

WORKERS  
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WORLD.  
UNITE

# THE MILITANT



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## Austrian Workers Fight Historic Battle

LEON TROTSKY

### AUSTRIA NEXT IN ORDER

(Almost a year ago, on March 23, 1933, Leon Trotsky wrote an analysis of the relationship of forces in Austria and the problems of the working class confronted by Bonapartism and Fascism. This study, while obviously not applicable to the present events in their entirety, nevertheless retains an essential validity in so many respects as to invest the extracts which we reproduce below with a particular timeliness which will, moreover, be of great value in facilitating an understanding of the turbulent events now occurring before our eyes.—Ed.)

Despite the experiences of Italy and Germany, the leaders of the Austrian social democracy do not understand the situation. In order to live and breathe, these people must fool themselves. This they cannot do otherwise than by fooling the proletariat.

Bauer places the blame for the defeat in Germany upon the Communists. We are not the ones to defend the German Stalinists! But their chief crime consists in their having given the social democrats the possibility of preserving their influence upon the basic part of the German proletariat and of leading upon it the tactic of debasing and fatal capitulation, despite all the crimes and betrayals committed by the social democracy. In essence Bauer's policies are no different from the policies of Winston Stamppfer. But there is a distinction. Bauer will be unable to shift the responsibility upon the Austrian Stalinists, who have managed to doom themselves to complete impotence. The Austrian social democracy is not only the leading party of the proletariat, but is the strongest social democratic party in the world as regards the population. The political responsibility lies upon the Austrian social democracy, solely and entirely. All the more fatal will prove to be the consequences of its present policies.

The Austro-Marxists say—if we are deprived of liberty, then we shall fight to "the end". By such subterfuge they want to "gain" time for their vacillations, when in reality they are losing the most precious time for the preparation of defense. After the enemy deprives them of liberty, it will be a hundred times more difficult to fight, for the liquidation of rights will be accompanied by military and police destruction of the proletarian press and the proletarian apparatus. The enemy prepares and acts while the social democracy hides its time and whines. The Vorwarts also repeated times innumerable: "Woe to Fascism, if it ventures against us!" The events have demonstrated the value of such rhetoric. The party which proved incapable of giving battle when it held in its hands almost impregnable positions and powerful resources will crumble into dust when it is completely expelled from the legal arena.

By their seemingly dreadful but in reality pathetic chorus—"If we are attacked", the Austro-Marxists reveal their genuine suffering, they still hope that things will be left in peace, that things, God help us, will not go beyond mutual threats and waving of fists. What this means is that they are chloroforming the proletariat to facilitate Fascist surgery. A genuine proletarian politician, on the contrary, would be duty bound to explain to the Austrian workers that their class enemy, himself, has been caught between the paws of history; that no other way out remains for him except to destroy proletarian organizations; that in this instance there is no escaping the mortal struggle; and that this struggle must be prepared for in accordance with all the rules of revolutionary strategy and tactics.

Otto Bauer has been hinting that in the event of a direct attack on the part of the enemy, the workers

will resort to a general strike. But this too is an empty threat. We have heard it more than once in Germany. The general strike cannot be produced out of one's vest pocket. The workers may be led to a general strike, but to do so one must fight and not play hide and seek with reality; a call to battle must be issued, one must organize for the struggle, arm for the struggle, widen and deepen the channel of struggle, not confine oneself to the legal forms of struggle, i. e., the framework dictated by the armed enemy. And first of all, the party itself must be permeated through and through with the idea that unless it engages in a decisive battle, it is lost.

It is quite possible that the General Committee will actually issue a call for a general strike, after the "open" (that is to say, the decisive) blow has been dealt. But this would mean that after leaving the stage, one calls upon the masses for a naked protest, or manifestations of impotence. Just so did the liberal opposition call upon the people not to pay their taxes after the monarch had told it to go to hell. As a rule, nothing ever came of it. In all probability, the workers will not respond at all to the belated and hopeless appeal of a party already smashed.

But let us allow that the Fascists will give the social democracy time to go to a general strike at the last minute, and that the workers will respond solidly to the call. What then? What is the goal of the general strike? What must it achieve? In what forms must it develop? How should it defend itself against military and police repressions, and against the Fascist pogrom? Wiseacres will reply that it is impossible to answer such questions beforehand. That is the usual subterfuge of people who have nothing to say, who hope in their hearts to get along without

(Continued on Page 2)

### C.P. Disrupts Garden Meet

BULLETIN—As we go to press, news comes of the disgraceful conduct of the Stalinists in disrupting Friday's Madison Square Garden meeting held in solidarity with the heroic Austrian workers. Called by the Socialist party and various N. Y. trade unions the Garden was packed with about 22,000 workers of all political opinions. The Stalinists could not run the meeting so they employed all means to disrupt it!

Clarence Hathaway attempted to take the platform to speak to the masses assembled. A fight started. Stalinists shouted: "We want Hathaway!" Chairs were flung from the balcony. Throughout the hall fights broke out. The Stalinists who had shouted "Communists and Socialists! Unite and Fight!" showed what they meant by this slogan! Miseducated and misled, the Stalinist workers conducted themselves in a shameful manner.

Thousands of workers, thousands of trade unionists, Right and Left, saw what happened. The Stalinists showed the workers whom they are trying to win over what a farce their demands for free speech and workers' democracy are. Left ing workers not tied by Stalinist discipline left the hall cursing the Stalinists.

What ammunition for the Right wing labor fakery! What an instrument in the hands of the Socialist leaders! The uninitiated worker will confuse this action with Communism! True Communists denounce such disruptive tactics as anti-Communist and anti-working class.

### A United Front on Austria

Pious resolutions approving the action of the Austrian proletariat in fighting determinedly against Fascism are already plentiful. Internally disrupted demonstrations of protest against the bloody terror of Dollfuss have already disgraced the workers' movement in New York. In any concrete sense the American working class has thus far done exceedingly little to demonstrate the concern it must feel for the fate of its brother class, now courageously defending the interests of the world proletariat.

There is no time to waste in bringing aid and comfort to the workers of Austria. Messages of sympathy and encouragement, really powerful mass demonstrations of protest and solidarity, even material assistance can be sent from this country to Austria. The fact that a government censorship exists and that the usual facilities of communication are closed, does not make such collaboration in this momentous struggle impossible. There are technical means available for carrying out every desirable action. Only the will is necessary.

The time has come once again when all efforts must be directed toward bringing about a united, militant, powerful mass participation in the struggle against Fascist reaction. Only such a united front will enable the American workers to make to the Austrian struggle the contribution which it should be their pride to make.

To bring this and about, a united front conference is necessary at once. The Communist party, the Socialist party, A. F. L. unions, every other working class organization should participate. Despite the many important differences among them—and no united front can be permitted to obscure these—there is a basis for joint action in this all-important matter. The active support of the fighting Austrian workers, the smashing of Austrian Fascism, for the crushing of counter-revolutionary intervention in Austria—these are no sectarian matters. They are the concern of the whole class. He who prevents union on this question, buries a knife in the backs of the heroes of Vienna.

The Communist League of America stands ready to do its utmost to bring such a united front into being at once.

### HOTEL STRIKE

BULLETIN

Just as The Militant goes to press comes the report that the Hotel Men's Association has rejected the agreement which, according to the heads of the Regional Labor Board, they had previously accepted. The struck hotels all during the day had been refusing to take back the strikers according to the terms of the agreement. Now it is reported they are insisting on the notorious "merit clause" under which the active militants among the strikers would be blacklisted.

Great indignation seized the mass of strikers at this double-cross of the hotel bosses. The general strike has been declared on again in full force, and at this writing the strikers are sweeping through the hotel district in a stormy mass parade.

(The following editorial was written after the acceptance of the agreement by the membership meeting. The new developments give no reason to change the viewpoint expressed in the editorial but, in our opinion, only add emphasis to it. At the present critical juncture plain speaking on every issue is necessary.—Editors of The Militant.)

A compromise settlement of the general strike of the New York hotel workers negotiated through the Regional Labor Board was accepted by a vote of the strikers at a mass meeting on Thursday February 15th. Already, however, there are reports of violations of the agreement by five hotels.

The agreement provides that all strike breakers are to be discharged, and all strikers put back on the job. The rehiring of strikers is to be committed in not later than two weeks and no new men are to be employed until all strikers have been put back on the job. The arrangements for the reinstatement of the strikers in their jobs are to be made with the hotel management by shop committees consisting of delegates from the shop.

Within two weeks after the men have gone back to work the Regional Labor Board is to open hearings on the question of working conditions, hours, split-watch, etc., with the Hotel Association of New York City and individual hotels. At these hearings the organized hotel workers are to be represented by the union. Such are the terms of the agreement. It can be taken for granted that the Hotel bosses will try in every way to violate and sabotage the agreement. Everything depends now on the firmness and solidarity of the strikers in enforcing the agreement.

While the main objectives of the great struggle—complete recognition of the union and definite wage increases and shortening of hours—have not been attained in the first test of strength, the conditions of the settlement provide a basis for the maintenance and development of the union and the actual achievement of its claims in the next period. The hotels were hard hit by the strike, as the consequences they have agreed to demonstrate, and if the union holds its ranks firmly and presses forward at every point, the establishment of a powerful union in the industry under the banner of the Amalgamated Food Workers will be a certainty.

Here everything of course depends on the strength and militancy of the workers and their reliance on that alone. The agreement negotiated through the NRA can become a trap for the workers, a means of disarming them and of paralyzing their organized struggle, or it can open the path for a further development of this struggle and the accomplishment of higher aims. The agreement in itself ends nothing and settles nothing. The relation of forces will decide. The ending of the strike does not end the struggle against the rapacious exploiters; it only changes its form. If the workers understand that and maintain their solidarity and aggressiveness in the next stage of the struggle, they can establish their union on a permanent foundation and confront the bosses henceforth as an organized power.

The fight of the hotel workers for organization has been conducted against heavy odds from the beginning. The New York hotels represent powerful aggregations of capital. Not since 1918 has any union arisen that was able to challenge them. It is to the glory of the Amalgamated

(Continued on Page 2)

### Cops Slug Workers In Austria Protest

Demonstrating their solidarity with their heroic Austrian comrades, 5,600 militant workers paraded to the Austrian Consulate at 5 P. M., Wed., Feb. 14, where they were joined by thousands of others. Several hundred police, mounted and on foot, brutally charged into the crowd again and again in an effort to stop one of the most militant demonstrations ever seen in N. Y. C. Carrying red flags and banners, denouncing Fascism and pledging solidarity with their comrades on the barricades in Austria, the workers kept their lines solid and marched around the block where the Consulate is located.

The demonstration which was originally called by the S.P. & Y.P.S.L. was supported by all Left wing workers and was a splendid united front action, marred only by the efforts of the Stalinists to disrupt the Socialist marching lines. Members of the Communist League supported in getting leaders of the Y. P. S. L. and Y. C. L. together and averted a serious clash between the marchers. Following the demonstration one section of the workers marched down Fifth Avenue and dispersed at Union Square.

Stalinists marched to the Workers' Center. Socialists held a brief meeting at the Rand School and then dispersed.

### Strikers Take "Militant"

The special hotel strike numbers of The Militant sold about 1500 copies at the strike halls. Strikers praised its attacks on Stalinist disrupters and Right wing elements. The Militant was the only paper to give substantial space to the strike, and to defend from the beginning to the present the interests of the rank-and-file. Strikers bought it, pasted clippings from it on the strike hall walls, and quoted from it. The Daily Worker spoke of the strike only to try to disrupt it. Right wing strike leaders spoke only of The Evening Post, because it was the solitary capitalist rag not to knife the strike steadily, and interfered with Militant salesmen.

### French Gov't Priests Bless In War Move Fascist Guns

It was the murder of an Austrian Archduke which provided the signal for the world war of 1914-1918. Today France as well as all other capitalist countries is girding its loins for a new imperialist war. Europe will not go to war over Austria, but already the French government is taking steps which indicate that Austria may again provide the signal for war. The formation of a Right cabinet by Doumergue, as a result of the disturbances of last week, has led directly to a new tension in the international political situation.

The Doumergue Cabinet has placed the control of foreign affairs in the hands of a "directorate" of four: Doumergue himself, Barthou, Flandin and Tardieu. Doumergue is a bitter reactionary, a professional Red-baiter and imperialist. Tardieu is the chief political agent of the French steel trust and armament industry, headed by the Comite des Forges. Not Poincare himself is more bellicose than this quartet.

An "Aggressive Tone" Whereas Paul-Boncour, as Foreign Minister, met Hitler's rearming activities with a flood of talk about legal questions, the new quartet shows a different attitude. In reply to the German note of January 19 asking questions regarding French armament and war plans, the Doumergue Cabinet has taken what the New York Times calls "an aggressive tone, using some phrases that sound almost like an ultimatum." France refuses to disarm and de-

(Continued on Page 2)

### Show Proletarian Will In War Against Fascism

The eleventh hour has struck in Austria.

With a superb heroism which has evoked the grudging admiration of even the capitalist press abroad, the Austrian proletariat is fighting desperately for its life. And what deathless pages it is writing with its own blood! What a thrilling spirit of selfless sacrifice, fearlessness and determination it is displaying! What militant in the ranks of the working class all over the world does not feel his blood pound furiously, and his pride rise at the thought of being a soldier in that international army whose vanguard battle the Austrian workers are now fighting!

The honor of the proletariat, besmirched by its established leaders in Germany who last year dragged it in the mud of capitulation and needless defeat, is being retrieved by the nameless immortals on Austria's blood-soaked barricades.

Where are they now, those who sneered at the working class for its defeat in Germany, who would not see that it was only a bitter episode in the ceaseless battle that will end only with the emancipation of all the oppressed? The proletariat of Austria is now drawing from them, what immense reservoirs of courage and endurance are theirs to tap, how lofty are the heights of heroism they can scale.

Clad in "old rubber jackets, ragged trousers and broken shoes", the revolutionary proletariat has nevertheless held out till now with only "rusty rifles, some hand grenades and a few score machine guns". Their fortresses are their homes of brick and glass. Their trenches are hastily thrown up barricades. Their auxiliary troops are their women and children.

Arrayed against them are all the forces of reaction. Field pieces, howitzers and even naval ordinance have been moved up to demolish in brief and merciless bombardments the model apartment buildings which the Viennese workers were taught to regard as imperishable

Many Catholic workers were astounded to read in the capitalist press dispatches from Vienna that the Catholic Storm Troopers (of Dollfuss' Patriotic Front) joined the troops in shooting down workers, and that Catholic priests made a house to house canvass to rouse their flocks to volunteer as killers. What shocked these Catholic workers? The marriage between Fascism and the Catholic Church has long been consummated in Austria; for the only quarrel of the church with Hitler and Mussolini—that the church be given a high enough place in the Fascist state—was clearly settled the very day that Dollfuss announced his Fascist plans.

It was last September, at the celebration of the 250th Anniversary of the siege of Vienna, in the Heldenplatz before the former Imperial Palace, that Dollfuss, flanked by three scarlet-robed Cardinals and their Brother-in-God, the Papal Legate from Rome, announced his program of a Catholic Fascist State. "We will build up," declared Dollfuss, bowing to the churchmen, "A Catholic German State which will be thoroughly Austrian upon a corporative, authoritarian basis." With this guarantee from the head of the new Fascist state, it is no wonder that Catholic priests go from house to house recruiting volunteer killers.

Dollfuss himself has always been a pillar of the Church. It was proudly reported in the Catholic papers of Austria that, when he was

monuments to an unmolested "growing over into socialism." At the Brenner Pass, the artillery of Mussolini's legions points down menacingly upon the civil war in Austria, ready at a moment's notice to fire into the ranks of the proletariat. At the North it is threatened by the Hitler hands. From the West looms the threat of Berenger: an army of the international counter-revolution to occupy any part of Austria over which the red flag will float.

Drunk with the knowledge of the resources upon which he can draw—not so much for his own preservation as for the crushing of the rebels—the repulsive dwarf who is momentarily clothed with the authority of the Chancellorship is seeking to escape obscurity by infamy. To the laurels of a miniature Napoleon he must needs add the reputation of a Gallifet. Blinded by an exaggerated sense of his own permanence he does not realize that when the horrible massacre he has ordered is ended, and if he succeeds in exterminating the party whose leaders' toleration made possible his moment of office from the outset, the name of Dollfuss will disappear into the same oblivion as that of von Papen and Schleicher who enjoyed a similarly brief notoriety.

Hemmed in though they are by greater numbers, the socialist masses are fighting with an obstinacy and defiance which is without equal in recent times. Driven from one position, they appear the next moment in another. In many places their machine guns, rifles and pistols are proving the equal and even the superior of the enemy's artillery because of the limitless courage and solidarity with which they are fighting. Without the superior military equipment of the reaction, Dollfuss and the mercenaries of the Heimewehr, who march much better on a ration of beer than on a ration of bullets, would have proved a sorry match for the serried ranks of Austria's proletariat. And even as matters stand, the outcome of the titanic battle is by no means determined in advance at this writing.

That the embattled workers have stood their ground even for so long a time is still more impressive in consideration of the tremendous handicap under which they launched their revolt.

Austria is not Germany. Here no one need go far afield in seeking the Achilles heel. No need here to spend time in mathematical computations which are to establish the ratio of responsibility respectively borne by social democrats and Stalinists. Here the caricature of Communism represented by the latter reached that limit of absurdity which was equivalent to its total disappearance from the political scene, unaccompanied by the slightest convulsion.

For good or evil, the social democracy was tantamount to the political expression of the working class of Austria. Upon its leaders, and exclusively upon their shoulders, rests the responsibility for the course pursued in the past. They must be judged accordingly.

The international social democracy, which experienced its second catastrophic historical bankruptcy in the capitulation to Hitler which, with the aid of the no less ignominious conduct of the Stalinist leadership, left the German proletariat paralyzed with bewilderment and prostrate,—is now trying to refurbish its arms in the light of the flares of Austria's civil war. The eternally discredited 2nd International, which nineteen years after the first one, inflicted a second 1914 upon the German working class, is now seeking to restore its exploded prestige by a parasitic association with the heroism of the Austrian rebels.

In vain! History will never permit it! What is there in common between

(Continued on Page 3)

DEBATE  
The Crisis in the  
Communist International

What is  
The Way  
Out?

JAMES P. CANNON  
Says:  
THE 3rd INTERNATIONAL  
IS BANKRUPT—  
FOR A 4th INTERNATIONAL.

On MONDAY, MARCH 5, 1934  
8 P. M.  
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Chairman: SIDNEY HOOK  
ADMISSION 35c

JAY LOVESTONE  
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