The articles by Gramsci published in English in International Press Correspondence

Derek Boothman

Antonio Gramsci

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Abstract
The articles included here represent most of what Gramsci published in the Comintern journal International Press Correspondence, under his own name or one of his pseudonyms of the period, G. (sometimes Giovanni) Masci. 1 In much of this period Inprecorr was coming out more or less twice a week, with articles from all parts of the world, including from Russia, with articles written by the various Party and Union leaders. Even during the period of great polemics which basically started just before Lenin's death and carried on over the whole of this period, the Inprecorr in its various languages of publication, carried articles giving all points of view written by all the participants in the controversies. This was true both of the Russian communists, so the Trotsky controversy was given full airing from both sides, and of those involved in other debates outside Russia. In Italy, for example, it was not only the extreme left of Amadeo Bordiga that was present in the Party, and that found space in the pages of Inprecorr, but also the right of Angelo Tasca – one of the Turin Ordine Nuovo group and, up to near the end of Gramsci's stay in Moscow, one who had the ear of the Comintern leadership. And another on the right was Antonio Graziadei, an economist judged to hold a “revisionist” stance, whose views were expressed fully both in Inprecorr and in book International Press Correspondence came out regularly in Russian, French, German and English (with the abbreviation Inprecorr), and sometimes, it seems, also in a Spanish edition. The period of the articles published here ranges from 1922, up through Gramsci's half-year stay in Vienna (December 1923 to May 1924), and on to the last period when, after his election as a parliamentary deputy, he was able to return to Italy on the basis of parliamentary immunity. With his new status as a deputy he could in theory evade the warrant that had been put out for his arrest in February 1923.
The articles by Gramsci published in English
in *International Press Correspondence*

Introduced by Derek Boothman

The articles included here represent most of what Gramsci published in the Comintern journal *International Press Correspondence*, under his own name or one of his pseudonyms of the period, G. (sometimes Giovanni) Masci.¹ *International Press Correspondence* came out regularly in Russian, French, German and English (with the abbreviation *Inprecorr*), and sometimes, it seems, also in a Spanish edition. The period of the articles published here ranges from 1922, up through Gramsci’s half-year stay in Vienna (December 1923 to May 1924), and on to the last period when, after his election as a parliamentary deputy, he was able to return to Italy on the basis of parliamentary immunity. With his new status as a deputy he could in theory evade the warrant that had been put out for his arrest in February 1923.

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¹ This pseudonym is seen here, for example, in the list of contributors on the title page of the 4 January 1924 issue, but not the article itself, where his name is wrongly given as “J. Masci”.
form (referred to by Gramsci in the last of the pieces here) and rebutted by other, non-Italian Marxist economists, again in Inprecorr.

The pages of the journal with Gramsci’s articles have been scanned into a computer and adjusted to give an image which is a close approximation to but, for various reasons, not absolutely exact image of the original page; parts of other articles on the same pages as those of Gramsci, have here been deleted. Taking his articles in order, the first – published in Inprecorr, it seems, on 19 April 1922 – deals with the Genoa conference that tried to introduce some order into the capitalist economies and establish, through the Soviet foreign minister Chicherin, a relationship with the young Soviet Union. In this article, as in the later one on “Italy and Yugoslavia”, there is a mention of “Fiume”, the city known in most places outside Italy as “Rijeka” (both words meaning “river”) and situated along the Dalmatian coast in current day Croatia. Soon after writing this article on the Genoa Conference, at the end of May Gramsci left for Moscow, arriving there on 3 June 1922, and very shortly afterwards was admitted to a sanatorium at Serebryanyi Bor (Silver Wood), now a suburb of Moscow but then somewhat outside the city, with what turned out to be a total nervous breakdown. This meant he was out of circulation for most things except for very urgent party business, usually meaning letters drafted by another comrade and co-signed by him, until the autumn of that year, when he was well enough to attend the IV Congress of the Comintern (5 November–5 December 1922). In this period in the sanatorium one of the other patients was Evgeniya Schucht, a communist whose Party membership had been sponsored by Lenin, a long-standing family friend, and through Evgeniya, he met her sister Jul’ka who became Gramsci’s wife and mother of his two children; another sister, Tatiana, was to become his main physical and psychological support in prison.

Gramsci came back into circulation just in time for the IV Congress, and was well enough to write the article published in Inprecorr as “The Mussolini Government”. This however does not get quite as far as the title suggests, stopping instead at the discussion of the previous, and last, non-fascist government for the next two decades, that of Luigi Facta. Giovanni Giolitti was, as usual in that period, the dominant figure behind the scenes attempting – but not very successfully – to control the course of events, and he is here the main target of Gramsci’s criticisms.
of the “liberal” forces. The article breaks off rather suddenly before arriving at the point of the formation of the Mussolini Government announced in the title. It may be that this is indeed the end of the article, but it may also be for example that a page went missing from the article consigned by Gramsci to the editors of *Inprecorr*. Certainly the French version of the article in *La Correspondance Internationale*, on which Quintin Hoare’s translation was based (*Selections from Political Writings (1921-1926)*, Lawrence and Wishart: London, 1978: 129-31) breaks off at the same point before getting to the formation of the Mussolini government after the March on Rome in October 1922 and the King’s nomination of Mussolini as prime minister on 31 October 1922. The text of the article printed in the English language edition of *Inprecorr*, and translated at the time from Gramsci’s Italian, naturally is different in its wording but not its meaning, from the Hoare translation. Here as elsewhere, the translation, or perhaps the type-setting, shows signs of being rather hurried and there are more mistakes than usual in typing, or in the transliteration of names, the correct forms being “Giolitti”, “Turati” and “Fasci di Combattimento”.

The “Letter from Italy” printed in the opening number (3 January 1924) of Volume 4 of *Inprecorr* which bears the by-line “G. Masci (Rome)”, maybe in order to confuse the fascist secret police, but modern readers should not be confused since, first, this is indeed Gramsci and, second, he was in Vienna. The article is of interest perhaps most of all for its attempt to sketch out a class analysis of the social power base of fascism, though marred by an temporary over-optimism about the supposed short-lived nature of fascist trade unionism. One can probably get as good a description of the challenge made to these unions by the communist forces on the left, since in its very first period fascism, or parts of it, did certainly find itself in a rather rocky position.

Almost immediately after this “Letter from Italy” we find another article, this time on the Yugoslav question, which he had been following, and on which there is a very interesting and important letter, to be published in the forthcoming edition of his pre-prison letters. Gramsci’s stay in Moscow had in fact been prolonged slightly, to the beginning of December 1923, i.e. beyond what had been foreseen, to allow him to attend the Comintern conference on the Balkans. And in the fourth number of *Inprecorr* (24 January) of 1924, there is an article of his headed
“Italy and Yugoslavia”. Then, while still in Vienna partially directing Italian Party operations from relatively close to Italy and hoping to be able to return there, Inprecorr published another article of his, this time about the elections held at the start of April 1924. Again the by-line “G. Masci (Rome)” should not deceive. This article was written and published only a few days after the elections and it is apparent from what he writes that not all the results had been confirmed, since the list formed by the Communist Party and allies actually obtained two more seats (nineteen) than he here seems to think (seventeen). The maximalists obtained 22 deputies, as said in the article, and the reformists 24. Amendola’s list in the South got seven deputies and the “constitutional opposition” as a whole 14 (see Paolo Spriano, Storia del Partito Comunista Italiano, Vol. 1: Da Bordiga a Gramsci, Einaudi, Turin, 1967: 340). In the case of this article more than in others, however, the binding of the journal is so tight that some words and figures in the margin are difficult and even impossible to decipher. Where possible we have filled in the incomplete words with additions in square brackets.

As we know Gramsci was elected as a parliamentary deputy at the April elections. And later that year, in August 1924, after a hard-fought battle in the Italian Party, the new Central Committee that emerged after the V Congress of the Comintern, nominated him General Secretary.² It is then not surprising that the chronologically last article published here is of a rather different nature from the 1922 to 1924 ones. It is in fact a report to the Italian Party Central Committee and in effect begins to sketch out the line that was to form at least one of the main planks of the platform approved by the III Congress of the Party, held illegally in the French city of Lyon the following January. Here the copy of the Inprecorr article is good, key names and terms are highlighted in bold type; any imperfection (e.g. “cation” for “caution” are due to the typing or typesetting of the original). Gramsci’s theses (political report) to the III Italian Party Congress and his assessment of the Congress itself are available in English in the Hoare volume referred to above, but preparation of an English version of the entire set of the fives theses of the majority, representing Gramsci’s full position at that time, is underway in a volume to be edited, annotated and introduced by Adam David Morton and the current author, A Grand and Terrible World:

² These events will be reconstructed in the English pre-prison letters volume, where newly found documentary evidence will also be provided about his assumption of the general secretaryship.
Gramsci’s Pre-prison Letters. In the summer of 1925, however, we see Gramsci at work on the so-called “Bolshevization” of the Party, but a Bolshevization that for him meant collaboration of everyone, irrespective of their particular political position, in the leadership of the Party, with all contributing to the formation of policy and then being bound by a collectively arrived at decision. Indeed he expresses the hope in this article that “we”, meaning the Party majority “shall arrive at an understanding with Bordiga”, who had, together with Bukharin, been offered joint vice-presidency of the International, but turned it down. This view of Gramsci’s of what constituted Bolshevization and the relation between majorities and minorities was, in the international communist movement, more observed in the breach than in the observance and leads on to the disagreement he expressed with the Russian Party the year afterwards, but that issue will be dealt with afresh in the forthcoming volume.

The English-language articles presented in this number of the *IGJ* are based on microfiche and paper copies of *Inprecorr* consulted mainly at the Marx Memorial Library and at the European University Institute in Fiesole, just outside Florence in central Italy, and the author wishes to thank the librarians and staff of both places. Pretty well all collections of *Inprecorr* seem incomplete, with numbers missing, so there is certainly at least one other article on “The Vatican and Italy” printed at the time in an English translation which up to now has “escaped”. This is one that is available in other languages, including a retranslation into Italian, a process which is also the case with other articles here that one can see in an Italian version. The translation process leads of course to inaccuracies, whether translation was done at the time or decades later. A note of caution should therefore be introduced when one reads the articles here. And a further note of caution should be added since, in the absence of the originals in Italian, and knowing the editorial practices of many journals – including *Inprecorr* – some changes from Gramsci’s originals might have been introduced. It is known that yet another article by Gramsci appeared in another Comintern journal in the first half of the 1920s, dealing with the situation in the “red two years” in Turin. Reproduction of this, the longest article that he wrote before the famous essay on the Southern question, is being delayed in the hope of being able to compare it with the original handwritten manuscript, which has
only just come to light as a result of archival research by the present
author, by Adam David Morton and by Emilia Kosterina.

The translation service at the Comintern was exceptionally advanced for
its time, and indeed in the Archives one sees notes asking, for example,
for documents to be translated at great speed so that the Comintern
leadership had a reliable version in their hands within a couple of days.
The translators were obviously working under great pressure and with
great efficiency. What one does notice however is often a somewhat
stilted nature to the translation itself, with literal reproductions of the
style, wording and at times grammatical structures of the original
language, understandable given the situation in which the translators
were working. We have not changed these aspects of the translated
articles, nor the typing or type-setting mistakes as regards spelling and
punctuation.

We should here like to thank Daniele Negretti for invaluable help in
producing as good a copy as could be hoped for with present computer
technology; without his help this contribution to the IGJ would indeed
have been far more laborious.

The articles are presented below in chronological order. Approximate
dates are given where possible:

- The Genoa Conference and Italy, *Inprecorr Vol. 2*, No. 28, p. 211,
  (19 April 1922).
- Fascism: Letter from Italy, *Inprecorr Vol. 4*, No. 1. (3 January
  1924).
- Italy and Yugoslavia, *Inprecorr Vol. 4*, No. 4, pp. 25-26. (24 January
  1924).
- Election Results in Italy, *Inprecorr Vol. 4*, No. 25, p. 231.
- The situation in the Communist party of Italy, *Inprecorr Vol. 5*,
  No. 60, pp. 835-6.
The Genoa Conference and Italy.

by Antonio Gramsci (Turin).

One problem dominates Italian foreign policy: the establishment of Italian supremacy in the Adriatic and the annexation of Fiume and Dalmatia to Italy. The question now arises: What is the attitude of Germany and Russia to this foreign policy?

Before the war Yugoslavia was predominantly influenced by powerful Russia. Even today its existence is very closely connected with that of Russia, of course not so very much in connection with the form of government of the latter, i.e., not whether Russia has a feudal, bourgeoys or proletarian government, but rather because it is the natural ally of the Slavic population in the Balkans. When Russia is weak, Yugoslavia is weak; and this weakness permits Italy to extend its imperialism to the Balkans. This is furthermore the form of nationalism propaganda in Italy, which at the same time is the immediate expression of the policy of the Italian large landowners and the military caste.

Russia is a most serious competitor of Italian agriculture. Before the war Italy imported 1,600,000 tons of grain from Russia, and the great land owners were protected by the state by the imposition of an import duty to the extent of 8.75 lire per hundredweight. It is thus very natural that an impoverished, naively Russian is in their eyes much more desirable than an economically efficient Russia which would be able to export its grain surplus. In Italy the industrial workers are only third of the entire working class. The other two-thirds are agricultural workers or peasants. Even the Italian Socialist Party was at the beginning more a peasants' than a workers' party. This also in part explains its development from a proletarian standpoint and its vacillating policy. The new attitude of the People's Party, the party of the Catholic peasants, has thus also obtained very great importance for Parliamentary politics as well as for Italian foreign policy.

As the civil war, which the large landowners deliberately commenced in order to carry on a large-scale offensive against the Catholic minority, spread and grew in intensity, the People's Party turned more and more to the left and the reaction of this change in its attitude was very soon evident in Italian foreign policy. Premier Bonomi, who was in very large degree influenced by the People's Party, changed his attitude towards Russia and showed a certain inclination towards the reestablishment of relations with Russia. This led him to take the initiative in Cannes for the convocation of the Genoa Conference.

The foreign policy of Benito Mussolini, the leader of the Fascist is in complete agreement with that of Nitti, the representative of Big Business and high finance. These circles are interested in the coal district on the Black Sea. This explains why they display a very sympathetic attitude towards an international financial consortium for the capitalist exploitation of Soviet Russia's resources. They thus hope at the same time to do good business and to obtain their own sphere of influence on the Black Sea.

All the vacillations of Italian foreign policy are caused by the intensification of the class war and the consequent disintegration of the social forces. It is thus necessary to give an exposition of the Italian situation in order to illustrate the reactions in foreign policy which are therewith connected.

The trend to the left of the People's Party and the fact that several of its most prominent leaders, such as Deputy Merlo, have expressed themselves in favor of this new political tendency have led to a split within the military caste, a large number of whose members are Catholic.

However, for the great majority of these groups, the Conference has only this significance: the introduction of Germany into European economy. That also explains why circles are now supporting the Genoa Conference, who at first bitterly fought it and even employed it as a pretext for the overthrow of the Bonomi Cabinet. Among these latter the most prominent are the supporters of Cioffi, the Fascists and the Nationalists.
The Mussolini Government

By Gramsci

The fact of the Italian state, which was lately settled in a rather pallid manner by the Fascist Party assuming power, may be regarded as the result of the economic stratum of society. The Italian bourgeoisie has succeeded in organizing its State not so much by its own innate strength, as by the fact that it has been able to attract and exploit the latent strength of its own society. The policy of Napoleon III, in 1852–1859, the Austro-Prussian War of 1866, the French defeat of Sadowa, and the subsequent development of the German Empire. Thus the Italian bourgeoisie state developed differently and more slowly than many others. The Italian state was par excellence the state of the workers, which was as anarchic and irresponsible. The great Piedmont strike in December 1919 brought the collapse of the industrial and commercial bourgeoisie. The Italian government, led by Giolitti, endeavored to meet the situation by an alliance between all the urban classes, with the class of the agricultural laborers. The first proposal of collaboration with the government was made to Giolitti in the early part of the century. This could not however be turned into a step forward in the development of the constitutional State towards parliamentary democracy. This was rather in the nature of a more or less conscious trick by a paternal government to the working classes organized in trade unions and agricultural co-operatives.

The war had destroyed all these attempts. Giolitti, in accordance with the Crown, had pledged himself in 1917 to act in concert with Germany in the 1914 war (the military convention signed in Berlin in 1912 by General Pollio, chief of the
FASCISM

Letter from Italy.

At the Conference held on the 19th December under the direct auspices and in the presence of the Prime Minister Mussolini, between the leaders of the Fascist Trade Unions, the complete failure of the programme and the practice of Fascism in the sphere of Trade Unions had to be recognized.

The Fascist Trade Unions movement, before and after having obtained power, in order to bring it into effect, had to be extended to a rather considerable degree in the agrarian field, had failed almost completely in the industrial field. It was true for the Fascist, in view of the life and working conditions of the poor peasants, and of the rural workers dispersed in a great number of villages with facilities between the Trade Unions, to destroy the Socialist organizations of the land workers and to force the rural masses by means of physical terror and of the economic boycott, to enter into their corporations. It was otherwise in the industrial sphere, except with the railway employees, amongst whom much could be obtained by state comision and by the ever threatening menace of discharge, and also with the loccoirs who had already formed strictly guild-like organizations determined by the conditions in the traffic at the Italian ports which is developing very rapidly, in relation to the preponderance of exports and imports and to the seasonal activities for grain, coal and coffee.

In the large industrial towns, the Fascist only succeeded in gathering incalculable groups, consisting mainly everywhere of unorganized and of, criminal elements who, by means of the Fascist party ticket, obtain immunity for sabotage, theft in workshops and personal violence against foreigners. And yet it was necessary for Fascist politics to eliminate these elements from the Italian people and to make of them the most terrible barrier for any attempt to organize the workers in an independent organization.

The Fascist movement can only maintain power for any length of time if it is able to extend its influence amongst the workers of the large industrial centres, and to extend it to other organizations which are not Fascist. Mussolini bases his power on large strata of the petty bourgeoisie, which, since they have no function in the productive life, and hence do not feel the agitations and the contradictions creating fluxes (i), in fact believe the class struggle to be a diabolical invention of the鼹es and communists. The center, according to Mussolini, the conception of Fascism is dependent upon that fact. It is indispensable for the Fascist to organize that no independent organization of a typical class character exist and that the modern social life be organized under Fascist government, controlled by the Fascist ideology, being the concentrated expression of all personal and national aspirations of the petty bourgeoisie. Hence the necessity for integram Trade Unions, which is a reverse of the democratic Trade Unions substituting the defined function for the religious idea.

This point of view is opposed by the independent Fascists, who refused to enter the Fascist organizations viz to allow themselves to be made puppets, by Fascism and its life. The Fascist, some months ago, in face of the replies from the industrialists, began a demagogic campaign which went so far as to fiber announcing and causing the formation of great national organizations on the national and local scale. The campaign against the independent organizations culminated in the fact that the party paid, by Mussolini to the left workers of Turin on the anniversary of the Fascist March in 1922. The workers of the Fiat, six or seven thousand of whom had been gathered in the courtyard of the factory in order to listen to a speech by Mussolini, received the leader of the Fascist in a hostile manner. The Fascists accused the Turin workers of having insulted and at least with the messengers of proposing to treat with such organizations in order to destroy Fascism, of disenfranchising the workers from the Fascist Trade Unions, thus preventing the development of the Communist Trade Unions Committee organized in the interest of the workers, forcing the workers masses totally part in the struggle against the industrialists in order to change the position, even though the struggle had been stopped by the Fascists. The agitation was stifled by the central leaders of the Fascist, and the Conference held on the 19th December was condemned. In the speech Mussolini delivered then, he recognized, that it is impossible to organize the worker in the sphere of agrarian production. The Fascists have to respect the organizational independence of the industrialists and have to work only in order to avoid the outbreak of class conflicts. The meaning of these words is clear. The Fascists abandon even the keeping up of the appearance, not only of a struggle against the industrialists, but also of any attempt to displace, under its arbitrary control, the interests of the classes and they have only the confused task of organizing the workers in order to surrender them to the capitalistic bound hand and foot. Thus the beginning of the end of the Fascist Trade Unions. Immediately after the Conference, many land owners protested chiefly against the disavowal of the treatment shown to the farmers and to the agricultural workers. The Conference has been convicted by the Italian Trade Union Committee referred to the demands of the latter. The farmers, by signing them to expect labor contracts, which of course they declare to be absurd and exposed to the interests of the masters, and they claim to be allowed to immediate the General Confederation of Agriculture which had been absorbed by the Fascist corporations. At Pavia the agrarians have placed themselves in direct opposition to Fascism providing a whole series of risings and conflicts. At Ragusa Finibus, the Deputy Cagone, former Under-Secretary of State in the Government of Mussolini, has been expelled from the Fascist and leads a raging campaign in favour of the organizational independence of the land owners.

It is to be remarked how great a success was obtained by the tactics applied by our Party, in order to announce before the masses the Fascist Trade Unions Leaders who had raised such a hubbub against the industrialists. It is true, these facts procured to the Fascists the satisfaction of having mounted and been attended by many thousands of workers, but they are also, to force the Fascists to the wall, to créer them to cut their words and to disorder them even in the eyes of the most backward portion of the worker masses. If these facts were generalized and also extended by the agrarian field it would be possible to arrive at a high degree the dissolution of Fascism and hence the reproduction of the revolutionary forces of the democratic trade unions which is the only way to keep the cadres and the要素 of a precedent character till now. This is the way that the Fascists, ever since the moment that they are not able to say that the agrarian masses are not united, is true, they risk much if they attack Fascism in order to command it within the Fascist Trade Unions. A step in the right direction should be the intention to unite the independent organizations to the Fascist ones, and to declare that large strata, not only of workers, but also of all the masters who have penetrated the Fascist Trade Unions, are doomed to these aggregations by the Fascist democracy, hoping thus to wring something from their employers. The intrusions shown by the refusals and the masterly attempts, as in fact no intrusions were made, but against the poorest and most backward portion of the workers. Moreover, in no case these facts should not make any concessions to the Fascists who are governing.
CORRESPONDENCE

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POLITICS

Italy and Yugoslavia.

By G. Maa (Rome).

The conclusion of the agreement between Italy and Yugoslavia, which liquidates the question of Fiume and opens up a new period in the history of the relations between both countries, has its origin primarily in the following three series of facts:

1. The approaching commencement of the election campaign in Italy. The Fascist government wants to disprove the constitutional opposition of one of the most important causes of its success and of its development among the bourgeoisie: the complete failure of the Fascist foreign policy, which had isolated Italy in Europe.

2. The coming to power in Greece of the government of Venizelos. The government of Mussolini had to continue itself, that it could not do two jobs at the same time. Venizelos is the policeman who, since the discussion of Versailles up to the present time, has contributed most of all to thwart and to destroy the expansionist plans of Italian imperialism in the conflict with Yugoslavia, Italy was hampered by the treaties, in the conflict with Greece, however, the treaties are in favour of Italy, and in the agreement recently concluded, it is directly affirmed, that Italy and Yugoslavia pledge themselves to maintain the "status quo" established by the treaties. Closely connected with this is the policy of France towards the Little Entente, which would have become an immediate danger for Italy, if the conflict for Fiume had become intensitated, as seemed probable until very recent time.

3. The new plan of foreign policy, which until 1922 had been a personal one of Mussolini’s, now becomes the official government policy. With this plan are connected the agreement between Italy and Spain; the policy of approachment to the Soviet Union; the conflict between Italy, firstly aided by Spain, on the one hand and England and France on the other, regarding the Tangier question. A prologue to all this had been the Italo-Greek conflict and the landing of Italian troops at Coni.
fascist journalist, justifies us in predicting that, substantially, Italian foreign policy will become more anti-English though preserving the appearance of the character of impartiality between France and England. The fact must not be overlooked, that the Fascist Party, as a petty bourgeois nationalistic mass, asserts a continual pressure on the government. The Fascist would like to initiate a direct policy of complete independence from the hegemonic Powers which are at present contending against one another for world dominion. But it is clear that the economic weakness of Italy compels a compromise between the making of mere affirmations for the purpose of internal propaganda on the one hand and the real policy on the other. And therefore the adventurous and blustering character of Fascist foreign policy still continues.
POLITICS

The Results of the Elections in Italy.

A First Impression.

By G. Masei (Rome).

All parties declare themselves satisfied with the results of the elections, because all parties up to the eve of the poll had [had] no criterion, not even an approximate one, whereby to make forecasts, and all of them felt themselves to be crushed by the Fascist terror. This statement justifies the essential feature of the Italian situation which is characterized by the desanctionization of the masses, by the impossibility of holding meetings and by the feeble circulation of the papers openly in opposition to Fascism. The first results known up to now have defined results, owing to the complication of the election law, will only be known by the 15th or 16th April permit us to draw some very important conclusions which are indispensable for understanding the general orientation of the future political struggle in Italy.

1. The constitutional opposition (Camerlengo, Bonomi) has known that it has behind it a rapidly disappearing minority of the public opinion. In Italy, even among large states of the working class, the legend had arisen that the bourgeoisie itself, through its progressive and radical wing, would carry out the anti-fascist revolution; the elections have destroyed this legend. [has] nothing before the Frontal Reformists in a decisive and emphatic manner the question of abandoning the old political theatre of the block with the bourgeoisie left in favour of the workers' and peasants' block.

2. The working class has revealed resistive forces exceeding [all] expectations. At Milan, the combined votes of the three parties Communist, Minimalist and Reformist, have, in 1924, passed those which the Socialist Party polled in 1919, i.e. in the period of the highest revolutionary development: the 11,000 votes in 1919 have grown to 66,000 in 1924. The working class has proved in a magnificent manner its historical function as champion in this sphere of opposition to Fascism; the results of the elections declare against Fascism no other opposition is possible than revolutionary opposition. The Communist Party is the sole workers' party which has scored an electoral success; [it] had thirteen deputies in the last Legislature, and it now has twenty. The Reformists have raised from 83 deputies to 231 the Minimalists from 96 to 22. In the industrial towns (except Milan) the Communist Party has polled more votes than the minimalists in some towns, especially in the South of Italy; [has] polled more votes than the Minimalists and Reformists together. The induction is a clear one: the revolutionary proletariat is reorganizing itself around the Communist Party and abandoning the Minimalist Party which has the majority of its sympathizers among the rural wage-earners.

3. The peasant mass has been disintegrated by Fascists. [It] has in a large part forsaken the banner of the Party of the Populari and has formed a whole series of local political aggregations which presumed themselves at the elections as opposition parties: the Populari Party from 196 seats held until to 39.

The electoral law, supported by the state apparatus and by the Fascist organization, has manufactured a large majority for the government of Mussolini: 4,204,454 votes for the "National list" and 39,080 votes for the Fascist minority list II., with the total of 3,774 seats out of 5,35 of which, however, only 260 are officially members of the Fascist Party. To what extent these figures reflect the real state of mind of the population can be judged by the following fact: in all towns with over 75,000 inhabitants (except Bolzano), the Nationalist is in an unquestioned minority, as compared with the combined vote of the opposition. The smaller the centers and the more the Fascist pressure is able to control the votes of the individual citizens, the more the voting became plebiscites right up to 100% for the National list and for the list II.

In any case, Fascism has obtained a victory, and the Mussolini government has been strengthened by the elections both as regards at home and abroad, a fact which will have very notable consequences. The new Chamber will assume a true and proper character of a Fascist Constituent Assembly; this means, that it will legalize Fascism by reforming the National Constitution and by forming the democratic liberties which have ceased to exist in fact. It is therefore not improbable (already an illusion in this regard was contained in the prepared speech of Anascoli) that the democratic opposition will raise the demand for new elections, in order to convoke a true and proper Constituent Assembly with the definite task of revising the Statutes, and by means of this slogan it will again seek to create a good basis for a Left Bloc. The Communist Party which emerges politically strengthened from the elections, will therefore have a well defined task to fulfill: it must continue and intensify the campaign for the proletarian united front and for the workers' and peasants' government. In this and taking advantage of the parliamentary tribune. The peasants who have been shattered by the elections and who, in their great majority, have been compelled by means of terror to vote for Fascism, will realize more continually that from the present situation, the only way out is by revolutionary means. In the South of Italy, the Fascists have only been because of unheard of acts of violence succeeded in subordinating the peasants masses on the election day, throughout this whole area (which comprises one third of the territory of Italy) the Communist Party formerly had not even one deputy, and now it has three: one in Sicilia, one in Apulia and one in Campania. The economic situation of these populations is a terrible one: emigration has been rendered impossible by the American immigration laws, and the area of land under cultivation has for this harvest been decreased by the great landowners. The Fascist terror can only for a short time prevent a wave of revolts, as took place in the decades from 1860-1870 and from 1890-1900. The true Communists elected in the South therefore have historic significance which can surpass all expectations.
The Situation in the Communist Party

By Gramsci (Rome)

Comrade Gramsci recently gave a detailed report before the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Italy, on the inner situation in the Party. We give below the most essential parts of this report:

The conditions under which the CP of Italy has to fight are extremely difficult. It has to fight on two fronts against the Fascist terror and against the reformist current which is permeating the trade unions of the D’Aragona type. The regime of terror has considerably weakened the powers of the Italian trade unions. The reformist leaders exploit this state of affairs for their own ends, and exclaim the utterances of the revolutionary party in the trade unions. The masses are anxious for unity, and to carry on the fight within the "Confederazione Generale del Lavoro" (Federation of Free Trade Unions). The reformist leaders thus find themselves obliged to oppose the organisation of the masses. At the last congress of the Trade Union Federation D’Aragona proclaimed that the main task of members in the Trade Union Federation must not be permitted to exceed one million. This means that the leaders of the free trade unions only want 5.3% out of 15 million Italian workers to be organised. An adherent of the social democratic policy of joint action with the bourgeoisie, Gramsci criticises in his report the party’s sympathies for the bureaucratic path. How is it to be explained that they are so arrogant in their trade union movement to be avoided? We see only one possibility, the organisation of factory councils. Since the reformists oppose the concentration of revolutionary forces, it is the task of the factory councils to defend all the factory workers against the Party, and to strengthen the "inner Factory Committees" or, where they do not exist, to form Proletarian Committees. These last should be mass organisations adapted to develop the trade union movement, and to participating in the general struggle against capitalism and for the working masses.

In this context, the Italian comrades are in a much more difficult position than the Russian Bolsheviks before the war, for they have to bear their own and simultaneously against Fascist reaction and against reformist reaction. But the most difficult situation, the Comrade must be the enthronement of the communist party, both with regard to ideology and to organisations.

In these questions there is no disagreement in the standpoint held by the Communist Party of Italy and the Communist International. The Italian Committee of the Enlarged Executive of the Italian Communist Party, our party, is united in both matters. The Italian Committee of the Enlarged Executive has condemned, in its resolution of March 1919, the absorption of the trade union movement by the Trade Union Federation of the Italian Communist Party.

Gramsci Bordiga, our President of the Communist Party, has called upon us to take part in the work of the Italian Enlarged Executive, has decided to do so, although he considers himself, with the V. World Congress, to be the party’s chief in the Italian Committee of the International. His attitude is the most respectful towards party leaders. It is the task of the Comrade to study the standpoint not only actively antagonistic to that of the Exekutive, but even antagonistic to the party’s "inner Factory Committees". It is to be regretted that comrade Bordiga would not take part in the discussions on the Trotsky question if he had gone to Moscow for this purpose, he would have had his opportunity of having the views and positions of the Enlarged Executive and this opinion of the factories and coal: at the disposal of the Office of Moscow.

The Comradeship which should have discussed this question was the Comrade who was responsible for the Party’s inner Factory Committees, but the Party must refuse (if the Bordiga idea is to be helped to work) to receive the Enlarged Executive and considerations raised in the Communist Party of Italy with reference to the five fundamental characteristics demanded by Lenin of every really revolutionary Communist Party. These five points are as follows:

1. Every communist must be a Marxist. (Today we say: "Marxist Leninist")
2. Every communist must take his place in the front ranks of the proletarian action.
3. Every communist must have some revolutionary ideology, he must be at the same time a revolutionary and a real politician.
4. Every communist must submit his will to that of his Party, and judge everything from the standpoint of the Party. (He must be a truly disciplined member of the Party, in the highest sense of the word.)
5. Every communist must be an internationalist.

We may say that the CP of Italy fulfills the second condition, but none of the other four.

The CP of Italy lacks a thorough Marxist-Leninist teaching. In this lack we observe the remains of the traditions of the Socialist movement in Italy, which avoided these theoretical discussions which might have aroused the interest of the masses, and contributed to their ideological education. This state of affairs is extremely regrettable, and comrade Bordiga contributes to its continuance by confusing the tendency, pedantic to reformists, of supporting certain "collective work" for revolutionary political action, with the endeavours of the Communist Party to so raise the intellectual level of its members that they are able to grasp the immediate and distinct parts of the revolutionary movement.

The Party has succeeded in developing a feeling for discipline in its ranks. But a lack of international spirit is still observable in its relations to the Communist International. The Bordiga group, which tends to reconcile itself with the declaration of "Italian Left" has created a sort of local patriotism inconsistent with the discipline of a world organisation. The situation created by comrade Bordiga is similar to that created by comrade Sarret after the II. Congress in Moscow, and that situation led to the expulsion of the Maximumists from the Communist International.

The greatest weakness of the Party lies however in its loss of the revolutionary base or so often stressed by Lenin. Of this does not characterize Bordiga himself; it characterises the elements prevailing themselves around him. The expansion of Bordiga is the result of the special conditions of life obtaining among the Italian working class. But the Italian working class forms only a minority of the working population. It is concentrated for the most part by one class of the country. Under these circumstances their Party falls easily under the influence of those middle strata who are capable of a certain extent of shortsightedness, and who work within a circle actually opposed to their interests. On the other hand the situation in the Socialist Party up to the time of the Leghorn Congress was calculated to develop Bordiga’s ideology.

Lenin, in his "Infinite Disease" of "Radicalism in Communism", defines this situation in the following sentence: "In a Party where there is a Turati and a Sarret who does not condemn Turati, there must inevitably be a Bordiga as well."

But it is less naturally inevitable that comrade Bordiga should have preserved his ideology in our Party, our party, our less a Marxist than the others, should it not be the task of the party to fight against the Bordiga influence and to be the true representative of the revolutionary movement. The struggle against opportunism has rendered Bordiga so possible that he is sceptical as to the possibility of saving the proletariat and its Party from the invasion of petty bourgeois ideology, except by the employment of some of the tactics, which, while however contradict the two leading principles of Bolshevism, the purification of the working class and the hegemony of the proletariat in the revolutionary movement.

The whole discussion in the Communist Party of Italy? What is their nature? What are their consequences? What is their influence on the Education of the Partisans and the Communists? An answer to this question is as follows: It is not yet established until 5 of the revolutionaries substantially differentiated of the real Bordiga Party, and that Bordiga has not yet succeeded in yet in avowing himself into a whole the various groups which have been formed. The CP of Italy has been divided out of three groups: 1. Bordiga’s anti-dissociation faction (faction abstaining from voting) 2. The group of the "Ordine Nuove" (New Order) and of the "Venerdì" (Friday) group 3. The Comminist-Maximalist group Bordiga’s faction was formed as national organisation before the Leghorn Congress, but it occupied itself solely with the inner life of the Socialist party, without possessing the political experience imperative for mass action.
The "Ordine Nuovo" group formed an actual fraction in the province of Piedmont. It developed its action among the masses, and showed itself capable of establishing a close connection between the inner problems of the Party and the demands of the Piedmontese proletariat.

The overwhelming majority of the members of the CP of Italy are elements which stemmed from Fascism, which has succeeded in establishing itself. In this situation a Right wing might easily come into existence — if it does not exist already — which, despairing of being able to overthrow the Fascist regime rapidly enough, adopts a policy of passivity which would make it possible for the bourgeoisie to exploit the proletariat for anti-Fascist election manoeuvres. In any case, the Party must recognize that the Right danger is a probability, and must first meet this danger by ideological influence; later, if necessary, with the aid of disciplinary measures.

The danger from the Right is merely probable, while that from the Left is obvious. This Left danger forms an obstacle to the development of the Party. It must therefore be combated by propaganda and by political action. The action taken by the "Extreme Left" threatens the unity of our organisation, for it strives to form a party within the Party, and to replace Party discipline by faction discipline. We have not the slightest wish to break with comrades Bordiga and those who call themselves his friends. Nor do we seek to alter the fundamentals of the Party as created at the Leghorn Congress and confirmed at the Rome Congress. What we must demand is that our Party does not content itself with a mechanical affiliation to the Communist International, but actually approves the principles and discipline of the Comintern. But in actual fact 90% of our Party members, if not more, have today no knowledge whatever of the methods of organisation upon which our relations to the International are based. We believe that we shall arrive at an understanding with Comrade Bordiga, and we trust that he believes this as well, and as desirous of it as we are.

The CP of Italy will hold its Conference shortly. In the discussion preceding the Party Conference we shall have to deal with the present political situation and the tasks of the Party in Italy. Since the last parliamentary elections the CP of Italy has been carrying on energetic political work, participated in by most of its members. Thanks to this work, the Party has tripled its membership. Our Party has shown much energy and realisation of activities in pressing the problem of revolution in Italy as the problem of the alliance between the workers and the peasantry. In short, the CP of Italy has become an important factor in the political life of the country.

In the course of the above-mentioned work, a certain unification of character, a homogeneity, has been developed within the Party. This homogeneity, one of the most important results of our Bolshevisation, must be firmly and finally established by our Party Conference. We shall discuss the international situation and the proportions of social forces in Italy, concentrating our efforts upon the two following points: The development of our Party, which must be such as to render the Party capable of leading the proletariat to victory (the problem of Bolshevisation); and the political action which must be carried on for the purpose of uniting all anti-capitalist forces and establishing a workers' state. To this end it is necessary to study the conditions in Italy with the utmost exactitude, so that the revolutionary alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry may be established, and the hegemony of the proletariat firmly secured.