

A Letter from M. Pivert

To the Comrades Expelled by the National Congress of the Socialist Youth of France at Lille; July 30, 1935

Through "Populaire" (Organ of the S.P. of France—Ed.) I learned of the decision on your expulsion and the circumstances preceding it. I regret not being able to return to Paris to aid you in securing reparation of this injustice. I am in solidarity because this is the first time in the party that they have expelled comrades only for serving socialist ideals, with faults to be sure, but also with genuine results: the development of their organization. I am in solidarity because I believe there is revealed in this procedure an extremely serious political significance which must bring to your aid all those who sincerely and not in phrases stand for revolutionary unity.

Revolutionary unity without comrades like Fred Zeller or Makarovsky (leaders of the Seine District of the Socialist Youth—Ed.), members of my group is a fraud. The splitting action perpetrated by comrades who have been artificially lined up against you and who do not understand its import (or who have utilized your errors) may have disastrous repercussions not only for the Party but for the entire labor movement.

The first thing I request of you is to do nothing to aggravate matters: to demand of your comrades remaining in the organization that despite what has happened they devote themselves to the development of the Youth (organization—Ed.). You have the right to defend those conceptions which you hold dear. For that, the doors of the Party are immediately open to you. Do not be discouraged, you will not be alone in defending the right of minorities to live in the democratic Party like you. Issue an appeal to the Party at once—this ought to bring the Party to revoke an impermissible decision if it is true to its structure. This appeal must be tentative and this appeal you to continue your practical work without interruption inside the Seine Federation, if at the same time, and I strongly hope so, the majority which you have won remains loyal to you.

It is in order to aid you, if you believe it useful in your defense, whether by utilizing these lines or by using them in helping you address your appeal to the Federal Bureau and the Bureau of the Party that I occupy myself in discussing the grievances concerning you which you have written me.

The Problem of Factions
Lagorgette (Right wing leader of the Socialist Youth—Ed.) condemned factions and proposed to dissolve them. There is nothing new in that. At a certain Federal Congress at Montrouge the adults launched an extremely heavy and vicious attack on us because of our faction, the "Bataille Socialiste."

... Does that mean that they did not belong to any faction in the Party? I do not want here either to examine or analyze such a position. I say merely that it is the undeniable right for comrades of the Party and the Youth who think in this or that way to meet together, to act in concert for the development of the propaganda of their tendency, to visit groups, to seek votes on the eve of a Congress, to designate their representatives for Party functions. You have the right to demand this option, and no more; it is impossible to go any further, that is to say, up to official exteriorization (although in fact it is difficult to conceal ones group preferences in public action). But that, that is what we have always done in the whole life of the Party. That is what we have always done in cases of decisive battles against imperialism and we have practiced it with Paul Faure, with Zyromsky, with Louis Levy, with Severa, without ever thinking that one day that would be a motive for expulsion ... against another faction than ours.

I also read with regret the demand of Mireille Osmia: "Renounce factional activity," and that individually. What is the meaning of this? As for myself I would never sign it. More precisely I say: in the hour when complete unification approaches, the right of minorities becomes most precious with the single condition that the factions do not hinder the regular work of the Party. I have always seen confused comrades—who have no strong principled position and are often embarrassed by the choice which the existence of factions imposes on them—struggle against tendencies and factions.

You have therefore the right to justify your appeal to the Party by referring to the constant practice of the internal life of the Party.

From this point of view the "dis-solution of the Bolshevik-Leninists" has no meaning, if they do not at the same time dissolve the other official and secret factions ... but then it is impossible to apply such a decision.

As to the especial quality of the Bolshevik-Leninists, and here I will say quite clearly that a psy-

chological error has been committed by those among you who assume this name. Incontestably there is confusion here, and those who expelled you have utilized the weapon which has been given them; if you are loyal to original Bolshevism, you do not accept the democratic structure of the Party, equality for all tendencies and for all members. They therefore impute to you the intention, which has long been that of the Communist Party, "to bore from within," to demolish the socialist organization, in order to win the leadership, but with another structure. All the confusion exploited against you arises from that. ... And it is necessary to dispel this notion (as the adult Bolshevik-Leninists must also do) under pain of driving the present conflict into a blind alley. The Socialist Party is, in fact, victoriously struggling against all attempts of the C.P. to bore from within. It is instinctively levelled against all attempts at renewing such methods. But I never understood your return to the Party as a method of this kind. You would certainly have avoided the exploitation of your label against yourselves, if you had proclaimed your will to submit to the rules of internal propaganda in the same degree and with the same rights as the other ideological currents in the Party. This is one of the points you must insist upon. And even if, in the aim of obtaining satisfaction, the label Bolshevik-Leninist or Trotskyist has to disappear from circulation, I am certain that you would not hesitate to change it. ... The essential thing is not to wear the label of an enchanting name but to apply oneself in following the teachings it implies.

But all this does not apply to comrades like Fred (Zeller—Ed.) who are not in the Bolshevik-Leninist group, at least to my knowledge! For the latter the measure is even more unreal and takes on such significance that all minorities threatened by the same token must band together in solidarity!

On the "Illegal" Nature of the Expulsions

I maintain now that the expulsions decided on by the National Conference of the Youth are incompatible with the statutes of the Party. It is not within the province of a congress to transform itself into a High Court and to condemn (since they have neither instruction nor defense, and the delegates to a congress are not judges). From top to bottom in the Party there are control commissions which judge. That is the juridical argument which has always been made against our demands to expel the traitors from the Party. That is why the Federal Bureau of the

The Moral Guardian of Capitalist Exploitation

The Church, Fascism and War

By RICHARD ZOITZMAN

Born in an era of chattel slavery, flowering in the epoch of feudal serfdom, declining with and as a loyal servant of capitalist imperialism, the Catholic Church has uninterceptedly condoned and glorified the exploitation of man by man. As a beneficiary from the system of organized robbery the Church fears any slight change, any piece of enlightenment which might threaten the status quo and therefore its own income. At one time the Church was able to organize its own force to combat progressive movements of a past century. The Jesuits were such a spearhead against the democratic bourgeoisie. Developments today however have put the Church in the position of having to depend on finance capital and its gangster formations for the preservation of the present system. It hails and helps every reactionary measure, every downward step which capitalism must take in its efforts at self-maintenance, asking in return only that its "Peter's Pence" be not interfered with. When this latter happens then indeed does Rome thunder against the "excesses of Fascism," as in Germany today, only then do its dupes picket German consulates, declaring "the Church is anti-fascist." Since when?

Unqualifiedly blessed is the venomous arch reactionary Gil Robles, head of the Spanish fascist Catholic Action. With what rage and bitterness do workers recall how, during the February 1934 uprising in Austria, the priesthood went from house to house, appealing to the sons of the wealthy to join with the Heimwehr butchers in putting down the starving proletarians. Today, labors' standard of living having been reduced forty percent, with all unions and workers' organizations under government ban, Austria stands a Rome anointed Pausal State.

Seine, which demanded the expulsion of Poggioli ... but which permitted him to remain at the head of socialist municipalities despite serious breaches of discipline in electoral action, against which I revolted in advance, cannot impartially apply an inadmissible decision in your case. After a control commission hands down its verdict there is still the possibility to appeal to a higher body. Such an appeal was made in the case of a notoriously disqualified gentleman, like Duchanel, who still has his party card. Therefore one cannot consider your expulsion as final for it is impossible to imagine different disciplinary rules for the Youth and the Party. Then the latter is particularly lenient with renegades and traitors, Marquet was not expelled, nor was Bouisson, nor was Comper-Morel (he is even going to enter. I hope in this connection, that Lagorgette will press the demand of expulsion against this gentleman which he accepted with Perigaud and myself).

For comrades careful in keeping the Youth in their place, I think that the action perpetrated lacks deliberation. It would have been necessary to begin by declaring the motion of expulsion unacceptable for one never knows where that will lead to. If in a group, if in a Federation, a Bolshevik-Leninist majority declared, as a reprisal, the expulsion of this or that minority as counter-revolutionists and disloyal to the real fundamental bases of socialist action, where would be the then? In the same way I set myself against this sectarian conception and the rise with indignation against the sectarianism of the majority of the Conference: is this that opponent is in the way? I disdain to answer this (it is too easy!) I believe that many of the young comrades who voted for your expulsion (or whose mandates were utilized in this aim) will regret the deplorable action which has just been perpetrated. As to the editor of "Populaire," Daniel Mayer, I consider his contemptuous comments as an infamy. No! This is not the way we treat young comrades like those whom I know well and whom I have seen at work in direct action and this is not the way to answer them. It is a bad internal regime which will surely be in, I am certain, if everyone does as he wishes.

The Motives for the Expulsion
In the motion of expulsion there are certain unacceptable considerations and others which might be justifiable but I persist in believing are unacceptable in your case.

To come out in favor of the 4th International? It is the right of the Youth and the Party to appreciate the present situation of the

Just across the Rio Grande in Mexico, the Chiristero Guerrillas seized at workers parades from churches as a Christian protest against "Socialist Education" in the schools, and the curtailment of Catholicism's power and income.

At the moment that the Couglins, Bishop McConells, and other Christy demagogues beat the tin pan of pseudo-radicalism for "social justice," and a "more equitable distribution of wealth" etc., Rome throws its moral and material weight behind capitalism's murder gangs whose sole purpose is to reduce the workers to abject pauperized slaves.

Even programmatically in the Papacy upholds Fascism. In his *Quadragesimo Anno* encyclical of May 24, 1931, Pope Pius states that "Corporations will be appointed as the supreme authority over capitalism. As true and genuine organs and instruments of the state they co-ordinate and direct the activities of the unions in all matters of common interest. Strikes and lockouts are forbidden. If the contending parties cannot come to an agreement, public authority intervenes."

Like the Church of Stalin, the Church of Rome finds certain capitalist wars to have progressive features. In two pronouncements on the subject of Mussolini's preparation for war against Ethiopia, His Holiness piously remarks that the dead would be compensated for by the conversion of the survivors to the Faith. This three crowned vampire proceeds in his second message to describe with what "horror" he regards a war of conquest, concluding however that a struggle for "expansion is something different, and entirely justifiable.

The international workers' revolution alone can remove this parasitic organism. Only socialism can render such a growth impossible.

Editor's Note

Because of their extraordinary importance for the revolutionary movement of France as well as their educational value everywhere we publish herewith the letter of Marceau Pivert to the expelled Socialist Youth of the Seine District of France and a reply to some of his comments by comrade Leon Trotsky. Comrade Pivert is the leader of an influential left wing group called "Bataille Socialiste" in the Socialist Party of France (S.F.I.O.). As previously reported in the NEW MILITANT the ousted revolutionary youth leaders are gaining support everywhere. In a recent issue of "La Verite," organ of the Bolshevik-Leninist group in the S.F.I.O., just arrived from Paris, there appears a whole series of protests against the expulsions and greetings of solidarity with the expelled.

two Internationals and to hope for a better one, with or without changing the number. Did not the Spanish Young Socialists consider leaving the Second International? Does anyone believe that formal discipline and expulsions can add luster to the prestige of the Second International? Or does it prevent the workers from wanting complete unity? I myself am also a member of the Second International on paper, but no one will prevent me from believing that it no longer has any real existence. ... and from saying it. I am not the only one who thinks this way. Are they going to expel me?

Systematic denigration, that is, criticism of the point of view of those who think that everything is going well. The right of internal criticism. The right of free choice of the best solutions to the problems posed by events and which the Congresses of the Party have not foreseen, much less resolved. You must proudly demand all of this in your own field, in our activity in the Youth with the care of winning the young generation for socialism. What you must add, is that you have never had the intention of having any other policy than the Party's on essential questions; that is not possible (even though the Belgian Young Socialist Guards have obtained a hundred times more freedom than you on this subject). But certain questions are still being debated in the Party ... and it is delaying in taking a position, the question of the struggle against war, for example. We demand the right to examine them as "practices," one might say, and to make our position known. If this is the main grievance they have against you, then I reproach the framers of the motion of expulsion for lack of courage. Would they be expelled if the Youth defended to the letter the position of Blum or Zyromsky on the problem of national defense, that is to say, "in case of aggression by Hitler we will shoulder arms"? No, they would not! Now, I declare that this position does not conform to the regular decisions of the Tours Congress with which I am well acquainted and which Lagorgette has undoubtedly not forgotten. No, under no pretext, consequently, even the pretext of aggression, must the Party lend itself to the propagation of the acceptance of war. If that is the real motive for your expulsion, then it should be said frankly, openly. We will draw from that—the attitude of courtesy, even of comradeship which we do not regret, in our discussions—the inevitable consequences. We understand that it would be necessary to struggle by other means than silken words against the opponents of factions who want to expel us from the socialist community, before perhaps dragging the proletariat into a new 1914. ... And if this is not the question, then what is at the bottom of your expulsion? And if it is not the problem, then all the rest has only a mediocre importance and provided you emphasize your will to serve the Party, with your methods and your doctrinal preferences, developing them as you have done in the Seine, certainly your reinstatement must be speedy.

Finally I do not believe that they can seriously prove that your position or your action is "anti-unity" or responsible for "intolerable confusionism" in the ranks of the organization. But in any case, there is no impartial arbiter who can judge that this or that responsible comrade must be expelled. And if it is a question of a political line, then all those who have voted for you should be expelled (and are we to suppose that these people really believe that your followers would desert you?). If it is a question of precise facts, of propaganda contrary to the interests of the party, then a control commission must study the documents and decide.

In summary, nothing justifies a measure so fraught with dangers. In the degree that you are able to follow my suggestions, appeal, remain solidly organized, expelled or not. The Party must be consulted. In the last analysis it is it which must straighten matters out or aggravate them. Give it confidence! Fraternally yours, MARCEAU PIVERT.

"Labels" and "Numbers"

On the Subject of the Letter from Marceau Pivert to the Expelled Comrades of Socialist Youth of France

By LEON TROTSKY

The letter of Marceau Pivert on the expulsions of the leaders of the revolutionary youth of the Seine, despite its laudable aim, reveals some incorrect ideas, which, in their development, can lead to serious errors. The true task of a Marxist is to warn the young comrades against these errors.

Pivert himself accuses our comrades of committing a great "psychological error" by assuming the name Bolshevik-Leninist. Since "original Bolshevism," according to Pivert, denies the democratic structure of the party, equality (?) for all tendencies, etc., by their very name the Bolshevik-Leninists give the bureaucracy of the Party a weapon against themselves. In other words: the "psychological error" consists in an inadequate adaptation to the psychology of ... the bureaucracy of the Party.

This opinion of Pivert represents a very serious "political error," and even a series of errors. It is not true that "original Bolshevism" denies the democratic structure of the party. I advance the absolutely contrary affirmation: there was not and there is not a more democratic party than that of Lenin. It depended only on the advanced workers. It did not know the hidden, masked dictatorship, and the no less fatal one, the bourgeois "friends" of the proletariat, the careerist parliamentarians, the drawing room journalists, the whole parasitic coterie, which perverts the ranks of the party to speak "freely," democratically, but tenaciously holds on to the apparatus and in the final analysis, does anything it pleases. This kind of "democracy" in the party is nothing else than a replica of the bourgeois democratic state, which also allows the people to speak "freely" but leaves the real power to a handful of capitalists. Pivert commits a very great political error by idealizing and embellishing the hypocritical and fraudulent "democracy" of the S.F.I.O. (S. P. of France—Ed.), which curbs and paralyzes the revolutionary education of the workers, drowning out their voice by the chorus of municipal councilors, parliamentarians, etc., who are imbued to the marrow with their bones with egoistic petty bourgeois interests and reactionary prejudices. The task of the revolutionist, even if the march of devel-

opments obliges him to work in the same organization with the reformists, these political exploiters of the proletariat, consists not in taking the attitude of a disciple and of maintaining a lying friendship towards the agents of the bourgeoisie, but of opposing as clearly, as harshly and as unremittingly as possible, the opportunists, the patriots, the absolutely bourgeois "socialists" before the reformist masses. In the final analysis those who will choose and decide will not be the Blums and the Zyromskys but the masses, the millions of exploited. The party must be built on and for them.

The Name and the Masses
The misfortune of Pivert is that up till now he has not broken the umbilical cord which binds him to the small world of the Blums and the Zyromskys. On every new occasion he looks at his "friends" and feels their pulse with anxiety. It is this policy—false, illusory, unrealistic—which he offers to the Bolshevik-Leninists. They must, you see, renounce their own name. Why? Does the name frighten the workers? On the contrary. If the so-called "Communists," despite all the betrayals and all the crimes which they have perpetrated, retain an important section of the proletariat under their banner, it is only because they present themselves to the masses as the bearers of the traditions of the October revolution. The workers do not fear either Bolshevism or Leninism. They demand only (and they are right): are these the real or the false Bolsheviks? The task of consistent proletarian revolutionists is not to renounce the name Bolshevik, but to show their Bolshevism in action to the masses, that is, the spirit of absolute devotion to the cause of the oppressed.

The Meaning of Bolshevik-Leninist
But why then—instead of following the teachings which it implies? Now does not Pivert himself, wear the "label" socialist? In the field of politics as in all other fields of human activity it is impossible to proceed without "labels," that is, without designations and appellations as precise as possible. The name "socialist" is not only inadequate but absolutely deceptive, for everyone in France who has a mind to, calls himself "socialist." By their name the Bolshevik-Leninists say to each and all that their theory is "Mar-

ism"; that it is not the denatured and prostituted "Marxism" of the reformists (like Paul Faure, J. Longuet, Severa, etc.) but the true Marxism restored by Lenin and applied by him to the fundamental questions of the epoch of imperialism; that they base themselves on the experiences of October, developed in the decisions of the first four Congresses of the Communist International; that they are in solidarity with the theoretical and practical work accomplished by the "Left Opposition" of the Communist International (1923-1932); finally that they stand under the banner of the Fourth International. In politics, the "name" is the "banner." Those who renounce today a revolutionary name for the good of Blum and Co. will tomorrow just as easily renounce the red flag for the tricolor flag.

Pivert proclaims the right of every socialist to hope for a better international—"with or without changing the number." This irony, a little misplaced on the "number" (entirely—alas—in the spirit of the philistines of the S.A.P.) represents a political error of the same order as the irony on the "label." Politically the question is posed as follows: Can the world proletariat struggle successfully against war, fascism, capitalism under the leadership of the reformists or of the Stalinists (that is to say, Soviet diplomacy)? We reply: it cannot. The Second and the Third International are outlived and have become obstacles on the revolutionary road. It is impossible to "reform" them, because the whole composition of their leadership is radically hostile to the tasks and the methods of the proletarian revolution. Those who up till now have not understood the collapse of the two Internationals cannot raise the banner of the new International. "With or without changing the number"? This phrase is devoid of meaning. It is not by accident that the three old Internationals were thus numbered. Every "number" signified a distinct epoch, a program and methods of action. The new International must not be the sum of the two corpses, as the old social-patriot Zyromsky dreams, surprised in his unexpected recognition of the "defense of the U.S.S.R.," but the living "negation" of these corpses and at the same time the "continuation" of the historic work accomplished by the preceding Internationals. In other words: it is a question of the Fourth International.

The "number" here signifies a perspective and a distinct program, that is a "banner." Let the philistines wax ironical on the above. We must not imitate them.

The Crime of Hiding the Banner

The aversion for "labels" and numbers in politics is as dangerous as the aversion for precise definitions in science. In one case as in the other we have before us the infallible symptom of lack of clarity in ideas themselves. To invoke the "masses" serves in this case only to cover his own hesitations. The worker who believes in Vandervelde or Stalin, will, undoubtedly be an opponent of the Fourth International. The worker who has understood that the Second and Third Internationals are dead for the cause of the revolution will immediately place himself under our banner. That is precisely why it is criminal to hide this banner under the table.

Pivert is deceiving himself when he thinks that Bolshevism is incompatible with the existence of factions. The principle of Bolshevik organization is "democratic freedom of criticism and by groupings together with a discipline of steel in action. The history of the party is at the same time the history of the internal struggle of ideas, of groupings, of factions. Certainly, in the Spring of 1920, in time of terrible crisis, of famine, of cold, the 10th Congress of the Bolshevik Party, which at that time counted 17 years of existence, suppressed factions, but this measure was considered exceptional, temporary and was applied by the Central Committee with the greatest degree of prudence and elasticity. The real annihilation of factions began only with the victory of the bureaucracy over the proletarian vanguard and rapidly led to the virtual death of the party. The Fourth International will not suffer in its ranks from mechanical "monolithism." On the contrary one of its most important tasks is to regenerate on a new, higher historical plane the "revolutionary democracy of the proletarian vanguard." The Bolshevik-Leninists consider themselves as a faction of the International which is being built. They are completely ready to work hand in hand with other truly revolutionary factions. But they categorically refuse to adapt their policy to the psychology of opportunist cliques and to renounce their own banner.

Trends in Wage Levels

By ALBERT GLOTZER

Some weeks ago the New Republic printed a chart indicating trends in salaries and wages that is highly interesting and instructive, showing how in the most recent years of the crisis, particularly from 1923 to 1934, salaries increased and wages held their own, after a heavy decline in previous years, despite the supposed aid to wages in the form of the NRA. The figures according to the New Republic are taken from two sources, the Securities Exchange Commission for salaries and the U. S. Department of Labor for wages.

The report on salaries are for the leading officials of the outstanding companies in this country and for wages, the average of the workers in the corresponding industries. Weaknesses in the report are many. It does not contrast the salaries and wages for the years 1923-34 to the years preceding the crisis. It does not show the salaries for subordinate officials whose incomes are not far below the highest paid officials of any company. Likewise the report, being purely factual lacking any kind of analysis, does not show that for the officials, salaries did not stop with the opening of the crisis nor during its entire existence.

Important Facts Omitted

On the side of wages the report does not indicate whether these wages include also foremen, salesmen, office workers, etc., which in most cases would raise the average. As in the above, it does not compare wages for the years 1923-34 with those preceding the crisis. Being factual it does not mention the fact that wages in this period were raised on an average because of forced employment through the NRA and indirectly through government projects. That too, would raise the average wage. Such a fact as the years of unemployment and the loss of income for the mass of workers is not mentioned. Thus no average wage over a period of five to ten years is presented. Such a figure would again depress the average to a far greater level than is presented in the report.

Granting all the weaknesses indicated in the above it is nevertheless possible to gather the trends in the report. The report concerns including such as the American Telephone and Telegraph Company,

Bethlehem Steel Corporation, Diamond Match Co., International Business Machines Corp., Montgomery Ward and Co., Pullman Inc., Standard Oil Co., Westinghouse Electric, U. S. Rubber, Goodrich Rubber, Goodyear Tire and Rubber Co., etc., etc. While the automobile industry and most of the tobacco companies do not appear in the report, steel, textile, coal, transportation and the like are reported on.

Taking the 107 companies the average salary paid to the leading official is somewhat over \$61,000 a year, for the year 1934. Ten officials out of this total received between \$100,000 and \$300,000 (the top salary). Forty officials received a salary ranging between fifty and a hundred thousand dollars while a like number received between twenty-five and fifty thousand dollars. The remaining salaries ranged between ten and twenty-five thousand dollars a year. The inclusion of automobile and tobacco would find additional numbers in the upper brackets, these industries paying enormous salaries to its officials.

Average Wages—\$21
In the column of wages the year 1934 reveals an average wage of somewhat over \$21.00. Not one. (Continued on Page 4)

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