

2 Expelled From I.L.D.

A Letter from the U.S.S.R.

How Can Fascism Be Smashed?

GERMAN CAMPAIGN

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admit that out of the 100 names only 15 were circled with the MILITANT and that these lists were stolen in November. The reply of the comrades flings the accusation into the teeth of the depraved Stalinists. (1) How does it happen that out of the 100 names only 15 were circled? (2) That in the same month sixty-five Militants were circled? (3) Of these 65 names about two-thirds were scattered as far as New Hampshire (The I. L. D. branch list included only Boston names). (4) These 65 names received the Militant beginning with August, three months before the alleged theft. (5) Comrade Konikov offered the Executive the privilege of examining his mailing lists. Naturally they did nothing about it. The facts speak for themselves. But what is the real reason for the expulsion? We quote their statement:

"We hear the name of Trotsky more and more often. They fear to speak of him, only a remark is thrown out, then passing quickly to another subject they return to it anew. Among the old party cadres no one believes in 'his counter-revolutionary character.' They remember Trotsky's ability to speak, to explain. They recall the civil war, where and how Trotsky spoke. In these same circles, they speak of Rakovsky with respect. 'Unfortunately, he is in Siberia'. They inquire, 'What is Trotsky doing, what has he written, has he an organization?' There is very little information on the work of the Left Opposition abroad.

An old party member said: 'Surely Lenin would not be angry with me if I take off Stalin's portrait which is hung near his and place in its stead Trotsky's. We need Hiyich (this is very frequent). One often hears from an average functionary: 'It will be better if Trotsky returns'. Others add with fright: 'If he returns they will shoot us by the thousands.'

If the old party cadres conduct themselves towards Trotsky and Rakovsky in this manner, it is quite another matter among the youth. They know only Stalin.

Platnitsky recently spoke at the 'Society of Old Bolsheviks'. In his speech he sounded a strongly capitulatory note to Fascism. Fascism is vanquished. But the center is Poland. The revolution is closer there than anywhere else. This capitulatory note displeased many. They have no perspective. The C. I. is subordinated to the interests of the Foreign Affairs Department.

At a meeting of the bureau of the Moscow Committee they decided to construct an ice-house on the Red Square. They called in about thirty experts for this subject. After lengthy examination—they decided to build it. The experts left, they went on to the second point on the agenda. Suddenly Kaganovitch came (always late!). He interrupted the speaker and asked what they had decided on the first point. Having learned that they had decided to build, Kaganovitch answered: 'This is foolishness', and proposed not to build the ice-house. The proposal was unanimously accepted, even though they had previously (after three hours of discussion) accepted the opposite proposal.

Unfortunately, one must say, that despite the grave dangers threatening the proletarian state, the Stalinist bureaucracy has remained true to itself. The last plenum of the C. C. and the new expulsions from the Party (Zinoviev, Kamenev etc.) demonstrates that they have decided to persevere in their ignorance. The plenum confirmed the absolute correctness of the line of the leadership. The cause of the cracks in the execution of the economic plan, the disorganization of monetary circulation and all the colossal difficulties which threaten, these are, according to them, bad execution of the instructions and of the plan. The executives are responsible for it, the workers, and not the false line. On the necessity of a change of regime, under which even a good idea, a correct instruction takes on an astonishing malformation in its realization, under which party thought is completely strangled—not a word on this. The answer to the growing discontent of the ranks of the Party and the 'middle' section of the apparatus is more expulsions from the party, more arrests, more exiling of Bolsheviks....

—TONOV.
Moscow—Early October, 1932.

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an agreement with the social democratic and trade union organizations is not only permissible, but a duty. To reject this for reasons of "principle" (in reality because of bureaucratic stupidity, or what is still worse, because of cowardice) is to give direct and immediate aid to Fascism.

A practical program of agreements with the social democratic workers was proposed by us as far back as September 1930. (The Turn in the Comintern and the Situation in Germany, published by The Militant), that is, a year and a quarter ago. What has the leadership undertaken in this direction. Next to nothing. The Central Committee of the Communist party has taken up everything except that which constitutes its direct task. How much valuable, irrefragable time has been lost! As a matter of fact, not much time is left. The program of action must be strictly practical, strictly objective, to the point, without any of those artificial "claims" without any reservations, so that every average social democratic worker can say to himself: What the Communists propose is completely indispensable for the struggle against Fascism. On this basis, we must pull the social democratic workers along with us by our example, and criticize their leaders who will inevitably serve as a check and a brake. Only in this way is victory possible.

"Even at the present time, we are not duty-bound to support the Kerensky government. That would be unprincipled. It is asked: then we are not to fight against Kornilov? Of course we are. But that is not one and the same thing. There is a limit to this; it is being transcended by many Bolsheviks who fall into "conciliationism" and allow themselves to be driven by the current of events.

"We shall fight, we are fighting against Kornilov but we do not support Kerensky, we are uncovering his weaknesses. The distinction is rather delicate, but highly important, and must not be forgotten.

"What does the change of our tactics consist of after the Kornilov insurrection?"

"In this, that we are varying the forms of struggle against Kerensky. Without diminishing our hostility to him even by one single note, without taking back one word from what we have said against him, without giving up the task of overthrowing Kerensky, we say: We must calculate the moment, we will not overthrow Kerensky at present. We approach the question of the struggle against him differently: by explaining the weaknesses and vacillations of Kerensky to the people (who are fighting against Kornilov)."

"We are proposing nothing different. Complete independence of the Communist organization and press, complete freedom of Communist criticism, the same for the social democracy and the trade unions. Only contemptible opportunists can allow the freedom of the Communist party to be limited (for example, like entrance into the Kuo Min Tang). We are not of their school."

No retraction of our criticism of the social democracy. No forgetting of all that has been. The whole historical reckoning, including the reckoning for Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg will be presented at the proper time, just as the Russian Bolsheviks finally presented a general reckoning to the Mensheviks and Social-Revolutionists for the baiting, calumny, imprisonment and murder of workers, soldiers and peasants.

But we presented our general reckoning to them two months after we had utilized the partial reckon-

ing between Kerensky and Kornilov, between the "democrats" and the Fascists—in order to drive back the Fascists all the more certainly. Only thanks to this circumstance were we victorious.

• • •

When the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Germany adopts the position expressed in the quotation from Lenin cited above, the entire approach to the social democratic masses and the trade union organizations will change at once: instead of the articles and speeches which are convincing only to those people who are already convinced without them, the agitators will find a common language with new hundreds of thousands and millions of workers. The differentiation within the social democracy will proceed at an increased pace. The Fascists will soon feel that their task does not at all consist merely of defeating Brüning, Braun and Weis, but of taking up the open struggle against the whole working class. On this plane, a profound differentiation will inevitably be produced within Fascism. Only by this road is victory possible.

But it is necessary to desire this victory. In the meantime, there are among the Communist officials not a few cowardly careerists and fakers whose little posts, whose incomes and more than that,—whose hides, are dear to them. These creatures are very much inclined to spout ultra-radical phrases beneath which is concealed a wretched and contemptible fatalism. "Without a victory over the social democracy, we cannot battle against Fascism!" say such terrible revolutionists, and for this reason... they get their passports ready.

Worker-Communists, you are hundreds of thousands, millions; you cannot leave for any place; there are not enough passports for you. Should Fascism come to power, it will ride over your skulls and spines like a terrific tank. Your salvation lies in merciless struggle. And only a fighting unity with the social democratic workers can bring victory. Make haste, worker-Communists, you have very little time left!

December 8, 1931.

—L. TROTSKY.

Minor Challenged at Philly Meeting

Philadelphia.—Our German meetings in New York, and Philadelphia have had its repercussions here. It awakened the party bureaucrats to call an Anti-Fascist meeting in Girard Manor Hall, in which Robert Minor was the speaker.

Our presence in a solid group threw such consternation into the ranks of the party leaders that they turned this meeting into an anti-Trotsky campaign. Minor who was so busy attacking Lenin and Trotsky, after the days of the Russian Revolution in 1917, has lost none of his ability in this respect. He called us stool pigeons, police attacking the Bolshevik wing of the Communist movement. The only difference being that then he did it outside of the party and now he does it under the cloak of Communism.

If our presence threw consternation into the hearts of the bureaucrats, our activity during the question period, drove them into a still greater frenzy.

We asked why comrade Pappas and Roberts had been expelled for demanding the Leninist united front against Fascism. To this:

Minor replied that no one was ever expelled for desiring to fight against Fascism.

On being asked the role of the Red Army with regard to Fascism, he began by calling us provocateurs, agents of the bosses, etc., and said that the German workers must make their own revolution. He did not mention, however, that once Hitler begins butchering the workers that Hitler's cry will not only be against German workers alone but Bolshevism as a whole, of which the Red Army is a part.

When he was asked what the danger of Fascism meant to the Soviet Union, Minor replied it merely meant the transforming of one kind of bourgeois dictatorship into another.

The question in regard to the "Red Referendum" was a bone in his throat which he tried to dislodge quickly. He merely said that it was not inconsistent for one to vote for dissolution at one time and to vote against dissolution at another time. He refused to tell why it was not inconsistent.

We also asked if Fascism came into power on July 20, 1932, why did the party wait seven months to call this meeting. This question remained unanswered as did many others which were "unimportant".

—L. ROBERTS.

Quits 'Anti-War' Committee

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of confusion.

That these facts are forgotten by the Stalinists, the official wing of Communism, who so readily hand over the struggle against war to the intellectuals and students, is to be regretted. We of the Left Opposition can only make our position clear. We propose that in view of the incorrect basis of existence of the National Committee of the Students Congress Against War, for the reasons enumerated above, that the Committee dissolve itself. This can be refused only at the pain of muddling the issue and perpetuating a body that may have dire consequences, because of the deceit it engenders in the fight against imperialist war. The Young Communist League, the official banner bearer of Communism among the youth, should issue a call to the leading youth organizations, on the basis of several minimum proposals, for a preliminary anti-war conference. The latter conference is to discuss the question of calling a broader conference, the basis and time of such

a one. If after this, it is necessary to plan specific student tactics, then district conferences, etc., may be called. But at all times it should be remembered that because the roots of war lie in the capitalist system, that because only the working class is historically adapted to combat that system, it is false to speak of independent student activity.

I feel, further, that my continued membership on the National Committee may lead to a misinterpretation of my motives for accepting on it, that it may lead a sanction to the committee which I am opposed to giving it. It is therefore with the purpose of resigning from the Committee that I write this statement.

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A Good Quotation from Lenin

The present day epigones, that is, the thoroughly bad disciples of Lenin, like to cover up their shortcomings on every occasion that offers itself with quotations—often entirely irrelevant. For Marxists, the question is not decided by a quotation but by means of the correct method. If one is guided by correct methods, it is not hard also to find suitable quotations. After I had drawn the above analogy with the Kornilov insurrection, I said to myself: I can probably find a theoretical elucidation of our bloc with the conciliators in the struggle against Kornilov, in Lenin. And here is what I actually found in the second part of Vol. XIV of the Russian edition, in a letter of Lenin to the Central Committee, written at the beginning of September, 1917:

"The 'Iron Front' was sharply criticized by us."

And further on: "Trotsky wants, in all seriousness, to see the Communists going hand in hand with the murderers of Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg and beyond this with Herr Zoergel, and with any police president whom the Papen regime chooses to leave in office for the repression of the proletariat. Trotsky has attempted on more than one occasion, to lead the working class astray by his writings, by demanding negotiations between the leaders of the K. P. D. and the SPD. Among other things he said as follows, to quote his own word: 'One must actually declare complete readiness to form a bloc with the social democrats against Fascism... One must compel social democracy to form a bloc against the Fascists.' This policy would mean that we would abandon our correct Bolshevik policy." (Communist International, January 15, 1933, pp. 35-36.)

Quite "clear", is it not? To sit down with the socialist leaders is equivalent to the abandonment of Bolshevik policy. To propose to them a joint demonstration against Fascism, must be sharply criticized, and the action rejected. We take it that this holds not only for Germany, but for every other land, France included. But in France we see a somewhat "different" policy being pursued. In the central organ of the French Communist Party for January 17, 1933, we read the astounding report that:

"Yesterday comrades Maurice Thorez and Jacques Doriot, in the name of our party, met with Paul Faure and J. B. Severac, representatives of the Socialist party and Paul Louis and M. Juncker, representatives of the Party of Proletarian Unity. The purpose of this conference was to discuss the question of the unity of action of the proletariat and to define its forms."

How is this possible? Is the need for a united front so much greater in France than in Germany that in the former country it is impermissible to "abandon our correct Bolshevik policy"? What has happened in France? Is Paul Faure one hair's breadth better than the "murderers of Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg", his co-religionists in Germany? Why is it "correct Bolshevik policy" to aim for a "bloc with the social democrats" in France, and an abandonment of this policy to aim for it in Germany?

But alas and alack! The well of Stalinist confusion is not exhausted by this comparison of Thaelmann with the French Communist party. One day after the Daily Worker devoted its leading editorial to a ferocious tirade at the Militant for demanding that the German party propose a united front against Fascism to the social democracy, it prints (2-17-1933) with the utmost unconcern, as if there were not the slightest contradiction between the two, the following correspondence from Berlin, Czech social democracy. As for Lovestone, as is known, his fierce attachment to principle would never permit him to capitulate to the Stalinists. Really—just try him and see. Just try him. Or, ask Gitlow....

To Delay the Anti-Nazi United Front Is Fatal

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It is precisely because the socialist masses are not yet ready to accept in advance the leadership of the Communist party that they have till now remained with the social democracy. The problem is how to win them away from the petty bourgeois socialist camp. The Stalinist slogan assumes that this problem has already been solved! The "united front from below" is postulated on the theory of "social Fascism" which dissolves the sharp distinction between the extreme "democratic" wing of the bourgeoisie and the extreme Fascist anti-democratic wing at the other extreme. What this theory has in common with Marxism, or even with the simple and known facts of the class struggle, remains undiscovered to the present day. At all events, on the basis of this theory the Stalinists refuse to make a bloc with the social democratic party, or to approach it officially with a concrete proposal for temporary united front on concrete questions. Those who like ourselves even propose such a united front, automatically become, according to the Stalinists, social Fascists, or better yet, the counter-revolutionary vanguard of social Fascism. This can be read any day in the week in the Daily Worker, in the Communist International, and so forth.

America's Role in Germany Wall Street's Stake in Germany

"The problem of the mutual relations between the United States and Europe was very intimately bound up with the question of Fascism and social democracy. Only the defeat of the German revolution of 1923 made it possible (or American capital to begin the realization of its plans for the (momentarily) peaceful subjugation of Europe. Under these circumstances, the American problem should have been considered in its full magnitude. Instead, the leadership of the Fifth Congress simply passed it by." (Trotsky—"Strategy of the World Revolution".)

Such an analysis as early as the Fifth Congress would have enabled the Comintern to consider properly the role of American imperialism, and also the changing and developing new class relationships in Germany—both of which problems are not understood by the Comintern even to this day.

The defeat of the German revolution in 1923 made possible the "Americanization" of Europe through the Dawes Plan, the Young Plan, etc. Upon this defeat and the triumph of Stalinism in the Comintern, the necessary base for a new alignment of class relations in Germany was established. The propping up of the structure with American capital laid the objective base for capitalist stabilization. The triumph of Stalinism, upon the wave of revolutionary regress, laid the subjective base for the "return" of social democracy as a crutch for crippled German capitalism. Meanwhile capitalism nurtured the Fascist force for the coming showdown with the "Marxian swine".

In this period, while capitalist Germany was walking upon the crutches of social democracy and the American dollar, the main task of American imperialism was the problem of preventing the extension of the October revolution, of propping up decaying capitalism, and of maintaining thereby the dominating imperialist position and the super-profits that go with it.

Around Germany and its reparations problem in this post war period revolves the complex of capitalist contradictions. Today around Germany and its Fascist horde, the same thing is seen in a higher form. The key to the international situation, as Trotsky has said, is Germany.

American investments in Germany are tremendous.

Their protection is a major concern of our imperialists. In the past, every mark Germany paid in reparations was more than equalled by loans from American imperialism. But to keep this up indefinitely is not possible for American profits. From this flowed the new problem of the Hoover

moratorium, the reparations "settlement" and the war debt question.

The moratorium and reparations settlement were frantic attempts to hold in check the inevitable civil war in Germany. These moves were not successful. But they were able to strengthen the reactionary forces of Fascism against the proletariat. Between the contradictory problem of profits and the prevention of the extension of the October revolution, the American imperialists have been jumping in the hope that a parallel line of march can be obtained for these two factors in the decay of capitalism.

Normal bourgeois rule in Germany is desired. But American imperialism knows enough to change its attitude when the time demands it. The German capitalists were slow and by no means unanimous in changing from social democracy, to coalition to Bonapartism and now—to Fascism. The American imperialists will show these same contradictions in their change of position, and a slower tempo. Already a growing section of the American capitalists are in favor of "Hitler and Hindenburg—since the Bonapartist attempts have been dislodged by the sharpening class relations."

In South America, American imperialism has supported in turn reactionary, liberal, and "revolutionary" governments and has resorted to armed intervention—depending in each case upon the class relations and imperialist relations, according to the profit interest of American capital. Germany will be no exception. The only difference is that the explosive class relations in Germany are at a far higher stage than in South America, where the flames of revolt can be far easier held in check. Therefore, far more precaution has been shown by ruthless American imperialism.

—HUGO OEHLER.

"They had led us into the I. L. D. as known members of the Opposition. We had done everything that the officialdom let us do to support ILLD activities. Comrade Shechet, particularly had put so much energy into the ILLD work that the comrades were talking about it."

She was active in canvassing in the Negro section; in obtaining support of A. F. of L. and I. W. O. locals for the ILLD. The John Reed Branch elected her to its Executive Committee. And this comrade is called a disrupter and an enemy of the working class! The statement continues further: "The real immediate reason for our expulsion can be traced to a recent visit of comrade Biedenkapp when he spoke at the District Conference. He depicted the sad condition of the ILLD and of course like all bureaucrats blamed it on the membership. Comrade Shechet asked him if the membership were responsible for the three-months delay in calling the Mooney Conference.... She asked him if the membership were responsible for the delay in calling the Scottsboro conference until a few weeks before the trial so that no time was left for action.... Also when comrade Biedenkapp called for a resolution against the arrest of comrade Ping, secretary of the C. P. of China, comrade Shechet suggested that the name of comrade Chen Du Siu be added to the resolution.... Did comrade Biedenkapp answer her? Not in words, but in expulsions! We ask the comrades in the ILLD why we were expelled just after comrade Biedenkapp's visit when all the "facts" on the stealing of the membership list were known since November?"

"We herewith charge the officialdom of the ILLD with sabotaging the work of the ILLD. We challenge them to answer comrade Shechet's questions on the two sabotaged conferences. We refer them to the sections on "self criticism" in the report of the National Convention of the ILLD, and in the Labor Defender, and we charge them with not having made one change in conformity with the "self criticism" of "bureaucracy" and "too many functionaries".

"As for ourselves we deny every charge made and demand a proletarian trial before the members of our branches, and whatever happens we assure our comrades that we will continue to work for the I. L. D.

CHARLOTTE SCHECHET,
WILLIAM M. KONIKOV."

GOOD SALES IN BOSTON

The Boston comrades write: "We sold yesterday 70 Militants at a Forum where Muste spoke and we gave 30 away free. We are delighted with the good work done in New York."

German Opposition Overwhelmingly Against the Handful of Capitulators

BERLIN.—The Stalinist assertion that the German Left Opposition has disintegrated, supported by the forgery of an issue of the "Permanent Revolution", the organ of the German Left Opposition, is refuted by the action of the branches of the German Opposition with respect to the handful of capitulators who made the forgery possible.

The following branches, in resolutions addressed to the German National Committee, have either demanded the exclusion of the capitulators, R. Well, Senin, etc., or expressed their solidarity with the decisions of the National Committee:

Koenigsberg, Buehnen, Bautzen, Dresden, Bruchsal, Karlsruhe, Kaiserslautern, Mainz, Neustadt a. H., Mannheim, Frankfurt, Cologne, Gelsenkirchen, Essen, Solingen, Erkenschwick, Reimscheidt, Hamburg, Berlin, Oranienburg, Birkenwerder, Magdeburg, Halberstadt, Hildner.

For reasons that will be readily understood we do not enumerate the inner-party fractions.

In Leipzig, where the capitulators were able to gather only 28 signatures, the most inactive part of the organization capitulated. Two-thirds of the group stands with us.

Branches of which the capitulators wrote that it would "probably" join them, and which alone has more members than the capitulators are able to show "signatures" stands unanimously with the National Committee. Not a vote was

given there for Well and Co.

In Hamburg only the daughter of Fritz Buechner (Leipzig) voted for the "Program" of the capitulators. Well and Senin lied in obtaining ten telegraphic signatures.

It is a swindle to say that Well, Senin, etc., constituted the majority of the National Committee. Of twelve members of the National Committee only three stood on the side of Well.

It is also a swindle to say that they had a majority for their platform on the editorial staff of the "Permanente Revolution".

Lovestone and the Capitulators

The current number of the Lovestone paper, which appeared after our exposure of the forged issue of "Die Permanente Revolution", published by the Well group of capitulators which makes the excuse of "ignorance" untenable—unsmilingly reports that "the group 'Die Permanente Revolution' has capitulated and gone back to the official C.P.G. The last issue of its organ contained a full page appeal for unconditional return to the party! This leaves the 'International Left Opposition' without a group in Germany." Even if the American Right wing (which Lovestone also unsmilingly reports to have 900 members) can only publish its paper once a month, this is hardly a reason why deliberated falsehoods should be repeated.

The Right wing is not "without a group in Germany", as we know; that is, it has remaining in its ranks those who have not yet join-

ed the Social Democratic Party but who are quite ready to join the Stalin faction on the "proper terms". In Czechoslovakia, too, the Right wing is not "without a group"; only, its group is now part of the Czech social democracy. As for Lovestone, as is known, his fierce attachment to principle would never permit him to capitulate to the Stalinists. Really—just try him and see. Just try him. Or, ask Gitlow....

"The article contains among other things the following passage: '... But above all, the demand of the Berlin-Brandenburg district leadership to the "Iron Front" movement to hold a joint demonstration against Fascism, is most appropriate here.'

"In this we see the continuation of the false judgment of the role of the S. P. D. The proposal made by the leaders of the Berlin District of the Social Democratic Party but who are quite ready to join the Stalin faction on the "proper terms". In Czechoslovakia, too, the Right wing is not "without a group"; only, its group is now part of the Czech social democracy. As for Lovestone, as is known, his fierce attachment to principle would never permit him to capitulate to the Stalinists. Really—just try him and see. Just try him. Or, ask Gitlow....

What Next

Vital Questions for the German Proletariat,
by LEON TROTSKY

A penetrating Marxist analysis of the class dynamics and forces at work in the present situation. A burning indictment of the social democracy and the criminal blunders of the Stalinists. A work no Left wing worker and Communist can afford to neglect. One of the texts of the future.

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precious hours are slipping by. Hitler knows what he wants and he marches ruthlessly towards his goal. The Communist party and its leadership, upon whom such a tremendous historical responsibility rests, are floundering like fish in the meshwork of the Stalinist net. The net must be cut through with a quick, sharp knife. The German Communist Party must be set free so that it may act decisively. Upon it depends the decisive and final action of the whole German proletariat.

Saturday, Feb. 18, 1933 —M. S.