

The Case of Lieut. Scheringer

A couple of weeks ago, the *Daily Worker*, following on the heels of the rest of the international Stalinist press gleefully announced the adherence to the Communist Party of Germany of more than a dozen former Fascist (National Socialist) army officers who had taken the path marked out for them by the notorious Lieutenant Richard Scheringer. The *Daily Worker*, like the Berlin *Rote Fahne*, proclaimed this "victory" as a sign of the disintegration of Fascism in Germany and the revolutionary progress of the forces of Communism. Had these Fascists of yesterday really rallied to the Communist party on the basis of a revolutionary change of mind, there is no doubt that it would be the occasion for a claim of victory—and a cautious one at that, for they are at best dubious elements. Unfortunately, the facts belie such a claim. It appears that it is not so much the generals and lieutenants of Fascism who have come closer to international socialism as it is the Thaelmanns and Neumanns who have slid down to the level of the demagoguery and opportunism of national socialism.

This proceeds clearly from a pamphlet we have just received. Issued in Berlin by a publishing house controlled by the German party, it may be safely assumed that the Stalinists take at least a semi-official responsibility for its contents, particularly when we have yet to find in the official party press a single critical comment on what is said there. The pamphlet is entitled "Erwachendes Volk, Briefe an Leutnant a. D. Scheringer" (The Awakening People, Letters to Lieutenant Scheringer, Retired). Scheringer is the noted Fascist leader, Lieutenant of the Reichswehr, who was recently sentenced to prison for carrying on Hitlerite propaganda in the Reichswehr. In prison, he turned to reflection and finally sent an announcement of his adherence to the Communist party to the Communist fraction in the Reichstag. The sensation created by this step produced a voluminous correspondence between Scheringer and his friends in the Hitlerite camp. Some of the letters and answers by Scheringer are reproduced in the pamphlet. Even more than a revelation of the thoroughly nationalist spirit which still pervades Scheringer's thoughts, despite his "conversion" to Marxism (?), his letters stand as a burning condemnation of the Stalinist leadership in Germany which welcomed him and his simulators with open arms and sought to pass off his adherence as a victory for Communism. How Scheringer understands his adherence to Communism, and the basis upon which he is recruiting for it among his friends in the Hitler-Fascist camp, will be eloquently demonstrated by excerpts from some of the letters sent by him from Gollnow prison.

An old friend of his father Lieutenant General Dietrich, writes him in warning against "destructive Bolshevism", exhorting him against it in the name of the

"spirit which inspired the German officers' corps", to which this Bolshevik baptized by Thaelmann responds: "Your letter and the lofty sentiments expressed in it have stirred me deeply. It is the spirit of the old army that speaks here, the spirit of Langemarek and Verdun. The capitalist democratic system has nothing in common with this spirit. The 'national' circles have betrayed the cause of the dead in France just as Wilhelm II betrayed it when he fled to Holland. . . . The revolutionary forces of the people must be assembled, and the war of liberation carried to the West (i. e., against France) over the wreckage of the Weimar republic. . . . There is no longer any solution except that of the people's revolution. . . ."

In answer to the comments of the former leader of the Economic party, Johann Krummacker, our Lieutenant writes: "On the Jewish question we have already spoken recently. I would like to make plain to you once more, in brief, my standpoint in the matter: If one wants to take the ground from under the 'Jewish business spirit', he must eliminate the capitalist system. In a socialist Germany, the gentlemen of West Berlin, the gentlemen of Ulstein and Mosse will no longer have anything to say. They know this quite well and that is why they conduct an incitement with all means against Communism and against the Soviet Union. Besides this, it is nevertheless interesting, even if not of fundamental significance, that there is not a single Jew in the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Germany, while in the Scherl Publishing House of Hugenberg on the contrary, as was notoriously established in court, there are nine representatives of this race. Where do you find the Jewish preponderance in the Communist party? . . ."

One could go on for pages with this sickening rubbish were it not for the fact that the strongest stomach has its limits. Enough has been quoted to show the caliber of this now converted to Stalinist national socialism and to indicate the thorough wretchedness of any claim of victory for the German party. In 1919, the Communist Party of Germany was cursed with the "national Bolshevik" faction of Wolffheim and Lauffenberg; but it soon expelled them, and without much ceremony. In 1923, Zinoviev, Radek, Brandler and Froelich carried on their disgraceful "Schlageter policy", the attempt to win the nationalist-minded German soldier and worker on the basis of a capitulatory discussion with the nationalists. But the Schlageters and the von Reventlows were not yet haled as Bolsheviks, nor were they warmly welcomed into the ranks of the party. In 1931 with national socialist degeneration formally inscribed in the program of the Comintern, the latter-day Lauffenbergs and von Reventlows—the Franco-phobic Scheringers—are not only taken into the party but their "works" are published by the official party without a flush of shame and with the official imprimatur of the Stalinist legates in Germany. That the editors of the *Daily Worker* join in the chorus may be attributed mainly to their ignorance; they know no better. They are simply politically incapable of distinguishing between the degeneration of the party and its revolutionary progress.

The Left Opposition on the Parliamentary Tribune

Comrade Seipold's Speech in the Prussian Landtag

[We print below the full text of the speech delivered by our comrade Oskar Seipold, member of the Left Opposition of the Prussian Landtag at the session of July 8, 1931, in the debate on the referendum recently held.]

Deputy Seipold (Left Opposition of the Communist Party of Germany): Although I have had the occasion to speak from this tribune on small questions, this is the first time I have had the opportunity to speak here in a larger debate. Organizational and official, I do not belong to the Communist party, for reasons which it would be inopportune to explain here, but which are outside of my will. Politically and revolutionarily, I belong entirely to the Communist party and take my place in its Left wing.

The Fascist attack upon the Prussian Landtag is part of its campaign of destruction against the working class, and it is in this sense that every revolutionary will resist these veritable German Mussolinis, on this barricade as well as on others. Outside of this, no revolutionary worker has any interest in preserving the Prussian Landtag or any other Landtag in the Reich. The miserable parceling out of the state, with all the rubbish and spoliation of the German past, has remained with us as a heritage, and if the mutilated, violated and swindled revolution in 1918 did not put an end to it, it is primarily the fault of the social democracy. We are for a united German republic and we are sure that in a unified republic our Austrian brothers will find themselves together with us. But that is not yet enough for us. (Laughter from the Right. Interruptions: No.)

We know that Germany is an integral part of Europe, for the debasement, exhaustion and bleeding of which the ruling classes of Germany and the social democracy bear just as much of the responsibility as the ruling classes which imposed the shameful peace of Versailles upon all the peoples of Europe, including those of the so-called victors.

German and America
But even a really unified Germany could no longer exist in a broken up Europe devouring itself. This is precisely what illuminates specifically the miserable position in which the continent, once so proud of itself, finds itself today. The ruling classes of Germany are at the present time on their knees before Mr. Hoover, the perfect representative of American imperialism, of the hierarchy, of the magnates of the trust of the dollar, and they look up hopefully. Today, in the year 1931, it depends upon when and how Mr. Hoover will move his index finger as to whether we shall have a few hundred thousand unemployed more or less, as to whether Mr. Bruening goes or remains a few months longer, and what is still more important, as to whether the Reichsbank breaks up or is maintained a while longer. Has it not become a fact that America has put Germany on rations? But just look at France—victorious, proud, sabre-rattling France, which is

not in a much different and certainly not in a much better position. The French bourgeoisie also received the same amiable proposal, as unexpected as a blow over the head. It tried to set up some opposition almost to protest but how timidly, how reticently and humbly! France too has been rationed by the grace of Hoover—not to speak of the other states of Europe.

In order to throw a few crumbs to the people who have sunk into misery and despair, they speak and write about a Pan-European, of disarmament and other things. Disarmament is in reality only a strengthening of armaments for new imperialist wars, and Pan-Europe is the attempt by France to conceal its weakness, and, under the insignia of French bayonets, to mobilize Europe, Germany included, against Soviet Russia, and under the same trade mark, against the United States of America.

No serious person, including M. Briand, believes that the capitalist regime will succeed in satisfying the needs of the European peoples under the leadership of militarist France. No! The postponement of the war debt payments for a year, which is essentially a secondary question, has only increased the squabbling in Europe. How can one believe that the bourgeoisie will be able to eliminate all the irreconcilable rivalries, appetites and conflicts and to create a united Europe? If the German bourgeoisie, together with its social democracy, has shown its inability to unify democratically at least the German nation then they are even less capable of collaborating effectively in the unification of Europe. **The German nation can be united only by the victorious proletariat.** The same holds true for Europe. A Soviet Germany within a Soviet Europe—that is our solution of the problem. Look at Soviet Russia. We have no need of concealing the weaknesses and the wounds, which constitute the terrible heritage of the past, we have no need of idealizing the present situation. It is a transitional stage, with all its contradictions and torments. But can our misery be compared for a single instant with the hopeful perspectives opened up by the proletarian revolution in Russia? Imagine for a moment that this method of concentrated planned economy were based not or not only upon the backward productive forces of Russia but also upon German economy and technique, upon the ability of the German worker and technician—what vast perspectives and possibilities would then be opened up before the whole of humanity! That this has not been realized at least in part is primarily the fault of the social democracy.

Proletarian Revolution Only Hope
The European peoples have already seen their ruling classes in all sorts of possibilities, of situations, and of combinations, and have put them to the test. Salvation cannot come from that source; the salvation of Germany can only be realized by the victorious proletarian revolution. Only the victorious proletarian revolution can create a united and powerful Germany which will be a part of the Soviet Federation of Europe.

The Fascists who want to do away with the Prussian Landtag only because they see in it an obstacle on the road to the enslavement and the real national Mussolinization of Germany, these Mussolinis also speak of a revolution, that is, in contrast to us Marxists-Bolsheviks, of a people's revolution which they oppose to the proletarian revolution. We have nothing in common with this. It is evidently a question of a revolution that would be of benefit to all the peoples of Europe, and in the long run, to all of humanity, but such a revolution can be carried through only by the victorious proletariat, making its will the law of the state. Under this ambiguous formula of the people's revolution, we find highly chauvinist elements like Lieutenant Scheringer penetrating into the ranks of the proletarian vanguard in order to upset, to wipe out and to poison its international conceptions. People of this type speak of the "national" emancipation of Germany by a war against the Western powers. To this end, they are ready to sacrifice the forces of the proletariat to national interests, and to use them as cannon fodder. No, this is not our standpoint. We do not separate the fate of Germany from the fate of Soviet Russia, of Europe and of the whole world. **Our program is not the "national" emancipation of Germany, but the salvation of Europe by the proletarian revolution.** We know of no other salvation than socialism for the destitute threatened by crisis, unemployment and war. But we understand socialism not nationally but internationally. The workers of the Soviet Union have set a magnificent example; they have made a practical beginning with socialist construction. This work can be ended only by being extended over an increasing number of states, in the first place on the European continent. Then the Soviet Union will form the natural bridge to awakened Asia, and this will be the road to the socialist world federation.

Revolutionary Flames in Spain
At the other extreme of the Soviet Union there now bursts forth the great flame of the revolution. The revolutionary proletariat of Spain is already advancing the slogan of Soviets. This slogan is as inexhaustible and indestructible as the proletariat itself. The course of development is only passing through its first stage there. Our magnificent brothers of Spain, of Catalonia and of Biscaye, with their marvelous temperament and spirit of sacrifice, will not bring their revolution to a halt at the Ebert-Zamora stage; supported by the poor despoiled peasantry, they will march uninterruptedly to the complete victory of the proletarian revolution. The masters of France—not without cause—look wor-

riedly upon the events on the other side of the Pyrenees, and in the near future, —we are sure—the old historical watchword: "There are no more Pyrenees!" will become a revolutionary reality. No, a thousand times, no. Not from Locarno, not from Chequers, not from the White House at Washington, from the gilded caves of cupidity and blood-drenched intrigue will come liberty and salvation for the German and other peoples; only the proletariat, relying upon its own forces, will be able to liberate itself, that is the only road to the emancipation of Europe from the yoke of capitalism.

The revolution is a harsh means which demands great sacrifices. But these sacrifices must be made, for there is no other way of liberation than the proletarian revolution. Against permanent misery, against the permanent mutual devouring of the people, against the permanent lies and intrigues of the heads of the capitalist nations and naturally of ours also, **we raise the slogan of the permanent revolution of the proletariat.** This is the banner under which stands the Communist Left Opposition, the Bolshevik-Leninists, which is an international party of world Communism, to which I belong and in whose name I speak from this tribune. If today we are still compelled to fight against the Fascists, it is above all the fault of the social democratic leadership which strangled the revolution of 1918 before it had gone half way, before it had even gone a quarter way in its course.

(Turning to the Right). If in 1918 you had not had these friends—the social democrats—you would not be sitting here now. Without these people (pointing to the social democrats) the revolution of 1918 would have dealt differently with you. You would not have come out of the rat holes into which you crawled.

The "Freest Republic"
I have said that the revolutionary proletariat, aside from the fact about which the Fascists want to eliminate the Landtag, have no interest in its preservation. I say quite openly: we too have no interest in maintaining this democratic rep-

ublic for it is not a democracy for the proletariat but for the bourgeoisie. The "rights" of this democracy are only a snare with a thousand nooses for the workers, and for the exploiting class it is a theater with a thousand exits. There are two sorts of democracy: one for the bourgeoisie—that is the democratic republic; the other for the proletariat—that is the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat. It is often said, mainly by the parties of the Center, that we live in the freest republic in the world. It is doubtless futile for me to cite instances to refute this "held" assertion. One need only look around in order to see how perfectly the black-jack is used against the revolutionary worker. If, for example, the Spartakid was recently prohibited, such a policy of violence is not always a sign of strength. Has not Mr. Minister Severing said this very day that one must permit even a dying man to show signs of life from time to time?

This "freest republic" in the world accords the right of asylum to all the counter-revolutionists the White Guards of the Soviet Union and elsewhere. But for revolutionists, for Leon Trotsky, the former People's Commissar and organizer of the Red Army of the Soviet Republic, this "freest republic" in the world offers no asylum, any more than all the other capitalist countries.

(Interruption: And Russia?)
To discuss with you as to why he is not in Russia would be just as futile as to batter against the waves of the sea. (Deputy Leonhardt: A great philosopher!)

You are the greatest, dear colleague. I shall vote against the referendum proposed by the Fascist organizations and will naturally vote for the proposal of the Communist fraction for the dissolution of the Landtag, because the proletariat, as I have said has no interest in the preservation of this parliament, or in the preservation of parliamentarism in general; our aim is the extra-parliamentary revolution in permanence, the Soviet republic of Germany in a Soviet Europe as the bridge to the world socialist federation.

Jobless Meet Sabotaged

(Continued from page 1)
the request that each delegation sign one together with the names of the delegates. The Communist League of America (Opposition) had two delegates, Hugo Oehler and Martin Payer.

After the slips were collected, they were gone over by a couple of the party officials. No credentials committee was elected—neither was any report made by any one as to how many organizations were present, approximate membership, etc. This was all purposely "omitted" because "Trotskyists" were present.

Then Nels Kjar spoke, pointing the two reasons for the conference and explained that the floor was thrown open for discussion. While Nels Kjar was speaking, Rybicki pointed out the two delegates from the Communist Opposition and gave the chairman instructions not to give us the floor. Then in order to make his plans water-tight, Rybicki went through the delegates and cautioned with several of the party members with this result: The speakers came up in 1-2-3 style. The chairman and Rybicki would point to one after the other of those that were lined up—and only they were given the floor. All other hand-wavings were entirely disregarded.

Finally after seven or eight had spoken, nearly three hours of speeches, Rybicki cut the speech-making by announcing that during the "floor discussion" the Committee had chosen 25 of those present to be the delegation to go to the Emerson Relief Committee! Who "the committee" was, where it came from, and who gave it authority to choose the delegation, Rybicki did not explain. I understand that ideas do not come from nowhere, but I assure you that this "committee" did. Because the conference did not elect any committee and knew nothing whatsoever about it until Magician Rybicki pulled it out of his sleeve.

When the names of the appointees were read off, three of the workers expressed an inability to serve in the delegation. Payer together with two or three other workers, stood up and volunteered. Then Rybicki said that before adjourning the conference, he would read off the completed list of the delegation, and lo and behold, Payer's name had vanished. He was not included. Oehler, Payer and two of the delegates seated near us tried to get the floor to protest. We waved hands, stood up, "comrade-chairmaned"—but the meeting was adjourned in apple pie order.

Payer's protest after the conference to Rybicki who answered curtly with, "You know we wouldn't accept you". Rybicki explained to one of the worker-delegates who persisted in objecting to such tactics of discrimination by saying that Payer was not added to the delegation of 25 because "They already had the right proportion, 50% Negro and 50% white"

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and "besides there are certain organizations that we have nothing to do with."

Such tactics as these only serve to divorce party leadership from the workers. They discredit the Communist movement. Such tactics as these will give birth to a still-born babe if they are applied in September 13th Unemployment Conference.

The duty of the Left Opposition is to fight and expose the party's policy of grasping their other hand (their auxiliary organizations) and calling it a "united front" of the working class. The duty of every Communist and sympathizer is to fight against the bureaucrats' deliberate strangling of the potential mass unemployment movement. Exert pressure to force the party to hold a genuine united front unemployment conference on September 13th. Because only then will we be able effectively to resist the police terror, discredit the "Red scare" propaganda and wage a united struggle of employed and unemployed against the miseries of unemployment.

It is interesting to note that when the district organizer, Bill Gebert, spoke, although he linked the "Trotskyists" with the agents of the bosses and denounced us for bolstering up the capitalist system and told the Negroes that the "Trotskyists" were defenders of racial discrimination and Jim Crow laws—nevertheless objective conditions forced him to point out the necessity of adopting block councils and the united front of all working class organizations—unemployment demands "borrowed" from the Opposition. Of course, in true hypocritical fashion, he did not point out that these were "Trotskyist" demands—no, no. Gebert conveniently forgot the origin of the demands, although he did not forget to "connect" us up with a forged membership card got out by the Chicago Real Estate Board. Gebert told the workers assembled: the next time they run across any of the "renegades who call themselves Communists" to—"Well you know what to do." And the chorus of party bureaucrats replied in unison, "Yeh, we'll beat hell out of 'em!"

—MARTIN C. PAYER.

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Organization Notes

BOSTON—With the assistance of comrade Gordon the Boston branch reports that contacts are growing daily, but adds modestly "our activities are increasing slowly but satisfactorily". The police having put up a ban against street meetings, which the official party failed to attempt to break, our group took the initiative and last Friday held a successful meeting. There was a crowd of 200 in attendance, the police met in force and made several threats to arrest the speakers. Nevertheless the meeting was able to conclude in good order, winding up with an appeal to the assembled to attend in force the Sacco-Vanzetti demonstration scheduled for the following day.

"The comrades were elated", says the report. "The crowd was militant and responsive. After the meeting, we discussed with party comrades, who were standing in a daze and could not believe their eyes and ears, we who were called counter-revolutionists, holding a meeting for amnesty under the slogans of the I. L. D., calling the workers to a party demonstration and leading the workers in cheers for it. These comrades complained to us about the laziness and negligence of the party. It had not called a single amnesty meeting in Malden during the entire month."

As a result of the increasing activities quite a few revolutionary workers have come to our branch discussion meetings and are preparing to enroll into our class. The branch concludes its report, from which we have taken these excerpts, by an order for more literature. Distribution of our pamphlets has enjoyed a very favorable response. Large quantities were disposed of in connection with the recent showing of the picture "The Five Year Plan".

MINNEAPOLIS—Two of our comrades, Coover and Dunne were arrested recently for posting bills after a successful street meeting. They were subsequently released by the failure of the arresting cop to find a suitable charge which could stick. The branch reports that street meetings have otherwise gone ahead uninterruptedly and regularly. The branch has also with quite regularly added to its ranks by the admittance of new members.

Our Minneapolis comrades have long been in the lead in keeping a substantial Militant subscription list in the city and keeping it quite well up-to-date. All the efforts of the party-controlled miners' relief committee to keep our representatives nevertheless not successful in their members taking up

on. The comrades report that they were able both to secure funds directly and influence Left wing workers in lending their assistance. Likewise they have made their good contributions to help the Spanish Opposition and in bringing the message of the revolutionary workers of Spain to the attention of Minneapolis workers. In this respect very good results have been obtained by way of meetings at which speakers explained the developments in Spain and in distribution of our pamphlets on the Spanish revolution.

In the Minneapolis trade union field the only Communist actively fighting for the issues of the Left wing are those of the Left Opposition. It became possible therefore to elect several good Left wingers for the Minnesota State Federation convention.

CHICAGO—New blood has been added to the Chicago branch by the limitation of a couple of new young members. Preparations are now under way for a serious study class for the coming winter. Street meetings are being held regularly. In addition the branch has now for some time been conducting a series of lectures explaining the views of the Left Opposition in regards to events in the labor and revolutionary movement. That the Chicago branch is active in the regular tasks of the movement can be learned by reading the report of the recent Chicago unemployment conference where the official party bureaucrats spared no efforts to keep our representatives out. But even that does not prevent our comrades from doing their duty and their place within the unemployment movement, recognition or no recognition.

NEW YORK
The branch at the center has undoubtedly made a better record than any in the increase of its membership. While new applicants appear regularly the sympathetic circle also records some growth. Two street meetings are conducted regularly each week. New speakers are receiving an elementary training and a number of young energetic comrades animated by the good experiences of Comrade Clarke and Stamm during their recent activities in Cleveland are ready to undertake organization work immediately after our Second Conference. The New York branch has made quite regular progress in its sympathetic efforts to assign a special field of activity for every member. Most of them are now very active participants in various mass organizations. It has not as yet fully succeeded, however, in effectively mobilizing many supporters for the

general mass demonstrations, but some progress is being made in this respect. Once the New York branch learns better the technique of effective distribution of the Militant and of our literature, it will in the full sense of the word become our banner branch. But in this respect it has still something to learn.

Our Program of Expansion Campaign
While most of our attention of recent date, in so far as material means are concerned, has been directed toward collecting funds for the help of the Left Opposition in Spain now facing immense revolutionary tasks, nevertheless our program of expansion has not been at a standstill. This holds true both in respect to applying the measures called for as well as furnishing the material means. We have been able to record expansion. Since the organization of the Pioneer Publishers, literature sales have been gradually on the increase. The weekly Militant is now sufficiently solidly established to remain. Preparations are in full swing for the Second Conference and a little extra organization efforts are actually being made.

But since the date of the Second Conference is rapidly approaching there is a double urge to just increase the speed of collections so that we may reach the \$1500.00 by that date.

The contributions received since last report were as follows:

Minneapolis branch	\$17.00	2,000
Chicago branch	5.00	1,750
Boston branch	3.00	
M. Lopez, So. Africa	2.42	
New York branch	8.50	1,500
Tom Stamm	5.00	
New York Wm. Edwards	2.00	1,250
New York R. B.	2.00	
New York B. J. Fields	25.00	1,000
New York L. Stone, Phila.	2.00	750
Toronto branch	5.40	
Total	\$75.32	500
Previously reported	\$1,177.27	
Total		925
To date	\$1,252.59	