

# IN THE INTERNATIONAL OF LABOR

Reviews and News of the Working Class and Revolutionary Movements

## Appeal to the S. A. P.

### The Left Opposition Addresses the Centrist Party Congress

Due to the exceptional importance and interest of the events now taking place there, we are devoting the International Page of the present issue to the situation in Germany. Directly below, we are publishing the Appeal of the German Left Opposition to the Congress of the Socialist Labor Party (S. A. P.—Sozialistische Arbeiter Partei), the new Centrist party under the leadership of Left wing social democrats who were recently expelled from the reformist S. P. G.—Ed.

To the members of the S. P. G. (Socialist Labor Party of Germany) and of the S. J. V. (Youth Section).

To the delegates of the Party Conference.

Only a few months after the formation of your organization there takes place the congress of your party. We turn to you on this occasion to direct your attention in comradely fashion to those problems set on the order of the day by the present situation.

The formation of the S. A. P. reflects the deep crisis of the capitalist economic system on the one hand, on the other, the class betrayal of the social democracy and also the grave political errors of the leadership of the Communist Party of Germany. These three factors determine also the basis of existence of your party. The deep economic crisis and the enormous sharpening of the class struggle bound therewith do not permit for any length of time the existence of a party vacillating between reformism and Communism. The complete bankruptcy of reformism, the now open betrayal of the S. P. G. has heightened the dissatisfaction in the ranks of the social democratic workers to the point of breaking with reformism.

As a result of your incorrect appraisal of the Communist party you have not succeeded in introducing clarity as to the revolutionary way out but, on the contrary, have only arrived at a stage of considerable ideological confusion in the ranks of your own party concerning the fundamental problems of the revolutionary movement.

Only when you achieve full clarity concerning these fundamental questions will you be capable of leading your members and sympathizers along the right road—along the road of the proletarian revolution.

On this ground we consider it our duty to present to you our view on these questions in dispute and to call your attention to the dangerous consequences of your incorrect understanding of these important fundamental questions.

#### Struggle against Pacifism!

Please tell us, comrades of the S. A. P. if you want to make a revolutionary Communist party out of the S. A. P., how can you then permit in the pages of your newspaper the rottenest kind of pacifism? For example, the S. A. P. organ of the 7th of February contains profound speculations as to whether the plan of the French imperialists is a "work of peace" and concludes by calling it "the only constructive plan". On the 8th of March, Kleinest not only dedicates a most respectful notice to the memory of the renegade Briand, under whose administration (in France) the largest number of striking workers were shot down, but even declares concerning his Pan-European idea that "it reveals indeed that far-reaching socialistic tendency which bears in itself to a large extent the idea of organized economy."

This is the same "socialistic tendency" which the social democratic leader and later editor of the D. A. Z., Paul Lensch, had already discovered in war economy. If the whole of pacifism is nothing but a bourgeois fraud perpetrated on the working class, then this special sort of pacifism, irrespective of the motives which give rise to it, is clearly the work of agents of French imperialism. Comrades of the S. A. P., how can you tolerate such ideas?

To the nationalist idea of defeated German imperialism the revolutionary proletariat opposes not a nationalist "liberation program" and certainly not the idea of a "united" Europe under the hegemony of the French bourgeoisie, but the idea of the Soviet United States of Europe.

The pacifistic conception is in no way the monopoly of Kleinest. You all know that Kuester's group is not better by a hair, yes, you must make clear to yourself that the centrist leadership of Seydewitz-Rosenfeld represents the same point of view in spite of all radical phrases. That is clear from their behaviour in the Reichstag when they voted against the proposal of the C. P. G. (in their opinion national-Communist) to withdraw from the League of Nations.

\*Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung—reactionary newspaper.

Besides, pacifism in the S. A. P. has its special meaning. Since reformism does not dare openly to enter the field of internal politics in the present situation, it betakes itself to the field of external politics where it intends to hide its face better from the workers.

The revolutionary workers have nothing in common with the renegade Briand and with the imperialist Tardieu. It is a violation of revolutionary thought to swear in the same newspaper by Briand, Leon Blum, Paul Faure, Paul Levi and by Liebknecht and Lenin.

If you want to make a revolutionary

party out of the S. A. P. you will draw the conclusion that membership in it is incompatible with Brandism and pacifism. There can be compromise between bourgeois pacifism and revolutionary internationalism.

#### Does the "Declaration of Principles" Create Clarity?

In so far as the S. A. P. separates itself from the S. P. G. and the Second International in its "Declaration of Principles" and recognizes the dictatorship of the proletariat it takes a step forward. But in so far as it wishes to establish its position toward the C. P. G. and the C. I. it does not go beyond general, unprecise formulas. In this respect it undoubtedly reflects the centrist conceptions which are hidden behind general formulas and even openly avoids the revolutionary terminology used in the entire Marxist-Leninist literature. Just one example of this. After it is stated correctly in paragraph 3, part 2, why the proletariat must destroy the bourgeois state and build its own, it is stated in paragraph 4 that this is the expression of the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat. Why not "the state form of the victorious proletariat is the dictatorship of the proletariat", etc.? Do not somehow the conceptions Kautsky-Bauer hide behind these formulations? It must be said clearly that the dictatorship is irreconcilable with every form of bourgeois democracy. The core of the entire declaration doubtless is contained in the following paragraphs 9, 10 and 11. They present the necessity for and the role of the S. A. P., neither more nor less, in relation to the S. P. G. and the C. P. G. In paragraph 9 their unbridgeable difference from the S. P. G. and the Second International is set down and the winning of social democratic workers to a revolutionary party is given as the important task. In paragraph 10 it is set forth that the Communist party and the C. I. showed themselves unable to give leadership to the proletarian masses in the revolutionary crisis and that the organizational system of the C. I. as it has developed itself, makes the regeneration of the revolutionary workers movement difficult. We must affirm that both in freeing of the S. P. G. workers from reformism and in winning of C. P. G. workers, the S. A. P. has proved unsuccessful until now. Why? Have you given thought to this?

You could not win S. P. G. workers because you yourselves are not fully clear as to the way out of this frightful situation for the working class. On the one hand you have contempt for the League of Nations, on the other hand you vote against the C. P. G. proposal for withdrawal from the League; on the one hand a clear front against French imperialism, on the other, words of praise for one of its most subtle representatives, Briand; on the one hand recognition of the dictatorship of the proletariat, on the other visible currents for the "overcoming" of capitalism by democratic means. With such ideological confusion a S. P. G. worker cannot be won for the revolution. And how does it look with the winning over of the C. P. G. worker? "Inability of the C. P. G. and the C. I." "Organizational system of the C. I." It is impossible to win over the Communist workers with such general and hazy slogans. The Communist workers have fought reformism for some time, even when Seydewitz-Rosenfeld, "for the sake of discipline", were covering up all the betrayals of reformism. It is not sufficient therefore to be correct on a few separate tactical questions as against the C. P. G. but it is incumbent on the S. A. P. to explain fundamentally what separates it from the C. I. if the differences are mainly merely of a tactical and organizational nature, why then a new party? Why not concentrate all forces for the reform of the C. I.? Why not support the Left wing of the Comintern and the C. P. G. in its struggle to reform the C. I.? These questions must be answered clearly and unequivocally.

It is not accidental that the weightiest part of your "Declaration of Principles" is also the weakest and the most general in form. Here you must show clearly what you want!

#### Socialism in One Country or Revolutionary Internationalism?

Opposed to the centrists in control of the S. A. P. stands a Left wing. Unfortunately clarity could not develop there, indeed at times the will for it was lacking.

The clearest document of the Left wing S. A. P.—comrades is the declaration of Rueck-Duby-Schaber. This document repeats the most mistakes of Stalinist centrism in the international, especially Russian, questions. It separates itself from Stalin, exactly like Brandler-Thalheimer do only on German questions of second rate importance.

The shameful end of the Brandler group has made clear that without clarity in international questions neither a revolutionary organization nor a revolutionary line can endure.

In contradiction to this we consider it our duty to present several fundamental considerations. Although the limits of this document do not allow us a complete presentation of all the important questions of Comintern policies, we find it necessary to take up the decisive experiences of the last 9 years.

The leading role of the Communist party of the Soviet Union in the Comintern arose because of the victory of the proletarian revolution in the S. U. through which the Communist Party of the S. U. became the only party in the C. I. which assembled the tremendous experiences of a great revolution. From these experiences the young Communist parties should have learned and made their own the strategy and tactics of the struggle for the conquest of power of the proletariat. As long as the Communist Party of the S. U. pursued a policy based on the experiences of the proletarian revolution, the leading role of this party exerted a positive influence on all sections of the C. I. That was the period in which Lenin and Trotsky stood at the head of the C. I.

Through the introduction of the N. E. P. in 1921 in the S. U. which was made necessary by the failure of the European revolution to materialize, there began a strengthening of the bureaucracy in the Soviet Union. Simultaneously with this process went on the process of gathering the revolutionary proletariat of Europe for the decisive battles facing them. In the middle of 1923 the C. I. had to undergo tests of momentous historic significance.

In Bulgaria the Communist party was confronted with the task of leading the Bulgarian proletariat and the village poor to victory by utilizing the differences between the Stambulsky regime, the representative of the rich farmers, and the Fascist party under the leadership of Zankov, the representative of finance capital. The leadership of the C. I. and of the Bulgarian party refused to take advantage of the differences between the Stambulsky regime and Zankov, they maintained neutrality as they were of the opinion that democracy and dictatorship were one and the same. This political stand led to the victory of the Fascist dictatorship in Bulgaria. The result was the destruction of over twenty thousand revolutionary workers and peasants.

In Germany in 1923 the situation was extremely tense. It demanded imperatively a revolutionary solution. The Communist party at that time became a mass party not only by its numerical strength but by its extra-parliamentary influence. The masses looked toward the C. P. G. awaited from it the solution. At that time not only Brandler and Thalheimer but the entire Comintern leadership failed. Characteristic for that situation is the fact that Stalin demanded from the German Communist Party the restraining of the armed uprising, while Trotsky demanded the immediate organization of the uprising. The German defeat of 1923 signaled the danger which can be characterized as the crisis of revolutionary leadership on the eve of the transition to armed uprising.

The new defeats on the international arena, after the proletarian revolution in Europe previously had failed to appear, led to a further strengthening of capitalist elements and the bureaucracy in the S. U. From this moment on begins that process in the C. P. of S. U. which finds its expression in the negation of the international character of the Russian revolution and in the development of the theory of "socialism in one country".

These theories led first in the years 1923-1928 to the policy of building socialism in one country with the help of the kulak, the rich peasant, in the course of which the Left Opposition under the leadership of Trotsky were condemned and persecuted on account of their demand for industrialization and collectivization. This theory was relinquished in 1928, when under pressure of objective difficulties and the criticism of the Left Opposition, Stalin turned to the ultra-left course of bureaucratic tempos for the reconstruction of economy without any consideration of the objective and subjective possibilities.

The theory of socialism in one country is a reactionary theory which contradicts the foundations of Marxism-Leninism. The present weakness of the C. I. can be explained only by this theory. The following quotation shows how far this theory is removed from Lenin's conceptions. Stalin says (Pravda, No. 26 of Nov. 12, 1928):

"The difference of opinion consists in this, that the party considers it possible to overcome fully and completely the inner contradictions and possible conflicts by the inner power of the revolution itself, while comrade Trotsky and the opposition believe that these contradictions and conflicts can be solved only on the arena of the international proletarian revolution."

Lenin says on this subject: "Poor Russia will become rich when it throws aside every misgiving, every phrase, when it grinds its teeth, gathers its strength, strains all its nerves and muscles and grasps that the salvation is possible only on the road of the international socialist revolution along which we are already marching" (Lenin, Vol. 15, page 165). "We have always declared and repeated that old Marxian truth that for the victory of socialism the combined efforts of the working class of several advanced countries are needed" (The Infantile Disease of Leftism).

How far removed are these conceptions of Lenin from the hymns of victory of Stalin and Molotov at the 17th party conference over the beginnings of a classless society in the S. U. This is the sharp difference between national Communism and revolutionary internationalism.

(To be continued)

## Speech of Com. Seipold in the Landtag

### The Voice of the International Left Opposition in the Prussian Parliament

(Continued from page 1)

democracy is humanizing the enemies of the working class. Now, you can rest assured: when Hitler lets your head roll, then you can assume with certainty, your political integrity will have very little left to lose by this operation. Hitler's announcements are calculated for blockheads and have the interests of scoundrels and fakers at heart. The growth of the Hitler party unfortunately proves that stupidity in the German nation is not yet rare. But Hitler is miscalculating when he believes that he will be able to deceive the German working class as Wels, Hilferding and company have. In 1918 Herr Hilferding attempted to coordinate the Weimar constitution with the workers' councils. In 1932 he is no doubt racking his brain over how it is possible to conciliate the tailend of the Weimar constitution with the Fascist armories. But Herr Hilferding may have to conclude this theme in the emigration, if the outcome of events is to depend upon the leadership of the social democracy. His fate would be that of the Italian social democrats, who also fought against the methods of Bolshevism so long until they played the Italian proletariat and the Italian people into the hands of the hangman Mussolini.

A Communist deputy said in the Reichstag: "We do not fear the Nazis. For when they come to power, they will very soon exhaust themselves". Comrades, Communists, that is a fundamentally wrong point of view. For, we must not wait. We must not consider the seizure of power by the Nazis as a simple test for Hitler. That may be the point of view of the bourgeois democrats. But it is in no case a Communist point of view. Power in the hands of the Nazis would mean jail for the working class, the gallows for its vanguard, Golgotha for the producing people. (Rep. Kasper—C. P. G.: But who said that?)—Remember! On October 15, I believe, but we can look that up.—We must gather the working class for struggle before Hitler's dream of a Third Empire has become a reality. We must unite the working class in a single united front.

(Intervention from the Communist benches: And that is why you wiped the mandate from us!)

I am utilizing my mandate in the interests of the proletarian revolution.—But this united front cannot be decreed in advance, by saying to the non-Communist workers: Come to us, recognize us as your leaders, then we will create the united front with you! You can only get the leadership by gaining the confidence of the German proletariat in the dynamics of the struggle. Lenin said: Without confidence, there can be no hegemony and the Communist party should and must become the hegemon (leader) of the working class. But who ever says: We do not fear the Nazis, let them come to power—is already today frightened to death by them, is scared in his boots; he draws the conclusion that it is no longer possible to prevent the Nazis from seizing power and is consequently ready for a capitulation before Hitler without a struggle.

(Shouts from the Communist benches)

—We shall discuss elsewhere as to how far you have got with your policy of the Red Trade Union Opposition, the "Red" United Front, the "national and social liberation". Just to what extent you have already proved sufficiently and will prove even more clearly in the future.

But this capitulation, this belief that the victory of Fascism can no longer be avoided, is concealed under false optimism, on the grounds of an inevitable and self-understood bankruptcy of the Nazis. Naturally, everything on earth ends at some time. Even the domination of the hangman Mussolini will have to come to an end and the end of the Czarist power could be foreseen many years ahead of the time. But that does not change the fact that two revolutions were necessary to defeat Czarism and that in the meantime Czarism succeeded in plunging the entire Russian people into an imperialist war. We say to the false optimists who console us with the coming bankruptcy of the "Third Reich": Do not dare lull the German proletariat to sleep! Do not chloroform it with sweet promises, do not dare undermine its will power—now, when the will to struggle is the first and foremost condition of victory!

(Laughter among the Communists)

We are not for "national and social liberation" as you are. We revolutionary Marxists know that as long as the people is divided into classes, every conception has a class content. When social democratic workers often say: Yes, we are for democracy, but for a pure democracy, then they also forget that in a class society, democracy can only be a class concept. We Bolshevik-Leninists have no illusions and will not allow anyone to put any illusions over on us. What a horrible historical catastrophe it would be for the world proletariat, if the Nazis were to come into power in Germany! Once come into power, Hitler could only become the executioner of the German proletariat and the agent of French, British and American capitalism. And the war for "social and national liberation" which Hitler would conduct, could only be turned against the East and not against the West. That does not

mean at all, against Poland. For Hitler and Pilsudski can very easily find common ground against the Soviet Union. To allow Hitler to get into power would mean betrayal against the first workers' state in the world, against the Soviet Union. And that means, to betray ourselves doubly.

No, the working class of Germany does not want Hitler to study his state surgery on its neck, nor on its body. We must not wait until Hitler's power falls into bankruptcy. We must throw Hitler overboard, before his dream has become a reality.

(Very true! from the benches of the social democratic party.—Intervention from among the Communists: Who is "we"?)—We, the Left Opposition of the C. P. G., even though we are not for the "national and social liberation of the German people" as you are, but for the proletarian revolution.

(Hear, Hear!—from the Communists) because we know in the capitalist world the "people" is divided into classes. Friedrich Engels said: After the working class has conquered power, it will dictate the laws itself and in such a manner, that the capitalist class will disappear and become alike to the others. To that extent, to which the capitalist class will disappear, the proletariat also will dissolve itself because it will have no more classes against itself and the intervention of the proletarian state will become ever more superfluous, first in one sphere and then in another, until the state will wither away of itself.

Now, the Vorwaerts of March 15 writes in an editorial that hails from Paul Loebe:

"The first blow: 'Onward, Iron Front!' The Iron Front has stood its first political test splendidly. It has done its share to spell the 'day of certain victory' for the knights of the swastika."

It is ridiculous to believe that the fate of the German people can be decided by parliamentary elections, or that the decision will be arrived at according to the parliamentary calendar. The fate of the German people will be decided by steel and lead. Only blind men or people who purposely close their eyes can believe that the problem of the fate of the German people can be decided by some sort of parliamentary elections—be they Presidential, Reichstag or Landtag elections. Hitler's assurances of legality are nothing more than a thin veil of cunning, with which he means to cover his plans. Bruening's speeches against Fascism are not worth a Pfennig more than Hitler's oaths of legality. All are gliding along the ether of neutrality. But statesmen have never lied so much as they have since the time that the radio was put at their disposal. The fate of the German people will not be decided by speeches, but as I have already said, by the open struggle of the classes with steel and lead. For it is toward this road that the Fascists are advancing and the working class must know this. The working class must fight mercilessly against all lies that attempt to soothe, against all illusions that attempt to lull them to sleep, no matter from what source. In order to be able to fight against Fascism effectively, it is necessary to unite the factories, the shops, the working class quarters, the millions of unemployed within a single front, with the aim of throwing back the watch-dog of capitalism, the Fascists. For when the watch-dogs are beaten down, the master is in danger. The workers have no time to lose, they must organize themselves for defense, for struggle, for attack and for victory. Hitler intends to militarize Germany in the interests of capital. The German proletariat will show him that it is only willing to be militarized in the interests of the proletarian revolution. Against Fascism, which we consider the last stake of capitalism, we revolutionary workers, we Leninist-Bolsheviks will fight in the foremost front with our brother workers as the vanguard of the revolution. The Fascist wave will and must smash up on the granite of the proletarian forces. When the capitalist class of Germany, which has become

involved in its own contradictions and crimes, will push Hitler on the road to the overthrow, we shall take up the challenge in full preparedness. We shall say: Capitalism has wanted this; very well, we will raise our hand to its throat, our knee to its breast!

(Intervention by Rep. Paul Hoffman)—Yes, you are good "theoreticians", we have seen that repeatedly from your tactics, from your "United Front" only "under our leadership". You demand leadership a priori, because you are not sure whether you can win it. This is what Platnitsky also said at the XI Plenum of the E. C. C. I.: "The German Communists have committed a mistake by issuing the slogan 'No Social Fascists in the Strike Leadership' during the metal workers' strike. That was not quite correct."

(Rep. Paul Hoffman: Quite correct!)

—That was not quite correct, says Platnitsky.

(Rep. Paul Hoffman: That was quite correct!)

—In our opinion it was altogether wrong, in yours it was quite correct. In Platnitsky's opinion it was "not quite" correct. And why was it wrong in our opinion? If there are 50 Communists and 150 or 250 social democrats in a factory, then you can of course, manage to build some sort of "strike leadership" in which the Communists will have a "majority". But this strike leadership has no real basis, it is a fictitious structure and can never reflect the actual desire for struggle in the factory. In this manner, you remain up in the air with your centrist tactics. . . . In this manner you have isolated the party of the proletariat.

(Laughter among the Communists)

And all this at a time in which all the objective premises are favorable for the Communist party.

#### On the State Budget

Your budget does not in the slightest degree give expression to the actual tasks and requirements of the country. Your budget is constructed in such a way, as if everything were "normal". If the Prussian government were thinking seriously of fighting against Fascism, then that would be expressed in the budget, but there is not even an inkling of that in it. Who can offer resistance to Fascism?

(Shout from the Communists: You!)

—These shouts are worth as much as the shouters. Neither the police nor the Reich's army, but only and solely—the working class. Therefore we must aid in this aim, to organize and to arm it. Only in this manner can the question of a serious struggle against National Socialism be posed. Among the workers there are many who have served as soldiers, but the youth which has not yet learned to handle weapons, is the most numerous section. The opportunity must be created to train the young workers in handling weapons. It must be decreed: In the factories, one hour a day is to be devoted to military training. One day in the week street training and field maneuvers are to be held.

(Rep. Kasper—C. P. G.: Who is to decree this?)

—Patience. I will also speak about that. —The unemployed are to train with the workers in the factories, in which they have formerly been employed; special supplementary training can also be provided for the unemployed. For this purpose, a sufficient amount of weapons must be put at the disposal of the workers. The costs of the weapons and the training must be borne by the state. The government of the social democrat Braun will not by far attempt to do anything of the sort, for it would be a misdemeanor from the point of view of the high art of the state or that of proper parliamentary etiquette, and against the obedient devotion to the bourgeoisie. No that cannot be demanded from the great men of the S. P. G., whose aim in life it is to ape the bourgeois statesmen and to betray the interests of the proletariat.

(Disorder in the House)

But only in this way can it be proved by documents that the speeches of the ministers are a hollow sham.

Now on the Press!

## Problems of the Chinese Revolution

WHAT HAPPENED IN THE 1925-1927 CHINESE REVOLUTION? WHY WAS THE SITUATION LOST BY THE PROLETARIAT? WHAT IS HAPPENING IN CHINA NOW? WHAT SHOULD THE COMMUNISTS DO?

These questions and many more are posed and answered in this book. In Trotsky's own words: "The lessons and problems in the strategy and tactics of the Chinese Revolution constitute at the present time the greatest teaching for the international proletariat."

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