2a. Radek to VKPD Leaders in Berlin

14 March 1921

To Brandler, Thalheimer, Frölich, Meyer, Böttcher, and Felix [Wolff]

Dear Comrades,

1.) Situation here as follows: greater concessions to peasants essential; this means temporary economic strengthening of capitalist forces. Concessions abroad. Major efforts to maintain army battle-ready. Similar efforts to transform rearguard of exhausted proletarians into vanguard, endow it with courage and will to struggle. Spring and summer will be very hard. Help from abroad very necessary to raise confidence here among masses.

2.) Situation in your party is clear to me. Levi is trying to form faction with slogan: mass party or sect. That is a fraud, since his policies have dispersed the party. Meanwhile we, through activating our politics, can win new masses. No one here thinking of a mechanical split or any split at all in Germany. Task is to clarify differences, to make left wing the dominant force. Levi will go downhill fast. But we must do everything possible so Däumig and Zetkin do not go downhill with him.

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1. Archiv der sozialen Demokratie, NL Paul Levi 1/PLAA00043.
3.) Everything depends on world political situation. If rift between Entente and Germany widens, if war breaks out with Germany, we will speak. Mere existence of these possibilities means you must make every effort to mobilise party. Action cannot be shot out of a revolver. You must do everything possible to utilise the constant pressure of Communist masses for action in order to imbue them with awareness of how essential they are. If you do not do this, then at the decisive moment you will fail once again. Given the world-political stakes, think less of ‘radical’ phrases and more of deeds that bring the masses into motion. In case of war, think not of peace or mere protest but of armed struggle.

I am writing all this in a great rush at the party convention. I will say more in an article.

Greetings, Max [Karl Radek]

2b. VKPD Theses on March Action

[7 April, 1921]

1.) The London negotiations have been broken off; sanctions are in force; the Upper Silesian question is posed for a decision: these factors mark the start of a new period of heightened crisis for the German bourgeoisie. The peace previously concluded between the bourgeoisie and the social-patriotic parties has once more turned into open struggle: an economic war, a time of hunger. The bourgeoisie had only made a pretence of ending its war; now it has gone back to its starting point. The inherent contradictions of the imperialist war and imperialist peace were now blatantly exposed. Victory and defeat, both bankrupt, clashed against one another.

In the bourgeois camp, the heightened crisis resulted in an evident and rapid advance by the counterrevolution. Kahr banged on the table with his sword. Meanwhile, the parties of social betrayal broadened and deepened their alliance with the bourgeoisie. The Social Democrats and the Independents [USPD] were already closely allied by their joint crusade against the Communist vanguard in the trade unions. They now surrounded the counterrevolution with a protective wall. The counterrevolutionary bloc expanded

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2. The Tenth Congress of the Russian Communist Party was held 8–16 March 1921.  
3. These theses were adopted by the VKPD Central Committee at its meeting of 7–8 April 1921 by a vote of 26 to 14. They are translated from Zentrale der VKPD 1921, pp. 139–46; the version in IML-SED 1966a, 7, part 1, pp. 451–6 has also been consulted.  
4. The rightist politician Gustav von Kahr was then prime minister of Bavaria.