

# The Socialist Party of Italy

TWO recent items of news from Italy indicate the character of the Socialist movement there, and the imminence of great events.

The frontiers of Italy were closed the other day because of "revolutionary disturbances."

And the Italian Socialist Party has emphatically repudiated the Berne Conference of the Great Betrayal, severed all connections with the Second International and its Bureau, and decided to affiliate with the Communist International organized in Russia.

While in its issue of March 21, *L'Avanti*, central organ of the Socialist Party, greets the formation of the Left Wing Section of the American Socialist Party. . . .

When war was declared on August 4, 1914, the Italian Government assumed an official attitude of "neutrality" while secretly bargaining and intriguing with the Allies. The Socialist Party condemned the war as an imperialistic war, and adhered to the policy of militant Socialism. When the Social-Democratic Party of Germany, with the turpitude and insolence of a gutter strumpet, sent a delegation to Italy, headed by Dr. Suedekum, to urge the Italian Socialist Party to favor Italy's participation in the war together with the Central Empires,—the Party sternly repudiated the delegation and its monstrous proposal. The Party equally repudiated Jules Guesde, when Guesde, the former revolutionist who had developed into a watch-dog of the imperialistic government of France, urged the Socialists to plunge Italy into the war together with the Allies "for democracy."

Then the Italian Government, having driven a satisfactory bargain with the Allies, declared war against Austria "in the name of humanity and civilization." . . . The Socialist Party declared itself as uncompromisingly against the war. It did more: it translated this opposition into uncompromising propaganda. Government persecution could not stay its activity, which was based, not upon petty bourgeois pacifism, but upon the basis of Socialism and the proletarian class struggle.

In the summer of 1917, Italy was on the verge of a revolution. The revolutionary propaganda was about the bear fruit. Then came the military disaster at Caporetto, the invasion of Italy by the Austro-German troops. The Government exploited this to crush the potential revolution and inflame people against the Socialists. The bourgeois press blamed the Socialist activity for the disaster, and demands were made upon the Socialist Party to, "in the hour of danger," accept the national defense and its policy. Some of the Socialist leaders, a few, wobbled; but the Party spoke out sternly and uncompromisingly: in spite of the invasion of Italy, we cannot yield or compromise our activity against the war and our struggle for the Revolution.

This crisis was a test for the party, and the party met the test in the spirit of militant Socialism. Compare this with the attitude of Algernon Lee & Co., who wished our party to accept the war "in order to save the Russian Revolution." . . .

The Bolshevik Revolution inspired the Italian Socialists, who rallied to its cause. They accepted the Bolshevik proposal for an armistice on all belligerent fronts, and the Bolshevik policy of a revolutionary peace. In December, Comrade Morgari delivered an address in the Italian Parliament, in which, amid hoots and interruptions from the bourgeois delegates, he declared that the Socialist Party wanted an immediate peace, not only on Bolshevik terms, but by Bolshevik methods.

This acceptance of Bolshevik policy and practice inspired the Party to new activity, in spite of new and more intense persecution by the Government. Steadily, the Party as a whole grew more revolutionary; sections of the party in the summer of 1918 condemning certain minor compromises in the Party's official policy.

## AN APPEAL TO YOU

The capitalist class thirsty with hatred in their hearts, wild with rage, is about to commit a dastardly foul deed.

Enraged by the demonstrated solidarity of the workers of Seattle during the general strike and the success of the general strike, it is determined to exact punishment from the workers by victimizing and seizing upon over thirty loyal workers, whose activities in the labor movement, and self sacrifice for the cause of labor, has made them the most hated and dreaded workers in the eyes of the capitalist class.

They are charged with starting a revolution, attempting to overthrow the City government of Seattle, the State and the United States government; conspiracy, criminal anarchy and felony.

Thousands of leaflets, dodgers and propaganda matter, the organization of the Workers, Soldiers and Sailors Council, and also some articles published in *The International Weekly*, which is published by the Press Board of the Socialist Party of Washington, alleged to incite the workers to seize the shipyards, form the basis of the prosecution and charges.

The arrest was precipitated on the excuse that *The International Weekly*, which sold by the thousands of copies on the streets of Seattle on Sunday of the general strike while the capitalist papers were not permitted by the strike, contained the charged articles.

Comrades:—Behind the capitalist class of Seattle is lined up the whole capitalist class of America which was terrorized by the (first) great general strike, the governmental administration of the City, State and Nation.

Behind these comrades we must line all the workers of this nation.

Upwards of fifteen years in prison stares in the eyes of these victims of the general strike.

Your moral and financial support for the defense is urgently needed.

Send your contributions to  
SOCIALIST PARTY DEFENSE COMMITTEE  
215 Liberty Bldg., Seattle, Wash.

In the revolutionary street battles in Milan, Turin and other cities, the Italian Socialists received their baptism of deeds. Scores were killed and wounded, and many of the Party militants, including Comrade Serrati, editor of *L'Avanti*, were arrested on the charge of treason. Comrade Lazzari, secretary of the Party, was also arrested on a charge of treason. They were sentenced to three and one-half years and four and one-half years in prison, respectively, and released shortly after the armistice. Compare this with the acts of the American Government. . . .

The Italian Party repudiated equally the Social-Democratic Mission, headed by Spargo & Co., and the A. F. of L. "Labor Mission," headed by Gompers & Co. The Party has consistently, in its international policy, acted on the basis of the class struggle and revolutionary Socialism.

Since the armistice, the Party has intensified its revolutionary propaganda, which is a propaganda for Proletarian Dictatorship. It has no parliamentary illusions: it uses its parliamentary activity to promote the revolutionary mass action of the proletariat. As against a Wilson Peace, the Italian Party, unlike the majority in the French Socialist Party, opposes a Lenin Peace of Communist revolution. The Party was strong enough to compel the Government to release its class war prisoners shortly after the armistice.

## Manifesto of the Communist International

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but on the other hand constantly draws ever increasing elements of the working people into the immediate control of government.

### The Way to Victory.

The revolutionary era compels the proletariat to make use of the means of battle which will concentrate its entire energies, namely, mass action, with its logical resultant, direct conflict with the governmental machinery in open combat. All other methods, such as revolutionary use of bourgeois parliamentarism, will be of only secondary significance.

The indispensable condition for successful struggle is separation not only from the direct servitors of Capitalism and enemies of the communist revolution, in which role the Social Democrats of the Right appear, but also from the Party of the Centre (Kautskians), who desert the proletariat at the critical moment in order to come to terms with its open antagonists. On the other hand, there are essential elements of the proletariat, heretofore not within the Socialist Party, who stand now completely and absolutely on the platform of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat in the form

of Soviet rule, for example, the corresponding elements among the Syndicalists.

The growth of the revolutionary movement in all lands, the danger of suppression of this revolution through the coalition of capitalistic States, the attempts of the Socialist betrayers to unite with one another (the formation of the Yellow "International" at Berne), and to give their services to the Wilsonian League; finally, the absolute necessity for co-ordination of proletarian action,—all these demand the formation of a real revolutionary and real proletarian Communist International. This International, which subordinates the so-called national interests to the interests of the international revolution, will personify the mutual help of the proletariat of the different countries, for without economic and other mutual help the proletariat will not be able to organize the new society. On the other hand, in contrast with the Yellow International of the social-patriots, the Proletarian Communist International will support the plundered colonial peoples in their fight against Imper-

The fundamental revolutionary integrity of the Italian Socialist Party is revealed in its attitude toward the Berne Conference of the Great Betrayal: of the social patriots and petty bourgeois "Socialist" Before the Conference convened, the pro-war Socialists of the Entente and the Central Empires were negotiating "terms of agreement" on the basis of which they could meet together. The Italian Party, through *L'Avanti*, answered: "We do not have to discuss agreements with our Socialist Comrades of the Central Empires, in the manner of petty bourgeois shopkeepers: we know in advance the basis on which we are willing to confer with the Spartacans and other of the Austro-German Socialists who did not abandon their principles: the basis of unrelenting antagonism to Capitalism and the Social Revolution. It is only the betrayers of Socialism who must discuss "terms of agreement."

The Italian Party sent Comrades Jules Catalini, C. Lazzari and Morgari to Berne. After acquainting itself with the Conference, the delegation, through Comrade Catalini, issued this statement: "The Socialist Party of Italy has authorized me to support the Berne Conference if it adheres to the old International spirit. Having observed, since my arrival, that the Congress does not correspond with the point of view of the party to which I belong, a point of view that manifested itself during the war in the Zimmerwald and Kienthal conferences, I shall not participate as a delegate, and shall remain only as a newspaper man." Comrades Lazzari wrote in *L'Avanti* of February 12: "The Socialist Party of Italy can not consent to participate in partial conferences of parties or groups which worked hand in glove with the bourgeois governments during the war . . . and, for a stronger reason, with those upon whose conscience lies the assassination of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg."

This repudiation of the Berne Conference was immediately followed by the Italian Party's repudiation of the International Socialist Bureau and the Old International and complete acceptance of the new Communist International, through the following resolution:

"That the Executive Committee of the Socialist Party of Italy withdraw from the International Socialist Bureau and affiliates with and works for the establishment of the Socialist Revolutionary International upon the basis and principles laid down in the mor of January by the Russian Communist Comrade Moscow for the convening of an International Socialist Congress."

The Socialist Party of the United States do not profit from this revolutionary integrity of the Socialist Party of Italy. These two parties alone, of old majority Socialist parties, took a stand against the war. The Italian Party is drawing the logical conclusions from its against-the-war policy by accepting the Bolshevik-Spartacan International; it is now the task of the comrades of the American Socialist Party to act in the same revolutionary manner. . . .

The Italian Government imposes a rigid censorship, and it is difficult to know precisely what is going on in Italy. But it is clear that the revolutionary unrest is general and becoming more intense. It is clear, moreover, that in the event of a revolution in Italy, the majority Socialist Party will not oppose the Revolution, and in that way facilitate the conquest of power by the proletariat. The revolutionary spirit of the Italian Socialist Party is a challenge.

ialism, in order to hasten the final collapse of imperialistic world system.

The capitalistic criminals asserted at the beginning of the world war that it was only in defense of the common Fatherland. But soon German Imperialism revealed its real brigand character by its bloody deeds in Russia, in the Ukraine and Finland. Now the Entente states unmask themselves as world despoilers and murderers of the proletariat. Together with the German bourgeoisie and social-patriots, with hypocritical phrases about peace on their lips, they are trying to throttle the revolution of the European proletariat by means of their war machinery and stupid barbaric colonial soldiery. Indescribable is the White Terror of the bourgeois cannibals. Incalculable are the sacrifices of the working class. Their best—Liebknecht, Rosa Luxemburg—have they lost. Against this the proletariat must defend itself, defend at any price. The Communist International calls the whole world proletariat to this final struggle.

Down with the imperialistic conspiracy of capital.  
Long live the International Republic of the Proletarian Councils!