

IN THE INTERNATIONAL OF LABOR

Reviews and News of the Working Class and Revolutionary Movements

GERMANY

THE COMING WINTER

(Continued from Last Issue)

The special acuteness of the German crisis rests upon the position into which German capitalism landed through the end of the war. It lost substantial sources of raw material and its best markets. On the other hand, it established, with the aid of foreign credits, a huge productive apparatus which it could never utilize fully, which burdened it enormously, and part of which it cannot yet decide to liquidate. This is the actual reason for the special German crisis; not the Young Plan, as the Fascist demagogues say and the Centrists parrot after them. How little a change in the Young Plan could influence the crisis is shown by the absolute lack of success of the Hoover moratorium. The German bourgeoisie, which has become completely dependent upon the big powers, must fight for more in order to achieve its imperialist emancipation. The world economic crisis, which accentuated all the foreign political relations and strivings, and illuminated their direct connection with domestic policy, also evoked a turn in German foreign policy, which is represented by the Bruening of the emergency decrees, German imperialism, in possession of a powerful productive apparatus, and on the other hand pressed by the crisis, places its claims to equal rights against the French striving for hegemony. We recall the speeches of Minister Treviranus on the Polish corridor, the armored cruiser construction, Bernsdorff's disarmament demands in the League of Nations, the Russian credits, and finally, as the crowning of the whole, the German-Austrian customs union.

The German bourgeoisie suffered for the time being a crushing defeat. Not only in Geneva, but by the withdrawal of credits, it was driven by France, in the bank crash, to the very edge of the abyss. French imperialism robbed it of its Hungarian support, checkmated the game of the Eastern orientation by the Russo-French pact—and yet the German bourgeoisie has not capitulated as yet. This is above all things the expression of its internal strength, which even made possible this whole foreign political maneuver. It endeavors, by squeezing down upon the toilers to the last ounce, to hold out by the so-called self-aid until it receives aid from America or England, which will have to oppose a too strong growth of French influence. That is its second "trump". A capitulation to France would be the expression of its growing internal difficulties.

We see what enormous importance the development of the American crisis has for the fate of the German revolution.

The Policy of the German C. P.

We have already seen that the bourgeoisie could stand all the blows it received with the aid of the Social Democratic Party. We must, however, raise the question: how could the S. D. P. remain the leader of the starving millions of workers for so long a time? Formerly, it was able to keep the workers away from Communism by the preservation of small reforms. But today, it no longer preserves these small reforms, but rather participates in the most far-reaching elimination of them. A continued existence of the S. D. P. with such a scope in the present crisis can only be explained by the absolutely false and powerless policy of the Communist party.

An examination of its policy, unfortunately, confirms this assumption to the highest degree. On the basis of the Centrist construction of the third period, the policy of the C. P. rested upon three pillars: the acute revolutionary situation (1929!), social-fascism, founding of new trade unions. There was no policy of united front. By the "turn" of 1930-1931, the estimation of the situation was indeed moderated and a policy of the united front schematically dictated; the pillars of social-fascism and their own trade unions, however, remained.

With regard to social-fascism, the Left Opposition repeatedly pointed out the absolutely theoretical falsity of this conception. In practice, it formed an insurmountable wall between Communist and social democratic workers.

Separate trade union organizations (R. G. O.—Red Trade Union Organizations) could not even embrace one-fifth of the party membership. They are about one-hundredth as large as the reformist unions. As a result, it is also incapable of effectively influencing the daily struggles of the proletariat. In the trade unions themselves, the influence of the Communists, who are either expelled or else bound hand and foot by the ultra-Leftist policy, is reduced to nothing. The bourgeois press reports triumphantly that this year's trade union congress was the first since the war at which there was not a single Communist party delegate.

Neither could the party succeed in the organization of the enormous unemployed masses, for, with the deceptive expectation of an automatic radicalization of the unemployed, it rejected the proposals of the Left Opposition for forming a united front with the slogans of Russian credits, etc. The struggle against Fascism offered the best possibility of putting the party at the head of the proletariat. Here too a luckless policy destroyed everything. After the party had pursued a big-mouthed ostrich policy towards the growth of Fascism, it was seized with panic before the September

elections. Instead of vanquishing Fascism by a proletarian ideology, it endeavored to smash it by adapting itself to the Fascist ideology. There appeared the program for "national and social emancipation", the slogan of the "people's revolution" was proclaimed instead of the proletarian revolution, and finally, a direct united front was concluded with the Fascists at the referendum. This opportunistic policy, which is dictated solely by vote-catching endeavors and not by the actual relationships of the class struggle, which overlooks the fact that the united front is possible with the social democratic workers on the basis of a common principled basis of the class struggle, that there is no such basis with the blood-stained Fascist murderers, brought the C. P. G., outside of a few bankrupted lieutenants, nothing but confusion in its own ranks and a strengthened mistrust of many honest and class-conscious workers.

One would, however, fall into error in assuming that the party is not growing. The elementary pressure of the crisis is so great that it grows in spite of its policy. At all events, the fluctuations are so enormous (forty percent in 1930—fluctuation appears to be a concomitant of Stalinism) that it does not find it possible to constitute real cadres. Since the old, experienced members are mostly expelled or driven into passivity, the quality is a bad one. This is shown by the spread of anti-Semitism which is even rampant in the party press. That is how it is possible that in spite of all the election successes and in spite of the numerical strength, the party is incompetent in the decisive moments of extra-parliamentary action: in the economic struggles, in the struggle against the emergency decrees, in the bank crash. Of course, the party is completely bureaucratized; in actuality, there are no discussions and no elections. Corruption is inevitable as a concomitant of bureaucratism. It is an expression of the political bureaucratization of the party that one day it can make an unprincipled united front with the Fascists against the "social-Fascists" in the Prussian referendum; both overnight, upon command from above, without inquiring of the membership.

This disproportion between the strength and inner power of the party and the objectively revolutionary situation (however complicated it may be by Fascism) explains the otherwise obscure development of Germany. The objective situation remains the primary measure of the perspective. The objective situation is: sharpening of the crisis; collapse of banks and factories; rise of unemployment; decline of unemployment support; decline of wages; increase of hunger. The objective situation is: further collapse of the petty bourgeoisie in town and country. Even the bourgeoisie, at the sharp curves of the breath-taking decline, lives through moments of completely hopeless despair. Their old parties are disintegrating.

In the proletariat, dissatisfaction is constantly on the increase. Weak as the will to struggle still is, the will to unity is nevertheless great. All these phenomena permit the assumption that despair outside the factories and hunger inside the factories will lead to spontaneous outbreaks this Winter. All this, however, can only lead to the victory of reaction, which has up to now constantly and boldly attacked, unless the Communist party understands how to assemble and to lead the majority of the proletariat. The premises for this would be a re-arming of the party down to the ranks. That such a re-arming is possible in a very short time is demonstrated by the history of the Bolshevik party in April 1917. A re-establishment of the party upon a real united front tactic in the economic struggles, with democratic slogans, in the struggle against Fascism and Bruening, would give the party good prospects for the seizure of power. The Left Opposition is fighting for the propagation of the slogan which alone can make the situation fruitful. It examines the magnificent experiences which unfolded before its very eyes in order to learn from them, and it fights in the ranks of Communism for the revolution, come how it may. Berlin, September 1931.

—ERVIN BAUER.

What About Paterson?

(Continued from page 1)

Political Bureau! But it is quite certain that the workers in the field and in the ranks are ignorant of what the outcome has been. And that because the irresponsible cavaliers in charge of the party have neither told them, nor attempted to make an explanation, nor attempted to draw the tragic lessons from the results, nor attempted to examine into the "line" in the light of experiences gained—in a word: the Posters, Browder and Georges perpetrated a crime against the movement with their obstinately stupid policy in Paterson, and they now conveniently wash their hands of the whole matter—"We don't know what has become of the Paterson strike" . . . and they don't seem to care.

George insinuatingly refers to the guilt of the "T. U. U. L. (which) might do something about it". The trick will not work. These cheap politicians are trying to unload their joint responsibility upon Foster alone (who is the formal head of the T. U. U. L.), because Browder, George and Co. are conducting an underground factional fight against Foster. The responsibility for the Paterson tragedy rests upon the shoulders of all of them. Let them explain. Let the worker-Communists in the party call the bureaucrats and their policies to task!

British Crisis Sharpens

Militant Correspondents Describe Moods of the Workers

(Continued from page 1)

ignored in their slogans: then the Atlantic Fleet went on strike and the Daily Worker filled its front page with babblings about the Atlantic Fleet but avoided any definite appeal to the sailors; that is they did not urge any form of organization or action upon the sailors but merely applauded their action. The German Communist Paper has been suspended for four weeks for a direct appeal to the English sailors whilst the English Communist Daily avoids this and beyond sending "greetings" plays no part in the sailors' struggle whatsoever.

The need is for effective organization of all the workers for mass demonstrations and for strike action: for a real revolutionary leadership: for courage and determination. Indecisiveness, hesitation avoidance of direct and clear preparation for widespread strike action, friendly overtures to the "Left" of the I. L. P., talk of the General Election, hiding of the revolutionary implications of the struggle, these things are helping to confuse and weaken the workers and to prevent real resistance to the economy cuts and to the heavy wage-reductions threatened. Whether such a leadership can come forward in the party it is impossible to say, but there are signs that efforts are being made to force the issues into open Party discussion.

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The full extent of the National Government's economies are now known: it is beginning to be clear that this attack is preliminary to widespread wage reductions, affecting all sections of the working class. Talk of "balancing the budget" has now given place to talk of the need to revive industry and trade. For the financial crisis is only the reflection of the existing industrial crisis: the outflow of gold is due to the increasing excess of imports over exports, so great that the enormous tribute levied by British capitalism from foreign investments cannot cover it, and only a revival of industry and increased exports can save the whole of British imperialism. Because under capitalism present methods must go on the only "solution" possible for the ruling class is wage-cuts. The Budget has been "balanced" by reducing the wages of state employees and by cutting the benefits of the unemployed; trade can only be revived by heavy wage reductions in the principal industries.

Arthur Hayday, M. P., in his presidential address to the Trades Union Congress said: "To restore our export trade to equilibrium, if the wage-cutting policy were adopted, would involve wage reductions of 20 to 30 per cent". That the wage-cutting policy will be adopted we need not doubt: it is as certain as the fact that the trade union and labor leaders will not offer any real resistance to the Government's economies. For the extent of the wage reductions and of the strength of the workers' resistance to these demands depends very much upon the nature of the opposition to the National Government's economies.

Parliamentary Opposition

The Labor Party's "opposition" has been revealed as one of words and very weak "words" at that! Indeed, there is widespread suspicion that the whole affair has been "rigged": this instinctive feeling is very widespread among the workers.

The role of the Labor opposition is clear enough: it is to divert the growing fury and revolt of the workers into "safe" parliamentary channels. More than ever before is the parliamentary deceit clear to all and the uselessness of the Labor Party's opposition opens the way to the development of a powerful mass movement led by the Communist Party.

In the weakness and cowardice of the Party leadership lies great danger for the workers of England. Hesitant for days, unwilling to move without sanction from Moscow; locals, all initiative destroyed by the suppression of discussion and by the attacks on critical comrades, did nothing save run meetings, and the party as a whole could return no answer to the question of the workers "what do you suggest we should do?" This remains unchanged: the party has no definite policy and even distorts and alters resolutions passed by militant trade union branches in order to avoid being committed too definitely. Where steps have been taken by locals, results have followed but in the vast majority of districts the workers are being offered denunciations of the T. U. C., of the Labor Party, of the I. L. P., and nothing beyond that. The need of the hour is the uniting of the organized and unorganized workers together with the unemployed in each district for action; mass demonstrations and preparation for widespread strike action. No other course is possible save confusion.

The Party

The implications of widespread action against the economies are obvious: any real and effective struggle would intensify the crisis and line up openly the two classes for warfare with the state forces at the disposal of the employees. A revolutionary party should face the implications, prepare the workers to face them and lead into struggle a conscious working class: to avoid clear explanation and preparation is treachery. The party is avoiding it and is thus almost indistinguishable from the Independent Labor Party.

A View of the Struggle in Madrid

The repression against the Communist Party of Spain grows tighter every day. The end of the party congress in the Asturias was marked by the arrest of the principal leaders of the party, administratively, without misdemeanor. . . Communists and syndicalists populate the prisons and floating jails by the hundreds.

In the proletarian sections, the repression arouses indignation; but the party, instead of gathering together the workers' organizations by a real united front, giving to the action undertaken a vast scope pressing the socialist and syndicalist leaders to the wall—organizes with its own forces "mass" demonstrations. I had the occasion to participate Sunday in two of them which I will describe to you:

From morning on, together with members of the Youth, we circled around the proletarian neighborhood, in many streets resounded the voice of the *Mundo Obrero* newboys and our young friends pointed out to us every news stand with satisfaction. On a lamp-post, a small poster pasted high up: *Mundo Obrero* has been seized by the republican police. Numerous stickers: "Form your Soviets in every factory", and in this Saint Denis of Madrid where the party in the last elections had a large number of votes, there is a warm enthusiasm for Communism.

We arrive at an illegal meeting of a nucleus. An old militant speaks to us of the great difficulties of organization and work. "The party meetings, even though they are legal, are forbidden, but we go off a great distance and the meetings are held anyway." As a group, we go off to the place of the demonstration where we arrive a few minutes before 8 (that is, much in advance, for the time in Spain. . .) The same spectacle presents itself to me as in Paris: general indecision amulating groups, cafe terraces occupied by demonstrators. Little by little, the circulation becomes intense, almost a thousand young workers are scattered there. Eight o'clock has struck about an hour ago. . . and the police (12 mounted and 20 on foot and a few flat-faces) begin to "scrape off" and to "filter through". Where a small determined group would have made possible at least a relative demonstration, this initiative is left to a handful of cops who attack every small group in the usual police manner.

No shouting, no singing, the police become unnerved, the horsemen mount the

sidewalks. . . a group of Youth take refuge in the neighboring hospital, the cops receive a few stones, pistols are unhesitatingly drawn, a few shots fired and the entrenched workers are dislodged, not without arrests. . . Something of an agitation continues on the place for a few hours.

The next day, the second demonstration was to take place at the prison. This prison surrounded by a huge square of high walls, composed of central buildings arranged in a cross, offered a surprising spectacle: Almost a thousand workers, very young for the most part, formed an endless line between the prison wall and a cordon of police. . .

Their hands strengthened by their advantages of the morning, the police this time took the offensive brutally. It was an abrupt assault, the cordon of visitors was arbitrarily swept away. A platoon of cavalry, sabres drawn, charged, followed by a hundred "seguridads" (security police), who, with their long swords did not miss any of those spared by the cavalry.

Our position not having been wiped out yet, my comrade and I sought to move on; but, impassable and determined, two "seguridads" barred the road by drawing their sabres. We are forced to retrace our steps. By misfortune, cavalry and footmen have turned about face and they approach to "clear out" our corner. Nothing to do about it. We must "get out". We pass with a few thracks.

In small groups, the workers discuss this new defeat, where a thousand workers who came to demonstrate were dispersed by 150 guards! The more we would be the better, said the numerous workers, and the attitude of the local N. C. of L. was severely criticized. But why, then, does the party allow its anarchist leaders to sink off? Why doesn't it make proposals for a united front?

"Todos a la calle!" Result: ten seriously wounded, numerous arrests. A comrade informs me: This evening there's a meeting of the Labor Defense, a Cortes deputy, a sympathizer, will speak. It is an invitation and we shall go there. The hall doors are closed, and a troop of Guardia Civil, mounted, rides around, provokingly. The meeting is prohibited and the street belongs to this civil guards, with green uniforms, light yellow trappings, black oil-cloth beacons, swarthy complexioned country lads, whose hands never leave the pommel of their sabres. We mix with the groups and make acquaintance with a party com-

guishable from the Independent Labor Party. Time is all important but the signs are that the leadership of the English party will fail to utilize this great chance and that their failure will be paid for heavily by the English workers.

It is the task of Left Oppositionists in England to rouse the party membership against the present policy and methods of the party leaders: to force discussion and full consideration of the position immediately and to win to the party workers who will fight inside it for a return to the Communism of Lenin and Trotsky.

—ANGLICUS.

London, September 15, 1931.

A LETTER FROM CORNWALL

The naval mutiny was a nerve-shattering blow to the Government, of course, and this financial crisis, with the suspension of the gold standard, will reduce them to second childhood. Some of the London capitalist papers, judging by today's *Daily Telegraph* are trying to minimize the effect of the suspension by pointing out that it comes after the budget has been balanced. Today's *Telegraph* keeps up its courage as follows: "The budget is balanced, and the budget will remain balanced. Half or more than half the sting of this enforced submission is removed now that the consequences can be faced by the British Government with fortitude and composure."

Previously the article had admitted that it was precisely with the object of preventing Great Britain from going off the gold standard that the present National Government was formed. "Events however," it pathetically remarks, "have been too strong and too hard for them." Then it goes on trying to keep up the courage of its readers.

"There is no need to fear a flight from the pound on the parallel of the flight from the mark of the franc. British currency is not inflated. The financial condition of the country is fundamentally sound. Nothing therefore in the shape of a currency slide need be anticipated, though some depreciation must be expected. But it can be reduced to a minimum if the British people will keep their heads as, by their official declaration, the Prime Minister and his colleagues are resolved to keep theirs."

When the news of the mutiny came the reaction was much the same. There was an endeavor to show that it was hardly to be called a mutiny at all. True, the men flatly disobeyed the orders to get up anchors and refused to go to sea. But they did not lay hands on their officers or work havoc on the ships. The fine tradition of the British navy for discipline and devotion remain intact, etc., etc.

The reaction of the workers I was able to speak to was one of pure joy. They were delighted when the news came through. . . .

—M. SHOOTER.

Helston, September 21, 1931

U. S. S. R. LETTERS FROM OPPOSITIONISTS

After having served my three years of deportations, I have obtained a "minus 20" and I am now at N. Here (and in the district) I have found an important group of deported Oppositionists. Here are also "old ones" who have served their three years and have obtained their "minus"; there are also youth and a former capitulator. The latter was sent here under Article 58 for three years, following the mass arrests made among the capitulators in the Spring of this year. These arrests were made in connection with our leaflets (on the trial of the saboteurs, etc.). Even though these leaflets were issued by our active group in Moscow, the repressions strongly acted also those who had left us. In general, the publication of each leaflet is accompanied in Moscow by raids in mass (and frequently by arrests) among all those who, in any way whatsoever, ever had anything to do with the Opposition.

The deported youth produced a very happy impression. Most of them are workers; they joined the Opposition in the last two years and they are completely unknown to us. They came to our ideas independently, "spontaneously". On their own initiative, often without any contact with the organization, they began the factional work, they issued leaflets, etc. This youth today constitutes a very important actor in the deportation. How many are there of them? A thousand, two thousand, or more?—I find it hard to say: my horizon of observation is too limited to judge. At all events, they are numerous.

From the solitary, only unimportant letters are allowed to go through. In the solidarity of Verchne-Uralsk, we are two hundred and fifty and this number is constantly augmented. We have learned that following a protest of those in solitary confinement at Verchne-Uralsk, they took away the "initiator" of this protest, comrade Yanuchevsky. Since collective protests are not permitted in the solitary, we proceed in the following manner: a comrade makes an individual protest and the others adhere to it. This was also the case with comrade Yanuchevsky. He was conveyed to Moscow, to the internal prison of the G. P. U. and he is condemned, it seems, to ten (!) years in a concentration camp. . . .

Since then it has been months that we have had no news of him, nor do we know where he is or what has become of him. That is just how the Schwaibes disappeared without a trace, after having spent many months of detention in the internal prison of the G. P. U. One of them is seriously affected by tuberculosis.

We have learned even if after a great delay, of the document, magnificent in its persuasive force, of Christian Georgievich Rakovsky on the trial of the saboteurs. Christian G. shows why sabotage has developed and upon what it supports itself. Ch. G. says that on the basis of his experience in the work at Paris, he could give vast and valuable material on the connections of the saboteurs with the White emigration and the French bourgeoisie.

Comrade Rakovsky has been placed under extremely painful material conditions. The state of his health arouses among all of us a tremendous uneasiness. There is no doubt that the Stalinist clique has condemned Rakovsky to a sure physical destruction. Continual house-raids, the encirclement of G. P. U. provocateurs absolute isolation, pernicious illness, material privation—these are the conditions under which Christian Georgievich lives. From the political point of view, Rakovsky is in an active and valiant state of mind; he reacts immediately to all the events but his writings reach us very rarely. . . . July 1931

—P.

FROM AN ECONOMIC DIRECTOR

The situation is critical in the field of construction material: Gigantic and urgent constructions like the Kuznetstroy and the Magnitogorsk are guaranteed with only 75% of the construction material; construction on the average is assured for 50% or less. How, under these conditions, can one count on the realization of the construction plan? 518 factories which, according to the plan, should be completed and put to work in the third year of the five year plan, will not attain this point. But instead of giving up the five year plan, in four years and of reducing the unrealizable program in a methodical manner, and thereby assuring the urgent constructions with 100% in construction material, the Stalinist leadership continues to build the factories. . . . by half. The criterion of bureaucratic prestige dominates everything. The wastes of "anarchy" attains an unbelievable degree: the economic organizations snatch construction material from each other.

Under the unbridled pressure of the apparatus, we endeavor to follow untenable rhythms. The tension of forces is terrific. Everybody is fatigued, including, of course, the stratum of the workers who are sincerely enthusiastic over industrialization. All this feeds the Right wing sentiments. . . . August 16, 1931

♦♦♦ READ AND SUBSCRIBE TO THE MILITANT

—RAY.