

IN THE INTERNATIONAL OF LABOR

Reviews and News of the Working Class and Revolutionary Movements

GERMANY

Communist Suppression

The financial crisis in Germany has continued to become more acute in the last week. In spite of all the measures (closing of the Exchange, restriction of bankers' activity, etc.) new crashes have taken place. The National Bank of the Rhine Provinces and the Shreider Bank of Bremen have gone bankrupt. Both are banks of great importance. There is no doubt that the crushing of the Danat Bank will involve the bankruptcy of other banks.

The hope of the German bourgeoisie in a prompt assistance on the part of America, England and France, under the form of a large loan, has not yet been realized. The trips of Curtius and Bruening to Paris and to the London conference yielded only meager results and it is only now that the question of aid to Germany is posed effectively at the same time as the guarantees which Germany can give in exchange. It is clear that it is not a question of guarantees of security.

The Hoover moratorium was undoubtedly a victory for the German bourgeoisie, while for France it was the beginning of the liquidation of the reparations and of the Versailles Treaty. The French bourgeoisie knew that it would be compelled to capitulate before American capitalism in the question of the moratorium. But at the same time it knew that Germany is on the threshold of financial collapse and that the prolongation of the parleys is putting the German bourgeoisie into a difficult position. It is now seeking through the lips of its representative, Laval, to exploit the situation in Germany to repulse the demand of German imperialism which looks, in the first place, towards the suppression of the reparations and the Versailles Treaty. It demands guarantees in order to have the possibility of keeping in leash the imperialist appetite of the German bourgeoisie. The success of all these plans of the French bourgeoisie depends above all on the position of America and England. It is nevertheless clear that the German bourgeoisie will be compelled to capitulate, entirely or in part.

In spite of all the decrees of the Bruening government, the state of industry has again become worse. Every day, they proceed to new closing down of factories and the discharge of workers and employees. Almost the whole textile industry of Saxony has closed its factories, not having the possibility of procuring the necessary raw materials from England with the present mark. The car shops at Verdau (Saxony) have closed at the same time that Krupp has shut down part of its shops together with Ford who did the same in his new factory at Cologne. It is probable that if the situation does not change, these measures will take on unimaginable forms and the army of four millions of unemployed existing today will be increased by a new mass of jobless. The need of paying social insurance to new hundreds of thousands will render the financial situation still worse.

The crisis in German capitalist economy has now attained its highest point. The collapse of the banks and the financial situation will certainly evoke industrial collapses on a greater scale. The productive apparatus of German economy cannot be maintained upon the basis of world economy with its present capacity and scope. It will be obliged to retrench. Even if the large loans succeed the situation will not change much by this fact, and the situation obtaining before the crashes will not be re-established.

Unemployment will increase in the future. One can also foresee great struggles; what will be the results? This will depend above all upon the attitude of the masses and the policy of our party. The bourgeoisie is preparing for this; it has begun by a widespread attack upon the proletarian press.

ABOLITION OF PRESS FREEDOM

On July 17, the new decree against political excesses went into effect. This decree is in actuality the abolition of the freedom of the press in Germany. Of the Weimar constitution, there now remains not a trace so far as the freedom of the press is concerned.

Even the Berliner Tageblatt is compelled to speak out a few harsh truths on

the subject of these decrees. In its evening edition No. 365, it says: "The right to express freely one's opinion is today practically abolished in Germany."

And every new article, every position of principle is threatened with the confiscation of the paper; it is clear that all these measures are in the first place directed against the Communist press. Even if the leaders of the German socialist party defend this decree under the pretext that it is directed against the Fascist press, every German worker knows that, in fact, it is aimed at the revolutionary proletariat and only at it. With the aid of this decree, the bourgeoisie succeeds in stifling for a long time the Communist press and by systematic prohibitions to destroy it completely.

And the offensive of the bourgeoisie finds no resistance for the moment. The fight between the police and the workers at Gelsenkirchen and Essen, at Leipzig, Trier, etc., are still isolated incidents and touch only a small part of the proletariat. These struggles can have importance, but they are not struggles of the masses of the German proletariat against the policy of dictatorship and hunger of the Bruening government and of the German bourgeoisie. If the situation is such, the fault lies with the Centrist leadership. But there is still time. The favorable situation in Germany has not yet passed. A winter of great class struggles is still before us. The future development will depend upon the fighting capacity of the party. A radical change of its policy on the basis of the tactic of the united front is the indispensable pre-condition for it.

To the extent that our party draws closer to the social democratic workers, it will also draw closer to the seizure of power. —ROMAN WELL.

The Bankruptcy of British Stalinism

The British Scene

On the shoulders of European revolutions England for decades consolidated her progressive development into an ever more powerful imperialist power. But her position as world's banker is now witnessing its eclipse. Her capitalist economy is afflicted with the illness of decay. Her statesmen, those who are capitalist in name and those who are labor in name, are at this present moment endeavoring to pool their resources to overcome the much feared economic disaster and to save the proud mother of the capitalist empires from the humiliation of a Hoover moratorium for England. England's present development is toward a revolutionary situation at an accelerated tempo.

However, so long that the British Communist Party remains what is tantamount to an impotent, isolated sect the situation is not so hopeless for the British bourgeoisie. However, it follows that to get the Communist Party out of its present stagnation is an imperative task. But to this task, its Centrist leadership does not at all measure up.

The disillusionment of two years of the "labor" government, the innumerable betrayals of the reactionary labor leaders, the growing discontent with unemployment and a constantly reduced standard of living, are preparing the working masses for motion. A point has already been reached where in situations of labor conflicts these leaders speak to empty halls or meet loud protests. Even

the imperialist agents in the Trade Union Council, sensing the danger, have on two occasions come out in criticism of the "labor" government. It protested the government attitude to the report of the Royal Commission on Unemployment; it protested the liberal-labor agreement to the bill of repeal of the anti-trade union act. But these are merely the efforts to construct if possible a safety valve for reaction. Yet the Communist party has not at all been able to supply leadership in this situation of rich possibilities.

Pollitt Recites the Failures

At the Eleventh Comintern Plenum, Harry Pollitt, the most perfect prototype of a Stalinist third rate functionary, presented a tragic picture. His lamentations were: "The trouble is that our comrades do not differentiate between the workers in the I. L. P. and their leaders and because of this we build up a great barrier between ourselves and the workers in the other parties... the attitude of nine members out of ten in our party to a new worker, and particularly to an I. L. P. worker is that if they are not prepared to swallow the whole 21 points of the Comintern program they are social fascists... Today we have a big strike move in England which has not been headed by the party and the Minority Movement... we are not able to develop the independent forms of struggle, the independent forms of leadership, so that we are not in a position to be able to give the call—Strike on—we are not able to get the lead of the strike movement. The reformists are able, on the whole, to call the workers out and call the strikes off."

A dismal picture of failure indeed, particularly when one considers the objectively favorable situation. But do these leaders attempt seriously and thoroughly to account for the reasons? Not at all. One may go further and ask: What does the present Comintern leadership propose to remedy the faults? From the shameful combinations of the Anglo-Russian Unity Committee, which served to give the reactionary Trade Union Council a Left covering and subjected the Minority Movement and the Communist party to these "Left" representatives of the Trade Union Council, the Comintern commanded the party to execute a sharp turn to "class against class". It instructed the party to assume "independent leadership" in the "Third Period" style; not because of specific factors of the objective conditions which were then particularly favorable to the reformists, but because of the proclamation of the "Third Period". It became naturally translated, not into struggle to prove the superiority of the Communist program, but by arbitrary division of separate strike committees, of separating and isolating the militant minority from the trade unions for creation of new independent unions. Thus the blundering stupidity of the British party leadership must, of course, first of all be traced to its roots of the Stalin policies in the Comintern, and a correction must first of all begin with a decisive condemnation of these false policies.

The Party Leadership Views

The opportunist nationally-limited position inevitably flowing from the reactionary theory of "socialism in one country" invented and applied by the Stalinized Comintern leadership has found its particularly crass expression in the whole concept of the British party leadership. In the cardinal question of the Indian revolutionary perspectives, the party leadership confines itself in the main to

demanding independence for India, that is it calls upon the British workers to demand for the Hindus the same national liberty which they have. This allows for no distinction whatever from the position of the "Left" I. L. P. But what is yet worse it fails entirely to establish the intimate connection which is so essential between the British workers and the Indian proletariat and poor peasantry. The continued subjugation of India remains one of the main pillars of the British empire, and just as much so is the development of the revolution in India—not merely its national liberation—one of the main pillars of the proletarian revolution in England. A correct orientation on this question thus becomes a cardinal task of the British Communist Party.

However, the opportunist nationally-limited position of the party leadership applies also in a full measure to its views of the situation of the British working class. The axis of its present propaganda and activities is the fight for shifting the burden of the growing crisis from the working class to the bourgeoisie. To this end it advances, as is for example contained in the program of the "Charter movement", the slogans of the partial demands for an increased dole at the cost of the owners of industry, the seven hour day, housing for workers, reduction of rents, a guaranteed minimum wage, repudiation of arbitration, release of class war prisoners, repeal of Trades Disputes Act, against tariff attacks upon workers' standard, added to which are the slogans, for fight against imperialism and for the defense of the Soviet Union, etc.

"Simplifying" the Problems of Revolution

These leaders have arrived at an altogether too simple rationalization of the power and resources of imperialism and the problems of the working class. Their conclusions are that since capitalism in its present declining stage cannot grant the necessary reforms to the workers hence every struggle for reforms becomes a revolutionary struggle. But the problem is not quite so simple. While struggles for reforms have a different significance today than during the period of organic development of capitalism; while reformism could then lay a progressive role but today will definitely have to choose between the paths of proletarian revolution or organic support of capitalist reaction, and invariably chooses the latter, nevertheless, for the Communist party, there still remains the problem of giving the struggle for reform needs and democratic demands a revolutionary content. Above all, there remains the problem for the party of building the forces which under its leadership in the struggles must consciously select the road toward the revolution. The party must establish itself as the vehicle of the revolution.

The British party write voluminously about the growing capitalist crisis and the debacle of the MacDonald gradualness. It quite correctly endeavors to unmask the "Left" of the I. L. P. and usually draws the conclusion formulated in blanket statements to the effect: These experiences will prove to the British workers that the Communist party is the only party fighting for their interests. This, however does not at all follow. That is, it does not and cannot follow unless the party also succeeds in proving its worth as a revolutionary leader.

What did Pollitt have to offer, at the Eleventh Comintern Plenum, as a solution for the present party difficulties? Of course, one must not expect a serious examination of possible fallacies of past

and prevailing policies and directives from self-contented bureaucrats. And so, Pollitt, also remained true to the established style of empty platitudes. He recommended "... to intensify work ... to lead workers' economic struggles ... to build broad union front activities from below ... activities against growing tendencies of fascism against growing war danger, etc." The particular possibilities for this, Pollitt saw in the Charter Movement.

Alas, in the Charter Movement the deceptive practice of, in view of all the failures, to appear stronger prevailed from its inception. In conformity with the "Third Period" style the party leadership set out to drum up a large delegation at the initial charter conference. It became a substitute for the reality of mass influence which the party still has to win. 788 delegates were secured, but only 68 representing trade union branches 51 the unemployment movement branches (a movement hardly existing in reality), 31 representing the party and Y. C. L. the balance were supposed to represent various miscellaneous mass meetings sports clubs, Minority Movements groups etc. This undoubtedly becomes its first fatal weakness. The revolution cannot be organized by deceiving the workers. Secondly one cannot yet notice any visible effort to correctly connect the economic needs and demands of this movement with the political issues. Thirdly, being borne out of the conception of finding a substitute for the ill-fated Minority Movement and a short cut to mass influence, the party's problems have not been brought nearer its solution. Essentially these problems remain as before.

The Future Holds Great Possibilities

The future orientation of the party still remains intimately bound up with the lessons of the past from which it has not yet drawn the necessary conclusions. Particularly so with the lessons of the 1926 general strike and the Anglo-Russian Unity Committee. Pressed by the growing workers discontent, today, similarly as prior to the general strike, "Lefts" are again coming forward from the reformist ranks to serve as a shield for the reactionaries to endeavor to defeat the struggles growing out of the discontent and to return to their original camp when this "danger" again blows over. The Communist party is yet entirely isolated. There is therefore a great danger that the struggle of the discontented masses, which marks the developing revolutionary forces, may be swallowed in this "Left" reformist swamp. The party cannot prevent it by its so-called "united front from below" coupled with the perfidious practices of what is called independent leadership. This will only mean to substitute deception and cunning for the actual unification of the workers. Moreover it always leaves the door wide open for the other desperate alternative—that is, to attempt to overcome the isolation which will ensue by alliances behind the backs of the workers with these Left coverings. In other words to repeat the shameful alliance with the "Lefts", the Hicks, Purcells and Cooks in the Anglo-Russian Unity Committee.

These "Lefts" in England have considerable experiences precisely in deception and cunning. The party has nothing to gain by attempts to emulate them. It has therefore become so much more an imperative duty for the British Communist Party to conduct an extended discussion to enable it to draw the proper lessons of 1926 so that it may arrive at a position of correctly estimating the future perspectives, correctly work out its orientation for genuine unification of the British workers which will in reality mark the end of the "Left" reformist deception and lay the basis for Communist leadership.

—ARNE SWABECK.

Opposition at Boston I.L.D. Conference

BOSTON— On Sunday, August 16, the New England Amnesty Conference called by the I. L. D. was held at the Ambassador Palace Boston. 34 organizations were represented by 64 delegates. The composition of the conference was much broader than previous conferences of a similar nature, though the representation from the fraternal organizations was not as strong as it could have been. Delegates came from all sections of the New England area. There was a good percentage of Negro workers present.

After the report of the Credentials Committee, all the delegates, including the representative of the Boston Branch of the Communist League of America (Opposition) were seated. McCarthy was chairman of the Conference and Cantor, the main reporter.

Comrade Cantor dealt at length with the numerous cases of capitalist repression and imprisonment facing the I. L. D. at present and stressed the need for a broad amnesty campaign for all class war prisoners, regardless of their political affiliation. He called for the co-operations of all the organizations represented to help make the campaign effective.

In the course of the discussion on the report, comrade Weiner, a delegate from the Needle Trades Workers Industrial Union and a member of the Opposition, took the floor and spoke especially in connection with the victims of the Pennsylvania Flynn Anti-Sedition Act mentioned in the report, and stressed the fact that two workers, Leon Goodman and Bernard Morgenstern, members of the Philadelphia Branch of the Communist League of America (Opposition) were also victims of this act and that they had been denied a class defense by the I. L. D. The delegates from the N. T. W. I. U. related the history of the case, told of the arrest of the two Oppositionists for distributing Unemployment leaf-

lets issued by their organization and for calling upon the Philadelphia workers to join the February 25 demonstration of the unemployed, called by the Communist party. Comrade Weiner also told of the repeated attempts made to have the I. L. D. take up their defense and of their failure to date. She then called upon the I. L. D. to live up to its principles of class defense for all working class prisoners and demanded that the two Oppositionists be put on the Amnesty List together with all the others. The speech was greeted with the applause of a majority of those present.

In his reply to comrade Weiner, the reporter claimed ignorance of the facts in the case and once more reiterated the policy of the I. L. D. to defend all class war prisoners without distinctions of affiliation.

Comrade Cooperstein spoke in the name of the Boston Branch of the Communist League of America (Opposition). The Opposition delegate hailed the seating of the Opposition at the Conference as a good step forward and as a sign that a real effort was being made to extend the class defense front of the I. L. D. Comrade Cooperstein offered the complete cooperation of the local branch of the Opposition in the Amnesty campaign, started the ball rolling for a campaign fund with a contribution, pledged all the financial and practical aid possible and offered to provide a speaker from the Communist League of America (Opposition) at the disposal of the Amnesty Committee. The workers present demonstrated their approval with applause for our representative and elected her as a member of the Amnesty Committee.

After the discussion, the organizations, represented were called upon to contribute to the fund, to hold meetings, to affiliate with the I. L. D., to distribute leaflets and to prepare for the equally important Anti-Deportation Campaign. With that, the Conference was concluded.

MADRID LETTER

The Revolution in Spain

(Continued from Page 1)

THE NATIONAL CONGRESS OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY

On July 10 the extraordinary congress of the Spanish social democracy was held in Madrid in order to establish its position in the present political situation. The June 28 elections to the Constituent Cortes gave the most powerful parliamentary minority, from the point of view of numbers, to the Spanish Socialist

Party. This fact puts the Spanish social democracy before the dilemma of holding back from or of accepting full power in a fairly short time. In this respect, the declarations of the socialist minister of finances, I. Prieto, are already very significant when it pointed out that the social democrats will not give their adherence to a government presided over by the present minister of foreign affairs, Lerroux, leader of the minority closest to the socialists numerically.

Following I. Prieto, the socialists will not vote for a Lerroux government. The socialists express it from the lips of one of their most representative men at the same time that they declare that the compromise reached at Saint Sebastian over the collaboration with the present government was a mistake of their party.

On this problem, the congress will have to pronounce itself on July 13 when it is opened up by the treacherous chiefs of Spanish socialism. What is most probable is that they will adopt a vague formula in order to elude responsibility.

The Madrid organization of the soc-

ialist party has held numerous meetings which ended with no concrete result. Everything was left to the congress.

The Spanish social democracy fears greatly to take the power absolutely into its hands and at the same time is afraid of continuing to form a part of a government which assassinates the socialist workers. The problem is thus pretty complicated and the worker masses are precipitously deserting the social reformist camp.

The C. P. of Spain must utilize the situation in order to denounce the treason of the Spanish social democracy. The best means is to push the socialists to the taking of power. It is the most effective means of unmasking them.

Needless to say that nothing practical will come out of the congress.

THE COMMUNIST OPPOSITION IN THE N. C. L.

The Spanish Communist Opposition has begun to work practically and actively in the National Confederation of Labor.

Immediately, we have begun to register successes. In Madrid the painters have named a trade union leadership composed entirely of comrades of the Opposition, Francisco Garcia Lavid among them.

After the intervention of our comrades at a meeting, our comrade Garcia Lavid was named for the leadership by acclamation. So were two other comrades by a great majority. The anarcho-reform-

ists were put in the minority.

The successes of our friends are disturbing and irritating the anarchists who made a great scandal and, assisted by anarchists from other organizations, went so far as to attack our comrades.

At the present time, the anarchist groups of Madrid have met in order to remove our friends under the heads of the painters' organization, under the fraudulent pretext that Garcia Lavid was a candidate in the last elections.

Our comrades were accused of belonging to the Committee of Reconstruction of Seville and violently expelled from the local of the N. C. L. Naturally, the painters will have their word and, against the advice of the anarchist groups, will ratify the nomination of our comrades.

The following fact must be pointed out: it is the first time that Communists have won in Madrid an organization attached to the N. C. L. and also the first manifestation of our trade union activity.

The triumph of our painter friends in Madrid shows how the Communists have to act in the N. C. L., but also shows the anarchist phobia against Communism a phobia provoked in large measure by the Reconstruction conference of Seville, convoked by the Stalinists. The struggle is very difficult. It must be said that a Stalinist present at the meeting showed his agreement with the anarchists so as not to give his vote to our friends of the Communist Left Opposition.

At the same time that we obtained this success at Madrid, our comrades have

obtained the direction of the People's House of Llerena (Bodajoz). The Left Opposition is beginning to reap successes on the trade union field.

NEW PERSECUTIONS AGAINST US

The news we receive from the provinces are more serious every day. Many comrades do not receive *Comunismo*, in spite of repeated mailings. The republican police confiscates (steals, for it does it illegally) the copies of the review. Many letters from our comrades arrive only after a long delay or do not arrive at all. *La Verite* and *La Lutte de Classes* come to us irregularly or "are lost" . . . by the General Management of the Republican Police. The struggle and the persecutions continue.

OUR PROGRESS

The second number of *Comunismo* has been given a much better reception than the first. Groups of comrades constantly arise throughout the country. At Salamanca, the republican and political bosses' list an important group of the Spanish Communist Opposition has been constituted.

At Bilbao, our group has doubled its membership. In Estremadura, new groups have been formed. At Segovia, the official party group is on our side.

The second pamphlet by comrade Trotsky which our "Communist Publishers" has just put out is receiving an excellent reception and comments. The Spanish Communist Opposition is showing itself to be the only representative of Marxism in Spain.

—HENRI LACI

Madrid, July 1931

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