

# Throughout the World of Labor

## The Developments in Germany

The German working class is now going through a far severer period of economic and moral depression than even the most pessimistic tables of statisticians can describe. It takes an insight into the conditions of the average proletarian family to establish this. Vegetable-butter (margarine is found everywhere at the workman's table instead of butter. The diet is entirely devoid of eggs. Only the most meager portions of meat find their way to the worker's stomach. Malt coffee has displaced bean coffee, and so on without end. In short, the working class diet consists in large measure of what was termed during the war and inflation periods *ersatz-lebensmittel* (substitute products).

Professor Kucinski, a bourgeois economist has figured out that the worker receives in wages only 85% of what he needs for a minimum standard of living! This at the same time that German industry increases its production by leaps and bounds. And yet the reformists, still backed by a

majority of the working class, shout: Accumulate! Accumulate! For them the way out of this working class misery lies in the accumulation of capital in Germany. There are more than 3,000,000 unemployed in the Reich, more than half a million in Berlin alone. There is hardly a family in proletarian Berlin that hasn't its *stempelbruder*. Unemployment insurance, of which the "social" state, Germany, so proudly boasts as against the unsocial U. S., is hardly enough to keep its recipient alive. The result is that the unemployed fill the "welfare offices" and "aid societies" day after day and are forced to degrade themselves to virtual beggars. The moral effects can be imagined.

The coalition government of the Reich is very shaky. It has done its work. It has brought about the reduction in unemployment insurance and the arbitration clauses through *Wissel*; it has cast the burden of the taxes on the working class through *Hilferding*. Severing's anti-Communist "Law for the Protection of the Republic" complete the circuit. Finance capital is preparing the boot for its social democratic lackeys. It needs more "resolute" servants for its purpose in the period to come.

The entire German economic system of the immediate future will live in the shadow of the recent Wall Street crash. A German economic journal writes on this: "It is probable that at least partially the economic cooperation of similarly constructed concerns of the countries involved will take place of the formerly customary loan grants, namely, those made to the large industrial states like Germany, for instance, which (economic cooperation) powerful American capitalist enterprises will finance." (*Zeitschrift d. Deutsch-Ameri. Wirtschaft. Ver.*, December, 1929)...

The favorable German industrial conditions, to be made yet more favorable by the greater depression of the German working masses soon to follow, now attract all the capital that formerly went to the prosperity-promising American industry. This means an advanced internationalization of industrial capital and a firmer grip on the latter by world finance capital (Morgan and Co.). How this works out in Germany may be gathered from the growing dictatorial strength of Morgan's German representative, Hjalmar Schacht, the president of the Reichsbank. Herr Schacht is the man who tumbled *Hilferding* from his ministerial chair, because he was not far-reaching enough in his "reforms" and because, for reasons of political demagoguery, he didn't go in energetically for immediately carrying out these reforms. Schacht is also the leader in the movement for the "decommunalization" of Germany, i. e., for the abolition of communal expenditure. (An example of ringing success is Mr. Schacht's plans which were recently in Berlin, where the city council voted a Christmas surplus for the unemployed, which the magistrate, under Schacht's direction immediately repudiated.)

In German politics, the situation finds a mirror and barometer. The coalition government is nearing the end of its string. Its prospective collapse is on the order of the day. The national "Right" is in a deep crisis. Those elements backed by heavy industry, like the *Landbund* and *Stahlhelm*, are breaking way from the irreconcilable Rights around *Hugenburg* and *Hitler* and are going in for a policy of supporting the status quo of the republic, because "it is developing in a direction towards us". Even *Hitler* is willing to "listen to reason". His papers are full of praise for *Schacht*, and despite all their radicalism and sham "revolutionary socialism" they write that they are for such a payment of reparations as the "nation finds bearable."

The C. P. of Germany is thus facing a very serious but promising state of conditions. Its victory in the Berlin elections was a real one, all the more significant because the Party campaign program was altogether out of proportions to real affairs—to the "Left". It is no exaggeration to say that a considerable majority of the Berlin proletariat is behind the Party and places all its confidence in it. Whether the party will be able to hold this mass and increase it depends entirely upon how much sanity it will apply in its tactics in the trade unions and towards the increas-

ingly disillusioned workers who still follow the S. P. while discontent within the reformist organization is growing, while rebellion against the treacherous leadership is brewing.

As a whole, the party seems to have sobered a good deal lately. The calls to arms echo very faintly in the press today. In the trade unions as well as in the party itself, the stress is being laid on organizational work. But the ultra-Left tactic of "revolutionary" *kampfleitungen* (struggle leadership) and separate factory councils lists has not been given up and may still do it much harm. In many factories (e. g., *Ullstein*, *Simiens*) where the largest Communist nuclei exist, these nuclei have pitted themselves almost unanimously against the party tactic. In the question of "social fascism", the Communist workers have solved the problem in their own way. They explain to the S.P. workers in discussion that the word is applied only to the social democratic leaders, to the "comrade"-ministers, etc.

The campaign of terror which the authorities and the bourgeois press have been conducting for some time against the party and the militant sections of the class is taking on ever greater proportions. Falsification, slander and provocation fill the air. The revolutionary masses are increasingly aroused to counteract violently to this terror, and the party functionaries sweat blood to keep the people in check at demonstrations and public meetings. The party's effort to connect the active discontent of the unemployed with solidarity actions of the workers in the factories is to be applauded. But here too it will not do to restrict oneself to phrases alone.

On the occasion of initiating a formal "Stalin cult", the *Rote Fahne* has not overlooked any opportunities to make personal attacks upon comrade Trotsky. It is significant to note who the attackers are, and how they attack. *Heinz Neumann*, accused by the social democrats and the *Brandlerites* (without any refutation up-to-date) of being in close connection with the German police is the star—using the occasion of a review of *Willi Munzenburg's* latest book "Die Dritte Front". He pits *Munzenburg's* "collective" spirit against Trotsky's "gnawing egotism". This is just too ridiculous, even when we overlook the incongruity of the comparison. For, as you know, upon *Munzenburg's* head hang the following charges made by *Herzog*, the editor of *Das Forum*: breaking the foreign trade monopoly of the Soviet Union, speculating with goods sent to relieve the Russian famine in 1921, misappropriation of W. I. R. funds—all for personal purposes. As far as I know *Munzenburg* has not as yet made answer to these charges.

While *Willi* does a thriving business with his newspaper-concerns, and lives in princely luxury in his home at "In den Zelten," comrade Trotsky, the "egotist" lives the life of exile in backward Turkey, refused a visum by the rest of the planet. Perhaps *Heinz Neumann* will make us believe that this ban is due to nothing more than Trotsky's "gnawing egotism". The workers know better. They know that in Trotsky, the bourgeois world fears the personification of that "haunting specter" that is rocking the foundations of the capitalist system, of victorious Communism.

The *Brandlerites* have had considerable success lately—in a material way: they have finally begun to publish a daily which appears in Leipzig. In Berlin, their publications have to be sought for with a search-light.

How *Brandler* goes about in organizing his international faction may be seen from his article on the amalgamation of the three Czecho-Slovakian opportunist groups. *Brandler* was present on the scene of action. His role can only be imagined. He writes, among other things:

"Only when the united opposition applies the united front tactic wrongly will the confederation (amalgamation) be, not a step forward, but a retreat. But there is no occasion to assume this, despite (!) the false formula of 'class conscious parties' (referring to united front with the social democrats.—S. G. See last issue of *Militant*.—Ed.) in the unity resolution." (*Gegen den Strom*, No. 1, 1930.)

*Brandler* reprints *Lovestone's* articles on the International, which are only an echo of his own and *Roy's* articles. Where *Roy* writes: "It is unfortunate that the factional struggle in the C. P. S. U. lost such valuable revolutionaries as *Trotsky* for the movement", *Lovestone*, for his own purposes, substitutes *Zinoviev* for *Trotsky*, and *Brandler* adds a little note, remarking that after *Lenin's* death, *Zinoviev* never played an independent role in the International. A similar instance of "differences" is *Roy's* "polemic" against *Wolfe*, in which he criticizes the latter's theory that the resolutions of the Sixth Congress were correct, but were revised at the Tenth Plenum. Here too, the theory is made to fit "national" purposes.

I visited a *Brandler* meeting recently. *Brandler* gave a pretty accurate appraisal of conditions in Germany, from which there was much to learn. When he was asked in the discussion part how the Communist Party and the International came to be in such a position of impotence at present, he simply answered that this condition is due to the failure of the revolution to arrive in the rest of Europe and to the increasing difficulties in the building up of socialism in Russia. Almost in the form of asides, he remarked that the failure of the revolution in Germany in 1923 was due to the threat of the Entente to come to the aid of bourgeois Germany (!) and further: "Even the skilled leadership of *Marx* and *Engels* was not able to hold together the First International, built on centralized direction. Its decomposition showed that it is necessary that the proletariat of each country work out its own problems in the struggle for power." Berlin, January 10, 1930.

—S. GORDON

## Communist Injunctions. . . .

The 3rd period according to the 6th World Congress, represents a critical stage in the class struggle against capitalism. . . . great industrial strikes, increasing unemployment, growing crisis, etc. etc.

In Canada, beginning with Aug. 1, 1929, the shades of the Third Period were more visible than ever before. The Party had openly challenged the Toronto police force on the issue of freedom of the streets, free speech and assembly. Unfortunately, the failure of the Party to mobilize the masses had doomed the struggle almost from the beginning as to its possible success in forcing reactionary powers in Toronto to withdraw their edict making the revolutionary movement semi-illegal.

But in spite of the buoyant boasting and revolutionary chatter of the Party leadership the membership and working class were soon to be treated to the spectacle of a form of the class struggle of the A. F. of L. fakers. On Oct. 9, *Jack McDonald*, secretary of the C. P. of Canada, R. E. Knowles, Jr., a petty bourgeois liberal and J. W. Gill, a social democrat and petty bourgeois storekeeper filled and filed an injunction against the Toronto police force, for trying to suppress the class struggle.

But fortunately for the powers that be, the bourgeoisie remains as class conscious in the Third Period as they had been in the previous periods and the injunction was squashed. It would seem that the police had taught the Party leadership a lesson in the A B C of Communism but no. . . .

Another three months were hardly to elapse when *Rev. A. E. Smith*, secretary of the Canadian Labor Defense League and a Party leader, was to announce to a Convention of the Labor Circle, that at last the break in the fight for free speech had come. The police had prohibited the *Freiheit Singing Society* the use of a hall for a concert.

An application for injunction was once more filed against the police and again the courts of capitalism taught the party the same lesson they had taught them so short a while ago—the laws and constitution of a bourgeois state, are made to serve the interests of the capitalist class. Injunctions, even in the 3rd period, still remain a weapon in the hands of the capitalist class to suppress the workers and cannot be used as a substitute for the class struggle by the proletariat.

Toronto, January 21, 1930

—M. Q

To the Comintern as well as the Profintern, tactics consist in periodic zig-zags, and strategy—in the mechanical sum of zig-zags. That is why the proletarian vanguard suffers defeat after defeat. *Prinkipo*, December 22, 1929