

WORKERS
OF THE
WORLD.
UNITE

THE MILITANT



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Forward in Lenin's Way!

The Left Opposition Alone Carries on the Work of Ilyitch

Once again, the working class of Europe is facing a period of colossal historical opportunities. The world crisis of capitalism has produced a revolutionary situation in Central Europe. Communism is about to stand another gigantic test. Clarity, firmness, Bolshevik boldness are the demands of the minute.

And it is precisely at this time, that the memory of Lenin is alive as the revolutionary inspiration of all working class fighters. Lenin represents the victory of the Russian revolution, the flaming torch of the world revolution, the militant proletariat turns at all moments of crisis, as a well of confidence, as a reservoir of revolutionary power.

Above all else, Lenin taught active realism in the class struggle. His was not a teaching of dead letters, but of living action. He analyzed, he divided his friends from his enemies, he calculated the right moment and the point of vantage and he struck. The dry and impotent formula of "social Fascism", the unrealistic conception of the "single reactionary mass" were unknown to him.

When Lenin arrived in the Petrograd of the February revolution, he did not find a working class ready to follow him blindly. His own disciples did not even grasp the grand sweep of his revolutionary ideas. He was not deceived by the trend nor by the particular stage of developments. He knew and he stressed that the masses can only learn from their own experiences, and he was determined to teach them, patiently but surely. Confident, intransigent and firm, he proceeded to carry out the task he had set for himself. Success met his resolute, but patient efforts.

What Lenin taught, the breath of life he breathed into the struggle of the proletariat for power, is today, unfortunately, entirely forgotten by those who usurp his place in the Communist International. The German Communist Party, the section of the vanguard of the international working class that is confronted with the greatest task of revolutionary action at the present, is further away than ever from the road of Lenin. Its leaders are incapable of seizing the importance of the various factors in the situation. The ideological devastation brought about by Stalinism since the death of Lenin prevents them from mastering the political task of the moment: the unification of the working class of the country against the menacing and deadly attack of Fascism.

Lenin never stipulated the absolute necessity of the unconditional acceptance by the Russian working class of Bolshevik leadership in the renunciation of the Kornilov offense, in defeating Russian Hitlerism. He confidently joined in a united front with the social democratic workers and forced their Menshevik leaders to reveal their true colors. And he proved the superiority of Bolshevik leadership, defeating not only Kornilov, but the Kerenskys, the Thellders and the Duns and Tseretellis with them.

Before the arrival of Lenin, the Russian party was also derailed, dragged into the conciliatory swamp by Stalin and by Kamenev. But the strength of the Bolshevik idea made possible a quick rearming of the party of Lenin and enabled it to pass through its internal crisis and to lead the Russian working class in triumph. The Bolshevik idea is not dead. The German Left Opposition, under the direct participation of Leon Trotsky, the co-fighter and the comrade of Lenin, is keeping the ideas of Leninism alive. The rearming of the German party is on the order of the day. Its glorious tradition dating back to the days of the Spartacists, to the stirring memory of its valiant pioneers, to Rosa and Karl, cannot fail to raise it to the high level of militancy of those days. The last word concerning the fate of the German working class has not yet been spoken.

The Stalinist epigones, rotten to the core and infested by the putrid theory of socialism in one country, are preparing to leave the German workers isolated in the battles to come. They want peace: the five year plan must first be completed. What is at stake is not only the five year plan, but the life itself of Workers' Russia. Stalin and his faction have been so entangled by their own mistakes, so disorientated by the policies of vulgar empiricism that they have lost all perspective. The alarm must be sounded. The situation must be saved. The Communist ranks must once more be awakened by the pungent, stimulating ideas of Ilyitch.

When Lenin first set foot on Russian soil in 1917, he addressed the following simple and strong words to the masses who had come to greet him:

"Dear comrades, soldiers, sailors and workers! I am happy to greet in your person the victorious Russian revolution, to greet you as the vanguard of the proletarian army of the world. . . . The hour is not distant when the peoples, answering the call of our comrade Karl Liebknecht will take arms against their exploiters, the capitalists. . . . The Russian revolution, achieved by you, introduces a new epoch. Long live the world revolution!"

The hour is not distant today, when the hosts of Lenin in Russia will have to answer the call of the hosts of Liebknecht in Germany. The Stalinist regime is revealing itself as an obstacle in the way of the world revolution, more sharply at the present than ever. The Left Opposition, with Trotsky, the closest collaborator of Vladimir Ilyitch Lenin at its head, is calling for clarity and action. It is sounding the alarm in time. To the German Communists, to the workers of Soviet Russia, to the proletariat of the whole world, the Left Opposition directs its voice the voice of Lenin. It is not yet too late. The German party is still capable of victory, of uniting the proletariat about it—for the defeat of the class enemy. Victory can come, will come in the way of the Left Opposition and comrade Trotsky, in the way of Lenin.

Lenin's Last Words to the Party

By the stability of the Central Committee, of which I spoke before, I mean measures to prevent a split, so far as such measures can be taken. For, of course, the White Guard in *Russkaya Mysl* (I think it was S. E. Oldenburg) was right when, in the first place, in his play against Soviet Russia he banked on the hope of a split in our party, and when, in the second place, he banked for that split on serious disagreements in our party.

Our party rests upon two classes, and for that reason its instability is possible and if there cannot exist an agreement between those two classes its fall is inevitable. In such an event it would be useless to take any measures or in general to discuss the stability of our Central Committee. In such an event no measures would prove capable of preventing a split. But I trust that is too remote a future and too improbable an event, to talk about.

"I have in mind stability as a guarantee against a split in the near future, and I intend to examine here a serious of considerations of a purely personal character."

"I think that the fundamental factor in the matter of stability—from this point of view—is such members of the Central Committee as Stalin and Trotsky. The relation between them constitutes in my opinion, a big half of the danger of that split, which might be avoided, and the avoidance of which might be promoted, in my opinion, by raising the number of members of the Central Committee to fifty or one hundred."

"Comrade Stalin, having become General Secretary, has concentrated an enormous power in his hands; and I am not sure that he always knows how to use that power with sufficient caution. On the other hand comrade Trotsky, as was proved by his struggle against the Central Committee in connection with the question of the People's Commissariat of Ways of Communications, is distinguished not only by his exceptional abilities—personally he is, to be sure, the most able man in the present Central Committee, but also by his far-reaching self-confidence and a disposition to be too much attracted by the purely administrative side of affairs."

"These two qualities of the two most able leaders of the present Central Committee might, quite innocently, lead to a split; if our party does not take measures to prevent it, a split might arise unexpectedly."

"I will further characterize the other members of the Central Committee as to their personal qualities. I will only remind you that the October episode of Zinoviev and Kamenev was not, of course, accidental, but that it ought as little to be used against them personally as the non-Bolshevism of Trotsky."

"Of the younger members of the Central Committee, I want to say a few words about Bukharin and Piatakov."

Left Opposition in Appeal to Needle Trades Workers for United Action in Struggle

We are reprinting below a statement by our needle worker comrades, issued to all workers in their trade. Our comrades have represented the views expressed therein consistently and repeatedly at various public meetings and gatherings of the N. T. W. I. U. The statement is a recapitulation, in precise and concrete form, of the position of the Left Opposition in the needle trades situation. —Ed.

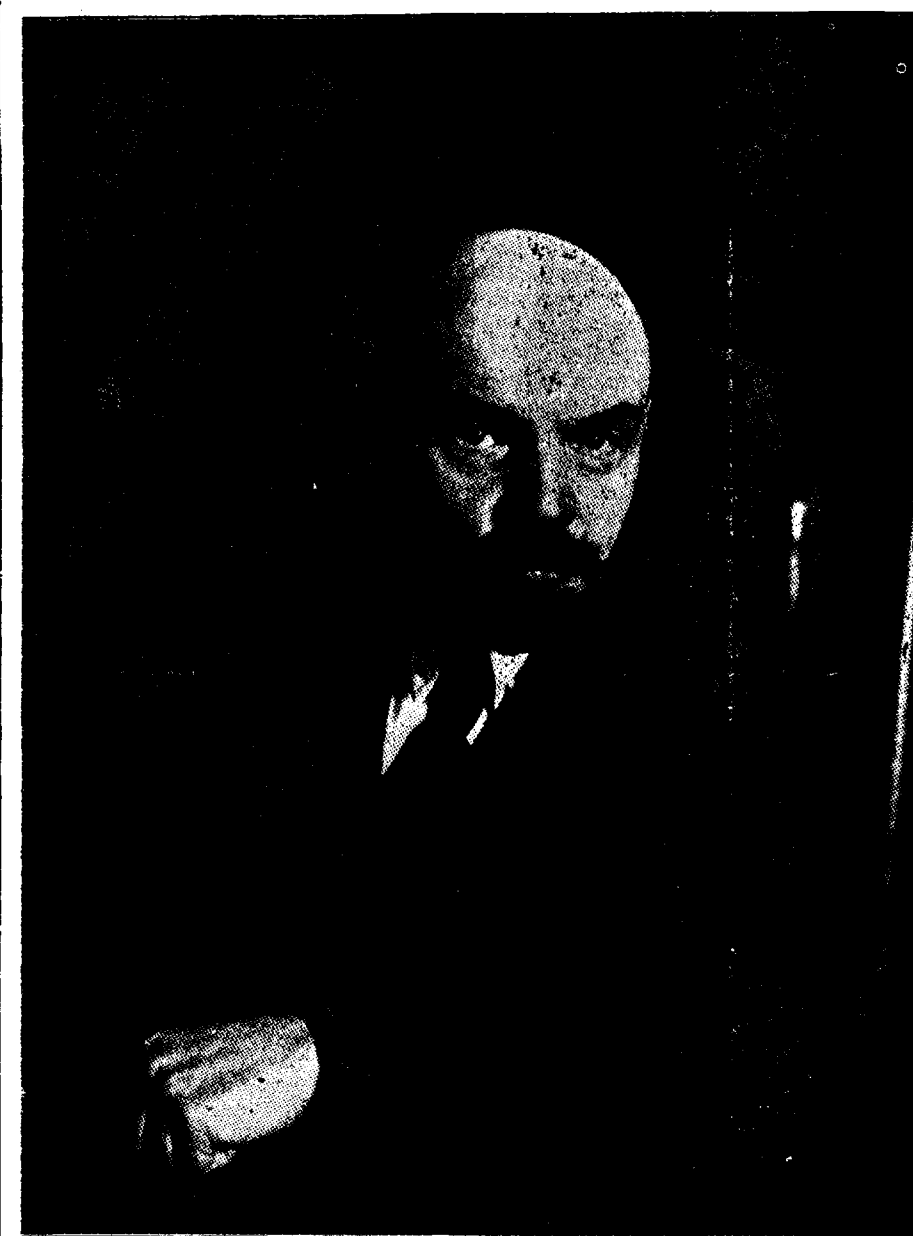
Fellow Workers and Comrades:

Again we are hearing the day when we will have to take the cudgels against the bosses: the dress manufacturers, contractors, jobbers, for a better living. The agreements, as bad as they were, expire. The bosses are preparing to cut further into our earnings. For them the expiration of the agreements, is a signal for concerted action against our conditions—for us the expiration of the agreement must be a call to arms against further enslavement of the dressmakers.

We learned enough from the past to be ready to repulse and defeat the wage

OPEN FORUM

Lecture by
ARNE SWABECK
The Heritage of Lenin
at the
Labor Temple
14th Street and Second Avenue
Friday January 29, 1932
at 8 P. M.
QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION
ADMISSION: 25 Cents
Unemployed Workers Admitted Free
Auspices: New York Branch Communist League of America (Opposition)



They are, in my opinion, the most able forces (among the youngest), and in regard to them, it is necessary to bear in mind the following: Bukharin is not only the most valuable and biggest theoretician of the party, but also may legitimately be considered the favorite of the whole party; but his theoretical views can only with the very greatest doubt be regarded as fully Marxist, for there is something scholastic in him (he never has learned, and I think never has fully understood, the dialectic).

"And then, Piatakov—a man undoubtedly distinguished in will and ability, but too much given over to administration and the administrative side of things to be relied on in a serious political question."

"Of course, both these remarks are made by me merely with a view to the present time, or supposing that these two able and loyal workers may not find an occasion to supplement their knowledge and correct their one-sidedness."

Dec. 25, 1922

"Postscript: Stalin is too rude, and this fault, entirely supportable in relations among us Communists, becomes insupportable in the office of General Secretary. Therefore, I propose to the comrades to find a way to remove Stalin from that position and appoint to it another man who in all respects differs from Stalin only in superiority—namely, more patient, more loyal, more polite, and more attentive to comrades, less capricious, etc. This circumstance may seem an insignificant trifle, but I think that from the point of view of preventing a split and from the point of view of the relation between Stalin and Trotsky which I discussed above, it is not a trifle, or it is such a trifle as may acquire a decisive significance."

Jan. 4, 1923

The Dressmakers in the other needle trade centers fare no better. Their standards of living have gone down just as much and just as rapidly as in New York. The dressmakers there, have gone through the same struggles with the two unions in the field and followed the same policies. Therefore the wrong policies must be corrected everywhere—New York, Boston, Philadelphia, etc.

United Action Is Imperative
The dressmakers of the Industrial Union and the dressmaker members of the I. L. G. W. U. must begin a very serious campaign to make the question of one united strike of the dressmakers a reality. This is not the time for mere maneuvers! The livelihood of

Hitler Prepares to Strike

Stalinist Leadership Impotent in Face of Impending Struggle

Behind the social volcano of present day Germany, there is unfolding a political scene that has many elements of a farce in it. And that is not at all strange. Times of revolution, days pregnant with human convulsions, always show up the ruling classes and political personalities as a whole in all possible and impossible shapes, like a refraction mirror. So it was in the Russia of 1916-1917 with the buffoonery of the Rasputinade and the equally risible counterplay of the liberal bourgeoisie. So in Spain since last April, with the solemn comedy of the "Workers Republic" and the trials of the "responsibles". In the current uncertain political situation, before the masses have had the opportunity to have their say, we are witnessing

a similar scene in the Reich.

Hitler and the Weimar Constitution
Hitler is defending the Weimar Constitution, the barge of glory of the "criminals of November 1918". Answering the appeal of the Weimar Centrist: Bruening to agree to an avoidance of popular elections by extending the term of President Von Hindenburg by Reichstag decree, the new defender of Weimar and constitutionalism just bubbles over with indignation:

"The Weimar Constitution, he says 'is the legal basis of the German Republic. Article I states that Germany is a republic deriving all power from the people (sic). Article XLI states that the President shall be chosen by the entire electorate."

"To substitute the Reichstag's verdict for the people's voice would be a manifest contradiction to the Constitution. . . . Our self-respect alone. Here (Chancellor, obliges us to decline your proposition to agree to the prolongation of President Von Hindenburg's term of office by a two-thirds majority of the Reichstag."

Thus spoke Hitler, whose legions are already lying in ambush, ready to throttle the working class—that same "people". No further bargains with the vacillating parties of the "democratic" bourgeoisie. Tenseness marks the moment. The high praetorians of the German master must put up a front of resoluteness, of intransigence. They know what that soon they will have to strike. And they are not underestimating their enemy.

Why Hitler Promises Private Debts Payment

The Austrian adventurer also knows, that in that battle the aid of the foreign powers would be indispensable to him. And that accounts for the other face of the farce: Hitler re-assuring the international capitalist that private debts will be paid, while the "greatest German diplomat since Bismarck", namely the clericalist Chancellor bluntly declares that reparations will not be paid.

The leader of German Fascism is no fool. He realizes very well that a fulfillment of his "traditional" policy would mean isolation for a government of the "Third Reich". And isolation is just precisely what he fears most, no matter how much the clownish Feders prate about—autarchy. To crush the German proletariat tomorrow, Hitler will not hesitate for one moment to embrace his "arch-enemy" of today.

And, to be sure, that is just the direction the foreign policy of the Nazis is taking. In the same document addressed to Bruening, the National Socialist chieftain, in taunting his bourgeois opponent, remarks:

"Only when Germany can offer something, will she be given something."

For Attack on the Soviet Union

What Hitler wants to offer the world bourgeoisie, is no secret. He wants to offer it, a defeated and spineless proletariat, a Germany that will take the lead in the inevitable imperialist offensive against the U. S. S. R. That is the devil's bargain that Fascism is ready to conclude. And that is the basis on which the French, the British and the American robber governments will agree to meet it half way.

A huge slaughter is being prepared for the working class of Germany, for the workers of Soviet Russia. Doubtlessly, the understanding of this immediate danger is growing among the masses of the affected countries. The will to fight is rising. But misfortune of misfortunes: the leadership is not at its post. It is acting the role of the slacker. At a time in which the ground is cut beneath the feet of reformism by the events themselves, the revolutionary leaders, the official Communist party, finds itself unable and impotent, fails to rally the resolute and determined masses of proletarian fighters for the unpostponable struggle against the arm-

—Lenin.

ed and arming class enemy. The Thaelmanns and the Remmeles and all of their sorry ilk dabble in sterile theories, attempt to theorize themselves out of their hard pressed position. The Stalinist incompetents offer nothing, absolutely nothing, to bring the workers into motion. They are much too occupied in covering up their own tracks. . . .

Thaelmann & Co. Prepare For Capitulation

Unfortunately, the shakiness, the spinelessness of the official leadership is also sowing apathy and helplessness into the ranks of the Communist workers. In a series of articles in the *New York Evening Post*, H. R. Knickerbocker, one of the more reliable and more independent of the bourgeois newspapermen, writes from Berlin:

"I asked a German Communist: What will you do when Hitler comes in?"

We will try, he answered, to get the social democrats to declare with us a general strike and run Hitler out the way the general strike ran out Kapp in 1919."

"But," I objected, Kapp took the government by force and the social democrats were clear in their minds that as democrats, they had to defend the democracy. The social democratic government in 1919 itself declared the general strike. Will the social democratic leaders go with the Communists now to declare a general strike if Hitler comes to power legally?"

"Not much hope", he admitted.

"You have 6,000,000 Communist voters. It only took 50,000 Bolsheviks to make the Russian revolution. I know the conditions are entirely different. But why can't your 6,000,000 oppose Hitler by force?"

"We haven't got the guns", was the sententious reply. **The Soviet Union is not ready for a German revolution.** We think if Hitler comes in he will run the country down so fast that by next autumn we can take power."

"But Hitler will then have all the guns."

"Yes, Hitler will have the guns. . . ." It is not amiss to bring the above quotation in its full length. For it is a revelation of the real state of mind the criminals of the Stalinist faction with the national-limitedness of their perspective, have managed to produce among their rank and file. The bourgeois reporter too, does not fail to see the situation clearly and the questions he asks are certainly appropriate. The workers of Germany are being deserted in their struggle by the usurpers of leadership in the German Communist Party and the Soviet Union. Thaelmann and Company are capitulating under the pretext that the social democracy influence in the working class must first be wiped out. In the meantime, the Nazis are laughing up their sleeves. Weakness, indecision, cowardliness on part of their enemy is just what suits them most. They are preparing to seize all the guns.

Fascists Prepared For Struggle

Knickerbocker tells us in the same article that he asked a National Socialist: "What will you do when you get power?". "He might have launched a long discussion of the party program", he says, "but his only reply was: 'Keep it.' The Fascists are not theorizing now. They are preparing for action. And action, decisive and determined, is the only thing that will save the working class. Elsewhere in the present issue of the *Militant* we are publishing a document of our German sister section. In it, the German Left Opposition (Bolshevik-Leninists) propose a concrete, brief and clear program of action to the Communist Party of Germany. It is worth while studying. Every member of the American party, every conscientious Communist ought to read it carefully and draw his conclusions. Time flies. It is necessary to act. The duty of every revolutionist is clear. Let their voices be heard everywhere. The present course of the Stalinist leadership must be stopped if the working class of the world is to avoid disaster."

—SAM GORDON.

New Trotsky Pamphlet Out

As we got to press, we receive the news that comrade Leon Trotsky's new pamphlet *Germany—The Key to the International Situation* will be out on sale beginning Wednesday next. The pamphlet is in three sections. It consists of the original work, entitled "Shall Fascism Really Be Victorious?", the article "For a Workers' United Front against Fascism", and an appendix bringing a document of the German Left Opposition.

Whoever want to know the Communist solution to the question: "Communism or Fascism must avail himself of a copy of this pamphlet at once. The price is 10 cents per copy, 7 cents in bundles of five or more."

Send your orders in immediately to: **Pioneer Publishers, 84 East 10th Street, New York City.**

(Continued on page 2)

A Review of the Recent National Tour

The Sweep of the Economic Crisis; Its Effects on the Revolutionary Movement

A tour of the country today reveals particularly the stark picture of the realities of unemployment. Cities like Chicago and St. Louis, one can say, are taking on a desolate appearance. The Illinois government itself admits 1,049,000 unemployed in the state, or 15-12 per cent of the total population. Yet everywhere the signs of a live virile unemployment movement of a mass character are quite absent, although a number of councils have been organized in the various cities. Throughout the official party there is an immense turnover of membership. As many as join the party ranks, pressed by the realities of the crisis, leave it again in just as large numbers. As a matter of fact most of the new recruits leave its ranks after a very brief sojourn. Upon the party this turnover is making its indelible imprint.

In the Left Opposition branches this is not the case. We are gaining new members slowly, the new recruits remain in our ranks, but our members are still small. What then becomes of these many "visitors" to the party ranks? Most of them take leave again because of being repelled by the existing bureaucracy or specifically by its blundering mistakes. Some of them learn a valuable lesson in the process and come toward the Left Opposition. A few become so disgusted that they are browbeaten back into their former apathy, but most of them unquestionably remain within the movement, sympathetic to Communism. In this sense the movement as a whole has certainly experienced growth. But within the party itself the ideologically low level is particularly apparent. The political life within the units is reaching zero.

In the Illinois mine fields this condition is reflected as well as is also the fact of the party's failure to employ the united front policy. Compelled by the power of job control concentrated in the hands of the union officials, and by the agreement reached between the John L. Lewis and John H. Walker cliques, the Illinois miners are again all back in the U. M. W. Now they may expect a wage cut at the expiration of their agreement in April. But testifying to the opportunities which have been available is the fact that in several local sections progressive elements still have considerable influence. The National Miners' Union is non-existent in that field. Its attitude of boycotting the rebel movements and its failure to meet them on a united front basis brought this result.

Meetings in the Mine Field

Naturally we presented this criticism at our meeting in Staunton, Ill. Present were the party organizer in the mine fields with some of the party members. In the discussion they had very little to say about this question, the organizer had something else in mind. He asked the direct question: "Do you support the hunger march to Washington?" The answer was in the affirmative. He then, after first voicing his agreement with our general analysis of the capitalist crisis, attempted to prove that our position was the opposite. In support of this contention, he quoted the following from our open letter to the party on the unemployment question: "It is false to center the unemployment program, and the activities and demonstrations, around the deceptive opportunist petition campaign to Congress . . ." For us it became quite easy to verify, not only that this was still as correct as when written, but also that the hunger marchers themselves declared that they did not come to congress to present petitions but to make definite demands. The audience present voiced no doubt of our further statement that the workers will obtain only what they are ready to fight for.

St. Louis Crowd Responsive

The city of St. Louis has very little of a revolutionary movement or of Communist activities. Naturally our Left Opposition branch there is small. Still, a splendid meeting gathered for our meeting. In fact we were greeted by the hearty applause of a typical American audience composed of workers who

evidently had so far had very little contact with the Communist movement but nevertheless had received one object lesson from the capitalist crisis. A couple of Stalin supporters took exception to our views, but it came in the form of merely repeating old slanders of Trotsky always having been a menshevik. Unfortunately for the objectors, a person who evidently had strayed in by accident very fervently took up the cudgels for the capitalist system which was under indictment of the whole audience. And despite our efforts to make the distinction clear, it quite naturally turned its scorn almost equally against all three objectors in common.

The Tour Further West

In Kansas City we met a different kind of opposition. The party functionaries spared no efforts to keep the workers away from our meeting. Members from the unemployed councils were warned to stay away. Those who had distributed our leaflets were labeled "dangerous to the working class". But there was no evidence that the workers took that very seriously and those party members who came to our meeting greeting the first remarks with a snicker, soon became attentive and listened very carefully.

In both of these cities there are good opportunities for the movement in general and for the Left Opposition. Our units, however, are as yet weak numerically, a condition which we must, of course, endeavor to overcome. In this respect comrade Clarke, who went to Kansas City to stay for a period, is doing good pioneer work. Our St. Louis branch is taking up much more effective work. Perhaps there could be no better tribute to this fact than the panic-fear with which the party bureaucrats have gone about destroying the Mooney united front movement which was beginning to develop in Southern Illinois particularly through the assistance of our St. Louis branch.

Minneapolis Movement Growing

In this respect we have had similar experiences in Minneapolis. There, our members have for years been deeply rooted in the labor movement and established real prestige for themselves among progressive and Left wing workers. Naturally our members would be of serious account in a Mooney movement actually organized on a united front basis. Because of this, the petty party bureaucrats worked overtime maneuvering to keep our branch representation out. By a little trick it was accomplished at the first conference, but with the result that all representation, outside of the party and its auxiliaries, dropped near the vanishing point. This, however, can soon be remedied and the Mooney movement rebuilt.

Our Minneapolis branch had not less than four public meetings arranged for the tour with a banquet thrown in for good measure. But it occurred just during the period of the Christmas holidays which to an extent accounted for the fact that these meetings were not as large as they should have been when organized by a live and strong branch. Nevertheless the elements mostly attracted were those with a militant record in the local labor movement. Because of that, the discussions following each lecture became very thorough and fruitful.

A portion of the Minneapolis stay became devoted to the problems of our branch and its function. It has succeeded in adding quite substantially to its ranks. Its activities are generally organized in a thorough manner, particularly centering in the trade union field. Just now it is renewing its efforts to put more active life into the local railroad council to organize a fight against the pending wage cuts.

Excellent Meeting in Chicago

The Chicago Left Opposition branch made one important step forward in acquiring permanent headquarters. It has become a place full of life, meetings and study classes take place regularly and generally speaking, quite successfully. For our tour, one public meeting was held at the headquarters and one

in the down town section. The latter proved highly successful. It attracted a good-sized audience and brought out so many questions which in sum and substance amounted to almost a full review of the Left Opposition platform.

This branch has some recent gains to its credit, particularly among young workers. Those comrades who a short time ago were expelled from the Y. C. L. because of their fight against the system of bureaucracy have continued their logical development and adhered to the Left Opposition platform. They are now active members of the Chicago branch, comrade Satir is already busily engaged teaching other young workers. While there have been periods of a certain let down in active work carried on by this branch in the past, its future prospects of steady growth are already quite well assured.

Winding Up in the East

In the Eastern section, we held public meetings in Boston, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh and Youngstown. In the latter city we will henceforth have a functioning branch. It begins its activity with small numbers, but that is no deterrent; it has been the history of our whole movement including those branches which are today very lively. In Cleveland we have also taken steps toward the formation of a branch. When we reach the point of recording the gain of a few young recruits in that city, a live existence will be assured.

The efforts made by the little party bureaucrats in Pittsburgh, to break up our meeting and by similar individuals in Youngstown to create friction, our readers already know, came to naught in a rather inglorious fashion. In all of the meetings there was a good sprinkling of party members present, at several instances asking questions and participating in the discussion. Throughout the tour good collections were made to aid us in further activities. As one example in this respect, we might mention that from seven comrades alone, in Boston a total contribution of \$50.00 was made.

All in all the tour brought splendid results. First, in again bringing forward in public meetings the Left Opposition views of problems of the class struggle. Secondly, in strengthening our branches everywhere and lastly, but perhaps foremost, in knitting our organization as a whole more closely together.

—ARNE SWABECK.

A Set-back for Stalinism . . .

On Jan. 18, I was asked by my Local Union to give a report on the Marine Workers' Defense Committee. At once the chief leader of the T. U. U. L. took the floor and made a motion that my report be delayed. His reasons were: that their delegate was not present and from what information they had so far, the committee should be withdrawn. He was followed by one of his lieutenants who also spoke in favor of withdrawing from the Committee. I was granted the floor next. I explained, that since their delegate had only attended one of these three meetings, he could not give much of a report, and that I was asked by the Committee because of his absence and lack of interest to have the L. U. send another delegate in his place. Therefore I urged that action be taken immediately. The membership which is now familiar with the case, became uneasy. They could not understand the dishonest maneuver of these two would-be revolutionary leaders of the T. U. U. L. refused to entertain the amendment. An appeal from the decision of the chair was demanded. The vote was taken and guess what happened—out of about a hundred and twenty-five (125) members, about eighteen (18) belonging to the T. U. U. L. eight (8) voted for hearing the report immediately and five (5) voted to postpone it. I must say that I can hardly find words to express my gratitude to those members of the T. U. U. L. whom their conviction forbade to raise their hand with the five (5) allies of the hangman. We also owe a certain amount of respect to those members who claim they are not familiar with the case. Yet as workers, rather than to throw their lot in with the hangman they abstained. Now came my report. In order to clear up some of the misunderstanding, I had to quote the statement from the *Daily Worker** mentioned in some of the T. U. U. L. members protested. They were ashamed of their own quotation. I stressed the work of the Defense Committee and also read off the letter from the I. L. D., in which they now offer to defend the Marine Workers.

I did not even have to re-appeal when some members shouted "Brother chairman, I make a motion to donate them another fifteen dollars and to substitute the one delegate". The chairman again refused to entertain the motion. Instead he picked up the constitution and started, "In the name of . . . I declare this meeting adjourned." No sooner had he finished when two members had jumped on the

Resurge of Mine Struggles

Miners Learning, Gathering Forces for Coming Fight

Reports from the mine fields tell of a reestablishment of the influence of the U. M. W. A. in recent months. This organization, controlled to the point of strangulation by the abominable Lewis machine for years, was considered to be on its last legs only a short time ago. Due to the splitting up of the advanced militants among the miners, the Stalinists allowing the "progressive" fakers a free hand by their narrow and bureaucratically limited policy, the U. M. W. A. because of its job control is being looked upon by many miners as the only organization left for them.

The new influx of membership into the union will undoubtedly revive the Left wing within it and open up real possibilities for militant action among the miners on a nation-wide scale. In view of all these developments and in view of the approaching international convention of the U. M. W. A., the article by comrade Allard published below is especially interesting and important. More articles by the same comrade and by other comrades in the mine fields will follow. —Ed.

The district convention of the U. M. W. A. was held soon after the rank and file movement in Illinois had been decisively defeated by the Lewis-Walker-Op-

platform and tried to take the gavel away from him to reopen the meeting.

A free-for-all was in full swing and in ten minutes another "third period" had taken place. Casualties were as follows: compound fractures of two chairs and three tables legs, a minor skull bruise. The peace treaty is set for January 21. And now a few words on the chairman. He helped to "make history" for our L. U. He placed upon it the blackest spot of any of his forerunners. Never in its darkest days had a chairman of this Local taken such action. And now, to prevent any such recurrences we have to recall him and elect a new chairman at our next meeting. Should the T. U. U. L., whose battle he fought, and who supported him in exercising his "legal" rights under our constitution to adjourn the meeting, feel that we are doing them and the workers in their camp an injustice by this move they can again exercise their legal rights, by appealing to the District Council or General President Hutcheson!

—AV. H. H.

erators and Department of Justice combination. Scores of plain and simple unionists had been rounded up, grilled and jailed because of their so-called "sympathies" with the Communists. It is a fact that the rank and file movement wanted the alliance of the Communists but the official party bluntly refused, condemning the movement as a betrayal. It was several weeks before the anger of the rank and file could be overcome and gradually we were able to convince the miners that there was a difference between the "Communism" of the official party and the Communism of the Opposition. The result is that today the miners know a great deal more of "Trotskyism" and its differences with the false teachings of Stalinism. If we were not able to make greater organizational gains in the struggle it was because of the numerical weakness and the difficulties of going out among the "raw material" and showing them the differences between the factions. This problem, I assume, is universal. But still, it is a bigger problem among the American workers, due to their political backwardness.

Causes for Retreat

We may summarize the struggles of the Illinois miners under the leadership of the rank and file, their weaknesses and failure to capture the union, as follows:

1. The rank and file leadership was weak in understanding the most elementary problems of the working class—therefore it was virtually without a program.

2. Hordes of opportunists, disgruntled fakers, swarmed into the movement contaminating the healthy proletarian base, to see our party controlled by elements that do not understand the need of united action under the circumstances.

3. The combination of the reactionary forces of the U. M. W. A., the bosses and their government. These forces drove back into "line" nearly 35,000 miners who had through their local unions endorsed the rank and file file office.

4. The official party's hostility and stubbornness in demanding the unconditional control of the rank and file movement. The party refused to be a minority. Of course, this is the general program of the T. U. U. L. and there is nothing new in the outrageous manner they gave help to the enemies of the Illinois miners. To me, this was the most tragic experiment in the labor movement. The present situation in Illinois is surely heading toward another movement that will be fought bitterly. The contract expires March 31, 1932. The Illinois district represents the last semblance of absolute job control in any mining field in the country. We can go farther by saying that it is the last section of the American unskilled working class that has job control. The union is at stake. The miners' organization in this state will not be fighting for better conditions, nor to hold what it has, but it will fight for its very rights to exist as a union. The leadership of the union surely is not very much concerned, as most of the present staff have accumulated wealth and are "independent".

Conditions are horrible. The plight of the American working class is well felt by every revolutionist. There is no need to dwell on that here. It is highly significant, however, to point out the fact that the national government in a public statement says that the American Red Cross has changed its policies relative "to an act of God" and is "appropriating" money to aid the bituminous miners. The State Committee on unemployment also emphasizes the "dire need of the bituminous coal miners". This is not an accident or an unrelated incident. Whether the coal miners' conditions are worse than those of the rest of the American working class is not the question that concerns the capitalist class. It is of supreme importance, however, that the coal miners have a strong tradition of struggle. And since the Wall Street crash and even prior to that time, some section or other of the industry has at one time or another been involved in bloody guerilla warfare. That is the dynamite that strikes fear into their hearts.

The Miners' Educational Leagues

In Franklin County, over 20 local unions are affiliated to a Franklin County Miners' Educational League. This is a duplicate of the Staunton Sub-district organization. It holds meetings regularly in various mining towns every Sunday. The benefit of this organization is great. The topics are always of interest to the miners. The thinking of the miners is stimulated and raised to a higher level. The tolerance towards Communists is excellent and every form of political philosophy is permitted expression. This minority right is in line with our program and is receiving great sympathy throughout the whole union. A general Left wing program has been adopted to present before the international convention. Resolutions on the Soviet Union Criminal Syndicalism, Unemployment Mooney, Against the Appointive Power restriction of length of time in office abolition of the International Executive Board, numerous revisions of the constitution such as that reading "share of our products" to "the full social value of our products", etc., etc are some of the things the Educational Leagues have adopted and sworn to fight for in the International gathering. This Left trend has been brought about due to the prevailing conditions, naturally, but also by the great pressure of Left Opposition comrades and other class conscious militants in the field.

—GERRY ALLARD.

ON THE QUESTION OF THE STATE

A comrade from Bethlehem writes to the *Militant* that Communists, sympathizers and Left wingers still inquire on the attitude of the Communists toward the question of the State. They further ask what is the position of the Left Communists. The comrade inquires: "Is the aim of the Communists, after a successful proletarian revolution, the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, to continue to build a State?"

In reply to the comrade, it can be stated that the views of the Communists relative to the State, or government, are definite and specific. The early and modern leaders of scientific socialism or communism have answered clearly all that is involved therein. The first to do so were Marx and Engels in their historic "Communist Manifesto" and in Engels' "Socialism—Utopian and Scientific", which comprises a section of his larger work, "Landmarks of Scientific Socialism (Anti-Duehring)".

Class Society and the State

The Communists see in the State an organ of domination of one class in society over another. Till the advent of power by the proletariat in the Soviet Union, the State had always been an instrument of power of a ruling and exploiting class over the mass of exploited people. This has been the situation in all preceding class societies: slavery, feudalism and today capitalism. Modern capitalism in its stages of growth, and largely even yet, expresses itself through the parliamentary—allegedly through the methods of "universal" suffrage—form of government. But already, in its imperialist epoch and its decline or decline on an international scale—it is resorting to another form of domination or dictatorship, that is, the Fascist dictatorship, which, among other things, shows more plainly the bankruptcy of the economy of capitalism today and compels it to resort to special repressive forms to maintain, somehow, capitalist domination.

The Communists understand that the State is but the outgrowth of the existing social and class relations which arise out of the conditions of production and distribution of the means of existence. This is so under the Soviets in the period of the proletarian dictatorship, even as in capitalist society itself. No Communist desires a State or repressive organ for its own sake. But unlike the Anarchists and Syndicalists, they know that the mere denial or negation of the State and its role, does not do away with it.

The Proletarian State

The proletarian State, the Soviet Union, too, is an apparatus of one class against another. The proletariat has succeeded the bourgeoisie as the ruling class, and, in alliance with the peasantry there, protects the interests of the useful producers and endeavors to eliminate all forms of exploitation and exploiters. Soviet rule is the highest form of democratic procedure yet developed. It is not a parliamentary form, after the manner of capitalism but, in the main, Communists and proletariat, led by the

an industrial form or the political expression of the masses.

The dictatorship of the proletariat, in Russia in the form of a Soviet Government—Workers' Councils—represents the transition form between capitalist society and the final establishment of classless—hence governmentless—society, that is: Communism. The Soviet state strives for the complete elimination of all forms of capitalism and capitalists petty or large. At the same time, as one of its outstanding achievements, the Soviet government assists in the establishment of the social and economic functions of the working masses. So long as classes in one form or another exist, a governmental apparatus or State will exist. Its final elimination or dissolution can only be the result of a long process in which the useful producers—workers of brain and muscle—finally establish all the necessary bases of social production and distribution, without any kind of exploiting factors or remnants, and thereby develop a condition wherein no form of governmental apparatus is required. In other words, to paraphrase Marx and Engels, the administration of men (government) is to be replaced by the administration of things, that is, the administration of the processes of production and distribution or the establishment of a social and industrial commonwealth in which political government, as we understand it now, becomes wholly unnecessary. Society will function through social and industrial forms. On this question Daniel De Leon, the American revolutionist, has made great contributions which have been attested to by Lenin.

Respecting the gradual elimination of the State, Engels has described the process as a withering away or vanishing of the State. Our readers can find voluminous material on this and kindred questions in Lenin's brilliant work, the "State and Revolution", Trotsky's "Terrorism and Communism", Marx's "Criticism of the Gotha Program" and other works. The point of view of the Left Opposition is amply expressed therein.

The Soviet Government Today

There remains nevertheless the situation in the Soviet Union today. That Stalin and Stalinism have to a large degree converted the Soviet apparatus into a bureaucracy which less and less represents the basic historical interests of the proletariat, does not do away with the fundamental fact of the necessity for the proletariat to create a State, a Soviet government, for its own ends. Stalinism has abused the proletarian State, has made a mockery of proletarian democracy in the Communist party, in the Soviet government, in the unions, etc., but despite the terrible abuses, despite the usurpation of powers by the bureaucracy, the Soviet government remains a WORKERS' STATE. Despite all that happened, the Left Opposition has full faith in the regeneration of the Communist party of the Soviet Union and the Communist International. The vigilance and understanding of the worker-Communists and proletariat, led by the

Left Opposition, we have reason to believe will yet remedy the situation with in the Communist movement in Russia and internationally.

The Viewpoint of the Opposition

In "Problems of the Development of the U. S. S. R."—a draft of a thesis of the International Left Opposition on the Russian Question—comrade L. D. Trotsky has dealt concretely on the causes and cure of the situation existing in Russia and in the Comintern. We can think of nothing better to recommend to our Bethlehem comrade and to all other interested workers than a close study of this thesis.

It is there pointed out that the party, like all political institutions, is also a product of the productive relations of society. The bureaucracy that has developed in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, in the Soviets, etc., is not an independent historical factor; it can only serve a class. The zig-zag course of Stalinism has nevertheless, because of pressure from the Left Opposition and the proletariat, developed on the basis of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The fundamental danger of the bureaucracy, in addition to all the crimes against the Russian and international proletariat committed by Stalin and his faction, is that, "even if it can not itself become the foundation of state power, it can, with its policy, make it extremely easier for the power to be transferred from the hands of the class into the hands of another," namely, the passing of Soviet power into the hands of the bourgeoisie. "The present-day Soviet apparatus is a bureaucratic, plebsitarily distorted form of the dictatorship of the proletariat. At the same time, however, it is a potential instrument of Bonapartism." But, the Left Opposition, points out, the proletariat and the worker-Communists will resist such a development to the limit, and "between the present function of the apparatus and its possible function, the blood of civil war would still have to flow". The proletariat will indeed not lightly give up its power because of the crimes of Stalin and the bureaucracy.

In brief, comrade Trotsky proves, "The strength of the Soviet bureaucracy has unfolded on the basis of the abrupt decline in the political activity of the Soviet proletariat after a number of years of the highest exertion of forces, upon a series of defeats of the international revolution, upon the stabilization of capitalism and the strengthening of the international social democracy." Nevertheless, "the bourgeoisie could come to power in the U. S. S. R. in no other way than with the aid of a counter-revolutionary upheaval. The proletarian vanguard retains the possibility of putting the bureaucracy in its place, of subordinating it to its control, of insuring the correct policy and by means of decisive and bold reforms, of regenerating the party, the trade unions and the Soviets."

—M. A.

Left Opposition in Appeal to Needle Trade Workers

(Continued from page 1)

start again a movement for unity. If the Right wing will reject our plea, if the Right wing will refuse a conference for a united strike, then all the dressmakers will know whom to blame for the division in our ranks. We will then proclaim louder than ever: The Right wing bureaucrats DO NOT WANT UNITY with the Industrial Union which represents the most militant section of the dressmakers. Both unions must be recognized as bona-fide organizations. On this basis.

We propose that:

1. The N. T. I. W. U. should send a letter immediately to the Joint Board of the I. L. G. W. U. proposing a conference to draw up demands and to elect a General Strike Committee, representative of both unions, each union reserving the right for freedom of criticism.

2. This letter to be printed in thousands of leaflets in a number of languages to be distributed among the wide masses of the dressmakers with a call to them to force the officialdom of the I. L. G. W. U. to accept our proposals.

3. A joint shop conference to follow which would definitely consider and sanction all conference proceedings and decisions.

4. A huge Joint Organization Committee to be organized of both unions with every worker who is ready and willing to help eligible to participate in the

work and activities of the Organization Committee.

The publicity and propaganda about the demands must be spread far and wide. The deep-going crisis, the mistakes of the N. T. W. I. U., and the hand-in-glove work of the I. L. G. W. U. with the bosses, dampened the fighting spirit of the dressmakers. This spirit must be revived! The bosses must feel long before the strike begins that they will not succeed in cutting off another slice from the meager earnings of the dressmakers. A united struggle against the bosses will again bring to the forefront the rebellious fighting power and hatred of the workers against their class enemy.

The Left wing cannot wait any longer. THE LEFT WING MUST ACT, if it wants to retain the confidence and loyalty of the worker dressmakers! Now is the time to lay the foundation for one union in the trade. A Joint Conference for a united strike of the dressmakers is a real beginning for final fusion of both unions—into one.

ON WITH A UNITED STRUGGLE AGAINST THE BOSSES — AGAINST DIVISION IN OUR RANKS — AGAINST CLASS-COLLABORATION POLICIES. For better conditions—for a fighting Union of all needle trades workers.

(Signed)

Needle Trades Workers, Members of the Communist League of America (Opposition)

IN THE INTERNATIONAL OF LABOR

Reviews and News of the Working Class and Revolutionary Movements

ROSA LUXEMBURG

On the Anniversary of Her Assassination by the German Social Democrats

(Continued from last issue)

The differences between Centrists and Left crystallized another stage in the ensuing debates on the significance of imperialism. The Right wing openly demanded "equal rights or our industries in the colonies" (Quessell at Chemnitz Congress 1912). To oppose colonialism was utopian, Luddites smashing machinery. Kautsky defined the Centrist position in the *Neue Zeit* (1912). Imperialism is the endeavor of an industrial capitalist nation to annex agrarian territory. As such it is only one form of capitalist expansion. From the "economic viewpoint" there were tendencies towards the formation of an all-embracing world trust, a super-imperialism that would eliminate competition and struggle. He urged rapprochement with the sections of the bourgeoisie who were in his opinion not interested in imperialism, to be achieved by the advocacy of the policy of disarmament and the United States of Europe under capitalism.

For Rosa Luxemburg, imperialism was not merely a policy preferred by a narrow clique, but the last phase of capitalism, pregnant with revolutionary consequences. The limitations of this article preclude the detailed discussion her views merit as set out in her vigorous "Accumulation of Capital" (1912). It must suffice here to state that she conceived the problem of imperialism to be a problem of the realization of surplus value and not of monopolist extra-profit under finance-capital, as Lenin sees it in his well-known brochure. She takes as her point of departure the criticism of the diagrams in Marx's second volume of Capital. Dealing with the reproduction of social capital as a whole, she indicates the manner by which capitalism achieves a certain equilibrium between the two great sectors of economic activity (a) production of means of production (b) production of articles of consumption, and is enabled to absorb the ever-growing mass of commodities. These diagrams, Rosa proceeds, are a theoretical fiction and misleading to boot. If capitalism could profitably realize its surplus value within its own framework, how account for the fact that production outstrips consumption, and explain the fact of the struggle for markets and colonies. There would be no objective impediments to capitalist accumulation nor any immanent necessity of the social revolution.

Marx's analysis is based on the assumption of an all-inclusive capitalist world with two classes, where in reality it functions in a non-capitalist environment. It is to this latter "third person" that capitalism must turn to market its surplus. Imperialism is the political expression of the process of capital-accumulation in its struggle for the rest of the still uncaptured non-capitalist territory and is thereby a new lease of life for capitalism and its gravedigger at the same time.

The theory of Rosa is open to serious objection, on both theoretical and empirical grounds. Undeniably, as a matter of historical fact, capitalist development does proceed by the systematic extension of its base. To extricate itself from its internal contradictions every national capitalism turns to the reserves of the world market. Lenin had occasion to advert to the problem of the external market in his polemics against the Narodniki (populists) and the legal "Marxists". The conditions that give rise to the foreign market are not the impossibility of realizing a profit, abstractly considered, but extended circulation of commodities and the tendency of capitalist production to the growth of the productive forces break down the old regional and state barriers. Production is anarchically carried on for an unknown market, resulting in the disproportional development of the various branches of industry and recurrent crises of over-production. The higher organic composition of capital, technical progress, leads to a fall in the rate of profits. The fusion of banking and industrial capital known as finance-capital, which arises under conditions of the concentration of production, seeks to counter-act this tendency by means of monopoly, in the home market by protective tariffs, abroad in the struggle for markets and colonies for the export of capital (raw materials, cheap labor, cheap land). War is not merely the armed conflict for the annexation of agrarian territory but the struggle of monopolist finance-capital for the repartition of the world market, in other words the contradiction between the productive forces matured for a socialized world economy and the nationally limited, capitalist methods of appropriation.

Rosa Luxemburg's theory has certain points in common with Kautsky's as Lenin's has with that of Hilfering. She could explain the seizure of a backward agrarian region but how would she explain the lust for Lorraine or Belgium? She seeks to establish absolutely objective barriers to capitalist development by her conception of "third persons" but the fact is that the contradictions of capitalism lead to proletarian and colonial revolutions while the greater part of the world is still composed of "third persons". Her theory does not throw into necessary relief either the national or colonial problem.

The clouds of the coming war were rolling ominously. There is no lack of documents of the pre-war socialist opposition to imperialism. The best known resolutions emanated from the Stuttgart (1907) and the Basle (1912) Congresses of the Second International. At Stuttgart, Rosa Luxemburg introduced the amendment on behalf of the Russian and Polish delegations. There was never a word breathed in these resolutions of "national defense" as a justification for socialist truce with the capitalist state in the event of war, which did not prevent the traitors later from covering up their enlistment on the side of God and Kaiser with quotations from Marx, Engels and Lassalle, referring to 1830, 1848. Officially the International pledged itself to utilize the war crisis which was characterized as a product of the imperialist struggle for markets, to the overthrow of the capitalist system. The outbreak of the war confirmed beyond a doubt that opportunism was the forerunner of social patriotism. The virus of adaptation to the legal and constitutional conditions of the bourgeois state had rotted the very foundation of the international. Rosa Luxemburg had entertained more than a premonition when she uttered the warning note at the party Congress of 1910, "we thunder against militarism in time of peace but when war really breaks out . . .". The reference was to the seizure of Chinese territory by German imperialism. And later when she attacked the official leadership for its passivity in the Morocco crisis (1911). In the acid test of 1914, Kautsky hastened to lend additional "justification" to the socialist rogues with his inimitable thesis that the International was an instrument of peace, not war.

The Left wing stood by its guns. Together with Karl Liebknecht who had roused the chauvinist fury of the social democratic Reichstag faction by his refusal to vote the war credits, Rosa Luxemburg began the work of the underground and illegal organization that led to Spartacus and the split in the social democracy. When she was released from prison, together with Karl Liebknecht, she organized and participated in the never-to-be-forgotten heroic war demonstrations in Berlin in 1918, for which they were immediately imprisoned.

It was at that time that Rosa produced her brochure "The Crisis in the German Social Democracy" under the pseudonym Junius. Lenin in Switzerland greeted it cordially as by and large an excellent work of Marxism. But in the

interests of the ideology of the future Third International which in his mind was already clearly projected, he submits certain of its views to keen though comradely criticism. He considers it a defect that social opportunism as a distinct current is not directly enough related to the current social patriotism as an explanation of the betrayal and collapse, thus leaving the problem of the split in the International dangerously open. He also takes exception to the thesis that in the era of unbridled imperialism no more national wars were possible. In this imperialism war it was true that Russian imperialism stood behind Serbian nationalism. But it was wrong to dogmatize. The wars of the French Revolution were national in their inception and became imperialist under Napoleon. The imperialist Seven Years War between France and England led to national wars later (imperialist war is of course possible on the basis of serfdom or primitive capitalism). If all wars are to be branded as reactionary it would afford an objective basis for pacifist and disarmament illusions and militate against the struggle of the workers and the colonial peoples. Finally he criticizes Junius' selection of the 1848 slogan that the best means of national defense was the united German Republic to be achieved by class struggle. This was in place as a watch-word of the bourgeois democratic revolution against feudalism. But the slogan now must be the conversion of the imperialist war into civil war for the realization of socialism.

The response of Rosa Luxemburg to the October revolution could never be in doubt. She was no stranger to its problems. When the character of the future Russian revolution was debated at the London (1907) Congress of the Russian social democracy and Lenin defended the position of the Mensheviks, Rosa Luxemburg along with Lenin represented the viewpoint of the Bolsheviks. Her formula for the bourgeois democratic revolution in Russia coincided with Trotsky's the dictatorship of the proletariat supported by the peasantry. The mensheviks attempted to build up a difference of conception between that formula and Lenin's. But the latter himself in 1909 wrote "the formula 'proletariat supported by the peasantry' remains entirely within the bounds of the very dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry." Of the November revolu-

tion Rosa wrote: "Whatever a party could muster in a historical moment of courage, energy, capacity of action has been completely accomplished by Lenin, Trotsky and their comrades. Their October insurrection was not only the actual salvation of the Russian revolution but also rescued the honor of international socialism". In the posthumous work on the Russian revolution published by Paul Levi, she submits certain policies of the Bolsheviks to sober criticism. Her friends Warski and Clara Zetkin say that she had revised these views and had not intended the document, written in prison, for publication. That is very likely but in any case history has proved that her criticism was substantially incorrect. Thus she failed to distinguish between the strategic aspects of the agrarian problem and the problem of a collectivized rural economy. She took a position on the national problem that resembled Bucharin's later: that self-determination under capitalism was unreal. Only socialism could realize the self-determination of peoples. Similarly her views on the red terror the monopoly of legality by the Communist party, the dispersal of the Constituent Assembly. She would in all likelihood have been compelled to modify these views in the light of a more intimate study of the problems of the dictatorship. Some of her criticism of Lenin's policies however which completely missed the mark might be applicable to the seamy sides of the policy of the Stalin epigones.

In 1918 came the revolt of the Kiel sailors and soldiers of Berlin. It opened the prison doors. The socialist traitors attempted to persuade Wilhelm to stay to the last. Failing to guide German capitalism into the channels of a constitutional monarchy they yielded to the idea of bourgeois republic. Their hatred of Bolshevism outmeasured everything else. They particularly feared Spartacus which had constituted itself as a separate party with the slogan of All Power to the Soviets. Noske, surrounded by the Hohenzollern generals, unleashed the white terror. The Spartacists were shot down by the thousands in bloody civil war. Rosa and Karl were murdered in the most bestial fashion. Her body in a disfigured condition was dragged up months later from the Spree river.

German menshevism and the bourgeoisie has triumphed. Vae Victis! But the spirit of Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht marches on in the millions of German workers who today are again confronted with the problem of power. The day of the reckoning with the social democracy approaches.

—MAURICE SPECTOR.

The Fascist Danger and the Need for a United Front of the Proletariat

When Azana became President of the Council of Ministers after the resignation of Maura and Alcala Zamora there were many who interpreted the change of ministry as an evolution to the Left. Maurin went so far as to say that the new government was "typically petty-bourgeois" and to put it on a level with the Kerensky government. We, on the contrary, from the first moment maintained that this solution of the crisis meant a step forward in the direction of the big bourgeoisie and of its bloc with the socialists.

"In reality," we said in the third number of "El Soviet", which was confiscated by the governor of Barcelona, representing the so-called "Kerensky government", "the real master of the situation is Lerroux, that is, the big bourgeoisie. Still the time has not yet come to take off the mask, to take over completely the reins of power in the name of those who see in Lerroux, as he said in his speech at Santander, 'the lifeboat in which the shipwrecked man sees the hope of salvation'."

The facts have proven, and keep proving, that our evaluation was correct. On the adoption of the "law for the defense of the republic" there followed a policy, continually more aggressive, of repression against the working class and of systematic strangulation of the democratic revolution. Nourished by the weakness of the working-class organizations, the incapacity of the anarcho-syndicalist leaders of the C. N. T., who have learned nothing from experience, and the absence of a strong Communist party, the bourgeoisie keeps consolidating the ground which it has gained, and is lying in wait for the opportune moment to upset the democratic cart and to install its unmasked dictatorship.

The Socialists and Democratic Illusions
Today this is not possible. Democratic illusions are still quite alive among the petty-bourgeois masses and a large part of the working class. The bourgeoisie finds it necessary to maintain these illusions temporarily, making use of a political force which is not completely discredited among the masses, and by its name at least, represents a guarantee of radicalism. This political force is the socialist party, whose leaders show themselves disposed as usual to serve as auxiliaries to the exploiting class.

Still, to form an exclusively socialist government would be a risky adventure. Inevitably it could do nothing else than continue the policies of the bourgeoisie, and the socialist party would discredit itself irretrievably in the eyes of the working masses. With it, the bourgeoisie would find itself deprived of one

of its most important reserve weapons.

The socialists, who are fully aware of this, are horribly afraid of taking over the entire responsibility for the state power, and declare themselves for a concentration government, over which they should preside. Largo Caballero was in a hurry to state that such a government, by its very composition, would be unable to realize the party program. Yet, according to the declaration of the Minister of Labor, "the party, having made greater renunciations than any other for the welfare of the republic, will accept this sacrifice too for the 'national interest'."

Under these circumstances the socialists, free of all responsibility for the policies of the government, will contribute to maintaining democratic illusions among the masses and will make it possible for the bourgeoisie to consolidate its position and to prepare, behind the socialist screen, a genuine Fascist dictatorship. The Azana government was the first step in this process; the government presided over by the socialists will be the second.

Lerroux, the Spanish Miliukov

The events of the last few days fully confirm this evaluation. While public opinion is being prepared for a Largo Caballero government, and the alertness of the masses is being put to sleep, Lerroux, in an interview given to the editor of the reactionary Madrid journal "Ahorra", expressed the opinion that the socialists in power, "far from being a difficulty" would be "prudent collaborators". In a few truly classic words, stripped naked, without reserves—the class character of the regime; "I can assure you," he said, "that I am realizing the prophecy which I made years ago when I said, (too emphatically, as some thought), 'I will govern'. Now I can say that I am governing, since government and not the power". Lerroux One can have the power and not the government. One can have the government and not the power. I have the government and not the power". Lerroux is the representative of the big bourgeoisie, the Spanish Miliukov; the workers must not forget this.

Let them not forget, too, that the leader of the "radical" party is no platonic individual. When he entertains the masses on the tambourine of the "socialist government", Lerroux is making serious preparations, not only to govern on the political stage, but to take over the power, to become the direct instrument of a bloody dictatorship of the Fascist type.

The constitution of the nationalist

party, "Young Spain", announced recently, is the first important step in this direction. Its organization, based on a militia of 500,000 men, who are to "wear a distinctive costume with the attributes of the legion, a gray-green shirt and a collar of the same color", is modeled on Italian Fascism. The warning to abstain from joining, made to "the timorous and cowardly, and those who are not capable of facing all the dangers of a bloody battle", show clearly what are the intentions of the promoters of this new organization.

The proletariat would commit an error which might have fatal consequences if it does not give this fact all the attention which it deserves and fails to see in the announced intention of this group more than a mere manifestation of boasting.

It is more than probable that "Young Spain" will fail to recruit the 500,000 men which it needs to put out the democratic revolution for good and to crush the proletariat. Still they can become an imposing force tomorrow. The worst thing we can do is to close our eyes to this incipient danger. In 1920, and even in 1921, the Italian revolutionists looked with disdain on the Fascists, whom they saw as nothing more than "bandit gangs" without real force. These "bandit gangs" took the power at the end of 1922 and dragged along with them the large petty-bourgeois masses, these same masses who had followed the socialists and who, disillusioned by the downfall of the proletarian revolution, threw themselves into the arms of Mussolini.

Are there factors in Spain which are capable of favoring the development of a strong Fascist movement? There are beyond a doubt.

Whither, the Party Bourgeoisie?

The first factor, and the most important, is the petty bourgeoisie. As in Italy, the urban and rural petty bourgeoisie constitutes the immense majority of the population. Because of the very role which it fulfills in the economic life of the country—dependence on big capital—this class is incapable of carrying out its own policies, and constantly vacillates between the big bourgeoisie and the proletariat. To win it over, or at least to neutralize it, is a task of fundamental importance for the cause of the revolution.

After the ruin of the great working class movement of 1917-1920 it supported in fact the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera. Still, since this experience did not free it from the burdensome load which weighed down on it, nor improve its situation, it developed toward republicanism.

With the fall of monarchy and the proclamation of the republic, the petty bourgeoisie gave free rein to its democratic illusions and hopefully followed the demagogues of the left. Still the illusions are disappearing, and these great fluctuating and indecisive masses find themselves irresistibly drawn to that social class which offers a clear and concrete program, and has the unshakable determination to put it into practice.

That class can only be the big bourgeoisie or the proletariat. The big bourgeoisie has this program: the crushing of workers' organizations, the consolidation by fire and sword of the domination of capital. The instrument for the realization of this program is being forged by Lerroux and his "Young Spain". Nothing is easier than to attract the disillusioned petty-bourgeois masses with this program, conveniently seasoned with a good dose of demagoguery. Let us not forget that, at the beginning, Italian Fascism declared itself anti-capitalist and republican.

Still, there is a second factor, no less important: the proletariat, which has a unique opportunity to give definitive battle to the bourgeoisie and to take the power. The objective circumstances could not be more favorable to such an end. But subjectively it is disarmed.

From a trade union point of view it is divided: the leaders of the U. G. T. collaborate openly with the bourgeoisie, and those of the C. N. T. either fall into a reformism which fully equals that of Largo Caballero and Co. (the Petrolista group) or into adventurism (the F. A. I.) which can only lead to a bloody and profitless putsch.

—ANDRÉS B. NIN.

Barcelona, Nov. 27, 1931

(To Be Continued)

For Communist Action!

Documents of the German Left Opposition

We are reprinting below excerpts from several documents of the German Left Opposition, which appeared a few weeks ago in their organ "Permanente Revolution". With Arm Communist conviction, our German brother section raised its voice in warning and made positive proposals for a change in policy to the Central Committee of the German Communist Party. The ideas of the Left Opposition rest upon the experience of the great Russian revolution. Despite persecution by the state and the bureaucracy, despite callumination and repression, these ideas are irresistibly forging ahead. They are bound to become the common property of all revolutionary workers.

TO THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE C. P. G.

Dear Comrades:

Victory is possible, victory is probable, everything must be done to assure it. Only in this manner can revolutionists pose the question.

The question of the victory over Fascism in Germany is also the question of the fate of the U. S. S. R., regardless of whether it is considered from the economic, the political or the purely military point of view. But that means that so as to be able to assure the future of socialist economy in the U. S. S. R., the Soviet Union must stake all its strength on the victory over Fascism of the European revolution with which it is inseparably linked. This alone can be the strategic line of the Communist party.

The C. P. must adopt a position of departure that rests upon irreconcilable and ruthless struggle against Fascism, for the purpose of destroying Fascism in the inevitable and open struggle for the conquest of power.

The united revolutionary class action of the proletariat must be organized against the victory of Fascism.

This can be realized only when all revolutionary forces, no matter in what camp they stand at the moment, unite for this common action that stands on the order of the day. We know full well that the premises for such an action are extremely unfavorable. But in spite of this, the C. P. G., as the historically chosen organization must in view of the seriousness of the situation make the attempt to realize a genuine fighting unity of the working class. To this end, we submit the following proposals:

The C. P. G. is immediately to ap-

proach all political groups, trade unions and workers' organizations who declare themselves prepared to fight against Fascism, with the aim of a common appeal for the formation of a Joint Council of Action against Fascism. This appeal must contain:

1. The creation of Committees of Action consisting of representatives of factories, trade unions, political groups and other workers' organizations. It is of the greatest importance, that all the existing tendencies in the revolutionary working class of each locality actually be represented in the Committees of Action.

2. The Joint Council of Action is to be constituted at a congress of delegates from these Committees of Action in the entire country, which should be convoked without delay. This congress is to represent the proletarian concentration against the concentration of the reactionaries.

3. The congress must be organized in advance as the proletarian counter-parliament in the event of a Fascist Reichstag, or against an extra-parliamentary or parliamentary Fascist government.

4. The congress must solve three tasks concretely:

- (a) the preparation of the general strike to prevent the seizure of power by Hugenberg and Hitler;
- (b) the formation of one common, non-party workers defense corps;
- (c) the elaboration of a common minimum program with regard to the next steps to be taken by the Committees of Action.

Under a correct leadership, such a defense action contains all the necessary elements with which to lead the proletariat, in view of the objective possibilities described above, not only against Fascism, but to the overthrow of the bourgeoisie as a whole.

Such a policy is possible only after a radical change in the course of the party. The experiences of the French C. P. speak an unequivocal language. Despite the "third period", despite the ultra-Left trade union tactic, despite "social Fascism" and similar slogans, the party has been forced by the pressure of objective conditions and partly also, on the basis of sound proposals made by the Left Opposition, to change its course radically. (See the proposal to the Socialist Party of France for common action on the second ballot, the Parliamentary Congress for the establishment of trade union unity). It is high time to draw the consequences in Germany and to re-establish the unity of all genuine Communists.

We declare emphatically that, despite profound differences in a whole series of questions we will support with our innermost convictions and without any reservations, every step undertaken by the party in this direction with all our strength and that we are completely and entirely at the service of the party in any instance whatsoever.

With Communist greetings,
for the LEFT OPPOSITION OF THE
C. P. G. (BOLSHEVIK-LENINISTS)
The National Committee.
(Continued in the next issue)

Shachtman Lectures at Opposition Forum

On Friday, January 13, comrade Max Shachtman spoke at the Labor Temple on the impressions he acquired during a four weeks' stay in Spain. An audience of about a hundred workers listened attentively to comrade Shachtman's description of the miserable conditions of the Spanish workers, the betrayals of the Spanish social democracy, the impotence of the syndicalists and anarchists and the criminal blunders committed by the official Communist party under the direction of the Comintern led by Stalin.

Comrade Shachtman brought back heartening news of the growth of the Spanish Opposition which has now more than a thousand members, and of its fight for the unity of the Communist ranks. Significant was the fact that comrade Trotsky was extremely popular with the Spanish workers, that editions of his pamphlets were literally cobbled up. In Spain, as elsewhere the workers despite the slanders and lies of the Stalinists refuse to believe that Trotsky and the Opposition are counter-revolutionaries.

The struggle of our Spanish comrades carried on under much greater hardships than we face here must be an inspiration to us to double and redouble our efforts to regenerate the American Communist party and to reunite the Communist vanguard.

A Correction

Due to unforeseen technical difficulties, the leading news article in our last issue, entitled "Japs Subsidize Russian Whites", appeared in garbled and distorted form. Unfortunately, the necessary corrections could not be made in time. But we shall come back to this subject dealt with in this article in the immediate future, in more extensive form.

—THE MILITANT.

THE MILITANT

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EDITORIAL NOTES

ANOTHER DEFEAT IN KENTUCKY

The conviction of William Hightower and the sentence of life imprisonment is the second heavy defeat suffered by the miners and the entire working class of America in the Kentucky murder trials. These are no mere law cases. The courtroom, during these historic trials, is an arena of the class struggle. In reality, although not formally, the right of the workers to organize is at stake. The whole prosecution is designed to victimize men for asserting this right in action and to intimidate others by the ferocious "justice" measured out to the victims.

The attention of the entire working class ought, therefore, to be centered on this courtroom spectacle in Kentucky; the chief "witness for the defense" he compelled to hear and to heed. But such a movement is not to be seen or heard. The judicial hirlings of the coal operators grind out the convictions and prepare others in an atmosphere of undisturbed security.

A purely legal defense, however competent, unless it is reinforced by a determined and clamorous agitation, presents no serious obstacles to the railroad of a working class militant. This can be laid down as an axiom extracted from the record of the class struggle in America. Whoever has illusions about this, whoever wants to confine the defensive action of the workers to the presentation of legal evidence and the collection of funds for lawyers's fees, is at best, a harmful, if well-meaning, fool. It is high time to appeal these cases to the working class. A nation-wide action of the workers is an indispensable obligation which they owe to the defendants and to themselves.

The chief obstacles in the way of effective protest action of the masses are the disunity in the labor ranks, and the partisan disputes which take no account of fundamental class interests. This deplorable circumstance is expressed in the obscene factional quarrel over the case between the Stalinists and the I. W. W. They have acted like tradesmen haggling over private property. The *Daily Worker* prints not a single word about the trials and conviction of Jones and Hightower. By that deliberate silence they take upon themselves a part of the responsibility for the outcome. In all this the Stalinists are true to themselves, for it is their mission to soil and discredit the banner of Communism. The conduct of the I. W. W. officials is no better. They content themselves with the fact that the hated Communists have nothing to do with the defense. Any scoundrel of faker is welcome at their defense conference, but not the delegates of a Communist organization. In the self-satisfied contemplation of this victory over the factional foe they lose sight of the defeat suffered by the class and the basic reasons for it.

The life-sentences in Kentucky are warning signals of a furious offensive against the awakening labor movement. The laboring masses, attacked from every side, robbed of their standards and deprived of their rights, have no way out but to fight. They must find the way to fight unitedly, as a class. "An injury to one is the concern of all"—this glorious motto of the Knights of Labor must be revived and inscribed on the banner of the workers once again. Differences and disputes over methods and theory—which are unavoidable in the process of clarification—must not prevent unity and solidarity in the common fight against the class enemy. If the conscientious workers in all camps will dedicate themselves to this principle and fight for it they will soon find the way to sweep the disrupters aside and create the conditions for the united front of labor. Then they will be able to halt the defeats in Kentucky, and elsewhere, and transform them into future victories.

A SORRY ADVENTURE

It is just about a year since Weisbord, having failed to convince us by argument, set out to prove by example that he alone possessed the secret of organizing a mass movement and steering it on the straight revolutionary path. If we still remain skeptical it is not because his adventure has been devoid of interest or because he failed to make contributions of a certain kind to the movement in general. You have to give him credit for trying. He didn't prove his own case. It is true, but he proved something else. What his exploits lacked in the heroic quality they made up in a unique humor that was all the more infectious because of its apparent unconsciousness, like the comic act of a sad-faced clown. Therefore we maintain, against those who want to cross him off as a total loss, that the man has his uses. Revolutionists remain human, all too human: we need diversion and amusement. We live perilous lives, beset with griefs and difficulties, and one who can make us laugh is not to be utterly scorned. A brief account of the life and deeds of Albert Weisbord during the past year is justified by this consideration.

As the world knows or ought to know, the herculean endeavors of Weisbord have recently culminated in a split of his organization. From this we learn that the total membership of the mass movement—at the time of the split was thirteen people. Out of these thirteen, six seceded or were expelled, leaving a net membership of seven in the parent organization, including Weisbord himself and his immediate family. Thereupon—it is alleged—some members of the split-off faction, who had never belonged to any organization before and

whose sole instruction in revolutionary ethics had been imparted by him, made an uninvited visit to the headquarters and carried off some books. Weisbord announced this depredation in a characteristic manifesto and submitted it to the whole revolutionary movement as the question of the day.

We are not in favor of burglary and larceny and it is easy to incite us against practitioners of these arts—principle in this matter being reinforced by personal grievances. We were just on the point of passing judgment on the alleged culprits when Weisbord forestalled us by an appeal to other authorities. The incomparable revolutionist took his whilom comrades and pupils to court and there prayed for the justice that had been denied him. And then, to make sure that this lesson in Marxism would not be restricted to the defendants, the judge and the court attendants, he published a letter in the *New York Forward* explaining his action. He went to court, he said, on the advice of Roger Baldwin. That ought to satisfy anybody who is satisfied with Roger Baldwin as a moral, legal and political authority. Moreover, he protested, it was a civil suit and not a criminal case which—as they say in Missouri—is a distinction if not a difference.

So what can we do now? We have never yet testified against anybody in court and cannot go as witness. We are also barred by ethical scruples from expressing any opinion which might prejudice the case of the defendants. And besides, if it is a matter of law, cannot the seceding faction claim minority rights in the property? We have heard of cases where minority groups of stock holders sued for an accounting and division and were granted it. We raise here also a hypothetical legal question: Suppose the defendants plead insanity and cite as proof that they were still suffering from the influence of Weisbord at the time of the alleged offense? It would be a cruel judge indeed who would turn a deaf ear to such a plea.

One may think that these performances would be enough for one man for one year—or for a life-time. But no, the comic resources of our hero are inexhaustible. On top of all this—to round out the year, so to speak—Weisbord addressed a letter to the Communist League proposing that we get together and talk things over with a view of unity. This proposal he blandly informed us, is designed to be a "bridge" to the Communist League. But he is separated from us in such a way that a bridge can hardly be the medium of connection. What this fellow needs is a ladder or, better yet, a rope.

—J. P. C.

In Spain: «The Democratic Republic of the Workers»
A First Hand Account of Conditions Under the Socialist-Republican Regime

This is the first of a series of articles on the situation in Spain by comrade Max Shachtman who has just returned from a visit to that country.—Ed.

The social democrats throughout the world beat the drums mightily for their Spanish colleagues when, a few months ago, the prominent socialist parliamentary leader, Luis Araquistain, speaking for the Constitutional Committee, presented the committee's report to the Cortes at Madrid which incorporated into the fundamental law of the land the proclamation that Spain was henceforth a "democratic republic of the workers". Not even a genuine republic of the workers could be expected to perform miracles for the proletariat after an existence of a handful of months. But the least that one can demand is that the political regime guides the destinies of a republic so lofty in intention should give some indications that it plans to improve the status of the class whose republic it announces itself to be. Or if not that, then at the very least, it should not stand very much in the way of any endeavors the workers themselves may make to ameliorate their conditions. By even such a simple and empirical test, the new "workers' republic" of Spain has already proved to be one of those cruel deceptions with which the bourgeoisie has always fed those over whom it rules.

What do the conditions of the Spanish workers actually look like, now that Alfonso Bourbon has been driven from the throne, his henchmen dispersed, and the republic proclaimed?

The Conditions of the Workers

The far from revolutionary International Labor Bureau of the League of Nations places Spain, in a recent survey, at the bottom of a list of some dozen representative European countries, with regard to the standards of living of the working class, lower in the scale than some of the classic countries of misery in the Balkans and the Baltic states.

With the Spanish peseta now equal to less than nine cents in U. S. coin, the industrial workers average about 8 pesetas a day which means that on the basis of a 48-hour week, the Spanish worker would average something like five dollars a week. In Valencia, the workers average from 9 to 10 pesetas a day. In Madrid, the capital of the country, which has relatively few industrial workers, the building trades workers, the most highly-paid in the city, get anywhere from 13 to 15 pesetas a day. The metal workers in Vizcaya, probably the most highly paid in the country, receive from 15 to 17 pesetas a day. Workers in the famous textile mills of Barcelona get about 10 pesetas a day, while women workers in the same mills will average

but half of that wage. In Saragossa, where the cost of living is somewhat higher than elsewhere, a painter will earn 8 pesetas a day. In the smaller city of Palencia, building trades workers like masons, carpenters and painters receive only some 6 to 7 pesetas. Day laborers in the cities may get an average of 7 pesetas a day, often less.

But these are not the worst by any means. Agricultural laborers not only have a highly seasonal employ, but when they do work in the fields they will get from 3.5 to 4 pesetas a day, and in some districts as low as 2.5 pesetas a day (about twenty cents a day in U. S. coin), together with their board and the highly doubtful pleasure of sleeping in barns and stables with the live stock. In Madrid, I saw a sight which can only be compared with the very worst days of the sweat-shop industries of New York's forgotten East Side. In a room of a communal family flat, a half-dozen young girls, not one of them out of her teens, were crowded together, at work, making waists, with no ventilation and the most meager illumination. These children—most of them were that, literally—get 2.5 pesetas for eight hours of work, but since they work "a day and a half" each day, or 12 hours, they carry off the magnificent pay of 3.75 pesetas at the end of each back-breaking, eye-tearing day. Such a sight is far from unique in Madrid; the system is quite widespread. And what must conditions be in the less modern sections of the country?

Such a wage standard is better understood when the reader learns that a rather modest meal at a very modest restaurant costs two pesetas. A dozen eggs are three pesetas. The housing conditions of the average worker are positively wretched. The home of one of our most active militants, representative of the average, consisted of one room, probably 12 feet by 7, illuminated—if one may say so—by an air-shaft window four feet square, with miserable sanitary facilities, and permission to use the communal kitchen for cooking. The average worker lives in similar flats, containing four families, who are distributed in five rooms, one of which serves as the joint kitchen. The comrade I speak of paid the average rent for the one room—forty-five pesetas a month.

The Misery of Unemployment

For those who are fortunate enough to have work, life is still "bearable," so to speak. But what about the unemployed? With a munificent gesture, the Republican-Socialist coalition government has introduced the 8-hour working day. It cost it little, since most of the workers had already acquired that standard. In some cases, the law made conditions worse by lengthening the working

day. But of what value is the 8-hour working day to those who cannot find work for one hour a day?

Unemployment in Spain at the present moment is terrific and the consequences are almost indescribable. Industries are paralyzed, there is an acute financial crisis, the peseta continues to career along the downward path. I was reliably informed—accurate statistics are unavailable—that between forty and forty-five percent of the industrial and agricultural workers, some 1,000,000 of them, are completely unemployed, while another twenty percent are at work only part of the time. In Vizcaya, they say, there is not a single worker who is employed for a full week at a time, and this in a section whose mining, metal and building trades industries make it proportionately more important, industrially speaking, than Barcelona itself. When the situation was not quite so acute, the municipalities would give free food to the jobless. Now the food is not only of a greatly inferior quality, but many of the municipalities are confining the food rations to those who are "natives" of the town. That is, only those workers who are actually born in the town may taste of the thin bounty of the "workers' republic".

Misery and suffering march in the train of this situation, which has even more dramatic and sensational results. Prostitution, an inescapable curse of capitalism under all conditions, rages like a pestilence. The streets of Madrid, for instance, literally ran with these unfortunates like a great sore. The "ataco", or payroll holdups, which were brought to an end by the Primo de Rivera dictatorship, are becoming frequent occurrences again, just as the individual pillaging and pilfering of stores by desperate jobless workers is on the increase: here as everywhere, poverty is the nesting place of crime. Along the most magnificent streets of Madrid, on its Broadway—the Gran Via—one sees innumerable groups of four silent men, each holding a corner of an extended white cloth into which the passer-by sometimes throws a copper which is to appease the fierce hunger of the unemployed worker before whom the national constitution so eloquently proclaims "his" republic. So that the sensibilities of the bourgeoisie shall not be made to suffer, and in order that the miserable realities shall not too rudely reveal their disharmony with the farcical constitutional phrase, cities like Barcelona and Bilbao have formally prohibited the "four with a cloth" from begging in the streets. But mendicancy is still widespread, in spite of the prohibition. Along the Ramblas in Barcelona, infants, as wild-eyed and raggedly clothed as any of the Russian "homeless waifs" over whom the world bourgeoisie and the social democracy love to make such a horror-stricken to-do, infants and their elders by the hundreds are engaged, either professionally or by economic compulsion, in the degrading business of begging.

The Two Revolutions

—But was your workers' republic any better at the outset? One can hear the retort of all manners of social democrats and their apologists. The comparison of the Spanish "workers' republic" with the Russian proletarian dictatorship af-

ter the Bolshevik revolution, even the casual one, does not speak a single word in favor of the former of its artificers. Unlike Spain, the Russian workers proclaimed their republic after three years of the most horrible and exhausting war known to history, a war in which the flower of the Russian working class and peasantry was driven to the slaughter by a depraved royalty and a cynical semi-feudal militarism, and decimated by the millions. The Russian revolution took place amid the economic ruin brought about by czarism, a heritage which it has not yet been able to throw off completely. The Russian revolution saw the light of day at a time when half or more of it was occupied by hostile foreign troops, ravaging the country and locking out the Russian government from occupation of some of the most essential industrial and agricultural regions. The Russian revolution was almost coincidental with the establishment of a strangulating economic blockade which sought—and for a time succeeded—to cut Russia off from the life's blood of the world market.

Yet, in spite of these enormous differences, quantitative as well as qualitative, which constituted such mountainous obstacles to the progress of the Russian workers' republic, one may say without exaggeration that the Bolshevik regime gave the working class and the peasantry infinitely more in one week than the Socialist-Republican revolution and regime have even thought of giving the Spanish workers and peasants in the whole nine months of their existence.

At the very outset, the Bolsheviks established a workers' control of production which was a veritable control, and not the class-collaborationist burlesque which the Socialist minister of labor, Caballero, has so solemnly presented as a gift to the employers under the guise of benefiting labor. At the very outset, the Bolsheviks gave the peasants the land for which they hungered by simply expropriating the large landowners and the church something which the Spanish bourgeoisie and their socialist assistants will never think of doing anywhere but on paper, if there. The dis-establishment of church and state in Russia was a trenchant reality and not the elaborate farce that has been played in Spain, where the church continues to have a stranglehold on the country's industries and agriculture, not in its own name so much—it has yielded in the form—as in the more legal name of its known adherents.

In a word, the difference between the two revolutions and the two republics they produced is the difference between the proletariat in power which crushes the bourgeoisie and their social democratic guardsmen, and the bourgeoisie in power which, with the aid of its social democracy, crushes the proletariat. However extensive the advertising campaign which the international social democracy is carrying on for its Spanish colleague, this fundamental distinction cannot be covered up.

—MAX SHACHTMAN.

The next article in the series will appear in the *Militant* next week under the title: "The Republic Establishes Law and Order."

The Proletarian Party Opposition

After a decade of existence as an expelled group from the Communist party, the Proletarian party is now proceeding through a period of internal struggle and split. The element that made up the P. P. pivoted around a section of the socialist party of Michigan as part of the Left wing majority expelled by the Socialist Executive Committee minority. And now the P. P. is repeating the process on a smaller scale with the Keracher minority controlling the apparatus, expelling the majority. All the Bureaucrat methods of the socialists or Stalinists are used by Keracher and Co.

This party, after a decade of existence as a sect devoting its time to theory—theory that now proves to the majority of its own members to be void of living Marxism, can only exist as a counter-part to bookshelf "activity". The deep world crisis closed in from all sides on this placid condition causing internal motion that broke through the isolation. The first convention in Detroit was a replica of the Stalinist methods of proceeding over the disputed questions: on the analysis of the crisis, the trade union question, immediate demands, unemployment, etc. The revolt from this position of "theory" reacted to its opposite of "mass work" in a hope of breathing new life into the P. P. The P. P. Opposition comes from a party of inactivity. While we were a minority expelled by the bureaucrats who did not allow our position to reach the party. The P. P. Opposition now constitute the majority of this party. This explains to an extent the reason they swing to "mass activity" and their accusations that the Left Opposition are too "theoretical and too much concerned with the Russian issue" but this does not justify or give them a Marxian base for their action—quite the contrary.

The split in the P. P. is national with the Left, through expulsions and withdrawals, holding the majority over six units and contacts throughout the country. The base of the Left is in the headquarters city and here it faces the greatest internal contradictions as well as the greatest possibilities. They have an open forum two block from the P. P. headquarters with a weekly attendance of over 200 while the P. P. has declined radically. Before the P. P. Opposition could organize itself nationally, Cleveland and New York had moved into the official Communist party. The Chicago P. P. Opposition can say this shows weakness on their part and dismiss it at that but facts prove it only reflects the weakness of the national center of the P. P. Opposition and disintegration will claim the rest unless drastic steps are taken at once to correct their international perspective.

Since the party fastly chopped off part of Cleveland and New York we should ask, where do we catalog the P. P. Opposition among the Communist cur-

rents? It cannot be cataloged with the Left Opposition, the Ultra Left nor the Right wing currents this they themselves admit. Neither can facts characterize them as an independent current of Communism, nor as the Marxian group in America. The P. P. Opposition itself is the best denial of this. The P. P. has tactical differences but no theoretical differences with the C. I. and always abstractly endorses the C. I. and all its policies. This shows, generally speaking, that they are a sectarian grouplet of the official Communist party and concretely speaking a right-center sectarian grouplet supporting Stalinism. Stalin's socialism in one country has its counterpart in the P. P.'s National Communism.

On the one hand, the expulsion of the Left Opposition from the C. I. was the most detrimental to the world revolution and the Soviet Union, on the other hand we can say the struggle within the P. P. and its majority under the influence of the P. P. Opposition is healthy and a step forward for American Communism. Now adrift, the P. P. Opposition has the key to the problem and will determine if they proceed forward or backward. Where are they today and what are they heading for?

The P. P. Opposition is not a homogeneous grouplet by any means. The action of Cleveland and New York already throws light upon the process of contradictions they brought out of the party with them and have not yet outgrown—or contradictions that may kill them as a grouplet, depending upon what their most advanced force does in the next several weeks. To join Centrism was no step forward, it was only a jump from the tail to the body, unless they go into the party with the intention of correcting the revisionist position. Another section of the grouplet under Beretier's influence have accepted the Grossman theory as the latest in Marxism. The Scandinavian grouplet and some American elements that dropped out of the P. P. before and others that were expelled make up some healthy element that would be an asset to the American Communist movement. To go forward the P. P. Opposition must answer the question of an international program, a question still unanswered in their group. It may be much nicer for some to have their own "play house" and play the game according to their own rules than to be a faction of the Communist International as the Left Opposition and take all the dirt and slander that goes with it. However, there is no choice for a Marxian, we do not make history out of the whole cloth, neither do we make a party out of the whole cloth that will carry through the successful proletarian revolution in the United States, but in order to build a party to accomplish our task in America we must have above all—a correct inter-

national program to be rounded out with revolutionary strategy and tactics for the peculiarities of America.

—HUGO OEHLER.

CHICAGO

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Every Sunday, 3 p.m.

JAN. 31

C. R. HEMINGSEN
From P. P. Left

"The Class Nature of the American Government"

Free Admission
at
HALL, 1435 NO. WESTERN AVE.

Auspices: Chicago Branch, Communist League of America (Opposition).

ST. LOUIS

"Labor Fakers Betray the Shoe and Railroad Workers"

will be the topic at a mass-meeting held Wednesday evening, January 27th, 7:30 P. M. at the Main Library Hall, 14th and Olive Streets, St. Louis, Mo.

Martin Payer will speak, with John Scott as chairman.

Auspices: St. Louis Branch, Communist League of America (Opposition).

Kansas City

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 1

FASCISM OR COMMUNISM IN GERMANY?

SPEAKER: GEORGE CLARKE of N. Y.

914 Grand Avenue
Second Floor

Auspices: Communist League of America (Opposition)

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Unemployment and Communism

On February 25, 1931, 400,000 workers in the United States according to the *Daily Worker* demonstrated for Unemployment Insurance. Compared with the demonstration of the year before, this showed a great decline. The *Daily Worker* claims 1,250,000 workers in the March 6, 1930 demonstration. This tremendous decrease was hailed by Browder as an advance (*Daily Worker*, March 6, 1931.) On the basis of this "advance", Browder on March 12, in the *Daily Worker*, motivated a turn from the fight for Unemployment to a system of organized beggary.

This in part is what Browder wrote:

"Where the city authorities reject the demands for the relief of specific cases of starvation—the council must set up a food collection committee which will undertake food collections from the larger capitalists and corporations of the locality, particularly in those institutions where the unemployed were formerly at work. When the committee is unable to get food from the corporations and large capitalists they shall then begin to solicit small merchants and the petty bourgeoisie generally, calling upon these elements at the same time to join the Unemployed Council in demanding relief from the government treasures and in demanding unemployment insurance nationally."

This "fight" for relief reached its highest expression in a recent New York demonstration in which a worker carried a placard, reading: "We want more, not less relief!"

While the dwindling party supporters were struggling to carry out Browder's directives, the fight for unemployment insurance was confined to resolutions passed at narrow, sectarian conferences, and to articles in the *Daily Worker* and other party organs. The masses no longer could be counted by the hundred thousands, not even by the schooled exaggerators who write editorials "Against Exaggeration". They had disappeared from the struggle.

Browder's strategy, as could have been foretold by a pioneer, ran its course without results. By the end of the summer of 1931 it was clear to all that competing with capitalist charities for pennies could not advance the revolution. The fight for Unemployment In-

surance had lapsed; the struggle for relief was equally unsuccessful. The crisis was still deepening; the misery of the masses was greater and more widespread. Bourgeois demagogues were threatening to take over the leadership of the movement for relief and Unemployment Insurance. At this point, the party decide to revive the fight for Unemployment Insurance.

Its first assault on capitalist greed was the National Hunger March. This was organized around the slogans of a resolution adopted by the Executive Committee of the T. U. U. L. on October 3. On the basis of this document the revived fight for Unemployment Insurance is taking place. It is important to understand exactly what this resolution proposes with regard to unemployment. Has the party learned from its mistakes? Does it repudiate the opportunism of Browder and Co?

If the party's efforts to win Unemployment Insurance demonstrated anything, they demonstrated that the party could not unite the masses around the slogan of unemployment insurance alone. There is no question that Unemployment Insurance is what the masses need to alleviate their misery and to serve as a bulwark against strike-breaking. It is true that under certain conditions the workers will fight to Unemployment Insurance, but it is also true that the party failed to build a broad movement of employed and unemployed workers for it.

One reason, of course, is the stifling bureaucratic regime in the party and its organizations which drives away thousands of workers sympathetic to Communism. Bureaucracy played its part but it is not decisive. The basic reason is to be found in the illusions of the masses. The masses are not yet convinced that "prosperity" will not return. They still believe that the crisis will lift, bring in work for them. They do not understand that we, like England, will now be blessed with a permanent army of unemployed. The masses think in terms of work. Unemployment Insurance is predicated upon the permanent unemployment of large sections of the working class. For these reasons, the American workers are slow to fight for Unemployment Insurance. — STAMM.

(To be conti.