



Leon Trotsky Analyzes German Situation

The Camp of Counter-Revolution

The shifts in government since Brüning's time show how rapid and hollow is the universal philosophy of Fascism (out and dried Fascism, national Fascism, social Fascism, Left social Fascism) which the Stalinists slap over everything and everybody, excepting themselves only. The upper crust of the possessors is much too small in numbers and much too hated by the people to be able to rule in their own name. They require a screen—the traditional monarchic ("Will of God"); the liberal-parliamentarian ("Sovereignty of the People"); the Bonapartist ("The Impartial Arbiter"); or, finally, the Fascist ("The Anger of the People"). War and revolution have taken the monarchy from them. Thanks to the reformists, they have maintained themselves on the crutches of democracy, for fourteen years. When, under the pressure of class contradictions, the parliament split asunder, they attempted to hide behind the President's back. There came the chapter of Bonapartism, i. e., the bureaucratic-police government which is raised over society and which maintains itself on the relative equilibrium between the two opposing camps.

Passing through the transitional governments of Brüning and Papen, Bonapartism assumed its purest form in the person of General Schleicher—but only in order to disclose in him its insolvency. Hostile, doubtful, or alarmed, all classes viewed this enigmatical political figure that resembled nothing so much as a question mark with the epaulettes of a general. But the chief cause for Schleicher's failure, and incidentally for his preceding successes as well, lay not within himself; Bonapartism cannot attain stability so long as the camp of revolution and the camp of counter-revolution have not measured their forces in battle. Concurrently, the frightful industrial and agrarian crisis that hangs over the country like a nightmare does not facilitate Bonapartism's tight-rope balancing. True, at first sight, the passivity of the proletariat facilitated in the highest degree the tasks of "the Social General". But, it turned out otherwise; precisely this passivity weakened the hoop of fear that binds together the possessing classes, bringing out into the open the antagonisms that tear them apart.

Economically, German rural economy leads a parasitic existence, and it is a heavy ball and chain on the feet of industry. But the constricted social basis of the industrial bourgeoisie turns into political necessity the preservation of "national" agriculture, i. e., the class of junkers and rich farmers along with all the strata that are dependent on them for this policy. Bismarck laid the foundation, firmly binding the agrarians and the industrialists together by military victories, gold indemnity, high profits—and the fear of the proletariat. But Bismarck's time have passed into eternity. Present-day Germany speeds not from victories but from defeat. France pays her no indemnity but she pays France. Decaying capitalism survives no profits opens up no perspectives. Nothing comes together for the possessing classes except their fear of the workers. However, the German proletariat—for which its leadership is entirely to blame—remained paralyzed in the most critical period—and the antagonisms between the possessing classes broke out into the open. With the Left camp expectantly passive the "Social General" fell under the blows from the Right.

When this happened, the upper crust of the possessing class took its governmental balance: on the debit side—a split in their own

rank; among the assets—an octogenarian Field Marshall. What more remained? Nothing, except for Hugenberg. Whereas Schleicher personified the unadulterated idea of Bonapartism, Hugenberg personifies in himself the chemically pure idea of property. The General was coy, refusing to reply to the question which is better, Capitalism or Socialism; Hugenberg makes no bones about announcing that there is nothing better than an East Prussian junker on the throne. The most rooted, the most ponderous, and the most entrenched form of property is private ownership of land. If economically, German agriculture is the kept whore of industry, then it is most proper that no other than Hugenberg himself should be at the head of the political struggle of the possessors against the people. Thus the regime of the supreme judge of arbitration, who was raised above all classes and parties, has been brought smack up to the supremacy of the (German) Nationalist Party, the most self-seeking and greedy clique of proprietors. Hugenberg's government represents the quintessence of social parasitism. But just because of this, when it became necessary, in its pure state, it became impossible. Hugenberg requires a screen. As yet today, he cannot hide behind the mantle of a Kaiser, and he is forced to resort to the brown shirt of the Nazi. If one cannot obtain the sanction of the highest heavenly powers

German Class Struggle and Collaboration with U.S.S.R.

What is to be Germany's road out of the crisis? To this fundamental question every party representing the leadership of a distinct class must be prepared with its own answer. Since the contradiction between the isolated proletarian state, the Soviet Union, and the capitalist world is the outstanding contradiction of the present stage of decadent capitalism, the attitude of the German parties to Soviet Russia is an integral part of their proposed answers to the basic questions of German economy. The attitude of the big bourgeoisie is clear. It wants to reduce Soviet Russia to the state of a colony, through the usual processes of imperialist conquest and exploitation. They want to continue the line of the pre-war Hohenzollern regime, which led to colonial expansion in Africa and China, and to hardly less concealed subjugation of Turkey and part of the Balkans. Since Germany reached its first working agreement with the Soviet Union at Rapallo in 1922, the big bourgeoisie has been steadily pushing forward the idea that Germany must compensate itself in Russia for the losses of its pre-war colonies, and the expulsion of German capital from Turkey.

On this basis they can form a working agreement with French, British and American imperialism, and provide an alternative to the restoration of the colonies which is the logical consequence of a successful drive by the German bourgeoisie against the Treaty of Versailles.

Preparing for War
This means war—for this there can be no doubt. Therefore the German big bourgeoisie is preparing to break up all organizations and forces within Germany which would be capable of resisting a war of imperialist aggression. The social democracy can no longer be counted upon to carry the working masses with it as it did in 1914. Not that the leadership of the social democracy is any better now than it was then. The existence of the Communist party, its mass following, and the enormous organizational pressure which it would exert upon the social democratic masses in the event of war, make it unsafe for the big bourgeoisie to count too much on the support of the social democracy. It must crush social democracy as well as Communism if it is to prepare for the next war.

For this reason the big bourgeoisie is being forced to form a close alliance with Fascism, representing the mass organization of the petty bourgeoisie against the proletariat. Not only must it form an alliance, but also put itself at the head of it, and in practice carry through its program as that of Fascism.

The petty bourgeoisie in and of itself is not interested in imperialist conquest. Its own program,

First Article After Hitler's Appointment as Chancellor By Leon Trotsky



through the monarchy for the property owners, there remains the sanction of the reactionary and unbridled rabble.

The investiture of Hitler with power served a two-fold purpose: first, to decorate the camarilla of property owners with the leaders of "a national movement"; and secondly, to place the fighting forces of Fascism at the direct disposal of the proprietors.

It was not with a light heart that the high and mighty clique made a deal with the malodorous Fascists. There are too many, all too many fists behind the unbridled upstarts; and therein lies the dangerous side of the brown allies; but in that very same thing is also their fundamental, more exactly, their only advantage. And this is the advantage that decides, for such are the times now that there is no guarantee in property except with fists. There is no way of getting around without the Nazis. But it is likewise impossible to give over to them the actual power; today, the threat on the part of the proletariat is not so acute that

the higher-ups should consciously provoke a civil war with problematic outcome. It is to this new stage in the development of the social crisis in Germany that the new governmental combination corresponds, in which the military and economic posts remain in the hands of the masters, while the plebeians are assigned decorative or second rate posts. The unofficial but all the more actual function of the Fascist ministers is to bind the revolution with terror. However, the suppression and annihilation of the proletarian vanguard the Fasc-

ists must achieve not otherwise than within the limits set by the representatives of the agrarians and the industrialists. Such is the plan. But how will its execution turn out?

The government of Hugenberg-Hitler includes within itself a complex system of contradictions; between the traditional representatives of the agrarians, on the one side, and the patented representatives of large capital, on the other; between these and the others, on the one side, and the oracles of the reactionary petty bourgeoisie, on the other. The combination is extremely unstable. In its present form it will not long endure. What will come in its place in the event of its collapse? In view of the fact that the chief instruments of power are not in Hitler's hands, and since the latter has amply demonstrated that alongside with the hatred to the proletariat there is deeply ingrained in his bone the awe before the possessing classes and their institutions, it is impossible to exclude absolutely the possibility that the social tops, in case of a break with

the Nazis, will attempt once again to take to the road of presidential Bonapartism. However, the probability of such a variation, which, theretofore, could have only an episodic character, is extremely slight. Incalculably much more probable is the further development of the crisis to the side of Fascism. Hitler, in the character of Chancellor, is such a direct and open challenge addressed to the proletariat that a mass reaction, in the worst instance, a series of disparate reactions, is absolutely inevitable. And this will suffice to push the Fascists into the foremost places, displacing their much too corpulent mentors. But on one condition: if the Fascists themselves remain on their feet.

The assumption of power by Hitler is indubitably a fearful blow for the working class. But this is still not a decisive or an irrevocable defeat. The enemy, who might have been crushed while he was only striving upwards, has occupied today an entire series of commanding posts. This allows his side a great advantage, but there has been no battle as yet. The occupation of advantageous positions decides nothing by itself, what do decide are the living forces.

The Reichswehr and the police, the Steel Helmets, and the storm troops of the Nazis represent in themselves three independent armies in the service of the possessing classes. But from the very meaning of the present governmental combination these armies are

not united within a single hand. The Reichswehr, to say nothing of the Steel Helmets, is not in Hitler's hands. His own armed forces represent a problematic quantity which is still to be verified. His millions of reserves are human rubbish. In order to conquer complete power Hitler must provoke a semblance of civil war (he himself is afraid of an out and out civil war). His substantial colleagues in the ministry at whose disposal are the Reichswehr and the Steel Helmets would prefer to strangle the proletariat by "peaceful" measures. They are much less inclined to provoke a minor civil war for fear of a big one. In this manner there remains no short distance from the ministry headed by the Fascist Chancellor to the complete victory of Fascism. This means that there is still time at the disposal of the revolutionary camp. How much? It cannot be computed beforehand. Battles alone can measure its duration.

The Camp of the Proletariat

When the official Communist party states that the social democracy is the most important prop of bourgeois domination, it repeats only that idea which served as the point of departure for the organization of the Third International. When the bourgeoisie invites it to power, the social democracy casts its vote for the capitalist regime. The social democracy tolerates (suffers) any bourgeois government that tolerates the social democracy. But even when completely discarded from power, the social democracy continues to support bourgeois society, recommending to the workers that they conserve their forces for battles, for which it is prepared never to issue a call. By paralyzing the revolutionary energy of the proletariat, the social democracy provide bourgeois society with an opportunity to remain alive under conditions when it is no longer capable of living, thus turning Fascism into a political necessity. The very call of Hitler to power emanates from the Hohenzollern Field Marshall, who had been elected by the votes of social democratic workers! The political chain that leads from Weis to Hitler has quite a personal character which can be gathered from inspection. There can be no two views upon this score among Marxists. But what's in question is not how to expound a political situation but how to transform it in a revolutionary manner.

The guilt of the Stalinist bureaucracy is not in that it is "irreconcilable" is politically impotent. From the fact that Bolshevism under the leadership of Stalin proved victorious in Russia, the Stalinist bureaucracy deduces that it is the "duty" of the German proletariat to rally around Thaelmann. Its ultimatum reads,—"unless the German workers accept beforehand, a priori, and without reservations, the Communist leadership they must not so much as dare think of serious battles. The Stalinists express it differently. But all circumlocutions, restrictions, and oratorical tricks change nothing in the fundamental character of bureaucratic ultimatum, which helped the social democracy to bring Germany to Hitler.

The history of the German working class from 1914 represents the most tragic page of modern history. What shocking betrayal by its historical party, the social democracy! What ineptitude and what impotence of its revolutionary wing! But there is no need for going so far back. For the past two or three years of the Fascist upsurge, the policy of the Stalinist bureaucracy represented in itself nothing else but a chain of crimes which literally saved reformism, and thereby prepared for the subsequent successes of Fascism. At this moment, when the enemy has

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Leon Trotsky Analyzes the Hitler Regime

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already occupied important commanding posts, the question inevitably arises. Is it not too late to call for a regrouping of forces in order to repel the enemy? But first we must answer here another question, what does "too late" mean in the given instance? Must this be understood to mean that even the boldest turn about face on the road of revolutionary policy is no longer capable of radically changing the correlation or hope of achieving the necessary turn? These are two different questions.

Is It Too Late to Act?

We have in effect given an answer to the first already in what was said above. Even under the most favorable conditions for Hitler, he requires a long number of months—and what critical months!—in order to establish the hegemony of Fascism. If one takes into consideration the sharpness of the economic and political situation, the ominous character of the danger the proletariat is right up against, the frightful alarm of the workers, their numerousness, their exasperation, the presence of experienced fighting elements in their ranks, and the incomparable capacity of the German workers for organization and discipline, then the answer is clear: during those months which are needed by the Fascists in order to break down internal and external barriers and to entrench their dictatorship, the proletariat under correct leadership can come to power two and three times over again.

Two and a half years ago the Left Opposition insistently proposed that all the institutions and organizations of the Communist party from the Central Executive Committee to the smallest provincial nucleus should immediately turn to the parallel social democratic organizations with the concrete proposal for mutual action against the impending suppression of proletarian democracy. Had a struggle against the Nazis been built on this basis Hitler would not be Chancellor today and the Communist party would be occupying the leading place within the working class. But there is no return to the past. The consequences of the mistakes that have been perpetrated have succeeded in becoming

political facts and compose at present a part of the objective background. The situation must be taken as it has been composed. It never need have been as bad as it is. But it is not hopeless. A political turn about face—but a real one, a bold one, an open one, one that is thought out from all sides—can completely save the situation and open up the road to victory.

Hitler needs time. A revival of trade and industry, should such become a fact, would not at all signify the strengthening of Fascism against the proletariat. Under the least betterment of the conjuncture, capital, which has been furnished for profits, will feel the acute need for peace in the factories, and this will at once shift the correlation of forces in favor of the workers. In order that the economic struggle should from the very first steps merge with the political struggle, it is urgent that the Communists be at their posts, i. e., in the factories and within the trade unions. The social democratic leadership have announced that they desire an accord with Communist workers. Very well. Let the 300,000 workers who belong to the Red Trade Union Organization catch up the reformists on their own words and turn to the General German Trade Union Federation with the proposal to enter immediately into the free trade unions, as a fraction. One such step will bring a change into the self-esteem of the workers, and therefore into the entire political background.

Turn Depends On Party

However, is the turn itself possible? That is what the task requires. The vulgarizers of Marx, gravitating towards fatalism, observe as a rule nothing on the political arena save objective causes. But, in effect, the more acute the class struggle becomes, the closer it draws to a catastrophe, the more often the key to the entire situation is entrusted to a given party and its leadership. At this moment the question is posed in this manner: If in its time the Stalinist bureaucracy has kept hard fast on the road of dullwitted ultimatum, despite the pressure of, say, ten political atmospheres, will it be capable of withstanding a pressure ten times greater, of one hundred atmospheres?

But maybe the masses will go into action of themselves, overturning the barriers of the apparatus after the manner in which the transport strike broke out in Berlin in November 1932? There is no ground, of course, for considering the spontaneous movement of the masses as being excluded. In order to become effective it must on this occasion surpass the Berlin strike a hundred or two hundred-fold in scope. The German proletariat is sufficiently powerful in order to sweep into such a movement even if hindered from above. But spontaneous movements are precisely so called because they originate without leadership. Whereas, our question touches the problem of what the party should do in order to give impetus to the mass movement, in order to help it attain its sweep, in order to take its place at the head and guarantee its victory....

Today's telegrams have brought news of a general strike in Lubeck in answer to the arrest of a social democratic official. This fact, if true, does not in the least rehabilitate the social democratic bureaucracy. But it inevitably condemns the Stalinists along with their theory of social Fascism. Only the development and the sharpening of the antagonism between the National Socialists and the social democrats can bring the Communists, after all the mistakes that have been made, from out of isolation and open the road to revolution. But one must not hinder but assist this process which is ingrained in the logic of the relations themselves. The road to this lies through the bold policy of a united front.

Elections Can Decide

Nothing

The March elections, at which the social democracy will clutch in order to paralyze the energy of the workers will in themselves resolve nothing, of course. If no major events occur up to the elections, which will transfer the question to another plane, then the Communist party should automatically receive an increase in votes. It will be incommensurably greater if the Communist party will this very day take upon itself the initiative for a defensive united front. Yes, today the matters deal with defense! But the Communist party can ruin it

self, if, in the wake of the social democracy, even though in different terms, it turns its electrifying agitation into a purely parliamentary huddle, into a means of distracting the attention of the masses from their present impotence and from their preparing for the defense. The bold policy of the united front is at this moment the only correct basis for the election campaign as well.

Again, are there enough forces in the Communist party for the turn? Will the Communist workers have enough energy and resolution to help the pressure of one hundred atmospheres beat its way into bureaucratic skulls? No matter how offensive such an acknowledgment may be, that is precisely how the question is posed at present....

The above lines were written when we learned, after the inevitable delay, from the German newspapers, that Moscow at last has given the signal for alarm to the C. E. C. of the German Communist Party: the time has come for an accord with the social democracy. No confirmation of this news is at hand but it smacks of the truth; ever, the Stalinist bureaucracy commands a turn about face only after the events deal with the working class (in the U. S. S. R. in China, in England, in Germany) a blow on the head. When the Fascist Chancellor trains his machine guns at the temples of the proletariat bound hand and foot, then and only then were made from out of isolation and open the road to revolution. But one must not hinder but assist this process which is ingrained in the logic of the relations themselves. The road to this lies through the bold policy of a united front.

Party Democracy and the Turn

It goes without saying that the Left Opposition will take its stand with both feet on the ground of this related acknowledgment and will try to squeeze from it everything that is possible for the victory of the proletariat. But while so doing, the Left Opposition will not for a moment forget that the turn of the Comintern is a purely empirical zigzag, performed in the due course of panic. The individuals who equated social democracy with Fascism are capable, in the process of struggle with Fascism, of going over into idealization of the social democracy. We must vigilantly keep watch to preserve the complete political independence

of Communism; to coordinate the blows organizationally, but not to mix the banners; to maintain absolute loyalty in our relations with our ally but to keep an eye on him, as our enemy of tomorrow.*

Should the Stalinist faction really put in effect the turn that is dictated by every phase of the situation, the Left Opposition, of course, will take its place in the common ranks of battle. But the confidence of the masses in this turn will be all the greater the more democratically it is achieved. Thaelmann's speeches or manifestos of the Central Executive Committee are much too little for the present sweep of events. What is needed is the voice of the party. There is no other way of returning the confidence of the party in itself, and of deepening the confidence of the workers in the party! The Congress must take place within two or three weeks, not later than the opening of the Reichstag (if the Reichstag will be convened at all).

The program of action is clear and simple: Immediate proposal to all social democratic organizations from top to bottom of a united defensive front.

Immediate proposal to the General German Trade Union Federation to admit the Red Trade Union Organization into the trade unions. Immediate preparation for an emergency party congress.

What is at stake is the head of the working class, the head of the Communist International and—let us not forget it—the head of the Soviet Republic!

* In the light of recent events and against the background of the tragic mistakes of the Stalinists, the anecdote of the capitulation of Well and others is comparable to the appearance of clowns in Shakespeare's tragedies. These gentlemen announced yesterday that (a) the danger of Fascism is liquidated, thanks to the correct policy of the party; (b) the policy of the united front, permissible in the past, from now on is become counter-revolutionary. On the day after these confessions Hitler assumed power and Stalin announced that the policy of the united front, counter-revolutionary in the past, from now on becomes necessary.

Prinkipo, February 5, 1933.
—L. TROTSKY.

Pose Problem of Germany-U.S.S.R

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United States. The foreign trade interests of the agrarian-capitalist bloc are, in a limited way, being subordinated to its interest in protecting the productivity of domestic capitalist agriculture.

Line of Big Bourgeoisie

But this policy can be carried through only in a limited way; the broad policy runs in the exactly opposite direction. The whole line of the big bourgeoisie since the crisis has been to stimulate foreign trade at the expense of the internal market. The methods of high prices and low wages, of dumping in export market, of liberal credits backed up by the Reichbank and in the last analysis by the taxing power of the government—these have resulted in a surplus of exports over imports since the crisis, while during the period of stabilization German imports were higher than its exports. In other words, German capitalism has looked for the way out of the crisis abroad, while deceiving the petty bourgeois masses with the Fascist slogan of self-sufficiency. Foreign markets are being closed tighter by tariff walls and other restrictions. The latest unspoken plank in its platform is the imperialist subjugation and exploitation of Russia.

The social democracy attempts to hold on the bourgeois "internationalism" of the manufacturer-and-banker-Jews. The removal of restrictions on foreign trade, development of markets abroad, unhampered movement of capital over national boundaries—the typical

program of a Keynes, a McKenna, a Morgan—these are the answer of social democracy to the question of the way out of the crisis. Under the existing high tension of international economic relations, when every country is competing with all the others in putting up walls against the entry of foreign goods, in a world of import quotas, exchange restrictions, prohibitions on the export of capital—such a program is not only a betrayal of the interests of the working class, but a ridiculous blindness to the facts. The question of Russia as a distinct factor in the situation is ignored.

Answer of Communism

What must be the basic answer of Communism to the question of how Germany is to get out of the crisis? It must be one that recognizes the necessity of still further developing the productive forces of Germany, it must recognize the fact that German economy is an integral part of world economy, and it must be based on the closest possible intertwining of the direct, immediate economic interests of Germany with those of Russia.

German capitalism, recognizing the immense potentialities of Russia, looks on it as a field to be exploited after first crushing the working class in Germany as well as in Russia; the German proletariat, on the other hand, can take gigantic steps toward building up Socialism on the basis of the combination of Russian resources and German technology, but filling this same economic formula with an entirely different class content—the fraternal economic collaboration of the manufacturer-and-banker-Jews. The removal of restrictions on foreign trade, development of markets abroad, unhampered movement of capital over national boundaries—the typical

LEAGUE ACTIVITIES

Oppositionist Beaten In Cleveland

Cleveland.—The readers of the Militant will recall the activity of the Left Opposition in Cleveland on the German situation and the speech comrade Sam Gordon made at the party demonstration in that city on the danger of German Fascism to the American workers. This has struck fear into the hearts of the local bureaucrats who have replied in their well known educational manner—by slugging Gordon.

Since the Left Opposition German campaign began Gordon has been active in spreading its ideas, making contacts with party members and distributing Militants and recently leaflets advertising comrade Hugo Oehler's meeting in Cleveland. The bureaucrats began to take alarm. Gordon was spotted by the bureaucrats at the City Central Council of the Unemployed on Saturday. All regular procedure was broken off and a sudden attack was launched against the Left Opposition organizer. Misquotations from the Militant, personal attacks and all the rest of the Stalinist figural were bandied about in order to expel comrade Gordon from the meeting. He was not given the chance to defend himself on the pretext that he would be given the opportunity to do so, at the block committee, where he is a member. The motion for excluding Gordon from the meeting passed. About five comrades the only ones who knew Gordon, abstained from voting. Anna Onda, local bureaucrat, and Leonard Patterson, a Negro organizer from N. Y. led this railroad attack.

On Monday, February 20, the block committee met. The meeting was crowded with strange faces—obviously called down by the Stalinists. A functionary, Berndt, started the meeting by attacking Gordon without any delay. First the usual hokum about the "counter-revolutionary Trotskyists" then, Gordon is not "just a rank and file Trotskyist". Finally the real reason for the bureaucrats' venom—Gordon had raised the German issue and had spoiled (how?) their pure and simple charity demonstration, raised the workers out of the rut of Stalinist opportunism and awakened them to international consciousness.

Gordon was given no chance to defend himself. Upon a signal from the party bureaucrat (Berndt), a young careerist by the name of Fred Dell pounced upon him, unleashing a premeditated attack from all sides. Comrade Gordon was absolutely alone in the affray. His nose was battered and his eye blackened. In this manner are the Cleveland bureaucrats educating the proletariat.

This great apprehension on the part of the party bureaucrats indicates the great interest of the party members in Germany and the platform of the Left Opposition on this question. A good crowd is expected for comrade Oehler's meeting.

—C. G.

Youngstown Proposes United Front

Youngstown.—The following self-explanatory letter has been sent by the local branch of the Communist League of America (Opposition) to the Communist party organization:

Section Committee, Communist Party of the U. S. A., Youngstown Section. Dear comrades: The party press has recently come out with news of a turn toward a broader united front in the unemployed movement. The Daily Worker of January 11 writes: "The need for united action of all workers of all shades of opinion and of whatever organization is desperate." Everyone of us will agree with this. The especially poor showing that we all made when the hospitalization question was the budget came up before the City Council shows that this turn is even more desperately needed in Youngstown. We welcome this turn as a great step forward for the party and the whole working class movement and hope to see it carried through successfully here as well.

Since the Unemployed Councils in this city are in particularly poor shape, it becomes first of all necessary to rebuild these. We know that the party forces are small and as yet inadequate for the great amount of work at hand. We know that every available force is needed for the work. To this end we offer, every one of our small group, to carry out any task assigned to us in this desperately needed united action of the unemployed, in a disciplined manner. Of course, we reserve for ourselves the right of criticism, but we declare ourselves always ready to come to an agreement with you as to the time and place of criticism.

Every hand is needed. That is clear to all. We of the Left Opposition are only a small group in this town, to be sure. But we want to be and can be of aid to the party in this important turn. It is up to you to decide.

Hoping that you will give this letter the serious attention it requires, With Communist greetings, Youngstown Branch, Communist League of America (Opposition) Secretary.

WHY IS THE COMINTERN STILL SILENT ABOUT THE ACUTE CRISIS IN GERMANY?

Musteites Exclude Oppositionists

Youngstown.—Recent Youngstown papers reported that efforts were being made to unite the Austin town and Smith Township Unemployed Leagues with the local Independent Club as the first step in a movement to create a large city-county unemployed organization. A meeting to consider these plans was to be held at the Independent Club on Sunday afternoon. But newspaper publicity had apparently frightened some of the I. C. members, for whoever possessed the keys to the club headquarters did not appear.

The few members of the I. C. present were invited to attend a discussion meeting at the home of one of the League officers, Perkins. The latter had failed to answer an inquiry of mine dated November 21, so I knew that if possible he and other followers of Muste would endeavor to exclude me from this meeting as Musteites have done with other Communists in St. Louis and other cities. But I managed to go to Perkins' home with a militant worker from the I. C. Before entering, Perkins asked my name. I gave it to him and he immediately seemed perplexed and said, "A Communist?" Before I had more than answered him the militant worker asked good-naturally, "What's wrong? Are you afraid of Communists?" They are just like other workers. "No," Perkins replied, "BUT I don't like the dirty lies they tell in the Daily Worker!" So we followed him into his home.

While we were finding places Perkins must have put the leading League members wise to my identity. For the meeting had no more than started with a roll call of those present than the chairman asked me pointedly, "And whom do you represent?" "The Communist League of America and a group of sympathetic unemployed workers," I replied. He granted, cleared his throat and announced, "You men know our attitude in regard to Communists. What shall we do?" And then followed one of the emptiest discussions I have ever heard as to why I should be excluded from the meeting. I was a Communist, a disrupter. The Daily Worker told lies; Communists vilified Muste. They couldn't work with Communists, and besides this was a "secret" meeting and they didn't want a word of it to get in the Communist press.

I tried to point out the general difference between a Stalinist C. P. member and a Left Oppositionist, and refused to be held responsible for the mistakes of the Party. As a worker interested in the building of a united unemployed council I asked to be permitted to remain. Some fool grabbed on to the word "council" and exclaimed, "You want to build a Council and we want to build a League! We can't agree!" The discussion proceeded fruitlessly; they were determined to get me out at all costs. So I proposed that a vote be taken as to whether or not I could remain without voice or vote. I was told that I couldn't make a motion and some one moved that I be invited to attend an open meeting of the Austin town League on Wednesday night. This passed, and a motion to evict me was made and voted upon. The members of the I. C. were bewildered, but two sturdy workers both voted and spoke in favor of my remaining even though I was a Communist. The League functionaries all voted against it and succeeded in getting a few rank-and-file inexperienced members of the I. C. to vote with them. Perkins and his clique wouldn't permit me to leave the house until I had given up a list of names which I had copied down during the roll call.

But we will get in contact with the workers in the Leagues and the I. C. in spite of such nonsensical intrigues and obstructions! We will help to build a united local unemployed organization that will function with workers' democracy and not according to the whims of bureaucrats. FOR A UNITED FRONT OF ALL UNEMPLOYED WORKERS! —N.

ABERN SPEAKS AT WILKES-BARRE MEETING

Martin Abern, member of the National Committee of the Communist League of America (Opposition), will speak under the auspices of the League at Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, on Sunday, February 26, 1933, 2 P. M. on the crisis in Germany and the standpoint of the Left Opposition. Admission to the meeting is free and all miners and other workers are cordially invited to attend. The meeting will be held at the Workers' Circle Hall, 69 S. Hancock Street.

Oehler Tour:

Davenport, Iowa—Feb. 27
Des Moines, Iowa—Feb. 27
Kansas City, Mo.—March 1, 2, 3
St. Louis, Mo.—March 4, 5
Illinois Coal Fields—March 6, etc.

ABERN AT BOSTON MEET

A mass meeting at which the German situation today will be analyzed and the reasons given for the Left Opposition demand for a united front to smash Hitler, is to be held in Boston on Sunday night, March 5, 1933, 8 P. M. at Belmont Hall, 150 Humbolt Ave., Roxbury, Mass. The meeting, under the auspices of the Boston branch of the League, will be addressed by Martin Abern, member of the National Committee of the organization, and by comrade Antoinette F. Konikow. All workers are urged to attend the meeting and hear the standpoint of the Opposition.

Militant Correspondent Reports On Events After Hitler Took Power

(Continued from Page 1)

ocrats, Reichsbanner people and trade unionists instinctively unite and fight shoulder to shoulder. Numerous are the accounts brought by our comrades of workers everywhere asking: "Why do we not build the united front?" Liberal bourgeois papers reprint letters from workers posing this question. But—and that is the crucial question—the leaders, Stalinists, Socialists and trade union bureaucrats refuse to realize the united front from organization to organization.

The workers are still sadly bewildered. But it is not so in the ranks of the bourgeoisie. The present situation found them quite well prepared. The forces on that side of the barricade were not taken by surprise. They decided quickly for the Fascists precisely out of fear of the growing misery and discontent of the working masses. Economic developments within the Reich continued to present their protracted black picture. Unemployment was on the increase. The official figures of January 15, 1933 gives the numbers of 5,995,000. This accounts only for those officially registered who receive unemployment insurance, but not of those not registered or the part time workers. In reality the total figure is much higher. The emergency decrees had already helped to reduce further the working class level and increase its discontent. The Communists had gained in the last elections. The Schleicher government, evidently despite its good intentions, could not consolidate the Bonapartist regime. Its prospects of maintaining capitalist rule and avoid civil war diminished. The bourgeoisie called upon its last reserve—the Fascists hordes.

Against the dangers of a growing working class threat the capitalist solidarity extends beyond the national boundaries, not even taking cognizance of such distinctions as former "mortal enemies". And so also in this case, the change in Germany produced its echo in France. The "Paris Solr" of Jan. 31 commented: "Hitler in power! This news would a few months ago have produced the effects of a bombshell. Today it reverberates but there is not much detonation." This bourgeois paper is fully conscious that the imperialist road now leads through the Fascist re-

game toward a united front against the growing threat of the German revolutionary workers. True, there is the Versailles Treaty standing a little in the way. But such matters can be adjusted to enable the German and the French bourgeoisie to work hand in hand. In this manner the first steps toward forging the spearhead of the army of intervention against the U. S. S. R. are being taken. That is the very heart of the question of a possible final conquest of power in Germany by the Fascist bandits. Finally that much at least seems to have dawned upon l'Humanite (the French party daily). It did mention that danger in one of its recent issues. But in face of that recognition it demonstrates its utter helplessness, its paralysis. Choked by the false concepts of Stalinism it cannot show the way. It can only repeat what in view of the concrete needs of the situation becomes a mere abstract commonplace. It repeats the slogans of downing Fascism and of the united front from below.

The Issue is Now to be Settled by the Means of Civil War

The Fascist government does not at all hide its objectives. Hitler's very first ministerial address to the public declared: "The greatest actual danger is the danger of Communism.... Bolshevism would spell disaster not only to Germany but to the entire world. The national government is determined to defend Germany against Bolshevism, against anarchy and against the scourge of the class struggle." That the C. P. is the vanguard of the working class the Fascist leaders fully understand. But the full scope of their objectives became further clarified by Hitler's election campaign address of February 8. He declared in his usual bravado style, but now with a more sinister sureness: "I shall not resign my function until I am fully convinced that my mission is accomplished. That within less than ten years Marxism shall no longer exist in Germany." Such are the threats of extermination of every section, of every vestige of the working class movement, for in their usage of the term Marxism the Fascists include the Social Democrats and even the reformist trade unions. Yes, precisely that is the mission of Fascism. German capitalism is the weakest link in the imperialist chain, in the throes of the decay of

the system as a whole, has decided to settle the issue by civil war in the hope of thereby accomplishing the destruction of the working class movement in order to maintain itself in power. For that aim Fascism is the instrument.

quick in its actions—one has followed the other in rapid succession—in the attempt it is making to consolidate its position. The Reichstag was dissolved without even being permitted the opportunity to convene. The new elections will take place, not after the usual sixty days, but within one month, on March 5. The important positions under the ministry of the interior, particularly those of chiefs of police, are being filled by Fascists. Several issues of the Rote Fahne have been seized. A press censorship decree is issued giving the chief of police the authority to prohibit any paper which advocates a general strike, or strikes of any kind, or prints what is called "deliberate misinformation". All city councils (admirable bodies) throughout Prussia are dissolved and new elections set for March 12. The Prussian state government, the Braun cabinet, which had only a shadow existence, is unceremoniously and completely dissolved, prepare the road for dissolution of the Landtag despite its majority opposition. Even bourgeois democracy due to its flexibility, still has a certain usefulness—Dissolve by decrees, get new elections with all the machinery of suppression in readiness so as to obtain a voting strength which can furnish a mask of authority. That is to be preparatory to the final coup d'Etat. These are parts of the immediate strategy of the Fascist government. (To be continued)

—ARNE SWABECK.

CHICAGO COMPLAINS!

Rebecca Sacherow of the Chicago branch writes: "Our German campaign is going over big here. The Militants are eagerly awaited by all of us here and all our sympathizers are offering to help distribute them where they will do the most good. Last night we had a general membership meeting of all our sympathetic organizations and everyone volunteered to do his share. One party member was present and he took a bundle of the papers for distribution within the party." "We were," adds Sacherow, short of our requirements; Chicago is complaining that it doesn't receive enough copies of the "new Militant" to go around!!

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