

WORKERS
OF THE
WORLD
UNITE

THE MILITANT



Weekly Organ of the Communist League of America [Opposition]

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Germany Before the Elections

The latest dispatches from Berlin report the long expected announcement of Hitler's candidacy in the coming presidential elections to be held on March 19. The *New York Times* of February 24, 1932, in its editorial comment on this subject, chides the German reactionary brusquely for his "tactical" mistake. "By lining up with the venerable president of the Reich," the *Times* goes on to say, "he would have added to his dimensions as a responsible statesman without surrendering anything of his prestige as a crusader." It is quite plain that Wall Street is rather vexed with the developments in German internal policy. Reconciled for some time now with Fascist ascendancy it nevertheless dreads the thought of social convulsions conjured up by the picture of a break with "legality" by the Nazi leader, to whose popularity with international reaction it has, of late, contributed not a little. In a combustible political atmosphere like the present, what with the rumbling of the cannon still in full swing in the Far East, every abrupt turn in the situation of any of the outstanding European countries is a cause for the greatest anxiety on the part of American capitalism already dizzily spinning in the whirlpool of the world crisis.

But, in Germany itself, it is not only the National Socialists who are oriented for sharp and open class warfare. The entire bourgeoisie is prepared for it, knows that it must come, and lends the most direct aid to the Fascists in their aims. Only a short two weeks ago, Groener, Hindenburg's Minister of the Reichswehr lifted the ban against National Socialists in the army, an act equivalent to an open offer of military collaboration with the Hitler hordes. A German newspaper, the *Spandauer Volksblatt*, brings an even more interesting report:

"For weeks, intensive military exercises are being held on the parade grounds of Doberitz (near Berlin). The participants in these exercises are National Socialists. As many as 3000 men have been counted at each field day in the course of the last few weeks. . . . The exercises take place on the property of the Reichswehr. In front of the entrances, soldiers stand on guard. These are entrances bearing signs to the effect that civilians can pass only with the permission of the commander. . . ."

In addition to all this, there is, of course, the Nazi terror in the proletarian quarters, which goes on unabated, without any interference on the part of the police. On the other hand, all attempts of the working class to take measures against this terror, are put down without much ado, no matter from what section or tendency they arise. In one of his proclamations to the army, the same Groener declares:

"I will never tolerate the preparation of an auxiliary militia, as it has been spoken of in certain Reichs Banner (reformist) circles. . . . Such organizations lead in the last instance, to workers' and Soldiers' Councils and similar revolutionary formations". It must be remembered, in passing, that the Reichs Banner is not even an exclusively working class organization by the composition of its membership. But the fact alone that the Reichs Banner does include a great many social democratic workers, makes it insufferable to this minister of the "democratic German Republic", for which the Scheidemanns and the Eberts saw fit to destroy the flower of the German proletariat in 1919.

While the Fascists are feverishly preparing for their attack behind the scenes, the attention of the entire German nation is occupied by the forthcoming elections. The Fascists have selected, Hitler, the Centre and the middle parties, Hindenburg; and the Communists, Thaelmann for their respective presidential candidates. The social democrats are chiefly concerned with ways and means of making the former Hohenzollern Field Marshall acceptable enough for the workers in their ranks, as the defender of democracy! This despicable aim of the social democrats, which falls in line with their entire tradition of working class betrayals, is one that stands open to successful attack on the part of the German Communism. The social democratic workers are just about nauseated with the shilly-shallying of their leadership, who by their tactic of piece-meal capitulation to the Bruening-

Hitler policies have lost nearly everything that still held the workers in their ranks attached to the social democratic party. A very great part of the social democratic electorate will undoubtedly vote for Thaelmann in the elections, regardless of the decisions of their leadership. And this fact is of great importance for the Communists, provided they can link up the extra-parliamentary struggle for the social democratic workers with it.

Unfortunately, the German Communist Party, bound hand and foot by the utterly false tactics of the Stalinist leadership, with its disastrous theories of "social Fascism" and the "united front from below", has not been able to progress very far in the struggle for the reformist workers in the factories. Despite the enormous increase in the Communist vote during the elections held in the course of the last two years, with the S. P. G. losing ground continually, the situation in the factories still remains well within the hands of the social democracy. 83.6 out of every 100 Works Council seats still go to the reformists, while only 3.4 per cent go to the Communists. Without an advance in the factories, all the gains in the parliamentary election will have no meaning. But in order to push forward in the factories, the German party must give up its false, un-Leninist conception of the united front, cast aside the obstructionist theory of "social Fascism" and reorientate itself along the

The Glass-Steagall Bill -- A Measure to Aid the Bankers

American capitalism twisting and squirming under the lash of economic law, is making strenuous efforts the present time to bring about a revival. Plan after plan is being thrown at the country, only to go down in defeat, leaving barely a ripple on the declining crisis curves. But a few short days after the creation of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation and the administration at Washington announced the new, bi-partisan, anti-depression measure, the now much heralded Glass-Steagall Bill.

The capitalist class of this country, falling to see any indication of a coming revival, even now, two and a half years after the stock market crash, are attempting to, through a series of well timed and big scale maneuvers to restore their "confidence" that has supplanted all their economic theory. It is only in an actual analysis of the proposed steps that their valuelessness as measures for revival can be exposed. Particularly is this true of the present Glass-Steagall bill.

"Big Free Gold Gain", "Credit Expansion", "Increased Currency", are read in the newspaper headlines. What are the actual facts? Is there a stringency of credit at the present time? What might this "big free gold" lead to? These are the questions to be answered.

Any economist will admit that were there a demand for credit at the present time and the banks were unable to satisfy this demand, any steps taken to relieve the credit strain would be steps for revival. But is this condition prevalent today? By a mere glance at the low interest rates of the past year one would be forced to give only one answer. Industry desiring funds for investment have no difficulty finding lenders. There is no credit crisis—except on the side of the borrowers.

Now, to examine the actual measure. Under the existing laws, member banks of the Federal Reserve system are permitted to rediscount (borrow on) certain commercial short term loans from the Federal Reserve Bank. This so-called self liquidating paper consists of loans secured by actual commercial and industrial goods to be realized upon soon. Thus should industry demand more credit, the various member banks can apply to the Federal Reserve system with these eligible notes as security for loans in the form of increased currency, which money is then loaned to industry. The cry is now raised of the exhaustion of the total of eligible paper. Item number one of the new measure would make eligible for rediscount less secure paper than at present. This is hailed as the powerful tonic to aid "our" sickened industry. Will it do this?

Any analysis of the facts shows the futility of the measure in this regard

OPEN FORUM

Lecture by
JAMES P. CANNON
"THE COMMUNISTS AND
DISARMAMENT"
The Meaning of the Geneva Conference
at the
Labor Temple
14th Street and Second Avenue
Friday, February 26, 1932
at 8 P. M.
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lines of a broad proletarian struggle against genuine Fascism, as outlined by comrade Trotsky and the Left Opposition. Instead of persisting in its ostrich policy which amounts to a surrender to the class enemy without a struggle.

The presidential elections, considered not as a decisive struggle, but as an opportunity to rally the workers and to force the breach between them and their reformist misleaders, offers another great opportunity to the Communist Party of Germany to make up for lost ground.

—SAM GORDON.

New York Dress Strike Grows

Workers' Militancy Attains Unity on Picket Line

Since the International Ladies' Guild call in the New York dress shops on Tuesday Feb. 16, this battle has gained in momentum with a claimed 20,000 workers out and approximately 60 percent of the shops closed at the time of going to press. On a whole it is one encouraging sign of working class resistance to the slashing capitalist offensive.

With the needle trades workers this is a tradition. While they have suffered untold misery from the sweatshop conditions under which they have been working for years, they have always been found in the very front ranks of the class struggle. This splendid tradition, however, has continually been most outrageously abused by the treacherous sell outs, victimization and expulsions which is the record of the union officialdom. It practically paralyzed the union in 1927. Yet with the aid of the class enemy the corrupt officials were able to continue themselves in power and suppress the rank and file revolt. But the price paid was the one of re-establishment of the misery of the sweatshop. A heavy price for a union to pay.

The garment workers union has succeeded in recuperation in the sense that the ranks have again been strengthened.

But the same leadership remains in control. Only the intense pressure of the membership brought the issues of abolition of the sweatshop to a head now and resulted in the strike. The officials did everything in their power to ward off struggle. Surely this is sufficient reason to bear close watching of these officials. Sell-outs are their practice and only the rank and file itself can properly guard its own interest.

There is a considerable difference in this strike compared to the one two years ago. That was too obviously a made up affair of collaboration with the bosses. The latter were actively helping in shutting down the power and ejecting the workers from the shops. The difference now is in the fact that the workers are more definitely asserting themselves and pressing for their demands.

The central issues in the strike are the demands for abolition of the sweatshop conditions, for a minimum piece work price of not less than \$1.10 per hour, and for the forty hour, five day week. The jobbers and manufacturers object, of course, particularly to the minimum wage demand and want to maintain the privilege of the right to reorganization in the shops—that is the hiring and firing at will.

The strike has become a powerful one immensely adding to the ranks of those following the call of the Left wing union entering into the conflict one week earlier. Despite the lack of a unity policy in the strike the workers have succeeded in establishing unity on the picket lines. This has served to reduce actual scabbing to a minimum. Naturally the manufacturers have begun to feel disturbed which has become particularly expressed in the statements made by the jobbers and inside manufacturers associations of negotiations depending upon the inroads of the strike into the unorganized shops. That considerable such inroads are made can be gleaned from the fact that while the I. L. G. W. has within its ranks only about 15 percent of the dress shops, nevertheless the strike has become about 60 per cent effective.

With the striking ranks attaining unity on the picket line the monstrous policy of strike leadership becomes so much more outstanding. The I. L. G. W. officials are still pursuing their old game of working hand in glove with one set of bosses helping them against another, of working with the jobbers and inside manufacturers against the unorganized contractors. That is playing the bosses game and benefits them only. It contains the very germ of sell-out and

defeat. But in the very rank and file unity and determination lies the hope that it can be circumvented. A victory of the dressmakers strike will become a powerful incentive to stimulate general working class resistance to the capitalist wage cutting offensive.

In this situation the responsibility of the official party leadership in control of the policy of the Left wing receives accentuated importance. Continuation of blunders can only strengthen the hands of the Right wing officials and thereby benefit the class enemy. The present course of the official party policy accomplishes precisely that. It still proceeds from a proclaimed intention of smashing the "company union" and smashing the "fake strike". How ridiculous that must sound to the thousands of workers on strike one can well imagine. They mean their strike in deadly earnest. They cannot have any too great illusions of intentions of the Right wing leadership. But what they require is assistance. Their fight is one against sell-outs as well as against the class enemy. They should be able to look for such assistance from the Left wing.

Unity has a very distinct meaning to workers in struggle. The remarkable achievements on the picket line should be a serious warning to the party officials that the essence of this word cannot be played with. This strike is only one stage in the series of conflicts which the future holds; but it does offer an opportunity for a revolutionary policy of working class unification. It holds the possibility of wielding this weapon so much dreamed by the employers as well as by their agents in labor's ranks.

Negotiations for settlements are already in progress. The industrial union reports several shops settled. The I. L. G. W. leaders can be expected to spare no efforts to accommodate the bosses. In this they can count upon a coat of whitewash from the Lovestone group which is already laying its basis by accusations of scabbing by the Left wing. That, of course, will prove primarily how far this group has traveled in deserting the Left wing and all it stands for. But above all it again emphasizes the responsibility of the revolutionary party. A correct policy of trade union unity, a preliminary actual and genuine struggle for a united front in this strike, a united front which will bring the two unions into common struggle for the immediate common objective, would now spell a serious step forward in organizing the general working class resistance to the capitalist offensive.

Canadian Workers Fight Against Reaction

In Canada the infamous "Section 98" of the criminal code is being enforced with a vengeance. Its most outstanding case was the trial and conviction of eight Communist Party leaders. But that was only a prelude to a yet greater objective.

The Canadian bourgeoisie, the same as their worthy brothers in every other capitalist country, are endeavoring to issue out of its crisis primarily on the backs of the workers. And, of course, the criminal code prosecutions are primarily the beginning to a general and more intense attack upon the working class in an effort to reduce the standard of living. It is significant of the role of capitalist agents within labor's ranks that precisely in this situation Mr. Moore of the Canadian Trades and Labor Congress steps forward with the statement that in his opinion "these men had a fair trial".

During the year 1931 there have been within the borders of Canada over 700 working class arrests. Over 119 years of imprisonment was handed out by the courts in 155 convictions. Working class meetings were broken up and in many cases entirely prohibited. Revolutionary literature was banned. The *Daily Worker* and the *Freiheit* are prohibited entry into Canada. Workers upon whom any possible suspicion of revolutionary inclinations can be placed are stopped and questioned in the streets. This has already been the experience of several of our Left Opposition comrades. Some time ago the book "The Proletarian Revolution" by Trotsky was banned. Just now our new pamphlets "Germany the Key to the International Situation" has suffered the same fate.

It is encouraging, however, that the official Communist party of Canada, by these serious experiences at least have learned one valuable lesson. It is actually making some efforts toward building a genuine united front movement for the repeal of "Section 98". The response of working class organization have been so broad and wide that it gives gratifying testimony to the power and validity of this policy. The Left Opposition is participating fully in this movement. At a recent un-

ted front repeal conference held in Hamilton, Ont., our comrade Green was seated as a representative of the Communist League of America with Silver representing the Toronto conference district. Selected on a delegation to present demands upon Premier Henry in regard to the repeal are our comrades Spector and Silver.

Glotzer Meetings

Responses from the various cities to our second national tour have been excellent. In Buffalo, N. Y. the local branch of the Proletarian Party Opposition made arrangements for a public lecture for comrade Glotzer under its own auspices.

Arrangements are now also being completed for a radio address to be delivered by comrade Glotzer from the St. Louis station KMOX, on Wednesday afternoon March 2nd. Further announcements of this we expect to make in our next issue. In Minneapolis our branch is preparing for a debate with A. C. Townley, the organizer of the Non-Partisan League. The fact that comrade Glotzer has just returned from a visit with comrade Trotsky, able to give first hand information of the discussions with the revolutionary leader in exile, able also to give first hand information of his impressions of the movement in the European countries, is proving of real interest and a stimulus to the projected public meetings. At the time of going to press the swing through Canada has been completed and comrade Glotzer is heading west. The schedule for the balance of this tour is as follows:

- West Frankfort, Ill. March 1
- Lecture to be at Labor Lyceum (Number Two Orient Hall) 7 P. M.
- St. Louis, Mo. March 2
- Lecture to be at Central Library Hall, 14th and Olive Streets, 7:30 P. M.
- Kansas City, Mo. March 3
- Minneapolis, Minn. March 5, 6, 7
- Chicago, Ill. March 9-10
- Cleveland, Ohio March 11
- Youngstown, Ohio March 12
- Pittsburgh, Pa. March 13

Our Press Needs Your Help!

Building the revolutionary press is even under objectively favorable conditions an arduous task. It requires unceasing activities by those willing to devote themselves to its accomplishment. Without doubt the conditions today are objectively favorable. We have received many tokens of the growth of sympathy for the Left Opposition, but we can, of course, not overlook the fact that many workers are not able to translate their sympathy into material support. Yet we must find the means to overcome such handicaps.

In the stream of turbulent events of the present period the Left Opposition press stands out solid as a rock. But we cannot at all say that its foundation has been secured in the sense of providing the means for its continued existence. Yet that can and must be accomplished. It is because of this that we today par-

ticularly call upon all comrades and supporters to assist us in finding the best way out of this present difficulty. Extension of our press, building its circulation is the way out.

Can we have this assistance in the form of concentrated activities during our three months' circulation drive. Every new subscription, every additional sale extends our press and helps provide the revenue for continuation. It drives an additional nail into the coffin of capitalism.

We call upon all our supporters to participate, to endeavor to secure subscriptions for *The Militant*, *The International Communist League* (to appear April first), *The Young Spartacus*, *Unser Kampf* and *Kommunisten*.

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