

# Letters from the Nazi Inferno

Letters from Rhineland

Above all, the Nazis are preoccupied with preparations for the First of May. All the factory workers must appear at 8 a. m. sharp at their places of work. Then everybody is to proceed to the public square and from there to the churches, in company with the veterans' associations, etc. No one knows where those who dissent are to gather. It seems that several of the stouter characters refused to obey this injunction; for example, a well known machine factory. The bosses declared against the use of any coercion—their factory was a place of work and not a headquarters for political assemblies. Aside from this, they categorically refused to hoist the swastika on their rooftops. The money which had been collected for the purchase of the flag was sent back by them.

Up to the middle of the last year, one of our comrades was the leader of the section in our town. A certain X... unfurled a strong anti-Trotsky campaign and our comrade was not long in getting himself expelled. After his expulsion, X... was appointed in his place. Even at that time, the rank and file had a great distrust for X... and rose up against the expulsion of our comrade. But the bureaucrats imposed X... upon the workers. Today, in gratitude to the bureaucrats, X... turns all of them over to the Storm Troops and the concentration camps.

38 police functionaries have been summarily dismissed. The reason for this is to be sought in the fact that the chief of the section taught the Schupo (Reichshunter) the use of arms. This man has fled. His activity was betrayed by a member of the Schupo.

The "nature colonies" here have been occupied by the S. T. and the Hitler Youth. The Nazis do not forget anything. They are seizing hold of all domains of life and placing them under the control of the police.

### II.

Yesterday I witnessed the following incident: A Storm Trooper argued with a man of about 60 in the street. In the course of the argument, the S. T. beat the old man bloody and knocked him down to the ground. His right temple was an open wound and blood was flowing down his face. The passerby were aroused and hurled oaths at the S. T. Words like these were heard: "Watch out, when the times change, take care!" Such scenes are not rare here.

The Nazi march on May 1 was quite imposing. It is true that it resembled more a country fair show than a demonstration. It was without movement and without enthusiasm. Depression among the workers, who had to participate under threat of discharge. Here and there, petty bourgeois drinking alcohol from the bottle.

In some places the party comrades still were able to hoist the red flag on a chimney; the S. T. naturally soon came to take them down.

The party distributed a leaflet: "Under the Sign of the Cross." It was so dull and confusing that no one could make it out. The party comrades are so awkward in distributing leaflets, that they are caught en masse. Later, when the Nazi tribunals sentence them to two years in prison, the papers write: "Indulgent judges."

**Letter from the South West**  
Here conditions differ greatly according to the districts; first, as to the methods of the new power and then, relative to the party. The strongest oppression is felt in the Palatinate, where there has been an extraordinary number of arrests and where the petty bourgeois elements are greatly aroused against the working class. For our comrades too, the work is of unheard-of difficulty in these regions. But in the big centers, our organization works very well and has remained completely intact. Here the party is nearly finished. To the degree to which their members do not realize the whole weight and the full extent of the situation. It is still possible, to be sure, for them to count on some activity. But certain sections of the town have already collapsed.

### Letter from Thuringia

After the collapse of the C.P.G., the members became very much accessible to our literature. Those who have remained without an organization seek a new leadership. There isn't any more social democratic literature at all. We cannot complain about that. Some sections of the reformist trade union bureaucracy have, however, published some sheets without any political tendency.

Among the members of the CPG there is great indignation against the criminal leadership; nevertheless, the organizational conservatism still retains a hold on a number of workers with whom our comrades are becoming strengthened. Stool-pigeonry is very much widespread in the party (illegal regional bureaus are ransacked, as well as print shops and conferences; there are mass arrests). The great number of Lumpenproletarians who are now orienting toward "Aryanism" is the cause of this. The S. A. P. and the Brandler opposition are still working, but remains out of contact with their leaderships. Possibilities of legal work have completely disappeared. At the Municipal Assemblies there are at most a few rare social democrats. There are no representatives of the C.P.

## The Truth About Conditions in the Labor Movement

Some very prominent social democrats have signed declarations in which they say that they will not have anything more to do with Marxism (Grell, former minister of Public Education in "red" Thuringia; Seele, head of the Reichsbanner and Landtag deputy; Kubnt, Landtag deputy, etc.) Some "Communist" leaders also fell on their knees at the police headquarters. (Tospefer-Weimar, secretary of the Communist Landtag fraction in Thuringia; the chairman of the C.P. in Thuringia and of the municipal fraction; Scharf, Landtag deputy, etc.) Here is a short report and a sad balance.

**Letter from Hamburg**  
Several middle provincial organizations of the S.P.G. (Brunswick, etc.) have dissolved. The Free Trade Unions have taken the stand of lashing themselves on the new state (this letter was written before Ley's trade union act of May 2—Ed.), emphasize their complete independence of political parties and their services for the German nation. In their meetings, they stifle all discussion in the bud.

The S.P.G. wherever it still exists, has done away with all the regular district meetings and reports all those which do take place, to the police, which prohibits them. Which is just to the fakers' liking!

The S.P.G. workers, in spite of their final break with reformism and in spite of their revolutionary reorientation, do not, nevertheless, take the C.P.G. seriously any more than they have in the past. They say: "Yes, and you Communists, what have you done? Just as little as our own party."

In the C.P.G. there are strong putschist tendencies, but also strong tendencies opposing them. Sometimes, putschist slogans are smeared over the walls of the houses during the night. The stools have penetrated very deeply into the party; that is shown by the very skillful methods of arrest. Policemen declare that of themselves they can find nothing; everything is done by anonymous denunciations, which come in wholesale and are in great part worthless, but sufficiently useful for the police to enable them to make several arrests a day.

The proletarian quarters in the city are submitted to raids on the very greatest scale, from time to time. These sections of the city are shut off for the whole day, and domicile after domicile is carefully searched. Many typewriters and mimeograph machines are found. In the central bureau for the organization of the Anti-Fascist congress, which was discovered, 18,000 Barteled stamps were confiscated.

## The Discussion on Germany

**Resolution of Left Opposition Youth Group of Southeast Berlin on the Question of the New Party**

1. The victory of Fascism in Germany has closed the period of our struggle for a turn in the CPG to the policy of the united front, and opened the period of struggle for the creation of the new party. That is a fixed fact on which there are no differences within the ranks of the L.O.

2. Nevertheless a fairly large group of comrades (represented by E.B. in No. 3 of *Unser Wort*) is of the opinion that it is impossible to set up the slogan of the new party immediately, since this does not correspond to the mentality of most party members, who still need additional experience with their party.

We decidedly reject such a viewpoint as well as their whole way of posing the question. In our orientation, we are guided not by the fluctuating moods of the masses, but by the objective facts. These are: (a) organizational as well as political collapse of the CPG; (b) the impossibility of rescuing this party from disintegration; (c) the impossibility of this party's ever again winning the confidence of the working class. The recognition of these facts will inevitably penetrate among the party members as a result of their further experience with the party and will direct their sympathies toward the L.O., but only under the condition that we tell them the hard truth in its full extent, without being afraid of temporary unpopularity.

With the arguments with which E.B. justifies his rejection of the propaganda for a new party under present conditions, one might just as well have rejected the propaganda for the united front policy in the previous period. Only yesterday the party members considered our demand for the Leninist united front as "counter-revolutionary Trotskyism"; today they are convinced of our correctness. Today they reject the slogan of the new party, but tomorrow will convince them of its necessity. If we do not tell them in time, they will try to find a way out in other directions and greatly increase the difficulties of the necessary work of building the new party.

3. The recognition of propagandizing for the new party does not mean that we turn this slogan into an ultimatum. In this respect we fully support the slogan of E.B. "cadres for the purpose of checking over the past and clarifying the situation." We consider this slogan as the correct link in the chain for

The instructions of the party to the members prove its entire incapability. In one circular it says that dues stamps for April are still to be pasted into the membership books; furthermore, at cell meetings, control of membership books is to take place. Even after the opening of the Reichstag, membership meetings of as many as 80 men used to take place, all of which were naturally raided. Even meetings of the ILD were sacked.

There are stool-pigeons in even the most internal meetings. They suddenly expose themselves by naming those who are to be arrested by the police, after their arrival. The stools are, or have been for the most part, functionaries.

Sentiment is predominantly depressing. In the party there is, to be sure, a great deal of optimism, which is strongly nurtured from above. "Time is working for us, we still stand before the decisive battles, the masses are turning away from the Nazis in huge numbers, because of their 'margarine' policy (the reference is to the policy of emergency measures which the Nazis substitute for the grandiose pre-election promises—Ed.), hitherto, the party did not want to see any differences at all among the bourgeois. Today it is clinging to them. It does not say that only the class struggle forces of the proletariat can bring the downfall of the Fascist dictatorship, but issues the opinion that Blomberg, with his Reichswehr, international Jewry, America and England will bring this about.

The publications of the party are on a very low plane. The leaflets are addressed to all possible strata, but do not gather the revolutionary forces of the proletariat. The S.P.G. is designated in these leaflets as the "main social support of the Fascist government."

The party has sharpened the struggle against the Left Opposition. It utilizes the most repulsive methods. In Wandsbeck a list of expelled Oppositionists was found by the police with remarks like the following: "At the time of the seizure of power by the Communists these people are to be turned over, arrested and made harmless." A Left Oppositionist was given to understand in a discussion that he ought to guard himself, they would not shrink back even from denunciation. Another comrade was threatened with a physical attack. Expulsions and insults have not stopped.

The Nazi terror strikes us Oppositionists as well: arrests, threats and deportation to concentration camps. But, by and large, our organization has taken all the necessary measures of precaution for security. Publication is carried on undisturbed. There is even a better sale of publications than previously. A slow stream toward the L. O. is becoming noticeable; connections all around are being strengthened.

## Another Word About Heckert's Apologetics

The article by H. E. in previous issues of the *Militant* dealt with the rabid frothings of Fritz Heckert against Trotsky which were "unanimously adopted" by the Executive Committee of the Comintern. One passage in that memorable speech of Heckert's had not, however, as yet been given an answer by the actual events. This answer has since arrived, and in full measure, at that.

Heckert said literally: "But what this Hitler-Trotskyist platform of the 'United Front' represents in reality, a platform created to exonerate the S. P. G. is proved by the facts and events themselves which took place at the very moment when Trotsky wrote his article. Trotsky poses the defense of Leipart's unions as the second point of a common front between the Communists and the social democracy. At the same time, however, Trotsky's ally Leipart is delivering the trade unions to Hitler, declaring that the ADGB (German General Federation of Labor Unions) accepts the reorganization of the trade unions according to the Italian example. The facts have thus exposed in cruel fashion the counter-revolutionary significance of the 'platform' of the social-Hitler-

## On Zinoviev and Kamenev

So they have once more capitulated. The Soviet press reports it triumphantly and the T.A.S.S. communicates the capitulation to the whole world. Meanwhile, it is hard to conceive of a fact which more mercilessly compromises not only the capitulators themselves but also the regime which requires such sacrifices. Broken backbones can no longer serve as props. And the Stalinist apparatus has become a machine for crushing backbones.

Zinoviev and Kamenev were subjected a few months before to expulsion from the party and exile not because of any oppositional activity of their own, but because of "knowledge of and failure to report" oppositional activity of the right wing. At all events, this was only a formal cause. The real cause was the fact that in the atmosphere of general discontentment, Zinoviev and Kamenev constituted a danger. They did it, it is true, capitulate back in January 1928. But to whom? To the anonymous bureaucracy passing under the name of the party. Today, such a capitulation has lost all value. One must acknowledge the infallibility of Stalin in order to have the right to live and breathe politically. Zinoviev and Kamenev simply could not force themselves to such a moral prostration. They had been in the Lenin staff too long for that, too well did they know Stalin, his role in the past and his real caliber. The oath of personal fidelity to Stalin simply stuck in their throats. And that was just why they were expelled.

It is not hard to imagine what took place afterwards behind the scenes. For some time now the apparatus has been calculating that Stalin's leadership is costing the party too dear. Stalin himself feels it. It didn't go, of course, without the mediation and humble intercession on the part of the so-called "old Bolsheviks" on the one side, and their cynical exhortations on the other. "Acknowledge his genius—that costs very little nowadays—and come back to Moscow; after all, it is better to be in the party." And Zinoviev and Kamenev "acknowledged," that is, they finally sank down into the depths. Their personal fate is profoundly tragic. If the future historian will aim to show how pitilessly the epochs of great convulsions devastate men, he will bring forward the example of Zinoviev and Kamenev.

At the time of the first capitulation they could still foster the illusion: "Work in the party," "Contact in the party," "Influence upon the masses." Today there is not even a trace of these illusions left. Zinoviev and Kamenev do not return from the opposition to the party, but merely from exile to Moscow. Stalin needs their return for the selfsame purpose for which he needed the appearance of Bukharin and Rykov on the tribune during the celebration of May Day; thereby, the void around the "leader" is, if not filled up, then at least concealed.

The failure of Zinoviev's and Kamenev's first capitulation, which had a political character, proved to be a relentless, and thereby an all the more effective demonstration of the correctness of the Left Opposition; the party can be served only by serving its ideas and not its devastated apparatus. The second capitulation, which has a purely personal character, strengthens that conclusion from the opposite end. Like Gogol's hero, Stalin gathers together dead souls for want of the living. The salvaging of the heritage of Bolshevism, the training up of new revolutionism, succession, remains not only the historical task but also a lofty privilege of the Left Opposition.

— L. T.  
Prinkipo, May 23, 1933.

**A Half Year sub to the Militant is \$1. On a Club Plan with three others it is only 50 cents.**

# The British I.L.P. Turns Leftward

## Realignments in the Camp of English Reformism

The present world economic crisis and the pre-revolutionary crisis of British capitalism has had a marked effect on the entire English labor movement. This is particularly true of the traditionally left reformist party, the Independent Labour Party. A gauge of the growing maturity of a revolutionary crisis can often be found in the changes which the parties of socialist centrism undergo. These changes are seldom fundamental; they are rather changes of form and modes of expression.

To the party of J. Keir Hardie, which, immersed in the "practical" political tasks of the day, scoffed at the German theoreticians, Marx and Engels; the party which produced leading spokesmen for the House of Lords, the bourgeois prime minister, MacDonald, the aspiring Fascist, Mosley—suddenly, at Bradford last August proclaimed itself the party of revolutionary Marxism! The I.L.P. withdrew from the Labour Party, which it had built, on the grounds that its parliamentary representatives were refused to criticize and vote against the Labour Party caucus in parliament. This led to the organization of the Socialist League by those who wanted to continue the old policy, among them such leaders as H. N. Brailsford and Fred Henderson.

Up to the formation of the Communist party (1920-21) the Independent Labour Party contained some of the best revolutionary socialists in Britain. Such an outstanding spokesman of the present Communist party as R. Palme Dutt a Left Centrist of high calibre, got his training in the I.L.P. After the World War, the Independent Labour Party made advances towards the Communist International; addressed a number of fundamental questions to it. The reply drafted by Lenin, made even the more "radical" leadership lukewarm. Supporting the view of a democratic or parliamentary "revolution" to attain socialism, criticizing the Labour Party's open collaboration with the British imperialists, and permitting wide differences of opinion and action within the party, the Independent Labour Party has succeeded in keeping thousands of militant workers from the Communist party.

Despite this, the I.L.P. in recent years lost many members. The following figures speak for themselves:

1900—28,000
1914—20,000
1919—32,000
1921—37,000
Aug. 1932—12,000

Since the Bradford Conference (Aug. 1932) the membership has further declined. At the same time a deep ferment developed in the ranks: The Revolutionary Policy Committee, a group formed months previously, continued to issue its own literature and hold meetings, some of which were advertised in the official organ of the I.L.P! In

## Good Response to Appeal

We have received the following communication from the American Committee of the International Commission for Help to the Imprisoned and Deported Bolsheviks (Left Opposition):

"We wish to thank the friends of the October revolution who have responded so promptly and generously to our appeal for help to the imprisoned and deported Bolsheviks of the Left Opposition in the Soviet Union. Gratifying as the response has been, however, it is only a drop in the bucket compared to the needs of the revolutionary fighters who are undergoing the severest privations. We ask all those who wish to keep intact the reservoir of revolutionary energy and experience represented by these men to renew their efforts to help us raise the funds which are so urgently needed.

"We wish to report the results of our efforts to the organization of the American Committee to the close of May 31, 1933 as follows: RECEIPTS from donations, \$373.75

EXPENDITURES:
Remitted to International Commission . . . . . 340.00
Cost of remittances and cable charges . . . . . 17.84
Printing and Stationery . . . . . 10.25
Mailing costs . . . . . 3.96
Total Expenditures \$372.05
BALANCE on hand
May 31, 1933 . . . . . \$ 1.70

"We are not publishing the names of individual donors, as some of them have requested us not to make their names public, but we acknowledge all donations individually.

"Some of the letters which we have received accompanying donations show such splendid spirit that we cannot refrain from quoting a few:

"Dear Comrade,  
"Enclosed please find a money order for two (2) dollars, which is a donation to the fund for the Russian Bolshevik-Leninist to help them along and save their lives. We consider them the real comrades, and further we consider their banishment as the blackest spot on the body of the Soviet State committed by Stalinist bureaucracy. The contributors are as follows:  
M.K. \$1.00, J.C. 50c, K.C. 50c.  
With Communist greetings,  
K.C., Bethlehem, Pa."

"Dear Comrade,  
"Read the April 15th appeal of the Militant for contributions for our comrades exiled by the Stalinists.  
"Enclosed please find \$2.00. Sorry it isn't more. I had this money set aside to purchase painting materials, but it will give me more pleasure knowing of the good to be gained from it for our poor comrades in distress.  
Sincerely yours,  
I, New York City."

"Dear Comrade,  
"Please accept my dollar as subscription for our comrades of the Russian Left Opposition who are struggling in exile from Stalin's persecution.  
Old Comrade L. F.,  
San Francisco, Cal.  
P.S. LONG LIFE TO COMRADE L. TROTSKY!"

"Remittances should be addressed to:  
Sidney Hook  
234 Lincoln Pl., Brooklyn, N.Y.  
With Communist greetings,  
The American Committee of the International Commission for Help to the Imprisoned and Deported Bolsheviks (Left Opposition)  
By  
B. J. Field, Secretary."

ers' councils, to unite the working class for the overthrowing of capitalism and the subordinate role of the bourgeois parliament was acclaimed by the Conference. A resolution to support the unemployed organization led by the Communist party, the N.U.M.W., was carried overwhelmingly after some dispute.

A sharp fight occurred on the question of international affiliation. The National Council of the I.L.P. recommended disaffiliation from the Labour and Socialist International. A resolution was introduced supporting disaffiliation and instructing the National Council "To approach the Secretariat of the Communist International with a view to ascertaining in what way the I.L.P. may assist in the work of the International." The mover of the resolution made it clear that he was not asking for affiliation to the Communist International but collaboration in whatever form is agreed upon. John Paton, secretary of the party, supported the National Council's view and polemized against the resolution calling for approach to the Comintern. Jack Gaster defended the resolution. The vote was very close. The resolution carried by a vote of 83 to 79.

Another resolution, which embodied the full program of the Revolutionary Policy Committee, offered a new constitution for the party. It emphasized the function of the workers' councils and the subordinate role of the parliament. It was then strongly opposed by the old guard, particularly F. W. Jovett, who stated that the I.L.P. was asked to achieve power by civil war. He stated that the I.L.P. should aim to achieve socialism by parliamentary means. The leaders of the R.P.C. supported the new constitution. According to the New Leader report of the proceedings (4-21-33) "by 90 votes to 8, (the) Conference rejected the vital section of the new Constitution." Apparently the most ambiguous terminology was desired!

An interesting part of the Conference was the attempt to introduce stricter discipline in the I.L.P. A motion to introduce a probationary period in which the applicant for membership would be tested was rejected. Further an amendment was introduced "safeguarding pacifists from disciplinary action on account of their objection to take part in war, was withdrawn on an understanding from John Paton that the N.A.C. would accept its intention!" A truly revolutionary socialist party!

A resolution for united front action with the C.P., Labour Party, etc., was adopted after some discussion. The new national council although containing supporters of the Revolutionary Policy Committee like Jack Gaster is in the main controlled by the Brockway-Maxton tendency in the I.L.P.

The Comintern had replied to the request of the I.L.P. for collaboration. Instead of issuing a programmatic declaration so as to win the revolutionary workers within the I.L.P. to Communism, the Stalinist bureaucracy has confined itself to merely welcoming the step and declaring its readiness to collaborate with the I.L.P. A most excellent opportunity missed to educate the ranks of the I.L.P. But Stalinism, once again taken by surprise, is uncertain as to the next steps; it is in a quandary.

The American Stalinists claim the results of the I.L.P. conference and particularly the resolution to approach the C.I., which they incorrectly interpret as application for membership, as a victory "for the united front policy of the Communist Party of Great Britain. (*Daily Worker*—4-17-33) What sheer nonsense! In the last few years, the British party carried on the craziest zig-zags of any section of the Comintern. Subordination to the "Lefts" during the British miners' and general strike in 1926; its constant changes on the parliamentary field which were understood by no one; suddenly the third period with its "independent" leadership of strikes and the building of new unions; then the famous Charter campaign which was an attempt of a united front mass movement which was still-born, its policy of falsification, etc., alienated the best sections of the I.L.P. from the British party. The proof is the fact that few of them were won for the party.

In the columns of the *Labour Monthly* a discussion has been going on for some time on "Communism and Left Socialism," of some value. But the practical activities of the party (with the exception of its unemployment work which has been fruitful) negated most of the gains made in that manner. In more recent times the *Communist Review* has contained articles which attempt to discuss the problems of the Left Socialists. But the influence of the British Party or the Revolutionary Policy Committee is negligible.

The tendency towards Communism in the I.L.P. is due primarily to the awakening of the more conscious elements within it to the impasse in which British imperialism and world imperialism finds itself today. It appears paradoxical that at a time when Stalinism has failed miserably to approach the Comintern. From one point of view it shows their own political immaturity, from another, and more fundamental view, is an indication that they correctly do not identify Communism with Stalinism.

The view of the more advanced (Continued on Page 4)

From "Unser Wort"

B. J. Field, Secretary.