

In Germany

The Menace of Fascism

BERLIN—

For several weeks the new government of the bourgeois bloc, the government of Brüning-Schiele-Treviranus has been in office. From the outset, it has placed itself under the sign of menacing dictatorship. It sought a parliamentary majority but it declared at the same time that if this majority were not forthcoming, it would not resign—but would govern without parliament.

During the twenty-one months when the social democracy had power in its hands, it prepared the ground for a stronger reaction; the bourgeois bloc took possession of the bloc which had been willed to it by the coalition—to carry out in a speedier and more brutal fashion that which the social democracy has begun: the throttling of the working class.

It was evident to every revolutionary Marxist that the social democratic coalition could only play the role of preparing the way. Nothing could be more false than the conception that the official Communist Party theoreticians defend nowadays after trying to rid themselves of the theory of social fascism. A leading article of the *International* (No. 7) says among other things that in the course of recent years every government has marked "one step further in the direction of the fascist development of Germany" and that consequently the "Muller government was obviously as reactionary a government as those which preceded it."

This mechanical conception has nothing in common with Marxism and completely disregards the development of the class struggle which is full of contradictions.

Why did the bourgeoisie, which called the Socialist party to the government after the elections of 1928 so brutally dismiss its "socialist" domestics in 1930?

The Communist Party and the Leftward Movement

The bourgeois government bloc suffered a mark defeat in 1928 in the Reichstag elections. The piratical tariff policy and the reactionary social policy, the brutal measures of capitalist rationalization had set the masses in motion. About a million and a half petty-bourgeois, workers and medium and poor peasants turned from the Right to the Left wing of the bourgeoisie, towards the social democracy, which increased its vote from 7,881,000 to 9,151,000 votes. Half a million workers abandoned reformism and the open bourgeois camp, to go to the Communist Party whose vote increased from 2,700,000 to 3,260,000. The years 1927 and 1928 witnessed an increasing activity of the masses. To stop the development to the Left and to bring confusion to the masses, to disintegrate their elan—that was the function of the coalition. Today after nearly two years one must admit that the bourgeoisie has largely attained its object. Despite as reactionary a policy as possible in nearly every field, the social democracy succeeded in putting a brake on the militancy of the masses.

With the aid of the Young Plan it succeeded in sowing illusions inside the proletariat. And as the Communist Party did not know how to lead the masses into struggle step by step, nor to organize them by the revolutionary application of the tactics of the united front, no real struggle was developed against the Young Plan against the capitalist offensive, and as the Left current of 1928 did not develop further, no real mass desertion of the

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Spanish Left Organ Appears

The *Militant* is glad to report that the Spanish section of the *International Left Opposition* has just been able to establish an organ of its own under the name of "Against the Current". It is to begin as a semi-monthly and will aim to become a weekly.

The situation in Spain, with the prevailing ferment among the workers and peasants following the end of the Primo de Rivera regime is favorable. The Opposition has already made gratifying gains in the fight to win the masses for the revolutionary line against the Stalin faction which has control of the Party apparatus. Our warmest fraternal greetings to our Spanish comrades.

workers from the social democracy to the Communist Party took place.

Tricked by the social democracy, repelled by the Communist Party's politics of bluff, the bombastic phrasemongering which held sway over the Wedding Congress of the Party, great masses of class conscious workers sank into apathy and indifference, tens of thousands have been lured over into the camp of the fascists. The anger, the discontent and even the revolutionary hatred of the social democratic party have grown among the masses but at the same time confidence in the leadership and slogans of the Communist Party, in the political correctness of its line in the immediate struggles, has waned.

The bourgeoisie is well aware of this change in the outlook of the masses. Today the bourgeoisie fears incomparably less than in 1928 the development of a revolutionary movement against its domination.

The Bourgeoisie Dismisses the Social Democracy

That is why the preparatory role of the social democracy has come to its close; the bourgeoisie feel it can now reach its ends without the direct aid of the socialist party. The party was shown the

door. After the abrupt attack of Schacht against Hilferding (December, 1929) the end of the coalition was only a matter of weeks....

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The new bourgeois bloc (Brüning-Schiele-Treviranus) is by its very nature a transitional regime. With its left foot it supports itself on the parliamentary regime with its right foot it rests on the open dictatorship. If contrary to all predictions, the resistance of the masses against the regime of the bourgeois bloc should become too strong, the road to a new coalition would not be barred. The transition to such a regime as exists in Thuringia—parliamentary in its externals and fascist in its essence—is quite within the realm of possibilities. What is least likely is that the bourgeoisie will at the present time openly instal a fascist regime, letting the parliamentary mask fall. The legal and semi-legal possibilities are not yet exhausted, the class struggle in Germany has not yet taken on that form which compels the bourgeoisie to renounce the advantages of parliamentarism.

The traditional character of the present regime reflects the profound crisis in which bourgeois democracy finds itself in Germany. The crisis in all the bourgeois parties is the expression of the same phenomenon: but the crisis of bourgeois democracy itself is only the external expression of the crisis of the capitalist social order. The solution of this crisis will depend on the further development of the class struggle in Germany. —K. L.

Discussion

Communism and the Negro Problem

The *Militant* welcomes membership discussion on all the basic problems of the Communist movement. We do not regard leading committees as the sole repositories of all the wisdom of Marxism and Leninism. What is called the Negro problem especially is one that will bear a good deal of thorough study and discussion. The easiest line of approach would be to repeat some glib formula.

Discussion articles on this or other questions of Communist theory and strategy should be as brief and to the point as possible in view of our limited space. —Editors

Philadelphia, Pa.

Editors, the *Militant*:

Some time ago I heard a member of the Communist Party, Ben Thomas, state in a lecture that the Negro should be given autonomy, and that in such districts where the Negro is in a majority, a Negro Soviet Republic should be set up. My reaction to this was strongly in Opposition. It seemed to me that this was a purely mechanical attempt to introduce European, African or Asiatic conditions into America. I am not afraid of being nailed as an "exceptionalist" when I state that the American Negro Problem is an American problem and must be solved on the basis of actual conditions in America. That it cannot be solved with any transplanted formula.

What is the situation here? Is the Negro a National Minority, in the European sense? Has he a culture, or a language that is different from the American people?

Most emphatically no! The American Negro is integrally a part of the American working class and any attempt to segregate him is absolutely wrong. The Communist movement should bend every effort to eradicate every tendency in that direction.

What the Negro needs is class consciousness, not race consciousness.

Bourgeois Negroes are themselves trying to build up race consciousness, shouting for race interests. They desire that the Negro should be segregated into separate schools, in order that Negro daughters should have opportunities to become schoolteachers. They want Negroes to patronize Negro doctors, dentists, merchants, bankers, etc... Why? For the particular advancement of the Negro professions, etc.

The Communist movement should avoid this pitfall. Every effort to segregate the Negro should be fought. Negro girls should not teach Negro children, they should, when qualified as teachers teach any school, no consideration of their race or color should be given. Negro children should go to schools in the districts in which they live, there should be no Negro schools.

There should be no Negro labor unions. Workers should unite! Marx was not wrong when he said, Workers of all lands.

Unite!

When the American Civil War occurred, Marx was strongly for the Northern cause and supported Abraham Lincoln. He saw that part of the American working class was still under chattel slavery. Their color was not a factor. Today the whole American working class is under wage slavery and color is not a factor.

The finest way in the world to play into the hands of the Southern bourgeoisie is to talk about Negro Soviets. They will immediately translate this into Negro dominance, and with this slogan they can alienate the Southern whites of the working class.

Segregation even when apparently for the good of the Negro is wrong.

Our policy should be to knit closely together all workers, black and white, native and foreign.

There is no physiological or biological race hatred. Race prejudices are purely social and economic. I was raised in Washington, D. C. and Virginia. I know that as kids we white and black children associated freely and without prejudice. It was only later, when we realized that the Negro had a lower position, lower even than our own as "Poor White Trash", that we developed a superiority complex. White and blacks in the South would mingle freely if permitted. In fact they do in such lowly circles as bootleggers, prostitutes, etc. where they feel that there is nothing to lose. Only social advantages draw the color line. Communists are not snobs, our base is the workers, and on this base we can and must build up a united front of the earth's exploited.

In the South our soviets must be built up from the workers, black, white and mixed. If the official Party fosters such wrong ideas of Negro segregation we should fight it.

Summing up then let me state:

No national minorities exist in the United States. Any efforts to transplant a foreign culture, Negro, Jewish, Polish, European or what not, should be vigorously combatted. There is one American working class, and it works only to the interest of the Ruling Class when efforts are made to differentiate between the workers.

Particularly the Negro has no separate interests. He is not a foreigner. He is American for many generations. He has no national culture. Russians may be interested in Russia, Poles in Poland, Jews in Jerusalem, but the Negro is interested in America. He is American. Garvey is doing all he can to manufacture an artificial background for the Negro in Africa. Let us be careful to avoid such nonsense.

Fraternally,

—K. M. WHITTEN

* I mean bootleggers in the Southern sense, who sold drinks out of a bottle in a small way, not our modern capitalist "Al Canons" type.

LOVESTONE'S «AMERICANISM»

Nowadays nobody with eyes in his head can mistake the sorry role that Lovestone and his faction are playing in the Communist movement. Years ago his opportunistic ideas could always find shelter under the protecting arm of Stalin's Comintern; today he must shiver in the rain of criticism. To illustrate this I will point out several things which occurred at a youth meeting held by the Lovestone group in the Grand Opera House last week.

About fifteen people attended this meeting. The audience was mainly composed of Lovestoneites, a few League members and a stool pigeon of the Y. C. L. sent there to report the League members foolish enough to think they could attend any meeting but their own. The reporter of the evening was Will Herberg. He gave a fairly accurate representation of the situation in the Party. Any half-way educated Communist can see the countless mistakes and false policies of the leadership and the impasse into which they have led the C. I. But when he tried to analyze the causes at the bottom of this crisis and to estimate the work and value of the Left Opposition he got himself into an awful mess. His only attempt to discuss the questions the Opposition has raised was on the problem of Thermidor. Firstly he drew an utterly false picture of no unity of opinion among the forces of the Left Opposition on this question. Some, he said, believed that Thermidor was already accomplished, others that it was on its way and still others didn't believe in it at all.

The first view (that Thermidor is already accomplished in the Soviet Union) is held by Urbahns, he maintained. And then, like a typically bankrupt politician he attacked this view as the one of the Opposition. This he succeeded in doing, since it doesn't take much brains to expose as erroneous a theory like this one. But he didn't dare attack the official viewpoint of

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The Role of American Imperialism

Every estimate of the present situation must proceed from the fact that the world center of economic gravity has shifted to the United States. American imperialism now levies tribute from practically all the capitalist countries of the world. This development which has risen to its height in the period after the world war, has bound up the fate of American imperialism with the economy of the whole world in an inextricable form. No analysis of its future economic course, internally as well as externally, can be made without a consideration of its international position.

The effect of America's direct intervention in European affairs after the war was the temporary, partial stabilization of European capitalism. This stabilization occurred in direct connection with the defeat of the German proletariat in 1923 and resulted in the consolidation of social democracy for the time. In turn it enabled the United States to avoid the convulsions that would have affected it inevitably in the event of the development of the revolutionary wave in Europe.

The United States has expanded its productive capacity which has brought about a further contraction of markets for European capitalism and consequently a contraction of the European market itself. The post-war chaos of Europe has made it impossible for the debtors of that continent to present a sufficiently consolidated united front to which they are inclined. The very strength and expansion of American imperialism has laid the foundation for the most violent struggles in Europe and in the colonial countries. The European powers must fight among themselves for a larger ration in world economy, and against the United States for the same reason. The pacifist effect which American intervention had upon the European situation in the beginning is now being transformed by the process of development into a revolutionizing effect. American imperialism is now beginning to look for a solution of its own approaching internal convulsions at the expense of Europe, and primarily of Germany, and increased exploitation and imperialist raids on Latin America and China.

— FROM THE PLATFORM OF THE COMMUNIST OPPOSITION ADOPTED (CHICAGO) MAY 20, 1929.