

History of the class struggle in Hungary 1919-1945

The period of retorsion

As the part of the breaking down of the 1917-23 revolutionary wave the bourgeoisie used very manifold means, took advantage of the weaknesses of the proletariat, to beat back the proletarian revolution in Hungary. When the self-organizing proletariat was actively fighting against the imperialist war by force of arms, organizing extended strike movement, forming workers' councils, looting, as well as started the liquidation of the bourgeoisie, a "radical" framing force was needed which could counteract the extension and centralization of the struggles, the organization of the proletariat as a party. This role was played by the Bolshevik movement which, in spite of that it gained its strength mainly from the proletariat and its leadership, in words, was for the revolution (of course it wanted to carry out the revolution by the specific Bolshevik scheme: it sought to withdraw the old ruling class in order that it could establish the radical social democratic form of capitalism controlled by the Bolsheviks), during the period of deep crisis of capital, when there were good conditions for proletarian self-organization and for the total destruction of capitalist structures, it was objectively counter-revolutionary. The Bolsheviks backed by the moderate social democrats established the so-called Hungarian Council Republic, a structure of power which was able to successfully counteract the radicalisation of the masses. Under their reign the Bolshevik leadership was acting the part of the grave-digger of the struggling proletariat and doing so encouraged the sweep of the counter-revolution. For instance when Béla Kun entered into negotiations with the Entente and succeeded in counteracting the evolution of revolutionary defeatism: Clemenceau sent a message for Kun in which he called upon the Bolshevik leadership to stop the advance of the Red Army in Slovakia. And what's happened thanks to the „God of bourgeoisie”? Kun entered into collusion with the bourgeoisie, betrayed the Slovakian proletariat and doing so increased

the demoralization, geared up the sweep of the white-terror carried out against the proletariat. The Red Army accepted the commands of the party-bureaucracy so the army, recruited from workers, could experience gradually to its own cost the consequences of Béla Kun's oath of allegiance. When all these things delivered the goods and the Hungarian proletariat was unable to extend its **struggle**, unite with other proletarian movements in the region, finish with the Bolshevik leadership, and was defeated also by force of arms the government of the Hungarian Council Republic resigned, since it weakened, broke up and was unable to maintain its own power. The resignation was published in *Népszava* on 2nd of August. Kun and his associates earlier had hoped to get support from the Russian Bolsheviks but the latter were waging bloody war on the agrarian workers, the rich peasant proprietors and the white armies to maintain their power. So they were powerless to help their counter-revolutionary allied in Hungary.

Thus after all these events the restoration of the traditional bourgeois order started gradually. Right-wing social democrats formed a government under the direction of Gyula Peidl. By the reorganization of courts, of the police, of the gendarmerie, by giving back the companies to the owners the government built the bases necessary for the reconstruction. The bourgeoisie needed a stabilizing force in the region which was able to ensure the maintenance of the capitalist structures and the smoothness of them in long-term. It had to be able to eliminate the further proletarian resistance and to build a political-economic structure of which the production could be restarted in. Further condition for the stabilization was the signature of the peace-treaty which could adjust the „World War”, so a sound government needed. However, the Romanian troops after the occupation of East- Hungary, made an entry into Budapest on 4th and 5th of August, 1919. Thus the reign of the so-called trade-unionist government led by Peidl was only temporary. On 6th of August, the Romanian troops backed by the Hungarian conservative counter-revolutionary forces occupied the prime minister's office and dispersed the trade-unionist leadership. The latter a few days earlier had even trusted that the Entente would redeem its promise and in this way they would calmly build a capitalist system, dreamt and led by them. They were wrong.

The counter-revolutionary forces, made an entry into Hungary, were not monolithic. A sphere of interest was represented by the Entente forces, the Hungarian nationalists also separated into different groups, etc. During the rivalry of the counter-revolutionary groups the events were managed more and more by the forces led by Miklós Horthy and by the the Romanian troops. Insomuch as the white guards led by Horthy had the necessary military force and after the fall of the Council Republic they were able to keep under control the major part of the government structures. In this time the reigning governments were only figureheads. The white-terror finished with all forms of proletarian resistance, it was merciless and revenged for the injuries of the bourgeoisie. Where the Romanian troops, which occupied the eastern and the middle part of the country, were not present there the terrorists of the Hungarian officer guards slaughtered the proletarians. They strengthened and extended their internecine war. The captured comrades of the Lenin Lads, who had been the vanguard of the revolution, were fiendishly tormented (just as the middle-age Inquisition did it) and later executed. The revenge of the bourgeoisie was bloodthirsty, it befitted their class black ground. Where Horthy's troops were marching there were hanged proletarians, broken bones, eyes put out. Meanwhile the Bolshevik-social democratic left-wing took refuge in Austria. Béla Kun and his associates left the country while they deliberately eliminated from this fleeing the anarchists and left-wing Bolsheviks, who tried to hide and to resist in Hungary. The consequences were very depressing: Tibor Szamuely was struck dead by the border guards (or he committed suicide), Ottó Korvin stayed at Budapest and continued the organization, thus he was captured, tormented and later executed (there was an attempt to liberate him but the adventurous action failed). Thousands of militants, myriads of proletarians who were delivered into the hands of the white-terror stayed in Hungary and tried to reorganize our movement.

Beyond the armed terror the white forces used means of propaganda (which was spreading nationalism and revisionary insanity everywhere) and the legitimation of anti-Semitism (a numerus clausus in the case of universities for people of Jewish origin was adopted in 1920) to pacify and to win the Hungarian working **class** over to the white counter-revolution. In effect the conditions for the capitalist stabilization were given, so the white forces backed by the Entente successfully

altered the political structure, and in a few years formed a sound government. Horthy and his associates tried to save their empire (after all they were directly descended from a state-power of which ruling **class** lost the „World War”), so they offered to the French bourgeoisie to support the intervention against Soviet-Russia with army. This offer, however, didn't save their empire from the breaking up: the peace-treaty in Versailles, in the Trianon castle was signed in July, 1920. So for them, to the period of „World War I” and of the revolution which ended with huge economic loss, added the „apocalypse” of losing of territories. The territory of Hungary decreased from 282000 km² to 93000 km², its population decreased from 18 million to 7,6 million. The breaking up of the onetime empire is a serious trauma for the Hungarian far-right to this very day, so they often roar at their demonstrations and at football matches the slogan of „Down with Trianon!”. On the other hand the peace-treaty disunited thousands of working-**class** families and during the following decades many of them fell for nationalism driven from above and were fighting for bourgeois interests, killing their **class** fellows – meanwhile the irredentist framing had ever-increasing influence.

The survivors

After the defeat of the revolution the trade unions and the social democratic party were allowed to function and, except for a few matterful analyses, the fact remained that they had nothing to do with **class struggle**. The Bolsheviks had to reorganize their party.¹ heir Viennese leadership started to elaborate the lessons of the defeated revolution in *Vörös Újság* (‘Red Journal’) which was published as the supplement of the journal of the Austrian Communist Party, entitled *Die Rote Fabne*. The journal *Kommunismus* was also published in Vienna, in which one part of the communist movement was trying its wings against the Comintern. György Lukács, with his own avant-garde Marxist tune, also wrote for this journal, but later it was liquidated by the Bolsheviks due to its „leftist” deviations. It's not by accident that we mention this important area of Görgy Lukács's theoretical activity, his fruitful period for the communist movement: then was forming the exciting, lively, dialectical analytical conception of his book *Történelem és osztálytudat* (‘History and **Class** Consciousness’), of which effect returned within the Hungarian movement principally in Attila József's, Pál Justus's activity and in of the so-called oppositionists.

At this time the circle of proletarian militants hallmarked by Lajos Kassák also remained active. They were under the influence of a specific Proletkult approach and were unable to break with their attempts at the unification of „proletarian art and communist revolution”. After the defeat of the revolution the activists, who had been active in Kassák’s circles and by the different journals connected to them, also had to emigrate and their revolutionary impetus decreased. Avant-gardist art had an increasing effect on them and they started to propagate an ageless, „all-human, humanistic scale of values which is above the social classes”, so they increasingly stood away from **class**-militancy. „The journal *Ma* (‘Today’) by its political position and by its ideology was communist and it’s still that, but beyond that something else, too. Human, that is universal.” – wrote Kassák in the period of the emigration and this confession shows their relation to the revolutionary movement. The members being active by the journal always changed, later many of them (most of the former committed hard core) became activists of the Bolshevik movement, others sunk into the delight of bourgeois aesthetics. Their products later became part of self-realizational egoism, art treasures of museums. The journal *Ma* (‘Today’) and its circle was still active in Vienna in the early twenties, but their activity was very confused. They were proclaiming eternal revolution, were attacking social democracy, however, they misunderstood Bolshevism what they regarded as revolutionary fellow-passenger. Due to that their activity, instead of the revolutionary whirl, was confined into a relatively more peaceful area their impetus decreased, thus instead of revolutionary attempts, satisfaction of artistic creative urge became of primary importance. However the journal, as the manifestation of one fraction of the proletariat, in retrospect is a sweet gleam of the period of the white-terror. Their commitment (since that remained still unquestionable) and their increasingly mere verbal radicalism not permitted their evolution, as „they could fight in the revolution of art”, but they increasingly became bit players of real revolution, of communist war.

The others stayed in Hungary also made a motion in this period. The white-terrorist regime made a call that the working **class** must avoid any actions and in reply to this on May Day in 1920 there were several strikes in the factories. In June the Alliance of International Transport Workers called upon the world-proletariat to boycott all the works which would benefit the white-terrorist Hungarian state. The boycott started on 20th

of June, the trading railways were stopped. In reply to this the Hungarian bourgeoisie stopped the export of the foodstuff. Before the boycott the miners in Tokod and in Tatabánya already went on strike, they demanded higher wages, several miners were arrested by the police. The two actions, however, didn't join. When the call for the boycott was made the miners had already been working. Soon after the boycott ended, too. Since the Entente bourgeoisie „put pressure” on the Alliance of International Transport Workers which yielded under the pressure and stopped its adventurous but instead fast action. It entered into negotiations with the Entente bourgeoisie, and as usual, the trade union pulled in its horns, went back into the piggery to chaw the pigwash.

Consolidation, that is the reality of capitalism

After the defeat of the revolution the capitalist landlords bore rule, who dominated together with the Church and lived their proletarian-murdering everyday life. The ruling **class** consisted of gentry left-overs, peasant proprietors, and urban bourgeoisie, that is to say group of great landlords, agrarian small capitalists, and industrial, commercial capitalists. The regime was headed by Governor Horthy who nominated the actual prime ministers. In this period, after the bloody retorsion, less brutal means were enough to maintain the seeming social peace, so the ruling **class** started the gradual “consolidation” of the regime. Under Pál Teleki's and afterwards István Bethlen's prime ministership the white-terrorist guards were pressed back and eliminated. Moreover, the far-right forces had to be harmonized with the liberals, the smallholders' party, and with christian democrats, social democrats, thus finally the practical and ideological feature of the ruling **class** was formed. Within this the Catholic Church was determinant: the “Christian direction” remained the biggest landowner, with its one million acres' land-owning. The members of the Catholic episcopacy owned one thousand acres per head at least. A lot of workers fell a victim to the politics and ideology of the conservatives, several Christian, racist, far-right para-military groups were formed, which even more acerbated the life of the working **class** persecuted by the white-terror.

The Horthy regime amalgamated the features of fascism and of bourgeoisie conservatism and in this manner took the floor as the hangman of the working **class**. To indicate its background we use György

Ránki's one essay. The program of the "Christian direction" had two important elements. It was phrased by Gyula Gömbös as follows: "I will be led by two guidelines. One of them is the Christian thought, briefly we can call it racialism, the other one is the agrarian thought." It meant that, under the aegis of the „Christian thought”, taken advantage of the anti-capitalism of the exploited masses, they acted against big capital which comprised many bourgeois of Jewish origin. They wanted, however, neither to reform nor to modernize capitalism, but to expropriate the capital of the bourgeoisie of Jewish origin and to subordinate it to the "national interests". Moreover, the gentry-officer guards wanted to take advantage of the conflicts between big capital and the latifundium (naturally this period is the headspring of latter-day nationalism), thus they propagated the necessity of defence of „Hungarian land”, and of „Hungarian interests” as means for pressing back „foreign” big capital (later the Hungarist movement used the same methods to frame the nationalist part of the working **class**). All this was integrated with very lively social demagogy and with promises for land reform; the ruling **class** was fooling the agrarian, and industrial workers like this.

From capitalist point of view, the world-wide situation became partially steady in the early twenties. The revolutionary wave in Germany was defeated (it was not without a hitch, as Max Hölz and his comrades continued their grim **struggle**), but in China the uprising was permanent which couldn't be defeated for a long time. In Italy, after the factory occupations and struggles in the works, Mussolini started to cement his position. In Russia, after eliminating the anarcho-communist forces in Ukraine and pulling down the anarcho-communist movement in general, the Bolsheviks consolidated their power. The Leninist-Stalinist-Trotskyist epidemic became even more drastic. In Mexico, the revolutionray movement weakened, in Argentina it had already to be on the defensive earlier. In Hungary the retorsion, the nationalist framing, the cretinizing of the working **class** also delivered the goods, so the political stabilization could be continued as well as the economic reorganization could be started.

In the spring of 1921 a government led by István Bethlen came into office, and soon after the Egységes Párt ('Unitary Party') was formed, which by uniting the fractions of the ruling **class**, consolidated

the government. To maintain the seeming social peace the new government, parallel with the retorsion, tried to blarney different political forces. The land reform started in 1920 continued - they tried to win the landless agrarian workers over to support the regime. The latifundia, however, remained dominant, only 5% of the arable soil were allotted, from which the recorders, gendarmes, as well as those who had been active in carrying out the white-terror got foremost. The landless peasants also got some land which were far away from their homes, droughty and were between only 0,5-1,5 acres. Furthermore they had to pay a fine for them. In fact the peasants got land charge in order that the state, or the domanial treasury could gain more money. The fact remained that most of the agrarian workers worked as a landless day-wage man, a farm-hand or, parallel with farming their small lands, as wageworkers. This mass, which comprised more than two million workers, felt the pinch: due to the great labour-power surplus their wages were very low, on an average 25000 workers left the agriculture yearly, most of them couldn't find any jobs even in the industry. The day-wage men engaged themselves for the season, so they always had to wander from one latifundium to an other in order to find any work for a short time. After the daylong, sweated work they were usually accomodated in the stable. Thus during the Horthy regime there were a lot of actions in the countryside carried out by agrarian proletarians, which were in general beaten back by the gendarmerie.

Bethlen entered into negotiations also with the social democratic party. They agreed on that the MSZDP ('Hungarian Social Democratic Party') would control any workers' actions and would hold them between democratic framework, would avoid the organization of postmen, railwaymen, public servants and of ground-men. So it would practically function under conservative control and would back the government. It was easy to carry out these politics doubly so as the MSZDP got 25 electoral mandates in 1922. Thus they had even more capability to work together with the government. The Bolshevik party, on the other hand, was banned in 1921. By this time the bolshevization of the party had already been finished and, except for a few heterodox members, it followed Leninist ideology.² Béla sat on the central committee just like Jenő Landler and György Lukács, too. Before the party would have been able to cement itself, fractionalism emerged in the emigration. The fraction in Moscow led by Kun was for the formation of

an illegal mass-party; it wanted to act as an independent force. The fraction in Vienna led by Landler, on the contrary, regarded dangerous to send a lot of activists back to the white-terrorist Hungary. They thought that the agitators had to infiltrate into the trade unions and into the MSZDP, meanwhile the illegal party had to be cemented and established. The Comintern first backed the fraction led by Landler and even adopted a resolution about this, so the popular frontist tactics were dominating for a space. The Bolshevik activists were infiltrating into trade unions, workers' societies and sport clubs in order to agitate. A few commissioned were trying to reorganize the party in Hungary and they succeeded in organizing a couple of party-cells, for example in Csepel, Ózd, Salgótarján, Budapest, etc. Their journals got to Hungary, so the *Proletár* ('Proletarian'), *Kommün* ('Commune') and others were available for the workers. The still not too strong Bolshevik party, however, was pulled down by sectarianism so it couldn't get great ascendancy over the proletariat, its framing activity was not so effective than during the revolution.

On the bases of the political stabilization led successfully by the ruling **class**, the reorganization of the economy, had been disorganized by the war and the revolution, could be started. The bourgeoisie first had to solve two problems. On the one part the economy had to be retooled from the war production to the normal production, the extant structure of production had to be reorganized, the very low productivity had to be increased and they had to restrict the inflation increasing sharply. On the other part the economy had to be accommodated to the new circumstances which emerged after the breaking up of Austro- Hungary. Due to the peace-treaty the territory and the population of Hungary decreased greatly and these meant smaller market, less raw materials, smaller arable soil, so both the industrial, and agricultural productive capacity decreased. Hungary formerly had been carrying its export and import on mostly inside Austro- Hungary, there were common money-market, unitary price-level, common customs area. Since all these ended, the bourgeoisie had to build up a new system of external trade accordantly to the world-market, they had to find new markets, had to solve the problem of shortage of raw materials, had to restructure the production. For these tasks they needed considerable capital. The state tried to put up the sources for these by increasing the bank-note issue, so from 1921 the inflation was gearing greatly and gained more

thousandfold degree till 1924. Due to this the miserable conditions of the working **class** acerbated even more, the food shortage and the unemployment worsened. The average labour-time in the industry was 9,5 hours, and Péter Veres wrote down that the day-wage men, the farmhands, the ground-men worked 14-16 hours a day, in exchange for this now they got lower wages. In 1920 there were 40.000 unemployed day-wage men at reaping-time, 30.000 agrarian worker families made a precarious living, according to certain sources during the ages of the white-terror 300.000 workers were unemployed. Then most of the agrarian workers were starving, the children were begging in groups, and the situation changed not too much afterwards...

The bourgeoisie channelled the money won by the inflation to the large-scale industry and to the latifundia as credit, in order to revive the production and to increase productivity. This project was also backed by the increasing inflation which decreased the real wages (the increase in price was more than twice as much that the wage increase), thus decreased the production costs, too. Because of the very low wages of the agrarian workers, this effect was even stronger in the agriculture. As a result of all these the rate of production approached the pre-war level in a few years, the industrial and agricultural export increased. Meanwhile the Hungarian bourgeoisie took a loan up from the League of Nations, so they were able to pay the state deficit and stopped the man-made inflation in 1924, since they didn't need that on further. The inflow of western capital as credit geared, however smaller part of it was applied to develop production, the rest was used for pay-off, buying lands and for building. They invested against us: prisons and barracks for the gendarmerie were built. In spite of this the Hungarian bourgeoisie, thanks to the relatively high prices of the agrarian products in the world-market (in Hungary the agriculture was still predominant over the industry), was able to revive the agricultural production and to ground the economic growth in the following years. The same tendency in the industry was slower, since, due to the shortage of capital caused by the stoppage of the inflation and to the increasing unemployment (there were 120.000 urban unemployed in 1924) the level of industrial production was decreasing between 1924 and 1927. The revival started only later and was relatively slow.

Meanwhile the coming alive social democratic party and the trade unions organized several strikes. The *Népszava* ('People's Voice'), daily paper of the social democrats, was shooting his mouth off actively, and their monthly theoretical journal *Szocializmus* ('Socialism') was also published. Most of the industrial workers were forging the railing of their prison inside the MSZDP and the trade unions. In 1921 the union membership was 200.000 approximately. The MSZDP was strong principally in Budapest as well as in the near suburbs (Újpest, Kispest, Budafok, etc.), its membership was constantly changing and after the first revival, in the late twenties and early thirties it decreased to 70.000-100.000 members. Both the party and the trade unions were functioning under the control of the Ministry of Home. It meant among other things that they had to announce all the gatherings, strikes, demonstrations in advance. It can be said about their activity that they were competing with other bourgeoisie forces for the title: „vanguard of the counter-revolution”. They regarded the safeguard of workers' interests inside capitalism as their main aim, so its deceptive when we report on hundreds of workers' actions. Since most of these were under the control of the mentioned political forces or of the Bolshevik gnomes. The spread of the strikes was backed by the fact that the Hungarian economy was going under a transformation and the heavy industry was gaining ground. Due to this, during the recovery of mining, iron industry, textile industry strike movements of whole industries were able to emerge (typical data that from the beginning of the era to its end the number of the exploited in the textile industry increased from 20.000 to 60.000).

In the works and factories the Christian organizations and the system of informers were also present. As a contemporaneous observer noted, the strikes were not merely of economic but also of political importance in the mid thirties. Under the Gömbös era, and also even earlier, the conservative governments backed the formation of different far-right or fascist workers' organizations (Nation-wide National Alliance of Hungarian Workers, Parochial Workers' Organization, etc.) in order to frame the proletarian struggles even if they were carried out for reformist demands. Most of the strikes were organized for higher wages, so they were defensive. Pál Demény, with his ulterior coherence, wrote about the relation of the ruling **class** to the strikes as follows: „Horthy and his associates had to willy-nilly tolerate them. Their state apparatus knew that it's no use bearding with the organized workers struggling for more

food, better sanitary conditions, holding down their jobs, against wage cuts, increasing efficiency. Being aware of their right, they had got backbone, were faithful and united. The strike-breakers consisted only of non-union Christian-socialists, members of far-right organizations, and miser, indifferent workers. Right these are the bad workers, the production can't go with them. The loss of the profit is huge, and the municipal officers don't rejoice over the striker, desperate men and women. The union leaders usually back the strikers, but they are for the agreement when the strike-pay empties their pay-box." Being aware of this, it's worth mentioning the typical features of the strikes which became frequent from 1922. There were hundreds of strikes, however these didn't achieve real **class**-militancy. After demanding and getting wage-rise, the workers usually moved back into the works and factories. Moreover, due to the lack of co-ordination the strikes confined to single regions. Although the capitalists sometimes lost huge profit and had to take care of defeating the repining workers in time. Conflicts often occurred between the union leadership and the rank and file, and not always from political motive, but on „trade-unionist" terrain. One of the partakers disregarded the organizational agreement, so they had a row, but the conflict was usually solved soon after. So the masses of the working **class** were framed by classic social democracy, trade union bureaucracy and in a less degree by Stalinism. The far-right forces were gaining ground better and better and from the thirties onwards the antifascist framing were also strengthening.

The conditions for the evolution of very **class struggle** in Hungary were becoming increasingly complicated. On the one part the ruling **class** had a well-organized inspectoral system (police, system of informers, acts against the proletariat and communist organization), and was able to effectively defeat the proletarian actions. They tried to counteract the reorganization of the proletarian movement, which had been crushed after 1918/1919, also by legislative measures: they banned and persecuted the communist organization, propaganda activity, the so-called „**class** instigation" by all means. To commit this, it was enough to sing the International or to pass on a communist leaflet. There was censorship, all publications were banned which propagated against the order in **class struggle** way, the distribution of the emigrant communist and Bolshevik publications and of memoirs about the Hungarian Council Republic was also prohibited. Some works of the following

persons, among others, were banned: Trotsky, Ervin Szabó, Kropotkin, Lajos Kassák, Radek, Lenin, Buharin, Lukács, Marx, Gorter, Pannekoek, Attila József. The Bolshevik journal *Front* and a lot of other books, brochures, journals regarded as subversive were also banned. On the other part the MSZDP together with the trade unions and the Bolsheviks (who acted as an effective framing force even in the illegality) were able to function as a massive counter-revolutionary camp, even if it was not exempt from inner struggles between the different fractions, and to carry out its splitting activity. Today the situation in Hungary differs in that: then the left counter-moved stronger in the rivalry of the democratic forces. Today in Hungary the left is agonizing on the periphery and due to its identity crisis it is always flirting with the liberal government or its openly nationalist-conservative like the Munkáspárt ('Workers' Party'), the Bolshevik successor-party.

Agrarian misery, bondage and struggle

The poor peasants and wagemakers of the villages and farms also lingered on after the defeat of the revolution. The agrarian workers had „fixed labour-time” in the sense that they were working literally day in day out. They were usually on bread and water and ate some onion – this was their repast, which was calmly called lunch break. Their nutrition was „very manifold and abundant”, they ate meat and fruits very rarely, all the more bread, onion, and scrambled soup. In his book *Néma forradalom* ('Silent Revolution') Imre Kovács writes down in detail how the poor countrywomen (afterwards agrarian workers) had killed their children since the period of serfdom not to bear the children into misery, while the ruling **class** had been treating about the considerable wane of the Hungarian. In Zoltán Szabó's book entitled *Tardi helyzet* ('Circumstances in Tard') an eleven years old girl of agrarian working-**class** origin who vegetated in Tard reported on the manifoldness of her diet as follows: “I don't eat meat, because there is no meat.” Plain answer. (Nowadays the “condemned men” of the Diósgyőr carcass-pit can eat some meat because they gorge the city's carcasses of dogs, of cats, etc. Corking repast!). This shocking world is unveiled against us, if we read the works of the Hungarian “narodniks”.³ The social imprint of the feudal-capitalist dirt of the misery: farm-hands, day-wage men sentenced to everlasting grind. The backwardness was reflected by the fact that the agrarian working **class** was unable even to form trade unions, thus only

the social democrats and the Bolsheviki were agitating in the countryside, however they were not too successful. The formerly relatively strong agrarian-socialist movement, however, occurred from time to time and caused watchful nights for the gendarmerie for weeks at a time. The organizational level of our **class**, however, was not so depressing, as one could conclude from the above facts.

In this period, due to the capitalist transformation of the Hungarian economy, **class** antagonism became simplified to two antagonistic classes. Therewith the mental forms of feudal backwardness, however, dominated strongly. The landlords remained the same pitty monarchs at their lands, like they had formerly been as landed gentries. In spite of that capitalism had liberalized the economy, it took a whale of a time till the culture of capitalism also entered the old rustic milieu and displaced it from its secular lethargy. The Hungarian rural bourgeoisie, with his genteel hobbies, romantic nationalism, and his intense greed, could exploit the wageworkers living there in the most extreme forms. There were genteel sprees (sticking pigs, hard drink and wine, bitches, pipe smoke and headache at dawn...), all these were paid from the exploited work of the farm-hands, day-wage men and ground-men. Meanwhile the arrogant former gentries were gradually becoming bankrupt and they had to abandon their feudal style of living and were under the necessity of acclimatizing to the day-to-day challenges of capital. Their subjects were the ground-men, the day-wage men, the farm-hands and the smallholders who were farming their small lands – the exploited agrarian working **class** consisted of them. There could be economic differences between them, like a street-cleaner differs from a greengrocer (who functions as the possessor of the means of production but unable to profit from it beyond his or her own living) who uses his or her own labour force and doesn't exploit alien labour.

„The land reform of the counter-revolution created parcels of 2-3 acres which were unviable, over and above the redemption totally impoverished the new landholders. Since 1920 the number of smallholders increased from 720.000 to 912.932. Due to this the land reform not only made the distribution of the land even more unbeneficial, but increased the degree of exploitation of the agrarian labour force and caused catastrophic decrease in the wages of the day-wage men. It's well-known that the smallholder, even within general

conditions, was unable to pay his way only by farming his own land. He had to sell his labour force and to work for an other person in order to earn the money required to cover the shortcoming. Actually his interests are the same that of the day-wage man, since both of them, against the employer, try to obtain the highest wages possible. In case of unemployment, however, the smallholder has an advantage over the day-wage man living only from selling his labour force, because the smallholder can gain his subsistence in part from his land. The land reform not only increased the number of smallholders, but at the same time due to the redemption charged them. The smallholder couldn't dreamt that working on his 1-2 acres' parcel he would be able to pay both the redemption, the tax and would have enough money for his own living and for his family. He had to snatch with the avidity of despair for every realizable and unrealizable chance to work, for any wages. In fact the land reform opposed the smallholders who got some land to the day-wage men and according to the official data of the Ministry of Agricultural, between 1926 and 1931 decreased the yearly average wage of the agrarian workers from 429 to 227 pengos." – noted the Marxist István Miklós Stolte in his brochure entitled *Az ezer éves per: földreform és telepítés* ("The Thousand Years Old Cause: Land Reform and Settlement").

Out of the workers exploited in the agriculture the typical wageworker, the day-wage man got the lowest wage, which was approximately 180 pengos per year (it was just enough to avoid dying of hunger) in the early thirties. The farm-hand earned yearly 200 pengos. The day-wage man beyond his beggarly wage got some flare, potatoes, flour, etc. in order that he could avoid dying of hunger and could go to work again. In general there were two gainers in an agrarian working-class family. In 1930 there were 220000 families of farm-hands and 560000 families of day-wage men, approximately. The day-wage men in average worked yearly 120-150 days, they usually didn't have any work in winter so then the level of unemployment was very high. Out of the workers dragging on a miserable existence a lot of people were analphabet (according to certain sources in 1930 the administration „didn't want to give Bible" into the hands of 433.000 analphabets). And if somebody learnt to read, that person „was molesting the administration", as the following report shows: „András Pethes, as the first member of the family who learnt to read and to write, ascribed inhuman power to the letters. He sent applications and petitions to all of the imaginable powers and listed his

charges against the squire. In these he grouped the thousand year old discontents of the peasantry, which broke from his conscience out, with especial excitement. Finally the administration sent him into madhouse, since the father behaved intractably and was reiterating that the land concerns the people.” – wrote Géza Féja.

Against the mass of the agrarian working **class** stood the rural bourgeoisie (small capitalists and great landlords) as well as the urban aristocrats (of course they were also bourgeois) who possessed estates in the countryside. Since the mid of the 19th century (when the “civil revolution” had swept over Austria- Hungary, together with the industrial revolution) the feudal conditions had been gradually abolished by the capitalist development which commenced also in Hungary. But the level of the capitalist development fixated on a primogenous level of capitalist economy even in the first decades of the twentieth century and only slowly passed yesterday feudalism. The mode of production was transformed, the latifundia were farmed by wageworkers, however the rural provinciality was capitalizing very slowly. As Ferenc Erdei country-researcher wrote: “An other feature of the countryside is its backwardness. It means that everything happens sooner in the town, and even the things which happen sooner in the countryside or happen only there, become important according to the town. In the town the newspapers appear, the news arrives sooner, most of the initiatives arise from there and especially the prices are formed there. Rain and hailstorm are the events of the countryside, but also these become a social affair through the price-forming, the news and the standpoints of the town market. And, above all: much or, one might as well say, all of the major events of the bourgeois society take place only in the town, so the countryside can participate in them necessarily only secondly, only as a follower or as a borrower. Now this secondary and backward condition forms either the affirmative acceptance of backwardness or the striving against backwardness as special rural attitudes. The village close to the town follows quickly and tries not to stay out from anything, but the godforsaken village – which hardly can do anything other – forms a principle from its backwardness, or languishes and dies under the burden of backwardness which cannot be remedied or beautified by turning it into a conservative principle.” According to this, the statements of József Révai (who had a sometimes very meaty dialectical critical ability, but who was advancing more and more towards Stalinism) are also valid:

“Of course the main power – big capitalism – is in the hands of Budapest, but there is a Hungarian speciality – the dictatorship of the capital over the countryside gets along with the dictatorship of the countryside over the capital. Economically, financially and culturally, the capital is the master, but the countryside takes revenge, and it subjugates the capital in Budapest itself. The **class** compromise dominating over the life of the Hungarian society since 1867 manifests itself: the upper classes of Budapest borrow the strata, with which they keep both the countryside and Budapest below them, from the countryside. But the synthesis of the big capitalist and feudal forces is not a total fusion but only the ‘unity of the opposites’, that’s why a new unity has to be created – by **struggle** and bargain – again and again.”

So, this was the basis on which the resistance of the agrarian proletariat developed. Even during the most serious harassments, some agrarian socialist cells gave a sign of life. At the spring of 1921, an illegal cell was created in Endrőd, other groups were formed later in Jászapáti and Jászszentlászló, and the organizing efforts manifested themselves also in the growing number of isolated strikes. Arrests and worrying were on the agenda. The Bolshevik fraction in Vienna kept contacts with those Bolshevik groups in Hungary which were regularly leafleting in the area of the Tisza river, cheering the “new proletarian power”. The social democratic party also continued its petty political practices (in the environs of Nagymaros, the party promised several thousand koronas for those who voted for them, but if they didn’t vote they were threatened with unemployment), while the agrarian workers, who were followers of the party, were continuously worried by the gendarmerie. At the 20’s, only a pale shadow remained from the old, powerful agrarian socialist movement, the main problem was that the industrial proletariat and the agrarian proletariat were unable to create their own unified party-cells. At the one hand, the agrarian proletariat had been startled by the practices of the Bolshevik-social democratic party during the Council Republic. During this, they experienced that the old masters had been replaced by new ones or the masters even remained the same, (“The Hungarian agrarian proletariat with its low level of education couldn’t understand that in technical and functioning questions it had to obey the same farm manager who had subjugated and bled it – in the name of the landowner – before the revolution” – remarked Jenő Varga in 1921,

dealing with the agrarian critique of the Council Republic), they “hunger for land” had not been satisfied, just like before.

Moreover, such dividing forces as the various smallholders’ and farmers’ parties, associations, federations were present, which promised land reform and which had a strong influence thorough the country. The organizations of the urban proletariat were both numerically and organizationally weak to embrace the whole of the Hungarian working **class**, and a mere propaganda activity wouldn’t have been enough to revolutionize their fellow sufferers if those were not revolutionized by their immediate reality. The urban and the rural proletariat were dependent on each other, each of them would have had to encounter the bourgeoisie on its “own terrain” while trying to unify their forces. But except for some single events, this did not take place in the given period. Though the agricultural working **class** counted millions, it was isolated and scattered which enabled the power to keep it in check. The circumstances of the agrarian workers were even worse than those of the industrial workers, since its lack of organization made it naked to the landowner. The risk of the enterprise was partially shifted on them, since if there was a bad harvest, they received less wage for more work, this way unfreely taking over a part of the bourgeois’ loss. And if they tried to stick up for their interests then they could easily become unemployed since there was a considerable redundancy in agricultural workforce throughout the whole period.

Nevertheless, the army of the exploited, which was weakened after the revolution, slowly started to feel its legs. At the summer of 1920, several proletarians in Sümeg refused to swear an oath at the conscription, and shouting „We don’t swear!”, singing the International, they left the hall. The authorities literally hunted to our comrades at the homesteads, in the villages, in the dusty small towns and also in Budapest. Flatfeet were snooping around, until now this has been succeeded by the technique of universal camera-settings. The same disgusting atmosphere was scragging the agricultural and industrial proletariat, the bourgeois carrion-blow of which we can feel today again in the press, on the streets and squares, on the markets, in the villages and on the trams. Provincialism coupled with nationalist scamming and with the profit-hunting mechanism dictated by the ruling **class**. In spite of all these, the proletariat’s will to live manifested itself in countless

ways – from the refusal of work until the arrests because of movement-organizing activity, from the strikes up until the bloody struggles on the streets. The state organs sorrowfully discovered that at a lot of places, the agricultural proletarians decorated their walls with the pictures of Marx and Lassalle instead of crosses. The series of tortures, interrogations couldn't break the impetus of the agricultural proletariat's **struggle** which was often unorganized but undoubtedly permanent. From the middle of the 20's the strikes proliferated – in 1926 at the time of harvest the production was paralyzed in several places because the reapers stopped working. At this time there was a walk-out also in Nyírmártonfalva, the strikers were arrested for one month. There were strikes also in Moson, in Mezőgyána and other places. Gumshoes and lurkers traveled throughout the country, and bombarded the state organs with their reports. In a report from 1928 we can read: „Unemployment spreads more and more, thousands of ground-men are condemned to inaction and discontent rises more and more. The vital interests of 70000 people who are able to work are in question, who will get into a crucial situation if we don't help them by creating sufficient job opportunities. There are 5000 members in the ground-men's contractor co-operative but these also cannot provide job opportunities. One must let the redundant workers to go abroad and the church must also work more on education to 'fraternal love' since as less we deal with our working masses as more their private and public life will be driven towards extremities – harmful internationalism and disbelief.” In several places there were imprisoned those workers who started to organize because of the sleazy fare and the low wages. The usually unorganized „labour troubles” were quickly smashed by the authorities, but they were not able to short out the self-organizing agricultural proletariat itself from the world of misery. Much were fired, the strikers were often doomed to prison or penalty (if the comrade was imprisoned at harvest time then its family was doomed to dying of hunger). The wage struggles usually ended with a defeat, and this intimidated the strikers since the bogy of firing and incarceration was hovering over their heads.

The Bolsheviks, thus also the MSZMP ('Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party'; the legal cover-party of the Bolsheviks which was created in 1925) found out that the **struggle** of the agricultural proletariat and that of the industrial proletariat had to be swung to the same direction, this was also propagated by them in one of their

proclamations distributed in the countryside, in which they urged the unification of the workers of the town and those of the countryside. But our Bolsheviks were not able to slough their elitist skin also in this case. Deeply scorning the agricultural proletariat, they stressed that it is the urban proletariat which is only capable of leading their **struggle** to victory. This typical, falsely understood vanguard-fudge was later accepted within the ranks of agrarian workers (after the “World War II”, in particular), but until that the Bolshevik agitation had harmed the life of the oppressed of the villages with less efficiency. Certainly, the unification of the forces – on the basis of mutual dependence – would have been important for the agricultural and the industrial proletariat, but this was not realized.

Working class and proletariat

At the middle of the twenties, more than 20% of the workers worked longer than 10 hours per day, in Kőbánya, 12-13 years old working-**class** children grubbed 12 hours a day, they carried bricks for a monthly wage of 7 pengos. Because of workplace casualties, approximately 3000 – 4000 workers died or became disabled every year. In 1926, the average rent of a fusty, buggy flat was equal to 217 pengos, hence there were a lot who – in order to be able to pay the rent – had to hire out some sleeping places for night. A lot of worker families starved, in Budapest, 51% of the workers could not eat three times a day. Epidemics raved in the working-**class** districts. Kispest, Ferencváros, Pesterzsébet, Angyalföld... The tainted piped water did its part. There were a lot of suicides, one from every 2000 inhabitants of Budapest committed suicide (the reason was usually the blind-alley life of the working **class** member). „The radio speaks loudly far and wide, the writers write, the play-actors play, the movie goes on. At the same time, the inhabitants of the house in Visegrádi street 20-24. are sitting in their rooms and kitchens, wearily and bitterly, in most cases, at the light of paraffine lamp, they are sleeping, gaze into space, maybe quarrel with each other. And if they have a lot of free time, they may bethink themselves of the fact that their fate is much better than that of the Abyssinian natives, because they live in culture, and a well organized bourgeois society keeps guard over their material and spiritual goods. And those who are totally possessed by this beautiful thought, fall asleep earlier than the others, only to go with fresh force to penury labour in the morning.” (György Bálint)

At the end of the twenties, the members of the working **class** slowly and gradually started to confront the flagrant crisis of capital, they experienced directly that the capitalists shifted their losses upon them once again. In 1929, mainly Bolshevik activists started a hunger strike in the prisons, which was probably organized by the illegal Bolshevik party. Misery and the lack of any perspectives brought the working **class** to the streets again and again but those were not the real interests of the proletariat which were standing behind the demonstrations and strikes, which had become regular since the spring of 1930 – these were merely the democratic actions of the workers floundering in the train of the social democratic and Bolshevik parties. In 1929, already 75000 industrial workers were jobless. Various movements of the unemployed were formed, with the fuss of the trade unions' in the background. There were demonstrations in Kispest, Szeged, Debrecen, Gyöngyös, Pécs and other bigger towns. At 26th of January 1930, on a demonstration in Budapest organized by the KMP, the demonstrators confronted the police on the Rákóczi street, one policeman was knocked off. But these demonstrations were quickly disarmed by promising various subsidies and by negotiations. It was time for the working **class** to face the fact that it can expect absolutely nothing neither from its leftist functionaries, who had been using the masses for the sake of their own ambitions, nor from the government which gave only so much aid which was barely enough to avoid dying of hunger, this way securing the possibility to put them to work at any time. The left-wing parties used tactics and threw their slogans to the masses according to the actual balance of forces. At this time, the 7-hours working day and 40-hours working week was on the agenda of the reformist workers' movement. These had been borrowed by the social democratic movement from its western relatives in 1931. The organized workers were organized by the reformist left-wing political forces, and the unorganized were often scabs, so capital preferred to employ the latter. Just like today, the bourgeoisie was good in exploiting the division of the working **class**. The „foreign workers” often confronted the local ones, the right-wing raised his word against the non-Hungarian workers, demanded their firing and deportation (the characteristics of nationalism has been the same up until today). Some social democrats sometimes put forward the same demands (the social democrats from Győr in 1931, for instance). The jobless often clashed

with those employed – there were not even the palest signs of class solidarity.

But still, the proletariat in Hungary was breathing, moving, organizing. At 1st of September 1930, a gigantic demonstration took place in Budapest.

First of September, 1930

„In Pest, on the pavestone,

Flows the blood of the prole,

Noises of machine-guns and rifles

Are not quiet as yesterday

Red Tomorrow is awakening!

Our song about the revolution”

The events in September did not surprise the authorities, the quickly worsening economic conditions during the world-wide economic crisis led to a densification of strikes which showed the growing combative mood of the proletariat. The social democrats called the masses on the streets on 1st of September, but the proletarian-killers wanted to see a silent demonstration of the sneaky mass. The KMP spoke to the masses in a more radical tone, it called for a loud, militant demonstration – which could show the power of the party. A mass of 150 thousand people marched on the Andrassy boulevard and in its surroundings, the army of demonstrators flowed on the streets shouting „Down with Horthy!”, „Down with Bethlen!”. The slogans were still moderate, they demanded „Work and bread!”. On the corner of the Andrassy boulevard, the policemen blocked the road and attacked the mass, which clashed with the hirelings of the state shouting „Long live the dictatorship of the proletariat!” and „Down with the government!” A politician from the opposition tried to soothe the angry proletarians who reacted by burning his car. The social democratic leaders desperately recognized that the hell had broken loose, and that it was only the help of the police which had saved them from having been killed. The revolt had already reached the

Városliget (City Park), in the city there were overturned trams, cars, scattered pavestones everywhere. „Let’s beat the policemen to death!” – the cry spread on the squares, but the police volley-firing killed a 22-years old comrade. The empty-stomached proletarians of the street became even angrier. The city center turned into a battlefield, but except of several well-organized actions at which the cordons were broken through, the will of the masses was not uniform in respect to the means of reaching the concrete aims. They clashed with the armed forces of the state, they distributed the leaflets written by the blinding light of the paraffin lamp, the International could be heard several times, but they did not manage to generally revolutionize the working class. The proletarians confronted the armed forces of the ruling class in the countryside, too. The proletarians of Miskolc, Győr and other towns fought their street battles separately. The series of events at 1st of September could have been a turning point in the life of the proletariat, since such huge masses had not been on the streets since the proletarian revolution. But the weapon of mass strike and the raising of barricades didn’t prove to be enough to escalate the struggle. The demonstration remained defensive, no concrete program or idea were put forward, also nothing about the question how the struggle had to swing further. The revolt was also not coordinated with the members of the working class living in the neighbouring countries. Some voices of solidarity emerged in the movement press, but generally the Stalinists monopolized the evaluation of the events, the majority of the world proletariat didn’t even hear about what happened.

Permanent crisis, fascist hordes, war against us

Due to the antagonism of capital and labour, the general crisis of capitalism manifests itself steadily in the form of different social upheavals. It’s true even if the bourgeoisie is able to find ephemeral solutions for certain partial problems. We know these „delectable salves” very well: unemployment, disguised or open war against us, etc. In 1929 a further symptom of the crisis of the capitalist system occurred, over and above very sharply. From the end of 1928 (and from 1929 still more) the main creditor of Europe, the US detained its credits. The liquid export of capital of which value in 1928 was more than one milliard dollars, decreased to 200 million dollars during 1929. It was dangerous even in itself since the indebted Central-, and East-European countries

were able to pay their extinction mainly only from further credits. Thus the economy crashed. In this situation none of the capitalists wanted to start new investments, so the amounts applied to investments decreased materially world-wide. There were no orders for the industries producing capital goods, they stopped the production and fired great masses of workers. At the end of 1932 there were 15 million unemployed workers in Europe. Until 1932, when the crisis touched its bottom, the world-production of constructional trade, compared to the summit before the crisis, decreased with 40%. The world-production of coal-mining, of iron-, and steel industries decreased with 60%. The decrease of the employment decreased also the absorbing capacity of the market, so the crisis spread to the industries producing consumer goods. The demand decreased materially and this abated the prices. The prices of agricultural goods started to collapse, the price of the grain on the world-market decreased with 58% between 1929 and 1932. The agrarian working class was starving, the urban working class was living in penury. In 1933 there was general famine for instance in Ukraine, in the North-Caucasus, etc.

The effect of the general crisis of capitalist production spread to Hungary, too. Due to the decrease of the prices of agricultural goods in fact the Hungarian agricultural export broke down. The inflow of capital, which had been considerable during the prosperity, stopped. The western creditors of the Hungarian bourgeoisie suddenly reclaimed their money, thus the Hungarian bourgeoisie was running into debt more and more. They tried to solve this problem by increasing the exploitation of the working class. The wages in general decreased with 50-60%, the number of the unemployed workers increased from approximately 250000 to 600000. The poor peasants, owning small lands, were running into debt, lost their lands which were bought by the peasant proprietors. The set-back in the field of the industry occurred mainly in the iron industry and metallurgy, in mechanical engineering, building-trade as well as in food industry. Until 1932, when the crisis touched its bottom, the number of the workers employed in these industries decreased with 30%, the wages in general decreased with 25-30%. All these meant the pauperization, and in several cases, the real famine of the working class. In Hungary there was no unemployment benefit, thus the system of the so-called starvation work was established. It meant that in exchange for some kind of labour service a wageworker got as much money that he or she could creep home in order to sleep, and on the following day back to

the workplace. In this period, due to the general misery, the movement of the unemployed workers strengthened, the incensed proletarians were demonstrating throughout the country.

At the end of 1929 and early in 1930 when winter came, the unemployed workers also arrived to the streets of Szeged, Debrecen, Miskolc, Hódmezővásárhely, Eger, Pécs, Nyíregyháza. In Szolnok the hungry demonstrators were attacked by the police and the scuffle ended with flatling. The hungry proletarians demonstrated in Szegeden, Gyula, Járókszállás, Hódmezővásárhely, Orosháza, Kiskundorozsma. They shouted as follows: „Here is the revolution, down with the masters, let's go there where the food is!”, and attacked the police which scattered the mass by beating them with gun-stock. A lot of people were arrested. The actions, however, didn't spread to other districts and because of their detachedness, afterwards everything was going in the same groove. In several cases it was the „calm” and pacifist, counter-revolutionary attitude of the social democratic party which prevented the masses from acting as real class-militants. To attain this, naturally, at the workers' hand it was necessary to pin their faith upon the party. Above we wrote that the left-wing parties of the bourgeoisie didn't have a great influence on the agrarian working class. It was true in general, but they were able to put pressure on the working class when it was urgently required for the ruling class. The publications and the leaflets of the social democrats could suddenly appear in the critical areas to pour balm into the workers' wounds. For this it was necessary that the hungry masses who were unable to organize themselves seriously, had democratic illusions and cooperated with the social democrats.

During the period of the crisis the ground-men easily left their non-existent workplaces, so the proletarians of the cities and of the neighbourhoods took part together in the demonstrations. On the 1st of September in 1930, when the proletariat was fighting on the streets of Budapest, hundreds of proletarians were demonstrating in other cities, for example in Gyula, Szentes, Szeged, Debrecen, etc., but the clashes didn't form a great and strong insurrectional wave. The causes are well-known. There was bungling in every region, the lack of organization and the lack of perspective dominated everywhere. Many people thought - and they were absolutely wrong! - that the agrarian proletariat „was fighting with the feudal latifundia” and the urban proletariat opposed the

world-bourgeoisie. Seemingly they were fighting against different enemies, but in reality there was not a shadow of difference between them. The smallholders and the day-wage men sought the sources of their problems near at hand, while the ruling class profited from their exploitation. So the agrarian workers could be manipulated easier by anti-Semitism and be instigated against the towns, because of the backwardness of the countryside, what we detailed above; the urban workers vegetated on higher living standards, thus the witch-hunt was successful. Today the Hungarian nationalism also uses the same methods: it's enough if we look at the slogan of the revision of the frontiers which is very popular today, or at the very active Christian Churches interlocked with the far-right. On the other hand, it's much cheaper for the Hungarian bourgeois to employ the workers of Romanian, Ukrainian origin, so they try to embrace this fact on the field of xenophobia. It's the same problem like then: we are confined into different regions or isolated by the huge distances. There is no direct class-militant connection between the struggles of the Brazilian land-retakers and of the Polander miners, just like in the case of the rural-, and the urban proletariat then. The bourgeoisie is usually able to solve the „micro-problems” confined into regions from their point of view satisfactorily.

In spite of the manipulation, violent retorsion and the peaceful promises the proletarian actions were continuing in the thirties, too. „We are living in penury and starving. Count Teleki is jollifying and pay the costs from the blood pressed out from his landless peasants” – wrote a Bolshevik leaflet in the early thirties. Early in 1932 the masses demanded work and bread in Makó, Szeged, Mindszent, Nagymagócs, the ground-men were on strike in Battonya. In February a firm in Pesterzsébet called jobs, a few workers were accepted and the others, the unemployed workers attacked the office. In March the proletarians demonstrated for work and bread in Debrecen, they joined battle with the police, 54 proletarians were arrested. There were demonstrations in Csongrád, Békéscsaba and in several other places. The government financed the social democratic party and the trade unions in order that they could control the discontented voices. In April, due to the pressure of the masses and of the left-wing inner opposition, the social democratic party went to the streets in order to demonstrate its existence for both sides. In Balmazújváros and in Nyírtura, however, the masses attacked the gendarmerie, they used stones and sticks, finally the gendarmerie opened

fire on them. The streets were covered with proletarian blood, several proles were arrested and during the interrogation they were beaten. The organ of the party, the *Népszava* was banned for a short time. Both the MSZDP and Bolsheviks dealt a lot with the conditions in the countryside, so they „perceived” that „the question of the ground-men is firstly the question of the land”, thus the land reform has to be conquered on political field. During the period of the crisis the Bolsheviks, to some slight extent, also strengthened. At the end of 1932 the party center had connections with several cells (from Kecskemét to Győr), but more and more activists were arrested (193 activists were put under arrest in 1933). The social democratic party was unable to organize among the agrarian workers securely and effectively. It didn't know the local conditions well enough and sank into its electoral campaigns.

In the state of the general upheaval the want for pacification strengthened among the bourgeoisie. It led to the reinforcement of the government's far-right opposition. Bethlen resigned and after Gyula Károlyi's prime ministership, in 1932 Gyula Gömbös became prime minister. Thus the fascist orientation, revisionism and anti-Semitism strengthened and Gömbös, in long-term, was working on the formation of a dictatorship similar to the Italian one. By this time, however, the total building-up of the fascist system didn't come about yet. Since the yeasty promises, demagogism (new workplaces, reformation of capitalism under the aegis of romantic anti-capitalism, anti-Semitism), and the fictitious decrees (benefit for the medium-holders, taking over of one part of the smallholders' debt by the state, etc.) were enough to abate the discontent of the working class. Hordes shouting anti-Semite slogans were on the hike throughout the country and influenced easily certain groups of the unconscious workers who wanted land, work and better living conditions. In 1937 the Kaszáskeresztes Párt (‘Scythe-Cross Party’) tried to organize an army from the most exploited workers of the villages, which would have attacked Budapest in order to capture the power and form a government (in the event of victory, the party promised 20 acres land per head for all the members of the army). The racist groups reached also the world of the homesteads in the southern Alföld, the agitators of the Nemzeti Szocialista Magyar Munkáspárt (‘National Socialist Hungarian Workers’ Party’), of the Nemzeti Radikális Párt (‘National Radical Party’), of the Nyilaskeresztes Párt (‘Arrowed-Cross Party’), of the Alföldi Brigád (‘Brigade of Alföld’), of the

Kettőskereszt Vérszövetség ('Double Cross Blood-Alliance') were present there. Moreover, several journals like the *Nemzetőr* ('Militiaman'), *Nyilas roham* ('Arrowed Assault'), *Nyilas harc* ('Arrowed Struggle') and different brochures propagated the racist thoughts, dulled the workers. After the occupation of Austria by the Germans in 1938, this course intensified, since due to this the Arrowed movement strengthened. Gömbös, however, didn't have a unitary fascist mass-movement, and the building-up of such movement was contradictory both to the interests of the capitalists and that of the great landlords. After the first period of the pacification, the ruling class didn't need an omnipotent leader. Now Gömbös tried to enlarge the power of his government upon the economy and with his permanent social demagogy was instigating the agrarian workers against the great landlords. Both the groups of the capitalists and of the great landlords disapproved of this, so they tried to push the fascist groups back.

The bourgeoisie was still unable to restore order, in the midst of the inner struggles of the ruling class the proletarians continued the organization. In summer, 1934 there was a demonstration in Sarkad and others followed it in December, in Debrecen and in Nyíregyháza. In Kőrösladány the proles marched to the town-hall and shouted as follows: „We are dying of hunger!”. In 1936 the harvestmen went on strike in the Pallavici manor. In several cases the isolated communists and the Bolsheviks also took part in the organization and launching of the strikes, but without the support of the masses their activity was not very effective. It was also added to the strike movement which livened up in the late thirties that the urban proletarians, who were in direct connection with the countryside, also fought for higher wages and as casual workers took part in several cases in the demonstrations of the agrarian proletariat. Due to the effect of the industrial proletariat's movement the workers went on strike at the sugarworks in Mezőhegyes, the platelayers went on strike in Kisbér, the textile workers in Szőny, etc. From the pieces of news they got several agrarian workers felt a kindly interest toward the Spanish proletarian revolution. The farm-hands blustered at their landlords as follows: „Take care what you do, because we are going to make it warm for you, like the Spanish peasants made with their landlords and priests in Madrid”

Meanwhile the government started to reorganize the economy in order to stabilize its position. To get through the crisis they decreased the state costs, increased the taxes and took up loans. They encouraged financially the agricultural export, so they ameliorated the competitiveness of the Hungarian products. Moreover, thanks to the political-economic orientation towards Italy, Germany and Austria there were new markets for the increasing export. The government succeeded in decreasing unemployment by encouraging the electricity supply and the aluminium production. Gömbös planned to establish an obligatory corporate system which would have been very similar to the Italian corporative system. He wanted to eliminate the strikes and demonstrations in this way, that is, to solve the „workers’ question”. Gömbös, however, mobilized the fascist groups to no avail, he failed to take over the helm against the rival bourgeois groups. They were against the exaggerated control of the state over the economy and the instigation against the great landlords, as well as against the quick political-economic orientation towards Germany, since in long-term they were afraid of the loss of their autonomy. Thus, due to the opposition of the capitalists and of the great landlords, Gömbös was not able to entirely practise his social demagogy and without an adequate mass-movement he didn’t succeed in carrying his plan into execution even till 1938.

Due to the war preparations of the fascist powers, which were gaining ground and livening up from the mid thirties, the Hungarian industrial-, and agricultural exportation to these countries increased. The economic-political bonds strengthened more and more so these supported the strengthening of the Hungarian fascist forces. As natural continuation of the always stressed revisionism, Hungary also began to war preparations in 1939, which, thanks to the considerable capital investment and to the development of heavy industry, gave a new impulse to the economy. The formerly huge unemployment decreased, the wages which had been previously minimized, increased (mostly in the heavy industry), the living standards of the working class, compared to the former years, changed for the better. The agricultural production also livened up due to the increasing inner consumption and broadening export. At the same time the government tried to gain direct control over the economy. Several factories were pronounced to ordnance factories and were put under military leadership. The government could control the production and the operation of the factories, thus it centrally increased the labour-time

and the intensity of labour. The men between the age of 14 and 70 as well as the adult women could be called up for work of home-defense at any time. So, the exploitation of the working class was intensified already from this time. In this period the government introduced the so-called Jewish-laws which defined the maximum percentage of people of Jewish origin in certain ways of business, so the bourgeoisie hastened to discard the workers of Jewish origin and fired them in great quantities. When they became unemployed the police interned them soon after under the pretext of that they were labour deserters, thus they made a living certainly with illegal means.

In 1941 Hungary joined the „World War II”, thus the functioning of the war economy and the extension of war altered the conditions of the working class for the worse. Due to war prosperity the unemployment mended, but with the increment of the wages there was a huge increase in prices (until 1943 the prices increased more than 300% compared to the pre-war price-level) and because of the shop-shortage a lot of basic goods were non-available or were much more expensive than usually. The state tried the decrease the wages and the home consumption by means of adjusting prices and wages, and afterwards both rationing and obligatory surrender of agricultural goods were introduced. Due to that Hungary gradually became ancillary to the German war machine the deficit of the state estimate increased materially. This problem was solved by inflation of the currency and continuous extension of labour-time, so the living standars of the working class were continuously decreasing. In addition the bourgeoisie tried to liquidate all forms of resistance and organizational efforts. In September 1943 – for instance - 5000 workers went on strike at the Weiss Manfréd factory demanding 40% wage increase, but the army intervned and crushed the strike. The state repression, the police control were intensified at the workplaces in order to maintain the uninterrupted production: in case of absenteeism the workers were fined, sent to the front or were interned. Meanwhile the army was mobilized tens of thousands of workers were sent to the front in order that they would fight and die for bourgeois interests. So the bourgeois war against us was becoming total more and more on all sides.

Horthy and his associates seeing the German military defeats, however, tried to withdraw from the war. In reply to this, at the same time with the occupation of Hungary by the Germans, fascists assumed power

with the collaboration of the Sztójay government on 19th of March, 1944. The Gestapo was more effective in repressing the workers than the former military powers were, more and more labour camps were established for the refractory proletarians. The ghettoization, deportation and sending of workers of Jewish origin to the front was started soon after, and these were enthusiastically carried on by the Arrowed movement (when we are writing these their successor organization – the Magyar Gárda [Hungarian Guard] - is just being established in Hungary) after their rise to power in October, 1944. Hundreds of thousands of workers of Gipsy-, and of Jewish origin, communists and those who were condemned as „lumpen persons” were killed. The Bolsheviki and the left-wing social democrats made common cause with the Soviet Union and gathered into an antifascist front against Hitler in order to fight back: they put forward the slogan of „independent, free, democratic Hungary”. The popular front organized the antifascist resistance, they demanded wage-rise, better alimention and the decrease of labour-time. In 1944 in Pécs the workers in the coal-mines celebrated May Day with work stoppage, on 10th of July in Békéscsaba leaflets („Let’s sabotage! Join the partisans! Don’t join the army! Down with the war! Beat those who hold with the Germans!”) were spread by unidentified persons. In September about 2000 workers from the Diósgyőr ironworks marched to the management’s office and demanded the withdrawal from the war. In October Gömbös’s statue on Döbrentei square and afterwards a bookshop maintained by the Arrowed movement were exploded by partisans from Marót group. There were also sabotages, the Demény group and the Deák-Mayer group spread leaflets in Sashalom, Kispest, Soroksár, etc. and they organized attempts against the Arrowed movement, but kept closely in the shade of the Soviet Union. The popular front established its bases also in the countryside, the Bolsheviki party tried to act the role of the great leader but it walked into a rival organization, the Parasztoszövetség (‘Peasants’ Alliance’) which was founded in 1941. There were antifascist demonstrations and assemblies for independence, a few corps joined the Soviet army or the partisans in order to fight by the side of Bolshevism. The revolutionary traditions of the proletariat did not appear on the scene, in this region there was no opposition to the common insanity of trinity of fascism, nationalism and Bolshevism.

In June, 1944 a group, calling itself anarchist, gave a sign of life during its action in a small town in North-Hungary. They had entered into a totally false (self-liquidating) alliance with the Bolshevik partisans already from the beginning, but afterwards they had a row with the Stalinists who wanted to direct the events more and more, and who finally delated them for the fascists. Those members of the group who survived, split into fractions, some of them joined the Bolshevik party, the others performed direct actions. They attacked two warships from the Hungarian river fleet and afterwards exploded a fuel depot in the BudaCastle. Members of the third part of this movement were shot dead when they attacked a nazi residency. When Budapest stood a siege they organized sabotages, 200 activists of them were killed. After this they decided, except Korsakin who didn't agree with his fellows, to stop their activity till Hungary became part of the Soviet zone and would see what is to be done later. Till that time they were working in work detachments and in hospitals. In June, 1945 the movement held a meeting where the representatives of all the three wings were present. One of the wings, signed with P. M. monogram (he was a student), wanted to co-operate with the Bolsheviks and hoped that after finishing with the bourgeoisie they would finish also with the Bolsheviks. The other wing led by Torockói wanted to make the movement legal, while Korsakin's group aimed at continuing the struggle against the state and the Russian troops. They decided this question democratically and all of them stressed the they would accept the decision taken by the majority. The majority was on Torockói's side so the movement became legal, they established a printery and started their propaganda activity. Then the movement consisted of 500 active members. Afterwards they had a conflict with the Bolsheviks again, who eliminated the hostile group when they got an opportunity (it happened under the Stalinist era when there was a strike in a factory in Csepel). So their inorganization, democratism, the lack of a clear common program doomed to self-liquidation their far-leftist, popular frontist, class collaborationist attempt. Finally the so much wished Red Army arrived and continued the exenteration of the working class just as the Arrowed movement did it before. They broke everything, looted the flats of the workers, raped the women and girls who came their way, those who tried to resist were shot down. The soldiers captured by them were deported, executed; a lot of workers became „guest” of the Gulag for long decades. From the entire population which

consisted of 14,6 million people approximately 340000-360000 soldiers and 600000 civilians (mostly workers) were killed during the triumphant campaign of the bourgeoisie. The „new era” meant nothing positive for the working class, when it came out from the shelters only got the future of misery and exploitation within different bourgeois framework. The next chain-link of capitalism was the bolshevization, then the original version of monopol capitalism was renewed. We, however, still have only one task which is not easy: to liquidate the class society in order that we could sit down to drink a beer in such a way that we didn't need to look at the prices and at the time. There is the cold beer... can you see it?

Can we break walls with dialectics? (1.)

The history of the Hungarian workers' movement after the "II. World War" has been committed to paper almost exclusively by Bolshevik-social democratic Marxists, therefore they regarded all the major manifestations of the class movement as successes of their own party line, while usually they were writing disdainfully about the more radically leftist groups and – beyond leftism – the anti-democratic anarchist-communist groups and phenomena, and called them traitors. But there had been some militants about whom the party-historians had to speak, because, for instance, their activity in the workers' movement had become inseparable from their literary activity, so it was impossible to remain silent about them. The press also couldn't afford not to make capital from a newly discovered proletarian poet or working-class writer for a while. Here we would like to say some words about one of the most controversial figures of the movement in Hungary, Attila József, whom our introduction fits very well. In addition, we can witness now in Hungary a falsification, the aim of which is to make from this proletarian poet a bourgeois poet.

After the crushing of the revolution in 1919, during the twenties, in the Café Blau in Vienna, a small anarchist circle around Ernő Weiler met regularly. The latter considered himself a communist, but he had taken a loathing to the Bolshevik "party discipline" and made sabotage acts in Vienna together with his comrades while living the life of the vagabonds. Attila József had traveled to Vienna in order to study, and here he contacted Géza Forgács, a member of the 'Bund der Herrschaftslosen Sozialisten' anarchist circle, which published a periodical. The young poet heard a lecture of Pierre Ramus, and there he made acquaintances

with Weiler and his comrades. However, their ways separated. In this period Attila József met the Bolshevik elders of the Vienna emigration, György Lukács and Béla Balázs, and they held him a very talented proletarian poet. After the short stay in Vienna, Attila József arrived in Paris in 1926, here he made acquaintances with A. Dauphin-Meunier (who had written his book about the proletarian revolution in Hungary, *La Commune Hongroise et les Anarchistes*, not long ago, in 1925). Shortly after his arrival, Attila József got in touch with the Anarchist-Communist Union, which was discussing about individualist anarchism versus collectivism and anarcho-communism in this period. There are no memoirs from which we could know whether the young proletarian poet had somehow participated in the debates, and we are also not informed whether he met the Platformists around Makhno. For him, it was more a period of inquiry and immersion than of serious commitment. But the new influences had shown through his revolutionary poems written in those days – it's enough to mention the excellent *Szabados dal* ('Emancipated Song'). Soon he starts to deeply study the works of Marx, and, among others, this helps him to become one of the most brilliant revolutionary poets, the poems of whom step out from the usual medium, penetrate into the factories, workshops and workers' flats and hardly strike. The poet had become a member of the Bolshevik party, but he was expelled later because of his unreliability and anti-Stalinist views. Marx in lyrics – so we can characterize his most important and best thought-out poetic works. Attila József was one of those few in the Hungarian class movement whose historical materialist approach hadn't become a peculiar grotesque self-justification which makes one drown in Marxist orthodoxy. His class-struggle poems (he wrote a big number of them while living in the deepest proletarian misery) are tantamount to any high-standard communist analysis, and they are also first-class bases for agitation. Later some of his poems and essays suffered for the fact that the poet hadn't found his comrades and moved towards social democracy, and with his united frontist views drifted apart from the revolution. His journal contributions and studies are less meaty, but we can see in them the vague picture of a lost serious 'communist theoretician' (see *A szocializmus bölcselete* ['The Wisdom of Socialism'] from 1934, for example). In 1937, being 32 years old, Attila József committed suicide, not having found his place either in civil life or in the movement, so he decided to let the train destroy his young body which

had suffered many privations. We charge also this to the bourgeoisie's account. Sure it is...

About the activity of the IWW in Hungary

Already before the “First World War”, a Hungarian-speaking section of the IWW was formed in the United States, which published its journal *Bérmunkás* (“Wage Worker”). Károly Rothfischer was the editor of the journal during the war, who was imprisoned, then sent into exile to Mexico in the time of the witch-hunting against the IWW. The IWW was also present in Hungary, as its publications (brochures, journals) found their way to the comrades living here. The title of the journal had to be continuously changed, so sometimes it appeared as *Új Társadalom* (“New Society”), sometimes as *Ipari Munkás* (“Industrial Worker”), sometimes as *Védelem* (“Defence”, 1917), then as *Küzdelem* (“Struggle”, 1918), later as *Felszabadulás* (“Liberation”, 1918-1923). The organization published his journal in Hungarian language in Cleveland, Chicago and New York from 1912 until 1954. About the period after 1919, we know that György Hoffmann and his comrades regularly received the publications of the IWW from the USA, and they discussed them on their meetings on the Szúnyog-island and in Népliget. It was generally known, that Antal Mosolygó (whom József Lengyel simply called the “Hungarian wobbly”) sympathized with the IWW. He had got to know its publications through Ervin Szabó, and he also distributed them during the “First World War”. But we don't know whether he had direct contacts with the IWW. During the period of the revolution, the aim of the IWW-sympathizers in Hungary was the creation of the republic with Mihály Károlyi at its head, the formation of factory councils, but they didn't want to abolish private property (!). Let's see how the organization itself defined its relation to private property. We can read in an issue of *Bérmunkás* from 1926, published abroad, the following: “The IWW wants to put private property to the corporative property of the whole humanity, where each person must be a productive worker, because they have to consume necessarily the production of labour, and anyone who consumes without producing necessarily sponges on the product of someone other – he would steal the fruit of someone other's work. The IWW would make those consumer goods which are the personal needs of everybody the private property of those who use them. So, the IWW would abolish only the present system of private property, the using of

the private property system for exploitation, or – more correctly – make it the property of the masses who really produce them, in order to make it serve their prosperity and pleasure.”

We can see that the IWW imagined classless society on the basis of collective property. Of course, this programmatic point remains trapped in an illusion. Property can only function if there exists also propertylessness, so if we abolish the interconnected relationships of these opposites, the connection of cause and effect (capital-labour) will disappear. Hence it is wrong to plan a society with collective property as a basis for a world without exploitation. One of the main pillars of the communist movement is the destruction, total abolition and liquidation of all property forms. The concept of property is tied to the world of value, the latter is tied to the society of commodity production, and if there is no value, which we have destroyed together with the world of commodity, then capitalism and generally, the world of property is dead. But it is not an accident that the IWW places collective property in the basis of the future society, because its program declares that workers’ self-management is the goal of the organization. These are totally false programmatic points. Both the council communists and the “anarcho-syndicalists” would have had to understand that workers’ self-management is nothing else but the fulfillment of the social democratic program and practice lengthened “by our own hands”. Council communism as an important element of the communist movement made a series of ruptures and radical steps forward, but it couldn’t detach itself completely from social democracy. The same is the case with the IWW, and this is because it fundamentally misunderstands the relationship between the worker and his/her work, between capital and labour. It doesn’t take into account the communist recognition that after the victory of the revolution (and already during the revolutionary process, since he/she appears in it not as a worker but as a proletarian), the worker will relate to his/her reality – to a reality, where the rules of the disappearing value and its consequences (market etc.) do not function any more – not only as a productive force but as a human being fulfilling itself (coming to consciousness) through the revolution. Through the totality of the revolution, the opposition between labour and capital disappears and gives its place to the universal human activity, which organizes life – which is not alienated any more – according to the needs of the individual and the community, which are now not subordinated to

each other. In contrast, through workers' self-management, the worker manages the produced value (capital), one of the basic factors of his/her alienation. Although he/she has chased away his/her bourgeois masters, he/she continues to reproduce the hierarchical relationships by functioning as a worker (he/she controls a given domain and performs labour which produces commodities/means of exchange, he/she only replaces money by another means of exchange and keeps its function), so, he/she exploits himself/herself, and the army of labour collectively reproduces itself. They don't understand that the real, creative human activity forms a world which is completely separated from labour and value-production. That's why we call it human activity (and not labour!), because it exists not as a segment alienated from us, because we don't produce surplus value and means of exchange in monotone work processes, but the community – superseding the universe of the work process and its result: commodity value, through the activity of the not-specialized 'homo ludens' – re-creates again and again its collective existence according to its real (not alienated) needs.

But let's return now to the history of the IWW in Hungary. The IWW-current in the Hungarian working-class movement got a solid organizational shape only at the second half of the twenties, but it had been introduced already in the shadow of the developing white terror, by the workers' at Hungarian-American Woodworking Inc. who had returned from the USA. But even before, they had published their paper *Felszabadulás* in Bratislava. There were IWW-fractions in Komárom, Rózsahegy, Nagyszombat, Losonc and in Romania and Yugoslavia; the IWW distributed its paper also in Austria. From 1921, the Hungarian IWW also started to grow, the militants of the IWW-cell in the Woodworking Inc. were active in the cartridge factory, in the Ganz Electrical Factory, in the Kaszab Bolt Factory, in the iron factory and in other workplaces of Csepel, Budapest, Miskolc, Jászapáti, Ózd, Tatabánya etc. They wanted to create an illegal communist party together with those communists who organized in the same places. The idea of organizing an armed insurrection also arose, they wanted to put ten battalions into action in order to occupy the strategically important places in the capital, but this plan died too early. The exposure of the organizing activity was followed by a wave of arrests and then by long silence. And then suddenly the 26th of June 1928 issue of *Bérmunkás* (USA) reported that a comrade from Paris had informed it about the

initiative of forming a new IWW-movement in Hungary after the fashion of the American mother organization, under the name Magyarországi Általános Munkásszövetség ('General Workers' Union of Hungary'). From the beginning, the activity of MÁMSZ extended from propaganda to organizing strikes, it created discussion and reading circles, established a movement library. At the same time, MÁMSZ published its own *Bérmunkás* paper, which ceased to exist in the thirties when the organization declined (the publication had not been regular even before, the newspaper had disappeared for longer or shorter periods). The paper published in Hungary used a somewhat more moderate language than the American one, and the legality of the paper resulted in a type of verbal opportunism, because the editors always had to think about the censorship. However, they didn't hide their affiliation. ("MÁMSZ *does have* a program, and it is nothing else than that of the Industrial Workers of the World" – they wrote in their paper.)

Movement agitation, organization of common club life was a vital element for MÁMSZ. However, we don't remain silent about the consequences of their harmful ideology and practice which was based on ouvrierism and divided the potential force of the proletariat. MÁMSZ almost always spoke to the manual worker (as it professed in its program: the industrial worker) – the leather-worker, the building worker, the miner. As if there had been no wage workers who perform mental work. It propagated the centralization of the unions, but because of its ouvrierism, it focused attention only on the economic struggle, it didn't take into account the totality of capitalism going beyond the industrial workplaces. Another result of its syndicalist ideology was the belief in the omnipotence of the general strike. True, that through the general strike the production is paralyzed (which is a very important element of the revolutionary struggle), but if the stoppage does not turn into a universal struggle against the world of capital, then comes the restoration, the workers in some territories begin to operate the self-management model. The lack of a self-organizing communist party becomes unambiguous when the question of "how to go further?" emerges. Of course, this party is also not almighty and it has to go along all the bumpy roads of self-organization, but it has accumulated already so many classist experiences that it confronts the former illusions by propagating the unity of party and class. It does not divide but centralize, it doesn't ruminate on the question, how to continue the process of restructuring

labour, but it professes the communist society on the basis of “from everybody according to his/her abilities, for everybody according to his/her needs”, of the merging of mental and manual activity, and it organizes its revolutionary struggle in accordance to this aim. It was always the world of capital, its technological and work logic which determined the theoretical bases and practical steps of our confrontation, so the defensive struggle took place within its prison walls. It’s time to supersede this, and the biggest obstacles for this superseding are the old habits (the activity of MÁMSZ, for example, also drowned in this sea of dirt).

Bérmunkás was published 10 times a year, the paper contained 4 pages. It had become an organ of wage workers’ struggles, which considered the trade unions bureaucratic and obsolete, and it attacked, criticized them continuously. MÁMSZ also rejected the political parties. “The economical struggles will be directed not by political parties or leaders but by those who feel the oppression of capital on their skin in their workplaces, in the scene of production in every moment.” So it rejected the trade unions because of their reformism and their division of the class, it attacked the politicizing workers’ parties, and it set against the society of capitalists a specifically centralized workers’ self-management called industrial democracy, which could be achieved through a general strike (“the class solidarity which becomes conscious”). Through its controversial but intransigent class militancy, this IWW-fraction weakened capitalism but at the same time, it blunted the radicalism of the class struggle. It can be said about IWW in general that the former revolutionary vanguard grew tame and became more and more a typical anarcho-syndicalist organization. For MÁMSZ, this process of decay reached its critical point in 1934 when it formed an alliance with the Népmozgalom (‘Popular movement’) around Aladár Weisshaus – the two groups distributed their movement publications together, and MÁMSZ gave a space for Népmozgalom to function within its framework but without fusing with it. And this was done by an organization which criticized more than once the Soviet Union (denouncing not only its party bureaucracy, but also its social system) while *Új szó* (‘New Word’), the organ of Weisshaus’ group stood up for it. Not to mention that the comrades from the IWW in other countries fought a life-and-death struggle against the Leninists, Trotskyists and Stalinists. In spite of this, MÁMSZ in Hungary organized strikes, made

solidarity actions together with them. In the reality, Népmozgalom tamed MÁMSZ to itself, the latter was not even a pale shadow of its past. On the meetings of MÁMSZ, the anti-war and anti-fascist slogans became stronger, and the organization which had turned completely reformist was dissolved by the authorities in February 1937.

Anarcho-communist bombs...

During the thirties, the practice of the propaganda by deed also returned to the Hungarian communist movement. József Schiess, who in France scraped along as a decorator, was a member of the Revolutionary Anarchist-Communist Union (UACR) which was based on the Platform of Makhno and Archinov. After the organization had ceased to exist in 1930, he returned to Hungary in 1931, but he maintained his contacts with his comrades in France. In Hungary, he exploded bombs several times. The propaganda by deed was not denounced by the Platformists, they regarded it as a proletarian means by which the working class can be alarmed. However, we can say in general, that the actions of the propagandists by deed proved to be ineffectual, they got many of our comrades on the gallows or to prison. At the same time, if we set out from the weekdays in the cesspit of the bourgeois society, then the compulsion of the comrades to act becomes completely understandable emotionally. Just waiting and waiting, watching for the coming of the revolutionary hurricane, while we rot alive... Nevertheless, it is important to mention: "A revolution cannot be imagined without a big mass of fighters... and a lot of revolutionaries are prone to forget this." Even if the revolutionary goes ahead of the masses, he/she cannot stir them up with mere warning actions. It is not possible, because these actions necessarily lead into a dead-end by setting the terror of an individual or a smaller group against the incomparably stronger terror of the bourgeoisie. Even in its practice, the revolutionary vanguard can never detach itself from the proletariat, since it will be simply left alone without the support of the revolutionary masses – the revolution cannot be created artificially.

Having been acquainted with these experiences, Schiess and his comrades still believed in the awakening power of the propaganda by deed. József Schiess met in various pubs those militants who were expelled from the Bolshevik party, and presumably they were those from

whom he recruited his group. They made plans for a series of attempts, and they performed some smaller actions. In 1932, a phone-box next to a hotel was blown up, then Andrassy street 60. followed. Between these bombings, Schiess and his comrades held seminars “on the anarchist ideology, on the nature and application of the fighting means of this approach”. They stressed that “in order to overturn the present social order, for people who desire for subversion it is absolutely necessary to harm the repositories of the present social order, to weaken the pillars of the present order by making a succession of attempts”. In 1934, the group got into gear again, this time their targets were the flats of the bourgeois living on the Andrassy street. However, the police were already watchful, they arrested comrade Schiess, but they couldn't get anything out of him about his comrades. The group continued to organize, but the police were on its track, and soon they arrested two militants who were putting together their bombs. The two detainees didn't give any information about anybody and anything, they denied the fact that they belong to a group and they also denied that they have contacts. However, the house searches proved to be revealing, the police found the evidences for their affiliations in their homes – a number of comradely publications from abroad and also letters from comrades. As it is emphasized also by a detective's remembrance, József Schiess considered himself a convinced communist and he insisted that he had wanted to intimidate and terrorize the bourgeois society by his bombings, and that he had wanted to incite the members of KMP to do similar actions – since a lot of them sympathized with the propagandists by deed. One of the detainees stated: there was a ‘legal’ communist party which followed the politics of the Comintern, and an ‘illegal’ one, the party of the ordinary members which supported such kind of actions and would have participated in them. But the comrades were locked up for long-long years.

The opposition (1.)

We use the term ‘opposition in the workers’ movement’ in a much broader sense than the Hungarian bourgeois historiography. This current was far not uniform, in its ranks there were militants expelled from the KMP or the social democratic party, leftist who “had been striving for independence from the beginning”, various Marxists, Trotskyists, anarchist sympathizers, people having an artistic bent, masters of the art

of living. Such fractions which were thrown out of the social democratic and Bolshevik parties also emerged. Those expelled differed from the official current in the fact that they didn't submit themselves to the Stalinist commands (they formulated an elementary, latent, not characteristic critique of the Soviet Union), and they could perform their activity in a somewhat more bustling spiritual milieu. So, let's survey the field of the Bolshevik opposition, and let's map its main footholds.

In 1925, a legal cover organization of the Bolsheviks was established under the name Magyarországi Szocialista Munkáspárt ('Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party'). One of the leaders of this party was Aladár Weisshaus, and old militant of the movement, an "adherent of Landler". The program of the party stood on a completely social democratic basis: it demanded suffrage, appropriate real wages and other reforms. Even before the founding of the party, Weisshaus and some of his mates had come into conflict with Kun's company, so they were expelled after the formation of the party. Weisshaus and his followers started to criticize the program of MSZMP more and more, questioning its "revolutionary aims". They opposed the forming of Bolshevik cells, they attacked the party leadership for its will to participate in the parliamentary elections, and they also raised objections against the participation of the foreign commission of KMP in the direction of the Hungarian movement. All in all, they confronted the line of Kun, which was sending unprepared and inexperienced activists to Hungary who were then arrested one after the other. The case of Irma Mendl came on top of this. The party leadership accused the Bolshevik activist woman of being a police agent, but Weisshaus qualified this charge as a slander and he stood up for the old militant. At the same time, he wanted to bring on a split within the party, and he tried to take over the leadership of the party in some districts of Budapest. At the beginning of 1927, for instance, Weisshaus and his followers came to blows with other activists in the Hernád street central party office.

After his expulsion from the party, Weisshaus didn't idle, but started to organize reading and agitation circles, together with his group in Kőbánya, Ferencváros and other suburbs. Then they made contacts with some members of the Kommunista Ifjómunkások Magyarországi Szövetsége ('Hungarian Association of Young Communist Workers'). The youth organization functioned under the aegis of the Bolshevik

party, but their activity was loosely coordinated. That's why the Weissshaus-group could contact the hard core of KIMSZ, those young militants around Iván Hartstein, our later comrades, who were only advancing, developing towards the communist movement at this time. The Weissshaus-group took part in numerous strikes, while they were continuing their seminars, on which they usually analyzed Marx' *Capital*. Weissshaus wrote even a book entitled *Társadalmi gazdaságtan* ('Social Economics'), which interprets the message of the massive volumes didactically but far not on a low level and not in a self-justifying Bolshevik manner. In 1934, Weissshaus published (under the pseudonym István Párkányi) another longer writing entitled *Új társadalom felé* ('Towards a New Society') in which he thoroughly analyzed the role of technology in the society of commodity production, connecting it with the growing unemployment. Dealing with the state deficit, he pointed at the general crisis of capitalism, but his analysis didn't attain anything else than the Bolshevik state capitalism – for him, this was “the society of the future”. In spite of this, the Stalinist Bolsheviks continuously attacked their less bureaucratic, anti-Stalinist mirror image, they accused him of being a police squealer (groundlessly). But why couldn't the Stalinist party tolerate its rival? Weissshaus didn't want to create a fraction, he didn't want to centralize the reading and study circles, he didn't restrict the independence of the lecturers; as he says in a letter: “for the time being, I didn't think about a movement, but about educating a communist vanguard, the lack of which in MSZMP I had felt with regret”. So Weissshaus and his followers wanted to educate creative movement militants and not push-button robots which carry out every order – in this, they differed from the Stalinists, but nevertheless, they also followed the line of Comintern. From the second half of the thirties, the members of Weissshaus' *Népmozgalom* tried to disintegrate different fascist organizations, some of them entered these and continued their agitation there. In 1937, Weissshaus was put behind bars because the authorities watched his extensive anti-fascist activity with repugnance. However, his adherents remained active even without him, and they penetrated not only into fascist but also into social democratic organizations in order to discuss, agitate and disintegrate them. During the war, Weissshaus (who had been released in 1942) and his companions organized new study circles and they created a complete net between the workshops. Characteristically, they distributed also the leaflets of the

Stalinists in this period: the politics of the popular front, the worship of the Soviet Union didn't enrich the workers' movement with new recognitions, which would have gone beyond the counter-revolutionary nature of the fraction struggles within the same camp (this opposition confronted more the local Stalinists than Stalinism as such). Although the change of power which was expected by Weisshaus really took place after the war, his Stalinist comrades continued to harass him.

The critical remarks said before are valid also for the movement led by Pál Demény, the members of which opposed Moscow in some questions, but in the reality, they didn't supersede the moscovites' standpoint in anything. They were less demagogic than the Stalinists; they were Leninists, but they didn't even call themselves a fraction. This label was stuck on them only after the war. Nevertheless, they belonged to the opposition, since they didn't join the ranks of those who were bowing and scraping to the official leadership and pulling its wagon. At the same time, they often collaborated with the Bolshevik party, they contributed to its press under pseudonyms, published papers, organized strikes, distributed leaflets. They attacked the personality cult, instead of it they cherished the cult of the first, "true generation" of the Bolsheviks. They wrote books and analyzes, they were imprisoned for long years both under Horthy and later under the Bolshevik rule (the Stalinist party did never forgive their heresy). During the war, they fought for 'the liberation of the homeland', propagating the dictatorship of the proletariat (!), they organized strikes and acts of sabotage – also strictly in the shadow of Moscow, forgetting the heritage of the Zimmerwaldists, fooling several thousand workers. In spite of all these, Demény was locked up by his Stalinist comrades after the war. Later he wrote the history of his prison years and also his autobiography, which are useful readings in the sense that they give a picture about the history of the oppositional movement.

A snapshot of Rézner's group

In the seminars of Weisshaus, a Marxist militant had grown up who later became 'independent' – in the strict sense, he was neither a Trotskyist nor a Leninist, but he could not get out from the magic circle of the Soviet Union since he considered it the only proletarian state in the world. We are talking about the coppersmith József Rézner, the key

figure of the Rézner-group, who left Weisshaus' circle in 1931, considering that its cautious, low-key functioning is not enough. He formed his own group in which there were some 60-80 members (according to József Román's report based on police data). Rézner himself also laid much stress on self-education, in 1934, he wrote a book entitled *Marxiizmus* ('Marxism') in which he analyzes and popularizes Marx' *Capital*. The group was attracted to anarcho-syndicalism, that's why its above mentioned sympathy towards the "workers' state" is quite strange. The history of the group has mostly remained a mystery, so we can only briefly mention its presence on the palette of the opposition. We suppose that it didn't enrich the proletarian movement with its recognitions and activity. Actually, by asserting its critical support of the Soviet Union, it prevented the Hungarian working class from coming to proletarian class consciousness.

Trotskyists

The exploited living in this area could know only from the social democratic press (which liked the Mensheviks) and the Stalinist press, what was going on in the USSR. While the bourgeois newspapers demonized the Soviet Union, the Stalinists presented it as the Earthly Paradise, the Leninists and Trotskyists, on their part, spoke about the bureaucratization of the "proletarian state". Within this manipulative medium, whole generations of the working-class movement (except, of course, the class-struggle movement and later those Western European communists who had grown out of the left of Bolshevism) couldn't even imagine their existence in the movement without the Soviet Union. It's worth bearing this fact in mind if one examines the Trotskyists within the opposition. The Hungarian party press perpetually battled against the "renegade workers' leader". From the end of the twenties, but even more from the thirties, the campaign against Trotsky and Trotskyism (which was in formation) intensified, during which Trotsky and his current was qualified as counter-revolutionary, a propagator of petty-bourgeois ideology etc. Nevertheless, in a lot of cases, Trotsky was the example to be followed for some oppositionists, and there were only a few who recognized the fact that the whole Bolshevik family tree had sprung forth from the same root, or the obvious tricks of the distorting Stalinist propaganda.

Between the two “world wars”, a massive, active Trotskyist movement didn’t come into being in Hungary. István Miklós Stolte was a more or less lonely militant within the opposition with his Trotskyist positions (which were spiced with a barely perceptible anarchist deviation: “It’s true that I’m not devoid of a little Bakuninist anarchist deviation. Well, I’m proud of it.” – he stated once). In 1931-1932, he created a short-lived illegal Bolshevik cell with his fellow-students at the faculty of arts, then they searched contacts with the illegal party and joined it. KMP later expelled him (explaining the expulsion with Stolte’s leftist deviations and unreliability), and then accused him as well of being a squealer (also this accusation was groundless). According to *Dolgozók Lapja* (‘Workers’ Newspaper’), he published a leaflet in 1935 which supported the assailants of “comrade Kirov” and “slanders the Soviet Union, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and its leaders” (Stolte couldn’t know that it was Stalin who had stood behind Kirov’s liquidation). In his autobiography, Béla Szász, who used to be a friend of Stolte, says the following about the relationships between Stolte and those deviationists who were branded Trotskyists: “In contrast to the trumped up Trotskyists, to which this indication was used more as an abuse than as a specification, István Stolte counted as an authentic Trotskyist. One of the most authentic in Hungary, since after his expulsion from the communist party, Stolte organized a small Trotskyist group, and as the leader of it he contacted Sedov, the son of Trotsky, and the regional Trotskyist center which was established by Sedov in Bratislava, Czechoslovakia.” At the beginning of the thirties, he published several brochures and books. In these writings, he generally works up the class struggles of feudal Hungary, with “a grain” of nationalism and on an extremely Marxist language. In 1934, *A jobbágyság keletkezése és a Dózsa-féle forradalom* (‘The Rise of Serfdom and Dózsa’s Revolution’) and *Az ezeréves per: földreform és telepítés* (‘The Thousand Years Old Cause: Land Reform and Settlement’) were published. These were followed by the publication of *A parasztok királyától a nagyságos fejedelemig* (‘From the King of the Peasants to Esquire Prince’) in 1941 – this book is a history of class struggles written on quite a nationalistic tone. During the thirties, two books of Trotsky were published in Hungarian. *Merre tart Franciaország?* (‘Where Is France Heading For?’) was published in Belgium – this is an analysis of the popular front; we don’t know who were standing behind the publication. In 1932, *Az egyetlen út* (‘The Only

Way’) appeared in Bratislava – this book dealt with the contemporary events in Germany; Stolte was one of those who were responsible for the publication of this writing. In 1943, the police came upon a Trotskyist group, 15 members of it were arrested. The aim of the group was the forming of the IV. International’s Hungarian organization, its leaders had participated in various social democratic and trade union movements since 1920. We have no information whether the group in question was that of Stolte.

The opposition (2.)

The Bolshevik activist Ferenc Boér “was condemned, his conviction was pronounced to be lie and when he was denounced as traitor of the movement he was delivered into the hands of the police” – wrote his biographer. He criticized the KMP leadership already in 1929 in the journal *Kommunista* (‘Communist’), which was the organ of the party. The party didn’t take this in good part, but his criticism extended even more following his expelling from the party when he published a new journal (it had only one issue) named *Leninista* (‘Leninist’). In this he wrote as follows: “Series of facts confirm that the current opportunist leadership of the party seceded from the membership of the party. It seceded from the revolutionary vanguard which was moving the KMP forward by bloody sacrifices since the collapse of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The party leadership doesn’t tolerate any critiques, it eliminates, expells and denounces as a police spy that who dares to act against the mistakes.” Boér talked about the degeneration of the party and believed that the party could be led back to the right way. He devoted himself to this and never abandoned the idea that the masses were to be in the party. In that party which struggled for the defence of the Soviet Union, turning the imperialist war into civil war, for the formation of the world-soviet. Boér emphasized the Bolshevik program of 1917 which was followed by the party leadership only on the level of slogans. Boér never reconsidered the relation between substruction and superstructure, never reviewed the history of Bolshevism and thought seriously that his party degenerated then. Boér’s story is a relatively well-known one, but it’s less known that during the twenties a lot of activists left the party of themselves since they couldn’t bear the atmosphere. The expelled, denounced and generally imprisoned activists (this was provided by the KMP leadership) were beaten and blackballed by the party members being in prison.

Vörös Segély ('Red Aid'), which was established for supporting the imprisoned militants helped the activists to different extents, according to their position in the party hierarchy ("very important", "important", "less important" persons).

Without revolutionary program and centralisation...

Kassák drew up the aims of the journal *Munka* ('Work') (it was established in 1928) and of those who gathered around it as follows: "Today we all have one task: drastic transformation of the real capabilities of life from social aspect... we want to address ourself mainly to young workers and students, we want to support and deepen the development of the organizational and critical abilities of the masses... we had to review the historical events of past years, the tactical and strategic methods of the working class' actions, the objective and subjective causes of getting into trough of the sea... we don't write poems just for the poem itself, we don't carve statues just for the statue itself, and we don't build houses just for the style of house-building...". The journal and its circle synthesized the Proletkult speech choir, the ouvrierist workers' literature, the artistic avant-gardism with socialist tendency, the elemental illustrative power of sociophotography and the economic analyses taking Marx as a basis. The journal was not only an intellectual workroom, but a current which formed a community, it, however, never worked under unitary principles and was situated on the confine of communism and far-leftism. This current was unable to eliminate its own democratic limits since it never wanted to do so (when certain activists tried this, they were expelled), or even in 1934 Kassák espoused the popular front in his brochure *Napjaink átértékelése* ('Reinterpretation of Our Days'). He condemned the Bolshevik and the social democratic parties since these sharpened the internecine fight "within the proletarian class" and were unable to solve their conflicts when they faced the mortal enemy: fascism. Kassák had learnt nothing from the period after 1919, he hadn't learnt that class collaboration leads to the abandonment of revolutionary struggle and that the mentioned parties are not the mass parties of the proletariat, but the parties of democracy.

The coherent revolutionary program was lacking, they didn't even try to form a unitary group. The journal often published antagonistic opinions,

it was total chaos. They published, for instance, Molotov's booklet *The second five-year plan* while Imre Vajda wrote several articles on the relation between the workers' movement and fascism in the journal, which were totally divergent from the Comintern's line. Mostly in the early period were published analyses on fascism which grasped the increasing terror of capitalism not within the framework of fascism/antifascism, but propagated class struggle against capitalism (these, however, regarded fascism as the main enemy). The members of Kassák's circle didn't clarify their position towards the Bolshevik-social democratic movements and the idea of forming a new, real proletarian party-cell never occurred to them. They went so far as Kassák later took part of the counter-revolution when he asserted: "The slogan of dictatorship of the proletariat has to be removed from the agenda, since it would only add fuel to the fire." But when he said this, the revolutionary elements had already left the Munka-circle.

Can we brake walls with dialectics? (2.)

Pál Justus was member of the MSZDP since 1925. He wrote for different journals, for example, for the leftist *Együtt* ("Together"), which was hallmarked by Lajos Nagy. Soon after he became one of the former and main publicists of *Munka*. He wrote actively, organized seminars, debated and read (Marx, Lukács, Korsch etc.), widened his knowledge. In 1930 Justus together with his activist associates opposed Kassák. They criticized that Kassák and his associates were passive and antinomic in the field of class struggle, since they attacked the 100% which was the organ of the Bolshevik party, but yet they often commended the Soviet Union. Justus wrote that they lacked the political activity and thought that the circle did mainly cultural work, so instead of this „it's necessary and also possible to start a new, revolutionary socialist movement, which is independent of the two existing parties. It has to be much more leftist than the left wing of the social democratic party, but it has to be independent also of the communist party." Due to the heated debate between Kassák and Lajos Szabó in the spring of 1930 the rupture became obvious and the radicals were expelled from the circle. Justus and his comrades (Lajos Szabó and Pál Partos who were influenced by Karl Korsch, and the latter had contacts with the FAI during the

proletarian revolution in Spain) established their own circle, the Diákoppozíció ("Student Opposition"), which in fact never formed a close, centralized movement. As Adám Tábor wrote, out of the oppositionists Lajos Szabó and his fellows not even during their Marxist period believed in any "socialist state", they were so anti-institutionalist that Lajos Szabó's movementary name was AO, which meant "Anti-Organization". This name, however, expressed not only their anti-Bolshevism, but the fact that they didn't understand the necessity of the communist party and were unable to clarify what draws a distinction between the communist and the democratic workers' movement. Beyond the fragmentary critiques towards the conception of the party there are no signs (there are no written sources at all) of that they would have dealt with the questions of the party and class profoundly. Karl Korsch's effect partially matured as Pál Partos and his comrades, who were in regular relationship with Korsch, propagated the latter's theses of „anti-organization” which asserted that „at the time of relative social peace the danger of bureaucratization and congelation is inherent in all organizations”. Because of the danger of detection only distantly related groups have to be organized at the time of the counter-revolutionary period, which would have inner autonomy and would function according to this. Korsch rejected the bourgeois politics and their mode of organization, and was nearing the council-communists already at this time, and got in contact with them soon after. But with the rejection of bourgeois politics the council-communists as well as their followers disclaimed not only the trade unions and parliamentarism, but the necessity of the communist party; they were superficial since they mixed the Bolshevik party with the communist one. The conflicts between Partos and his comrades, who were "orthodox Korschists" and Fuchs and his comrades, who were influenced by Trotskyism intensified inside the opposition. Partos was for the anti-organization while Fuchs argued for the Trotskyist party organization. Korsch's above-cited idea was accepted only by ten members of the opposition (according to certain sources the opposition consisted of 60 members, other sources assert that there were 100 members or more). Pál Fuchs and his comrades followed rather Trotsky, but they didn't form a fraction or a party, while they was nearing Demény and his group, but the latter didn't tolerate Fuchs's criticism towards the Soviet Union in long term, so continued alliance was not formed between them. While Justus and his comrades

moved towards council-communism during their theoretical activity, although they couldn't establish a separate movement. Instead of this remained the debates, without any practice...

Pál Justus was also influenced by Trotsky (for instance in certain prevarications: Justus and his fellows took part in the municipal electioneering of the social democratic party in exchange for the infrastructure they got from them; and it was not by accident that Justus became one of the mouthpieces of the party after „World War II” – true, not for long), but he was not Trotskyist, even if he argued for him against Stalin. The oppositionists should have reconsidered their passivity in order to achieve further radicalisation and to outrun their own former limits by forming communist party-cells. Partos and his comrades, however, were able only to help the formation of an actually active council-communist movement, but they didn't take part in its consolidation. They engaged in effervescent discussions with the movement hallmarked by Iván Hartstein, which moved towards radical positions, through the KIMSZ it neared Trotskyism and afterwards its members outran these positions and became militants of the communist movement. The radical oppositionists wanted to influence the Bolshevik youngs in the KIMSZ, so they had long debates regularly, which often ended with scuffles. In spite of this they sought each other because the oppositionists were in need of educating (beating), enlightening their Stalinist class brothers, who were functioning under the influence of the party, but on the other hand were the neighbour young prolets who were also victims of the system just as them. We don't know much about the topics of the debates what Justus and his comrades had inside their circle and out of it: they disclaimed the socialist nature of the Soviet Union and were roaming basically on the above-mentioned roads. József Román, one of the „enlightened” Bolshevik partners in these debates wrote about his discussions with an oppositionist, Dénes Lőwy as follows: „He usually explicated that the direction of social development requires more flexible readjustment of Marxism to the changing technical and scientific conditions. The military featured, centralist organization of the movement is dangerous, threatening and inadaptably in such conditions, the assertion of absolute obedience prohibits the political alteration and flexibility of the party. My answers, however, were basically same as the curriculums of the recent seminars... in spite of that I was iterating the well-known arguments the discussions impregnated me.”

In 1931 Lajos Szabó, Andor Sziertes, Pál Justus, Béla Tábor, Károly Heinlein and Pál Partos translated and published with their commentaries Marx's *Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* under the pseudonym of „Lantos”. Korsch commended the commentaries exceedingly (otherwise the book is unavailable). In spite of this the opposition didn't form an organical unity and its disruption was as quick as its formation. In 1933 the Viennese police found the copy of Lenin's testament written against Stalin (it was sent to Hungary through Szabó by Korsch) in Lajos Szabó's pocket. The police thought he was a communist agent, so after one week remandment he was deported to Paris. Justus called out his workfellows for strike, so he was fired in 1932. He went to Paris where he got in touch with the Cercle d'études Scientifiques which was established by Boris Souvarine and also with Carlo Roselli's and Lucien Larat's group. He was inspired also by them and moved towards more radical positions. He came to know the truth about the frame-ups in Paris (Justus and a few activists organized a demonstration in Budapest in front of the Soviet embassy in 1937 and stood up for Bukharin and his fellows). While Justus was member of the social democratic party and was leading seminars, he finished his book *A szocializmus útja* ('The Course of Socialism') in 1942, and afterwards he attached an epilogue to it. Justus analysed fascism from council-communist point of view and pointed out that democracy and dictatorship were not antagonistic political forms, antagonistic bourgeois attitudes and ideologies, but two successive phases of the capitalist development of society. He also developed that the bourgeoisie had to militarize itself „in order to break all forms of resistance of the working class and to make these impossible institutionally, or else the only solution of the serious crisis of accumulation, that is the quick and radical depression of the living standards of the working class, cannot be achieved.” He analysed the process in which fascism became a mass movement and came to the only sound conclusion that in the rivalry of the capitalists two fractions of capital faced each other in the forms of fascism/antifascism, while both of them gained their hinterland from the working class. The internationalist program of revolutionary defeatism clearly appeared in the text when Justus pointed out that the task of the movement was not supporting democracy against fascism, but giving assistance to socialism against capitalism. Our comrade rejected the popular front and indicated that it led to the abandonment of class

struggle, as well as it came into power only there (in France in 1936), where the „danger of fascism” was not actual. Through the analyses of class structure Justus demonstrated how the small-proprietor exploited stratum was manipulated and militarized by its reality. Nor did he dissemble that the working class „due to the fear of unemployment, didn’t dare to use its great economic and social armament, and the weapons had already known and used were knocked out of the hands of the unemployed. There remained the political weapon, the only one which was known by the reformist conscience: the ballot-paper. The working class voted once and once again, five times, ten times and according to the electoral statistics larger and larger masses were ‘radicalised’. It waited, however, in vain that its political parties, for which it voted, would change its conditions. In the same way the workers who recognized the crisis of capitalism consciously were unable to fight for socialism, since in their decomposing, reformist ideas socialism was merely an uncertain generality, a fair epilogue of festal speeches, and moreover class war against capitalism meant endangering of the still existing jobs.” Justus’s observations are still actual today, but we have to amplify them, because today the outpost of capitalism is not the triunity of fascism, classic social democracy and Bolshevism, but a more complex dictatorship of capitalist democracy which, however, assimilates all these entirely.

Justus condemned the old parties, just as his West European comrades did, but he also depicted the communist movement as the heir of social democracy. We totally disagree with this. Communism arose from the process of class struggle, from the movements, struggles which had developed through experiences and had been formed by the Servile wars, the medieval socialistic heretic movements, peasants’ revolts and by the modern proletarian movements. Justus, like Pannekoek and others, was unable to outrun workers’ councils, because he deduced the antagonism of democracy and communism from a false starting-point. The council-communists who had grown up on social democracy and on its Marxism were unable to abandon this tradition and they criticized mainly its mode of organization, thus they fixated on the level of self-management. But, if we review our predecessors mentioned above (make no mistake council-communism is also one of our predecessors) partially the praxis of abolition of value, property, democracy and of work could be seen within the framework of the given mode of production. The totality,

however, can be brought about only by the party of historical materialism, the communist party. So in these years Justus took up the line of council-communism (in theory), while he was member of the social democratic party and was trying to push it towards the left. Nor he managed to solve this flagrant contradiction, since in Hungary didn't emerge such classist resistance during „World War II” which would have followed the praxis of revolutionary defeatism.

Beyond the opposition – a communist party-cell: the council communists in Hungary

The history of the council-communist comrades in Hungary represents the course of the communist vanguard which was maintaining the communist program in this region most consistently after the proletarian revolution of 1918-1919. This party-cell was born from the opposition, our comrades made the round of the different stages of the movement. Hartstein and his comrades split from the already mentioned KIMSZ and from the youth organization of the social democratic party. They took part in Weisshaus's circles, afterwards they outran these and established gradually the communist group which was acting as part of our internationalist struggle. József Román wrote about the beginning period as follows: „The discussion-seminar started already on Saturday afternoon. Three leaders – this term prevailed – of the group were Iván Hartstein, Vucsinovics and Laci Fürth. One of them, Hartstein – who usually was unsurpassable – delivered a lecture... His very home were politics, with all nooks and corners of Marxism, with imposing quotations not only from Marx, but from Hilferding, Reich, Rosa Luxemburg, Lenin. The main topics were: the commodity, primitive accumulation, the labour theory of value.” The rememberers usually point out the lively style of debating of the group, their fresh, effervescent, inspirative presence which was free from Bolshevik doctrinarianism. Accordingly, Hartstein and his comrades were constantly targets for the Stalinists who condemned them as provokers, police spies, liquidators, in order to make their activity impossible. In 1929 Hartstein and his comrades formed the Marxista Ellenzéki Front (‘Marxist Oppositionist Front’) whose activists, due to the lack of huge membership (it consisted of 30 or 40 members), usually mingled in the crowd in demonstrations, momentary assemblies, gatherings of the left-

wing parties and agitated, provoked them and tried to radicalise the situation. They also agitated among the unemployed in front of the employment agencies, like the GIK did in the Netherlands. Their journal the *Jövő – Marxista Munkásszemle* ('Future – Marxist Workers' Review') was published from the spring of 1930, ten times a year. They usually wrote short, compact articles in which they emphasized the continuity of proletarian struggles and always attacked categorically the "left-wing reformism". In their article written about this they wrote as follows: "The social democratic party can be recognized first of all by its huge bureaucracy. The KMP also. A huge, earth-bound and fainéant bureaucracy is proper to this movement; behind the social democrat bureaucracy, however, stand masses, then again the KMP has a bureaucracy without masses. Naturally these well-paid bureaucrats do not take part actively in the practical tasks and in the organization of actions. They only direct. They are the 'coriphaei', the members of the 'upper organ'. They think that the second council republic could be established 'only' by direction. Of course it's easier, especially as it doesn't accompany with such danger." They wrote about the perspectives of world revolution (in this article they still penned that the revolutions had been defeated, except in Russia!), and about parliamentarism, in this question they took up a clear communist line. They posed against the prevarication of the Bolsheviks that "Parliamentarian work is the work of class-peace. The liberation of the working class is possible only through the class struggle. Only such a movement really represents the interests of the working class which wages a class war for its liberation!" At the same time, they didn't reject the Comintern completely, they dated its deformation from 1923 (at this time, they were still trapped by the theories of degeneration). In their article, they attacked the hesitant politics of the Comintern, because "if there is a revolutionary situation, then it is opportunist, and if there is stabilization, then it is revolutionary and putschist". Frankly speaking, according to them, the Third International didn't size up realistically the possibilities of the revolution, and it hindered the development of the proletariat's struggle by its wrong decisions. For example, they came up with the Chinese revolution, in which the Comintern had intervened by insisting on the politics of popular front and it hadn't supported the formation of an independent communist party. Moreover, the Comintern adopted the slogan of 'social fascism', it didn't see that

“social democracy means a democratic, fascism means an openly dictatorial bourgeois rule, and although both serve the oppression of the working class – one is nevertheless a democracy, while the other is a dictatorship. Instead of pointing at the betrayals of the workers made by reformism, [Comintern] attacks it in such a way which nobody takes seriously.” These short citations make it clear enough that at this time the journal *Jövö* took an oppositionist position, but it had already some communist overtones.

They regarded social democracy simply as a traitor, and didn't consider it a counter-revolutionary tendency from the beginning. They mentioned the differences between social democracy and fascism, but they came up with bad reflections. What must be emphasized much more that social democracy differs from fascism not only in its political democracy (pluralism, liberal civil rights, parliamentarism, etc.), in its outward methods, but these two are historically different reactions to the given crises of the capitalist society. The present social democracy differs from the classic social democratic movement not because it doesn't use the class terminology, not because it detached itself from Marxist orthodoxy or because it doesn't call the stupefied workers to strike, but this difference is dictated to it by the dynamics of the modern capitalist society. Its ideology and practice are formed by the intensified accumulation of capital: it gets a new image with its more and more perverted nationalism, with the myths about the disappearance of the working class. So, the higher level of exploitation, the organization of labour “modernizes” the leftist fractions of the capitalists and urges them to new efforts. Instead of Eduard Bernstein, there is Anthony Giddens. If it is necessary, social democracy becomes militant just like in the past (Noske, Vienna 1934, the Iraq-politics of Tony Blair etc.), and we also mustn't forget that Bolshevism is the heir of classic social democracy, a regenerated leftist bourgeois reform force. That means, both tendencies belong to the democratic dictatorship of capital, but if fascism uses primarily the ambitious “middle strata” of the working class (clerks, small retailers, smallholders) to achieve its goals, social democracy tries to legitimate itself by swinging round the whole of the working class. “At the beginning of monopole capitalism, big capital confronts a complex of small existences. The higher profit of the industrial branches with the biggest composition of capital emerge from the profit of those working with a lower composition, a part of the extra cartel gain is paid not by

the allied capitalists. So, the common interest would turn the ‘middle class’ against monopole capital, but this interest is crossed by another interests. There is a common opposition against the demands of the working class, move over, since the social burdens are much heavier, often unbearable for the smaller capitalists, their anti-socialist behaviour is extremely pugnacious. And, since a real antagonism is added to its formerly ideological anti-worker position by the attaining of the proletarian demands and the welfare achievements, the ‘old middle class’ in the process of proletarianization is the one from which the first commando units of big capital are chosen – both in the direct and the indirect sense of the word” – writes Pál Justus in his shockingly powerful book, which presented a radical analysis of this question in 1931.

The group around Hartstein organized also within the above presented MÁMSZ (which they joined individually); the police later put an end to this when it took legal action against Barnabás Fürth and his comrades, charging them with ‘Bolshevik agitation’. They had to step on the road of complete organizational independence, and the impetus of their development also didn’t render it possible for them to wheel and deal. This time the Trotskyist influences still dominate *Jövő*. Although they condemn the Bolshevik conception of ‘socialism in one country’, they attack only the Stalinist leadership, arguing in defence of Trotsky. “Ultimately, the antagonism between Stalin and Trotsky is the antagonism between two classes” – they wrote, and they expounded that in their view, Trotsky defended the interests of the proletariat in the questions of the Chinese revolution, of the five-year plan economy, of the Comintern etc. Several years before, Hartstein had sought contacts with the Trotskyists in Berlin and Vienna – with Leninbund, for example –, and he was still dreaming about the formation of a new, Bolshevik-type party while marching with the whole group towards council communism. This transitional period is reflected also by the articles published by the group – in one place the group emphasizes the revolutionary role of the workers’ councils, but it does not argue completely for them, and it doesn’t turn against the left wing of Bolshevism. The decisive step was made as a result of the discussions with the oppositional line represented by Partos and his comrades. Those around Hartstein reorganized their group, and together with Barnabás Fürth – who had been released from prison – they founded the Magyarországi Baloldali Kommunista Szervezete (‘Organization of

Hungarian Left Communists', MBKSZ). They gradually became more and more radical and started to make actions, for instance, they organized a demonstration in front of the Magyarországi Építőmunkások Országos Szövetsége ('National Union of Hungarian Construction Workers') headquarters. Marching away from there, the demonstrators smashed the shop-windows and upset the bourgeois places of entertainment like the Hauer confectioner's, they looted and expropriated all over the downtown.

New epoch

MEF had stepped on the road of the revolution already at the time of its founding, but this was fulfilled only when Barnabás Fürth traveled to Germany and returned reinforced by comradely contacts which inspired and radicalized the group. In Germany, Fürth met the comrades from KAPD, from the Intransigent Left, from AAUD-E around Rühle and the activists from the German Industrial Union (DIV) which was the German brother organization of MÁMSZ. He also met communists who were active in other countries. Discussions followed each other, and after the clarification of the programs comrade Fürth received financial help and, of course, a lot of movement literature: among others, Pannekoek's *World Revolution and Communist Tactics*, the publications of KAPD, Gorter's *Open Letter to Comrade Lenin*, Rosa Luxemburg's writing on the Russian revolution and Trotsky's *Letter to the German Worker-Communists*. The group intended to publish these in Hungarian, but except of one brochure – it was published in 1933, under the title *Weimartól a horogkeresztig* ('From Weimar to the Swastika') – at last they didn't publish anything from these. They changed the title of their journal; from now, it was called *Osztályharc* ('Class Struggle') – and the slogan "All power to the workers' councils!" appeared on the heading. The journal was even more radical, more complex and, all in all, more centralized than before.

About Stalinism

The illusions about Bolshevism gradually flew away; nevertheless, they continued to separate Stalinism from Bolshevism, and they didn't criticize the latter in its entirety but only its actually ruling form. They considered that Stalinism is counter-revolutionary as it was. They

reproached the Stalinists with the following: “a real revolutionary workers’ organization differs from reformism exactly in the fact that it defends solely the interests of the proletariat and it has nothing to do with the petty bourgeoisie. When KMP calls the workers and peasants in its leaflets to fight for land and liberty, in what does it differ from the social democrats? That it wheels and deals with the petty bourgeois elements? No – this question cannot be presented like this. The social democrats package all their betrayals into the anyhow explainable concept of tactics. KMP does the same.” In another writing, they revealed that the Soviet Union was flirting with the capitalists, and they stated that “there can never be peace between capitalism and socialism”. Usually they tried to uncover the politics of the Kremlin – this was necessary because in Hungary KMP stupefied its adherents and propagated the magnificence of the USSR by telling that the wise leadership fought with its brilliant “revolutionary politics” for world communism. That’s why the group laid so much stress on the young Bolsheviks; it didn’t consider them mature counter-revolutionaries, and it had right, because the world-view of these activists was not petrified, these were exploited reflecting to their weekdays, who were also manipulated by that ‘mind industry’ which had got the closest to them. The articles of MBKSZ about the Soviet Union are not based on a critical support, they point at the fact that in this country wage labour and exploitation continue to prevail: “If there was a dictatorship of the proletariat in the USSR, if it exercised its dictatorship as a class, if it disposed over the productive apparatus, then nothing would determine the inequality of the wages, then it wouldn’t act against its own interests, and those workers wouldn’t be harassed, exiled and imprisoned – like the despotic Tsarism did it with the revolutionaries – who dare to criticize in the soviets of the self-styled proletarian state. State capitalism removes private capital, the only change is that state capitalism took the place of private capitalism, but wage labour – as the birthmark of capitalism – remains. The class differences also exist, because the means of production are not in the hands of proletarian councils but in those of the state bureaucracy; therefore it is impossible to liquidate the causes of class differences within the framework of the second five-year plan, so, one cannot speak yet about the realization of socialism. The tempo of the Russian industry’s development is not yet a proof of socialism. We can see the same in the development of private capitalism in the USA...

Therefore we can quite safely call the second five-year plan the bluff of Stalinism.”

About fascism

According to MBKSZ, fascism is dangerous not only because it represents a brutal armed oppression for the capitalists’ interests, but also because it tries to influence the masses of workers mentally as well. “It pretends to be anti-capitalist in order to be able to penetrate the workers’ minds, it declares itself an enemy of exploitation and private property and fights against them [Of course, the latter is not true since fascism attacks only certain fractions of the bourgeois class and tries to depict this, which is part of its social demagogy, as a general anti-capitalist attempt – *Barricade Collective*]. Its dream is the fascist state, which stands above the classes, which equalizes the antagonism between capital and labour and at the same time... prepares this way ideologically the imperialist war.” It tries to delude the unschooled workers by emphasizing the national idea, the non-existent concept of homeland. “The bourgeoisie sees that reformism cannot prevent the proletarians from being revolutionized, so it tries to carry a new ideology, a dangerous capitalist ideology into the working masses. But the fascist ideology can influence – but just to a certain extent – only the absolutely unschooled, absolutely unconscious groups of workers. Hence, fascism’s centre of gravity can be found mainly in the armed struggle against the revolutionary workers, i. e. in the terrorist struggle” – they write in the spring of 1932. The problem of fascism/antifascism is not a question for them, they reject the united front, revolutionary defeatism is their standpoint, this can be seen also from their writings about the wars. They reject the misleading slogans about ‘social fascism’ screeched by the Comintern, they study the effects of fascism primarily from the point of view of the working class, and they point out that “the rule of fascism will annihilate the power of the old workers’ movement”. In 1932, they had written in advance what then went on gradually in Germany from 1933, but they had not expected the absolute weakening of internationalism, and that the masses of the working class infected with fascism and nationalism slaughtered each other in a new imperialist war. They thought that “fascism would be the last form of bourgeois oppression”.

Night in the outskirts

“In the street a policeman,
a muttering workman, pass.
Now and then a comrade
flits past with leaflets.
Keen as a dog on the track ahead,
listening cat-like for noises behind him;
avoiding the lamps.”

(Attila József)

In the summer of 1932, they launch a new journal for the workers living in the suburbs of Budapest (only one issue of it appeared). “The languishing suburb must wake up from its daze and indifference, and has to join the process of revolutionary struggles” – they bawl in the journal entitled *Felszabadulás* (‘Liberation’). “The proletarians of the suburbs must be aware of the fact that only the Far Left Communist Opposition is their real class organization, their vanguard which leads the struggle against capitalism. Which rejects the reforms, and fights for communism, for the power.” Although the formulation teems with inaccuracies, with untenable concepts (far left, opposition), it tries to address – heatedly and unambiguously – those workers who function directly according to the needs of capital. The journal pointed at the fact that Hungary is a capitalist cattle-truck, where the workers willingly go to the slaughterhouse. Therefore this small communist group tried to rouse its class brothers and sisters. “Something must happen, the present conditions are unbearable, the suburb – this suffering object of the unbridled and unexpressible capitalist exploitation – must move. It is they who most move, since nowhere are the inner contradictions of the capitalist society so howling, nowhere can be felt more the necessity of changing quickly and radically the present conditions, as here, in the suburbs covered with the shadow of the lustrous downtown and the boulevards. In these terrible nests where people become bestial

physically and morally, where there is slough, bog, misery – which all follow in the footsteps of capitalist exploitation.” In their publications, they besiege relentlessly the bastions of KMP, the social democrats and the fascists: “The question of the day is not the luncheon voucher, the penury aid, the infant care and the old-age insurance – these don’t mean anything, these can at most extend the misery, the famine process of the workers. The question of the day is the revolution!!!” They have right!!! “One must reject the struggle for welfare policies, for reforms, the time of these has already finished, the working class has to fight in the present revolutionary situation directly for the goal, FOR COMMUNISM, FOR THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT. Every kind of politics based on pacts must be rejected, there cannot be any compromise between capital and labour, their antagonisms cannot be surmounted ever and in anything.”

They showered manifestoes written on such a tone upon the streets of misery, and in fact those starving on periphery red them; nevertheless, the organization didn’t grow stronger, and other communist forces also didn’t emerge, while a lot of former leftist militants joined the Arrowed movement (the Hungarian Nazis). Moreover, the Arrowed movement copied the illegal workers’ movement by organizing seminars and reading circles. The Hungarist Movement promised a community and social welfare, its mass base was the working class, in detail – its poorest and most unconscious layer. In October 1940, the miners went on strike, they demanded higher wages; for some time, the arrowed-crossist propaganda was so successful within their ranks that the arrowed-crossists wanted to use their movement to overturn the government. However, when the government resorted to military force, the arrowed-crossists backed out of the strike. Nonetheless, it is characteristic how the fascists – just like today – used those layers of the working class which had been infected with nationalism. So, the communists couldn’t compete either structurally or in efficiency with the Hungarist movement which counted several hundred thousand members and was sometimes endured, sometimes supported by the bourgeoisie. But MBKSZ firmly propagated what the communists must always propagate – the necessity of the class struggle without any compromises, the dictatorship of the proletariat, the revolutionary red terror. It didn’t submit and didn’t manoeuvre, it didn’t want to take advantage of the working class but to co-operate and jointly organize the class war. They made attempts to

radicalize the strikes, they tried to make propaganda in a circle as wide as possible, they also attempted to strengthen the movement. In a longer term, their goal was to create cells in the workshops and workers' councils.

About Bolshevism in general

They didn't make a critique of the whole of Bolshevism, denominating it concretely. Although their journal under the new title *Spartakus* in fact (even if not completely openly) attacks the whole of Bolshevism (the 'old workers' movement', using the expression of Pannekoek) in its September 1933 issue. In the article *A tömegek és vezetők* ('The Masses and the Leaders') we can read the following: "the bureaucracies of the trade unions and the parties have long since lost touch with the masses, to such an extent that the strikes during the last years broke out against the will and the protest of the trade union bureaucracy. Through this, the leaders themselves have become an abstraction in front of the masses, and they think that they are hovering above the masses. Hand in hand with the capitalists, they try to reduce the misery, the revolutionizing tendency. But it would be futile if one would try to replace the old reactionary leaders with leftist and revolutionary workers, because the structure, the content and the disposition of these organizations are counter-revolutionary and they make it impossible for the masses to turn these organizations into the instruments of their will. Only the workers' councils can radically abolish both the trade union and the party bureaucracy. If the revolution reveals itself in the fact that the masses seize the direction of the production, then the organization must have a form which makes it possible for the masses to rule their society themselves, and only such an organization can measure up to the task of the proletarian revolution which allows the workers to take part actively in everything and act, to work self-motivated, out of their own conviction, on their own responsibility, according to the interests of the community. But the disposition of the old workers' organizations is not the class struggle and the revolution." About the relationships between the masses and the leaders, they also write that so far, the leaders in the workers' movement had undervalued the role of the masses, and they regard only themselves as the deciding factor. Against this, MBKSZ argues as follows: "1. The movement and action of the masses is brought about by the sharpness of the capitalist

contradictions (crisis, war, famine) on the one hand, and by the preparatory work of the vanguards, the preparation of the masses and bringing them into battle on the other. 2. The task of the proletariat's vanguard cannot be anything else than giving the revolutionary actions of the masses a resolute and definite form, and adjust the masses which have come into motion to achieve the realization of socialism.”

Weaknesses, the dissolution of the group

These critical and programmatic points harmonize with the programme of one of the communist vanguard's fractions of the time – in essence, they don't differ from the ideas of council communism. But they differ from the programmes of the Platformists and of those communists who detached themselves from the left of Bolshevism. But – as a result of the circumstances in Hungary – a coherent, radical movement did not emerge (apart from those fractions which were mentioned in this essay), therefore the problems of rupture with the ‘old workers’ movement’ repeatedly reappear. In fact, two fractions existed within MBKSZ. The current of Hartstein had never made a pronounced rupture with orthodox Bolshevism, and the current of Barnabás Fürth did not insist on the precise denomination of the class enemy, so, despite their communist practice, they didn't bring the criticism of Bolshevism to its final consequences. The controversies within the group had come to such a pass that the current of Hartstein wanted to monopolize the common infrastructure (printing equipment, movement materials etc.), but later the conflict was settled. However, the further clarifications became impossible when the group was nabbed and liquidated. A young comrade, Teréz Weisz was caught, and then this led to the arrests and imprisonments of 27 comrades. So, the organization fell apart and ceased to exist – some militants were absorbed by Bolshevism, others went to exile or died during ‘labour service’, as Iván Hartstein.

But their activity has a lot of lessons even for today. Totality widens with gradual recognitions, but a movement which had not criticized sufficiently profoundly its own past, of course, repeats the same mistakes and blunders which were made by it earlier. Today, the programme of MBKSZ, together with other council communist views (as the mythology of workers' councils, the rejection of the communist party, the throwing out of anarchism) would be untenable, but not

completely, since the council communists enriched the class movement of the proletariat with their recognitions and practice. This current was a part of the communist vanguard, but not its totality. The totality is the communist world party which comes into being through the process of struggle – compared to it, everything else is only a fraction and fragmented force in the class struggle. If some people from a particular group or organization will trumpet today that they are the only representatives of “THE COMMUNIST PARTY” then they must be shot into nape. Today there are only party cells! The communist programme can be the party of totality, the destructor of capitalism only through its practice. But today we see such a profound rupture between the class and the party that only small communist cells defend the revolutionary programme of the proletariat, therefore the unity of theory and practice cannot blossom out in its entirety. One of the main obstacles for this is the working class itself. The communists polemize continuously, they criticize our movement and enrich it with new recognitions again and again, but without the necessary class support and without a radical struggle developing world-wide, the vanguard, losing touch with the masses, stands isolated in the capitalist dirt. The passive working class wriggles in the prison of wage struggles, while the communists – without the support of the radical masses, therefore not too effectively – hammer those prison walls which are fortified by the working class day by day. There is no party without class and vice versa! Only the social democratic and Bolshevik parties (the parties of “professional revolutionaries”, i. e. the parties of the capitalist interests’ representatives) think that they can throw their declarations to the working class with the might of democratic centralism.

This fundamental problem was present also in the Hungarian workers’ movement between the two “world wars”, just like today. We can shout again and again, million times, that the planet burns on us, that the tsunami sweeps us away, that we die of hunger, that we hold our tongue at the workplaces etc., that the working class has to negate itself in order to make our struggle victorious. We can wait for stock-market crashes while the imperialism of the bourgeois society is spreading and destroying us, transforming everything which doesn’t serve it, and this way burying its own grave. But capital is not interested in its own contradictions; we have to smash up its rules which had been forced on

us! WORKERS OF THE WORLD, UNITE! LONG LIVE THE
COMMUNIST WORLD REVOLUTION!

Barricade Collective

January, 2008.