

Declaration of the Internat'l Left Opposition

Declaration of the Delegates Belonging to the International Left Opposition (Bolshevik Leninists)

FOR THE CONGRESS OF STRUGGLE AGAINST FASCISM

The victory of Hitler in Germany shows that capitalism cannot live in conditions of democracy, cannot even cover its tracks with democratic tutelage. Either the dictatorship of the proletariat or the open dictatorship of finance capital: Either the workers soviets or the armed bands of the desperate petty bourgeois populace!

Fascism has not and cannot have any program of solving the crisis of capitalist society. But that does not mean that Fascism will fall automatically a victim of its own contradictions. No, it will maintain capitalist exploitation by running the country, by degrading capitalist civilization and by continually introducing greater savagery into the customs. The victory of Fascism is the result of the maudlin of the proletariat to take the state of society into its own hands. Fascism will live as long as the proletariat does not rise.

Social democracy delivered the proletarian revolution of 1918 to the bourgeoisie and thus, once again, saved declining capitalism; it is the social democracy and it alone which gave the bourgeoisie the possibility to turn, in the following stage, on the fascist banditry. Descending from one step to the other, in pursuit of the "lesser evil," the social democracy finished by voting for the reactionary head marshal, Hindenburg, who in his turn summoned Hitler to power. Demoralizing the proletariat by illusions of democracy in decadent capitalism, the social democracy deprived the proletariat of all its powers of resistance.

SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC LEADERS LICK HITLER'S BOOTS

The top layers of the German social democracy are now trying to adapt themselves to Hitler's regime in order to preserve the remainder of their legal positions and the benefits that accrue from them. In vain! Fascism has brought with it a swarm of starved and ravenous locusts who demand and will obtain the monopoly of jobs and incomes for themselves. The penalty of the reformist bureaucracy, a secondary result of the defeat of the proletarian organizations, represents the payment for the uninterrupted chain of treachery of the social democracy since August 4, 1914.

The leaders of the other social democratic parties are now trying to separate themselves from their German brothers-in-arms. It would be impermissible light-mindedness, however, to believe the words of the "left" critics of the reformist international, all of whose sections find themselves on different degrees of the same road. As in the time of the imperialist war, in the process of the fall of the bourgeois democracy each section of the Second International is ready to rebuild its reputation on the back of another national party. But basically they do the same work. Leon Blum supports the militarist and imperialist French government. Vandervelde, president of the Second International, has not withdrawn, as far as we know, his signature from under this same Versailles peace which has given German Fascism its present dimensions.

FIRST 4 CONGRESSES OF C. I. VINDICATED BY EVENTS

All the fundamental principle theses of the first four Congresses of the Communist International: on the decadent character of imperialist capitalism, on the inevitability of the decomposition of bourgeois democracy, on the impasse of reformism, on the necessity of the revolutionary struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat, have found their irrevocable confirmation in the events in Germany. But their correctness has been demonstrated "ad absurdum": not by victory but by catastrophe. If, despite almost fifteen years of existence of the C. I., the social democracy succeeded in carrying the policy of the "lesser evil" to its final conclusion, that is, to the worst evil that can be conceived of in modern history, we must look for its cause in the fact that the Communism of the epigones has shown itself incapable of fulfilling its historic mission.

BLUNDERS OF STALINISM HAVE SHIPWRECKED REVOLUTIONS

Up till 1923, the C. I. marched forward in all countries, almost without a halt, weakening and ousting the social democracy. In the last ten years, not only did it not make any new quantitative conquests, but it suffered a profound qualitative degeneration. The shipwreck of the official Communist

party in Germany is the fatal termination of the "general line" which passed through the adventures of Etshonia and Bulgaria, through the capitulation before the Kuo Min Tang, through the not less infamous capitulation before the trade union bureaucracy in England, through the Canton adventure, through the convulsions of the "third period," through the break with the mass trade unions, through the theory and practice of "social Fascism," through the policy of "national liberation" and "people's revolution," through the rejection of the united front, through the banishment and persecution of the Left Opposition, finally, through the complete stifling of the independence of the proletarian vanguard and through the substitution for democratic centralism—by the omnipotence of an unprincipled and dull witted apparatus.

The essence of bureaucratism resides in the distrust of the masses and in the tendency to replace their conscious revolutionary activity by combinations from above or by naked commands. In Germany, as well as in other countries, the Stalinist bureaucracy posed continual ultimatums before the working class. It fixed for it, from above, the dates for strikes or for the "conquest of the streets," it arbitrarily fixed "red days" or "red months" for it, it ordered it to accept all its slogans and zig-zags without criticism; it demanded that the proletariat recognize its leadership in the united front in advance and without question, and on this monstrous ultimatum it based its struggle, false from end to end and impotent, against Fascism.

NOT ACCIDENTAL ERRORS BUT AN ERRONEOUS SYSTEM

Errors are inevitable in the struggle of the proletariat. Through their own errors the parties learn, select the cadres and educate the leaders. But in the present C. I. these are not errors but an erroneous system which renders a correct policy impossible. The social agents of this system are a large bureaucratic stratum, armed with enormous material and technical means, in fact independent of the masses and conducting a furious struggle for self preservation at the price of the disorganization of the proletarian vanguard and its weakening before the class enemy. Such is the essence of Stalinism in the world workers' movement.

In the last years, the Left Opposition, before the eyes of the entire world, followed the fascist tide in all its stages and traced a policy of true revolutionary realism. As early as the Autumn of 1929, that is, three and a half years ago, at the very beginning of the world crisis, the Left Opposition wrote:

L. O. ANALYSIS OF FASCISM IN AUTUMN, 1929

"Just as revolutionary situations developed more than once out of the conflict between liberalism and monarchy, which later went over the heads of both opponents, so a revolutionary situation can develop out of the clash between social democracy and Fascism—two antagonistic praxes of the bourgeoisie—which will pass over the heads of both of them.

"The proletarian revolutionist would be worthless if he did not understand, in the epoch of the bourgeois revolution, how to estimate the conflict between the liberals and the monarchs, and instead of utilizing the struggle in a revolutionary manner, threw the two opponents into one pot. The Communist it not worth a copper who in the face of the collisions

To the World Anti-Fascist Congress to Be Held in Copenhagen, June 17th

between Fascism and the social democracy, shouts down this formula with the barren formula of social Fascism, which has no content at all."

The policy of the united front should have been built on this general strategic perspective. Step by step in the course of the last three years the Left Opposition followed the development of the political crisis in Germany. In its periodicals and in a series of pamphlets it submitted all the stages of the struggle to an analysis, unmasked the ultimatum character of the formula "only from below," took upon itself where it could, the initiative of united defense committees, supported the initiative of the workers in this direction and demanded incessantly the extension of this initiative over the whole country. If the C. P. had resolutely set out on this path, the reformist bureaucracy would have shown itself impotent to restrain the pressure of the workers for the united front. Smashing up against a new barrier at each step, Fascism would have opened all its wounds. The local defense bodies would have grown irresistibly, in fact transforming themselves into workers' councils. Marching on this path, the German proletariat would have dealt a decisive blow to Fascism and with one last stroke would have swept away the whole leading oligarchy. The whole situation laid the basis for the revolutionary victory of the German proletariat.

STALINIST BUREAUCRACY TAKES PATH OF SABOTAGE

The Stalinist bureaucracy, however, took the path of unconscious but nevertheless actual sabotage of the revolution. They forbade agreements of Communists with social democratic organizations, destroyed the common organs of defense created by the workers and, under the name of "counter revolutionaries," expelled all the defenders of a correct revolutionary policy from its ranks. It could be said that such a manner of acting was especially created to isolate the Communists, to consolidate the bonds between the social democratic workers and their leaders to sow confusion and disintegration in the ranks of the proletariat and to prepare the unobstructed ascension of the Fascists to power. The results are apparent!

On the 5th of March, when the fate of the proletariat was already decided, the E. C. of the C. I. not only declared itself ready for the united front from above—true, on a national and not on an international scale—but consented, so as to satisfy the reformist bureaucracy, to renounce mutual criticism during the period of the united front. A jump from incredible bluntness, from ultimatum presumptuousness to characterless concessions! The Stalinist bureaucracy, having stifled criticism within its own party, had evidently lost its understanding of criticism in the political struggle as such. Revolutionary criticism determines the attitude of the proletarian vanguard, that is, of the most critical party in contemporary society, towards all classes, parties and groupings. A real Communist party can no more renounce criticism, not even for a day, than a living organism can renounce respiration. The policy of the united front does not exclude mutual criticism in any case, on the contrary, it demands it. Only two bureaucratic apparatuses, one of which is weighted

down with betrayals and the other with a fatal chain of errors, can be interested in the suspension of mutual criticism, transforming the united front by that same fact into a silent conspiracy behind the masses, the aim of which is their own preservation. We, the Bolshevik Leninists, say that never and under no conditions will we join in such a conspiracy; on the contrary, we will unrelentingly denounce it to the workers.

SURRENDER CRITICISM BUT RETAIN "SOCIAL FASCISM"

At the same time that it consents to renounce criticism, the Stalinist bureaucracy seizes upon the repulsive boot-licking of Weis, Leipzig and Co. before Hitler to revive the theory of social Fascism. In reality, this theory remains as false today as it was yesterday. Those who were only recently the masters of Germany, fallen under the boot of Fascism, are licking this boot in order to gain indulgence from the Fascists; that corresponds exactly to the miserable nature of the reformist bureaucracy. But that does not at all signify that there is no difference for the reformists between democracy and the Fascist boot, and that the social democratic masses are not capable of struggling against Fascism when an issue is opened for them on the arena of struggle.

FASCISM BUILT ON LIES; COMMUNISM ON TRUTH

The policy of Fascism rests upon demagoguery, lies and slander. The revolutionary policy can only build on truth. That is why we are obliged to condemn resolutely the Organization Bureau for the convocation of the present congress, which has given, in its appeal, an optimistically false picture of the state of things in Germany, speaking of the powerful development of the anti-Fascist struggle. In reality, for the moment, the German workers are retreating in complete disorder without fighting. Such is the bitter fact which cannot be blurred by words. In order to stand on its feet, to regroup and to concentrate its forces the proletariat, represented by its vanguard, must understand what has happened. Away with illusions! They are precisely the illusions which led to the catastrophe. We must say what is, clearly, honestly, openly.

The situation in Germany is profoundly tragic. The butcher has only begun his work. The victims will be legion. Hundreds and thousands of workers in the Communist party are imprisoned. Severe tests await those who remain faithful to their banner. The honest workers of the entire world are giving their whole-hearted sympathy to the victims of the Fascist butcher. But it will be the height of hypocrisy to demand silence on the fatal policy of Stalinism because its German representatives have at the same time become its victims. Great historic problems are not settled by sentimentalism. The supreme law of the struggle is to conform to the end goal. Only the Marxist explanation of all that has happened can imbue the vanguard with self-confidence. It does not suffice for it to express its sympathies for its victims, it must become stronger in order to overthrow and strangle the butcher.

German Fascism slavishly follows the Italian example. That, however, does not signify that power is assured to Hitler for a series of years, as was the case with Mus-

solini. Fascist Germany starts out on its history in conditions of a very advanced capitalist disintegration, of mass misery unprecedented in modern history and of a three tening tension in international relations. The denouement can come very much sooner than the masters of the day think. It will, however, not come of itself. A revolutionary shock is needed.

NO MIRACLES; ONLY WORKERS CAN DEFEAT FASCISM

The social democratic press places great hopes in the existence of cracks in the German government bloc. Along this same path, fundamentally, marches the Pravda of Moscow, which only yesterday denied the existence of antagonism between Fascism and the social democracy but today counts on the antagonisms between Hitler and Hugenberg. Contradictions in the ruling camp are undeniable. But they in themselves are powerless, insofar as it is a matter of arresting the victorious development of the Fascist dictatorship which is dependent upon the whole situation of German capitalism. We must not expect miracles. Only the proletariat can put an end to Fascism. So that the latter can proceed on to the broad historic path, a decisive turn is necessary in the field of revolutionary leadership. It is necessary to return to the policy of Marx and Lenin. We, Bolshevik-Leninists, do not come to this congress to entertain any illusions whatsoever, nor to save false reputations. Our aim is to clear the road for the future. Naturally, we do not doubt that tens and perhaps hundreds of thousands of workers are seriously prepared for struggle will be represented at this congress. No less are we inclined to believe that the delegates will be seriously disposed in their majority, to do everything possible so as to crush Fascism. Nevertheless, the Congress itself, in the manner in which it has been conceived and called together, cannot, we are profoundly convinced bear serious revolutionary significance. Fascism is a formidable enemy. To struggle against it we need compact masses of millions and tens of millions of workers well organized and well directed. We need a firm basis in the shops and in the unions. We need the confidence of the masses in a leadership that has been tested by the experience of struggle.

The problem is not solved by solemn meetings nor by sensational speeches. This congress, hastily improvised, represents isolated groups without any links between them, who after the congress will be just as isolated as before it from the millions of proletarians.

CONGRESS AGAIN COLORED BY INTELLIGENTSIA

The "isolated" individuals from the intellectual bourgeois circles will color the anti-Fascist Congress as they colored the Amsterdam Congress. It is not a very permanent color. The advanced workers, in fact, appreciate greatly the sympathy which the best representative of science, literature and art have for them. But from that it does not at all follow that the radical scientists or artists are capable of replacing the mass organizations or of undertaking to lead the proletariat. And yet this congress pretends to leadership! Those representatives of the bourgeois intelligentsia who really de-

sire to participate in the revolutionary struggle should begin by clearly defining their program and by attaching themselves to a workers organization. In other words, in order to have the right to vote at a congress of the fighting proletariat, the "isolated" must cease to be isolated.

Neither the work against war nor the march against Fascism requires any special art which lies beyond the general struggle of the proletariat. The organization which is incapable of analyzing precisely the situation, of leading the daily defensive and offensive battles, of gathering about it the broadest masses, of achieving unity in defensive actions with the reformist workers, unbending them at the same time of their reformist prejudices—such an organization will inevitably suffer shipwreck in the face of war as well as of Fascism.

AMSTERDAM CONGRESS MISERABLE FAILURE

The Amsterdam Congress has shown already its inconsistency in the course of the offensive of the Japanese bandits against China. Even in the domain of agitation, the alliance of the Stalinist bureaucracy with the isolated pacifists has not achieved anything substantial. It must be said openly: the anti-Fascist Congress, which in its international composition, is much rather an accidental meeting, is called to create an appearance of action, just where action itself has defaulted. If, conforming to the project of its organizers, the Congress contents itself with a barren appeal, in the history of the struggle against Fascism it risks becoming not only a zero but a negative quantity, for the most serious crime in present conditions is to lead the workers into error about their actual forces and the real methods of struggle.

Only on one condition, can the Congress of Struggle Against Fascism play a progressive although modest role; if it shakes off the hypothesis of the bureaucratic impostors who stand behind the scenes, and puts on the agenda a free discussion on the causes of the victory of German Fascism, on the responsibility of the leading proletarian organizations and on a true program of revolutionary struggle. It is by taking this path, and this one only that the congress will become a factor of revolutionary renaissance.

The platform of the International Left Opposition gives the only correct directives for the struggle against Fascism. As the most immediate and most pressing measures, we, Bolshevik-Leninists, propose the following:

PROPOSALS OF INTERNATIONAL LEFT OPPOSITION

1. TO immediately accept the proposals of the Second International for an agreement on an international scale, such an agreement does not exclude but demands the concretization of the slogans and the methods for each particular country;
2. TO principally condemn the formula of the united front "from below only," which means the rejection of the united front generally;
3. TO reject and to condemn the theory of social-Fascism;
4. IN no case and under no condition to renounce the right to criticize the temporary ally;
5. TO re-establish freedom within the Communist parties and all organizations which are under their control, and those that make up the Anti-Fascist Congress;
6. TO renounce the policy of independent Communist trade union

organizations; to participate actively in the mass trade unions;

7. TO renounce the infamous competition with Fascism under the slogans of "national liberation" and "people's revolution";

AUSTRIAN WORKERS MUST TAKE OFFENSIVE

It is necessary to begin to undertake the discussions between the Second and Third International by putting the question of Austria in first place. Everything has not been lost yet in that country. By starting immediately on the road of active defense the American proletariat, supported by the proletariat of all the countries of Europe, could, by the consistent and courageous development of the offensive, arrest the power from the hands of the enemy; the internal relation of forces in Austria assures victory. A red Austria will immediately become a prop of strength for the German workers. The whole situation will change abruptly in favor of the revolution. The European proletariat will feel that it represents an invincible force. And only this consciousness is necessary to wipe out all its enemies.

It is the U. S. S. R. which occupies the central position in the struggle with world counter-revolution. In this domain, we, Bolshevik-Leninists, less than ever, subscribe to the policy of official optimism. In the bureaucracy all is well five minutes before the catastrophe. Such was the case in Germany. The same method is being applied also for the Soviet Union but the situation in the first workers' state has never been so tense as at present. The basically false policy of the uncontrolled bureaucracy has thrown the country into unbearable privation, has brought the peasantry into conflict with the proletariat, has sowed discontent in the working masses, has tied the hands and feet of the party, has weakened all the pillars and props of the dictatorship. The October Revolution has no need of "friends" who sing false hymns and repeat each word of the ruling bureaucracy in chorus. The October Revolution has need of militants who speak the truth, even if it is harsh, but who, on the contrary, maintain an unshakable loyalty in the hour of danger.

SO UND THE ALARM: SOVIET RUSSIA IN DANGER!

We sound the alarm before the world proletariat: the Soviet fatherland is in danger! only the fundamental reform of the entire policy will save it. The program of such reform is the program of the Left Opposition in the U.S.S.R. Thousands of its best fighters, at their head, C. G. Rakovsky, at the present time fill the prisons and the places of deportation of the Soviet Union. From the tribune of this congress we send our fraternal greetings to our valiant comrades-in-arms. Their number is growing. No amount of persecution will shake their courage. In the difficult days to come the proletarian dictatorship will find in them not only wise counselors but also devoted soldiers.

The development of the international workers movement, and above all the European, has reached a decisive point. The German Communist party is smashed. To think of re-establishing it on the old basis and under the old leadership is a hopeless utopia. There are defeats that are unpardonable. The German Communist party will now be built on a new basis. Only those elements of the old party, who have freed themselves from the heritage of Stalinism can take their place among the builders. Will organizational succession be followed in the development of the other sections of the C. I. in its entirety? History has apparently not rendered its final verdict on that. One thing is certain: very little time remains to correct the monstrous errors. If this time is lost, the Communist International will go down into history with the glorious Leninist beginning and the infamous Stalinist end.

We, Bolshevik-Leninists, propose to make the experience of the fall of German Communism a point of departure for the rebirth of all its remaining sections. We are ready to concentrate all our forces to that end. In the name of this task we extend our hand to our fiercest adversaries of yesterday. It is unnecessary to say that in the battle against Fascism, in the defensive as in the offensive, the Bolshevik-Leninists will occupy their places of struggle in the common ranks as they have occupied them everywhere and always.

Roosevelt Intervenes

(Continued from page 1)

the illusions of bourgeois pacifism and to help prepare the slaughter of the working class.

For workers there are no "aggressor" and "defender" nations. For workers there can only be imperialist wars and revolutionary wars. If the Soviet Union is to exist as the workers' fatherland, the preparations for imperialist war must be mercilessly exposed. If the workers are to be forewarned against the coming butchery, it is criminal to play around with non-sensical dabbings on "aggressor" nations and "partial disarmaments".

Finally, if the murderous aim of the capitalists are to be defeated, the working class of the world must be rallied into a solid, compact fighting mass by the Leninist tactic of the united front, step by step in their everyday struggles, and up to the unified struggle against imperialist war. The role of the American workers in this task is, in view of the world position of American capitalism, doubly great. —S. G.

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