

Throughout the World of Labor

The Czecho-Slovakian Elections

BULLETIN

The latest information on the Czech elections bears out the letter of comrade Lenorovics. The Communist Party suffered a crushing defeat, the Agrarians and the Social Democrats made huge strides forward. The Czecho-Slovakian Social Democratic Party increased its vote from 631,000 to 963,000 (more than 50 per cent) and its mandates from 29 to 39. The German Social Democratic Party of Czecho-Slovakia increased about 25 per cent, from 411,000 to 506,000 and its mandates from 17 to 21. The Communist Party dropped from 933,000 to 752,000 and its mandates from 41 to 29. The Czech Agrarians rose from 970,000 to 1,100,000 and are now the strongest Party. The C. P. lost its position as the strongest of the workers' Parties. The Czech S. P. is now the 2nd strongest Party in the country instead of the 4th. The German S. P. becomes the strongest German Party in Czecho-Slovakia. The bourgeois bloc government, consisting of 5 Czech and 3 German Parties, which ruled for over three years with 157 mandates out of 300, now has between 143 and 144, or a minority, and as comrade Lenorovics points out, will probably have to call into the coalition other parties, the Social Democrats most likely.—Ed.

The election comes this time in an unexpected manner. By a combination of technical maneuvers the bourgeoisie is endeavoring to make a success. The military festival of St. Wenceslas and the coincidence of the election day with that of the birthday of the Republic are to contribute to strengthening of national illusions and to make them serve for the elections. For the bourgeoisie, the great chronic crisis of the proletarian Party is also a circumstance that has its importance.

Finance capital has worked well in the course of the past years. Large sections of the petty bourgeoisie (small peasants, small tradesmen, half-proletarian employees) have been proletarianized, and increased exploitation of the working masses is being carried out. The discontent of the workers is still restrained, but it is constantly rising. The objective conditions are favorable to Communism.

In 1925, the Communist Party got close to a million votes. At that time, seven million voters went to the ballot box. This time there will be about 300,000 more voters. But if the Communist Party gets the same number of votes as in 1925, it will be a setback for it, for in that case the Communist Party would not have an increase to register to correspond to the growth of the voters and the "radicalization" of the masses. It is also proper to point out that the number of votes in itself is not a decisive sign of the strength of the Party—it is only a criterion. At the end of 1928, for example, the Communist Party went through a profound crisis; it was incapable of any action: it received nevertheless more than 800,000 votes.

The Left Opposition has no illusions: The elections will be a defeat for the Party, in spite of the favorable objective conditions for Communism. The socialist parties will gain votes in a high proportion. This fact is all the more grave because one of the Socialist Parties of Czecho-Slovakia, the Social Democratic Party, was near to crumbling a few years ago. Now, significantly enough, this same Party has just held its election meeting in the largest hall in Prague, the Lucerna. At this meeting, the former king's minister, Vanderveelde, delivered a long speech, and, naturally, it was nothing but a lengthy, disgraceful diatribe against Communism and the Soviet Union. The social democrats who formerly held their meetings in the small halls on the outskirts can now speak to large masses, while the Communists must be content with a small hall in the Smichov quarter. This at a time when favorable conditions exist for Communist agitation and propaganda.

Reformist illusions are reviving. This fact is all the more humiliating because it must be noted at a moment when the leadership of the Communist Party is pursuing a self-styled Left policy. But the essentially Centrist character of the leadership can only compromise any real Left policy, because many workers who take the half-measures and the zig-zags for a "Left" policy are disconcerted by the inevitable opportunist effects and become distrustful.

To unmask the Centrist Gottwald-Reinann leadership is the most pressing task for us, for these Centrists are barring the road to impelling the masses toward Communism.

The repression that the bourgeois coalition has not ceased to exercise is now becoming strengthened. Military expenditures are increasing. It can nevertheless be expected that on the morrow of the elections the social democrats will form an open coalition with the bourgeoisie. The Czecho-Slovak proletariat (out of 7,000,000 voters a good half of proletarians can be counted) wants socialism, but the Party capable of guiding it is wanting.

The bourgeoisie in power has created a strengthened regime of dictatorship, remarkably organized in every field. It is by this means that it can hold the workers in check, for it thus succeeds in retaining the mask of democracy.

The task of the Opposition consists in showing the workers that the lack of success of the Communist Party has not its cause in Communism itself but in the bad leadership of the Party. The present chiefs of the Communist International have not known how to broaden the bases of the revolution, either in Europe or in China, and the result of it is a new rise of reformism, successes for the bourgeoisie, the victory of opportunism in the Communist Parties and the persecution of the Left Opposition.

It is certainly very difficult for revolutionary workers to vote for bureaucrats who are the leaders of the moment. But the votes that will go to the Communists need not be brought to the credit of these leaders who, for a long time now, are no longer considered as the leaders of the proletariat. The real leaders, such as Trotsky and many others, are persecuted, imprisoned and deported. The votes given the candidates of the Party should be considered as a protest against bourgeois domination, against social peace, as a demonstration in favor of Communism.

H. LENOROVICS

Prague, October 20, 1929.

The E. C. C. I. Plays with the Life of the Austrian Party

As the Berlin "Rote Fahne" reports, the Plenary Session of the Communist Party of Germany met on October 24 and 25. Under the point "International Report", Remmele reported and remarked among other things as follows:

"The Austrian comrades must put on the agenda the demand for the formation of Workers' Soviets, organize the armed struggle against fascism, that is, immediately, not only theoretically or propagandistically, but practically and organizationally, raise the problem of the proletarian dictatorship."

Were this only the counsel of a Remmele to the Communist Party of Austria, it would really not be worth while to waste even a single word on the matter, but it is not a matter of a Remmele here! At this session of the Central Committee of the C. P. G. there participated representatives of the C. P. of Austria. It becomes ever more clear that it is the E. C. C. I. itself that is "issuing the slogan 'Form Workers' Soviets' in the present situation: the C. P. of Austria accepts this slogan, even if in a somewhat more cautious form, in the Vienna 'Rote Fahne'."

"The moment is also approaching when the working class, in order to conduct its struggle, will have to go over to creating Workers' Soviets."

Against this, Remmele polemized indirectly, turned against the slogan as "only theoretical or propagandist" and demanded its immediate realization by corresponding practical measures!

In an article "The Austrian Counter-Revolution is Preparing the Dictatorship" we considered the present situation in Austria in detail. The events since the writing of this article showed that we were right: The Socialist Party is letting the stirring of the masses fade away through numberless safety valves—conferences, meetings, preparedness of the Schutzbund (Defense League)—and confers with the counter-revolution in the constitution committee on the concrete form for legalizing the dictatorship. The "Arbeiterzeitung", central organ of the S. P. of Austria, writes on October 26:

"The population must be prepared for the negotiations to take their time. . . It will therefore be necessary in the first place to wait cool-headedly until the negotiations in the sub-commission and in the Rathaus lead to an understanding or to the break."

That is where the main danger lies now: that the still existing disposition to battle will collapse during the weeks-long negotiations in parliament to such a point that

torship without any resistance worth mentioning, as they did with the entry into office of the Schober-Vaugoin clique of the counter-revolution.

To call upon the C. P. of Austria in such a situation "to make the organizational preparations for the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship" is a disgraceful play of the worst and most conscienceless adventurers. It is not the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship that stands immediately on the agenda but the prevention of the stabilization of the counter-revolutionary regime!

It is the task now of the Communist Party of Austria not to dream of the uprising, for which all the social, political and military assumptions are lacking at present, but to concentrate all forces upon combining the political defensive struggle against the planned state of dictatorship with the broadest mobilization of the masses in the factories and the unemployed for economic minimum demands.

Only in this manner can the C. P. A. succeed in winning influence upon broader masses and in creating the pre-conditions for a successful resistance to the Schober regime. There can be no doubt that such a struggle has the tendency to become directly a struggle for power. Only hopeless adventurism, however, is capable of deceiving itself that these pre-conditions already exist.

KURT LANDAU

The Labor Movement in Greece

Capitalism has reached the zenith of its power. In the West and in the East, in the countries where industry was almost unknown, we see it assuming gigantic proportions, as in Greece for example.

A political maneuver has brought into Greece about two million refugees from Asia Minor and has thereby strengthened the elements of the progressive bourgeoisie who, since the 1909 revolution, have advanced the industrialization of Greece. That is one part of its program accomplished, since this bourgeoisie can dispose of an abundant and inexpensive manual labor. And it may be said that this mass, since its earliest youth, has been lulled by the priests on the "grandeur of Greece which fights for the delivery of its sons from Turkey, despoiler of the Byzantine empire". But once they quitted Turkey, and returned to the country of their origin, these opinions on Christain and beneficent Greece swiftly vanished among the refugees, for now, formed into compact masses of workers in all branches of industry, notably in the spinning industry of Naoussa, as well as the tobacco factories of new and old Greece, working in common has given them new power and a penetrating ideology: the ideology of wages.

With this plethora of a new contingent of exploited, what has been the role of the Communist Party? Almost nil. It let this mass of producers serve as an electoral clientele to the Venizelist or Liberal Party, and it is with their voice that Venizelos was able to defeat feudalism with the petty bourgeois elements he was able to rally against capitalism. In order to know the Party better, we must go back a few years.

Socialism was introduced around 1912-13 by some bourgeois intellectuals who studied in Germany. These professed a sort of pulpit socialism, clearly bourgeois, and their Marxism was in reality only degenerated. They are not even worth naming, and merit only disgust, for today they are overwhelmed with responsible positions in the Greek state. And, since the birth of that Socialist Party, at present Communist, those who aspire to establish themselves make use of this Party. Thus, in 1922, while on the Asia Minor front the soldiers abandoned their posts with the cry "Long live Lenin" and, returning home refused to fight any longer for reasons that did not concern them, the Party did not know how to profit by the occasion. It gave a free hand to a military camarilla which diverted the spirit of the rebellious soldiers and led it only against King Constantine, or rather, against Greek feudalism.

The slogan of the C. P. G. in 1925 was: Democracy of the Left!!! that is, cooperation with the liberal bourgeoisie. The functionaries at the head of the Party, are men without principles, without ideology (it is interesting to attend an election which resembles a bourgeois election from every viewpoint; all the means employed by the bourgeoisie are made use of, such as jugs of wine, distribution of alcohol, promises of positions in the Party and the trade unions, etc.) If they are to lose their positions they

Communists, like Pouliopoulos, petty-bourgeois intellectual, ethically an egoist, always desirous of being the leader. As for another, the ex-Communist deputy, Maximos, he declared from the tribune of the Chamber: "We, the Communists are against all violence", and, from the other side the bourgeois deputies, weeping with laughter, cried out to him: "And Marxism, have you forgotten it." Now the two cronies, Pouliopoulos and Maximos form a so-called Opposition to the Party which is just as harmful to the Greek workers as the Party itself.

The fault-crammed tactic of the Party obliged the sincere and revolutionary elements to seek a remedy for this state of affairs. That happened in 1922-23. To set the degenerated Party on the revolutionary track again, a struggle was begun; but in spite of the readiness of the militants the effort remained temporarily in vain. A division was necessary, or rather the redemption of a minority insignificant in numbers but significant enough from the point of view of revolutionary quality. The work that had to be done was enormous: to prepare the Communists in Greece was the first task, for in the Party, as well as in all the Parties of the C. I., Marxist-Leninist education was virtually dead. A review was created where much of the Marxist-Leninist literature was translated, as well as booklets to facilitate the adhesion to Communism of still uneducated workers.

At the moment of the withdrawal of the most active elements of the Party, this Opposition seemed the result of the special conditions in Greece, but today, we ascertain similar phenomena in all the Parties. The regrouping, which works under the name of the review "Archives of Marxism," and which has gathered numerous elements around the small minority from the outset, has just declared that it shares the ideas of the rest of the Left Oppositions. We can only rejoice at this declaration: an organization like the "Archives" is most qualified to lengthen the chain of the Left Oppositions.

M. KLADOS

The Chinese Communists and the Sino-Russian Conflict

On October 22, 1929, comrade L. Trotsky received a letter from a Chinese Opposition Communist, of which the following is the last part:

"What is your position in the question of the Chinese Eastern Railway? Here (in China) three slogans have been launched, one for each Communist tendency:

"Our own (that is, the Left Communist Opposition): Against the usurpation of the Chinese Eastern Railway by the Kuo Min Tang. Defense of the U. S. S. R. in the interest of the world revolution.

"That of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China: Against intervention. For the defense of the U. S. S. R.

"That of the Tchen Du-Siu tendency*: Against the traitorous policy of the Kuo Min Tang.

"A letter from one of our comrades in Moscow informs us that 'it is said' that you have declared yourself a supporter of restoring the Railway to China. That appears to me absolutely unbelievable. Couldn't you write on this question?"

These few lines are weighty arguments in the discussion on the Sino-Russian conflict. In China, as we see by this letter, not a single Communist tendency accepts support of the slogan of reinforcing the Chinese counter-revolution on the back of the Soviet Republic.

The Moscow Press, like that of the Communist International, is endeavoring to pass off the viewpoint of the Korschists, of Urbahns and others for that of the Left Opposition. That is what accounts for the letter from Moscow to Shanghai which repeats that "it is said" that Comrade Trotsky is a supporter of restoring the Railway to the Kuo Min Tang generals. Also, it is significant that a Chinese comrade, separated from him by thousands upon thousands of miles (his letter took 42 days to get to Trotsky) and in spite of the categorical information from Moscow, declares: "That appears to me absolutely unbelievable."

*We are informed that the Tchen Du-Siu group, which the Comintern made the scapegoat for the policy of Stalin-Bucharin-Martynov, has developed in a remarkable manner toward