

IN THE INTERNATIONAL OF LABOR

Reviews and News of the Working Class and Revolutionary Movements

Two Social Democratic Congresses: The Collapse of the 'Lefts'

The French Socialists and National Defense

PARIS.—The socialists have returned to Tours, ten years after the convention at which the workers drove them out of the party. The "dissidents" of yesterday, who began with 15,000, today boast in their bulletin of a victory full of dangers for the proletarian movement: 130,000 members, 126 members of parliament, 1,100 local mayors. Against whom do the party politicians brandish these figures? With great joy, Paul Faure proclaimed at the meeting: "In Sweden, the socialists obtained 43 percent of the votes, the Communists—1 percent."

The convention precedes the great "consultation" of 1932 at which the socialists expect to gain power through the electoral committees. But in reality, the politicians are preparing their batteries behind the scenes of parliamentary strategy. The principal feature of the conference was the academic resolution on the National Defense.

Tours 1920 and Tours, 1930. After an interval of ten years, the capital question that has served as an historic touchstone for the revolutionary movement, is once again up for debate. But ten years ago at the conclusion of the hideous massacre, the revolutionary workers under the guidance of the Third International arose against the betrayal of the socialist politicians. Whereas in 1930, after the collapse of the Second International, after the years of the great butchery, and after the creation of the Communist party they have returned to Tours to debate the very question that caused their downfall and their betrayal.

To what purpose? Louis Levy posed the question. "What can you decide now that was not decided at Stuttgart before the war?" Indeed, the Stuttgart motion and the amendments by Lenin and Rosa Luxemburg, calling for struggle for the downfall of the régime in case of war, still remain excellent texts today. But the socialist politicians already stood the test of putting it into effect in August 1914. Under the present conditions, they can repeat a second time. "Why make believe that the party of Marx," added Levy, "is capable only of debating to distraction in vague and uncertain terms?"

Today this economical solution can no longer prevail. Precisely because the socialist party must answer today and tomorrow the vague and uncertain preoccupations of the workers who are not concerned merely with the distribution of posts—and because a large national reform party, arisen from the working class after the existence of revolutionary proletarian parties, must needs adjust its ideological baggage.

Working class action was absent from the agenda of the debates. This point was sensed by Dumoulin, cleverer than the rest. "No one has mentioned the thirty million unemployed." In the texts presented by three principals and the two extreme tendencies, there were opposing formulations. Renardel said at the convention: "This defense of the country has been confirmed by the party", and Lagorgette declared: "Our slogan is the transformation of the capitalist war into a war of liberation." But he pronounced himself in favor of drawing up a unity motion and expressed his belief that a unanimous resolution is quite possible for international action.

In reality, the positions of the speakers all converged toward "pacifism through the extension of our organizational work". Within this framework of vague concepts, the socialist party is reserving for itself its "freedom of action". Twelve years after the war, not a single voice was raised to demand guarantees, to impose the control of the workers, to revolt against the fact that the party is in the hands of those who betrayed the working class into the hands of the imperialist butchers.

This "common fund"—far more important than all the formulas borrowed by Paul Faure from Austro-Marxism—became even more apparent by a series of embraces between Right and "Left" which shows that all the tendencies are staking everything on the 1932 elections. Therefore the exonerations of the seven deputies who voted for confidence in the Laval cabinet; the authorization of the *Populaire* to carry financial advertisements; the silence on President Boulestin; on Paul Boncour, despite his rabid manifestations of chauvinism; only one vote against the political report, etc.

These may be the perspectives of the socialist politicians, but all the objective factors, with which the "party of Marx" did not preoccupy itself; the economic unrest, the European crisis, the critical situation of the German régime, the Spanish revolution—regarded not as the "liberation of the socialists" today but as the emancipation of the working class of tomorrow—and the great working class movements like those which have already broken out three times in one year in the North, will interfere with the perspective of this convention.

Even on this same question of imperialist war, the voice of the workers forced by the crisis to face the realities of the class struggle, did not make itself heard at the Tours convention. That is for its vigor and for its strength

action against the enemy class. In the period which has just begun, in which the proletariat experiences the sharpest and most direct antagonisms between the opposing classes, the differentiation of the troops still held captive by the reformists in the service of the bourgeoisie depends upon the positive actions of the Communist party, its ability to reach the masses and to share the experience of the struggle with them.

In order to wrest them away, more is needed than the ritualistic conclusion of Bonté's articles (in *l'Humanité*). "Therefore, all honest socialist workers, draw your conclusions . . . Desert the social democracy, this rampart in the army of world imperialism." Nor the progress which he makes all by himself, twenty-four hours afterwards: "The socialist workers will not be deceived . . . They will desert the S. F. I. O. [French section of the Second International] the agents of the bourgeoisie." The theory of social fascism even in the modified form given it by the XI Plenum, will hardly be a better weapon.

At the present moment while the struggle of 120,000 textile workers is going on, the Communist party and the Red unions must wrest away the workers who are already engaged in struggle from the influence of the reformists, and along with them, from the social democracy, by the application of a broad and realizable united front policy. This will be the first effective answer to the dangers represented by the pacifist and bourgeois democratic politicians of the party of Noske and Paul Boncour against the working class, in time of peace as well as in time of war.

—LA VERITE.

* A dispatch from Paris on June 5, reports that in the last issue of the periodical *La Vie Socialiste*, Renaudel and 25 socialist parliamentarians renounced even this compromise resolution. In their declaration they say "When it becomes a question of protecting the independence and the boundaries of France, the socialists will also be prepared to vote for war credits." This is the real picture of the "socialist unanimity" of Blum Paul Faure and Co.—Ed.

League Activities

Two of our very active New York comrades, Tom Stamm and George Clarke have established their domicile in Cleveland where they are working to build the Left Opposition. Despite the fact that we have many good supporters in that city we have not had a functioning branch of the League. That prospect is very good for such a step is apparent from the reports of the two comrades. The *Militant* and our general literature is being received eagerly and new contacts are already gained. We know that these two comrades will spare no effort to build the movement on a substantial basis. They are now conducting regular open air meetings and we know we will be confirmed in our expectations for Cleveland.

Street meetings are also being conducted regularly by the branches in New York, Chicago and Minneapolis. In the two first-mentioned cities the audiences often run into several hundred, and while it cannot entirely be termed a steady audience, nevertheless the results in literature sales and contacts gained have been very gratifying.

George Saul is putting in a busy week doing organization work in Philadelphia. His immediate efforts are concentrated in helping to build up a defense movement for our comrades Morgenstern and Goodman who are now on trial for sedition. The complete failure of the I. L. D. to lift as much as a finger to take up the defense of these two class war prisoners made it necessary for our League branch there to establish its own defense committee. The case itself and the open sabotage by the I. L. D. is described elsewhere in this issue. Suffice it here to emphasize that our branches everywhere as well as the working class in general will be called upon by the Philadelphia defense committee to lend their most active support in every way to collect contributions to help wrest these victims out of the hands of capitalist class justice.

Our St. Louis branch has overcome its period of lethargy which obtained some time ago. It is now taking up active work and soon we expect to be able to report progress. The Boston branch organized a lecture for comrade Cannon on June 7. The sixty workers present discussed very seriously the problems of the American revolution taken up by the speaker. Systematic educational activities of this character, which is one very important aspect of the revolutionary movement, is gaining valuable contacts. In Boston, it has so far been expressed mainly in very favorably and extensive circulation for our literature. Our members there are consciously utilizing every such opportunity in addition to their active functioning in the very

The Sanction of Betrayal at Leipzig

At the beginning of June, the Social Democratic Party of Germany held its convention at Leipzig. Like the convention of the French socialists meeting simultaneously at Tours, it was a manifestation of the crassest sort of parliamentary cretinism. The actual problems confronting the German proletariat were painfully avoided. All the sessions were occupied in the main with inner party machinations.

The organizational report presents us with a picture of a big reform party, strengthened and consolidated in the years of revolutionary ebb, on the back of the disastrous defeat of the proletarian upsurge in 1923—and at the cost of the vacillating, adventurist policies of Stalinist centrism. A party one million strong, and what is for us even of greater import, proletarian to the extent of 50 percent of its composition. This great, organized proletarian mass is a decisive factor in the German class struggle and one with which the Communists must reckon. During the period of reaction, the defeated, scattered proletariat has been able to slowly collect its forces again, to rebuild its political and trade union organizations. Fatigued by the heavy defeat the working class was open largely to a reformist ideology, to contentment with wresting away mere crumbs from the table of the resuscitated and rehabilitated bourgeoisie. The social democracy took advantage of the situation.

Today the bourgeoisie is once again gripped by a crisis. The "generous" American imperialists who gave it a helping hand in 1924, are themselves in the midst of an economic debacle, the Hoover "moratorium" does not enjoy the support of France, herself facing a growing economic slump, as did the Dawes plan. The German bourgeoisie is on the offensive against the workers. It is trying to hold itself erect by taking it out on the bodies of the proletarians. Social legislation, the puny gains of the workers in long years of patient, tenacious struggle is slashed out of existence under the knife of the ruthless capitalist class. For the workers it is no longer a question of "snatching crumbs", but of retaining them. And this desperate defensive fight is inseparably bound up with the struggle for existence itself. The social democrats by their entire "policy of tolerance" toward the reactionary, anti-working class Brüning government are playing their customary role of ignominious treachery against the workers who follow it. What is this policy based on? Every concession must be made to Brüning so as to avoid the onslaught of fascism! In order to avoid the institution of a formally fascist government, every act that directly prepares and paves the road for a victorious, unresisted fascist overturn, is sanctioned. The class consciousness of the workers is lulled to sleep, the rising spirit of class revolt dampened. The Leipzig convention indirectly, but with an overwhelming majority approved this policy of stabbing the working class in the back.

The social democracy itself is slipping down more and more from its shamefully gotten government posts. Brüning is extending the government base to the extreme Right. But the socialists are still cowardly exerting every effort to keep their workers back from open resistance. Brüning cuts and slashes the last vestiges of working class legislation. The socialists are behind him. Brüning instead, uses the budget for the construction of armored cruisers. The socialists give their acquiescence. Now, an entire party convention is devoted to chastising the nine "Left" social democratic deputies who refused to vote for the armored cruiser "B", because they see the influence of the "party" damaged by this act in the eyes of the workers. And here even "the nine" capitulate. "The unity of the party must be preserved at all costs! Unity for what? Unity in the attempt to uphold the crumbling capitalist régime, to act as "physicians to the sick bourgeoisie", as Tar-now declared in the main report before the convention. "Is the working class prepared for struggle?", asked one of the delegates. He was answered with a thunderous roar of yes. Then why all this cautiousness? Why all this fear of struggle? Because the proletariat in struggle spells the bankruptcy of the social democracy and the conciliation of the proletarian mass with the Communist vanguard.

The social democratic mass is fermenting with revolt. The working masses are no longer inclined to suffer the abuses of the hostile government. The latest "Emergency Decree" of the Brüning government was met with volleys of stormy protest from every section of the country. The more enlightened bourgeoisie realize its danger. Thus, the Berliner *Tageblatt* pathetically appeals to the great "stable party of the German citizenry" to cease its policy of tolerating the Brüning government to head off the tempestuous revolt of the masses. But the social democratic lackeys are even more reactionary than these layers of the bourgeoisie, they are determined to go to the last ditch—for their capital-

Already the rebellion within the very ranks of the social democracy itself is deepening. While the convention was in session at Leipzig, the former Reichstag deputy Jacobshagen and numerous local groups of social democrats and social democratic youth declared their adherence to the Communist party. In the galleries of the convention hall at Leipzig, the voice of the social democratic rank and file made itself heard more than once, in the almost unanimous applause for the isolated delegates of the extreme Left, in the cheers at the mention of the Soviet Union, etc. The social democratic workers will not tolerate the treacherous, kowtowing passivity of their leaders much longer. Their last conquests are being wiped out by the government of fascist preparation. Unemployment insurance cut in half. The burden of taxes heaped higher on the workers' backs. The Scheele Wheat Laws make the cost of living unbearable. Democratic rights are summarily suspended with the full collaboration of the social democratic police commissioners. At Leipzig, the S. P. fell victim to a decree against demonstrations promulgated by their "own" police commissioner, Fleissner. Against all this, the social democratic workers are prepared to fight with the rest of their class, despite and, in due time, even against their ignoble leaders.

The way to unite all workers in common struggle lies in the united front under the leadership of the Communist party. The social democratic workers cannot be won over for united struggle by Thaelmann's denunciation of their leaders as social fascists, nor by empty appeals to break with Breitscheid, Wels and Co., to join the C. P. G. They can and will be convinced of the correctness of the Communist positions, and lined up for the red front of proletarian victory, by united action against the outrageous decrees of the Brüning government, by united struggle against wage reductions and for economic collaboration with the U. S. S. R. Up to the present the Communist party, hampered by its centrist baggage, has been unable to take full advantage of this promising situation. The sooner the German Communists rid themselves of their confused and vacillating Stalinist leadership, with their slogans of "national liberation" and the "people's revolution", with their theories of "social fascism" and their splitting tactics in the trade unions the quicker will the mass of workers still under the influence of the social democracy be liberated from it, the quicker will they become attached to the Communist vanguard, the quicker will the road be cleared of all reformist obstacles for the victorious upsurge of the proletarian revolution.

—S. GORDON.

The Provisional Government in Action

On Monday, May 11 a general strike was declared in Madrid by the C. N. T. [Anarcho-syndicalist trade union center]. The U. G. T. [General Workers Union], the reformist organization of the Labor minister, Largo Caballero, was against the strike, which was declared in spite of the reformists, through the solidarity with the victims of the working people of Madrid in the clashes with the monarchists on May 10, after a meeting of followers of the king who was expelled from Spain by the people and in a demonstration against the reactionary daily, the "A. B. C."

The Madrid people arose against the government of Maura and Alcalá Zamora who showed exceptional tolerance toward the monarchists while continuing the policy of anti-working class repression of the previous governments. The minister of the Interior, Maura, proved himself a violent enemy of the revolution. It was he, who gave the monarchists the permit to demonstrate. He it was, also, who ordered to fire against the proletariat demanding work and bread, at Bilbao Sevilla, etc.

The liberation of Berenguer, the general responsible for the disaster of Morocco in 1921, the second dictator, the vicious reactionary who executed Galán and García Hernández, the same Berenguer who most violently applied dictatorship and repression against the proletariat in order to save the crumbling monarchist régime, has greatly outraged the people of Madrid and of all Spain. In such a situation, the strike of Monday May 11, took place at Madrid, amid the greatest excitement. The people of Madrid hurled itself en masse against the clergy, burning the churches and the convents and stressing with these actions the tasks concerning the "responsibles", forgotten by the government of the republicans and the socialists. After their ascendancy to power they have forgotten those responsible for the past and the clergy continues to exist under favorable conditions even with the republican régime: Cardinal Segura has been permitted to carry on a struggle against the Republic. It must not be forgotten that Messrs. Maura and Alcalá Zamora are fervent Catholics.

To be sure, the people has given the government a serious warning and the latter has been forced to take the greatest measures of precaution and even to arrest several monarchists. But most of Alfonso's followers have already been set free, secretly and unobserved. First however, M. Maura and some of the governmental organs started a violent campaign against the Communists and accused them of making a bloc with the monarchists. It is true that reaction against the Communists became manifest in a large measure and that to a certain degree, the people believed the news of the press. A sentiment of hostility arose against the Communists, the government profiting by it to begin persecutions of Communists, especially

in Madrid, where fifty were arrested outside of the Monarchists, who were the real provocateurs.

The provisional government has been committing arbitrary acts, far more scandalous than those of the Primo de Rivera dictatorship; Primo, at least always manifested his reactionary character openly, without hiding anything. He made governmental arrests and called them such. But the government of the Republic arrests Communists without any legal grounds, in spite of the law, in spite of "republican democracy", and throws them into the prisons, maintaining all along—the Director of Public Safety (Police) is speaking—that "there are no grounds for arrests some are due to mistakes on part of the police". But Madrid was in a state of martial law and the military judge tried very hard to find something to stage a trial against the Communists—without success. After the state of martial law was lifted, the judge had to acquit all the prisoners, but then, the same director of Public Safety, the "very democratic" Radical-Socialist, M. Galarza, one of those who protested most loudly against arbitrary arrests when he was a prisoner of Berenguer, forgetting all these declarations arbitrarily kept the Communists of Madrid imprisoned. This is the point of departure toward the scandalous and criminal illegality resumed by the republican government in the same place and with even greater violence than the former reactionary government.

Spain is approaching constituent elections and the republicans are determined to get rid of the Communists and the revolutionary workers even before the elections.

The official Spanish Communist Party is always ready to commit stupidities without taking into account the situation, without considering the existing revolutionary opportunities, which are very favorable for the creation of a Communist party capable of organizing the working class for the seizure of power. But the official bureaucracy no longer lives in the domain of revolutionary reality. They forget that the party does not exist, that it must be organized, that Soviets have not yet been formed. The party leadership issues empty slogans "for the immediate insurrection", without a party, without Soviets, without a working class prepared for the struggle. The Spanish "Leninists" of the "third period" have forgotten the teachings of Lenin during the struggles in July 1917 at Petrograd. The irresponsible bureaucracy of the C. P. S. is very "capable" of playing at insurrection—contrary to the teachings of Lenin—but not of making the revolution.

The Left Opposition has a great task to fulfill and is already actively engaged working with all its forces to succeed. Madrid, Solitary Prison, May 21, 1933

—H. LACHOIX.

* Leaders of the popular military revolt at Jaca, last December.—Ed.

Organization Notes

Our Subscription Campaign With this issue the special subscription campaign comes to a close. Although the results show a steady upward climb on our mailing list, both for individual subscriptions and for bundle sales during the period, they have not been as great as they should be. The Chicago branch heads the list with 44 subscriptions to its credit. It wins the first prize. The New York branch comes next with 37 subs to its credit entitling it to the second prize. Third is the Minneapolis branch with 22 subscriptions to its credit. The St. Louis branch turned in 23 subs but at the time of closing had not entirely completed the payments.

We are in this tabulation counting only actual completed subscriptions and the total results would indeed look very modest if it had not been for the fact that a good portion, the most substantial portion, is made up by many subs coming in direct through individual efforts of supporters and readers scattered throughout the country. There has, of course been the great difficulty in the way that the subscription campaign was conducted during the period of the semi-monthly appearance of the *Militant*. This counts against the past but very much in favor of the future. Therefore while this stage of our subscription drive is closed we should now be able to begin anew, and begin on a much more favorable basis. We have reason to believe that all our comrades and supporters will now, with the *Weekly* actually in existence, undertake in a systematic manner the continuous extension of the circulation of the *Militant*. It can be done by renewing the expired subscriptions, by obtaining new subscriptions, by building up newstand sales and by increasing the present bundle order sales.

Our Program of Expansion Campaign With this issue the second step of our Expansion Program has become a reality. First we established the Pioneer Publishers, now the *Weekly Militant* is here. Although we were by July first a few dollars short of the stipulated sum of \$1,000 collected on the expansion program we can nevertheless say that we have succeeded through the splendid efforts of our comrades and supporters.

On the financial aspect of this program some branches have not responded as well. For example the contributions from Chicago and from Toronto have been rather small. We do not believe that the possibilities in these two cities have been particularly restricted, but rather that they have not been followed up so well. There are yet quite a good number of pledges which have been made for the Expansion Program which should be collected either immediately or in installments whichever basis was provided for. And that is true not only in Chicago and Toronto but also elsewhere. There are undoubtedly still some sympathetic supporters who could be visited and additional sums secured. Now we have also issued regular contribution lists for the *Weekly Militant* which should be used to pick up small change from any worker willing to give support. A systematic effort in this respect, with every comrade participating, can become a substantial help. The sums turned in on these lists will also be credited to the branches as their part in the Expansion Program since it is already such a part by virtue of being for the establishment of the *Weekly*. With the accomplishments already recorded, although modest, but a real accomplishment for a small revolutionary group, we have all reason to feel confident that we can proceed quite rapidly to the next step which is to be realized with the collections reaching \$1,500. In

speaking of the further steps it should not be overlooked that the program, which was really reserved for the final goal of the program, that is the building of a staff, is already also on the way to accomplishment.

	2,000—	
New York (Cannon)	\$1.00	
New York (E. Goodstein)	28.00	
New York (Hoffman)	5.00	
New York (Capela)	2.00	
New York (Friedman)	1.00	1,500—
Los Angeles	.50	
New York (Berman)	10.00	1,250—
New York (S. C.)	2.00	
Boston	20.00	
New York (Feldman)	.50	1,000—
New Haven	5.00	
Pittsburgh	3.80	750—
New York (Lewitt)	5.00	
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250—	901.50	
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