



## FOR THE 4th INTERNATIONAL!

### Appeal of the Communist-Internationalists to the Workers of the World

We, the representatives of the Communist Internationalists (Bolshevik-Leninists) of U.S.S.R., Germany, France, England, Italy, Spain, Holland, Belgium, the United States, South America, China and other countries turn to you, workers of the world, in an hour of impending danger, with this appeal.

Since the crushing of the Austrian proletariat and the bloody fights in the streets of Paris, it is clear even to the blind that old methods of struggle, based on peaceful development, are completely exhausted. Rotting capitalism has no other resort except to suppress the proletariat, smash its organizations, crush its will and reduce it to abject slavery. The bourgeoisie will not and cannot wait until the proletariat gains 51 per cent of the votes. The question will be settled by force. Finance capital is organizing and arming fascist bands. Mussolinism is not an Italian but a world phenomenon. The gangrene of barbaric reaction is spreading over one land after another. France is next in order. February 6th marked the first rehearsal of Fascist banditism. The same manifestations are in preparation in England. The prerequisites for fascism exist in the United States just as much as in Europe.

What a terrible degradation!

The proletariat is the only creative class in present-day society. On it depends the entire life of the country, its economy and culture. Together with the semi-proletarian masses, whose leader it is destined to be, the proletariat constitutes the overwhelming majority of civilized humanity. It is inspired by a great social ideal. During recent days in Austria as throughout all modern history, it has shown itself capable of great self-sacrificing heroism. Nevertheless, Fascism, basing itself on the worst, most demoralized elements of the petty bourgeoisie, on human dust, the scum of the nation, gains one victory after another.

#### The Bankruptcy of the Leadership

What is the cause of this?

This is the question weighing on the mind of every worker. The answer is written in the flames of the events themselves. The cause lies in the *bankruptcy of the leadership*. The proletariat is betrayed, divided and rendered powerless from above. For this the social democracy, the *Second International*, bears the major responsibility. As long as the trade union was limited to peaceful parliamentary and question struggles and settlements, the workers did not notice that the staffs were made up of narrow-minded petty-bourgeois types, ex-reformists and semi-revolutionists who had become conservatives and, finally, common traitors. To these leaders (Wels and Hilferding, Vandervelde and de Man, Leon Blum and Renaudel, Lansbury and Henderson, Robert Grimm, etc.) the thoughts and feelings of bourgeois ministers, bankers, journalists and professors are incomparably nearer than are the thoughts and feelings of the proletariat, the unemployed, the small farmers, the starving youth growing up on the streets.

But a heavy responsibility rests also upon the *Third International* which once rose high under the banner of the October revolution but which, sinking ever lower and lower, has changed from the revolutionary vanguard of the proletariat into an ossified bureaucratic apparatus. The Stalinist Comintern led the revolution in China and brought it to defeat. The Comintern took the revolutionary workers of the whole world out of the trade unions, isolated the left wing and thereby saved the conservative trade-union bureaucracy from collapse. The Comintern entered into blocs with individual bourgeois pacifists, chatterers, careerists while rejecting joint action with proletarian mass organizations. The Stalinist leadership of the Comintern says to the world proletariat: "Accept without dispute my commands or I will smash the fighting unity of your ranks and sabotage the defense against Fascism." This was the policy of the most powerful section of the Comintern, its German section, thru 1923-1932, and this policy led to Hitler's victory. In Austria, thanks to the chain of crimes and mistakes of the Comintern, the C. P. did not even succeed in raising its head. Finally, heedless of all tragic lessons, the Communist parties of France, England and other countries proceed slavishly to repeat the criminal policy of the German C. P. The combination of Marcel Cachin and Leon Blum will inevitably lead to the same consequences as the combination of Thaelmann and Wels. Along this road complete and final catastrophe awaits the proletariat.

The result of the great October overturn in Russia was the *Soviet Union*. It showed the power and potentialities inherent in the proletariat. The Soviet Union remains today flesh of our flesh and blood of our blood. With all the power at our command, we call on every

honest worker to come to the *defense of the Soviet State* in the hour of need.

Under the pressure of world imperialism, internal difficulties and the mistakes of the leadership, however, a *powerful bureaucracy* has elevated itself over the workers' and peasants' soviets, and now makes a religion of its infallibility. The autocratic rule of the unrestrained bureaucracy today constitutes the chief danger to the further development of the peoples of the USSR and to the triumph of world socialism. The Communist International created by Lenin has fallen victim to its slavish dependence on the degenerate Soviet bureaucracy.

#### Which is the Way Out

A *new party* and a *new International* must be built. Although in these words many hear the voice of "sectarianism" and "despair," this slogan is dictated by the situation in the world arena as well as in each individual country. There is no other way. Is it possible to reform or renew the *Second International*, pervaded by crimes and treacheries? The war and all post-war events answer: "No!" The matter stands no better with the *Third International*. We Bolshevik-Leninists, known hitherto as the left Opposition have tried for ten years to reform the Comintern, to bring it back to the road of Marx and Lenin. Colossal events in all parts of the world have confirmed our warnings and appeals. In vain! The conservative ideas and the interlocking interests of the privileged bureaucratic group have proven stronger than all the lessons of history.

It is impossible to rebuild the Comintern through the masses because it no longer depends on the masses. The *Second* and *Third Internationals* have played themselves out.

Now they are only obstacles on the road of the proletariat. It is necessary to build a revolutionary organization corresponding to the new historic epoch and its tasks. It is necessary to pour new wine into new bottles. It is necessary to build a genuinely revolutionary party in every country. It is necessary to build a new International.

The thinking worker must recognize the iron logic of these conclusions. But doubt born of the all too recent disappointments, rises in him. A new party! This means new *splits*. But the proletariat needs *unity* above everything else. This is simply a pretext, largely arising from a reluctance to face great difficulties.

We reply that it is not true that the proletariat is in need of unity in and of itself. It needs revolutionary unity in the class struggle. In Austria almost the whole proletariat was united under the banner of the social democracy; but this party taught the workers capitulation, not fight. The Austrian workers have demonstrated that they know how to fight. With them part of the old leadership also fought courageously, but the responsibility for the defeat falls on the party as a whole. Opportunistic "unity" has proven itself to be the road to ruin. In Belgium the party of Vandervelde, de Man and Co. have the overwhelming majority of the working class behind them. But of what value is this "unity," when the general staff of the proletarian army crawls on its belly before the royal power, the patriotic bishop, the liberal city mayor, all the representatives of the class enemy? In little Norway, the opportunistic party led by Tranmael, which received 45 percent of the total votes cast in the last elections, is repeating every crime of the Austrian social-democracy, is crippling the proletariat and opening the door to Norwegian Fascism. Such unity is a rope around the neck of the working class.

#### The Proletariat Must Forge a New Weapon

We need genuine revolutionary fighting unity: for the resistance of fascism, for the defence of our right to live, for an irreconcilable struggle against bourgeois rule for the full conquest of power, for the *Dictatorship of the Proletariat, for the Workers' State, for the United States of Europe, for the Socialist World Republic*. Social democracy is devoted in body and soul to the bourgeois regime. The Comintern has shown in practice its total inability to assemble the masses for revolutionary tasks. There remains for the proletariat only to bow its head under a slave yoke, a yoke even more terrible than that of the Middle Ages, or to forge itself a new weapon for its revolutionary liberation.

"Where however is the guarantee that the new International will not suffer shipwreck in its turn?"

A miserable, philistine question. In the revolutionary struggle there are no guarantees in advance and there can be none. The working class climbs up steps that it hews for itself out of granite rock. Some-

times it slips down a few steps, sometimes the enemy dynamites the steps which have been cut, sometimes they cave in because they were cut of poor material. After every fall one must arise; after every slip down one must reascend; every step destroyed must be replaced by two new ones.

A guarantee of success—if one must speak of guarantees—lies in the fact that we are enriched by the experience of the *Second* and the *Third Internationals* which were of great service to the proletariat before they broke down. *We stand on the shoulders of our predecessors*. That is our greatest advantage. We gather all who today have realized the perniciousness of the policy of the two outlived bureaucratic apparatuses. The correctness of our methods, our predictions and our slogans have been incontestably proved through the entire historic development of the last ten years, that is, the period of the degeneration and decay of the Communist International. Correct theories and a correct policy will inevitably clear a road for themselves and gather the majority of the world proletariat under their banner. Thus is *revolutionary unity* forged.

Here, however, we hear another answer which, at first glance, seems most convincing: "The *Fourth International* will not crystallize at once, and meanwhile fascist stalks over every land with seven-league boots; is this the time to divide the ranks of the working class?" To this we answer: "*For the unity of the ranks in the direct struggle there is the Leninist united front policy*. Bolshevik victory in October, 1917, thank only to the correct application of this policy. Marx and Lenin were not frightened by the splitting of opportunist bureaucratic parties while they welded the real revolutionaries into an independent vanguard; at the same time Marx and Engels were ready to make *practical agreements* with any mass organization for the defense of the *daily* interests of the proletariat. The wisdom and strength of Leninism lies, on the one hand, in the theoretic and political intransigence of the party, and on the other, in the realistic attitude to the class, all its organizations and groups. Leninism did not try to order the proletariat from above to follow it, but neither did it dissolve itself in the mass—and precisely because of this it gained the leadership of the proletariat.

#### The Proletariat Can Crush Fascism

Yes, throughout the world Fascism marches forward with seven-league boots. But wherein lies its force? In the confusion of working class organization, in the panic of the workers' bureaucracy, in the treachery of its leaders. It would be sufficient for the proletariat of one country to offer merciless resistance to the reactionary band, to go over to the offensive, to seize power, for the *attack of Fascism to turn into panicky retreat and go down in ruin*. Between the USSR and Soviet France the dictatorship of the Nazis could not last two weeks. Mussolini would not be long in following Hitler to inferno. Defense is possible and necessary; from an active defense there would emerge the attack. It is necessary to throw all waverers overboard and to free ourselves of the vacillating masters—they will follow later—it is necessary today that the vanguard close its ranks in the international arena. The masses harassed and made restless by terrible pressure and dangers await an answer and demand a leadership. That leadership must be created.

*The greatest of all dangers is the war danger*. The whole world listens to the indistinct subterranean rumblings of approaching international collision. The leaders of the Social Democracy and the trade union bureaucracy are preparing anew to assume the role of *patriots*, that is hirelings of imperialism, to become suppliers of cannon-fodder to the imperialist masters. Under the guise of "defense of the fatherland," they are preparing the slaughter of the peoples. At the same time the Comintern is replacing the revolutionary mobilization of the urban and rural masses with empty sound and fury, and tries in vain to hide its impotence by masquerade congresses. The proletariat can prevent a new war or shift its consequences to the shoulders of the exploiters in no other way than by re-grouping its ranks from the ground up on a new basis, under the banner of the new International. By taking the initiative, small minority can, under wartime conditions, play a decisive role. Think of Liebknecht! Think of Rosa Luxemburg! and think of Lenin!

#### A Program of Action

The miserable philistines may speak of our "sectarianism." To prepare for the coming day is not sectarianism, but revolutionary realism. To all working class organizations we offer a program of action on the basis of the proletarian united front. Beginning

today, we see active proletarian self-defense as the main task. Force against force! The workers' militia is the only weapon in the struggle against fascist bands, who sooner or later will have the aid of the official police.

A workers' militia, however, is not for parades or theatre performances, but for fierce struggle. A workers' militia, that is the mailed fist of the proletariat. Answer each and every blow with two blows. Carry the struggle to the point of exhaustion, to annihilation. Do not let the Fascist enemy raise its head. *Follow hot on its trail*.

The general strike of February 12th in France was an impressive warning, but no more than that. Scenting the danger the enemy has doubled, trebled and quadrupled its efforts. The working class of France, like that of the whole world, will be able to hold its position and win new conquests in no other way than by heroic battles. The revolutionary defense must become a great school for attack. The workers of France have shown that the blood still runs hot with the flame of revolution which flared in the Paris Commune. But the meadiness to fight, as shown by Austria, is not enough. It is necessary to know how; organization is necessary, a plan is necessary proletarian necessary.

On the 12th of February, on the day of the general strike and powerful demonstrations, the workers of France forced the two bureaucratic apparatuses into a united front for 24 hours. This was, however, *improvisation*, and for victory *organization* is needed. The natural united front apparatus in days of struggle is the body of proletarian representatives, the delegates from shops and factories, from working quarters and trade unions: the *Soviets*. Long before they become organs of power, the Soviets are the *revolutionary apparatus of the united front*. In honestly elected soviets, the minority submits to the majority. The powerful logic of the struggle pushes us in this direction. Our conscious efforts must be bent in this direction.

Today proletarian France is next in historic order. Again in France is being decided not only the history of France but that of Europe and, in the final analysis, of the whole world. Should Fascism succeed in crushing the French proletariat, the whole of Europe will have to drink of the bitter cup. On the other hand, under present conditions the victory of the French proletariat would far surpass in significance even the October victory of the Russian Proletariat.

#### Workers of the World

You can help the French proletariat best and most surely by an irreconcilable struggle against your own bourgeoisie. Under the fire of the enemy gather the most intrepid, far-sighted, devoted men, and weld them together into detachments of the Fourth International. Call upon and lead the toiling, the downtrodden, the unemployed masses into struggle. Penetrate every organization; Explain, arouse, recruit! Do not lose a day, not an hour!

HANDS OFF PROLETARIAN ORGANIZATIONS AND THE PROLETARIAN PRESS!

FOR THE DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS AND THE SOCIAL GAINS OF THE PROLETARIAT!

FOR THE BASIC RIGHT—THE PIECE OF BREAD!

AGAINST REACTION! AGAINST BONAPARTIST POLICE RULE! AGAINST FASCISM!

FOR THE PROLETARIAN MILITIA!

FOR THE ARMING OF THE WORKERS!

FOR THE DISARMING OF REACTION!

AGAINST WAR: FOR THE BROTHERHOOD OF THE PEOPLES!

FOR THE OVERTHROW OF CAPITALISM!

FOR THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT!

FOR THE SOCIALIST SOCIETY!

PROLETARIANS OF BOTH HEMISPHERES! The First International gave you a program and a banner. The Second International raised the widest masses to their feet. The Third International gave the example of revolutionary action. The Fourth International will bring final victory!

—League Secretariat,  
League of Communist-Internationalists.  
Geneva, March, 1934