IN THE INTERNATIONAL OF LABOR

Reviews and News of the Working Class and Revolutionary Movements

ROSA LUXEMBURG

On the Anniversary of Her Assassination by the German Social Democrats

(Contined from last issue)

Left crystallized another stage in the opposition to imperialism. The best ensuing debates on the significance of known resolutions emanated from the imperialism. The Right wing openly de- Stuttgart (1907) and the Basle (1912) manded "equal rights or our industries Congresses of the Second International. in the colonies" (Quessel at Chemnitz At Stuttgart, Rosa Luxemburg intro-Congress 1912). To oppose colonialism duced the amendment on behalf of the was utopian, Luddites smashing machin- Russian and Polish delegations. There ery. Kautsky defined the Centrist posi- was never a word breathed in these retion in the Neue Zeit (1912). Imperial- solutions of "national defense" as a ism is the endeavor of an industrial justification for socialist truce with the capitalist nation to annex agrarian ter- capitalist state in the event of war, which ritory. As such it is only one form of did not prevent the traitors later from capitalist expansion. From the "economic covering up their enlistment on the side viewpoint" there were tendencies to of God and Kaizer with quotations from wards the formation of an all-embrac- Marx, Engels and Lassalle, referring to ing world trust, a super-imperialism that 1830, 1848. Officially the International would eliminate competition and strug-pledged itself to utilize the war crisis gle. He urged rapprochement with the which was characterized as a product of sections of the bourgeoisie who were in the imperialist struggle for markets, to his opinion not interested in imperial- the overthrow of the capitalist system. ism, to be achieved by the advocacy of The outbreak of the war confirmed beyond the policy of disarmament and the Un- a doubt that opportunism was the fore-

row clique, but the last phase of capitalism, pregnant with revolutionary con- international. Rosa Luxemburg had ensequences. The limitations of this arti- tertained more than a premonition when cle preclude the detailed discussion her she uttered the warning note at the party views merit as set out in her vigorous Congress of 1910, "we thunder against "Accumulation of Capital" (1912). It militarism in time of peace but when must suffice here to state that she con- war really breaks out . . . " The referceived the problem of imperialism to be ence was to the seizure of Chinese tera problem of the realization of surplus ritory by German imperialism. And later value and not of monopolist extra- when she attacked the official leadership profit under finance-capital, as Lenin for its passivity in the Morocco crisis revolution against feudalism. But the sees it in his well-known brochure. She takes as her point of departure the criticism of the diagrams in Marx's second volume of Capital. Dealing with the inimitable thesis that the International reproduction of social capital as a whole, was an instrument of peace, not war. she indicates the manner bywhich capitalism achieves a certain equilibrium be- gether with Karl Liebknecht who had blems. When the character of the future tween the two great sectors of economic roused the chauvinist fury of the social activity (a) production of means of pro- democratic Reichstag faction by his reduction (b) production of articles of fusal to vote the war credits, Rosa Luxconsumption, and is enabled to absorb emburg began the work of the underthe ever-growing mass of commodities. ground and illegal organization that led These diagrams, Rosa proceeds, are a to Spartacus and the split in the social theoretical fiction and misleading to boot. democracy. When she was released from formula for the bourgeois democratic was dragged up months later from the If capitalism could profitably realize prison, together with Karl Liebknecht, its surplus value within its own frame- she organized and participated in the work, how account for the fact that never-to-be-forgotten heroic war demonproduction outstrips consumption, and strations in Berlin in 1916, for which explain the fact of the struggle for they were immediately imprisoned. markets and colonies. There would be no objective impediments to capitalist accumulation nor any immanent necessity of the social revolution.

Marx's analysis is based on the assumption of an all-inclusive capitalist world with but two classes, where in reality it functions in a non-capitalist environment. It is to this latter "third person" that capitalism must turn to market its surplus. Imperialism is the political expression of the process of capital-accumulation in its struggle for the rest of the still unoccupied non-capitalist territory and is thereby a new lease of life for capitalism and its grave digger at the same time.

The theory of Rosa is open to serious objection, on both theoretical and empirical grounds. Undeniably, as a matter of historical fact, capitalist development does proceed by the systematic extension of its base. To extricate itself from its internal contradictions every national capitalism turns to the reserves of the world market. Lenin had occasion to advert to the problem of the external market in his polemics against the Narodniki (populists) and the legal "Marxists" The conditions that give rise to the foreign market are not the impossibility of realizing a profit, abstractly considered, but extended circulation of commodities and the tendency of capitalist production to the growth of the productive forces break down the old regional and state barriers. Production is anarchically carried on for an unknown market, resulting in the disproportional development of the various branches of industry and recurrent crises of over-production. The higher organic composition of capital, technical progress, leads to a fall in the rate of profits. The fusion of banking and industrial a policy, continually more aggressive, capital known as finance-capital, which arise under conditions of the concentration of production, seeks to counter-act this tendenecy by means of monopoly, in the home market by protective tariffs, abroad in the struggle for markets and colonies for the export of capital (raw War is not merely the armed condict for party, the bourgeoisie keeps ocnsolidat- borators". In a few truly classic words, the annexation of agrarian territory but ing the ground which it has gained, and stripped naked, without reserves—the the struggle of monopolist finance-capi- lying in wait for the opportune moment class character of the regime; "I can tal for the repartition of the world mar- to upset the democratic cart and to inket, in other words the contradiciton be- stall its unmasked dictatorship. tween the productive forces mainred for The Socialists and Democratic Illusions a socialized world economy and the naappropriation.

points in common with Kautsky's as finds it necessary to maintain these il-Lenin's has with that of Hilfering. She lusions temporarily, making use of a could explain the seizure of a backward political force which is not completely agrarian region but how would she ex- discredited among the masses, and by plain the lust for Lorraine or Belgium? its name at least, represents a guarantee She seeks to establish absolutely object of radicalism. This political force is her conception of "third persons" but themselves disposed as usual to serve tive barriers to capitalist development by the fact is that the contradictions of as auxiliaries to the exploiting class. capitalism lead to proletarian and coloor colonial problem.

The clouds of the coming war were oisle would find itself deprived of one The constitution of the nationalist its situation, it developed toward repub-

rolling up ominously. There is no lack; interests of the ideology of the future tional socialism". In the posthumous The differences between Centrists and of documents of the pre-war socialist Third International which in his mind ited States of Europe under capitalism. runner of social patriotism. The virus For Rosa Luxemburg, imperialism was of adaptation to the legal and constitunot merely a policy preferred by a nar- tional conditions of the bourgeois state had rotted the very foundation of the (1911). In the acid test of 1914, Kautsky hastened to lend additional "justification" to the socialist rogues with his

The Left wing stood by its guns. To-

It was at that time that Rosa produced her brochure "The Crisis in the excellent work of Marxism. But in the

was already clearly projected, he submits certain of its views to keen though lapse, thus leaving the problem of the open. He also takes exception to the thesis that in the era of unbridled imperialism no more national wars were possible. In this imperialist war it was true that Russian imperialism stood behind Serbian nationalism. But it was wrong to dogmatize. The wars of the French Revolution were national in their inception and became imperialist under Napoleon. The imperialist Seven Years War between France and England led to national wars later (imperialist war is of course possible on the basis of serfdom or primitive capitalism). If all wars are to be brandillusions and militate against the struggle of the workers and the colonial peoples. Finally he criticises Junius' selection of the 1848 slogan that the best means of national defense was the united German Republic to be achieved by class struggle. This was in place as a watch-word of the bourgeois democratic slogan now must be the conversion of the imperialist war into civil war for the realization of socialism.

The response of Rosa Luxemburg to the October revolution could never be in doubt. She was no stranger to its pro-Russian revolution was debated at the London (1907) Congress of the Russian social democracy and Lenin defended the position of the Mensheviks, Rosa in bloody civil war. Rosa and Karl Luxemburg along with Lenin represented the viewpoint of the Bolsheviks. Her ion. Her body in a disfigued condition revolution in Russia coincided with Trot- Spree river. sky's the dictatorship of the proletariat supported by the peasantry. The mensheviks attempted to build up a difference of conception between that formulation and Lenin's. But the latter himself in 1909 wrote "the formula 'prolepseudonym Junius. Lenin in Switzerland mains entirely within the bounds of the greeted it cordially as by and large an very dictatorship of the proletariat and democracy approaches. peasantry." Of the November revolu-

tion Rosa wrote: "Whatever a party could muster in a historical moment of courage, energy, capacity of action has been completely accomplished by Lenin, Trotsky and their comrades. Their October insurrection was not only the actual salvation of the Russian revolution but also rescued the honor of internawork on the Russian revolution published by Paul Levi, she submits certain policies of the Bolsheviks to sober criticism. Her friends Warski and Clara comradely criticism. He considers it a Zotkin say that she had revised these defect that social opportunism as a dis- views and had not intended the docutinct current is not directly enough re- ment, written in prison, for publication. lated to the current social patriotism as That is very likely but in any case hisan explanation of the betrayal and col- tory has proved that her criticism was substantially incorrect. Thus she failsplit in the International dangerously ed to distinguish between the strategic aspects of the agrarian problem and the problem of a collectivized rural economy. She took a position on the national problem that resembled Bucharin's ...ter: that self-determination under capitalism was unreal. Only socialism could realize the self-determination of peoples. Similarly her views on the red terror the monopoly of legality by the Communist party, the dispersal of the Constituent Assembly. She would in all likelihood have been compelled to modify these views in the light of a more intimate study of the problems of the dictatorship. Some of her criticism of ed as reactionary it would afford an ob- Lenin's policies however which completejective basis for pacifist and disarmament ly missed the mark might be applicable to the seamy sides of the policy of the Stalin epigones.

> In 1918 came the revolt of the Kiel sailors and soldiers of Berlin. It opened the prison doors. The socialist traitors atempted to persuade Wilhelm to stay to the last. Failing to guide German capitalism into the channels of a constitutional monarchy they yielded to the strategic line of the Communist party. the idea of bourgeois republic. Their hatred of Bolshevism outmeasured everything else. They particularly feared Spartacus which had constituted itself as a separate party with the slogan of All Power to the Soviets. Noske, surrounded by the Hohenzollern generals, unleashed the white terror. The Spar tacists were shot down by the thousands were murdered in the most bestial fash-

Liebknecht marches on in the millions of German workers who today are again tion make the attempt to realize a genuconfronted with the problem of power, ine fighting unity of the working class

-MAURICE SPECTOR.

For Communist Action!

Documents of the German Left Opposition

brother section raised its voice in must contain: warning and made positive proposals great Russian revolution. Despite per- existing tendencies in the revolutionsecution by the state and the bureau- ary working class of each locality actucracy, despite calluminatin and re- ally be represented in the Committees of pression, these ideas are irresist bly Action. forging ahead. They are bound to become the common property of all revolutionary workers.

TO THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE C. P. G.

Dear Comrades:

Victory is possible, victory is probable, everything must be done to assure it. Only in this manner can revolutionists pose the question.

The question of the victory over Fascism in Germany is also the question of the fate of the U. S. S. R., regardless of whether it is considered from the economic, the political or the purely military point of view. But that means that so as to be able to assure the future of socialist economy in the U.S.S.R., the Soviet Union must stake all its strength on the victory over Fascism of the European revolution with which it is inseparably linked. This alone can be

The C. P. must adopt a position of departure that rests upon irreconciliable and ruthless struggle against Fascism, for the purpose of destroying Fascism in the inevitable and open sruggle for the conquest of power.

The united revolutionary class action of the proletariat must be organized against the victory of Fuscism.

This can be realized only when all revolutionary forces, no matter in what camp they stand at the moment, unite for this common action that stands on the order of the day. We know full well that the premises for such an ac-German menshevism and the bourge- tion are extremely unfavorable. But in oisie has triumphed. Vae Victis! But spite of this, the C. P. G., as the histhe spirit of Rosa Luxemburg and Karl toricaly chosen oragnization must in view of the seriousness of the situa-

The C. P. G. is immediately to ap-

We are reprinting below excerpts, proach all political groups, trade unfrom several documents of the Ger- ions and workers' organizations who deman Left Opposition, which appeared clare themselves prepared to fight against a few weeks ago in their organ "Per- Faseism, with the aim of a common apmanente Revolution". With firm | peal for the formation of a Joint Council Communist conviction, our German of Action against Fuseism. This appeal 1. The creation of Committees of Acfor a change in policy to the Central tion consisting of representatives of fac-Committee of the German Communist tories, trade unions, political groups Party. The ideas of the Left Opposi- and other workers' organizations. It is tion rest upon the experiences of the of the greatest importance, that all the

> 2. The Joint Council of Action is to be constituted at a congress of delegates from these Committees of Action in the entire country, which should be convoked without delay. This congress is to represent the proletarian concentration against the concentration

> of the reactionaries. 3. The congress must be organized in advance as the proletarian counterparliament in the event of a Fascist Reichstag, or against an extra-parliamentary or parliamentary Fascist government.

4. The congress must solve three tasks concretely:

(a) the preparation of the general strike to prevent the seizure of power by Hugenberg and Hitler: (b) the formation of one common,

non-party workers defense corps; (c) the elaboration of a common minimum program with regard to the next steps to be taken by the Committees of Action.

Under a correct leadership, such a defense action contains all the necessary elements with which to lead the proletariat, in view of the objective possibilities described above, not only against Fascism, but to the overthrow of the bourgeoisie as a whole.

Such a policy is possible only after a radical change in the course of the party. The experiences of the French C. P. speak an unequivocal language. Despite the "third period", despite the ultra-Left trade union tactic, despite "social Fascism" and similar slogans, the party has been forced by the pressure of objective conditions and partly also, on the basis of sound proposals made by the Left Opposition, to change its coruse radically. (See the proposal to the Socialist Party of France for common action on the second bullot, the Parliamentary Congress for the establishment of trade union unity). It is high time to draw the consequences in Germany and to reestablish the unity of all genuine Com-

We declare emphatically that, despite profund differences in a whole series of questions we will support with our innermost convictions and witchut any reservations, every step undertaken by the party in this direction with all our strength and that we are completely and entirely at the service of the party in

With Communist greetings. for the LEFT OPPOSITION OF THE C. P. G. (BOLSHEVIK-LENINISTS)

The National Committee, (Continued in the next issue)

Shachtman Lectures

On Friday, January 14, comrade Max Shachtman spoke at the Labor Temple on the impressions he acquired during a four weeks' stay in Spain. An audience of about a hundred workers listened attentively to comrade Shachtman's description of the miserable conditions of the Spanish workers, the betrayals of the Spanish social democracy, the impotence of the syndicalists and anarchists and the criminal blunders committed by the official Communist party under the direction of the Comintern led by Stalin.

Comrade Shachtman brought back heartening news of the growth of the Spanish Opposition which has now more than a thousand members, and of its fight for the unity of the Communist ranks. Significant was the fact that comrade Trotsky was extremely popular with the Spanish workers, that editions of his pamphlets were literally cobbled up. In Spain, as elsewhere the workers despite the slanders and lies of the Stalinists refuse to believe that Trotsky and the Opposition are counter-revolu-

The struggle of our Spanish comrades carried on under much greater hardships then we face here must be an inspiration to us to double and redouble our efforts to regenerate the American Communist party and to reunite the Communist vanguard.

A Correction

Due to unforescen technical difficulties, November 28, 1928 at the Post Office at suc. entitled "Japs Subsidize Russian "socialist government", Lerroux is mak- After the ruin of the great working New York, N. Y. Under the act of Whites", appeared in garbed and distortcorrections could not be made in time. But we shall come back to this subject -THE MILITANT.

The Fascist Danger and the Need for a United Front of the Proletariat

Council of Ministers after the resignation of Maura and Alcala Zamora there were many who interpreted the change of ministry as an evolution to the Left. Maurin went so far as to say that the new governmeny was "typically pettybourgeois" and to put it on a level with the Kerensky government. We, on the contrary, from the first moment maintained that this solution of the crisis meant a step forward in the direction of the big bourgeoisie and of its bloc with

"In reality", we said in the third number of "El Soviet", which was confiscated by the governor of Barcelona, representing the so-called "Kerensky government" "the real master of the situation is Lerroux, that is, the big bourgeoisie. Still the time has not yet come to take off the mask, to take over completely the reins of power in the name of those who see in Lerroux, as he said in his speech at Santander, 'the lifebuoy in which the shipwrecked man sees the hope of salva-

The facts have proven, and keep proving, that our evaluation was correct. On the adoption of the "law for the defense of the republic" there followed of repression against the working class and of systematic strangulation of the weakness of the working-class organiza-

Today this is not possible. Democratic tionally limited, capitalist methods of illusions are still quite alive among the petty-bourgeoisie masses and a large part Rosa Luxemburg's theory has certain of the working class. The bourgeoisie the socialist party, whose leaders show

capitalism lead to proletarian and colo-nial revolutions while the greater part of the world is still composed of "third" government would be a risky adventure. Inevitably it could do nothing else than continue the policies of the bourgeoisie, continue the policies of the bourgeoi persons". Her theory does not throw and the socialist party would discredit take over the power, to become the di-Rivera. Still, since this experience did into necessary relief either the national itself irretrievably in the eyes of the ect instrument of a bloody dictatorship not free it from the burdensome load Subscription rate: \$2.00 per year; for dealt with in this article in the immeworking masses. With it, the bourge of the Fascist type.

The socialists, who are fully aware of this, are horribly afraid of taking over the entire responsibility for the state power, and declare themselves for a concentration government, over which they should preside. Largo Caballero was in a hurry to state that such a government, by its very composition, would be unable to realize the party program. Yet, ac cording to the declaration of the Minis ter of Labor, "the party, having made greater renunciations than any other for the welfare of the republic, will accept this sacifice too for the 'national inter-

Under these circumstances the social ists, free of all responsibility for the policies of the government, will contribute to maintaining democratic illusions among the masses and will make it possible for the bourgeoisle to consolidate tatorship. The Azana government was the first step in this process; the government presided over by the socialists an imposing force tomorrow. The worst will be the second.

Lerroux, the Spanish Miliukov

The events of the last few days fully confirm this evaluation. While public opinion is being prepared for a Largo Caballero government, and the alertdemocratic revolution. Nourished by the ness of the masses is being put to sleep, Lerroux, in an interview given to the tions, the incapacity of the anarcho-syn- editor of the reactionary Madrid jourdicalist leaders of the C. N. T., who have | nal "Ahora", expressed the opinoin that learned nothing from experience, and the socialists in power, "far from being the absence of a strong Communist a difficulty" would be "prudent collaing the prophecy which I made years ago when I said, (too emphatically, as some thought), 'I will govern'. Now I can say that I am governing, since government and not the power". Lerroux Italy, the urban and rural petty bour-One can have the power and not the government. One can have the govern- ity of the population. Because of the ment and not the power. I have the government and not the power". Lerroux life of the country-dependence on big is the representative of the big bourgeoisie, the Spanish Miliukov; the workers ing out its own policies, and constantly must not forget this.

Still, to form an exclusively socialist the masses on the tambourine of the the revolution.

dangers of a blody battle", show clearly practice. what are the intentions of the promoters of this new organization.

The proletariat would commit an error which might have fatal consequences if it does not give this fact all the attention which it deserves and fails to see in the announced intention of this group more than a mere manifestation of boasting.

It is more than probable that "Young its position and to prepare, behind the Spain" will fail to recruit the 500,000 socialist screen, a genuine Fascist dic- men which it needs to put out the democratic revolution for good and to crush the proletariat. Still they can become thing we can do is to close our eyes to this incipient danger. In 1920, and even in 1921, the Italian revolutionists looked with disdain on the Fascists, whom they saw as nothing more than "bandit gangs" without real force. These "bandit gaugs" took the power at the end of 1922 and dragged along with them the large petty-bourgeois masses, these same masses who had followed the socialists and who, disillusioned by the downfall of the proletarian revolution, threw themselves into the arms of Mussolini.

capabe of favoring the development of a and profitless putsch. strong Fascist movement? There are beyond a doubt.

Whither, the Party Bourgeoisie?

The first factor, and the most important, is the petty bourgeoisie. As in geoisie constitutes the immense majorvery role which it fulfills in the economic capital-this class is incapable of carryvacillates between the big bourgeoisie Let them not forget, too, that the and the proletariat. To win it over, or Max Shachtman Maurice Spector leader of the "radical" party is no at least to neutralize it, is a task of platonic individual. When he entertains fundamental importance for the cause of

which weighed down on it, nor improve

When Azana became President of the of its most important reserve weapons, party, "Young Spain", announced re-licanism. With the fall of monarchy direction. Its organization, based on a the petty bourgeoisic gave free rein to its militia of 500,000 men, who are to "wear democratic illusions and hopefully fola distinctive costume with the attri- lowed the demagogues of the left. Still butes of the legion, a gray-green shirt the illusions are disappearing, and and a collar of the same color", is these great fluctuating and indecisive any instance whatsoever, modeled on Italian Fascism. The warn- masses find themselves irresistibly drawn ing to abstain from joining, made to to that social class which offers a clear "the timorous and cowardly, and those and concrete program, and has the unwho are not capable of facing all the shakable determination to put it into That class can only be the big bourge

oisie or the proletariat. The big bourgeoisie has this program: the crushing of workers' organizations, the consolidation by fire and sword of the domina-tion of capital. The instrument for the at Opposition Forum realization of this program is being forged by Lerroux and his "Young Spain". Nothing is easier than to attract the disilusioned petty-bourgeois masses with this progam, conveniently seasoned with a good dose of demagogy. Let us not forget that, at the beginning, Italian Fascism declared itself auticapitalist and republican.

Still, there is a second factor, no less important: the proletariat, which has a unique opportunity to give definitive battle to the bourgeoisie and to take the power. The objective circumstances could not be more favorable to such an end. But subjectively it is disarmed. From a trade union point of view it is divided: the leaders of the U. G. T. collaborate openly with the bourgeoisle, and those of the C. N. T. either fall into a reformism which fully equals that of Largo Caballero and Co. (the Peiro-Pestana group) or into adventurism (the Are there factors in Spain which are F. A. I.) which can only lead to a bloody

-ANDRES NIN. Barcelona, Nov. 27, 1931

(To Be Continued)

THE MILITANT

Published weekly by the Communist League of America [Opposition] at 84 East 10th St., N. Y. EDITORIAL BOARD

James P. Cannon Martin Abern Entered as second class mail matter the leading news article in our last is-

Vol. 5, o. 4 (Whole No. 100) Saturday, JANUARY 23, 1932

Bundle rates, 3 cents per copy