

WORKERS
OF THE
WORLD.
UNITE

THE MILITANT



Weekly Organ of the Communist League of America [Opposition]

Published weekly by the Communist League of America (Opposition) at 84 East 10th Street, New York, N. Y. 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.
VOLUME V, NO. 11 [WHOLE NO. 107]

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, MARCH 12, 1932

PRICE 5 CENTS

Sunday's Elections in Germany The Allignment of Class Forces in the Campaign Struggle

On Sunday, March 13 elections of enormous historical consequences are taking place in Germany. Behind these elections stands the mobilization of forces to decide the issue of who shall prevail, Communism or Fascism. Its historical consequence lies not so much in the direct outcome as to which candidate will win; but in the expression these elections give to the line-up and the strength of the class forces involved.

In its purely parliamentary aspect the present line-up represents itself as follows: To the Right the extreme reaction of Fascists (Nazis) nationalists and steel helmets, in the Center the bloc around the candidacy of Hindenburg of the various capitalist center parties and social democracy, to the Left the Communists.

Thus while the blurring of the class lines is still expressed in the fact of workers under social democratic influence being swung into the camp supporting Hindenburg together with outright capitalist reactionaries the two forces on either side of this grouping remain distinct. The strength of these two forces will be decisive for the immediate future. Fateful indeed will this event be for the German working class.

AS TO HOW DECISIVE FOR THE FUTURE THIS COMING RECORD OF STRENGTH OF CLASS FORCES WILL BE IS AMPLY TESTIFIED IN THE PRE-ELECTION CAMPAIGNS.

There are already the evidences of the conflict being transferred ever more out of the purely parliamentary field into sharp street battles. In this respect violence against the workers is on the increase. But there are also the accompanying hopeful signs of skirmishing working class unity in such skirmishes against the Fascist reaction. On the other hand ascism is now more clearly proclaiming Communism as its real enemy.

THE WORKING CLASS DIVIDED IN TWO MAIN GROUPS

As already indicated in this fateful situation the working class is still in its main aspect divided, by organization and by ideology. Today they appear in two main groups under the, for the actual situation, rather sumptuous names the "iron front" and the "red united front". In the former is included the trade unions, the Social Democratic party, the republican Reichsbanner and the labor sports organizations. Their leaders are the social chauvinists of S. P. G. It has of course nothing in common with a workers' iron front, but represents an attempt of the treacherous social democratic bureaucrats to swing these workers into a servile support of the reactionary capitalist government of Hindenburg and Brüning—for the maintenance of the capitalist system. Yet these organizations who make up the "iron front" embrace the bulk of the German working class. The "red united front" is under the leadership of the official Communist party, but unfortunately it is not a united front. How could it be with all the other workers organizations mentioned not included. The "iron front" embraces the workers who are still under the influence of social democratic ideology. The "red united front" embraces the workers won for the Communist ideology. A serious division in face of a dangerously vicious common enemy bent upon the destruction of all vestiges of working class organization.

GROWTH OF FASCIST REACTION A THREAT TO WHOLE WORKING CLASS

In elections held during the last couple of years throughout Germany the Fascist gains have mounted at a dizzying

speed. That gives expression to their menacing strength. Moreover, in a rapidly sharpening revolutionary situation, its role as the final means of maintaining capitalist rule becomes so much more pronounced. And so it is now. The Nazis can count on growing numbers of direct supporters amongst the great monopoly institutions.

Its true character as the darkest force of reaction, combining its aims of brutal working class oppression with a philosophy of adopting pre-capitalist forms of economy, was expressed, perhaps unwittingly, by a reporter of the New York Times of March 1. In describing the economic program of the parties to the Right he said: "All three groups (Nazis, Nationalists and Steel Helmets) fervently believe Germany should adopt a policy that they call 'autarkie', or economic independence. They admit this would be difficult, but think Germany in the long run could succeed in cutting herself off from Western Europe and feeding herself from her own land with the help of the Eastern European agricultural states. It would involve writing off parts of the vast capital Germany has put into her industrial plant, with a view to following a course exactly opposite to flooding the world with manufactured goods. It would involve an economic revolution and a terrific strain on the nation."

Here we have, though not yet clearly formulated, a theory of capitalist national self-sufficiency with an implied aspiration to become the spearhead of armed intervention for subjugation of the Soviet Republics. A return to pre-capitalist forms of production and exchange of commodities, squeezed in within national boundaries. A return to barbarism with the "terrific strain" to rest upon the shoulders of the working class.

IS THE WAY OUT THROUGH A FASCIST DICTATORSHIP

Today there is no way for Germany from her present economic dilemma on a capitalist basis. It exists within an economically declining capitalist Europe, ever more receiving the imprint of being put on rations in world economy by the more powerful American imperialism. German capitalism, after its re-stabilization following the events of 1923, has accomplished two successive waves of rationalization of its industry. Existing within a declining capitalist Europe and out of its former colonies, its economic problems become today that much more acute. Even a temporary relief for German capitalism through a Fascist dictatorship could, of course, only serve to further intensify these contradictions. However, the menacing threat in such a temporary way out for German capitalism is the sinister prospect of the crushing of the German working class movement, and with that the enormous danger to the whole world's working class movement—above all to the Soviet Union and the Communist International.

COMMUNIST PARTY FAILS IN GREAT POSSIBILITIES

What is the position of the German Communist party in this situation of menacing threats? S. P. bureaucrats are being made by the S. P. bureaucracy to swing the bulk of the working class, under the sumptuous name of the "iron front", into support of the Hindenburg candidacy, into support of capitalism and, in its ultimate sense, into support of preparation for the Fascist regime. Obviously, this latter aspect is not yet clear to these workers. They are being held under the illusion that at the moment their support to Hindenburg will offset the Fascist advance. To what extent and by what methods has the official Communist party endeavored to shatter this illusion?

Undoubtedly here was an excellent opportunity to split the working class forces away from the Center bloc of reaction now supporting Hindenburg. But that would presuppose the Communist party genuinely offering a united front embodying the serious immediate objectives of working class struggle. There should even be found no objection to serious efforts to bend the common grounds for unity around one working class candidate as a means of utilizing these elections to further stem the tide of Fascist reaction.

At the 1925 German presidential elections there were three candidates, the Communist, the social democrat and the

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Trotsky Discusses World Situation

We are reprinting below an interview granted by comrade Trotsky through the intermediary of Simon and Schuster, the American publishers of his latest work, "The History of the Russian Revolution" to the N. Y. Times.

The presentation of his views—which are those of the International Left Opposition—is here given in a concise and trenchant form, so that every reader can at once grasp the general outlines of our position as well as the elementary causes of the struggle we are carrying on.

Appraisal of Five-Year Plan

Question: Will you give your appraisal of the Five-Year Plan and the economic perspectives confronting Russia? Answer: The question of industrialization, and particularly of the Five-Year Plan, was one of the chief points of conflict between the Stalin faction and the Left Opposition, to which I belong. Up to February, 1928, the Stalin faction considered it necessary to rest its power upon the strong peasant and refused to compel him to make sacrifices in the interest of industrialization. The very principle of planning was laughed at by the bureaucracy. "We depend upon rain, not plans," they said. In 1925 I published a book, "Toward Capitalism or Socialism?" in which I proved that with proper leadership industry could show a 20 per cent yearly increase or more. Stalin and Molotov accused these figures fantastic and accused the Left Opposition of "superindustrialism." These cursory comments on the history of the thing are sufficient to demonstrate my attitude to the Five-Year Plan: I consider it a gigantic step forward in the development not only of the Soviet Union but of humanity.

Question: Do you believe that the development of the Five-Year Plan has strengthened or weakened the possibility of building socialism in Soviet Russia alone without cooperation along similar lines in the rest of Europe? Answer: This raises the question about socialism in a single country. The inevitability of socialism flows historically from the fact that the present productive forces of humanity have become incompatible not only with the private property in the means of production but also with present national boundaries, especially in Europe. Just as medieval particularism hindered the development of capitalism in its youth, so now at the peak of its development capitalism is strangling in the limits set by the national States.

Socialism cannot confine its productive forces in the Procrustean bed of national States. The Socialist economy will develop on the basis of an international division of labor, the mighty foundations of which have been laid down by capitalism. The Soviet industrial construction is, in my view, a part of a future European, Asiatic and world-wide Socialist structure, and not an independent national whole.

Soviet Russia and the Capitalist World

Question: Will Soviet Russia be compelled to come to some sort of a compromise with Western capitalism, assuming that she may not be able to pursue a Socialist policy single-handed? What form would such a compromise assume? Answer: The "compromise" between the Soviet and the capitalist systems is not a question of the future but of the present. It is already a fact today, although not a very stable one. How will the interrelations between the isolated Soviet Union and world capitalism develop? Here a concrete prophecy is not easy to make, but in general I should cast the following horoscope: European capitalism is far nearer to a Socialist revolution than the Soviet Union is to a national Socialist society.

Question: What are the prospects of Soviet Russia's relations with other countries in the political field if such a compromise proves feasible? Answer: The Soviet Government is interested in maintaining peaceful relations. It has demonstrated its will to peace, and is still demonstrating it by every means at the disposal of a government. It is true that in Paris they consider the Soviet proposal of universal disarmament a proof of the belligerent intentions of Moscow, and on the other hand the refusal of France to take steps toward disarmament they regard as an expression of the same peaceful intentions. Following the same logic the French official press considers the Japanese invasion of China an act of civilization, the Chinese resistance a barbarous act. Burglars, according to this logic, are not those who break into other people's houses, but those who defend their own. It is difficult to concur in this.

Attitude Toward the Stalin Regime

Question: What is your attitude toward the Stalin regime today and why? Answer: To answer this question I distinguish sharply two different conceptions: the Soviet regime as the regime of proletarian dictatorship and the Stalin regime, which is a bureaucratic perversion of the Soviet regime. It is with the aim of strengthening and developing the Soviet system that I wage a

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Ford Thugs Massacre Starving Workers

Police Give Workers Lead instead of Bread

On Monday, March 7, Ford's cossacks fired on a crowd of jobless workers demonstrating before his plant at Dearborn, Michigan. Four workers were shot and killed because they had come to demand from the apostle of "class peace"—work, a chance to earn their living. Among those killed was Joe York, the district organizer of the Young Communist League. Communist workers were in the first ranks of the struggle, were the first to be wounded.

The demonstrators, upon the call of the Unemployment Council of Detroit, were marching in orderly fashion and had intended sending up a committee to present their demands. Ford, the idol of the post war social democracy and all the other preachers of class collaboration, the symbol of "Americanization", immediately ordered his gunmen to pour lead into the masses calling for work and bread.

The whole horrid shape of "humane" American capitalism stands exposed before the workers of the world. The "pacemaker" of modern industry and of "industrial democracy", whose hands are dripping with the blood of militant workers, will become identical with the darkest and most reactionary forms of czarist despotism.

The heroic manifestation of the Detroit workers, coming in the midst of a general depression, will be a light-house of courage to the millions of unemployed workers all over the country in their fight against starvation. Their fearless march, in the face of tear-gas bombs, in the face of icy-cold fire hoses and machine-gun fire will be an inspiration and a standard of battle for all those who share their miserable fate under the abominations of the capitalist system. The most powerfully developed industry in the world and in history can give the masses of the population only what the blackest regimes of the past, have given them: hunger and lead. The workers are waking up to the fact that as long as the profit system, as long as private ownership controls the means of production, all technical progress can merely serve to enslave them. That is what the Communists are out to teach the workers, that is the condition against

which the Communists are the vanguard fighters.

Action Teaches Lessons

The workers can only learn from practical experience, from action. And it is in action that Communism shows the workers most clearly what they are up against and how they can overcome it. To carry out this historic task, the forefront fighters of Communism have once more proved their fearlessness, their daring, their absolute devotion to the cause of the working class, their utter defiance of the class enemy. Joe York, a valiant young Communist warrior, has fallen at the hands of the boss class. The answer of the working class of America to the murder of York and his three comrades must be a more determined, a more tenacious struggle against the master class than ever. The best class vengeance for the murder of our fighters is—organization. The fight for which York and his comrades died, must be carried into every factory, into every trade union. The whole proletariat must be rallied for a militant protest, the banner of the Detroit martyrs must be held high.

Every worker in the United States knows what hunger means, every worker knows what wage-cuts mean. The heroic example of the Communists does not pass them by unnoticed. But they are still apprehensive, they are not as yet convinced of the correctness of Communist policy. The Communists must take into account the degree of consciousness of the masses. In order to lead them into decisive struggles against the class foe, they must be prepared to go with the masses as far as the masses will go at the moment. In common struggle with the masses they have the best opportunity for winning them over to a Communist line of action.

Relief Struggle Growing

The masses are at present conscious of the necessity of resisting further unemployment, further wage cuts, and of wrenching from the capitalist class a measure of relief for their misery. The workers are still bound to their reformist leaders by innumerable prejudices, traditions and organizational ties. If they are to be brought into action, their leaders must be pressed against the wall. The united front of working class struggle against boss misery must be organized. That is the way to carry the banner of the fallen Detroit fighters up higher. That is the way for a successful advance of the forces of Communism. That is the way for winning a majority of the workers for the proletarian revolution.

The Communist party has once more, as often before, been the only party to show the oppressed and exploited workers the way out, the road to a fighting solution. It has once more shown that it is the only true party of the working class. It has proved that the workers are not going to remain passive before the onslaught of the boss class.

Government Persecution Coming

Already, the boss government is initiating a ferocious campaign of persecution against the Communist organizers. The whole frame-up system of capitalist class justice, with its "criminal syndicalism" laws and other vicious devices is being set into motion. The entire working class of the country must come to the defense of those attacked like a solid stone wall. Elementary worker's fate, every worker's elementary right to existence, is at stake.

The Communist party is calling protest and memorial meetings all over the country. It is the duty of every class conscious worker to stand behind the party of his class, and to demonstrate his solidarity with it. Against the bosses' offensive, against government persecution, for the workers' right to demonstration, for unemployment relief and unemployed insurance. Against wage cuts and for the six hour day, five day week. Against the imperialist war preparations and for Long Term Credits to Workers' Russia.

All New York workers will show their solidarity with the Communist party on Friday evening, March 11, at the Central Opera House, 67th Street and Third Avenue.

Workers! Make your protests against the Dearborn massacre a powerful demonstration of solidarity that will strike fear into the hearts of the bosses!

Press Circulation Drive

As we swing into the second week of the drive it is possible to report an encouraging response on the part of comrades and sympathizers. Some expired subs have been renewed. Some new ones have been sent in. At present the record of renewed and new subs is as follows: New York—7; Minneapolis—2; Chicago—1; Miscellaneous—4. There is also one new bundle order for a newstand to report. This is from Chicago. But this progress is not yet enough. More must be done.

What is already accomplished indicates that if all our comrades and supporters will put their shoulders to the wheel we can make a success of the drive. Certainly the objective situation is favorable. Workers are interested as never before in Communism. It can be assumed that a large working class reading public exists. It is necessary to reach it.

This can be done principally in two ways. First it is necessary to get new

N.Y. Paris Commune Affair

The members and sympathizers of the Left Opposition in New York are going to celebrate the sixty-first anniversary of the Paris Commune on Saturday evening, March 19th, at the Irving Plaza, 15th St. and Irving Place. The celebration will take form of an entertainment and mass meeting.

Comrade Arne Swabeck, National Secretary of the Communist League of America, will speak on "The Significance of the Paris Commune."

An elaborate social program has been arranged for. A chorus of forty Hungarian comrades will present a number of revolutionary songs. A group of young female comrades, members of the N. Y. branch and the Spartacus Youth Club, have been preparing several original dances. We will also have a piano recital and group singing. Refreshments will be on hand.

subs. The free pamphlets offered to subscribers during the period of the drive constitute a considerable reduction in the cost of a sub and are undoubtedly a strong inducement. They should be used as such. With each \$2.00 sub for fifty-two issues (1 year) The Militant will give a paper bound copy of comrade Trotsky's "The Permanent Revolution" with each \$1.00 sub for twenty-six issues (6 mos.) a copy of part 2 of the Draft Program—the Strategy of the World Revolution by Comrade Trotsky! with each of our 10c pamphlets. In sending in subs comrades should specify the literature which goes with them.

In addition to this, during the period of the drive, comrades may offer a \$2.00 rate for a combined 1 year subscription to The Militant and Young Spartacus. This will include fifty-two weekly issues of The Militant and twelve monthly issues of Young Spartacus. In the case of combined subs there is no literature premium. Whenever a combined sub is sent in it should be clearly indicated as such.

The second way of increasing the sale of The Militant is by increasing the bundle orders of branches, newstands, and bookstores. And by increasing the number of newstands which carry The Militant. This can be done more easily now by means of the newstands posters we spoke of in the last issue. These have been delivered by the printer and come up to our expectations. The posters will be shipped free immediately upon request. It should be remembered that we haven't too many. They should be placed only on stands and in stores which carry or will carry The Militant.

A third method of boosting the sub list is by renewing expired subs. Every week a number run out. From this it can be seen that the renewal of expired subs is a regular task. The national center notifies the branches in advance of the expiration. Where we have no

branches the national center notifies the subscribers. These subs must not be allowed to expire for want of attention. Their importance lies in the fact that as a loss they will offset the number of new subs. As a political loss, of course, they are even more important. Renewals count as new subs. Literature premiums apply equally to them. They are included in the standing given above.

The thing to do now is to drive along the three ways outlined above. Systematic plans should be worked out by the branches. Every supporter of The Militant should take it upon himself to bring in at least one new sub, or get one renewal, or get one newstand to carry The Militant, or better still all three. Against the difficult months which lie ahead The Militant must be put on a sounder financial basis now. Every effort must be made to insure the success of the drive.

OPEN FORUM

Lecture by
ARNE SWABECK
"LESSONS OF THE
DRESMAKERS STRIKE"

at the
Labor Temple
14th Street and Second Avenue

Friday, March 11, 1932

at 8 P. M.

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION

ADMISSION: 25 Cents
Unemployed Workers Accepted Free
Aspices: New York Branch Communist League of America (Opposition)

Paris Commune Celebration Saturday Evening, March 19, at Irving Plaza