

Draft Programme of the C.P.G.B. to the Comintern

Source: *The Communist Review*, June 1924, Vol. 5, No. 2.

Publisher: Communist Party of Great Britain

Transcription/Markup: Brian Reid

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INTRODUCTION

The Communist International is the recognised vanguard of the proletariat fighting for world power. It concentrates within itself the revolutionary experience of mankind, its science, its inspiration, its purpose.

Herein it surveys the history of the human struggle, traces the tortuous pathway of the exploited, examines the collapsing fabric of capitalism and blazes the light upon the tasks of the proletariat on the high road to Communism. This constitutes the Programme of the Communist International.

PRE-CAPITALIST FORMS OF SOCIETY

The earliest and most universal form of social organisation known to history is the *gens*—an organisation based upon kinship and the common ownership of the means of life. This primitive Communism lasted unnumbered centuries. From the moment that the elementary social requirements of mankind, food, clothing, shelter, could no longer be satisfied within the narrow limits of social organisation based on blood kinship, the struggle for life was transformed into a struggle for private property.

From that moment "all history is the history of class struggles. Freeman and slaves, patricians and plebians, lords and serfs, masters and journeymen, faced each other as oppressors and oppressed in ceaseless conflict." Society became everywhere more complicated with manifold gradations of social rank. The patriarchal *gens* gave way to the tribe, the tribe to the nation, and with the nation came the state as the organised instrument of class oppression.

Many of these old primitive forms of society still exist and in its relations with them the Communist International adopts the historical viewpoint and with a view to developing the conditions which make Communism possible, takes into account the stage of historical development which any group or nation may have reached.

THE RISE OF CAPITALISM

1. Practically the whole world is now under the rule of capitalism. "Rising out of Feudalism as a means to give freer play to the forces of production, it changes the form of class rule. Into the place of feudal Property stepped Free Competition, based upon the private ownership of the means of production of commodities for the market." A small class, the capitalist class, own the means of production and distribution, and by means of this monopoly, aided politically by the state and culturally by its schools and press, it dominates the lives of millions of proletarians, who, having no

independent means of existence, are compelled to sell their labour power to the ruling class. The working class is thus a commodity slave class, serving as a source of profit to the bourgeoisie.

2. The competitive, nature of capitalism compels the capitalists to form ever-newer and larger combinations in the form of joint stock companies, trusts, cartels, etc., to develop the banks, which in turn amalgamate into powerful financial oligarchies uniting industrial and finance capital and absorb much of the possessions of the large landowners.

The state passes under their control and becomes increasingly the instrument for new forms of competition on a colossal scale, placing armies, navies and air fleets at their disposal, interfering in trade disputes, regimenting the workers, setting up trade departments, imposing tariffs initiating tariff wars, developing consular services, supporting their economic and financial penetration into other countries with all its military power. It conquers, colonises or controls the small states, and transforms the era of *laissez faire* into an age of imperial conquerors struggling for control of the whole earth.

The rivalry becomes ever more intense, and immense expenditure on armies, navies, air fleets, and every means of annihilation, militarism and war becomes a permanent feature of society. The economic crises which have characterised the development of these forces, through the inability of capitalism to regulate production in relation to the market, become a permanent crisis because the productive capacity of capitalism has outgrown its capacity to absorb the products.

3. Profound changes in the social strata of society accompany these developments. Agriculture passes under the industrialisation process, although more slowly, and large numbers of the peasants are forced to become proletarians of the towns. Science is harnessed to industry and production; all forms of transport are continually revolutionised, and all kinds of mechanical devices and machines are introduced to simplify the labour process. The monopoly of the skilled craftsmen of earlier years is destroyed and the proletariat is reduced more and more to a uniform level of poverty.

4. The natural course of capitalist evolution thus inevitably sharpens the contradictions of capitalism. It concentrates the wealth of the world into fewer hands and draws the masses of the exploited together and facilitates their organisation. It develops the machinery of production and trains the exploited to work collectively. It develops a powerful technique, capable of producing untold wealth, and drives the masses into poverty and revolt. It creates the premises for the application of socialist economy which it is incapable of applying to society, and is thus destroyed by the proletariat which revolts against it as the barrier to human and social development.

THE RISE OF THE PROLETARIAT

1. The first proletarian organisations arise as instruments of defence against severe exploitation. They take the form of political parties, trades unions, co-operative societies, leagues and associations, etc. The precedence of one or another form depends upon the historic conditions. In Britain and Southern Europe unions precede political parties. In Germany and Russia parties precede the unions.

The unions develop as economic organisations from narrow local craft unions to national, industrial and general labour unions, as the small factories give place to the large factory system and the development of the means of communication and transport brings the workers into closer contact with each other. These combine into local federations and councils, national federations and councils, and international federations.

The political parties are historically later organisations with more definite political aims, utopian—reflecting revolt against oppression and aspirations for a new social order, revolutionary—aiming at the overthrow of capitalism and the inauguration of socialism, reformist—adapting working class aims to the claims of capitalism. Each of these types of parties appears according to the intensity of the class struggle and the stage of political development reach by the working class.

2. The first actions of the proletariat against capitalism take the form of protests against change, strikes for the improvement of conditions, leading to the idea of sudden substitution of the “Co-operative commonwealth” by mass action, the general strike and physical force.

Defeat leads to a reassimilation of experience and more limited aims—economically through the trades unions for wage improvements, modification of conditions of employment, insurance against unemployment, sickness, etc. In the category of economic organisations must be placed the co-operatives societies first “productive co-operatives” combinations of producers, which fail for want of capital and later “consumers co-operatives” which grow into a great economic achievement within the framework of capitalism, competing against private enterprise.

The political efforts of the workers. change from utopian measures of substitution to limited aims, such as the extension of the franchise and increased representation within the parliamentary and municipal institutions of capitalism.

Through these defensive struggles the workers gradually become conscious of the character of the struggle they are waging and of their political destiny as a class. This process is intensified as the reform struggles bring them up more and more sharply against the powers of the state.

The revolutionary character and purpose of the working class nationally and internationally first finds clear scientific expression in the Communist Manifesto issued by Marx in 1847. It inspired the creation of the First International Workingmen’s Association in 1864. But the International integration of capitalism and the workers’ movement was too undeveloped to make it anything more than a herald of what was yet to be.

Not until the vast undeveloped countries had been brought within the domain of capitalist development, and there was no longer any way of escape for the workers from the old scenes of oppression by means of emigration, was it practicable in the eyes of the masses to build international organisations. The era of imperialist expansion during the 19th century has as its corollary the vast increase in the forces of the proletariat and the beginnings of their organisation into international organisations of trades unions and co-operatives, and the creation of the Second International of Socialist Parties.

The wealth concentrating in the imperialist countries was used to corrupt the proletarian movement by concessions. Revolutionary action and thought were thus stifled at their source and reformism and reformist leaders, believing in the permanency of capitalism, held sway over the working class. It was thus totally unprepared for the crisis of capitalism which began with the war of 1914. The international combinations were shattered by bringing them face to face with the issue of class political power before they were capable of accepting such a challenge.

Revolutionary experience on an international scale alone was capable of creating a revolutionary international of the workers. This was provided by the world war of 1914-18, and out of it came the Russian Revolution and the creation of the Communist International as the instrument of world revolution.

4. Each country has its own counterpart of the international crisis wherein the defensive struggle of the workers is transformed into the struggle for power—from the dictatorship of the capitalist class to the dictatorship of the Proletariat. In this struggle the workers find they are opposed by the institutions of capitalism, parliamentary, municipal, educational, religious, juridical, etc., a vast apparatus of spiritual and physical oppression. The representative institutions have the appearance of a democracy wherein all have equal rights, but actually their economic and social power dominate the institutions, and use them as effective instruments of capitalist dictatorship, assisted by the army, navy, police, the law courts, etc., all of which are officered by the ruling class. The more the proletariat grows in political and organisational strength, the more the capitalist class has to concede to the working class in the form of democratic representation in these institutions, until the progress of the workers becomes a danger to the continuation of capitalist rule.

The capitalist then discards all democratic cloaks and leads the way to open civil war as the means of suppressing the aspirations of the workers. This course of action reveals to the proletariat that it cannot hope to attain political power through the democratic apparatus of the capitalists, and has no alternative other than to seize power, destroy the bourgeois state and create its own apparatus of class political power.

5. The Paris Commune of 1871 the Russian and Hungarian Revolutions, have demonstrated that the Soviet State is the type of state which assures proletarian democracy, *i.e.*, a form of government which gives facilities for the active participation of the working masses in the making and execution of all legislation, and is the most effective weapon of proletarian dictatorship. By the workers' right to elect and recall their delegates, the combination of Executive and legislative power, and the adaptation to economic requirements instead of to arbitrary territorial divisions, the Soviets present an abrupt contrast to bourgeois democracy.

6. In this struggle for proletarian dictatorship it becomes, clear to the most advanced workers that the broad mass organisations such as the trade unions, the co-operatives, the reformist parties of social democracy, are ideologically subordinate to the bourgeoisie, that to free them from this influence and make them effective weapons in the class war it is necessary for the most class-conscious, revolutionary workers to organise themselves into a Party expressing the interests of the working classes, and win the leading role in the proletarian class struggle. Such a Party is the INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST PARTY of which the Communist Parties of all countries are sections, the vanguard party of the workers, the concentrated expression of their interests.

7. This process of uniting the masses under the Communist flag can only be carried out in the actual struggle of daily life, in which the reformist parties and trade union leaders continually betray the interests of the workers by siding with the bourgeoisie. The struggle assumes more than an ideological struggle within the unions. It becomes a struggle for the elementary needs of the workers and compels them to reinforce their struggle against the reactionary leaders in the unions by the creation of factory and workshop committees organised irrespective of trades and crafts. The sharper the class struggle is waged, the more prominent is the role of these organisations as the basic units of the revolutionary mass organisations for waging the workers', war against capitalism. The workers see in them the forerunners of the Soviets which are developed out of them in the revolutionary crisis, and look upon them as the new units of the revolutionary, industrial unions.

8. The growing strength and importance of the Co-operative Societies (Consumers' and Productive), and the increasing support which they draw from the working class, makes it imperative that the petit-bourgeois leadership which now dominates them be replaced by Communist leadership. Without the co-operatives are won to the side of the revolution before the seizure of power they can and will be used by the reactionaries as instruments of counterrevolutionary sabotage.

9. In order to win the majority of the working class the Communist Party has to utilise all the possibilities of bourgeois democracy by securing the election of Communists to Parliament, Municipal Councils, Boards of Guardians, and such administrative bodies, for the purpose of using them as a revolutionary forum and waging an incessant fight against the reformists and reactionaries who seek to use these institutions as a means of stabilising and defending capitalism.

10. It has to combat pacifism as an instrument of the bourgeoisie, recognising it as a means of paralysing the initiative and will of the proletariat towards revolution in the most decisive hours of the struggle with the bourgeoisie. Pacifism drugs the workers and offers them as sheep to be slaughtered by their enemies, who are prepared to fight to the death to prevent the workers becoming the ruling class.

11. In the same category must be placed "religion, the opium of the people." By its mysticism and concentration on some other life, by its slave morality and its institutions which are increasingly utilised as political institutions of the bourgeoisie, encouraging the dread of change and fomenting

the ignorant prejudices against the instruments of change, it is a counterrevolutionary force, an enemy of the working class. Religion and pacifism are the two deadly drugs used by the bourgeoisie to paralyse the actions of the masses against the sacred rights of property.

12. The campaign against violence must be revealed as sheer hypocrisy. The bourgeoisie came to power by violence, by “bloody revolution,” by civil war. Only when the bourgeoisie had firmly established itself and met no opposition to their expansion did “peaceful democracy” play any part in its existence. Its affection for “go violence” and its loyal advocacy of religion are only developed when the working class begins to be conscious of its class interests and to assert its superiority in numbers and strength. As history does not reveal any ruling class willing to abdicate voluntarily, the Communists unhesitatingly declare that civil war, the most acute form of the class struggle, is the final means whereby all ruling classes will be overthrown. But in all struggles the action of the broadest masses is the deciding factor. Individual terrorism and individual acts of sabotage are useless.

13. In the period leading to civil war, the period of the penetration and decay of the bourgeois institutions and the struggle against the reformism of the social-democratic parties and the trade union bureaucracy, a variety of transitory forms of government may take place. Bourgeois governments, Constituent Assemblies, etc., may exist side by side with Soviets or Workers’ and Peasants’ Councils. In the Soviets there may be at first the supporters of the capitalists. In the Parliaments and Assemblies there may be representatives of the workers. In such a situation the whole aim of the Communist Party must be to strengthen the apparatus of the Workers’ Councils and to destroy the apparatus of the bourgeoisie.

14. In some countries, as, for example, England and Australia, Labour Governments may be formed within the Parliamentary system. These Labour Governments are really movements dominated by the ideology of the middle class or petit-bourgeoisie and only tolerated by the capitalist class so long as they do not attack their vested interests or the rights of property.

The advent of such governments represents an important stage in the disintegration of capitalism, and should be used as a means to force working class issues to the front and to intensify the struggle against reformism in the working class organisations. The advent of a Labour Government should be regarded as the signal for the strengthening of the working class organs, the factory committees, etc., leading to the creation of workers’ councils as the only means capable of exercising the will of the proletariat in its struggle against the bourgeoisie.

15. The conduct of the struggle against reformism on an international scale, and the relating of the sectional and national struggles of the proletariat to the international requirements of the class war, become for the first time possible with the creation of the Communist International. For the first time the millions of oppressed peoples of countries under the domination of the imperialists of the world have a common centre to which they can turn for guidance and are encouraged to find in the working class their ally against oppression.

The reformists answer the efforts of the revolutionary workers by efforts to reconstitute the old internationals of unions and parties and join with the capitalists in the creation of the League of Nations, the “democratic” cover for the rapacity of the imperialists. The whole movement in these directions represent the attempts of capitalism to heal the breach created by the Russian Revolution.

There is thus no alternative to the proletariat other than the creation of new revolutionary international mass organisations of unions, co-operatives and peasants, etc., to harness the results of the struggles within the national sections of the old organisations against reformism and reaction.

16. The Communist International, therefore, is the leader of all the exploited and oppressed. It defends the proletarian states that have arisen, fights for the liberation of oppressed nationalities from the bondage of imperialism and leads the workers of the capitalist countries to the conquest of political power.

17. Armed with these weapons of struggle, the Communist International pursues the aim of the substitution of the capitalist order by the Communist order, wherein the social ownership of the means of production supersedes private ownership; wherein classes are abolished and mankind combines in common effort to exploit the riches of the earth and human effort in the interests of all humanity.

THE HISTORIC CRISIS OF CAPITALISM AND THE STRUGGLE TOWARDS COMMUNISM.

1. Between the period of the beginning of the collapse of capitalism and the establishment of Communism a long interval of transition must ensue, in which the capitalist forces and the forces of revolution continually war with each other. Neither the defenders of capitalism nor the warriors of revolution can shake themselves free from the material and cultural conditions which exist throughout the world in varied array. Although modern imperialism brought all the regions of the earth beneath its sway, neither the great imperialist powers nor the smaller nations are uniformly developed. Hence the great crisis of capitalism, which produced the war of 1914-18, not only violently changed the relative positions of the imperialist powers, it also made vast changes in the material and political conditions of all the countries and in the class aspirations of large social strata throughout the world. From periodic crises such as had occurred repeatedly in its development it passed into its permanent historic crisis.

2. The world war constitutes the main factor in precipitating capitalism from its ascendent period into the present condition of chronic crisis. Instead, of proving a means to the consolidation and uniform development of capitalism, it set the contradictions and uniform development of capitalism, it set the contradictions of capitalism in more violent antagonism, let loose the forces of social revolution, shattered vast productive forces, dislocated its markets and made inevitable the periodic repetitions of world war until the social revolution intervenes.

3. The war began with Germany and Britain as the principal protagonists, each with subordinate allies less economically developed than themselves. As the process of destruction and attrition made the protagonists more and more dependent upon the neutral countries for resources, they each sought to make allies of the neutrals. The entrance of America and Japan became the means of developing these new imperialist powers and changing the relative positions of all the great powers of the world.

4. German imperialism was shattered, as a competitor for the world domination, by the American reinforcement to the Entente powers, and by the great wave of revolution which swept over Russia (relatively the weakest of the great capitalist powers, and Central Europe. The war ended with the centre of gravity of capitalism transferred to America, where the forces of production were greatly increased. The "victorious" countries were indebted to her, and Eastern and Central Europe were in a condition of famine, and their forces of production were terribly shattered. This contradiction intensified the rivalries rather than appeased them. In the place of Germany and Britain as the world's leading rivals stepped the Social Revolution, the revolt of the oppressed nations and colonials, the rivalry of the imperialists of Britain, France, America and Japan.

Notwithstanding the League of Nations, the Washington Conference, etc., the imperial rivals are more powerfully equipped than ever, with all the deadly weapons of war, and face each other with assumptions of faithlessness and threats of war. They are struggling to colonise the world, and their only opponent is the Social Revolution.

5. Economically Europe is divided into two groups of countries—the group suffering from under-production and the group suffering from over-production. The countries suffering under-production cannot buy, because of their poverty, from the countries suffering from over-production, who will not sell without payment. The world's market, based upon the exchange of goods with gold as a negotiable medium, is thus divided into sections, the economic and social conditions of which are utterly different. The visible index of capitalist decay is the rapid fluctuations and depreciation of the exchanges.

6. The lack of capital and material means of production in the under-productive countries leads to the deterioration of the physical condition of the workers, and reduces their capacity for production, whilst the middle classes (salariat, intelligencia, etc.), are thrust into the ranks of the proletariat in a similarly weakened condition. In the over-productive countries there is extensive unemployment among the workers, with a vast amount of machinery and means of production lying idle in want of markets for the goods they could produce.

7. Thus proceeds the general depreciation in the forces of production and the loosening of the ties between industry and agriculture in all countries. In the under-productive countries, because of the shortage of the means of production (artificial manures, etc.) the farmers take advantage of the shortage to force up high prices and to satisfy their own needs without regard for the needs of the towns. In the over-productive countries the same process operates because there are few buyers at profitable prices. Land thus goes out of cultivation. This process is advantageous to large farmers, severely handicaps the small farmers, intensifies the competition between them and leads to the big farmers monopolising the situation with a view to crushing out the small farmers. The position in the towns becomes more acute. The competition in industry is intensified—a competition which lends itself to the further concentration of capital.

9. These conditions are still further aggravated by the efforts of the Entente countries to recover their war losses by transferring them as a charge upon the Central European countries, and their efforts to make of them their economic and financial colonies. The Versailles Treaty has Balkanised Europe and torn its economic units asunder.

10. Nor can the countries outside Europe escape the crisis. The colonial countries are in a state of chronic crisis, owing to their inability to dispose of their agricultural and industrial products in competition with the older industrialised countries, while America, and Japan and Britain are in constant difficulties with regard to over-production and are striving to perpetuate capitalism by developing new colonial markets in China and South America.

11. The capitalists are powerless to affect a cessation of the decay of the capitalist world order. Those of the under-productive countries seek to escape by transferring their capital to neutral countries, and with high exchange rates. Those of the over-productive countries vacillate between two methods equally inadequate—either to leave the decaying countries to their fate and keep their own markets by high tariffs, or to re-establish the economic system of the under-productive countries.

The first leads inevitably to social revolution throughout Continental Europe; the second leads to the rehabilitation of Germany, the rival they set out to destroy, which in turn, if uninterrupted by social revolution, would intensify the world rivalry and lead direct to a repetition of 1914 on a vaster scale.

This latter policy also means the strengthening of Soviet Russia, where the proletariat holds power, not only because Germany would in the main be dependent upon Russia for raw materials, but also because the lack of markets elsewhere sets up a veritable scramble for the Russian market after the bourgeoisie have become convinced that they cannot kill Soviet Russia by military means. Paradoxical as it may seem, this policy tries to strengthen the storm centre of the social revolution as the means to escape revolution due to its own internal decay.

12. But there is no escape; the decisive struggle between the Bourgeoisie and the Proletariat is being waged. The capitalists are trying to win through the crisis also by intensifying the process of exploitation, reducing real wages, abolishing the eight-hour day, cutting the costs of production wherever possible. The proletariat is resisting fiercely and with revolutionary energy. In spite of the endeavours of treacherous Trade Union and Labour Leaders to persuade the workers to submit peacefully to the demands of the capitalists, the proletariat offers stubborn resistance. Strikes, armed risings, civil war, have become the normal conditions of many countries. The vanguard of the workers is inspired by the triumph of Soviet Russia to courageous and decisive actions. The

Proletariat everywhere is making great strides in class consciousness and losing all faith in the permanence and durability of capitalism.

13. The capitalists can no longer depend upon the power of the state for protection, and fear the revolt of the rank and file of their army and officials. They find it necessary, therefore, to organise new forces drawn from their own class and the disappointed petit-bourgeoisie, and make a new state power which over-rides the old parliamentary machinery. These forces gather strength from every failure of the proletariat and even win workers into their ranks. By these means they have administered military and political defeats to the workers in a number of European countries. But military conquests by force which have not the mass of the workers behind them are compelled to broaden their social foundations and make way for the re-invigoration of the proletariat by concessions, in order to get the machinery of production to work again. This is the dilemma of the capitalists in Europe. Having destroyed the illusions of the masses by violence they are compelled, in order to restore production, to give the proletariat strength and greater liberty of movement. Renewed strength and shedding of illusions leads to the extension of the social revolution beyond the borders of Russia.

14. The same factors operate in the capitalist relations to Soviet Russia. Rushing to a “new market” as a means of recuperation, they enable the proletarian state to recover from the destructive attacks of civil war and imperialist invasion. The longer the proletarian state survives the more it is enabled to widen the area of its influence and power in the world market, and to introduce new factors into the rivalry amongst the capitalists by the intensification of their quarrels in the struggle for trade privileges.

15. In order to use the capitalists to the utmost in restarting and rapidly developing industry after the revolution, the proletariat of the revolutionary states grant concessions to the capitalists which are a source of danger to the proletarian states, but only necessary and dangerous so long as the revolution is confined to the economically backward countries such as are in the union of Soviet Republics. Nevertheless, the policy advances the industry in the revolutionary states, whereas capitalists outside their frontiers cannot even with any concessions make the fullest use of their existing forces of production and are on the down grade.

16. The colonial peoples are also roused to demand and secure concessions from the imperialists. The colonial countries which are the product of racial expansions such as Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Ireland, emancipate themselves from the control of the mother country partly by peaceful means, partly by violence, and independently seek new outlets for their products.

17. The races held in subjection by white foreign powers have been taught to fight with arms, to desire higher social standards and greater freedom. Their belief in the permanence of supremacy of the white imperialist peoples rapidly vanishes.

18. The Communist International therefore affirms that only by the proletariat of the capitalist countries seizing political power, breaking the resistance of the bourgeoisie, expropriating the expropriators, can the productive forces again be restored and developed, and the masses of mankind set free to advance from Capitalist slavery to Communism. To meet the demands of the economic and political crisis, which varies in acuteness from country to country, the Communist International proposes the following fundamental measures to be applied by the various proletariat.

1. Nationalisation of all land without compensation, the handing over of the small farms to the farmers and the operation of the large farms by the state under the control of the workers.

2. Nationalisation of all banks, mines, railways, communications, transport, engineering, shipping, cotton and woollen industries.

3. The disarming of the bourgeoisie and the arming of the proletariat; the creation of a proletarian army, navy and civil guard.

4. The abolition of capitalist law courts and the establishment of workers’ tribunals.

5. The monopoly of foreign trade.
6. Nationalisation of distributive trades and fusion with co-operative societies, which become state distributive organs.
7. State monopoly of press.
8. Annulment of state debts, with allowance to small investors.
9. Nationalisation of all building and housing property, except small property owned by small tenants. Rents to be payable to the state.
10. Separation of church from state and equal status of all religious opinions.
11. Nationalisation of all day schools and universities; raising of school age to 18 years with equal opportunities for all the children to fullest secular, technical, and political education.
12. The liberation of the colonies held in military subjection (Egypt, India, etc.), and support of countries liberated against imperialism, whether the liberated countries are proletarian states or not, the question of their proletarian character being determined by the relation of social forces within them.
13. Recognition and alliance of the proletarian republic with the U.S.S.R.

Proletarians of all lands unite under the banner of the Communist International, in the revolutionary struggle for power and the dictatorship of the proletariat!

PROGRAMME OF THE BRITISH SECTION OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

On the basis of the above and in adaptation to the conditions obtaining in its own country the British Section of the Communist International presents the following complementary demands and programme theses.

1. Great Britain is the oldest of the Capitalist powers. Its economic organisation is most ripe for the transition to Socialism. The centralisation and trustification of industry and banking are highly developed and ready for Socialist ownership and control with the minimum of dislocation. The proletariat forms the great majority of the population. Only the political control of the bourgeoisie and the unpreparedness of the proletariat for the revolutionary seizure of power stand in the way of a Socialist Britain. The continuation of the capitalist method of production, after the historical justification for its existence has passed, has precipitated this country with the rest of Capitalism into a chronic crisis from which only the proletariat can bring it successfully.
2. Great Britain is also a leading imperialist power involved in all the classic problems of the imperialist struggle for world power. Its colonies and dependencies vary in the degree of their development. Australia, New Zealand and Canada, South Africa and Ireland have emancipated themselves to the extent of asserting themselves as independent entities, partly by peaceful means, partly by violence, and are rapidly becoming competitors with the mother country for the disposal of their products. India and Egypt are in constant revolt, demanding home rule, whilst the newer dependencies wrenched from the control of German imperialism, and those secured as "Mandatories under the League of Nations" (Palestine and Mesopotamia) are unceasingly demanding the right of self-determination.
3. Of these countries India especially is rapidly undergoing the process of industrialisation and has become an important factor in the dislocation of home industries (cotton, jute, etc.). The exploitation and development of the colonies and dependencies has been a means of developing the productive forces of Britain, and of interesting the workers in imperialist extension as a means of continued employment and high wages. The reactions throughout the British Empire in the period of the crisis of capitalism are all the more acute.
4. Britain emerged from the war with her industrial forces not only unimpaired, but with a greatly

extended and more centralised and trustified plant. By extensive subsidies the area of agricultural production had been increased. The proletarian forces had been enlarged by the transfer of old and young into all departments of production. The old craft demarcation barriers of the trade unions had been swept away with the consent of the trade union leaders, social pacifists and national patriotic Labour leaders, and mass production was developed on an enormous scale. The capacity for production was thus greatly increased.

5. By concessions in wages, hours of labour, preferences of employment to ex-service men, and the creation of an artificial boom in trade, etc., the capitalist class steered safely through the demobilisation crisis, only to plunge deeper into an extensive and long period of stagnation due to the contraction of the world markets and the advent of new and powerful competitors. Internal trade suffered a set-back. The building of houses ceased during the war, whilst the high prices of materials, resulting from the shortage, and inflation made it impossible after the war to proceed with building operations without state subsidies. But state subsidies became increasingly hard to get, owing to heavy taxation and the determined efforts of the bankers to restore the pound to its pre-war standard. Extensive unemployment among the workers, and the over-crowding of the proletariat and lower middle class, has accordingly become chronic. The state was forced to control rents in response to the political pressure of the masses.

6. The small farmers, encouraged during the war by profits from subsidised prices to enlarge their holdings by mortgage, find themselves with a double burden. They are unable to get the war prices for their produce, and they have to pay off their mortgages in a restored currency. They are compelled either to hand over their farms to the large farmers and landlords and become tenant farmers again, working under unprofitable conditions, or to pass into the ranks of the proletariat.

7. All the measures of state control, both in industry and in agriculture, are abolished. Whitley councils and wages boards, whereby the workers had exercised a check upon the rate of exploitation, are swept away in many industries. Educational facilities for the children of the proletariat are cut. Measures of social amelioration, such as feeding school children and the granting of milk for children, and maternity welfare, are cancelled. An offensive on wages has reduced the workers' conditions below the level of 1914.

The reactions of the Versailles Treaty conditions further paralyse important industries, such as shipbuilding, through the placing of the German Mercantile Marine upon the British market at cut prices and the sending of ship repairs to Continental ports to secure advantage of cheaper labour and weaker currencies.

8. But the capitalists reject any attempt to cut the colossal state debt, and extract thirty per cent. of the annual revenue in the form of interest on debt. They attack state expenditure on social services, insist upon the reduction of taxes on profits, and cut all subsidies to the working class, such as unemployed relief, etc.

9. The whole internal situation thus produced is one of instability. The capitalist parties are torn asunder in their efforts to find a way out of the constant crises, whilst the working class becomes increasingly restive and stronger in its challenge.

10. Faced with instability at home, Britain's position as an imperialist power is no less difficult. America overshadows her in the struggle for world power. Although at great cost she recovered her financial credit with America by funding the debt, America wields the financial hegemony of the capitalist world. Britain lost her naval supremacy at the Washington Conference, whilst America is struggling with her for the possession of her colonies, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, by financial and economic penetration.

11. Without still further concessions to the colonies, and the restoration of Europe under British hegemony, British imperialism is defeated. The struggle for the hegemony of capitalist Europe lies between Britain and France. Both are parties to the Versailles Treaty, which continues the war of 1914-18. By this Treaty Central and Western Europe were to become the Balkanised states of

Europe, subject to the financial and economic control of Britain and France, with the League of Nations as the democratic cover for the pursuit of imperialist aims.

The resistance encountered in the application of the Treaty has intensified the rivalry between France and Britain, stripped the League of Nations of its pacifist garb, brought the economic fabric of Europe into a serious condition, and let loose national hatreds to be fed by the militarist aspirations of the leading powers. The occupation of the Ruhr and Rhineland by French troops has placed the seal of a predatory purpose upon their policy, and nakedly revealed the real aims of the imperialists in the war.

12. Equally vicious is the policy pursued by these "Allies" who have now replaced the British-German rivalry in their relations to the Balkan states along the Mediterranean route of Empire. Wherever the Empire extends the same predatory course is pursued.

13. British Imperialism has been and is the mortal enemy of the social revolution. It pursued the policy of military intervention in Russia, and fomented the enmity of its border states in south, east and west. The backward countries of Afghanistan, Palestine, Mesopotamia, etc., are constantly bludgeoned or intimidated into active opposition to the Workers' Republic.

14. The Communist Party sees no way out of this chaos for the workers other than through the revolutionary action of the working class, and outlines the fundamental economic and political measures necessary for a solution in the interests of the workers and all the oppressed of mankind.

(1) Nationalisation of all land without compensation, the handing over of the small farms to the farmers and the operation of the large farms by the state under the control of the workers.

(2) Nationalisation without compensation of all mines, railways, communications, transport, engineering, shipping, cotton and woollen industries, banks.

(3) The disarming of the bourgeoisie, the arming of the proletariat, and the creation of a proletarian army, navy and civil guard.

(4) The abolition of capitalist law courts and the establishment of workers' tribunals.

(5) Monopoly of foreign trade.

(6) Nationalisation of distributive trades and fusion with co-operative societies, which become the state distributive organs.

(7) State monopoly of the press.

(8) Annulment of state debts with allowance to small investors.

(9) Confiscation of all fortunes over £5,000.

(10) Nationalisation of all property, except property owned by small tenants. Rents to be payable to the state.

(11) Establishment of national minimum wages and 40-hour week, in agreement with trade unions.

(12) Separation of Church from State and equal status of all religious opinions.

(13) Abolition of Poor Law. State responsibility for aged over 60, for unfit, for widows unable to work, and for unemployed.

(14) Free medical service.

(15) Nationalisation of all day schools and universities, raising of school age to 18 years with equal opportunity for all the children of the workers to fullest secular, technical and political education.

(16) The abolition of the monarchy and all hereditary titles.

(17) The liberation of the colonies held in military and political subjection. India, Egypt, etc., and support of the colonies liberated, whether they are liberated proletarian states or not, the question of

the proletarian character being determined by the relation of social forces within them.

(18) The creation of economic and political agreements with all countries with a view to peaceful development and exchange of goods.

(19) Alliance of Britain with the U.S.S.R. and other Soviet Republics.

(20) Repudiation of the Versailles Treaty: The cancelling of war debts and reparations.

(21) Universal simultaneous disarmament.

These measures cannot be carried through in their entirety without the *Dictatorship of the Proletariat*, exercised through the Soviets, and the crushing of the capitalist class. The working class is the only social force which can give effect to the demands. The opposition of all other classes to them, along with the opposition of the reformist leaders of the workers in the trade unions and the Labour Party, increases the social and economic chaos and intensifies the misery of the masses. But until the illusions concerning all other "solutions" to their social problems have been swept away from the mind of the workers, until the reformist leaders are disowned and the workers support the Communist Party and this programme, a succession of critical experiences is inevitable.

The complex social character of the Labour Party produces conflicts within its ranks. The proletariat, who form the majority of the membership, feel the distress and poverty arising from the breakdown of industry, and increase their demands for improvements, while the petit-bourgeois elements, fearful of the development of a revolutionary crisis, strive to divert the protests of the workers from mass action into parliamentary channels. In this policy the Labour Party leaders have the assistance of the trade union bureaucracy, who, in addition to being reformist in outlook; use the narrow constitutions of the unions as a means of confining the workers to sectional action, and thus prove a tremendous bulwark of capitalism.

It is the task of our Party to penetrate the ranks of the Labour Party and the unions, to combat their reformist leaders, and to encourage the workers increasingly to united mass action in the defence and prosecution of their interests. It is incumbent upon every Communist to be a member of a trade union, the most elementary form of workers' organisation, in order to help the workers to secure greater solidarity in action, combat reaction, and win their confidence as the real leaders in the fight for their interests.

10. The British working class is politically backward. All its existing traditions belong to the period of social patriotism. The revolutionary experiences of its early history, including the struggles of the Chartists, are only known to the students. It has been taught to regard the unions as only instruments for "collective bargaining" and to relegate politics to "politicians." The wealth accumulated by the capitalists throughout the period of imperial expansion has enabled the exploiters to corrupt the British workers, creating a labour aristocracy of skilled workers, while the unskilled have been organised into general labour organisations staffed by a well-paid reactionary bureaucracy.

11. These conditions make the British proletariat strongly susceptible to the Liberal policy of concessions and compromises, no matter at whose expense, as also to the Labour Government policy of conciliation, constitutionalism and imperialism. They have enabled the Labour bureaucracy subsequently to turn to their own account the "unofficial revolts" (the shop stewards' movement, the unemployed committees, the dockers' revolt, etc.), although these indicate the beginnings of the revolutionary experiences of the British working class, and reveal the manner in which the workers through factory committees, unemployed committees, etc., will break free from the influence of the reformists as the futility of the latter's efforts unfold themselves in their experience.

12. The formation of the Labour Government has not come through the aggressive action of the workers, or even by the Labour Party's securing a majority of the votes in a parliamentary contest. Millions of workers still vote for the Tories and Liberals. It has come through the chaotic condition

of the capitalist parties, which have proved incapable of solving the problems of the historic crisis of capitalism. Unable to secure unity among themselves, they had to call on the Labour Party to form a parliamentary government. The product is a bourgeois Labour Government, conducting a policy of Liberalism towards the workers with the consent of the capitalists, pending the reorganisation of their forces for further attacks upon the workers.

The foreign policy of the Labour Government is conditioned by the consent of the capitalist parties, because of its refusal to pass beyond the limits of capitalist constitutionalism. The policy of imperialist subjection and exploitation of the masses of India, Egypt, Africa, etc., and the whole imperialist fabric continues under the name of labour imperialism.

In its relations with the Workers' Republic of Russia, it defends the interests of the bondholders and speaks in the name of capitalism.

Although the Labour Party is the product of the working class movement, political power has not passed into the hands of the workers by the creation of the Labour Government. The capitalists are still in power, through their henchmen leaders in the ranks of the workers who form the Labour Government and the large body of its supporters.

13. It is the task of the Communist Party to expose this kind of Labour Government, to insist upon the leaders who claim any connection with the workers' organisations fighting for the workers' interests and with the workers or being exposed as the enemies of the workers. It accordingly supports the Labour Government where its actions are in accord with the demands of the workers, and urges the workers to challenge it with mass action where it supports the bourgeoisie.

14. The longer the Labour Government exists by the consent of the capitalist parties, and not upon the mass support of the workers, the more it forms working coalitions with the bourgeoisie and betrays the workers.

With the bourgeoisie it supports the policy of restoring capitalism and the strengthening of British imperialism by demanding the economic and financial colonisation of the defeated countries in the war, and effects the further enslavement of the workers. Against this policy the C.P. demands (1) the repudiation of the Versailles Treaty, (2) the repudiation of the policy of reparations and indemnities, (3) the withdrawal of British troops from Europe, (4) the calling of an International Conference of the governments (*a*) to cancel all war debts, (*b*) to agree to restore devastated areas by united international action, (*c*) to determine frontiers on the principles of self-determination, (*d*) to secure peace by simultaneous disarmament, (*e*) to supplement governmental action by the calling of an all-in international conference of workers' organisations, (5) action necessary to secure the carrying-out of this policy.

15. Against the attempts of the capitalists and the Labour Government to impose bondholders' and bankers' terms upon the Workers' Republic, the Communist Party declares its solidarity with the workers revolution and demands the conclusion of the economic Treaty with Russia, the cancelling of property-owner claims, the non-recognition of pre-revolutionary debts, and the granting of credits to the Soviet Republic. These are essential demands in the interests of the workers of each country.

16. The Communist Party regards the maintenance of the British Empire as an act of deadly enmity to the workers of this country and the whole world. So long as British imperialism reigns, there can be no peace in the world, nor can the world's economy be organised or bring relief to the masses. Our Party, therefore, declares, its solidarity with the oppressed nations under the British flag, and, contrary to the bourgeois Labour Government, demands the full political and industrial freedom of India, Egypt, and the "protectorates" within the confines of the Empire.

17. The whole period of the existence of the Labour Government is one of fluctuating struggles, wherein the masses are repeatedly roused to action by their deepening anxieties concerning the uncertainties of their conditions. The Communist Party formulates demands accordingly, keeping

constantly in mind the limitations of the workers' outlook and the fundamental tasks before them. Either the Labour Government must take action on behalf of the workers' demands or lose the support of the workers. On the other hand, the attempt to carry them through meets with relentless opposition of the bourgeoisie, which in turn compels them to face the issues of the class war, convincing the workers by their own experience of the correctness of the declarations of the Communist Party. The Communist Party in this period accordingly sets forth the following demands on behalf of the working class.

1. Nationalisation without compensation of mines and railways, and the control of the industries by the workers' organisations.
2. Application of the Capital Levy to all incomes over £5,000, and the use of the capital so obtained for the relief of unemployment, and for other social measures.
3. Cancelling of the National Debt with compensation to small depositors only.
4. State control of banks and opening of accounts to inspection.
5. Control of foreign trade and state regulation of internal prices.
6. Grants and credits to local authorities for the building of houses by direct labour.
7. Payment of unemployed relief from the national exchequer through the trade unions.
8. Payment of old age pensions from 60 years of age, without any other qualifications.
9. Granting of political rights to soldiers and sailors, placing them on the same footing as civilians, with the right to refuse to blackleg in industrial disputes.
10. Establishment by law of minimum wage, based on subsistence minimum, for all young workers.
11. Raising of the school-leaving age to sixteen years, and the granting of full maintenance based on subsistence minimum. Youths between 14 and 16 years to receive vocational training based on the work school and training centres attached to workshops.
12. Elimination of all night work for all youths under eighteen years.
13. Provision of free meals for all school children, and abolition of child labour.

In addition the Communist Party supports every demand and struggle of the workers for increased wages and shorter working hours and improvements in conditions, and encourages them continually to increase their demands for control in the factories and workshops.

18. The unescapable struggle involved in the support of any of these demands increases the political and economic instability and is a corollary of the advancement of the Labour Party. The ascendancy of the Labour Party to Government operates in two directions. It awakens the political consciousness of masses of the workers because of its association with the workers. It attracts increasing numbers of the middle class, who feel the uncertainties of their position. Losing faith in the permanency of things to, which they have been accustomed, they look for new leaders, finding them in the petit-bourgeois leaders of the Labour Party who have demonstrated to them their non-revolutionary character. The parties begin, to break up this process of class assimilation proceeds. They form new coalitions, make frequent elections, project alterations to the parliamentary constitution, prepare for unconstitutional action.

The Labour Party and the unions cannot escape this process, wherein class issues become sharper and society divides up into two opposing camps. The advent of a Labour Government with a majority over all other parties would make no difference to this fundamental process, involved in the clash of the workers' interests with the demands for the preservation of capitalism torn by its conflicting elements.

19. The more these tendencies develop, the more urgent and imperative becomes the full programme of the Communist Party, and more and more workers are attracted to it.

It opposes all efforts to split the trade unions and proposes measures for the strengthening and developing the mass organs of the proletariat and encouraging mass action. The importance of the mass organisation of the workers, and the struggle towards power, makes it imperative that the present weakened condition of the unions and other organisations be overcome, and an effective struggle be conducted against the reformists and reactionaries for the leadership of these

organisations. The Communist Party regards the numerous unions and their lack of central direction and craft outlook as a menace to the workers. It regards the basis of organisation external to the factories as a source of weakness. The Trade Union Congress is ponderous and weak through union jealousies and divisions, unable to wage a united fight because the decisions of its congress are not binding. The General Council functions as a mediator and not as a general staff leading the unions in the struggle. Its affiliation to the International Federation of Trade Unions is an autonomous affiliation, meaning stagnation in the international struggle of the workers.

20. Local organisations of Trades Councils, potentially a class weapon uniting all the local organs, are unrelated to the national movement.

21. The co-operative movement has been drawn closer to the unions through banking connections, through sympathetic actions in strikes. Though dominated by petit-bourgeois leaders and decentralised, they are reservoirs of strength if harnessed to the working class struggle and objective.

22. The Communist Party, therefore, proposes the following measures for the strengthening and developing of the working class organisations.

1. Amalgamation of trade unions into industrial unions, with factory committees as the units of organisation.
2. Creation of workshop and factory committees as the immediate means of struggle, both for the fusion of the union and the driving force in the economic and political fights.
3. Federation of Industrial Unions and the General Council of Unions, which shall be bound by the decisions of the Union Congress in order to act as a united body.
4. Formation of a joint council of unions, workers' parties, and co-operatives, for united action in all campaigns and struggles.
5. Reinforcement of the Trades Councils, the local organisations of the trade unions, by delegates from districts committees of the unions and from the factory committees. The affiliation of the Trades Councils to the Trades Union Congress.
6. The creation of a central council of Consumers' Cooperatives and C.W.S. drawn from the National Conference of Consumers and Wholesale Societies. Every worker to be a Co-operator.

23. The efforts to secure united action even along these lines meet with the vigorous opposition of the reformist leaders. Instead of assisting the unity of the workers, they defend with all their powers the interests of the bourgeoisie. The workers are opposed even by the Labour Government with a majority in Parliament and the workers are increasingly compelled to turn to the creation of the factory committees as the means of mobilising their forces against reaction. The fight increases in intensity and extent until the conquest of power through the Soviets.

24. Thus armed with the measures for the strengthening of the mass organisation of the working class with the successive political and economic measures for the development of the revolutionary purpose and power of the masses, the Communist Party responds to the International of the workers as a fighting force in the liberation war of the exploited.