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# THE MILITANT



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## Forward in Lenin's Way!

The Left Opposition Alone Carries on the Work of Ilyitch

Once again, the working class of Europe is facing a period of colossal historical opportunities. The world crisis of capitalism has produced a revolutionary situation in Central Europe. Communism is about to stand another gigantic test. Clarity, firmness, Bolshevik boldness are the demands of the minute. And it is precisely at this time, that the memory of Lenin is alive as the revolutionary inspiration of all working class fighters. Lenin represents the victory of the Russian revolution, the flaming torch of the world revolution, it is to his glorious example that the militant proletariat turns at all moments of crisis, as a well of confidence, as a reservoir of revolutionary power.

Above all else, Lenin taught active realism in the class struggle. His was not a teaching of dead letters, but of living action. He analyzed, he divided his friends from his enemies, he calculated the right moment and the point of vantage and he struck. The dry and impotent formula of "social Fascism", the unrealistic conception of the "single reactionary mass" were unknown to him.

When Lenin arrived in the Petrograd of the February revolution, he did not find a working class ready to follow him blindly. His own disciples did not even grasp the grand sweep of his revolutionary ideas. He was not deceived by the trend nor by the particular stage of developments. He knew and he stressed that the masses can only learn from their own experiences, and he was determined to teach them, patiently but surely. Confident, intransigent and firm, he proceeded to carry out the task he had set for himself. Success met his resolute, but patient efforts.

What Lenin taught, the breath of life he breathed into the struggle of the proletariat for power, is today, unfortunately, entirely forgotten by those who usurp his place in the Communist International. The German Communist Party, the section of the vanguard of the international working class that is confronted with the greatest task of revolutionary action at the present is further away than ever from the road of Lenin. Its leaders are incapable of seizing the importance of the various factors in the situation. The ideological devastation brought about by Stalinism since the death of Lenin prevents them from mastering the political task of the moment: the unification of the working class of the country against the menacing and deadly attack of Fascism.

Lenin never stipulated the absolute necessity of the unconditional acceptance by the Russian working class of Bolshevik leadership in the renouveau of the Kornilov offense. In defeating Russian Hitlerism. He confidently looked in a united front with the social democratic workers and forced their Menshevik leaders to reveal their true colors. And he proved the superiority of Bolshevik leadership, defeating not only Kornilov, but the Kerenskis, the Tselidzes and the Dams and Tseretellis with them.

Before the arrival of Lenin, the Russian party was also derailed, dragged into the conciliatorist swamp by Stalin and by Kamenev. But the strength of the Bolshevik idea made possible a quick rearming of the party of Lenin and enabled it to pass through its internal crisis and to lead the Russian working class in triumph. The Bolshevik idea is not dead. The German Left Opposition, under the direct participation of Leon Trotsky, the co-fighter and the comrade of Lenin, is keeping the ideas of Leninism alive. The rearming of the German party is on the order of the day. Its glorious tradition dating back to the days of the Spartacists, to the stirring memory of its valiant pioneers, to Rosa and Karl, cannot fail to raise it to the high level of militancy of those days. The last word concerning the fate of the German working class has not yet been spoken.

The Stalinist epigones, rotten to the core and infested by the putrid theory of socialism in one country, are preparing to leave the German workers isolated in the battles to come. They want peace: the five year plan must first be completed. What is at stake is not only the five year plan, but the life itself of Workers' Russia. Stalin and his faction have been so entangled by their own mistakes, so disorientated by the policies of vulgar empiricism that they have lost all perspective. The alarm must be sounded. The situation must be saved. The Communist ranks must once more be awakened by the pungent, stimulating ideas of Ilyitch.

When Lenin first set foot on Russian soil in 1917, he addressed the following simple and strong words to the masses who had come to greet him:

"Dear comrades, soldiers, sailors and workers! I am happy to greet in your person the victorious Russian revolution, to greet you as the vanguard of the proletarian army of the world. . . The hour is not distant when the peoples, answering the call of our comrade Karl Liebknecht will take arms against their exploiters, the capitalists. . . The Russian revolution, achieved by you, introduces a new epoch. Long live the world revolution!"

The hour is not distant today, when the hosts of Lenin in Russia will have to answer the call of the hosts of Liebknecht in Germany. The Stalinist regime is revealing itself as an obstacle in the way of the world revolution, more sharply at the present than ever. The Left Opposition, with Trotsky, the closest collaborator of Vladimir Ilyitch Lenin at its head, is calling for clarity and action. It is sounding the alarm in time. To the German Communists, to the workers of Soviet Russia, to the proletariat of the whole world, the Left Opposition directs its voice the voice of Lenin. It is not yet too late. The German party is still capable of victory, of uniting the proletariat about it—for the defeat of the class enemy. Victory can come, will come in the way of the Left Opposition and comrade Trotsky, in the way of Lenin.

By the stability of the Central Committee, of which I spoke before, I mean measures to prevent a split, so far as such measures can be taken. For, of course, the White Guard in *Russkaya Mysl* (I think it was S. E. Oldenburg) was right when, in the first place, in his play against Soviet Russia he banked on the hope of a split in our party, and when, in the second place, he banked for that split on serious disagreements in our party. Our party rests upon two classes, and for that reason its instability is possible and if there cannot exist an agreement between those two classes its fall is inevitable. In such an event it would be useless to take any measures or in general to discuss the stability of our Central Committee. In such an event no measures would prove capable of preventing a split. But I trust that is too remote a future and too improbable an event, to talk about.

"I have in mind stability as a guarantee against a split in the near future, and I intend to examine here a serious of considerations of a purely personal character. I think that the fundamental factor in the matter of stability—from this point of view—is such members of the Central Committee as Stalin and Trotsky. The relation between them constitutes in my opinion, a big half of the danger of that split, which might be avoided, and the avoidance of which might be promoted, in my opinion, by raising the number of members of the Central Committee to fifty or one hundred.

"Comrade Stalin, having become General Secretary, has concentrated an enormous power in his hands; and I am not sure that he always knows how to use that power with sufficient caution. On the other hand comrade Trotsky, as was proved by his struggle against the Central Committee in connection with the question of the People's Commissariat of Ways of Communications, is distinguished not only by his exceptional abilities—personally he is, to be sure, the most able man in the present Central Committee, but also by his far-reaching self-confidence and a disposition to be too much attracted by the purely administrative side of affairs.

"These two qualities of the two most able leaders of the present Central Committee might, quite innocently, lead to a split; if our party does not take measures to prevent it, a split might arise unexpectedly.

"I will further characterize the other members of the Central Committee as to their personal qualities. I will only remind you that the October episode of Zinoviev and Kamenev was not, of course, accidental, but that it ought as little to be used against them personally as the non-Bolshevikism of Trotsky.

"Of the younger members of the Central Committee, I want to say a few words about Bucharin and Piatakov.

We are reprinting below a statement by our needle worker comrades, issued to all workers in their trade. Our comrades have represented the views expressed therein consistently and repeatedly at various public meetings and gatherings of the N. T. W. I. U. The statement is a recapitulation, in precise and concrete form, of the position of the Left Opposition in the needle trades situation. —Ed.

Fellow Workers and Comrades: Again we are hearing the day when we will have to take the cudgels against the bosses: the dress manufacturers, contractors, jobbers, for a better living. The agreements, as bad as they were, expire. The bosses are preparing to cut further into our earnings. For them the expiration of the agreements, is a signal for concerted action against our conditions—for us the expiration of the agreement must be a call to arms against further enslavement of the dressmakers. We learned enough from the past to be ready to repulse and defeat the wage-

## OPEN FORUM

Lecture by ARNE SWABECK

### The Heritage of Lenin

at the Labor Temple 14th Street and Second Avenue

Friday January 29, 1932

at 8 P. M. QUESTIONS and DISCUSSION ADMISSION: 25 Cents Unemployed Workers Admitted Free

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## Hitler Prepares to Strike

Stalinist Leadership Impotent in Face of Impending Struggle

Behind the social volcano of present day Germany, there is unfolding a political scene that has many elements of a farce in it. And that is not at all strange. Times of revolution, days pregnant with human convulsions, always show up the ruling classes and political personalities as a whole in all possible and impossible shapes, like a refraction in a mirror. So it was in the Russia of 1916-1917 with the buffoonery of the Rasputin and the equally risible counter-play of the liberal bourgeoisie. So in Spain since last April, with the solemn comedy of the "Workers' Republic" and the trials of the "responsibles". In the current uncertain political situation, before the masses have had the opportunity to have their say, we are witnessing

a similar scene in the Reich. Hitler and the Weimar Constitution. Hitler is defending the Weimar Constitution, the barge of glory of the "criminals of November 1918"! Answering the appeal of the Weimar Centrist: Brueening to agree to an avoidance of popular elections by extending the term of President Von Hindenburg by Reichstag decree, the new defender of Weimar and constitutionalism just bubbles over with indignation:

"The Weimar Constitution, he says 'is the legal basis of the German Republic. Article I states that Germany is a republic deriving all power from the people (sic). Article XXI states that the President shall be chosen by the entire electorate.

"To substitute the Reichstag's verdict for the people's voice would be a manifest contradiction to the Constitution. . . Our self-respect alone. Here Chancellor, obliges us to decline your proposition to agree to the prolongation of President Von Hindenburg's term of office by a two-thirds majority of the Reichstag".

Thus spoke Hitler, whose legions are already lying in ambush, ready to throttle the working class—that same "people". No further bargains with the vacillating parties of the "democratic" bourgeoisie. Teusness marks the moment. The high praetorians of the German master must put up a front of resoluteness, of intransigence. They know what that soon they will have to strike. And they are not underestimating their enemy.

### Why Hitler Promises Private Debts Payment

The Austrian adventurer also knows, that in that battle the aid of the foreign powers would be indispensable to him. And that accounts for the other face of the farce: Hitler re-arranging the international capitalist that private debts will be paid, while the "greatest German diplomat since Bismarck", namely the clericalist Chancellor bluntly declares that reparations will not be paid.

The leader of German Fascism is no fool. He realizes very well that a fulfillment of his "traditional" policy would mean isolation for a government of the "Third Reich". And isolation is just precisely what he fears most, no matter how much the clownish Feders prate about—autarchy. To crush the German proletariat tomorrow, Hitler will not hesitate for one moment to embrace his "arch-enemy" of today.

And, to be sure, that is just the direction the foreign policy of the Nazis is taking. In the same document addressed to Brueening, the National Socialist chieftain, in taunting his bourgeois opponent, remarks:

"Only when Germany can offer something, will she be given something".

### For Attack on the Soviet Union

What Hitler wants to offer the world bourgeoisie, is no secret. He wants to offer it, a defeated and spineless proletariat, a Germany that will take the lead in the inevitable imperialist offensive against the U. S. S. R. That is the devil's bargain that Fascism is ready to conclude. And that is the basis on which the French, the British and the American robber governments will agree to meet it half way.

A huge slaughter is being prepared for the working class of Germany, for the workers of Soviet Russia. Doubtlessly, the understanding of this immediate danger is growing among the masses of the affected countries. The will to fight is rising. But misfortune of misfortunes: the leadership is not at its post. It is acting the role of the slacker. At a time in which the ground is cut beneath the feet of reformism by the events themselves, the revolutionary leaders, the official Communist party finds itself unable and impotent, fails to rally the resolute and determined masses of proletarian fighters for the unpostponable struggle against the arm-

ed and arming class enemy. The Thaelmann and the Renneues and all of their sorry ilk dabble in sterile theories, attempt to theorize themselves out of their hard pressed position. The Stalinist incompetents offer nothing, absolutely nothing, to bring the workers into motion. They are much too occupied in covering up their own tracks. . .

### Thaelmann & Co. Prepare For Capitulation

Unfortunately, the shakiness, the spinelessness of the official leadership is also sowing apathy and helplessness into the ranks of the Communist workers. In a series of articles in the *New York Evening Post*, H. R. Knickerbocker, one of the more reliable and more independent of the bourgeois newspapermen, writes from Berlin:

"I asked a German Communist: What will you do when Hitler comes in?"

We will try, he answered, to get the social democrats to declare with us a general strike and run Hitler out the way the general strike ran out Kapp in 1919."

"But," I objected, "Kapp took the government by force and the social democrats were clear in their minds that as democrats, they had to defend the democracy. The social democratic government in 1919 itself declared the general strike. Will the social democratic leaders go with the Communists now to declare a general strike if Hitler comes to power legally?"

"Not much hope", he admitted.

"You have 6,000,000 Communist voters. It only took 50,000 Bolsheviks to make the Russian revolution. I know the conditions are entirely different. But why can't your 6,000,000 oppose Hitler by force?"

"We haven't got the guns", was the sullen reply. "The Soviet Union is not ready for a German revolution. We think if Hitler comes in he will run the country down so fast that by next autumn we can take power."

"But Hitler will then have all the guns."

"Yes, Hitler will have the guns. . . " It is not amiss to bring the above quotation in its full length. For it is a revelation of the real state of mind the criminals of the Stalinist faction with the national-limitlessness of their perspective, have managed to produce among their rank and file. The bourgeois reporter too, does not fail to see the situation clearly and the questions he asks are certainly appropriate. The workers of Germany are being deserted in their struggle by the usurpers of leadership in the German Communist Party and the Soviet Union. Thaelmann and Company are capitulating under the pretext that the social democracy influence in the working class must first be wiped out. In the meantime, the Nazis are laughing up their sleeves. Weakness, indecision, cowardliness on part of their enemy is just what suits them most. They are preparing to seize all the guns.

Fascists Prepared For Struggle Knickerbocker tells us in the same article that he asked a National Socialist: "What will you do when you get power?". "He might have launched a long discussion of the party program", he says, "but his only reply was: 'Keep it.' The Fascists are not theorizing now. They are preparing for action. And action, decisive and determined, is the only thing that will save the working class. Elsewhere in the present issue of the *Militant* we are publishing a document of our German sister section. In it, the German Left Opposition (Bolshevik-Leninists) propose a concrete, brief and clear program of action to the Communist Party of Germany. It is worth while studying. Every member of the American party, every conscientious Communist ought to read it carefully and draw his conclusions. Time flies. It is necessary to act. The duty of every revolutionist is clear. Let their voices be heard everywhere. The present course of the Stalinist leadership must be stopped if the working class of the world is to avoid disaster. —SAM GORDON.

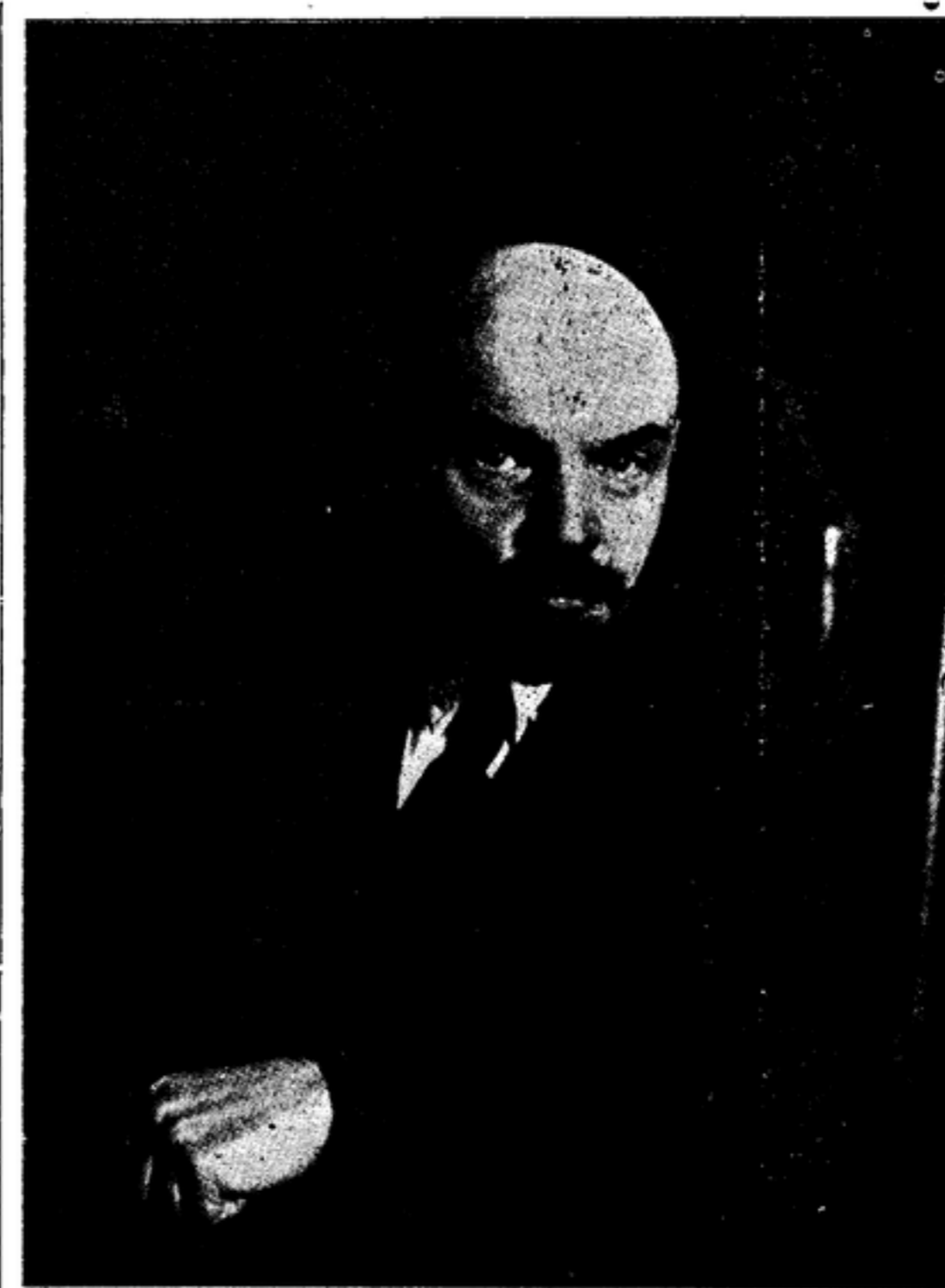
### New Trotsky Pamphlet Out

As we got to press, we receive the news that comrade Leon Trotsky's new pamphlet *Germany—The Key to the International Situation* will be out on sale beginning Wednesday next. The pamphlet is in three sections. It consists of the original work, entitled "Shall Fascism Really Be Victorious?", the article "For a Workers' United Front against Fascism", and an appendix bringing a document of the German Left Opposition.

Whoever want to know the Communist solution to the question: "Communism or Fascism must avail himself of a copy of this pamphlet at once. The price is 10 cents per copy, 7 cents in bundles of five or more.

Send your orders in immediately to: Pioneer Publishers, 84 East 10th Street, New York City.

## Lenin's Last Words to the Party



They are, in my opinion, the most able forces (among the youngest), and in regard to them, it is necessary to bear in mind the following: Bucharin is not only the most valuable and biggest theoretician of the party, but also may legitimately be considered the favorite of the whole party; but his theoretical views can only with the very greatest doubt be regarded as fully Marxist, for there is something scholastic in him (he never has learned, and I think never has fully understood, the dialectic).

"And then, Piatakov—a man undoubtedly distinguished in will and ability, but too much given over to administration and the administrative side of things to be relied on in a serious political question.

"Of course, both these remarks are made by me merely with a view to the present time, or supposing that these two able and loyal workers may not find an occasion to supplement their knowledge and correct their one-sidedness. Dec. 25, 1922

"Postscript: Stalin is too rude, and this fault, entirely supportable in relations among us Communists, becomes insupportable in the office of General Secretary. Therefore, I propose to the comrades to find a way to remove Stalin from that position and appoint to it another man who in all respects differs from Stalin only in superiority—namely, more patient, more loyal, more polite, and more attentive to comrades, less capricious, etc. This circumstance may seem an insignificant trifle, but I think that from the point of view of preventing a split and from the point of view of the relation between Stalin and Trotsky which I discussed above, it is not a trifle, or it is such a trifle as may acquire a decisive significance. —Lenin. Jan. 4, 1923

## Left Opposition in Appeal to Needle Trades Workers for United Action in Struggle

We are reprinting below a statement by our needle worker comrades, issued to all workers in their trade. Our comrades have represented the views expressed therein consistently and repeatedly at various public meetings and gatherings of the N. T. W. I. U. The statement is a recapitulation, in precise and concrete form, of the position of the Left Opposition in the needle trades situation. —Ed.

Fellow Workers and Comrades: Again we are hearing the day when we will have to take the cudgels against the bosses: the dress manufacturers, contractors, jobbers, for a better living. The agreements, as bad as they were, expire. The bosses are preparing to cut further into our earnings. For them the expiration of the agreements, is a signal for concerted action against our conditions—for us the expiration of the agreement must be a call to arms against further enslavement of the dressmakers. We learned enough from the past to be ready to repulse and defeat the wage-

cutting campaign of the bosses. Since the economic crisis set in, our living standards have gone down to the very bottom. It is becoming increasingly harder for a dress-maker to make a living in this trade: no work in the slow season and no wages in the so-called busy season. The former hours of work, won through many bloody battles of the workers, have been completely wiped out. Dressmakers work Saturdays, Sundays, and all other holidays. Union wages, Union hours, Union control—have become matters of the past. To let the present onslaught of the bosses proceed without resistance will mean a return to the sweatshop conditions. How long can we tolerate such a situation?

For the past few years, the dressmakers suffered more than was necessary because our ranks have been divided. Each union conducted the struggles separately. The Industrial Union put up desperate fights to improve the conditions for the workers; the I. L. G. W. U. pursued the policy of collaboration with the bosses. The ceaseless warfare between the two unions left the

workers facing the most miserable conditions in the shops. The Industrial Union struck—the International scabbed; the International struck—the Industrial shops remained at work—the result was a picnic for the bosses. They increased their profits while the workers abandoned the best weapon: UNITED ACTION AGAINST THE ENEMY.

The Dressmakers in the other needle trade centers fare no better. Their standards of living have gone down just as much and just as rapidly as in New York. The dressmakers there, have gone through the same struggles with the two unions in the field and followed the same policies. Therefore the wrong policies must be corrected everywhere—New York, Boston, Philadelphia, etc.

### United Action Is Imperative

The dressmakers of the Industrial Union and the dressmaker members of the I. L. G. W. U., must begin a very serious campaign to make the question of one united strike of the dressmakers—a reality. This is not the time for mere maneuvers! The livelihood of

thousands of organized as well as unorganized dressmakers is at stake! The united front movement must begin in the open and frank manner that will be understood and hailed by every honest dressmaker.

The Right wing leadership is not interested in united ranks. They can throw the blame for the bad conditions in the trade not upon themselves, and their class-collaboration policies, but upon the existence of the Industrial Union.

The Left wing must be interested in unity and must champion such unity. The dressmakers cannot afford to leave the strike in the hands of the I. L. G. W. U. officialdom—they will sell whatever remains of our hard won conditions to the bosses.

The unity proposals that were made up till now must be renewed again but with more vigor, more determination and in a manner that will bring us sooner and closer to a united strike. You must call upon the Industrial Union to G. W. U. pushed the policy of colla-

(Continued on page 2)