

IN THE INTERNATIONAL OF LABOR

Reviews and News of the Working Class and Revolutionary Movements

The Character of Fascism

An Analysis of the Composition of the Hitlerist Camp

In October 1930, the central committee of the C. P. G. decided overnight, that Fascism is reigning in Germany and that Bruening is its prophet. The 11th Plenum of the E. C. C. L. put its seal upon that, and all expectations, nourished by the "deviations" and inconsistencies in the resolutions, in the speeches of Remmele, etc., that the German central committee would revise this decision and take reality into account, have come to naught. Under the mask of a "theoretical elaboration"; a large current of confusion is flowing through the party into the minds of its membership and the only one of the four eras of the Thaelmann article in December which is actually being preached, is: "We live under Fascism!" "Fascism and social-Fascism in the last analysis are two different shades of one and the same basis for the bourgeois dictatorship" (Manuilsky's report to the 11th plenum)

It is therefore not at all strange that the resolutions of the 5th world congress have been raised from their graves and that Stalin's theoretical infantile maladies, like "social-democracy as a moderate wing of Fascism", "social democracy and Fascism as twins" and other abortions of the same sort are being preached as eternal truths. It is only being consistent for a Warner Hirsch* (Die Internationale, Vol. 15, No. 1) to counterpose democratic England and France to "Fascist" Germany!

The question of the evaluation of the situation, the question whether we really have Fascism already in Germany, is of the greatest strategic importance. If one takes an affirmative position on this question then one must come to an entirely different point of departure, to an entirely different (and distorted) evaluation of Hitler, as well as of the Fascist danger in the perceptible future. For in that case the question of a formulation becomes the question of a prognosis of the most likely development.

The theoreticians of the Comintern are operating with commonplaces like "Bruening and Hitler are both merely dictators of the bourgeoisie. Between an open Fascist dictatorship and the Bruening government there is in no case any class difference whatsoever." These are elementary truths for every Marxist.

The essence of Marxist analysis does not, however, consist in the recognition of the general, but of the particular, of the concrete. The essence of a valid political characterization does not consist of the ability of fastening it on to every, but to a definite, political situation.

Can the expression "Fascism" serve as a characterization for a specific political phenomenon, for a definite situation? It can. But in that case, what is "Fascism" actually? A review of European, and especially Italian Fascism, permits us to elaborate certain specific features of it, without any difficulty. Fascism is a unique and new phenomenon of the period of monopoly capitalism, a product of post-war capitalism, an offshoot of reformism.

As the collapse of economy spreads, as reformism begins to disappoint the masses looking for a way out, Fascism is saddled everywhere with the task of intercepting the radicalized masses who are about to turn revolutionary channels and of faking them useful once more for the purposes of finance capital. It is a matter, in this case, first of all, of radicalized petty bourgeois masses and consequently, we see everywhere, as a particular feature of Fascism—its broad petty bourgeois mass basis. Furthermore, we see as a consequence of this, the super-radical and quasi-revolutionary, typically petty bourgeois phraseology, the desecration of the idols of yesterday—democracy, pacifism—and the idealization of the most brutal strong-man dictatorship. We see further an unrestricted terror of the Fascists against the working class and all its organizations before and after its seizure of power, through particular organs (Fascist Storm Divisions, etc.)—a terror of such a great quantitative proportion that it becomes transformed into a specific quality. Finally we see the nationalist ideology as a maneuver of diverting attention from social misery and as the basis of an aggressive foreign policy, which is possible only on the backs of a defeated working class, for whom the revolutionary way out is closed. It is especially significant to take into account, as Alfred Kurella has done, the strong war sentiments current among the Italian workers.

Its origin and the tasks assigned to it by the bourgeoisie, account for the social of Fascism with regard to the social democracy. Fascism, which cannot tolerate any other party, not even a petty bourgeois one, at its side, can least of all tolerate those for whom it must substitute, because they have compromised and outlived themselves. It is quite true that the social democratic leaders would like to rule together with Fascism, but Fascism would not share its power with them. Despite the offer for a coalition made by the Baldest of the Socialist Party of Italy, the S. P. I. was proscribed even before the C. P. I. Despite all the services rendered to Pilsudski by the Socialist Party of Poland, its leaders nevertheless landed in the fortress of Brest-Litovsk. Just as it is certain that

several D'Aragonas will go over to Fascism, it is certain that the reformist organizations in themselves will be totally crushed.

"Fascism, nourished by the social democracy, will and must eventually crush its skull, in order to reach power. The Austrian social democracy does all it can to facilitate this surgical operation for it. (Trotsky)".

That is why the formula of "social Fascism" is not only harmful in agitation, but also false as a political prognosis.

When we consider, after this brief analysis of Fascism, the present day Bruening government, the differences are unmistakable. Its social basis consists unfortunately, as yet of the reformist workers chained to it by their treacherous leaders and not of the petty-bourgeois masses of Fascism even though it does indeed maneuver with the latter from time to time. The ideology of the Bruening who base themselves upon a parliamentary majority, is conservative and not quasi-revolutionary. The terror of the state apparatus is as yet in its embryo. It restricts itself to the toleration of the Nazi terror. The foreign policy of Bruening is not that of Hitler. That is what differentiates Bruening from Fascism. What brings him closer to it we know full well; it is the regime of emergency decrees, the factual even if not formal, suspension of democracy, the active support of the Nazis, etc. If we want to evaluate the Bruening government as a whole, we must characterize it not as Fascism but much more precisely as the government of the transition to Fascism, of the active preparation (Groener!) of Fascism.

The difference between Hitler and Bruening consists not in the aim but in the social basis (what Thaelmann, Manuilsky and Co. say about their common social basis is pure twaddle). It consists in the methods. And that is something that must not be overlooked.

The Government Reprisals in Greece

AGRINI, GREECE—January (Our correspondent).—On December 31, 1931

State troopers arrested comrade Demetrios Mylonas, President of the Panrefugees Organization of Agrini, and led him to the Police Headquarters. There the lackeys passed him through the third degree and locked him in a dark cell. At midnight, the Chief of Police Anastopoulos arrived at headquarters and immediately began to examine our comrade. During the hearing our comrade declared that he is a Communist and as President of the "Panrefugees", he carried the book and a protest leaflet, which they discovered in his pocket.

Immediately, this bestial policeman attacked our comrade with a black jack shouting that he is a member of the Unemployment Committee which met this Monday. Confronted with the Bolshevik courage of our comrade, the beast continued his attack with rabid madness for a whole hour until our comrade began to bleed. At the end he did stop with the threat that he is going to kill him in case he continues to be an active Communist.

The following day they called comrade Mylonas for another hearing.

But how Anastopoulos was able to learn of the meetings of the Unemployment committees which are illegal remains a mystery. In this organizational committee Stalinists also participated and there it is possible that this treachery is the work of stoolpigeons which exist in the Stalinist ranks.

The condition of comrade Baboucoupos continues to be the same and the wounds in his shoulders are not healed and therefore he can't move from his bed. The Municipal Hospital shows a criminal neglect and the same attitude is shown by the I. L. D. Our comrades have to care for him. In the meantime the condition of our comrades within the prison walls remains the same and we urge the formation of a committee of workers and intellectuals to bring to light the criminal activities of the Warden who are aiming to exterminate our fighters by every device of terror.

We are informed that our comrades of the Averof prisons are going to declare a hunger strike because the Ministry of Justice did not reply to their demands.

The "Students Syntroufa" circulated leaflets and appeals to every intelligent person, worker or intellectual to participate in the rally which is scheduled to be held at the "Trianon".

It is, however, conscious deception to characterize this order of things as the "lesser evil", as the social democracy is doing. Because the "lesser evil" Bruening is being tolerated by the S. P. G. and not fought by it, it becomes by itself an ever "greater evil" and is enabled thereby to prepare the "greatest evil" so impudently. It is clear that to differentiate between Bruening and Hitler does not as yet signify a policy of toleration. The Marxist manner of posing the question is given by Trotsky in his latest pamphlet:

"We Marxists consider Bruening and Hitler, together with Braun, as component parts of one and the same system. The question which one of them is the lesser evil, has no sense, because the system against which we are fighting, needs all these elements. But for the moment, these elements are in conflict with one another and the party of the proletariat must take advantage of this conflict in the interest of the revolution!"

—E. BAUER, Berlin

This gentleman, still convalescing from the Merker malady, is seeking to squeeze his way into the front ranks of the bureaucratic jackals gain, by howling himself hoarse against Trotsky ("Trotsky, an agent of Hitler-Fascism"). In his day, he himself, after leaving the C. P. G., did not disdain the role of a genuine "agent of Ullstein".

(To Be Continued)

The Stalinists in Bulgaria

Use Violence against Oppositionists in the Prisons

We are bringing below the document of comrade D. Gatcheff, incarcerated in the Philippopol Prison in Bulgaria, mentioned in the February 6th issue of *The Militant*. It speaks highly of the revolutionary quality of our Bulgarian comrades, whose splendid morale should serve as an example and as an inspiration to all Communists, and to the Left Oppositionists in particular.

To the District Attorney of the Philippopol Court, Petition of the Prisoner Dimitri M. Gatcheff, sentenced to life long imprisonment, a member of the International Left Opposition under the leadership of the brave comrade Trotsky and Rakovsky, against G. Ognianoff, T. Nikoloff, Boris Dimitroff, etc. Mr. District Attorney:

I should never have desired or tolerated your interference into our factional disputes. You are a representative of the power of the bourgeois class against which we are fighting and for which we want to substitute the power of the working class. We are a faction in the labor movement hostile to your class justice and to your class itself of which you are one of the representatives. But in the moment in which my opponents of the other faction turn to you and demand justice from you, I am forced to bring the truth, in the first place, before the working class and then also to the attention of your tribunal. At any rate, the responsibility for this interference on the part of our class enemy into our internal disputes, rests upon my opponents.

For a long time there have been existing several factions within the labor movement; the Right the Centrist and the Left. Of late, the approach of decisive struggles between the classes has brought about an aggravation of the factional disputes.

The Left faction in Bulgaria, as it exists at present, came to the fore towards the end of 1928. The opponents

of our faction, incapable of conducting an ideological struggle and of withstanding our tactics, resort to personal attacks, provocation and threats, employing all the means unworthy of a revolutionist. They have more than once published all sorts of stupidities about us, for which they have never brought any proof. We have answered all these provocations in a firm and disciplined manner, by pursuing our course, the course of the Marxist Left Opposition.

They have threatened our friends that they would throw them out from the third floor windows of the Central Prison. They have spat into their plates to deprive them of the meagre nourishment granted by the class enemy. They have attempted to get two of our friends killed at the hands of paid assassins. (At the Haskovo Prison) they have crushed the skull of one of our friends. They have made attacks upon the lives of our friends in the prisons of Silven, Vidin, etc. They have stolen letters directed to us... That has become a system with them. They murder our friends in Russia, in the fatherland of the workers and peasants. They imprison, they sentence to deportation Bolshevik-Leninists like Trotsky, Rakovsky, Muraviov and others. They have shot upon our friends in China and elsewhere. I must emphasize that all these deeds have not been committed by the Communist party but by one of the factions and that is—the Centrist faction, which is only a bureaucratic and paid apparatus, with Stalin as its head. They act without the knowledge or the desire of the Communist party and in this manner they stab a knife into its heart and into the heart of the working class.

Ever since my arrival here, these filthy affairs have also begun with regard to myself. I have more than once challenged them to make public their "accusations" and to counterpose the two points of view. They have always avoided this and have been continuing their attacks.

On the 11th of this month, after some similar quarrels and provocations, I met G. Ognianoff. I told him that they would remain cowardly and rogues as long as they would not adopt an open declaration. Upon this, T. Nikoloff and G. Ognianoff almost simultaneously fell upon me with the cry, "Traitor!". Nikoloff beat me with a stick over my head, Ognianoff struck me in the right eye with his fist. This was the cause of the entire scuffle. The result was: One of our comrades was wounded in the head, myself in my ear, and one other also on the head. On their side: Two wounded and several suffering lighter injuries. That is the whole truth, the rest is pure invention.

In No. 16 of the *Russian Bulletin*, comrade Trotsky, condemning the attack against members of the Left Opposition in Canton, states: "We will never employ terroristic methods in the factional struggles within the labor movement. It is the task of the Left Opposition to take special care with regard to this. Firmness, will power and discipline are indispensable!" Yes, we are fighting against the system of provocation, terrorism and cold blooded murder within our ranks. Can we also make use of this? No and never! We can never employ provocations, terrorism and murder against our comrades. But once we are attacked, we must defend ourselves for we are not dogs. Our factional opponents are at present playing in the role of the thief who cries: "Stop thief!"

They are organizing more attacks. They are employing more provocation and they tell stories of threats and provocations coming from us. We declare that we shall answer all their threats and provocations as we have in the past, with firmness and discipline.

We shall not employ the same weapons as they do, and accuse them of being connected with the management of the prison, but we shall tell the working class that they are being tolerated by this management—and that when they raise their hands against us they are acting unconsciously as a tool of the bourgeoisie.

Stalin himself is unconsciously a tool of the Ramsins when he shoots Opposition fighters, when he exiles them, throws them into prison. And the Ramsins are the conscious instruments of French and international imperialism. History also has its logic and that is the logic of the class struggle.

I protest not only against the situation, that my opponents remain "free" (i. e. they are in the regular prison), which permits them to hunt up witnesses and to continue the slanders against us—I protest against the fact that we, who have been wounded and beaten without any guilt on our part, are condemned to solitary confinement and subjected to an insufferable regime. Is it possible that for the necessary enjoyment of sun and air only 30 to 40 minutes are to be granted to us in the day?

I shall furnish you with sufficient evidence that the responsibility does not rest upon my shoulders without attempting to throw it on anyone else. The working class alone will judge who is really guilty and it is to it that I address myself.

D. GATCHEFF

-- Sharp Changes in the Foreign Policy of the French Imperialists --

(Continued from last issue)

For the reasons enumerated in the first part of this article, the Lausanne conference, which is to occupy itself with the question of reparations, that is to say, in the last analysis, with the Versailles Treaty, will be confronted with such troublesome and unstable conditions. If it is to be a matter of taking up the Young plan, the French will refuse to participate in it and will maneuver to postpone it. Germany intends to play its own game there, taking advantage of the attitude of the U. S. England considers it futile to lose its time there, if it should be impossible to include the question of the debts to the U. S. As to Italy, she wants to make of it a tribunal from which to appeal to the mercy of the U. S., who are in control of all its railroad stocks, by putting forth the threat of a "united front".

The necessity of an internal struggle against the proletariat, the growth of unemployment, the awakening of the labor movement, combined with the need to mask the aggressive policy of France and perhaps also the defeats which it has undergone, beneath the veil of pacifism, also constitute important facts. The radicals and socialists will play this role and will doubtless, consciously prepare to play it much more openly in view of the approaching elections.

Thus, once more, and this time with a character of extreme urgency, the clashes between the imperialists show the way to the only genuine solution the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the installation of the dictatorship of the proletariat which alone will solve the problem of the socialist United States of Europe. The C. I. is at present engaged in a struggle along the lines of the "nationalist and social" liberation in the different countries. It provides further

It is indisputable that the development of the crisis and the movement of the proletariat and the impoverished peasant classes of Eastern Europe require some sort of a way out for the bourgeoisie, Germany, Poland, Rumania, Hungary live on top of a volcano. Each bourgeoisie is conducting a fierce struggle against the working class, ruining its own home market, and consequently, also the foreign market of the others, reducing the working classes as a whole to actual servitude. But even this policy is insufficient to resist the monstrous onslaught of America, coupled with the strictures of the economic crisis. That is why the struggle against the proletariat cannot go on without the intervention of a certain amount of agreement among the rival imperialism, that is to say, without some of the imperialisms achieving certain temporary advantages over the others. France intends to maintain her own advantages. For this price, she is ready to tolerate the Fascist counter-revolution in Germany, in order later on to drive its point against the U. S. S. R. The East European states are also being encouraged by France to prepare for an armed struggle against the U. S. S. R. But Germany is still seeking to liberate herself from the fetters of Versailles, from the "tribute". For that is the only means of easing her difficulties, but also at the same time the one by which to shatter the hegemony of France in Europe.

The development of this situation which has been maturing for several months has brought about a displacement in the directing apparatus of the French bourgeoisie. Briand was the man of the period of ascent of French imperialism, on the basis of the Versailles Treaty, after the defeat of the Poincare foreign policy. Faced with new difficulties, he has little by little withdrawn from the scene. Heavy blows are in store for France from the outside. The recent ministerial crisis has reflected this forecast. Some demagogic reserves still exist; they constitute first of all: the radical party, which has just asserted, that in so far as foreign policy is concerned its program jibes with that of Laval.

mann and Company first drop the theory that "the main danger is the social democracy".

If the party does not at once change its orientation, the leadership of the C. P. G. together with the T. C. C. L., will be held responsible for the defeat of the German working class. It is they who are responsible for the failure of such a change today and for weakening the position of the workers which signifies, in effect, strengthening the position of Fascism.

The elections will decide nothing definitely. At best they may postpone for a short time the decisive struggle. Between Fascism and Communism only the armed struggle for power will decide the future. Supposing that the Centre-social democratic bloc should win the elections. It will at best give the working class more time to prepare itself for the final struggle. A victory of Fascism will push to the foreground the extreme acuteness of the situation, and force it to a head. In either case the election result will not change the perspective of struggle.

The party must foresee all the implications beforehand. The elections must serve it as a means of organizing its forces. The C. P. G. must begin to actually promote a genuine united front of the workers and their organizations. The perspective must be that of struggle to defeat the Fascist front as the step toward the proletarian seizure of power.

—ALBERT GLOTZER.

The Presidential Elections in Germany

(Continued from page 1)

ary struggle. For us it must be clear that the elections can at best act as a certain barometer of the tendencies to the political situation.

However, to plan the campaign of the party without bearing in mind the situation as it will appear after the elections, the trend of the struggle in the event of a defeat or victory of Fascism, is to lose oneself in a purely parliamentary struggle. Such a situation would result in continued defeats of the party and victory for the black forces of reaction.

What should the party do now? It should prepare for the struggle that will follow the elections. The Opposition has pressed for a change of line on the part of the C. P. G. We have attempted to make the party realize that the situation in Germany is a revolutionary one, that it ought at present prepare its forces for an eventual armed struggle for power. The elections should serve as an indicator of the relation of forces and

If the party is to successfully defeat help in the preparation for the conflict. Fascism and all the forces of reaction, it is necessary that it first change its analysis of the political situation, and reorientate itself accordingly. Concretely, this implies an acceptance on the part of the C. P. G. of the extreme danger of Fascism in Germany. The most important task confronting the united front of all workers in the struggle against Fascism. But for this it is necessary that Thael-

for an "alliance" of the countries in which this revolution will be victorious with the U. S. S. R. This perspective is false. The United States of Europe on the basis of Socialism will require a complete fusion with the U. S. S. R. As against the anarchy of capitalist Europe, it is not sufficient to counterpose the "harmonious" economic development in the U. S. S. R., for it is not a matter of a simple hypothetical comparison that remains abstract in the eyes of the proletarian masses. As against this pseudo-efficiency of the imperialists, as against the "European unions", as against the conferences of Lausanne and the European "united front", it is necessary to counterpose the agitation around the slogan of the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, for the realization of a Soviet United States of Europe. The internal ruin of bourgeois Europe is characterized by its extremely chopped up, parcelled off economic picture. This tattered character is an obstacle to the economic development of society as a whole. But the bourgeoisie seeks only profit and the advantages of competition. Only the proletariat, only the broad exploited masses can realize the socialization of the principal means of production, after the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the conquest of political power, as well as the socialization exchange production and planned economy for a broadened market, through the elimination of the manifold national barriers winding around Europe. This is the perspective which we counterpose to the bourgeois utopias.

—LA VERITE.

CHICAGO OPEN FORUM
"WHAT IS EUROPE HEADING FOR?"
Speaker: ALBERT GLOTZER
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 1932
at 3 P. M.
at
30 N. Wells St.
ADMISSION: 15c
Sponsors: Chicago Branch, C. L. of A. (Opposition)

THE MILITANT
Published weekly by the Communist League of America (Opposition)
at 84 East 10th St., N. Y.

EDITORIAL BOARD
Martin Abern James P. Cannon
Max Shachtman Maurice Spector
Arne Swabeck

Entered as second class mail matter November 28, 1928, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y. Under the act of March 3, 1879.

Vol. 5, No 8 (Whole No. 104)
Saturday, FEBRUARY 20, 1932
Subscription rate: \$2.00 per year; foreign \$2.50. Five cents per copy.
Bundle rates, 3 cents per copy.

(To Be Continued)