

# IN THE INTERNATIONAL OF LABOR

## Reviews and News of the Working Class and Revolutionary Movements

### FRANCE

#### French Foreign Policy Is Modified

Two important facts, the nomination of Francois-Poncet as ambassador to Berlin, and the resumption of commercial relations and the negotiation of a non-aggression pact with the U. S. S. R., mark a notable change in the orientation of French imperialism in its international relationships. These facts have not occurred by accident and revolutionists cannot treat them cavalierly, as *l'Humanite* does. There was a time when, not only serious commentaries on important political events were made by the party press, but when it did not hesitate to explain these questions in workers' meetings. Today, Peri confines himself to relegating everything to a few general stereotyped phrases which coincide with the "general line" of the moment.

The nomination of Francois-Poncet to Berlin goes beyond the limits of a simple diplomatic change, even considered as a measure against the former ambassador Margerie, for not having been informed about what was being prepared between Austria and Germany towards arriving at an economic agreement, which would inevitably have had important political consequences. Not only was Margerie punished—and Briand also effected indirectly—for the Anschluss affair. It is not for nothing that a career diplomat was replaced by an open servitor of the *Comite des Forges* (Steel Trust), by the founder of the *Bulletin Quotidien* which, every day, expresses to a narrow circle without circumspection the points of view of an important fraction of French imperialism which exerts a considerable pressure upon the government. After having imposed upon the Ruhr policy, it had to retreat as a result of the defeat suffered, and finally, had to accept against its will the policy of Locarno. Today, this policy is dead; it has had its day. French imperialism is compelled to follow another orientation.

Germany lacks capital. To avoid a catastrophe there, the other imperialists must lend it capital. France, on the contrary, has realized capital. The negotiations that have taken place for some weeks will lead to some temporary solution—which will rapidly raise the contradictions to a higher plane: among them, the loan of French capital to Germany is acquired in principle: what is under debate are the conditions, above all the political conditions, the famous "guarantees" that Germany will have to give. But French imperialism does not intend to rest content with promises. It intends to oversee, to control the employment of its capital. It wants to see where it goes, what purposes it serves. For this job, it needs a competent observer, and that is why it sends Francois-Poncet as ambassador. It needs somebody who knows German industry, German imperialism. And could it choose better than Francois-Poncet, connected with French heavy industry, connected also with German heavy industry (Cachin pointed it out during an election campaign, but in a detestable manner such as could only stir up base chauvinist sentiments)? The new French ambassador to Berlin will have as his mission to oversee the manner in which German capitalism uses French capital in order the better to exploit the German proletarians. To this strengthening of the bonds between the capitalists, there should correspond a strengthening of the bonds be-

tween the proletarians. But the policy of the "people's revolution" constitutes an obstacle in the road.

It is economic necessities also which have led French imperialism to modify considerably its attitude towards the Soviet Union and within such a brief period. Last October, the campaign against the pseudo-"Soviet dumping" was in full swing, the government took measures against Soviet imports, the relations between France and the Soviets were reduced to a strict minimum; today, the measures are withdrawn, and they speak of a "non-aggression" pact. It is minister Rollin who feels the need of explaining himself; it is the *Temps* which puts him through his gait—both of them strongly embarrassed to say that industry needs markets, that Russia is a large market, that all the bourgeois principles do not prevent America or others from doing business with the Soviet Union and there is no reason for France maintaining itself in a position without results. There is a retreat of French imperialism with regards to the U. S. S. R., and every Communist should rejoice at it. But that should not prevent us from seeing clearly, for in the first place it is not a question of a victory obtained under the pressure of the French proletariat and then we must combat the confusion sown by the so-called non-aggression treaties.

Since the beginning of the crisis, the Opposition has advanced the slogan of the economic collaboration with the Soviets under the control of the working class. It has shown that this was a powerful means of putting in motion the masses, and particularly the unemployed; it took up this slogan with insistence during the anti-dumping campaign. The Stalinists did not take it into account because it was the Opposition which recommended it, and because the U. S. S. R. was building socialism in a single country. This phraseology of the "third period" did not move the masses; and the relations between the Soviet Union depended only upon capitalist necessities, without the workers' pressure having anything to do with it. This is what, in an important measure, today reduces for the Soviet diplomacy, for the proletarian state, the advantages which the difficult position of French capitalism creates for it.

As to the non-aggression pacts, they must be denounced for the same reasons that the Opposition has denounced them since 1926, on every occasion. They bring no advantage to the Soviet Union, they can sow pacifist illusions among the less educated masses, just like the speech by Litvinov on the "peaceful co-existence of the two systems" (capitalist and Sovietist) which spring from the same conception. And then, they put the Communists who want to fight as Communists against the war, that is, to denounce the pacts, in a false position, in contradiction to the position of the U. S. S. R. All the actions of Soviet diplomacy must be defensible by the Communists; when circumstances oblige it to make concessions, it is enough to explain the motives for it. But a Communist would be lacking in his duty if he propagated petty bourgeois illusions in the manner of the socialists.

Economic necessities impose upon French imperialism, in need of outlets, held in the circle of imperialist rivalries, important political changes. The development of the crisis throughout the world renders all these "solutions" precarious. The workers should not allow themselves to be deluded by this or that step. The capitalist solutions can only transform their contradictions. To impose their revolutionary solution, the workers can count only on their own strength and forge their essential weapon, the Communist party, which a false policy has greatly blunted. Paris, September 1, 1931.

### After the Labor Government's Fall

## New Nat'l Government

#### LONDON LETTER

Full details of the Labor government's fall and of the formation of the National government will be, by now, in the hands of American militants: probably some points concerning the effect of this change, and of the threatened attack on the workers, upon the English proletariat, will be of interest to readers of the *Militant*.

One thing stands out most clearly—the immediate response of the working people. Not since the General Strike of 1926 have audiences been so easy to get and so attentive: socialist and Communist meetings are attracting large audiences and unemployed meetings and marches, in some cases spontaneous, are becoming daily occurrences in some districts. The English workers have awakened in a manner that reveals very clearly their fundamental soundness in class outlook. Even more ominous is the fact that the long silence over the General Strike is at last broken and the proletariat is discussing the events of 1926 because their relation to today has been strikingly revealed.

The working class, employed and unemployed, are united against the National government and its economy plans: only over the question of ways and means of meeting the attack are they divided and uncertain.

#### The Labor "Opposition"

Right up to the moment of the cabinet's resignation, the chief leaders of the present Labor "Opposition" were prepared to accept "nine-tenths" of the bankers' demands. The General Council of the Trades Union Congress were also prepared to reduce the workers' wages but by the less open method of tariffs. Now, both groups, wisely silent over their previous attitude, are, together with the Independent Labor Party, grouped together against the whole program of the National government.

The three Labor ministers who have joined the National government—Snowden, MacDonald and Thomas—are undoubtedly the three most able men in the Labor party. Thomas is its most astute tactician; Snowden its financial expert and MacDonald the leading theorist of British gradualism. Their breach with the Labor party has a deeper meaning than merely a "sell-out". It is not a "sell-out" in the commonly understood sense of the word: these men have seen quite clearly that the only alternative to acceptance of the employers' demands is revolution—which, of course, is no alternative to reformists.

Because of this, the "Opposition" of Henderson, of Clynes, of Maxton, of the General Council, will be limited to words and to unreal parliamentary "opposition", since any effective mobilization of the workers will raise revolutionary issues. Indeed can only be effective to the extent that it can challenge the whole basis of capitalist rule in Britain. This difference between a revolutionary leadership and a reformist one is not being emphasized here at all, and the Communist party is in danger of becoming either a mere "tail" of the "Left wing" or an isolated group understood by no one.

#### The Plight of the Party

The party has never before been seen to such disadvantage. Days elapsed before any lead was given to the party members or to the workers: local meetings difficult and delicate questions in the localities were left to drift. Only under pressure from angry rank and file did the party leadership eventually issue

some kind of lead—a confused and uncertain call which left the locals even more muddled than before.

The slogans of the party—"Not a penny off the dole"; "Not one worker off benefit"; etc.—are in essence the slogans of the "Left" and nowhere is it being shown clearly that the party is a revolutionary party, different fundamentally from the I. L. P.

There has been, to date, no clear explanation in the *Daily Worker* of the crisis, no clear statement of how the fight is to be waged and with what end. To the numerous questions raised by the locals, there is no reply.

The workers are, justly as far as they are concerned, beginning to assume that the party and the Labor "Opposition" are, save for personal differences, working along the same lines. More especially so since the Labor leaders are endeavoring to divert the workers from immediate action by talking of the next General Election and the party urges that "now is the time to build up the party's General Election Fund." By its inability to use the recent events to show the lie of parliamentary democracy, by its cowardice, hesitancy and its stupidity, the party leadership is aiding the labor leaders to hoodwink the working class.

Criticism has already been leveled at these leaders and more will follow. In the events of the next few weeks, the workers may forge new weapons and find new leaders; in any case, they will demand a reckoning from those who have served them falsely.

#### American Bankers and the Crisis

Comments upon the revelations of the party played in the crisis by American bankers, are both amusing and instructive.

The Liberal press, whilst more or less admitting that the bankers demanded certain "guarantees" before agreeing to the loan, are regretting the event—not, however, the fact that the bankers should dictate to Parliament but that the dictation should be made public!

Sections of the Labor movement are playing the imperialist game by denouncing "foreign" bankers' interference with English government, although the part played by the English bankers was precisely the same. In this way, the anti-American feeling is fostered amongst the workers here.

An American Communist, one of the party on their way to the Soviet Union a few weeks ago, was questioned about the attitude of the American workers to England and whether the American labor movement recognized the dangers of war through the development of Anglo-American rivalry.

A look of astonishment came over his face: war, he declared, between the two countries was undreamed of, and his expression showed that as far as he was concerned, he'd never heard of such a thing! Which shows how well the Molotovs and the Stalin have done their work.

#### Some Stalinist "Leninism"

An address delivered early this year by M. Gurevitch (Director of the Supreme Council of National Economy of the U. S. S. R.) to the "Society for Cultural Relations with Russia", has just been published in pamphlet form. Some of the statements in it deserve to be classed with Litvinov's latest utterances.

His concluding words were: "We have so much work to do in our own country and so little help from abroad, that our only desire is to be left alone. Let us work for a few years. All of you here

are not Communists. Nor am I here to convert you. We have only one wish. Here are two systems, one Communist (!) and the other capitalist. Let us have a fair struggle, and let us meet again in a few years time and then judge who has succeeded and who has failed... after a few years let us compare results." (Page 15).

M. Gurevitch is certainly a good pupil of Stalin: who would have thought it possible that such pitiful nonsense could be put forward on behalf of workers' Russia. A remarkable tribute to the effectiveness of the struggle against "Trotskyism" in the Comintern!

—ANGLICUS.

London, September 2, 1931

## Threats in I.L.D.

(Continued from Page 1)

of the old leadership of the organization and the successive advents of "new leaders", the whole spirit of the I. L. D. has been subjected to a forced change. Now, it appears, this change in spirit is to be formally incorporated into the statutes of the organization—directed first against the Left Opposition only as a beginning of similar steps against anybody else who presumes to have an opinion differing from that of the official Stalinist machine in the Communist party. Such a disastrous course can only mean progressive decline of the I. L. D., the fall of its influence and prestige, both of which are already badly enough damaged by the Engdahl and Hackers. The letter and the spirit of Hacker's new "decision" is not only a gross violation of the constitution of the I. L. D., but is conceived and executed in the reactionary spirit of the Gompers-Green-Lewis bureaucracy in the A. F. of L. When Hacker declared that "we will put a stop to the boring from within tactics of the Trotskyists", he was simply borrowing, both in phrasing and in tone, from the anti-Communist arsenal of the Black Hundreds in the A. F. of L.

#### Protest the Splitting Proposal!

It would be an evil day for the I. L. D. were such a step to be permitted by the conscientious and responsible workers in its ranks. Let the Hackers point to a single Oppositionist in the I. L. D. who has not taken upon his shoulders more than his share of the work, who has not been in the front ranks of activity, who has not demonstrated a sincere loyalty and devotion to the ideas and work of the organization! It cannot be done.

The Left Opposition requests no privileges in the organization, no special place, no exceptional rights, no "recognition" for doing its simple duty. All it demands, for itself and others, is the right of all I. L. D. members to retain their political or economic views and affiliations without the arbitrary interference of Messrs. Hacker and Engdahl and Foster. All it demands is the right to work actively and loyally in the ranks of the organization. The Stalinist officials, drunk with usurped and abused power, are rabidly afraid even of our membership in the I. L. D. But that should not be decisive for the members. Let them speak out immediately against the "new policy" of factional discrimination and extermination. The Hackers have done enough damage already. Let them go no further in discrediting and wrecking the I. L. D.

## The Real Situation in Russia

By LEON TROTSKY

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### GERMANY

#### Bruening, France and the Communists

The force of economic events, without consideration for the customs of high diplomacy, which consist of resting in summer from the "work" of winter, has provoked an extraordinary movement in the political relations of Europe and even of the whole world during the recent months.

The lack of independence in the position of German capitalism, which renders its existence even dependent upon foreign credits, makes the bourgeois press and public life particularly sensitive to all these changes.

The central problem is the department towards France. The German bourgeoisie still hesitates to submit itself flatly to French hegemony. That this is still possible for it, in spite of the terrific economic crisis, is on the one hand the expression of its internal political power, and on the other, of its hope in some Anglo-American combination. But it must be said that the German government in recent times has been particularly pursued by bad luck. Hardly is the famous Franco-Russian pact announced, which destroys at least the illusion of a serious orientation towards the East on the part of any imperialist country, the French measures of regulation in Hungary are hardly overcome, than the English crisis is anxiously followed by the German press, announcing new storms to which the conservative foreign policy has accustomed us.

The press of the German Communist Party, to the extent that it still exists, does not even deal with this question except by the general and mechanical formula of the "war danger". That is the inevitable consequence of the abandonment of all strategy in the European question which the Comintern summed up in 1923 by the slogan of the "Soviet United States of Europe".

In the interior of the country, the bourgeoisie has utilized the defeat of the referendum in order to attack the C. P. G. in a rabid manner (occupation of the Karl Liebknecht House). It utilizes the elements of the stum proletariat, adventurers and in large part provocateurs, who were able to slip into the party during the "third period" in order to discredit the party as such. The decrees, whose importance we have explained, facilitates this task for it enormously, for they have deprived the party of a good part of its press as well as of the possibility of action by means of meetings and demonstrations. As to the possibility of action in the trade unions, the party has itself deprived itself of this.

Triumphantly, the bourgeois press announces that the trade union congress this year (we will speak of it in greater detail) is the first one since the war in which not a single Communist delegate will participate.

What is more important than might appear at first sight, are the new decrees which prohibit the savings banks (official institutions of the communities and by that fact, everywhere favored by the small savers) from according credits to these communities. This not only means the depositing of all available means for private economy, but the inauguration of a grand-scale pillaging of the communities by this private economy, an audacious game which will strongly disquiet the petty bourgeoisie. Berlin, August 1931.

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### IN SPAIN

## Events of the Week

(Continued from Page 1)

#### FOR THE UNIFICATION OF THE C. P.

The Executive Committee of the Spanish Communist Opposition has sent, by registered mail with return receipt requested, the letter reproduced below to the Executive Committee of the Spanish Communist Party, to the Catalan-Balearic Communist Federation and to the Autonomous Grouping of Madrid. It must be added that the leadership of the two organizations have maintained silence on this letter to which they have given no reply.

The rank and file undoubtedly do not know these facts, and will be astonished at the incongruous conduct of their leaders. How will the "Batallists" of Barcelona and the other "ists" of Madrid justify their conduct, they who declare themselves partisans of the unity of the Communist Party of Spain? Here is the text of our letter:

"To the Executive Committee of the Spanish Communist Party to the Catalan-Balearic Communist Federation, to the Madrid Grouping, to the Spanish Communists in general:  
"Comrades. Once more we wish to express our firm intention to fight for the unity of Spanish and International Communism. We will do it as often as it will be necessary to bring it to the

attention of the Spanish Communists and of the working class in general, and also to show that the Spanish Communist Opposition, in spite of the calumnies to which it is subjected, knows how to fulfill its duty as vanguard of the world Communist party.

"The convocation of two Communist Congresses in Spain (August 15, by the E. C. of the Spanish C. P., and by the Catalan-Balearic Communist Federation) took place during the aggravation of the political situation and the accentuation of the revolutionary situation. In these circumstances, the division of the Communists the convocation of two separate congresses would be a counter-revolutionary crime.

"The Spanish Communist Opposition insists upon the need to unify Spanish Communism by convening a national unification congress which will embrace a representation from all the present existing Communist groups and factions...

"We, and with us the working class of Spain, will be responsible for disaster which may follow a retreat of the course of the Spanish revolution, by the mistake of those who, out of blindness or bad faith, will stand up against the unification of the Communist forces in Spain. The circumstances and the atmosphere are favorable to the development of our

forces: The Spanish Communist Party has possibilities of development if, to begin with, it knows how to achieve its unity.

"We hope that good sense and wisdom will carry the day in our organizations. 'Fraternally and always as Communists,' 'The Central Committee of the Spanish Opposition.'

#### IN THE COMMUNIST PARTY

Events follow each other and the leaders of the C. P. do not give the slightest sign of activity, unless one calls "activity" the publication of a special number of the central organ of the party *Mundo Obrero*, destined for what the bureaucrats call "an examination of the political situation", or to speak of we do not know what mysterious terrorism which, according to the Stalinists, wants to assassinate Bullejos and other no less important leaders of the S. C. P. These gentlemen know how to impress people marvelously by speaking of pretended assassinations against them.

In this period, numerous adventurers are joining the party. The other day we employed the expression "the adventurers are streaming in mass", but we must indicate the significance of the expression. We want to say "great quantity, whole groups of people without political dignity." One group of ex-socialist youth, expelled from the social democratic organization because they pretended to use a radical language, fixed themselves upon the organizations and making a political career, did not succeed in creating a Left socialist organization for themselves; after having found themselves the butt of numerous difficulties, without finding a field of action where they might organize them-

selves and give satisfaction to their personal ambitions. All these self-styled journalists, learning of the coming transformation of *Mundo Obrero* into a daily, have adhered to the C. P. with the idea in mind, no doubt, of finding a bureaucratic position and the Stalinist leadership which supported against us this class of adventurers has given them a job and is prepared to utilize them. Needless to say that these rooted Leninists are passionately anti-Trotskyist and that they submit absolutely to the will of the leadership.

The congress of the official C. P. will soon open; according to the date set, there are only a few days left for it and the discussion period which should precede every Bolshevik congress has not yet opened. The bureaucracy does not permit of reply. Everything is prepared so that the Congress, at which only those who submit to the leadership may be present, will only be a stupid parody from which not the slightest correct resolution will come out.

The other congress, convoked by the partisans of Maurin, is pompously called "unification congress". Nobody speaks of it any longer. Maurin and Co. are not thinking of bringing it together. The latest decisions of the Comintern on the Maurin group, the defeat which it suffered in the elections (especially in Madrid) and the discussions which this has engendered, have sown discord and the most lamentable confusion in the unprincipled Maurin group. One may be assured that this group has entered into a period of open decomposition, a process which, in Madrid, is very rapid, even though it is slower in Catalonia;

but inevitably, it will liquidate the "Maurinists". Some will come to the Spanish Communist Opposition, others to the official C. P., many will remain where they are; a large number will lean towards the Macia camp, since the Maurin group in Catalonia is only the Left wing, organized under a different name, of Macia's party.

#### UNEMPLOYMENT INCREASES

The majority of Madrid must effect economies, according to the councillors designated on April 12 to administer municipal policy, and for that, they are speaking of the suspension of the work begun to keep the workers employed.

5,000 Madrid workers are threatened with remaining jobless; other mayoralties which also gave some work to a few workers find themselves in the same position as that of Madrid.

Unemployment is increasing considerably. The government does not know how to find the solution of the evil. The extremely rare funds voted by the government to remedy the crisis, remain in the pockets of the enormous and numerous commissions designated to administer them. The provincial workers stream incessantly towards Madrid in the hope of finding work. Madrid is really the city least affected by unemployment, but it is hard and even impossible to find places.

And the winter is approaching threateningly filled with new events which will be sensational. It is certain that the government is disposed to machine gun the unemployed workers who dare to demand bread for themselves and their families.

—HENRI LACROIX.

Madrid, August 22, 1931