

# THE AGENT PROVOCATEUR



IN THE  
LABOUR  
MOVEMENT

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BY JOHANNES BUCHNER

(Translated from the German)

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# The AGENT PROVOCATEUR in the Labour Movement

By JOHANNES BUCHNER

(Translated from the German).

In the "Spitzel Almanach" (Spy's Almanac) which we published some time ago, we German Communists gave a list of the names of a whole number of police spies in the ranks of the workers' movement and warned the revolutionary workers against them.

The main purpose of this booklet is to summarise one or two general points with regard to the means of *combating provocation and spying*, those methods by which the class enemy seeks to break up the ranks of the Communists in all countries. Considering the many different forms which the revolutionary class struggle and the Communist movement take, and the various stages of development which they have reached, in different countries, and the manifold nature of the methods of suppression employed by the bourgeoisie, it would be a futile undertaking to attempt the drawing-up of a fixed and comprehensive code of rules in this connection. This is not the object of the present pamphlet. In the pages following, we would merely draw the attention of the Communists of all countries to the fact that it is a highly important task for them to fight with all possible vigour against the system of *agents provocateurs*. This system does considerable damage to our Communist movement, especially in the present period which is characterised by an extreme aggravation of the class struggle; for the Communist Parties are now the sole champions of the revolutionary upsurge of the masses; they alone are organising and directing the mass struggle of the workers for a revolutionary way out of the world economic crisis. It remains for each one of our brother Communist Parties, and for every individual Communist, to concretely apply the general aspects of the question which are summarised in this booklet, so that they may suit the circumstances in which this Party or that individual is placed.

## I.

### AGENTS PROVOCATEURS AS A TRUSTED WEAPON OF THE BOURGEOISIE.

#### ONE OR TWO FACTS FROM THE PRESENT AND PAST HISTORY OF THE POLITICAL POLICE.

A few months ago the whole world heard the news of the attempt to blow up the Budapest-Vienna express at Bia-Torbagy railway station. It was impossible to conceive what object this senseless act of destruction could possibly have served. Nevertheless, a communiqué was immediately afterwards published by



the Hungarian police, stating that certain documents had been found on the spot where the attempt had been made, proving that it had been the work of unemployed Communists, who, it was alleged, had planned a number of further acts of destruction with the object of creating new possibilities of work for the unemployed. Another furious campaign of persecution and calumny was immediately begun against our brother Communist Party in Hungary. This campaign soon resulted in *courts martial* being introduced in that country. The bourgeoisie thereby attained a long-cherished aim. The attempt at Bia-Torbagy was grist to their mill. Soon after, however, the true state of affairs was revealed. The perpetrator of the act was discovered, and it turned out to be the fascist, Matuschka, who had taken part in the punitive expeditions of officers' detachments after the overthrow of the Hungarian Soviet Government and who was in close connection with the Hungarian war ministry.

In Rumania, the country which borders on Horthy's Hungary, the political police are just as base, brutal and murderous and no limits are set to their activities. Here the paper, *Universul*, the organ of the military authorities and of the state police, simultaneously began an analogous campaign against the Rumanian Communists. It is characteristic that here too an attempt was made to connect a series of accidents and attempts, which had occurred recently on the Rumanian railways, with the activity of the Communists.

These facts alone prove what a big part is still being played in the present stage of the class struggle by the system of *agents provocateurs*, that trusted weapon in the arsenal of the bourgeoisie.

*Agents provocateurs* are no new manifestation. The history of the class struggle of the workers is abundantly rich in examples of the ruling classes employing espionage and provocation as a systematic weapon against the workers' revolutionary movement. In England, a country which possesses the most perfected apparatus for combating the workers' movement, the system of political provocation in the history of the struggle of the ruling classes against the revolutionary movement has taken deepest root. A few years ago a most interesting and informative discussion was conducted in the pages of the English press on the methods of work employed by the English secret service, or, as it is called, "Intelligence Service." During the course of this argument it was recalled that even at the time of the great French Revolution the then English prime minister, Pitt, who, as is well known, was trying by all possible means to bar the ideas of the French Revolution from entry into England, set up a most widely-spread network of espionage and provocation both at home and abroad. Pitt was in fact the original creator of the tradition and methods of work employed by the "Intelligence Service." These methods and traditions have been considerably enriched by the experiences of the World War and more particularly by the

fight with the colonial movements, which has been going on for many decades.

In France the method of political provocation had taken deep root by the time of the Second Empire, when the French police conducted a violent and merciless campaign against the 1st International, which was then coming into being.

During the French Empire the case of *Lagrange* had already caused much sensation. Lagrange was an assistant of the director of political police and had for some time been in connection with the workers' movement. A notorious adventuress, Florienne, the heroine of all the boulevard newspapers of her time, was in his service. With her co-operation the now famous attempt of Binode to assassinate Napoleon III. was staged. Florienne, who had received 40,000 francs from Lagrange, disappeared the day before the attempt was made. Later it turned out that the whole affair from beginning to end had been contrived by the police themselves for provocation purposes.

The history of the Russian revolutionaries is especially rich in examples of police provocation. The notorious "Ochrana" of Tsarist Russia made liberal use of provocation. Many of the weapons now being employed by the political police of all capitalist countries in the struggle against the revolutionary movement issued in the first instance from the well-equipped arsenal of the Tsarist Ochrana.

An *agent provocateur* who attained an international reputation was Asev, a classic figure in the history of police provocation. Asev's successful activities extended over a period of nearly twenty years and dozens of revolutionaries were delivered by him into the hands of the police. Asev was simultaneously a police agent and a member of the central committee of the Social Revolutionaries Party. It was he who organised the successful attempt on the Tsar's uncle, the grand duke Sergius, in Moscow, and before this he had already organised the bomb attack on the minister, von Plehve. In order to rehabilitate himself before the party, which had come to harbour suspicions against him, he even undertook the preparation of an attempt on the life of the Tsar Nicholas II., but before he could put this into effect, he had already been unmasked as a police spy.

In an earlier epoch there was Degayev, likewise an *agent provocateur* of the Tsarist Ochrana. After having delivered a number of prominent revolutionaries into the hands of the police, he organised the murder of Sudeykin, that very chief of the Ochrana service under whose immediate leadership he had "worked" for many years. A leading revolutionary also took part in the murder of Sudeykin in the person of Starodvorski, on whose head the Tsarist government had set a price of 10,000 roubles. This same Starodvorski, who, at this time, after the chief of the Ochrana had been murdered, was the topic of all Europe or rather of the whole world and who was to some extent an apostle of the Russian



revolutionary organisation known as "Narodnaya Volya" ("The People's Will"), later turned out to be likewise a secret agent of the Ochrana. This, however, was not known until twenty-five years afterwards, when the October Revolution of the Russian proletariat gave access to the secret archives of the Ochrana.

A no less interesting satellite in the system of political provocation was the priest Gapon. This man became known to the public of Russia and of the whole world as the leader of the mass march in which the workers of St. Petersburg bore a petition to their "little father tsar" on January 9, 1905—that bloody Sunday when the blood of the workers was shed so abundantly on the streets and squares of St. Petersburg. Gapon was in closest connection with the political police and Zubatov, chief of the Ochrana.

This same Zubatov was the originator of a method of provocation which is now employed against many inexperienced Communists in the police investigations of the political police of many countries. This method consists in conducting the enquiries in an extremely friendly tone calculated to gain the confidence of the victim.

We will not adduce any further examples of brutal infamy and moral destitution from the annals of the Tsarist Ochrana. But it is worth while studying the colossal amount of material which has been published on the work of the Ochrana since the October Revolution. It gives us a glimpse into the bottomless abyss of perils and dangers which lies before so many of us Communists in the capitalist countries, the more so since the methods of political provocation and police espionage now far excel those of the old Tsarist days in perfection and technique.

Political provocation plays a tremendous part in the political life of the bourgeois countries to-day. In many countries separate bourgeois groups have even succeeded during the last few years in bringing about changes in the government to suit their book, by means of political provocation. It is sufficient here to recall the famous "Zinoviev letter," a forgery which occasioned the downfall of the first MacDonald government, and this is by no means the only case which has occurred, with the capitalist press well primed to exploit the cunning to the full.

A number of masters in the art of forgery have lately distinguished themselves in the struggle against the international Communist movement. These have come mostly from the ranks of the emigrant Russian white guards. In general the white guardist Russian emigrants, the debris remaining from the shattered fabric of the ruling classes of old Russia, destroyed by the October Revolution, are playing an important rôle in the sphere of international political provocation. They form the great reservoir from which the political secret service and the police of many capitalist countries draw their supplies of agents. It may be said, without exaggeration, that in such countries, for example,

as Finland, Latvia, Lithuania and Esthonia, the apparatus of the political police has been organised either by white emigrants or by past officials of the Ochrana.

Comrades who have had occasion to make involuntary acquaintance with the prisons and police-cells of various countries, are unanimous in their reports that at the police examinations Russian white guardists again and again appeared, sometimes as higher officials, sometimes as chiefs of the political police. The police chief of Bombay is—a Polish emigrant from Russia.

It is a well known fact that the various imperialist cliques again and again adopt the method of provocation in their campaign against the Soviet Union, the first proletarian state of the world. The numerous forgeries of alleged Soviet Russian "secret documents" which have made their appearance in different countries in the last few years, the murder of the Soviet diplomat Vorovsky in Lausanne, and of his colleague Voykov in Warsaw, the bomb plot which was discovered against the Soviet Russian embassy in Warsaw—were all prompted by the desire to provoke a war with Soviet Russia. It is only thanks to the consistent *peace policy* of the Soviet Union that these provocative intentions of the war-mongers have been brought to nought.

A short while ago the international press was full of the news that the secretary of the Czecho-Slovakian mission in Moscow, a certain *Vanek*, had attempted to contrive a revolver attack on the Japanese ambassador in the U.S.S.R. through the agency of a Soviet official whom he had won over for this purpose. Let it be remembered that this synchronised with the advance of the Japanese army of occupation on the frontier of the Soviet Union in Manchuria. The whole affair was clearly nothing less than an act of provocation calculated to stir up a war-like conflict, an occasion for a new war of intervention against the U.S.S.R.

The further fact that Czecho-Slovakia has with the aid of French financial capital been turned into a military arsenal in the literal sense of the words and that this arsenal is designed to supply the countries bordering on the Soviet Union with war munitions, makes it obvious that the Czecho-Slovakian diplomat *Vanek* was here functioning as an *agent provocateur* in the service of the "great" imperialist war-mongers against the U.S.S.R.

### **Weaknesses of the Communist Parties in Combating Political Provocation.**

Political provocation is a scourge for all Communist Parties. Tens of thousands of political prisoners from the ranks of the Communist Parties and the revolutionary workers' movement are at present languishing in the prisons of the various capitalist countries. It can be stated with certainty that some 90 per cent. of these prisoners are the victims of police spies and *agents provocateurs*, while only the remaining 10 per cent. have found



their way into the clutches of the police by chance or through their own carelessness. Ninety per cent. of their enormous losses are sustained by the Communist Parties as a result of treachery, provocation and espionage, as a result of our own indifference and negligence in the struggle against political provocation. In many countries where our Communist Parties are illegal, such as for example, Roumania, Hungary and Yugo-Slavia, in the East and in the colonies, where the methods of the Intelligence Service and similar organs of the capitalist state police are applied on the widest scale, political provocation is wreaking terrible havoc and causing grievous suffering to our brother Communist Parties and to the revolutionary movement. But in Germany too and more especially in such countries as France, Czecho-Slovakia, etc., provocation and police espionage are ever lying in wait for our Communist Parties and inflict great damage on our movement.

Have the Communist Parties hitherto waged an adequate struggle against political provocation? It is an unfortunate fact that this struggle has not been waged with sufficient energy by the Communist Parties, despite the tremendous danger which is offered to our cause by provocation and police espionage. Here we should take a lesson from our enemies. How cleverly the dominant bourgeoisie manages to mobilise so-called public opinion when its interests require it! A glaring example of this is provided by the imperialist world war of 1914-1918. During the world war the bourgeois press of all countries and the whole apparatus of capitalist executive power managed to create a regular anti-spy mania. Let us recall, for example, how in the Allied countries after the outbreak of war the influence of this anti-spy campaign led infuriated mobs to destroy German shops and businesses. In the countries of the central powers too the artificial incitement to smell out spies was carried to the most insane extremes. To be sure, we Communists cannot adopt the same lying and hypocritical methods as are employed by the capitalist class in order to stir up public opinion; we shall never appeal to low chauvinistic instincts, as the bourgeoisie does at every suitable opportunity. We must, however, appeal to the class instinct, to the class-consciousness of the working masses, in order to increase the vigilance of these masses as against the class enemy to the highest degree and to evoke a wave of fury and indignation against the infamous methods of provocation and police espionage.

The Communist Parties are waging a vigorous and unabating struggle against all forms of opportunism and against the infiltration of a foreign class influence into the workers' movement. They are conducting an obstinate struggle against Social-fascism. Nevertheless we have not hitherto fought with the required energy, obstinacy and consistency against provocation and police espionage—the dirtiest, most dastardly and loath-



some weapon which the bourgeois class-enemy together with his fascist and Social-fascist agents puts in the field against us.

This struggle against political provocation must be taken up at once. This struggle must not merely be organised as a temporary campaign for a period of a few weeks or months. The struggle against provocation and police espionage must form a permanent and regular function of all Communist organisations. Until every single member in all Communist Parties, whether legal or illegal, is fully conscious of the fact that the struggle against provocation and police espionage forms a permanent and fundamental function of every Party member and of the entire Party organisation, until that time it will be impossible to set the necessary bounds to the devastating effects of this evil within the ranks of the Communist movement.

In all sections of the Communist International certain prejudices are still to be met with in this connection; such prejudices must be dealt with openly and sharply. Many Communists seem to think that political provocation is a sort of "secret" affliction, about which it is hardly fitting to speak in good society. They think it is enough for the Party to create some special organs or other to deal with such things. This is a very harmful and dangerous prejudice. The struggle against provocation and police espionage cannot be just the affair of a little committee of two or three persons. The entire Party, every Party organisation, every Party cell, every Party member must take part in this struggle. The Communist Parties are mass parties of the working class and our methods of combating provocation and police espionage can only be the methods of a mass struggle. It is this, among other things, which differentiates the Communist Party from such conspiratorial cliques as were formed, in their day, by the anarchists, the Russian Social-revolutionaries and similar organisations. However, in order to mobilise the masses of Party members and the entire working class for the struggle against this old evil, it is necessary to speak about it openly and draw the attention of the whole proletarian public to it.

Some comrades raise the objection that a public disclosure of all cases of provocation and police espionage would detract from the prestige of the Party. This is absolutely false. The prestige of the Party is suffering much more harm from the impudence of the police and of their agents and spies who sneak into the ranks of the revolutionary fighters. The prestige of the Party suffers incomparably more from the passivity and helplessness of the Party in the struggle against provocation. The prestige and the confidence which the Party enjoys among the masses, suffers far more detraction by the systematic arrests of dozens of its best and most active members. Every Communist knows, for example, what a disastrously important part is played by workshop espionage in the shop and factory; it forms one of the greatest obstacles to the firm anchoring of the Communist movement in

the enterprises. Anyone who realises this will hardly attempt to "save" the prestige of the Party by such dubious means as the hushing up of this fundamental evil. The prestige of the Party suffers far more from the way in which spies and *agents provocateurs* are often able to carry on their mischievous work in the most daring manner and over long periods of time, without suffering any particular harm on being discovered. There are many glaring instances of this, of which we may here adduce one or two.

In 1928 a certain *Joubert* was working in the Communist Party of France. He managed to gain the confidence of the Party leadership and to get charged with many important commissions. The Party, however, began to get news that Joubert was an agent of the French police. In order to test the truth of this information, he was placed under observation. But before our comrades had completed their enquiry, Joubert, who must meantime have got wind of it, was off and away, not without taking with him both Party money and Party documents. Thus a man who was already under observation and suspicion still had access to the money and documents of the Party! And to-day this same Joubert is living in all peace of mind, untroubled by anyone, as the manager of a State wireless station in Algiers.

In the "civilised" countries of the West we find there are special schools for the training of functionaries of the political espionage and supervision service. There the pupils of the Intelligence Service are taught all the tricks of the criminal trade which the police must learn. However, these greenhorns have to have practical exercise in the work of spying on Communists.

Groups of the promising upholders of the British Empire, for instance, took their stand outside the building where a session of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Great Britain was just then taking place, while an old experienced police spy pointed out our comrades to them one by one as they came out of the Congress Hall. He coached them out loud without any embarrassment: "There's Mr. Pollitt . . . that's Mr. Gallacher . . ." and so on. This insolent form of instruction could proceed without the slightest hitch. Are not the instances already given characteristic of the impudence and audacity which the police spies display, since they meet with no immediate and effective resistance?

There is yet another prejudice of a different kind. In many Communist circles it is said: Provocation and police espionage are inevitable evils; as long as there is class struggle, there will be provocation and espionage, so we must fight, not against provocation and espionage, but—for the world revolution! Now it may well be true that espionage and provocation will remain with us as long as that class remains which employs these methods for the assurance of its supremacy. But to conclude from this



that the struggle against provocation and espionage is therefore superfluous, would be one of the worst expressions of opportunism, a sort of fatalism, a theory of "christian" resignation and passivity in face of a dire evil.

The ruling classes make use of the infamous methods of espionage and provocation in order to weaken, corrode and undermine the revolutionary front of the workers. The Communist Parties must put an end to their attitude of indifference towards provocation, if they do not want to pay for their carelessness in this matter by further numerous and heavy losses.

### **The Merging of the Bourgeois Dictatorship into Fascism and the Growth of Provocation.**

Political provocation is a method used by the bourgeois state to combat the Communist movement. The growth of provocation is at the present moment closely connected with the whole system under which the bourgeois dictatorship is being merged into fascism. In the decisions of the XIth Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International we find the following :

Fascism grows organically out of so-called bourgeois democracy, the masked form of bourgeois dictatorship, it intensifies to the utmost all methods of suppressing and enthraling the workers, these methods being peculiar to the capitalist regime and inseparable from the whole system of bourgeois dictatorship.

The bourgeoisie sets up and moulds into shape the fascist regime which is intertwined with remnants of bourgeois democracy, with a view to destroying the class organisations of the proletariat, to suppressing the Communist Parties and to creating militarist-terrorist organisations of its own regardless of whether the forms of parliamentary government are thereby retained or removed."

Fascism thus "intensifies all methods of suppressing and enthraling the workers." It is therefore clear that hand in hand with the growth of fascism provocation and police espionage are also being employed more and more, since these methods play such a prominent part in "destroying the class organisations of the proletariat" and first and foremost of the Communist Parties.

Before the world war there were in Europe certain elements among the democrats who recoiled in pious horror from the methods of the political police, in particular the Russian Ochrana and even came out from time to time with protests against these methods. At the present day these old methods of the Tsarist Ochrana have been completely internationalised. In former times it was generally supposed that the beating and torturing of prisoners belonged exclusively to the methods of work employed by oriental despots. But to-day beating and torture constitute the customary method of struggle against the Communist movement in all capitalist countries. In the autumn of 1931 a campaign was waged in the American press against the "third degree," which is customarily employed at examinations in American

prisons. The American senate appointed a special commission to enquire into the ways of the American police. The report of this commission establishes the fact that the prisoners in American prisons are tortured in just the same way as in Rumania, Yugoslavia, Poland and such countries. In the prisons of renowned American "democracy" the prisoners are flung downstairs, water is pumped into their noses, needles are thrust under their finger nails, etc. In every capitalist country we can now observe numerous facts which prove how the merging of bourgeois dictatorship into fascism is promoting the development of provocation, police espionage and torture, and how the various different forms of provocation are being practised in the richest diversity.

It is a highly characteristic fact that at the present time the entire system of political police forces in all capitalist countries is most closely connected with the criminal under-world and is adopting the methods of work employed in this underworld. In China the bands of Chunchu's bandits are most closely connected with the police and are working hand in glove with them. In Chicago Al Capone's notorious gang of bootleggers and criminals was for years on end the virtual ruler of the life of the city and was working in most intimate contact with the highest police authorities. If a penal code could ever be applied to the system of political police, scarcely a paragraph could be found which is not violated by this organisation. In special police schools in capitalist countries all criminal arts are known.

Political provocation is one of the weapons in the class war. Every war, the class war included, requires the organisation of reconnaissance and espionage work within the enemy's camp. It is besides a customary part of the technique of war to organise every kind of sabotage and wrecking activity among the ranks of the enemy and in his rear. Political provocation aims not only at the organisation of reconnaissance and espionage, but also at the carrying on of sabotage and wrecking activities in the Communist ranks. And since the blows are much harder in the class war than in other wars, special attention must be paid to this dangerous evil. That the class war is really waged far more cruelly than ordinary war, is proved by such facts as, for example, that in war it is not customary to kill prisoners, whereas in the class war the bourgeoisie aims at the physical annihilation of its prisoners. The same is true of the methods of torture and so on. In the class war "democratic" prejudices are soon forgotten. The laws of class war are hard and merciless. Every Communist knows this and is quite clear about the possible consequences of this war. Whoever wavers and allows himself to be disheartened by political provocation, is no Bolshevik. We must fight against provocation, not capitulate to it.



## What Hinders the Struggle Against the Agents Provocateurs?

For the struggle of the Communist Parties against *agents provocateurs* and for the success of this struggle the greatest obstacle is offered by the *systematic work of police spies and agents* in the very ranks of the Party itself. It often happens that one of our brother Parties starts a campaign against the *agents provocateurs*, but comes up against a pronounced resistance from inside its own ranks. It is as if an unseen hand were stretched out to prevent the struggle. There can only be one explanation of this: the obstacles are laid in our way by those who have an interest in laying them.

A further obstacle in the struggle against *agents provocateurs* is the fact that many Communist Parties lack sufficient revolutionary determination and are *insufficiently imbued with Bolshevism*. We Communists speak a great deal about "Bolshevising" our Parties and can already point to certain successes attained in many countries in this respect, but a Party which does not in its entirety and with the support of the broad masses of the working class, wage a struggle against *agents provocateurs*, is in no sense of the word a Bolshevik Party. It is possible to declaim high and low and as much as you please on the theme of "bolshevising" our Parties, and at the same time to do very little towards putting this into effect. This happens especially in cases where carelessness and tolerance are present. The way in which a Communist Party wages the struggle against provocation and police espionage, gives a valuable clue of the extent to which it has been "bolshevised."

A third obstacle in the struggle against *agents provocateurs*, and one which is met with especially in the Communist Parties of the Latin countries, is presented by the petty bourgeois prejudices and petty bourgeois *muddleheadedness* which still prevail in these parties and are often too characteristic of individual Communists. How can one throw suspicion on a friend and a comrade? Why should I hurt his feelings like that? After all we can't all begin suspecting one another — this or nearly this is the process of thought followed by many Communists. Until the Communist Parties expel this petty bourgeois sentimentality and muddleheadedness energetically from their midst, they will never be able to wage an effective struggle against the *agents provocateurs*. Meanwhile it remains a fact that this spirit of tolerance is still so widespread in many of our brother Communist Parties, that even comrades who have behaved most unworthily before bourgeois courts of justice or under police examination and have actually betrayed other Party members, are often nevertheless entrusted with responsible charges, on the alleged grounds that they possess valuable and indispensable faculties.



In many of our brother parties which still remain legal, the struggle against *agents provocateurs* is impaired by an almost opportunist *attitude of legality*. Many parties will not treat seriously the duty of effecting a timely transition to illegal work. Nevertheless the struggle against *agents provocateurs* is one of the most important means to be employed in preparing the parties for illegal work. There are Communist Parties who do not seriously believe that the class enemy is getting ready to strike them a decisive blow in the present situation of intensified class struggle. They imagine that their present legal or semi-legal existence will go on lasting for ever. Such a conception is a manifestation of the very worst sort of democratic and parliamentary illusion. While these Communists carry on a struggle against democratic and parliamentary illusions in their political activity among the masses, they have up till now not yet organised and mobilised their own ranks with a view to sweeping away the remnants of democratic illusions in the question of combating the *agents provocateurs*.

Finally the *quarrels of various groups and fractions* within the parties is a great hindrance to the struggle against *agents provocateurs*. The fights between different fractions in the Communist Parties is most opportune for the police. As a rule the existence of fractional groups constitutes a sort of screen behind which the police are not only able to mobilise their spies for the collection of information regarding proceedings within the Party, but sometimes even try to exert a direct influence on the political line of the Party through their agents.

All these things, which render the struggle of the Communist Parties against the *agents provocateurs* more difficult, must be carefully borne in mind. All Communist Parties, without exception, must organise the struggle against *agents provocateurs*, and develop it on the broadest basis. Political provocation constitutes a severe threat not only to the illegal parties but no less, or perhaps even more, for the legal Parties, in which vigilance is sometimes diminished under the influence of legalist illusions.

## II.

### **AGENTS PROVOCATEURS AND POLICE SPIES IN RECENT TIMES.**

#### **THE SHARPENING OF THE CLASS STRUGGLE.**

There are a number of special reasons why the struggle against *agents provocateurs* is of such extraordinary importance under present conditions. The first reason is that at the present time the class struggle is proceeding throughout the whole world in an extremely aggravated form. The bourgeoisie is growing more and more furious in its behaviour, and is openly dispensing with all democratic traditions and prejudices. Whereas the political police

formerly pursued a long-sighted policy, they now go to work in the harshest fashion, often hazarding everything, and not hesitating even to sacrifice designedly their own members. Provocation is comparatively powerless during the time of great revolutionary upheavals, but represents a considerable danger also, and becomes in the period of reaction and the defensive an enormous danger in such a pre-revolutionary epoch as ours when the bourgeoisie in expectation of great class struggles is straining all its powers to liquidate the Communist organisations.

A second reason why the fight against *agents provocateurs* is of such great importance under present conditions, is that unemployment, distress and misery are playing ever greater havoc among the masses. While these facts on the one hand increase the revolutionary feeling of the masses, they provide the police on the other hand, with a much-desired basis of corrupting and winning over the weakest and least resisting elements and of constructing in the factories an extensive network of workshop spies and *agents provocateurs*, doing untold harm to our Communist Parties.

The fact that the working class, under the leadership of the Communist Parties, at the present time approaches a series of *decisive conflicts*, makes it likewise our urgent duty to organise the struggle against *agents provocateurs* with the utmost determination. It is easy to imagine what measures the police of all countries take against the Communists, when, for example, a war breaks out, when, long before the outbreak of war, preparatory measures are taken by the police, in order to have exact lists of all Communists, and to have their spies working unnoticed within the movement. It is an open secret that the best illegal sections of the Communist International are severely hampered precisely by the fact that their most active functionaries are very well known to the police.

Thirdly, it must not be forgotten that whereas the Party of the Russian Bolsheviks has had an experience of illegal struggle lasting over decades, and is thus hardened in its implacability and class-hatred against the enemy, the remaining Communist Parties are still comparatively young and often possess cadres of leaders who are still lacking in experience. This fact is especially glaring in countries where the white terror is rife. Here the whole composition of the Party membership often changes literally in the course of three to six months, and in consequence of arrests and prosecutions quite young, inexperienced comrades often find their way into leading posts—comrades who have never received proper Bolshevik training, and who, consequently, do not know the correct conduct to assume when they fall into the hands of the police. It is just because the cadres of Communist functionaries are only too frequently very young, that the Communist Parties, as one united Party, have to raise the question of combating *agents provocateurs* in such a serious form.



The following example is characteristic of the inexperience of many comrades: a young comrade from our German Party was asked what ought to be done with a Party member who had given his comrades away under the police examination or in court, and thus disclosed himself as a traitor. He answered: "He ought never to be entrusted with any more responsible work." It must be borne in mind that the Communist Party of Germany is one of the strongest sections of the Communist International. It has at its disposal tried cadres of leaders, schooled in numerous class-conflicts, and has also had much experience in combating *agents provocateurs*. If then cases are possible even in our German Party of individual Party members showing such a lack of understanding for the duties involved in the struggle against political provocation, what must be the state of affairs in other and weaker parties? It is accordingly a matter of paramount importance to make all Communist Parties acquainted with the methods which the police so liberally employ and to enlighten them as to how these methods can be combated.

For all these reasons the question of fighting against the *agents provocateurs* acquires a special importance at the present time. The whole experience of the Communist Party of Germany and of many other Communist Parties in the struggles of the last few years goes to prove the tremendous importance of this question. The terrorisation of the Communist Party of Germany by the German bourgeoisie and the Social-fascist police pack; the many blows dealt at the Communist press; the innumerable prohibitions of the *Rote Fahne*; the open demands of the Social-democratic press that the Communist Party be suppressed; the emergency decrees of Brüning, the political severity of which is aimed at the workers, first and foremost against the Communist workers—all this goes to prove that the German bourgeoisie and their Social-fascist agents are preparing to aim a decisive blow at the Communist Party. The class enemy is mobilising his fighting forces in all capitalist countries. We too must mobilise a correspondingly more energetic struggle against political provocation in our own ranks.

### **The New Methods of the Political Police.**

In order to carry on the struggle against *agents provocateurs* with success, we must first be clear as to how up-to-date provocation and police espionage go to work and under what peculiar conditions they do their mischief.

In old memoirs we find the *agents provocateurs*, police spies and spies painted in highly romantic colours. The classic *agents provocateurs* of Tsarist Russia in particular, such as, for example, Asev, Landesén, Zubatov, Gapon, etc., have been described hundreds of times. These descriptions often read like regular adventure novels. Things have changed now, however, and the methods which formerly characterised the Russian Ochrana are about as different from those of the political police in the capitalist

countries of to-day as a simple work bench is from the modern conveyor. One can often read in the memoirs of old revolutionaries, how they carefully looked round, took to flight to escape the police, hid themselves and so forth. While police espionage and provocation have now assumed quite other forms, many of the Communist Parties still remain on a very primitive level in their struggle against police spies and *agents provocateurs*. The Communist Parties have lagged behind their class enemy in this respect.

What has changed in the methods of the political police? The political police of the pre-war period made it their principal aim to get sufficient information to enable them to frustrate the activity of the revolutionaries, of whose designs they had no knowledge—whereas the activities of the modern political police are marked by the fact that they are not content with obtaining the most scrupulously exact information, but are at pains to see that their agents *enter actively into the political life* of the organisations under their supervision. The political police thus try to alter and to distort the line of policy pursued by these organisations. Many facts prove this.

Secondly, the modern political police possess in the fascist organisations, not only reliable supporters, but inexhaustible reserves for espionage service, a sort of voluntary organisation of *agents provocateurs*. That means that the police apparatus have been reinforced to many times their normal strength.

A third circumstance is that Social-democracy, continually by means of its propaganda of "class reconciliation," which it has carried on for many years, and by its daily practice of class betrayal, has deeply demoralised some sections of the working class, and thus created the psychological basis for mass espionage in the shops and factories, and for the direct participation of "Socialists" in the police force. In the German capitalist republic, for example, all trace of difference between the apparatus of the Social Democratic Party, and that of the police, has been almost completely obliterated. Whereas in former times it was deemed a heinous crime to betray a striker to the employer, and the most violent struggles were waged in every enterprise against the "stool pigeons," at the present moment the functionary of the Social Democratic Party calmly denounces any Communist he pleases, and has him thrown out of the works without more ado. Workshop espionage to-day finds its main support in the factory councils of the reformist trade unions and their confidential officials.

Fourthly, there is the circumstance that modern police espionage in the ranks of the revolutionary workers' movement and of the Communist Parties can draw upon the rich supplies of experience acquired during the world war. Just as the technique of war made great advances during the world war and the period immediately after it, so too the art of espionage has developed and progressed enormously. A book by the American war-



correspondent, Johnson, "Our Secret War," contains abundant descriptions of the various methods employed by spies during the world war for the communication of news. Everything imaginable was called into service for the conveying of news. Packages of fruit and flowers carefully wrapped in tissue paper and properly packed up in boxes with important news written in invisible chemical ink on the paper and even on the flowers and leaves. Newspaper advertisements, business insertions and "innocent" items in the agony column served to convey information to those whom it concerned. Sometimes an elegant *vignette* of a lady's head in a newspaper advertisement, in reality conveyed information with regard to military positions. The way in which postage stamps were stuck on letters and parcels in neutral countries, served likewise as a means of communication and signalling. A simple customer in a restaurant would play unnoticed with a toothpick on the table, but had in reality left behind news in chemical form for a later visitor who would decipher it in a single instant by "carelessly" spilling a glass of wine or water. Another form of transmitting information; two guests enter a restaurant at different times, sit down at different tables and have, apparently, nothing to do with each other. They have exactly similar hats and as they leave the place, one of them takes the other's hat. The exchange of information is thus achieved. We can all remember how active the so-called "patronesses" were during the war in the various belligerent countries, sending letters and charitable gifts to soldiers at the front. It has lately, however, been learned from a German source that this "patroness" movement, which arose in France, was not only utilised, but actually started by the German espionage service, in order to get news regarding the location of the various detachments of troops at the front. These few instances are alone enough to show what great advances have been made in the technique of espionage during the war. And all this progress and experience is now being used in the struggle of the bourgeoisie against the revolutionary movement.

Finally let it be said that the police, especially those of the great imperialist states, have collected a great fund of experience in the struggle against the movement for national liberation in the colonies.

And against these schooled and experienced political police, who have perfected their apparatus in a struggle against the revolutionary workers' movement lasting decades, who have extended and improved their technique and experience during the world war, who have at their command the most modern technical aids, and are based on the whole executive apparatus of capitalist class domination — against these political police are only the Communist Parties, often young and inexperienced. In France, for example, the bourgeoisie has at its command a powerful political police force which has been collecting



a colossal historical experience ever since the days of the Second Empire. The French Communist Party, which is comparatively young and inexperienced has to fight against this powerful organisation of espionage, pierce through and unmask its methods of work. This task is made the more difficult for our French brother-Party inasmuch as a more or less indifferent attitude is taken in Party circles there towards the question of police provocation. The situation is similar in many other countries : in Hungary, where the political police have behind them the experience gained during their struggle to annihilate the Hungarian proletarian revolution of 1919; in Japan, whose comparatively young political police force competes with France and England in efficiency; in the United States where there is a most widely extended network of workshop espionage, etc., etc. Nor must it be forgotten that the police of all countries, especially since the world war, have everywhere their "black cabinets" where all letters which are slightly suspect are examined and read. Such institutions exist in all countries.

The political police in all countries also possess scientifically arranged card-indexes. The political police force of Poland, for example, has at its disposal a card-index of suspects containing more than 20,000 cards. With the aid of such a card-index it can be exactly determined where the person in question comes from, what is his business, whom he is in contact with and where, with whom he is in correspondence, etc. The card-index contains a complete and detailed portrayal of the person under observation and of his surroundings. A card-index of a similar kind existed in France before the war, the so-called "index B," with whose aid the police were in a position to lay their hands on the leading revolutionaries in the country at an instant's notice. As, however, the Socialists and anarchist-syndicalists joined the patriotic front immediately war broke out, the police had no occasion to make use of this card-index. In this connection an interesting incident from America. During the war the Supreme American espionage-bureau compiled a card-index of a hundred thousand suspects. President Wilson, hearing of this, had a list of the hundred thousand names laid before him. He was astounded to find the names of many of his friends and acquaintances on it, and demanded the destruction of the card-index. The American espionage bureau declared that they had destroyed it and actually did destroy a hundred thousand cards, but three more copies of the card-index remained in existence, in their possession.

In order to be able to offer effectual opposition to the growth of the Communist movement and to penetrate into the shops and factories, the modern political police arrange special training courses of different grades for their police spies and agents. These courses even include instruction on the "Fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism." This is the case, for example, in Japan. After completing these courses the young practitioners of the Japanese

state police are often despatched to the workshops where they organise "Communist factory groups." The police can then round up, at one fell swoop, all those workers who are in sympathy with Communism. These are only a few examples of the methods of the political police to-day, which represent the fruits of long years of experience.

A fifth most important peculiarity of modern espionage and political provocation is the international co-operation of the police international at the head of which is the well-known Herr Schober, now Austrian minister of foreign affairs, and among whose active leaders is the Prussian Social-democratic minister of the interior, Severing. This international has its branches in the various individual countries. It is the function of the police international to collect the experience of all countries in the struggle against the revolutionary movement, and to systematise and exchange this experience. The political police of all the Baltic countries have even concluded an express agreement in accordance with which they not only exchange their experience but also execute mutual commissions and work together hand in hand. It often happens that arrests are made in Latvia at the instance of the Polish police and vice versa. The exchange of high functionaries in the political police is also a common custom. For example the former chief of the English police in Alexandria is now at the head of the political police in Athens.

There are also international police schools. Thus on the island of Corfu there is a school of espionage for all the Balkan states. The chiefs of the school are specialists from the English Intelligence Service. Prominent specialists from the French police force are also active as instructors in this school. International conventions and conferences are likewise held in order to regulate the co-operation of the *agent provocateur* and police spy services of the various capitalist countries. In 1931, for instance, a conference of the political secret service leaders of all the Balkan states was held in Bucharest. Visits to foreign countries are arranged for leading functionaries of the political police in order that they may study new methods of work. Strained diplomatic relations between capitalist countries present no obstacle at all to the continued co-operation of their political police. Polish Communists have already been arrested in Lithuania on numerous occasions and handed over to the Polish police. It is not uncommon for an agent to be simultaneously in the service of the political police of several countries. It was well known for some time, for instance, that the highly reputed Lithuanian "politician" Pletschkaitis was an *agent provocateur* of the Polish police, but it turned out that he was also simultaneously in the service of the Lithuanian police.

An enumeration of all the numerous other new methods which the political police of to-day have at their disposal, may well be spared. But it is perhaps worth emphasising that bodily



measurements and the taking of finger-prints, previously only employed in the case of serious criminals, are now being used against political prisoners to an ever-increasing extent.

### III.

#### THE CHIEF FORMS AND METHODS OF POLITICAL PROVOCATION AND POLICE ESPIONAGE.

##### THE OPPOSITIONIST GROUPS AS THE MAIN CHANNEL.

The chief avenues for entry offered to political provocation are provided as a rule by the opportunist groups within the Communist movement, both "rights" and "lefts." It is often those groups which have seceded from the Communist Party, which provide the police with a definite contingent of informers and *agents provocateurs*, who aim at the political disintegration of the Communist Party. In France, for example, this part falls to the so-called "*minoritaires*" of the revolutionary trade union movement. In Brazil the police have founded their own "Trotskyist" groups in order to combat the Communist movement. It is characteristic that Trotsky's autobiography "My Life," has been published in Polish by the Warsaw political police in an attempt to impair the morale of the Communist movement. The press organs of the "right" and "left" renegades, — "Against the Stream," "The Flag of Communism" and the like—are everywhere distinguished not only by slanders against the Communists but also by direct or indirect denunciations. The police in all countries are gathered round the renegade groups like maggots on a carcase.

##### THE METHODS OF POLITICAL PROVOCATION.

In what does the *systematic* work of political provocation consist?

1. Firstly, in disorganising the movement. This is attempted in various ways. The *agent provocateur* is charged with the task of bringing the Party leadership and the Party line of policy into discredit. The most various means are used to achieve this end. Existing discontent with the Party line, and the honest criticism of dissatisfied Party members is mingled with lies and calumny and monstrously exaggerated. All sorts of rumours are set going, slanderous rumours against the Party leadership and against individual leading comrades. Such discrediting of comrades who deservedly enjoy trust and confidence in the workers' movement, is aimed at setting them on one side and putting inexperienced and insufficiently tried people in their place. At the same time the *agents provocateurs* make it their business to see that young comrades who have distinguished themselves in the revolutionary struggles and are beginning to play a leading part in political life, are likewise kept from further political progress by plots to slander and discredit them.

2. Intensive aggravation of all differences of opinion and dissensions within the Party and all possible promotion of inter-

fractional struggle. Thus the following case occurred in one of the Balkan countries where a violent inter-fractional struggle was in progress. The political police arrested a leading Communist. But to the astonishment of the prisoner, no less than that of the police agent who had arrested him, the departmental head of the political police, reprimanded the agent saying: "You had no need to arrest this man. We know exactly what is going on in his fraction of the Party! During the course of the inter-fractional struggle, we have no need to keep this man here in prison."

A similar case occurred in Greece, where some arrested Communists were presented with the following during police examination: "We really cannot understand why you regard us as enemies. We have greatly assisted you in destroying the fraction to which you were hostile and have already arrested most of them." The following case occurred likewise in Greece: The police surrounded a house in which an illegal meeting was taking place. When those who had taken part in the meeting left the house, the police made their choice and arrested only the members of a certain fraction, letting the adherents of the other fraction go free. In this way the police attempts to exercise an active influence on the Party policy. A typical example of these methods of the police was to be seen in Hungary. For several years a violent struggle was waged in the Communist Party of Hungary against Comrade Bela Kun—a struggle which assumed the strangest and most manifold forms. Unmistakable proofs have, however, been discovered that it was the political police who had made it their task to discredit Comrade Bela Kun at any price.

3. Another very widespread method is the throwing of suspicion upon individual comrades, who are accused of being in communication with the police, and the spreading of rumours that the Party is completely riddled with police-spies. This is intended to dishearten the workers and keep them away from the Party. The method is specially widespread in countries where the Communist movement is quite illegal. Thus in India, for example, individual Communist groups have for years past thrown suspicion upon one another, and mutually accused each other of political provocation. A similar state of affairs obtains in Korea, where the Japanese police have managed to apply this method very skilfully.

4. A further aim envisaged in the systematic work of *agents provocateurs* is to make the Communist Parties, especially in countries where they are legal, an easier prey for bourgeois justice by provocative acts and by distortion of the Party line and the Party programme. Cases have often occurred in France where immature elements wanted to publish in "Humanite" precisely such anti-imperialist articles and appeals as would have provided the police with a pretext for taking proceedings against the central Party organ. It may well be inferred that it was not always the immaturity of individual comrades which was to blame



in these cases, but also the conscious efforts of the police to provoke the Communist Party.

5. Police-spies and *agents provocateurs* also make it their task to distort the political line of the Party in such a way that it may be compromised in the eyes of the working masses. Under this head comes for example the use of such methods of anti-militarist agitation which antagonise the soldiers to the Party, etc.

6. The provocative fostering and spreading of the police legend regarding the "hand of Moscow" in the revolutionary movement of the capitalist countries.

7. The method of driving the Communist Party or individual Communists to commit terrorist acts, is also frequently employed as a means of political provocation. The trial following on the murder of the police spy Blau in Germany in 1919 is a well-known case in point. A considerable number of revolutionary workers were put on trial. In the sequel, however, it turned out that the chief defendant, who had actually committed the murder of Blau, was an *agent provocateur*. Only a few months ago in Japan the police again tried to provoke a *Putsch* through their agents with a view to destroying the Party in this way.

8. Another method of political provocation is the wilful distortion of the Communist Party's organisational instructions. This must lead in some cases to the paralysing and frustrating of definite action by the workers. An example of this can be given from the history of the Communist Party of Yugo-Slavia. An *agent provocateur* who had already been working several months as a functionary of the Party and constantly carrying out the instructions of the political police, purposely distorted the organisational directives of the Party at the critical moment when a mass demonstration was being arranged, with the result that the workers who had been called on to join the demonstration, arrived at different meeting-places and at different times, which led to the demonstration ending in failure.

9. Another method of the political police is, by means of their agents within the Party, to find every possible pretext for sabotaging and frustrating the decisions of the Party authorities. It is the business of the *agent provocateur* to see that every decision of the Executive Committee of the Communist International or of the Party authorities is kept as long as possible from being put into effect. The agents who carry out these orders of the political police, often assume the disguise of fractional groups. Here too we may give an example from Yugo-Slavia. An *agent provocateur* who was working as a Party functionary and had been charged with the duty of distributing leaflets, declared that he had never received the order to do so. In reality, however, he had handed over the entire supply of leaflets to the police.

10. One method of provocation which is especially characteristic for America, is the organisation of such direct action on the part of the workers as must inevitably end in defeat. In America



where workshop espionage has perhaps attained its highest stage of development, the police has its agents occupying leading posts in the trade union movement with the main object of provoking badly organised direct action on the part of the workers and thus bringing the movement into premature disorganisation.

11. The method of provoking collisions with the police and the military is very widespread. The notorious "first shot from the crowd," fired at the police or the troops, is almost invariably the work of an *agent provocateur*. We must also mention one of the most infamous methods employed by the police, namely, the stirring up of internecine strife within the working class. These methods are employed on an extended scale by Pilsudski's fascists in Poland, and by the police agents among the Spanish anarchists and Spanish reformists, who often try to stir up civil war within the ranks of the working class with the aid of the so-called "pistolieri." This method of provocation is also very widespread in Latin America.

12. In order to be able to lay their hands on the most active elements in the Communist Party at one spot and beat them up, the police arrange through their *agents provocateurs* demonstrations in which it may be anticipated with certainty that only one or two active and militant Communists will take part. It is then an easy task for the police to break up the demonstration and arrest the Communists; in this way they often do grievous harm to the Party.

13. An old and well-tried method of political provocation, but one which has been widely employed in recent times, is to conceal forged documents, arms and the like in Party offices or the homes of leading comrades at times when they are being searched by the police.

14. Finally, the conscious campaign against the observation of all the rules of conspiratorial work, encouraging the imprudent and careless execution of Party measures in the illegal Communist Parties, was deliberately intended to demoralise and wreck the illegal Party apparatus.

Such are the main features of police provocation.

### THE VARIOUS FORMS OF MODERN ESPIONAGE.

It would be wrong to think that the police rely mainly on the information obtained by the method of external observation in their struggle against the revolutionary movement. One often hears romantic stories of how cleverly a revolutionary managed to cover his tracks, to escape the watchful eye of the police, to outwit a spy and so forth. A revolutionary should never, of course, neglect these elementary precautions; he must always be on the look-out when leaving the station or his house to see if he is being followed by police agents. Such precautions are, of course, by no means superfluous, but it must also be realised that it is not mere external observation

which constitutes the main danger, but the police-spy within the movement. External observation plays only an auxiliary part. It is, to employ an expression from the technique of war, something equivalent to the light cavalry, while the police spy and the *agent provocateur* within the movement is the heavy flank of the modern political police. Outward observation is only a subsidiary assistance for the *agent provocateur* and generally does not come into play until just before the arrest, when the police only want to establish one or two details which may still remain obscure. Outward observation is often only introduced with the object of providing an alibi for the *agent provocateur*, and to give the comrade who is to be arrested, and the Party, the impression that the police have procured their material exclusively by means of outward observation. In reality the apparatus for maintaining outward observation is none too large.

What is the function of the spy? The spy must get a thorough knowledge of his "client" and observe him at every step. He generally makes a daily report giving a detailed account of the observations he has made. In these reports the person under observation always figures under a concealed name and these names are often strikingly appropriate. The police observers are trained and perfected at special schools in the art of spying. Spies often carry on their work under the cloak of some innocent respectable profession. It would be ingenuous to suppose that spies are always people who persistently and obtrusively pursue their victims. These agents of the police often figure as street traders, house-porters, newsvendors and the like, who locate their place of work at a suitable point of observation. In the instructions issued by the Tsarist Ochrana spies are recommended to appear as postmen or cab-drivers. In accord with the spirit of the times the cab-driver has now perhaps been ousted by the chauffeur and the motor-cyclist. On the basis of the results obtained by their spy service the central police authorities work out a scheme in graphic form comprising all points visited by the "client" under observation within a given point of view; this often results in important Party connections being discovered.

It goes without saying that the police arrange for special observation to be kept upon the Party offices and place of meeting. For this purpose rooms are rented opposite or next to these places, a fact which should be constantly borne in mind by our Party organisations. This method of outward observation by means of police spies is only one of the more primitive forms of espionage.

Another form of espionage is effected with the aid of a broad network of informers from all sections of the population. The police employ this method of collecting information very cleverly by using the assistance of the wide "disinterested" strata of the population. No one may refuse aid or assistance to the almighty police. The police recruit their informers in the most various sections of the population, among lawyers, teachers, members of



parliament and borough councils, small tradesmen, janitors, servants, prostitutes, etc. The police—and this is especially true of America—often enlist groups of bandits and desperate criminals into their service as spies. It is a well-known fact, for example, that in one American city the district centre of the Communist Party was located in an office building and that in the same house only one floor higher up, was the headquarters of one of those notorious American gangs which busied itself with alcohol smuggling, assault and robbery, kidnapping for the extortion of ransom, etc. For a long time this proximity did not disturb the Communists in the least, till it was discovered that the ensuing campaign of police reprisals against the Party, was based on materials which had been “kindly” provided by the floor above.

In many countries, the colonial countries in particular, where the police exploit the misery of the masses to this end, mutual espionage is most widespread among all sections of the population. In India, for example, which has become a household word for starvation and distress, and where the spy-system of the Intelligence Service forms an important bulwark of British world imperialism, the work of the police spies and *agents provocateurs* has penetrated even into family life; the son often denounces the father and the father the son. Such are the fruits of the many years of “civilising” influence exercised by British imperialism in Hindustan.

The next form of police espionage consists in recruiting the services of a special category of persons who, because they have access to Party documents are in a position to give information about Party activity and the inner life of the Party. It is here, therefore, a question of the police penetrating into the technical apparatus of the Party. Shorthand typists, technical secretaries, janitors, charwomen and servants are enlisted for the purpose or specially despatched to the scene of action. It is often sufficient to have only a single confidant in the Party apparatus, for the police to be kept well informed about everything. Thus it has come to our knowledge that, in a certain country, which shall here be nameless, the police always received exact information of the proceedings of the political bureau of the Communist Party within half-an-hour of the close of the session. This went on for several years; they even received written minutes of the proceedings.

It is almost the general rule for the correspondents of bourgeois newspapers to play the part of police spies. They repeatedly use their correspondent's card as a cloak under which to carry on espionage.

In the illegal parties special vigilance must also be used with landladies and women who let rooms. These “good and solicitous” souls are often particularly good and solicitous in the service of the police, and generally render the latter invaluable assistance.

For getting information about revolutionaries the police also employ the following method:

A revolutionary who is under observation is surrounded more and more by a circle of acquaintances, who employ all possible "innocent" means of involving our comrade in talk on political themes. In such cases the police generally try to influence the psychology of this comrade, who is enduring constant persecution and feels himself a hunted being. It happens all too frequently that, in countries where the Party is illegal, active revolutionaries, after years of persecuted and tortured existence, sometimes feel a craving for domestic comfort, for free and communicative talk with good acquaintances and such things. Such feelings are simply the reaction of weak natures to the hard-pressed, insecure existence endured. The police reckon on such psychological cravings of individual comrades and are at pains to exploit these feelings for police ends. A characteristic example of this method of work and one which goes back to the activities of the old Tsarist Ochrana, was lately brought up in the law-courts of the Soviet Union. In Tsarist Russia there used to be held free-and-easy evening parties at which revolutionaries of various parties and views met together. The connecting link was generally the so-called political red cross which organised assistance for political prisoners. Such meetings were held, among other places, at the house of a certain woman named Serebryakova. Serebryakova was an active member of the political red cross and maintained the closest connections with all the leading groups of revolutionaries. Some time after the October Revolution it was discovered that this same Serebryakova was also an agent of the Ochrana and had kept the police informed as to all that went on within the revolutionary movement. Not until she had reached a gray old age was she convicted of this offence before the proletarian court of the Soviet Union. The arrest of many individual comrades and of entire revolutionary bodies—arrests which had remained unexplained for years—were first seen in their true light at this trial.

The police also use every opportunity of utilising so-called sympathisers or adherents of the Party for espionage purposes. In many cases the lawyers who undertake the defence of arrested revolutionary comrades are employed in this way. Such lawyers manage, by means of a friendly manner, and the bestowal of various small favours, to gain the confidence of their arrested client, and thus to learn many details about the life and work of the Party organisation which are of peculiar interest to the police.

The bitter experiences of many comrades has confirmed the fact that the police have their ears everywhere, ready to overhear any superfluous or incautious conversation on the part of the Party functionaries. *This habit of pointless talking and chatting must be vigorously combated within the ranks of our Party.* There are not a few organisations where this evil has taken on appalling



proportions. Many Communist Parties have already had to pay a heavy price for the unpardonable rashness which some comrades display in this respect.

We should also make some mention here of the danger of the so-called "political cafés." There are such cafés where one can be certain of finding all the Party leaders. It goes without saying that the police not only know the addresses of these coffee-houses with exactitude, but know also the habits, mode of life, circle of acquaintances, inclinations and tastes of all the regular customers, and that all conversation which takes place in such coffee-houses, is promptly reported to the police.

A separate source of information on the life of the Communist Parties is formed by the colonies of emigrants, especially emigrants from countries where the Communist Party is illegal. The revolutionary comrades think that they, in their emigration, are quite outside the network of espionage formed by their police, outside the field of observation of the class enemy. This feeling of security sometimes loosens the tongues of many otherwise careful and discreet comrades. It is, of course, only natural that emigrants who, for example, have gone to the U.S.S.R., should feel themselves perfectly free and under sure protection when they are there. But they forget that even in the U.S.S.R. a formidable class struggle is still going on against the remnants of capitalism, that the working class of the Soviet Union quite recently discovered whole hornets' nests of wreckers and saboteurs who were the direct agents of international imperialism. It is likewise a fact that the spy service of all capitalist States is striving to maintain its agents within the Soviet Union, and that, more than once, organisations of spies, who have crept in from outside, have been discovered in the Soviet Union. In regard to the colonies of emigrants in capitalist countries there is the additional factor of the isolation of the emigrants from the political life of the country in which they are living. This self-containedness and isolation from political life, and above all, the feeling of security and safety often undermine the revolutionary vigilance and prudence of emigrants. For this reason it is an urgent problem for the Communist Parties to make a vigorous effort to see that emigrants who have come from brother Parties and who are now living in their country, are drawn into political life. It is a fact which has been confirmed by experience that more especially the espionage service in the Balkan States relies to a great extent on information which has come to it from the numerous colonies of emigrants abroad.

The smugglers and contraband dealers, of whose service the Communists of illegal Parties have often to make use for crossing the frontier and for the sending of forbidden literature, are likewise a source for the omniscience of the police. Groups of smugglers in places on the frontier are often given a fixed salary by the political police.

In some countries where there are various legal organisations existing side by side with, and under the leadership of, the illegal Communist Parties, the police first attempt to introduce their spies and *agents provocateurs* into these legal organisations so that they may from this basis penetrate into the illegal parties. With the object of penetrating into illegal Party organisations, the police often adopt the means of forming their own groups and nuclei, as has been known to happen in many actual cases. These groups consist wholly or for the most part of police agents, call themselves Communist, and seek to establish connection with the central Party leadership.

In some colonial and oriental countries, such as, for example, China, Turkey, etc., where the Communist Parties used to work for some length of time in conjunction with various national organisations (the Kuomintang and such like) the former functionaries of these national organisations later form a most valuable source of information for the police. The Kuomintang leaders are naturally acquainted with many active comrades of the Communist Party from the time of their co-operation.

An especially large number of *agents provocateurs* are generated by the shiftings of classes which occur with particular frequency in the countries of Latin America. In these countries the Communist Parties often attract groups of temporary adherents for short periods. Persons who but yesterday were members of the Communist Party, are to-morrow taking high posts in the government, and so on. On the basis of experiences gained in the revolutionary struggle in these countries, it has become clear that the maintenance of close relations with such groups of temporary adherents is a matter often fraught with fatal issues for a Communist Party.

The above enumeration of the forms and methods which the police employ for the organisation of an espionage and information service, does not by any means constitute a complete list of all the tricks and dodges of the modern police. It may, however, provide a general summary of the means of provocation and reconnaissance which are most frequently employed by the police and which are disregarded by many of our comrades.

### **Various Types of Agents Provocateurs.**

The army of police spies and *agents provocateurs* is composed of the most various elements, which have been recruited in the most manifold ways and have different tasks to fulfil. The first type is the so-called "casual" *agent provocateur*. He comes from among the ranks of those people who have once been in the clutches of the police and have made open-hearted declarations under police examination. Such communicativeness before the police commissary or the examining magistrate is the first step towards treachery and provocation on the part of the person concerned. This is immediately followed by the execution, first of



small, then of larger, commissions for the police. The following sequence of events, of which there have been frequent instances of late, is typical in such a case: An agent who has just been recruited by the police out of the ranks of the Party, comes to the Party leaders and gives information to the effect that he has been tortured at the police examination and was only released after promising the police his co-operation. He says he has only made this promise in order to get released, but that he repents it now and has come with a frank confession to his Party. The Communist Party leaders often display a rash and indeed criminal trustfulness towards such people and it even happens that such "penitents" are entrusted with responsible Party posts. And for months and years after information is given to the police by such people, who 'under the cloak of their "honest repentance" abuse the excessive trust of the Party.

Another type of *agent provocateur* is the *information agent*. A small spy of this sort keeps the police regularly and systematically informed about that part of the Party activity and of the inner life of the Party, with which he is acquainted. Such a spy often develops into a central figure of the information service, who keeps the police supplied with detailed reports on everything that goes on in the Communist Party. The police take all possible care of such an ally and use every means to keep him free of suspicion. This, then, is the most dangerous type of *agent provocateur*. He is a most loyal Party member, unconditionally fulfils all Party decisions, vigorously combats all deviations and is an absolute model of militance and "self-sacrifice." In reality, however, he is day by day and year by year giving the threads of the Party work into the hands of the police and betraying not only individual comrades but entire organisations.

A special type is the "*theoretician*" in the service of the police. He is often not a Party member, but an author, journalist or some such, standing close to the Party, who regularly draws up a political report for the police on the state of the revolutionary movement and suggests various methods of combating the "enemies of the state." From the secret archives of the Russian Ochrana, made accessible by the October Revolution, it has been discovered, for instance, that the Polish publicist Urzosovsky, well known in his day in literary and revolutionary circles, fulfilled such a mission. Urzosovsky was a powerful speaker and a talented author, whose articles met with a great response among the younger generation of his time. But it turned out later that he was an information agent of the police and gave regular reports on the revolutionary movement in return for a monthly salary of 150 roubles, thus, so to speak, providing the Ochrana with a clear political viewpoint.

Finally, we come to a highly dangerous type of agent provocateur—the *politician*. It is his task to consciously falsify and distort the political line of the Party. This type of police agent

is unfortunately fairly widespread in the ranks of the Communist Parties.

### **The Recruiting Methods Employed by the Police.**

Of what methods do the police make use in recruiting their agents and spies? A very common method is to win over political prisoners under threat of capital punishment, torture, etc. In China, where the police apply the cruellest methods of torture and terrorisation to all arrested Communists, their victims are directly faced with the choice: death or the service of the secret police. In most capitalist countries in Europe—in Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Rumania, the Baltic States, Poland, Hungary, etc.—the political police use methods of corporal punishment and of torture to extort confessions and often obtain long and open declarations from people of weak character. Such an open declaration before the police is the first step on the way of treachery. He who once takes this path, may perhaps never turn back.

History shows many cases of people who took part with the utmost self-sacrifice in revolutionary action, but who later began to betray their movement, when in the clutches of the police. One of those who took an active part in the bomb attempt on the life of the Tsar Alexander II. in 1881, namely, Rysankov, made an open confession to the police, within twelve hours of his arrest, and betrayed a number of his fellow conspirators. Another Russian revolutionary, Karakosov, who had made a revolver attempt on the life of Alexander II., provided the police with a comprehensive deposition within three days of his arrest. It is likewise well known that the Dekabrist, the leaders of the officers' conspiracy against the Tsar Nicholas I. in 1825, cut a miserable figure at the examination and in court, with the possible exception of Pestel.

Another method of winning over people to be *agents provocateurs* is the employment of violence and terrorisation against the members of a political prisoner's family. The members of his family are brought into his presence by the police and beaten and tortured before his eyes, to make the prisoner more accommodating by these means. In Rumania the following case occurred recently. A comrade from the Young Communist League was arrested. The police brought his old mother, and beat the mother in the presence of the son, and then the son in the presence of the mother. The old woman, however, stood firm. She spat the gendarmes in the face and cried: "I am only a simple working woman and understand nothing about politics, but if that's the way you treat people, then it's clear to me that you are my enemies!" Not infrequently, however, the affair ends otherwise and the terrorisation of a political prisoner's children and of the members of his family proves a successful method by which the police can win over spies and *agents provocateurs*.



with their aspirations for freedom and he even kissed them good-bye, only to order fresh arrests and sign death sentences as soon as the prisoners had been led away.

In employing this method the police attempt to influence the innermost feelings and psychology of the prisoner. For after all—consider: The most cruel terrorisation and torture is being everywhere made use of; the prisoner expects to be cruelly tortured and beaten during the examination, and then quite unexpectedly he meets with polite, kind, nay, even affectionate treatment. It makes a tremendous impression on the young inexperienced revolutionary to find that he is not tortured, but on the contrary asked to join in a political discussion. The police commissary or examining magistrate, in his most unctuous manner, receives him with gestures of generosity, greets him in the friendliest way and says: "I would like to talk to you quite sincerely, as man to man. There is a great gulf separating us, it is true, but let us each speak our minds. Perhaps, after all, some points of contact can be found."

During the Kukalla trial in Finland, the examining magistrate began a conversation with a Party member of exceptionally strong character in more or less the following way: "You will, of course, make no deposition. I did not expect it of you. Your attitude is quite comprehensible to me. I have full respect for your motives and will put no compulsion upon you. But I hope that we may converse together on general matters such as can be read about in the papers every day?" Thus began a "friendly conversation," during the course of which the accused, besides matters of general knowledge, inadvertently let out certain details, which the newspapers had not yet mentioned.

Debates on "views of life," which are often most cleverly staged by the higher and more subtle myrmidons of the police, play a great part in the obtaining of unreserved declarations. Sometimes the police official succeeds in luring a young comrade into the trap by assuring him in the most solemn manner: "If you tell us the truth, we undertake on our word of honour that none of your friends will come to any harm. On the contrary, by doing so, you will only be shielding them from harm. We only lack one or two details to make our information complete." If the accused accepts this proposition, it does really happen sometimes that he and some of his fellow prisoners are released. But he who has once blabbed to the political police, is for ever in their clutches.

In order to insinuate themselves into the good graces of the prisoner, the police sometimes make a display of humanity and compassion towards his family, do him and his relations all kinds of favours, allow his acquaintances and relatives to make frequent visits and so forth. Sometimes they try to work upon the national or personal vanity of the prisoner. He is told: "You are an extremely capable and intelligent man, but the leaders of the Party

are intriguing against you and don't want to put you in the right place." Various differences of opinion between fractions are also utilised to this end. Attempts are often made to stir up arrested workers against the leaders of the Party: "You are being made the scapegoat, while the men higher up who have been egging you on, and who are really the guilty parties, have made themselves scarce or got away without coming to much harm."

Another favourite method of the political police is to arouse the impression in a prisoner that others have already betrayed everything. The inexperienced and astonished comrade is confronted with certain details which no uninitiated person could possibly be able to know. The prisoner may thus perhaps become demoralised and begin to blab. This assumption of "omniscience" on the part of the police has already led many astray. Much is also done with forged depositions alleged to have been made by fellow prisoners. The secret police naturally have at their disposal a staff of skilled forgers for whom it is an easy task to give a masterly imitation of any given signature. A deposition with another prisoner's "own signature" may easily startle a prisoner and make him lose his head.

A revolutionary must therefore make it his rule once and for all: If you fall into the clutches of the police, pay no attention to promises or misrepresentations, don't fall into a panic, don't let yourself be startled or demoralised; always be on your guard.

### **How the Police Screen Their Agents Provocateurs.**

One of the greatest difficulties in combating *agents provocateurs* is the great skill with which the police manage to screen their activities. It is none too easy to discover an *agent provocateur*, let alone unmasking him. Some such argument as this may often be heard: It is really impossible to suspect this man of being a spy; why, he himself has been many years in prison! Or a similar argument: He can't possibly be in connection with the police; he has known all the details of our illegal work for years, yet the police have hardly ever come to know our plans! Neither of these arguments is really sound. The police often succeed in winning over someone to be their agent after long imprisonment by giving him the prospect of being released before his time.

Other methods of screening the *agent provocateur* are, for instance, a "successful" escape from prison, or the acquittal, or premature release of other comrades, this time honest ones, together with the police spy.

How cleverly the police screen their *agents provocateurs* may here be illustrated by another historical example from the history of the Tsarist Ochrana. Degayev, the master spy of the Ochrana, once met the woman revolutionary Vera Figner, in Kharkov. In the course of their conversation he learned from her where her lodging was and at what time she generally went out. He asked her if she felt herself safe from the police. She



A fateful part is sometimes played by the wives of the arrested comrades. Cases have been known where wives, actuated by the desire to set their husbands at liberty, give the police information as to the organisations or individuals with whom he is in connection. This, of course, generally does not help the husband at all, while other victims are thereby delivered into the hands of the police.

Threats and blackmail always play an important part in the recruiting of police agents for the espionage service. When the police have once succeeded, either by way of terrorisation and threats or by friendly and considerate treatment, in bringing their victim to betray the Party, the person in question is already fast in the clutches of the police and it is not so easy for him to escape again. The threat to expose him as a traitor to the Party hangs like a sword of Damocles over his head and provides the police with a welcome means of compelling him to continue his betrayal indefinitely. Such a person is lost once and for all to the revolutionary movement. This method of blackmail is very widespread and especially popular. The Intelligence Service recruits most of its agents from among people of doubtful reputation. The political police often choose their victims from among that class of persons who have been guilty in the past of some action, for which they are liable to punishment, e.g., deserters, etc. The political police show the intended candidate for their service the summons of the court applying to his case and explain to their victim: As long as you work for us, this summons will be kept under lock and key and its existence will never be known to the outside world.

The various legal provisions which exist in different countries, for release from custody, or complete remission of sentence, in cases of exceptionally good conduct, are likewise employed by the police as a means of enlisting agents. An arrested Communist is often simply required to sign a statement stating that he will refrain from all further political activity in the future. This statement then forms a permanent instrument of threat and blackmail in the hands of the police, as against the person who has signed it.

The political police have also, in their long years of experience, developed their own school of thought as to how depositions and confessions can be obtained without employment of punishment or torture. The "benevolent," "friendly," "liberal" method of examination serves to attain this end. A master of this "bedside manner" was Zubatov, already mentioned as the chief of the Tsarist Ochrana, who would sometimes spend whole days and nights with political prisoners, discussing political questions with them. It is likewise well known that in much earlier times the Tsar Nicholas I. had also employed this method. At the examination of the Dekabrist, which he conducted in person, he declared with tears in his eyes that he himself greatly sympathised

answered: "So long as I don't come in the way of the traitor Merkulov, the police won't get me." Two weeks later Vera Figner really did meet Merkulov on the street as she left her house, and shortly afterwards she was arrested. For a long time the Party organisation were firmly convinced that Merkulov had betrayed Figner. Not till much later was it discovered that the meeting with Merkulov, who had already been unmasked as an *agent provocateur*, had simply been staged by the police in order to screen the as yet unsuspected *agent provocateur* Degayev.

Sometimes a comrade may be heard to argue: "The police don't know anything for certain about what I'm doing, otherwise they'd have arrested me long ago." That is quite wrong! The police do not proceed to arrest people at the moment when they get information, but when it best suits their book.

A characteristic episode in this connection from the province of military espionage is mentioned by Churchill in his memoirs. The British secret service had exact knowledge of the whole network of German military spies in England several years before the war. Despite this not one of these spies was arrested for the simple reason that it is easier to keep a known spy under observation than to have to begin looking for others sent to replace him. Besides this it was made possible to round up the whole nest at one fell swoop if need be. This actually occurred before the outbreak of war when it was no longer so easy for the German general staff to construct a new network of spies in England. Nor must it be forgotten that the police do not proceed to make arrests until their case is complete and until they have all the most important threads in their hands. Plenty of time is required for this.

An important point is the way in which the *agent provocateur* gets out of prison. He is either released together with other political prisoners, in the way referred to, or else the police stage his "escape." It is highly ingenuous to believe, at once, every story of a successful escape. The bourgeoisie build their prisons, it would seem, to be escaped out of. An *agent provocateur* "escaped" three times out of a Yugo-Slavian prison with many adventures. The third time he was even fired on. For a long time he was reckoned as a good and honest comrade in the Party. And yet he was a police-spy of the worst kind! In some instructions found in the secret archives of the Tsarist Ochrana, the police are advised not to practise this method of letting *agents provocateurs* escape, since it had already become so notorious that no one would believe the reports of these escapes. Therefore one must not implicitly believe in every escape. Every escape must be carefully examined to see whether or not it has been effected with the co-operation of the political police.

The old trick of putting an *agent provocateur* as cell-mate with a political prisoner, is well known. Besides this the police make abundant use of the assistance given them by the prison doctor,



the prison chaplain, etc., who engage in political talk with the prisoner. It is with the same object in view that the prison chief often plays the rôle of a splendid fellow, burning with radicalism and enthusiasm for freedom. In many cases that same prison superintendent who so "kindly" undertakes to convey correspondence to the comrades outside, first takes all letters to the prison chief or the political police. All these circumstances must constantly be borne in mind.

It is also worthy of note that a simple and humble way of life is by no means an adequate proof that the person in question is not a police-spy. The instructions of the Tsarist Ochrana expressly state that no *agent provocateur* should make any change in his outward way of life after entering the service of the police. It happens, of course, that a police-spy strays from the "true path" in this respect and it is then easier to discover him. But an experienced, prudent and skilled *agent provocateur* does not make such mistakes. The *agent provocateur* is generally in contact with only one official of the political police, whom he meets from time to time in a secret apartment. He does not work under his real name but under an assumed one and other agents of the police are quite unacquainted with him. As a rule even spies who work in the same organisation and for the same police department, do not know one another. It happens, for example, that one police spy may defend with fervour some proposal for provocation work, while another police spy secretly rejoices at having won over a comrade from the Party.

In order to shield their agents from being unmasked, the police often adopt the method of calumniating others and set rumours on foot that this or that comrade, who is really quite loyal, has connections with the police. The Social-fascists play a particularly infamous part in this connection. In quite recent times the leaders of the Social-fascist party in one of the "democratic" countries of Europe tried to disorganise our brother Communist Party by spreading such base and lying rumours against several prominent comrades. This method of blackening the characters of tried and trusted functionaries is very frequently employed. Attempts are even made to dishonour the memory of murdered comrades, with the same object in view. After the murder of the Yugo-Slavian Communists Djuro Djakowitsch and Niko Hetshimowitsch the police purposely spread the rumour that these comrades had made full confessions when under torture. It has now been proved that this was a vile slander. After the murder of the secretary of our Chinese brother Party in the autumn of 1931, the Nanking police set the lying rumour afloat that he had revealed many important facts.

The police often sacrifice their more or less insignificant agents without turning a hair, when it is a question of shielding a more valued *agent provocateur* from discovery. When, for instance, a number of arrests are suddenly made at the same time in an

illegal Party and the Party organisation in great excitement begins to search everywhere for the traitor, the police give such a turn to the course of things that one of their agents, perhaps one of those less highly valued, is exposed. It is like a game of chess: you sacrifice a pawn to save your queen. Often the police entrust another of their spies with the job of "exposing" his comrade; this spy then acts the part of a repentant police agent or one who is sympathetic with the Party. Many Communists are taken in by these manœuvres of the police, which are aimed at diverting their attention.

In the illegal Parties the police purposely leave one or two comrades from among the leaders at liberty in order to be able to keep an eye on the further activities of the organisation by means of careful observation. That also constitutes a means in the practice of the police of screening the *agent provocateur* whom they want to assist.

A peculiar type of political provocation is the so-called *provocational diversion*, which plays a most important part in the struggle of the bourgeoisie against the revolutionary workers' movement. Thus, for example, one or two people are got together to form an organisation with a revolutionary programme and to lure others into the trap.

A notable example of political diversion is the following. In parliamentary countries where the Communist movement is forbidden, the political police draw up "lists of Communist candidates" in many places in order to be able in this way to penetrate more easily into the illegal election campaign of the Communist Party. In such cases the police also publish their own "communist" pamphlets and newspapers, which are printed with confiscated type, and other similar things.

Another much-used method of provocational diversion is, after completely dissolving a committee or local organisation, to send out correspondence, reports and instructions which are alleged to emanate from this source, for several months afterwards, to maintain connections with representatives abroad and so forth. Such deceptive manœuvres were all too well known during the war in the sphere of military operations. Thus, for example, the espionage service of the English admiralty for a long time sent out code orders by wireless in a code which was known to be familiar to the Germans. The orders were, of course, only made up, but the German admiralty, where the wireless messages were received and deciphered, at first believed them to be authentic. Such cleverly "deciphered radiograms" also had a certain bearing on the result of the naval battle of Jutland. On the other hand the German espionage service, shortly after the outbreak of war captured twenty French spies who had succeeded in getting into Germany from Switzerland, and, having discovered all their secret channels of communication, caused alleged spies' reports to be sent in their name to the French for several months afterwards.



The political police of Japan almost completely liquidated a revolutionary organisation there a few years ago, but contrived for some time afterwards to maintain communications with its representatives abroad apparently in the name of this organisation. Not until the Japanese police had assured themselves that they could obtain no more valuable information from these representatives, did they lure them into the country and arrest them as soon as they crossed the frontier. All these are most instructive examples of political diversion as one of the methods of work employed by our class enemies

### **Workshop Espionage.**

Under the present conditions of our proletarian class struggle workshop espionage is an especially sharp weapon in the hands of the bourgeoisie. A favourable basis for the development and spread of workshop espionage is provided by : the way in which the worker in capitalist enterprises is deprived of his rights ; the terrible poverty of the masses in capitalist society ; and the way in which Social-democracy breaks the *morale* of the workers' ranks. The weakness of the Red factory councils and in general the weaknesses of Communist work in industry make it easier for the enemy to let loose his pack of workshop spies on the revolutionary workers.

Against the rising revolutionary feeling of the industrial workers and the increasing influence of the Communist factory cells, the bourgeoisie has created, among other things, a widespread and manifold network of workshop espionage. Hand in hand with the police the employers sometimes create complete cells of spies in every workshop department. That is the usual method of fascist Italy. Chiang-Kai-shek does just the same in China. In Italy the entire fabric of fascist trade unions is nothing more or less than an instrument of workshop espionage. The bourgeoisie as may easily be imagined protects its war industry, chemical works, railway workshops, etc., with especial care from Communist penetration by means of this method.

Of the many and various forms of workshop espionage we shall here mention only those which are employed most frequently. Firstly there is open police espionage. The so-called "workshop police" are organised in the enterprises and it is their task to keep the workers under observation in every possible way. The fire-brigades existing in the enterprises also perform in most cases the secondary function of spies and *agents provocateurs*.

Next come the spies of the employer and the management of the enterprise. The whole administrative staff, the managers, heads of departments, firemen, commissionaires, doorkeepers, etc., are generally included in the system of workshop espionage. Thus, for example, in the oil fields and petroleum refineries of Rumania, which are the property of American capitalists, the spy service is under the direction of reliable American foremen.

The reformist trade unions and the Social-fascist party play an enormous part in the organisation of workshop espionage. The reformist factory council generally has free access to the office of the factory manager. They are just as much interested in suppressing the revolutionary movement as the manager himself is, and they work in close accord with the management in measures for checking all revolutionary tendencies among the employees.

The young proletarian author, Willi Bredel, in his novel, "Machine Factory N. & K.," draws a most impressive picture of how the reformist factory council carries on its work of espionage. The chairman of the factory council and one of its active members are spies directly in the employ of the management. The former makes systematic reports incriminating revolutionary workers. Willi Bredel emphasises the following highly characteristic fact in his novel: the hero of the book, a Communist, notices on the very first day when he comes to the enterprise, that the functionaries of the Social-democratic party in the workshops purposely begin political discussions with the Communists, in the course of which they contrive by loud abuse and frequent reference to the "agents of Moscow" to draw the attention of the management to the Communists.

An example of how openly the Social-fascists go about their work of espionage, was provided by the Prussian referendum of August, 1931. To observe which Social-democratic workers answered the call of the Communist Party as against the instructions of the Social-democratic bureaucrats, the Social-democrats posted their pickets at the entrance to the polls, to note down all "unreliable" elements.

Lately there has been a regular influx of members of the Social-democratic party and even of entire Social-democratic organisations into the Communist Party of Germany. Workers even come to the Communist Party from the camp of the national-Socialists. It must undoubtedly be regarded as a great triumph for the Communist Party to have won over thousands of workers from the lies and hollow phrases of Social-Fascist and Fascist and to have enlisted them on the revolutionary front. Nevertheless the German Communists ought to bear in mind that, at just such times when such masses of new members are coming in, the organisation should see to it that no persons enter their ranks who have been sent by the Social-democrats and fascists to carry on a work of internal disintegration. It is a fact that in many Communist Parties at moments of great responsibility and of internal Party difficulties the most confidential decisions of the Party often come to the knowledge of the Social-democrats and are published in their press. There can be only one explanation for this; this information comes by way of renegades with whom individual members of the Communist Party are in communication. In various cases where schisms and secessions of small groups from the Communist Party have occurred, the renegades purposely



leave one or two of their adherents in the ranks of the Party so as to receive information from them, and where possible to carry on work of disintegration. In this respect the Lovestone group of renegades in the United States has made especially great efforts.

A prominent part in the organisation of workshop espionage is played by the so-called private detective agencies. These detective agencies have reached a particularly high degree of development in the United States, America being indeed the classic country for workshop espionage. In America many of these detective firms have attained the same scope as great capitalist enterprises and have the form of big commercial "trusts" with a widespread network of local branches. Such big firms as Pinkerton, Sherman, Burns, etc., have at their disposal their own press and literature, and employ a staff of authors and a total army of employees which a conservative estimate places at 135,000 persons. Their advertisements often take up a whole page of such great daily papers as the "New York Times." They own to a taxable income of 50 million dollars annually and pay a quarter of a million dollars taxes. The detective agency does everything; it undertakes all orders you may please to give it. They undertake orders from the employers for disorganising and crushing strikes in their enterprises, but at the same time they often take orders from the trade unions for protection against strike-breakers. From the insurance companies with which the employers are insured against loss through strikes, the detective agencies take orders for preventing all strikes in the respective enterprises. But it also happens that when business is going badly, an employer may want to pocket a compensation for strike from an insurance company. So he goes to a detective agency and orders a strike in his enterprise. Documentary proof can be brought to show that the biggest American enterprises such as, for example, the United States Steel Corporation, employ the services of these detective agencies.

The espionage firms do not always call themselves detective agencies. They sent out their circulars to the factory managers in many thousand copies, appearing therein under the most varied title: "Special bureau for personal service," "Union for educating the workers in the spirit of Americanism," "Organisation for peace in industry," "Bureau for the rational direction of industry" and many others.

We give here a typical extract from a circular in which one of these firms commends its services: "We undertake: 1. To organise trade unions in your enterprises and to guarantee that no strike ever occurs there. 2. If trade unions already exist in your enterprise, we undertake within a term of not more than sixty days to break up these trade unions by fractional struggles and personal intrigues and make them incapable of fighting."

The methods of work employed by all these espionage firms are more or less similar. They enlist their "functionaries" by means

of more or less veiled advertisements in the daily papers. The agent thus obtained then receives instructions to go to that enterprise from which an "order" has just been received, or which the detective agency has chosen to be the victim of its blackmail, and get employed there as a worker. The agents are given exact instructions as to how they can win the confidence of the workers and get into leading positions in the local trade union organisations. Generally there are several spies at work in the same enterprise without their knowing one another. They have to send in a detailed report every day to a secret address, giving their observations, the talks they have had and the new connections and acquaintances they have made. In these reports and in the rest of their correspondence they naturally do not appear under the same name as they have in the enterprise, but under the cloak of various numbers or assumed names.

It is quite a common occurrence in trade union organisations for them to find that one of their functionaries who has been active for many years in a leading position, was in reality just such an agent of a detective bureau or of the police commissariat, who had simply chosen the trade unions to make his career. Many quite prominent *agents provocateurs* who held high posts in the American Federation of Labour, were not recognised as such until after their death.

The spies received detailed instructions as to the way of life they are to pursue. The contents of these instructions are often very funny. One passage, for example, reads as follows: "When working among members of the I.W.W. (Industrial Workers of the World) put on worn-out clothes and shoes and don't shave. When you have to do with Communists, you may dress somewhat better, and when you have to keep company with members of the Socialist Party, conduct yourself like one of the middle classes."

But there are also instructions of a much more serious character. For example, the following: "Organise quarrels and collisions at the conferences in order to discredit the strike leaders in the eyes of the workers and to prepare the final downfall of the trade union organisation." "At the strike meetings demand the withdrawal of strike relief for women and young people." "Accuse the strike leaders of embezzlement. Demand daily checking up of accounts at public meetings," etc.

During a prolonged strike spies disguised as hawkers visit the strikers' families and offer workers' wives various articles in the way of furniture, washing and household utensils at astoundingly low prices, in order to bring pressure to bear on the strikers in this way. Documentary proof also exists that clergymen, doctors and various "humanitarian" organisations such as, for example, the Young Men's Christian Association, have received payments of money from the detective agencies and other "interested" parties to conduct propaganda against strikes.



It is also part of the practice of espionage firms to provide strike breakers in large numbers and at the same time to arrange for their armed protection. It thus often happens that individual strike breakers show themselves "quite accessible" to revolutionary propaganda and join the strike with many professions of penitence—of course, to act as *agents provocateurs*.

Cases occur from time to time when some great public scandal arises and the shameless activities of the detective agencies and the police come to the knowledge of the broad masses: Then the "democratic spirit" of America becomes much excited. Parliamentary commissions are appointed and great enquiries are set on foot. But public opinion soon quiets down again and the work of the espionage agencies goes on undisturbed.

The minutes of the notorious commission of the American senator, Fish, "for an enquiry into Communist activity in the United States"; the boastful announcements of the ex-police-chief of New York, Whalen, who lately declared himself to be in a position to lay before every employer a complete list of all the "Reds" employed in his enterprise; and the revelations recently made in the press of all countries regarding the use of the "third degree" in American police stations—all these facts lead us to conclude that the organs of American justice, police and state administration, with the active co-operation of the American Federation of Labour, have made still further progress in extending their work of provocation and espionage among the ranks of the labour movement.

This highly developed American technique in the matter of espionage has long ago found its way to the continent of Europe. The central organ of our French brother Party, "L'Humanite," which recently began a vigorous campaign against police espionage, published a news item not long ago in which it was mentioned that in France too there are a number of big espionage firms at work. The most important of them are the "Wills Agency" and "Marc Astey." Many retired police officers find employment with these firms. "L'Humanite" also mentioned the names of several *agents provocateurs* who had been unmasked in the Party and continued their work in the service of these firms. Among these was a certain Darrier, who had actually worked for some time on the editorial staff of "L'Humanite." The "Wills Agency" pays its agents who work in the enterprises, 30 francs per day over and above the wages they earn. "Marc Astey" even pays some of its agents as much as 80 francs per day extra.

"In the metal works of Paris alone"—writes L'Humanite—"80 spies are known to us by name." The espionage firm "Marc Astey" numbers among its clients the *Comitee du Forges*, the General Electric Company, the firm Hotchkiss, the Chemical Factory for Liquid Air, etc. In Great Britain the Press has been full of announcements of prominent ex-Scotland Yard officials setting up private detective bureaux.

The Communist Parties are not fighting against workshop espionage with sufficient vigour. This can be proved by many typical examples. For instance, in an industrial enterprise in the Bohemian part of Czecho-Slovakia a new worker by the name of Jan made his appearance. He had soon got on the best terms with the other employees and was very active in several strikes. But once after a strike 300 workers were discharged. All the revolutionary elements were seized and thrown on the street. The comrades suspected treachery and after a search some documents were accidentally found in Jan's apartment, incriminating him of being an *agent provocateur*. What was the upshot? Jan was compelled to leave the place by seven men; but the affair was not made public in the press, nothing resembling a political campaign was set on foot, the workers were not warned, nor the masses mobilised, against him. And Jan went on his way in all peace of mind to another North Bohemian town and went to work there in the same way. He was only discovered a second time by accident, when a worker, who had also come from the first town, happened to recognise him.

This helplessness, which Communists in the industrial enterprises display in such cases, constitutes a very serious danger. It is especially perilous now when the bourgeoisie are doing all they can to keep the Communists away from the enterprises and to isolate them, relying in the first instance on the system of workshop espionage to help them in their task. It is therefore the urgent and immediate duty of the Communist Parties to formulate measures for the combating and unmasking of the workshop spies. We will not succeed in maintaining our Communist cells in the workshops and in extending and consolidating their influence, unless we can attract the masses of workers to engage in the fight against workshop espionage.

The Communists have still to learn how to organise their work in the enterprises. Many Communists in countries where our movement is legal, think that they would be unjustified in undertaking illegal work in the enterprises. It is unfitting, they believe, not to make an open profession of one's membership of the Communist nucleus. A member of our French brother Party who was advised to disappear for a time in order to avoid being arrested, declared: "I am not a coward and I won't hide from the police!" We will give one more instance of the thoughtlessness and rashness which prevails among many Communists in this respect. One of our legal brother Parties publishes in its central organ on January 1st New Year's greetings from all Party cells giving the exact names and addresses, so that the police are thus provided with a complete list of all Communist cells.

The first duty of the Communists in their struggle against workshop espionage is therefore to organise illegal work in industry on the right lines. In many legal Communist Parties, not to mention the illegal ones, the membership changes very rapidly



New members are constantly entering the Party. Before the police despatch a "novice" to his work, they give him the most exact instructions, arrange their own courses for the study of the tactics and strategy of their opponents, etc. But when a young and inexperienced worker of 18 or 19 years old comes to join the Communist Party, how is he to assume the correct behaviour and be saved from making false steps without the necessary instruction and preparation?

The Communists must therefore instruct their members and arrange courses dealing with the organisation of illegal work in the factories. All cases of workshop espionage which are discovered must be dealt with in detail by our factory newspapers in order to warn our comrades and protect our Party nuclei from disaster. Every case of discharge must be examined with a view to ascertaining if it was not the work of an *agent provocateur*. We must publish special pamphlets in a popular style on workshop espionage and the methods of combating it. The most radical means of combating workshop espionage is and will always be, of course, well-organised mass work in the factory—work in which the Communists are unfortunately not yet up to standard. If we Communists can succeed, on the basis of well-organised mass work, in mobilising the sentiment of the industrial workers against workshop espionage and in kindling again the fire of proletarian indignation which the demoralising influence of Social-democracy has recently caused to die down, we will have dealt a decisive blow at the system of workshop espionage.

#### IV.

#### HOW TO COMBAT THE AGENT PROVOCATEUR.

Too many Communists think of the struggle against political provocation mainly or exclusively as a form of reprisals against individual traitors and police spies. Such an attitude is fundamentally wrong. What is required is a number of preventive measures to paralyse treachery and police espionage; and in the struggle against political provocation our attention must be focussed on this point.

Preventive measures for combating the *agent provocateur* must take three forms:

Firstly, the correct co-ordination of legal and illegal work. The arrangement of the whole work of the Party along correct lines makes it more difficult for the *agent provocateur* to get in and practise his trade.

Secondly, the drawing up and exact observance of the rules of conspiracy work, that is to say, practical technical measures to ensure that confidential decisions and documents, illegal persons, addresses, etc., are kept a close secret.

Thirdly, exact rules for the conduct of comrades under arrest, with regard to their statements in court and before the police.

The most vital and all-important means of combating political provocation is a genuine mass character of the revolutionary organisation. The real participation of all members of the Party in the political life of the Party, a well-thought-out attitude to all Party decisions, the exercise of self-criticism against all mistakes and against those who commit these mistakes, the political weighing-up of every individual member, of his methods of work and the results of his activity by the whole organisation, the working out of a collective Party opinion on the abilities, militant qualities and revolutionary reliability of all rank and file Party members and, even more so, of all the leading functionaries of the Party, and the promotion of initiative in all spheres of Party life—these constitute the best foundations and the most favourable conditions for a successful struggle against police espionage and political provocation. On the other hand, where attention is not directed to anything more than a purely mechanical execution of Party decisions, where the “group spirit” is dominant and instead of the qualities of individual comrades being carefully weighed in the political balance the mere titles of “a good friend” or “a jolly good fellow” are enough to obtain anyone admission to Party work, a favourable atmosphere for blind confidence, uncritical acceptance, mutual concealment of mistakes and omissions, etc., is at once created. In the unhealthy atmosphere of such sectarian circles the Russian revolutionary party produced in its day a crop of *agent provocateurs* which included such shining examples as the above-mentioned Asev, who was thus enabled for many years on end to deliver up innumerable revolutionaries into the hands of police thugs and to death on the gallows. The revolutionary organisations must, by means of a consistent and indefatigable political struggle on a mass scale against the *agent provocateur*, mobilise the dislike and hatred which the working masses feel against this infamous weapon of the class enemy and in doing so, apply all the experience at their command to help them in broadening and strengthening the resistance offered to police espionage.

The case of provocation at Bia-Torbagy, which, as we have already mentioned at the beginning of this pamphlet, led to the setting up of courts-martial in Hungary, unfortunately evoked no such mass resistance on the part of the Communist Parties. Yet in this case too it should have been the duty of the Communists to mobilise not only the public opinion of the working class but also that of all working elements in the population, to stigmatise this act of political provocation. Every such case of provocation must be used as an occasion for enlightening the masses and for stirring up their hatred against the class enemy and all his infamy.

In combating the *agent provocateur* it is of special importance to pay careful attention to the correct co-ordination of legal and illegal activity. Sound combination of legal and illegal work



makes the work of the *agent provocateur* more difficult and not infrequently leads to his being unmasked.

"In many countries, some of them the most advanced countries"—wrote Lenin in his "Infantile Sickness (Left Wing Communism)"—"the bourgeoisie is undoubtedly sending, and will continue to send, its *agents provocateurs* into the Communist Parties. One method of struggle against this peril is the skilful co-ordination of legal and illegal work." With reference to one of the greatest *agents provocateurs* in the Bolshevik Party, the notorious Malinovsky, Lenin wrote: "He betrayed scores of the best and most devoted comrades . . . . That he did not cause more mischief, was due to the efficient co-ordination between the legal and illegal forms of our activities. In order to gain our confidence, Malinovski was forced . . . to aid us in establishing daily papers which, even under the Tsarist, knew how to carry on the fight openly against the opportunism of the Mensheviks and to teach the fundamental principles of Bolshevism . . . With one hand Malinovsky sent scores and scores of the most active Bolshevik functionaries to prison and to death, he was compelled, with the other hand, to aid through the legal press in the education of tens of thousands of new Bolsheviks."

It is an important and necessary factor to avoid excessive concentration in the illegal work of the Party. This is particularly true of the countries where the white terror prevails. It still frequently happens that a great number of different illegal functions, such as the direction of an illegal printshop, communication with organisations abroad and with underground organisations and so forth are all concentrated in the hands of a single comrade. Illegal Party work calls for a strict division of functions so that the arrest of one person may not cause the dislocation of several spheres of illegal Party work. A comrade who has the direction of some special province of illegal Party work ought not at the same time to know all the details of all the illegal activities which go on.

Besides this it is necessary to work out a system by which every individual Party member may be carefully checked up. Such a thorough checking up must be undertaken when a comrade is to be entrusted with a responsible and confidential post, or with some duties which bring him into contact with the different branches of illegal Party work and with illegal organs, printshops, keys to secret codes, etc. The same applies to comrades who are to be active in the sphere of colonial work, anti-militarist activity and such like. All symptoms of personal feelings, sentimental considerations, or superficial friendliness in the selection of such comrades must be rejected as something essentially petty-bourgeois and unproletarian. Such a checking-up should include a serious examination of the moral and political personality of the comrade concerned, his strength of character, militant experience, personal courage, his connections and social intercourse, way of life, family

relations, etc., must all be taken into account. A comrade whom the Party has not yet had time to get to know properly, whom the Party is not yet quite sure of, had much better be kept in legal or semi-legal spheres of activity than be transferred to a post where a false step on his part might do our whole cause unspeakable harm. All this is of course particularly true of the countries where the white terror is most violent such as Yugo-Slavia, China and so on. The Communist Parties must subject all their leading functionaries to a checking-up in respect of their reliability and trustworthiness under the above-mentioned heads. It must be remembered in doing this that besides the old and tried cadres of functionaries whose ranks are thinning with the years and under the blows of the police, the Communist Parties also have cadres of young functionaries at their disposal. Under the conditions of an intensified class struggle and terrorisation such as the Communist Parties are now faced with, the composition of the active Party cadres changes extremely rapidly. Young Party members come into leading positions within the space of one year or even more quickly and not by any means all persons in whom the Party reposes the greatest confidence, are really carefully examined and selected, as is in fact necessary in such cases.

Under present conditions the Communist Parties must make it their general rule to adopt precautionary measures against individual comrades in any case of suspicion, serious or otherwise, even when there are no adequate proofs by which the suspicion can be corroborated. It only occasionally happens that the Party is in the fortunate position of being able to produce all the necessary evidence against an *agent provocateur*. Without such general precautionary measures the Communist Parties will always be having unpleasant surprises and making the work of the police more easy for them. There are many cases in the history of the revolutionary movement in Tsarist Russia, where Party functionaries were suspected of being *agents provocateurs* and where the Party commissions after long examinations and cross-examinations arrived at the conclusion that there was not adequate proof for the charges which had been brought or that the aspersions of suspicion were wholly unfounded. Yet later on, when the secret archives of the Ochrana had been made accessible by the October Revolution, it turned out that a great number of those who had once been suspected, had in fact really been in connection with the police. From which we may draw the moral that, whereas all cases where seemingly tried and reliable comrades are suspected of various offences, should be most carefully dealt with, a thorough examination carefully pursued to the very end, must also be regarded as indispensable in such cases.

It is further an absolute necessity that commissions specially constituted for the purpose carefully examine all the circumstances and all the details of every disaster and every arrest. To this end the closest possible connection must be established with the



arrested person so as to find out from him what grounds for suspicion he is able to produce. Interrogation of the members of his family and of other persons from the arrested person's circle of acquaintances may also provide important clues for clearing up the causes of the arrest. It is unfortunately still true that many Communists accept arrests and other misfortunes which befall the Party, with an almost fatalistic equanimity. It must be made an incontrovertible rule in the revolutionary organisations that each individual case be examined in detail and in every possible light, so that no uncertainties may remain.

After every arrest measures must immediately be taken to inform the members of the organisation of the success which the police have achieved. Further arrests, searchings of houses and various traps and pitfalls set by the police can thus often be avoided in time. The possible results of unthinking statements which the arrested person may make before the police and of the information he may give about comrades who are still at liberty, must likewise be avoided by informing the comrades who are thus endangered as quickly as possible of the peril in which they are placed. By altering the dwelling places of various comrades, the addresses and the places of meeting and by a number of other measures, the efforts of the class enemy to break into the ranks of the organisation must be as far as possible restricted.

The most essential measures for combating the *agent provocateur*—measures which must be quite systematically put into effect—may be summed up under the following heads:

1. Thorough analysis of every case of arrest, examination and comparison of all circumstances and incidents accompanying the case.

2. Exact analysis and control of the work carried out by Party functionaries in regard to the correctness of the political and organisational line. Increased vigilance in cases of distortion or misrepresentation of the Party line.

3. Exact analysis of the various proposals and formal motions brought forward by the suspected person over a given period of time.

4. Extreme caution towards people who display excessive curiosity, who offer themselves for the execution of confidential tasks and who want to learn at any price all that has to do with the illegal work of the Party.

5. Special attention and vigilance to be paid to Communists whose behaviour in private life is not in accord with Party ideas (e.g., cases of alcoholism, embezzlement, extravagance, sexual excesses, etc.).

6. Strict and continual financial control over all sums of money expended by the organisation and over every penny of Party funds. Where carelessness and irregularities occur in the administration of money, a favourable atmosphere is created for moral decay and political provocation to creep in.

7. Special courses of instruction in methods of combating political provocation and in the most elementary methods of illegal work and conspiracy must be conducted in the Party schools. These courses must be based not merely on the many years' experience of the Russian Bolsheviks but also on the more recent experience gained in the struggle of the modern Communist Parties in the various capitalist countries and in the colonies. For this purpose the publication of a descriptive and agitational mass literature is required, dealing with the methods and tricks employed by the police and giving concrete instructions as to how to combat the *agent provocateur*. Pamphlets must also be published describing typical cases of arrests, betrayals and provocation.

8. A struggle must also be waged against *agents provocateurs* who have been unmasked, by making their names known and publishing their photographs and descriptions of their persons in the press. The Communist Parties of other countries should follow the example of the Communist Party of Germany in publishing special almanacks and booklets with lists of names, personal descriptions and photographs of police spies and *agents provocateurs* who have become known as such.

9. In combating workshop espionage it is especially necessary to mobilise the public opinion of the employees against the activities of workshop spies. Direct action on the part of all the workers of the whole enterprise or of a given department so as to discover and forcibly eject all spies, is no bad remedy. A most suitable method is also the organisation of a mass boycott against the *agent provocateur*. A spy can often be got rid of by this means, for in the first place his activity as a spy is made considerably harder and less productive by the fact that all workers cut him and secondly he feels himself so uncomfortable in the enterprise where he is being boycotted that he prefers to fade out of the picture. In any case the organisation of the masses forms a decisive link in the struggle against political provocation.

10. Every Communist Party should constantly hold in view the possibility of having to change quickly to illegal work and should take such preparatory measures as may protect them against surprise in the case of sudden interference by the police or state executive.

A further group of measures may be classified under the head of improving the technique of illegal work and the methods of practical conspiracy. We may here adduce another example which goes back to war espionage as practised in the time of the imperialist world war. A famous school of espionage which the German general staff established in Antwerp during their period of occupation, gave its pupils among other things the following instructions as to the behaviour and methods of work to be employed by them in practice:

"Do not show too obvious curiosity when collecting news and doing reconnaissance."



"Train your facial expression so as to appear always uninterested and indifferent."

"Never discuss confidential matters in a coffee-house, on the tram or in the train." "Conceal your knowledge of foreign languages : this makes it easier for you to overhear conversations."

"Don't leave papers, envelopes, newspapers, hotel or business bills lying about anywhere. Don't throw them in the waste paper basket either, even if they are torn in small pieces."

"Always arrange meetings with people from whom you intend to learn something, at a great distance from your and their place of living. If possible they should have to make a railway journey of several hours to arrive at the meeting place. When tired, especially after a night journey, the client is less capable of offering resistance and is more ready to let things out."

"Rather learn five or six facts, even if they be insignificant ones than a hundred opinions."

The revolutionary, especially under present-day conditions, must constantly observe certain rules of behaviour. The contemporary revolutionary lives and works under the perpetual danger of police terror, of capitalist class justice, political provocation and police espionage. He must always be on his guard, must never talk at random, never be guilty of carelessness; he must know how to govern himself and hold himself in check.

In executing confidential conspiratorial work he must set about it with circumspection, prudence and consideration and always let himself be guided by the revolutionary aims in view. He must fight systematically against all distractions and tendencies to lose hold over himself, against talkativeness and against curiosity. He must evolve a number of strict rules of life for his daily existence and his intercourse with men and affairs. Among these rules, the following may be mentioned :

1. Tell him who *ought* to know what you have to say, not he who is *permitted* to know it. Special attention should be paid to this in the illegal parties, for not everyone is able to stand torture, if it comes to that.

2. A revolutionary must not talk at random or use superfluous words. Avoid discussing Party affairs in public places where there are many people about; in a coffee-house, on the tram, in the street, etc.

3. Only ask what it is your concern to know.

4. Be on your guard in telephoning and in letter-writing. Letters are read at the post office, talks on the phone are listened to.

5. Don't take unnecessary things with you.

6. Look round you. See who is following you and who is watching you.

7. Don't pose ! Don't attract attention by acting the conspirator; act and behave simply.

8. Avoid all frivolity and care-free behaviour. Consider every step and every action.

9. Adapt your way of life to the environment to which you belong according to the documents you carry.

### **Conduct Before Police and in Court.**

Lastly, a few words about conduct before the police and in court.

Every Communist Party and every revolutionary organisation must evolve rules, especially for the instruction of their younger members, as to what behaviour they are to assume when undergoing examination by the police. The general and fundamental rule for all Communists is: Make no statement! Of course this does not mean that all questions are simply to be met with the answer: "I refuse to make any statement." The tactics to be assumed under police examination must be much more elastic than that. But the fundamental principle remains the same: no statements incriminating any comrade, no names, no addresses, not a single fact which could possibly be used directly or indirectly against the Party, its organs or individual members of the organisation. No explanations in this respect. Absolute denial even when personally confronted with the persons and despite the evidence given by police spies and *agents provocateurs*. Whoever infringes, even but a little, these fundamental rules must instantly and mercilessly be ejected from the Party.

If therefore the police have any evidence against you or if they know that you are a Party member, you must make no further statement. Nor should you let yourself get involved in talks and discussions even about seemingly distant topics, such as views of life, etc. Only should the police not know for certain that you are a Party member, and have no proofs to that effect in their possession—then, since a categorical refusal to make any statement would convict you of being a Communist, you may permit yourself a few short statements calculated to obtain credence, but *only with regard to your own person*.

Here is another rule that must be taken good note of: If you are arrested keep quiet and firm; don't behave aggressively. Don't boast or brag. During the war it often happened that "heroic" officers who had been taken prisoner would be full of high-falutin' patriotism and boastfully declare to their enemies who were examining them: "You will yet feel the weight of the might of our arms! You'll get it in the neck at so-and-so" and so forth. Such ill-advised patriotism often gave the enemy valuable news, which cost the "loved fatherland" of the boaster dear. Even a Communist sometimes thinks that he will be thought a coward, if he does not describe his revolutionary activity while under examination. This is a thoroughly mistaken and dangerous attitude. We must always conceal our plans and our ways of work from the class enemy. Political expediency here is everything.

The conduct of Communists at public trials forms a special question. The police employ political trials not only as a means



of thwarting the activity of the revolutionaries whom they have just succeeded in arresting, not only as a means of terrorising and intimidating the revolutionary masses by cruel sentences, but also as a means of compromising Party functionaries in the eyes of the masses who are their supporters. A Communist must utilise a political trial to help on the revolutionary struggle. Our tactics in the public proceedings of the law court are not tactics of defence but of attack. Without clinging to legal formalities, the Communist must use the trial as a means of bringing his indictment against the dominant capitalist regime and of courageously voicing the views of his Party. The aid of such barristers as depreciate the importance and the function of the Party in their pleading, must be decisively rejected.

Perhaps in the case of certain Communists not possessing sufficient experience of the revolutionary struggle, the material collected in this booklet will call forth the perplexing questions: "If the author of the booklet is not exaggerating then, in general, it is impossible to differentiate a provocateur from an honest revolutionary. To the extent that a person carries on an impermissible intrigue and struggle against the Party leadership and the Comintern, it is comparatively easy to expose him as an agent of the class enemy. But the author of the pamphlet teaches, that it is possible for a provocateur to be a person who is always externally loyal in regard to the Party and the Comintern and who, precisely because of this loyalty, thus hides his treacherous work. Perhaps in the case of one who for long has carried on conspirative work and has never been caught, it is possible to suspect a provocateur. But the author of the pamphlet has specially emphasised that the police can arrest a provocateur precisely in order to mask his treacherous activities when suspicion arises concerning him in the Party. On the other hand, the author emphasises that it is impossible to believe in escapes from jails, because escapes are frequently arranged by the police. If a person lived prodigally, it is not difficult to guess that he has some funds, some secret source of income. But the author says that provocateurs receive instructions not to change their mode of life so as not to be discovered. If a person is exceptionally curious, then he naturally calls the most careful attention of the comrades to himself. But the author of the booklet proves that the absence of any sign of suspicion does not always constitute proof that we are dealing with an honest revolutionary; on the contrary it may hide a specially skilled and experienced provocateur, etc. Who can we believe, after this? How can we avoid the infection of spy-mania, not suspect every comrade around us as an agent of the bourgeoisie? And does this not introduce disintegration into the ranks of the fighters of the revolution?"

Yes, comrades, the tendency of spy-mania, of course, carries disintegration into the party ranks. Of course, every genuine Bolshevik is duty bound to fight implacably against such ten-

dencies. But although realising that such tendencies may be aroused in a few Communists of weak character, by the teachings of this pamphlet we must nevertheless state that all that we have said in this pamphlet only reflects, and certainly by no means fully reflects, the actual living facts. It is time to understand that the owning class disposes of colossal possibilities of suppression and disintegration of the revolutionary movement, from the most open brutal methods of fascist terror to the most cunning and subtle methods of corruption and deceit of different groups, strata and portions of the working class and peasant mass. Is it not clear that the bourgeoisie fights like a wild beast to preserve its rule, undertakes all possible measures, not shrinking from the most abominable, utilising each and every possibility? If we had not to do with such a cunning, crafty, implacable and bloodthirsty enemy, our struggle would be immeasurably easier, the road to victory incomparably shorter.

If this is the case, would it then be a policy worthy of Bolsheviks if we decided *not* to show all the manifold methods of provocation and espionage—because people who do not take into account the dangers threatening the C.P. and revolutionary movement from this side, can be panic-stricken and lose their heads? On the contrary, it is all the more our duty to pose the question in all its breadth and with all the necessary sharpness. Only hopeless opportunists, only toothless liberals are afraid to stare reality in the face.

But what measures of struggle can we adopt against this evil?

What perspective is there of overcoming it?

Of the measures of struggle we have already spoken, although only in the most general outlines, in the last chapter of this booklet, and consequently have naturally no intention of repeating ourselves. A word or two must be said regarding the overcoming of this evil in our conclusion.

Is it possible to overcome provocation? If we understand the question in its entire sweep as we have endeavoured to show and prove in our pamphlet, namely that provocation is one of the methods, one of the *oldest forms of the class struggle of the bourgeoisie against the proletariat*—an additional method especially important for the bourgeoisie in the present period of struggle for the very existence of the capitalist system—it is clear that the weapon of provocation and espionage will continue to be utilised until such time as class struggle is abolished. It is necessary to formulate the question in the following manner: To understand that it is impossible to overcome provocation without overcoming the entire capitalist system, without overcoming the rule of the bourgeoisie. It is necessary to add, in order to also understand this side of the question, that provocations will inevitably be overcome, *will inevitably perish, together with the rule of the bourgeoisie.*



The bourgeoisie is still very powerful—only a fool can deny this. But the bourgeoisie is not invincible: on the contrary its fall is inevitable.

The bourgeoisie still disposes of powerful means of economic and political suppression of the mass, powerful means of stupefying them. Does this mean that such expressions of class suppression, right up to bloody tortures behind the prison walls, and the execution of thousands of unknown heroic fighters of the Chinese revolution, right up to the "pleasantries" indulged in by the fascist Government of Pilsudsky in Poland—can these expressions of class suppression shake the convictions of the Bolsheviks of the final victory of the proletariat?

Shortly after the murder of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, Lenin wrote in a "Letter to the Workers of Europe and America," 27th January, 1919:—

"The exploiters have still enough power in their hands to murder and lynch the best leaders of the world proletarian revolution . . . but the exploiters of the whole world have no longer sufficient power to prevent the victory of the world proletarian revolution, which is bringing the inevitable emancipation of humanity from the yoke of capital."

The cause of the bourgeoisie is hopeless, the verdict of history, the verdict of the working class is already pronounced upon them. No means whatever, at the disposal of the bourgeoisie, are in a position to save them. But the rule of the bourgeoisie does not fall by itself. It must be destroyed. In order to destroy it, it is necessary to clearly understand the methods of struggle of the bourgeoisie against the proletarian revolution.

Provocateurs and spies are *not* everywhere, but they *may* appear everywhere, because we cannot know where this or that provocateur succeeds in digging himself in.

But the knowledge of such a *possibility* need not lead to panic—need not lead to the confusion of *possibilities* with *realities*—on the contrary it must lead to *cool-headed, firm vigilance*.

Remember that the enemy *may* appear everywhere, remember this *always* and *at all times*—and therefore always be on your guard, be a conspirator, carefully control yourself and others. To recognise the enemy amongst personal friends—this is no easy task; this requires great experience; for this persevering, systematic study is necessary, and in order to learn, it is necessary to tackle this in all seriousness.

One must have in view that, side by side with the work of unmasking this or that provocateur, it is necessary, as we have shown in this pamphlet, to devote chief attention to measures of a preventive character, to the struggle against provocation as a *system*, as a weapon and method of struggle of the doomed class against the revolutionary proletariat. It is necessary to expose to the party and the widest mass the methods of the class enemy, to

systematically raise their vigilance; the question must be raised in every Party cell. To rally the struggle of the mass, the struggle of the *class* against provocation as a system, to raise the revolutionary activity of the mass in this struggle—this is the task of the Communist Party, this is the task of the revolutionary proletarian advance guard.

The struggle against provocation as a system is one of the most important component parts, one of the chief fronts of the general class struggle for the emancipation of the toiling mass from the yoke of capital.

Finish with the underestimation of this question! End the previous attitude of equanimity, tolerance and passivity and helplessness in this important sector of the class struggle. It is high time a complete change was made in this field.

The Communist Parties, who are growing into a great class force and are leading the revolutionary upsurge in every corner of the world will take up this struggle with success.

The class struggle—our struggle—is raging with ever-increasing fury and severity. The class enemy has at his disposal all the means of force embodied in the state executive power. Fascism and Social-fascism, terror and treachery, provocation and espionage — all these means are brought to bear against the revolutionary masses. Yet the victory will be ours—the future belongs to us. The Tsarist Ochrana was destroyed by the mighty blows of the proletarian October Revolution, together with the domination of the bourgeoisie; it buried in its ruins all those who had once served it so faithfully, all those who had thrown in their lot with this rallying point of secrecy and infamy. The same fate awaits all police thugs, hired torturers and *agents provocateurs* throughout the whole world. They will vanish without leaving a trace, utterly consumed in the fierce fire of hatred and contempt which is blazing up against them among the masses of the workers. The memory of revolutionaries, the memory of the best fighters for the liberation of mankind from the yoke of capitalism will live on for ever in the hearts of the masses and be blazoned on the banners of the Revolution as a signal of strife and revolt. But the names of the long series of revolutionary heroes who have fallen in the struggle, from Spartacus to Karl Liebknecht, shine on splendidly through the long decades and centuries.

The Communists are fighting against that order of society which stands for crises and wars, distress, starvation and the destitution of the masses. They are fighting against that régime which is no longer leading mankind upwards but is dragging it downwards. They are fighting for the revolutionary way out of the severe economic crisis which now holds the whole capitalist world in its clutches. They are not fighting alone but together with the masses; they are at the head of the mass movement. Communism has already conquered on a sixth part of the earth's surface. Our victory over the whole earth is certain.



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