

Vantus and Haubrich

BY BELA KUN.

So be it! Better to break than to tolerate the confusion which hinders the ideal, the theoretical revolutionary growth... It is better to perish than to tolerate and condone mediocrity and irresolution.

Lenin. We know that what we are about to say will arouse the bitter resentment of those, who, hide-bound in their middle-class prejudices, are incapable of ever becoming true revolutionaries. It will enrage the revolutionary defeatists, whose fickleness and instability leads them to perpetual moralizing, and whose petty dilettantism betrays itself in constant vacillation. No doubt they will say that it is easy to talk boldly from a safe distance. Let them.

They will launch their fiery denunciations at our heads. Let them. Denunciations have become their daily bread. They will accuse us of attacking men who are helpers in Horthy's power. Let them. It is part of their aimless demagoguery to do so.

What we are about to say must be said. It must be said, because we must make good our own errors. We have to make good what we lost through sentimental weakness, and through miscalculation. We have to make reparation for having only vaguely warned, and not sufficiently impressed upon the proletarian masses, that among their leaders, were men who were sabotaging their cause; who, from malevolent intention, or from weakness and inconsistency, were supporting the counter-revolution, and betraying the power of the workers. We must make reparation, or at least do penance for the sin of having tolerated men, who gave the impression that they were leading the march of revolution, when, in reality, they were limping in the rear; men, who by their evil example and counter-revolutionary conduct, were tripping up and opposing the onrush of revolution, by delaying to speak, we should become their accomplices.

Crime to Tolerate Revolutionaries. We shall shock the senile dodderers; the morphia-slaves and the degenerates who, plagued with an evil conscience, and who can never come to any resolute decision, will be outraged. They will say we are aiding Horthy and his gang in their hangman's work. Nevertheless, we must speak—it is our duty as revolutionary Communists. If what the bourgeois press is telling the world about the utterances of these two former Peoples' Commissaries corresponds with the truth—and from our experiences of the Dictatorship, we know that it does—we must guiltily acknowledge that it was a crime to have tolerated them in our ranks, and above all to have tolerated them in the ranks of the Communists. The sin is ours, we must acknowledge it, and we shall have to labor long in the cause of the proletarian revolution before that sin is expiated.

We shall be told that it is easy to talk from the security of a foreign country, and that those who sought safety in flight have no right to question the courage of others. These admonitions do not perturb us. Our conscience is clear. Nevertheless, all our sympathy—our active sympathy, as far as it lies in our power—is with the revolutionary proletarians, who are languishing in Horthy's dungeons, planning how best to escape the gallows and their ruthless inquisitors. When the Dictatorship fell, we fled from Hungary, refusing to allow ourselves to be imprisoned by Piel's government, which incarcerated Otto Korvin and so many of our martyred brothers. Every proletarian knows that by fleeing the country, we are not renouncing or betraying the revolution. They fled—or stayed at home—so that they might sell the Bolshevik cause to which they had professed allegiance; so that they might call those who had fulfilled their revolutionary task, Red hangmen; so that they might sell the skin of the working-class to the bourgeoisie—but, nevertheless, acquired it, not by purchase, but by armed violence, rejecting the aid of these social democratic accomplices.

Flight Not Cowardice. In itself, flight is not cowardice; nor is it heroism to remain at home. The test is why one fled, or why one stayed at home. Was it to labor for the revolution and the emancipation of the workers, or to betray the revolution and the workers. Still further. Did he do it in the expectation that by staying at home he could go on working for the emancipation of the working-class, or to protect himself—that is the vital question—or to take service with the bourgeoisie?

Those who are laboring for the revival of the revolution and for the re-establishment of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat as the only means of emancipation, the workers can safely affirm that the two men whose names form the title of this article, and who formerly figured amongst the fighters in the ranks of the working-class, must from henceforward be counted with the betrayers of the working-class. They are the Communist Vantus, and the Social-Democrat Haubrich. We do not wish to harm them through these lines. We cannot thus damage them in the eyes of Horthy's judges more than they have damaged themselves by their own declarations, in which they confessed to sabotage of the Dictator-

ship and to counter-revolutionary activities. It would be sheer stupidity to expect a Communist, even the most heroic, to make his defence before his executioners on an occasion for Communist propaganda, unless he had abandoned all hope. The virtue of consistent veracity becomes a criminal folly in the face of the declared enemy.

It may sound paradoxical, but these two men are to be counted betrayers of the working-class just because they did tell the truth while on their trial before Horthy's judges. They stated that they had sabotaged the proletarian revolution even in the days before the Dictatorship of the workers, by their intemperate habits, by slackness and indulgence, by bad example, and total neglect of their duties. They were telling the truth when they asserted that they had accepted important posts in the Proletarian State, without conviction of enthusiasm, at a time when the conscientious execution of duty was a matter of life or death for the working-class. They accepted these posts, not from conviction, not because they felt they possessed superior political gifts, not from misdeeds, but nevertheless honest intentions, but—why?

One of them publicly acknowledged that he had participated in the counter-revolution, which during the Dictatorship, as well as afterwards, was responsible for the lives of many heroic proletarians.

They are prepared to bring witnesses to prove their betrayal, and they will succeed. This corroborates Haubrich's assertion, that the reason why he did not flee after the fall of the Dictatorship, was because he did not feel in any way guilty. We, who fled because we did feel guilty towards the bourgeoisie, and, far from being repentant, were planning to add to our guilt the fresh offence of a new revolution, we ourselves, can stand witness on their behalf, and affirm that they are not guilty in the eyes of the tribunal which is preparing to send them to the gallows.

What is the White Terror. That these men too should stand in fear—and justifiable fear—of death before their judges, reveals the true character and full significance of the White Terror. It proves that the White Terror is a White Terror. It proves that the White Terror aims at the destroying, not merely the members of the working-class movement, who actively offended against the murderous capitalist regime, but the working-class in general, even those whose participation in the Revolution was of positive advantage to the bourgeoisie. That is why the White Terror is a White Terror. The feature, among others, which distinguished the White Terror from the Red, was that the working-class was magnanimous, and always will be magnanimous. They showed the bourgeoisie unlimited mercy; the Red Terror was extended only to those who sought deliberately, and by force of arms, to damage the supremacy and the future of the working-class.

The White Terror, the Dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, will only permit so much of the working-class to live as is necessary for the continuance and security of its own parasitic existence.

We write this, to make reparation for our grievous offence, the offence of having, both before and during the Dictatorship, permitted the responsible posts of the Revolution to be filled by men, who, consciously or unconsciously, served the enemies of the proletariat, who, deliberately or from dereliction of duty, made it easy for the bourgeois counter-revolution to shed torrents of proletarian blood.

We write in the full conviction that we are not damaging these men in the eyes of Horthy's hangmen. We would willingly save them from their hands and preserve them until the time of a successful revolution, and then put them on their trial before the revolutionary tribunal of the triumphant proletariat.

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

The E. C. of the Communist International is composed as follows:—Levy (Germany, with Mayer as substitute); Rosmer, France; Quetch (all parties and groups of Great Britain, except the Pankhurst group); John Reed (U.S.A.); Steinhardt (Austria); Frus (Scandinavia; Sweden given separate representation later); Pak (Far East); Manner (Finland); Wijnkoop (Holland); Jansen as substitute. The Russian Communist Party, in accordance with the decision of the Congress, nominated five members: G. Zinoviev, N. Bukharin, K. Radek, M. Tomasky, Berzin, Stalin, Pavlovich, and Chicherin as substitutes.

G. Zinoviev was unanimously elected Chairman of the new Executive Committee, and a Bureau, composed of Bukharin, Rudniansky and Kobetsky was appointed. The latter was also appointed secretary of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, in view of the impending departure of Comrade Radek for the front.

Problems Before The 3d International.

By G. Zinoviev.

"Zinoviev begins by examining the events which have taken place within the International since the Third International was founded in March, 1919, at Moscow."

No Opportunists.

During this fifteen months a number of parties have left the Yellow International of Huysmans, which is represented to-day by three names—Pilsudski, Branting, and Noske.

The Communist International has, to a certain extent, become the "fashion." Very many organizations have voted for affiliation to Moscow. In so far as these organizations are proletarian and are resolved to fight the capitalist to the end, their resolutions deserve to be warmly welcomed. But we must beware of the opportunists who knock at the door of the Communist International. This must remain an International of action.

What ought our attitude to be towards the Centre Parties, which have left the Second International and have not yet joined the Third?

We know that the workers who are members of these Parties are with us, and that they sincerely desire to fight in our ranks against the capitalists and the social-traitors. But we are convinced that they will escape all the quicker from the ill-omened influence of these bad shepherds the more thoroughly we unmask all these gentlemen—Kautsky, Hilferding, Hilquit and Co.

While the First Congress at Moscow was only able to put forward the Communist Programme, this one must define the tactics of the Communist Party in the same mould.

Diversity of Tactics.

It is certainly quite impossible to cast all the Communist Parties in the same mould.

The Communist International knows very well that the workers in the different countries have to reckon with extremely diverse social conditions if we pass in review all these countries where Communism has already taken deep root, we can divide them into four categories:—

- 1.—Russia, where the proletarian revolution is an accomplished fact.
- 2.—Germany, Austria, and, to a certain extent, the Baltic Provinces, where the revolution has begun, and where the proletarian revolution is being born under painfully difficult circumstances.
- 3.—England, France and Italy, countries of victorious capitalism, with very old parliamentary traditions, where at the present time a deep dissatisfaction and a revision of values is evident amongst the working-class.
- 4.—The oppressed nationalities and the colonies, Ireland, India, part of Turkey, etc., where the movement for liberty cannot fail to take on a nationalist complexion, and where consequently special problems confront the Communists.

The Second Congress will have to weigh this diversity of conditions. It will concentrate the whole of its attention upon these tactical questions which confront the principal European countries.

Parliamentarism.

Zinoviev then speaks of parliamentarism. As long as the workers have not seized control, the Communist should use bourgeois parliamentarism in the interests of the fight for the proletariat and the dictatorship of the proletariat. There should be no split amongst Communists upon this point. The Bolsheviks entered into the Fourth Czarist Duma; after the revolution they went into the Municipal Councils of Petrograd, Moscow, and other towns; they sent their representatives to the Constituent Assembly, and "there is no doubt that the presence of a considerable communistic section in that assembly enabled it to be dispersed at the given moment in the march of the workers' revolution."

Concerning the question of the industrial unions, Zinoviev advises the Communists not to leave the "yellow" unions, as certain ultra-Left Wings Communists suggest. One must admit that these Unions comprise millions of workers. In Germany they include seven million members, whilst the Arbeiter Union of the German Communists only has about 100,000 members. We must fight inside these Unions and organize Communist centres in them. The Communists must be everywhere where there are organized workers.

At the end of his article, Zinoviev writes that the Second Congress should ask all the Parties affiliated to the Communist International to accept in its entirety the Communist Programme, and to change their name. "A clear-cut difference must exist between the Communists supporting the workers' revolution and the Social Democrats who help the capitalists to suffocate the working-class."

These Parties must turn out the leaders, who only remain with them in order to sabotage. Two worlds are in conflict: one class against another class the workers against the capitalist. No compromise, no equivocation, is admissible.

The Second Congress will be "the general call to the working elite of the world before the decisive struggles. The Communist of all countries must do all that lies in their power to enable the present Congress to write the page which it should write in the history of the movement for the liberation of the workers."