

# IN THE INTERNATIONAL OF LABOR

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

### LETTER FROM GERMANY

## The New Party Turn

The Menace of Fascism Increases

The dramatic and gigantic convulsions of world capitalism are at present unfolding over a far vaster scene than that of Germany. All attention is converging on England. However, from the point of view of the revolution, the German field must not be lost sight of for a single moment. For the economic reserves of British imperialism are incomparably greater than those of Germany, which have been dilapidated and wiped out by the war. Besides, and that is the main factor as proven by the everyday experiences, no Communist party exists in reality in England; while in Germany, despite all the mistakes, we have a Communist party that counts as a serious factor.

Nevertheless, the internal situation in Germany is not devoid in important events these last few weeks. Above all, there is the reappearance of the National Socialists on the political arena, as expressed on the one hand, by their return to parliament and, on the other, by extra-parliamentary actions. Thus, on the Jewish New Year the National Socialists organized a veritable little pogrom, similar to their attack on the shop fronts last year. The measure taken against them are of no account, the ring leaders were not even summoned to court. We see therefore, that in view of threatening weather, the bourgeoisie is once more forced to utilize the National Socialists after discarding them for six months, and despite the internal successes of the Bruening policy, it is obliged to consider once more seriously the prospect of Fascist arms.

#### Fascism Again Shows Its Fangs

At the time when the bourgeoisie withdrew the Fascists from parliament and the great strike struggles showed that the trade union bureaucracy was still quite sufficient to "pacify" the working class, we characterized this as an "honorable" retreat of the National Socialists, as a clever economy action of the bourgeoisie which only nourishes its bloodhounds to the degree to which it needs them—while several panic sowers raved about an approaching Fascist putsch. And in the same manner, while Thaelmann bragged about the "decomposition" of the Nazis we maintained that they would return, because neither the objective factors (the crisis, the rule of the petty bourgeoisie) nor the subjective factors (unsound policy of the C. P., the state of division and indecision of the proletariat) had disappeared. Experience has proved our contentions to be correct. In the meantime, fascism has gone through several transformations in its structure ("legalization") which makes its dependence on finance capital, if possible, even more apparent than before and which has made the road toward coalition still more accessible than was previously the case.

On the other hand, Bruening is constantly making attempts to extend his base, since his position is extremely precarious. The extra-parliamentary defeat at Geneva was this time quite complete. Despite this, German capitalism has as yet been reluctant to capitulate, it still hangs on to its program: equal rights, instead of subordination to the other capitalist robbers. This position is possible only due to the incessant and furious attack on the standard of living of the working class, due to the unlimited and unheard of support granted to the crippled private enterprises by the state. With this aim in view, the different provinces, Prussia and Saxony among others, have issued for their part, decrees that grant the reduction of salaries for the functionaries, layoffs, tariff increases, the suppression of the budget for cultural subsidies, layoffs of teachers, reduction of pensions, in short, all the measures that go under the name of national self-defense. Simultaneously, there has been a new, violent attack against the working class.

#### The Communist Party Changes Its Course

On the occasion of the mutiny of the British sailors, which produced great enthusiasm among the German workers, more than half of the Communist papers have again been proscribed. In addition, Bruening has ordered the creation of special tribunals. This is very significant among other preparations for the winter, since a great number of militant revolutionists have already been arrested. These events, the unadmitted defeat of the referendum and the directives of the E. C. have forced the party to change its course. This expressed itself also in a change in the personnel. Instead of Thaelmann, the notorious Heinz Neumann is now being played up. In any case, it is surprising (and after all the years of the "third period" it is even unbelievable) that offers of discussion are made to the socialist leaders at public mass meetings, which has not failed to produce an embarrassing effect on these people, who have taken recourse to the vilest sort of police tactics. In replying to the program of "National Self-defense" with concrete counter-proposals, with the program of the "Red Self-defense", we find a crying contradiction to the practice pursued up to the present by the party. In the same way, at the last congress of the Red Trade Union Opposition, there was no longer any talk of the creation of new trade unions, but rather the work in the Free Trade Unions was stressed. But what is unfortunate about all these healthy attempts,

is the fact, that for reasons of prestige the former policy cannot be liquidated and continues in existence altogether inorganically side by side with the latter and in contradiction to it.

#### Social Democrats Discussing Russo-German Relations

The social democracy has likewise been forced to take a much greater political initiative. And it cannot be denied that it employs a certain aptness in doing this. It is struggling persistently and even resorts to old articles by Engels to justify its theory of the "lesser evil".\* It is particularly occupied with an intense discussion on Russo-German relations, for the present as well as after the revolution. It denies that Russian credits would have any effect in obtaining work for the German workers, bringing the most ridiculous arguments against them, which shows what a tremendous propaganda force Communism possesses and to what degree the Opposition was justified when it proposed, two years ago, the slogan (the slogan of large, long-term credits to the Soviet Union—Ed.), which the party characterized as "counter-revolutionary". Under that same angle, the socialist party is also carrying on its agitation on, "Is a Soviet Germany Possible?", still "proving" in a dishonest and inept manner, that a Soviet Germany would not be able to get sufficient economic support from Soviet Russia.

All this in reality only proves in what an extraordinary dilemma the Socialist party already finds itself. It is unfortunate that even the leadership of the C. P. is forced to recognize the fact that its members in the factories are incapable of facing this question, simple as it actually is. This is the punishment for the education carried on in the Stalinist spirit and in the sermons on the development of the revolutions in the "national" framework during the last few years.

### In Great Britain

## Developments in England and Ireland

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In less than a week from now the General Election will be over; in the meantime all parties are as one in their efforts to veil the class issues that lie at the root of the recent events in Great Britain.

Mr. Snowden—two months ago the financial genius of the Labour Party—has described Labour's policy as "Bolshevism gone mad". Mr. MacDonald, now leading the Conservatives, explains that he is still a Socialist, Mr. Thomas endeavors to prove that the policy of the late 'National' Government saved the workers from increased unemployment. From the platform of the Labour Party, Mr. Henderson explains that he is not opposed to the idea of a national government, and spends most of his time trying to convince his followers that the Labour Government did not agree to 'cuts', or rather that they only agreed "provisionally". All the old catchwords, "tariffs", "free-trade", "currency reform", "nation before party" and so on, are being trundled forth a hundred times a day in newspapers, on posters, and from all platforms.

Sir Oswald Mosley's 'New Party' is now openly fascist; its programme is one of open dictatorship and around its candidates are grouped trained athletes for the defence of their meetings. But the workers have replied to this in no uncertain fashion. It is impossible for Mosley to hold a meeting without it ending in a pitched battle. At Birmingham 15,000 workers howled down the speakers and then, after dealing with the stewards, chased the speakers from the platform. In Glasgow an 'admission by ticket' meeting was stormed by thousands of workers and broken up.

There are twenty-five Communist candidates; already some eight or nine of them are in prison. The authorities are making every effort to cripple the Party. Candidates and their agents are jailed, the printer of the *Daily Worker* has been sentenced to nine months imprisonment and scores of local unemployed leaders are in prison. (This is an indication of what will happen after the election, for the employers will certainly begin a big wage-reduction offensive resistance will be met by all the forces at their command.) Provided the party works along the right lines it should gain support and added influence: this throws great responsibilities upon comrades of the Left Opposition for the present leadership is incapable of doing other than blunder from left to right and add confusion to the already confused state of things existing.

The party's election campaign has been very badly organized and their policy has been one of confusion from start to finish. The insistence of the locals in putting up 'demonstrative' candidates has partly prevented the carrying out of the original plan of 'concentration' upon selected constituencies. But in London, acting under Party instructions, many party members are deserting their areas and keeping in places where a party candidate is going to the poll. So

While we are writing these lines, a very important crisis is taking place in the Socialist party. The leadership of the party has put the alternative before the opposition to cease all practical activity or to face expulsion. This crass measure is undoubtedly explained by its fear of the winter. The leadership wants in advance to deprive all eventual rebellions of an organizing center. How can all this end up? The policy of the C. P. during the last few years prevents this opposition from turning toward the Communists. If it does not capitulate, it will be forced to create a new centrist party.

#### The Social-Democratic Opposition and the New Centrist Party

Such a party is historically outlived in Germany and the historic failure of the Two-and-a-Half International will also always serve as an enormous obstacle to such innovations. On the other hand, the tendency in favor of such a party is very strong.\* This is due to the fact that many have forgotten or have not at all gone through the experience of the Independents, whereas the mistakes of the C. P. exist before the very eyes and in the memory of all. Such a centrist party will naturally lead to a great confusion and will be a great obstacle in the development of the German revolution.

In conclusion, I want to give another example that illustrates vividly the physical decline of the German working class under the crisis and under the yoke of the decrees. The German professors do not now have been so proud that Germany outnumbered France in jobs and cannon fodder, are emitting cries of indignation and despair. For the first time, the percentage for the number of births in Germany has fallen below that for France. While in France there are 18.1 births per 1000 inhabitants, there are only 17.5 per 1000 in Berlin.

—E. BAUER.

\*Referring to the support ("toleration") given the Bruening government in view of the "greater evil"—prospective fascist domination. —Ed.

\*In the next issue of the *Militant* we will bring an article dealing with the developments of this tendency and with creation of the new centrist "Socialist Party"—Ed.

## Manchurian Events and the Communists

(Continued from page 1)  
year (1931) . . . the participants were only the vanguard of the vanguard. The proletariat is very weakly organized." The defeat of the "red army" at Changsha in August 1930, and the subsequent regime of white terror made the E. C. C. I. shudder at the consequences of its own policy, and was the real reason for replacing the Li-Li-Sian leadership in order to save the face of the C. I. and to sidetrack the wrath of the Party ranks.

The letter blamed Li-Li-Sian for the failure "to organize and strengthen the revolutionary base, to unite the Soviet districts, to consolidate the conquests already made . . . to organize the retreat and draw in the reserves", and for the attempt to carry out "the tasks of the occupation of Changsha and the preparatory march on Hankow which the Red Army has not the strength to fulfill." Upon such feeble arguments the E. C. C. I. announced the line of Li-Li-Sian to be principally antagonistic and mutually exclusive from the line of the E. C. C. I. and to be anti-marxist and anti-Leninist". They adopted two formulas: to consolidate the revolutionary base and "to struggle for the victory in one or several provinces".

#### The Protective Ambiguity of the Stalinist Formulas

The Stalinist directives are always double-meaning and therefore infallible. Since the sixth congress of the party (1928), the perspective of the party had been to "struggle for victory in one or several provinces." Whoever was doubtful of this perspective at the time of low tide of the revolution was called a liquidator and counter-revolutionary. But when the most loyal and most consistent Stalinist, Li-Li-Sian, seriously strove for this perspective (capture of Changsha and the preparatory march on Hankow), then he was all of a sudden found not to have consolidated the revolutionary base, he was branded as anti-Leninist and having principally nothing in common with the line of the E. C. C. I.

The letter of the E. C. C. I. was fatal to the party and opened a new page in its life or, rather, its degeneration. Politically it means the complete ideological disarming of the party, the loss of its perspective and orientation. Hitherto the whole party had been educated by the perspective, although a false one, of the immediate seizure of power "in one or several provinces" and "the armed uprising in the big and biggest cities", but with the downfall of Li-Li-Sian in the party, this perspective was scattered to the winds. This perspective is replaced by such empty slogans as "Defend the Red Army", "Defend the Soviet Government", "Defend the Soviet Union", "Down with the Kuo Min Tang", "Down with Imperialism", etc.

In principle the party rejected the democratic slogans. The slogans of armed uprising and Soviets are not taken off the agenda. It is necessary to prepare. But either this perspective will not be taken seriously by the party ranks, or the party in the future will head into another catastrophe, the blame for which will be laid upon the executives. Such is the mechanism of the Stalinist leadership. Therefore, the letter of the E. C. C. I. swore that only those who have nothing in common with Bolshevism can interpret this line as a line of retreat. Just the contrary, this is a completely disordered retreat which sowed confusion among the ranks of the party and lessened their confidence in the party leadership.

#### The Weakening of the Party Apparatus

Organizationally, the letter of the E. C. C. I. means the mechanical removal and the expulsion of responsible but not so meekly obedient party workers. Most of the old leading members and cadres were removed and replaced by inexperienced and theoretically poorly educated students returned from Moscow who enjoyed absolutely no confidence in the party and who are distinguished by their absolute obedience to the directives of the E. C. C. I. (its representative was Miff. Therefore, these students are also called Miff's-group). Some of the former leaders were relegated to local work. Others were expelled and formed a Right opposition which bears a prominent economist tendency. This opposition at first attracted many workers in Shanghai and North China and has its own centre and local organizations. Still other important workers, removed from positions, went over openly to the enemy, and organized skillfully the spy work which led to the arrest of tens of important party comrades (among them comrade Hsiang-Chu-Fa), to the disclosure of underground party organizations, and to the standstill of party work. The arrested comrades were shot immediately without any ceremony.

The party press often complains of the unprincipled and personal fights of the different groups. They become distrustful of each other and lack the spirit of comradeship. So long as the free discussion of the problems of the revolution is prohibited, and the leadership dominated by careerists, and the party demands obedience and lip-service from the members (members who fear to be expelled save themselves by formal recantations; those who are able and just severing are found outside the party); so long as these conditions exist, the party, as an organization which groups together men struggling for ideas, ceases to exist. The Chinese party is thus liquidated and destroyed by Stalin. He has completed what Chiang Kai-Shek has

left undone. All that remains is a faint shadow of the party.

Yet we read in an appeal to the Comintern, R. I. L. U., etc., by the E. C. C. of the Chinese C. P. that it spoke as "the Communist party of China with its 190,000 members and the millions of workers and peasants—!" (Inprecor, No. 38). And still the rabid reaction rages throughout China. In fact, in the Shanghai Eastern district—the biggest industrial district—there are party members only in one big factory, numbering about 20, but when meetings were called, those attending were not as many as five! The late Hsiang Chu-Fa, in his report to the fourth plenum of the party (January of this year) said: "The red trade union movement has sustained great loss and damage, the membership in the whole country greatly decreased. To take the example of Shanghai, the membership (in the red trade unions) has dwindled from 4,000 to about 1,000. In Shanghai, we have no connection with many workers' struggles, there are many strikes which we cannot lead."

In other industrial cities, the situation both of the party and the red trade union movement is only worse. There is not the least indication to prove that things have improved for the better.

The aforementioned letter of the E. C. C. I. has set the central tasks of the day for the party as follows: (1) to select and consolidate immediately the real red army of workers and peasants. Even at the beginning it numbers only 40,000 to 50,000 strong. (2) to establish immediately a powerful and capable Soviet government with a majority of Communists and get the best non-party workers, peasants, and soldiers to join it. (3) In the non-soviet districts to develop the economic and political mass struggle and in the process of struggles to organize the masses.

#### Actual Conditions in the "Soviet" Areas

Thus the chief attention of the Stalinist bureaucrats is paid to the Red Army and the Soviet government, and the slogans "Defend the Red Army", "Defend the Soviet government" are written as placards on all occasions whenever there is a big event taking place. The workers in the cities are induced not to believe in their own organizations and strength but to believe in the liberating role of some force outside them—the Red Army and the Soviet districts. But what are the real conditions in the Soviet districts and the Red Army?

First of all, it was Stalin who said at the 16th Congress of the C. P. S. U. that in China "it was said that there is formed a Soviet government." But later on the letter of the E. C. C. I. categorically denied this and said: "there is not yet a Soviet government in China; if there is, it exists only in the leaders, on paper, and is not a realized power." A letter published by the party organ, *Party Construction* discloses the real condition in the Soviet districts which entirely confirms the views expressed by the Left Opposition. Let us quote a part of it.

"Concerning the influence of the party among the masses," the letter from the Western Hunan and Hupeh Soviet district runs, "because the propaganda work was not done on a general scale and done badly, the masses . . . consider the Communist party is little better than the Kuo Min Tang, and in many places the masses adopt the attitude that since they are the subjects, it doesn't matter what party comes to rule them".

"Most party leaders in the Soviet districts are kept secret from the party ranks. The Communist members do not know what the Communist party is. At the time of the suppression of the Wang-Ching-Wei group (Kuo Min Tang Reorganizationists), they wept at home because they thought they had joined the reorganizationists. The responsible party workers forget the party. For three or four months, the party organizations and nuclei have not held meetings." In the mass organizations there are no party groups.

"The majority of the comrades of the red districts are corrupt, become bureaucrats and express a Right wing tendency. They think that since political power is already conquered, nothing more is to be done, they engage themselves for whole days in the hunt of women. . . . "The responsible comrades of the Soviet government do not give solutions to the general practical demands of the masses. At the same time the rich peasants occupy two thirds of the positions in it. The majority of the commissars are bureaucrats, so that the masses have no confidence in the Soviets and address the commissars as "sir".

just as they addressed the former governors."

"Owing to the fact that the masses do not understand the Soviet, therefore in the red districts there are concealed many reactionary elements, and the Soviets are helpless toward them. . . . "Party Construction"—N. 3-3-1931).

#### Mismanagement in Peasant Affairs

The editor of this organ pointed out that such things happen also in the Kiangsi Soviet districts. The party press and the letter of the E. C. C. I. complained that the rich peasants, and even the small landlords creep into the Soviets, into the Red Army and into the new organs of power. The land was divided in favor of the rich peasants; the poor peasants, the agricultural laborers and the coolies are not organized into unions. The Soviets are not elected but appointed, etc., etc. But the Chinese Stalinists, together with the E. C. C. I. attribute all this to the faulty line of Li-Li-Sian. Therefore they issue on paper such slogans as "Against corruptions", "Against bureaucracy", "Against the Right tendency".

They fail to understand that the causes lie deeper: in the nature of the peasantry, which is completely incapable of independent political action; that when the city proletariat remains passive, it is inevitable that the peasant guerrilla warfare degenerates.

The red peasant partisans have withstood three campaigns started by the Nanking government against them during the past year, even though troops, armed with modern munitions, often outnumbered them two or three times. Yet the red partisan army has defeated them successively, killing two divisions commanders. The weakness of the government army lies in the fact that dissensions exist among the generals and the soldiers are not quite willing to fight (they complain against their officers, underpay, bad treatment), while the red partisan army enjoys the support of the peasantry; this gives them a big advantage in conducting the war. If Chiang Kai-Shek is helpless even in the face of the red partisans in one province, Kiangsi, when in the cities, dark reaction governs, how can he cope with the upheaval of the entire nation?

The Kiangsi partisan warfare in a certain sense is a standing indictment of the crimes of Stalinist leadership in the second revolution, when it capitulated before the bourgeoisie. This time the Stalinist leadership capitulates before the peasantry, concentrates its whole work in the partisan warfare, dissolves the party into the peasant masses, giving up city work; makes the proletariat look up to the red partisan army as its savior just as it formerly made the proletariat believe in the bourgeois Kuo Min Tang as its savior. Let us entertain no illusions. The peasantry either follows the bourgeoisie or follows the proletariat.

It is just at this time, when the Manchurian events stir the whole nation, when the broad masses are indignant over the non-resistant policy of the Kuo Min Tang, when the mass movement flows over the dams of the Kuo Min Tang, when the students and the down-trodden masses come out spontaneously and write in handwritten placards against Japanese imperialism, just at this time, when the leadership of the Communist party is required, there is no Communist party. In face of such a great hurricane which arouses millions to the danger, the Chinese party completely fails to understand the meaning of this invasion as the grabbing of Chinese territory, the wringing of concessions and special rights which are possible because the Chinese Revolution is at its lowest point. The party sees the Japanese invasion only as an intervention against the Chinese revolution and the Soviet Union. Therefore their slogans, "Down with the intervention against the Chinese Revolution and the Soviet Union", "Defend the Red Army and Soviets", etc., are not grasped by the masses.

What an irony of leadership if we are to remember the following part of the letter of E. C. C. I. which said: "The E. C. C. I. deems it not only feasible but necessary to maneuver with the imperialists—we must at the same time with all means weaken the alliance of imperialism with the Chinese counter-revolution, to avoid the decisive conflict with it till we consolidate ourselves, to postpone the decisive struggle with the imperialists."

The Manchurian event is a great warning to the revolutionary Communists in China when a national ferment is not

(Continued on page 4)

## Third Annual MILITANT DANCE

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