WORKERS OF THE WORLD. UNITE

THE MILITANT

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For the United Defense against Hitlerism!

A Talk with the Socialist Workers by Leon Trotsky

This brochure addresses itself to the social democratic workers, even though personally the author belongs to another party. The disagreements between Communism and social democracy run very deep. I consider them irreconcilable. Nevertheless, the course of events frequently puts tasks before the working class which imperatively demand the joint action of the two parties. Is such an action possible? Perfectly possible, as historical experience and theory attest: everything depends upon the conditions and the character of the said tasks. Now, it is much easier to engage in a joint action when it is a question for the proletariat not of taking the offensive for the attainment of new objectives, but of defending the positions already gained.

That is how the question is posed in Germany. The German proletariat is in a situation where it must retreat and give up its positions. To be sure, there is no lack of windbags to cry that we are allegedly in the presence of a revolutionary offensive. These are people who obviously do not know how to distinguish their right from their left. There is no doubt that the hour of the offensive will strike. But today the problem is to arrest the disorderly **retreat** and to proceed to the regrouping of the forces for the defensive. In politics as in the military art, to understand a problem clearly is to facilitate its solution. To get intoxicated by phrases is to help the adversary. One must see clearly what is happening: the class enemy, that is, monopoly capital and large feudal property, spared by the November revolution, are along the whole front. The enemy is utilizing two means with a different historical origin: first, the military and police apparatus prepared by all the preceding governments which stood on the ground of the Weimar constitution; second, national-socialism, that is, the troops of the petty bourgeois counter-revolution whom finance capital arms and incites against the workers.

The aim of capital and of the landowning caste is clear: to crush the organizations of the proletariat, to strip them of the possibility not only of taking the offensive but also of defending themselves. As can be seen, twenty years of collaboration of the social democracy with the bourgeoisie have not softened by one iota the hearts of the capitalists. These individuals acknowledge but one law: the struggle for profit. And they conduct this struggle with a fierce and implacable determination, stopping at nothing and still less at their own laws.

The class of exploiters would have preferred to disarm and atomize the proletariat with the least possible expense, without civil war, with the aid of the military and police means of the Weimar republic. But it is afraid, and with good reason, that "legal" means by themselves would prove to be insufficient to drive back the workers into a position where they will no longer have any rights. For this, it requires Fascism as a supplementary force. But Hitler's party, fattened by monopoly capital, wants to become not a supplementary force, but the sole governing force in Germany. This situation occasions incessant conflicts between the governmental allies, conflicts which at times take on an acute character. The saviors can afford the luxury of engaging mutually in intrigues only because the proletariat is abandoning its positions without battle and is beating the retreat without plan, without system and without direction. The enemy is unleashed to such a point that it does not constrain itself from discussing right in public where and how to strike the next blow: by frontal attack; by bearing down on the Communist Left flank; by penetrating deeply at the rear of the trade unions and cutting off communications, etc...The exploiters whom it has saved discourse on the Weimar republic as if it were some worn-out bowl; they ask themselves if it should still be utilized for a while or be thrown into the discard right away.

The bourgeoisie enjoys the full freedom of maneuvering, that is, of the choice of means, of time and of place. Its chiefs combine the arms of the law with the arms of banditry. The proletariat combines nothing at all and does not defend itself. Its troops are split up, and its chiefs discourse languidly on whether or not it is at all possible to combine forces. Therein lies the essence of the interminable discussions on the united front. If the vanguard workers do not become conscious of the situation and do not intervene peremptorily in the debate, the German proletariat may find itself crucified for years on the cross of Fascism.

IS IT NOT TOO LATE?

It may be that here my social democratic interlocutor interrupts me and says: Don't you come too late to propagate the united front? What did you do before this?

This objection would not be correct. This is not the first time that the question of a united front of defense against Fascism is raised. I permit myself to refer to what I myself had the occasion to say on this subject in September 1930, after the first great success of the national-socialists. Addressing myself to the Communist workers, I wrote:

"The Communist party must call for the defense of the material and moral positions which the working class has succeeded in conquering in the German state. The fate of the political organizations, of the trade unions, of the newspapers and printing plants, of the clubs, of the libraries, of the working class, etc., is directly at stake. The Communist worker must say to the social democratic worker: 'The policy of our parties is irreconcilable; but if the Fascists come tonight to sack the hall of your organization, I will hasten to your aid with arms in hand. Do you promise me that if a danger threatens my organization you will run to my aid?' There is the quintessence of the policy of the present period. All the propaganda must be attuned to this diapason.

"The more seriously, persistently and reflectively we carry on this agitation....the more we will propose in each factory, in each worker's quarter and ward, active organizational measures for the defensive, the less will be the danger of being taken by surprise by the attack of the Fascists and the more certitude we will have that this attack, instead of smashing the ranks of the workers, will cement them."

The brochure from which I take this extract was written two and a half years ago. There is not the slightest doubt today that if this policy had been adopted in time. Hitler would not be chancellor at the present time and the positions of the German proletariat would be unassailable. But one cannot return to the past. As a result of the mistakes which were committed and the time which was allowed to pass, the problem of defense is posed today with infinitely greater difficulty: but the task remains just as before. Even right now it is possible to alter the relation of forces in favor of the proletariat. Towards this end, one must have a plan, a system, a combination of forces for the defense. But above all, one must have the will to defend himself. I hasten to add that only he defends himself well who does not confine himself to the defensive but who, at the first occasion, is determined to pass over to the offensive.

What attitude does the social democracy adopt towards this question?

A NON-AGGRESSION PACT

The social democratic leaders propose to the Communist party to conclude a "non-aggression pact". When I read this phrase for the first time in the Vorwaerts, I thought it was an incidental and not very happy pleasantry. The formula of the non-aggression pact, however, is today in vogue and at the present time it is at the center of all the discussions. The social democratic leaders are not lacking in tried-out and skillful policies. All the more reason for asking how they could have chosen such a slogan which runs counter to their own interests.

The formula has been borrowed from diplomacy. The meaning of this type of pact consists in this: two states which have sufficient causes for war engage themselves for a determined period not to resort to the force of arms against each other. The Soviet Union, for example, has signed such a rigorously circumscribed pact with Poland. Granting that a war were to break out between Germany and Poland, the said pact would in no way obligate the Soviet Union to come to the aid of Poland. Non-aggression and nothing more. In no way does it imply common action for defense; on the contrary, it excludes this action: without this, the pact would have a quite different character and would be called by a quite different name.

What sense then do the social democratic leaders give to this formula? Do the Communists threaten to sack the social democratic organizations? Or else is the social democracy disposed to undertake a crusade against the Communists? As a matter of fact, something entirely different is in question. If one wants to use the language of diplomacy, it would be in place to speak not of a **non-aggression pact**, but of a **defensive alliance** agianst a third party, that is, against Fascism. The aim is not to halt or to exorcize an armed struggle between Communists and social democrats—there could be no question of a danger of war—but of combining the forces of the social democrats and the Communists against the attack with arms in hand which has already been launched against them by the national-socialists.

Incredible as it may seem, the social democratic leaders are substituting for the question of the **genuine defense** against the armed actions of Fascism, the question of the **political controversy** between Communists and social democrats. It is exactly as if one were to substitute for the question of how to prevent the derailment of a train, the question of the need for mutual courtesy between the travellers of the second and third classes.

The misfortune, in any case, is that the ill-conceived formula of a "non-aggression pact" will not even be able to subserve the inferior aim in whose name it is dragged in by the hair. The engagement assumed by two states not to attack each other, in no way eliminates their struggle, their polemics, their intrigues and their maneuvers. The semi-official Polish journals, in spite of the pact, foam at the mouth when they speak of the Soviet Union. For its part, the Soviet press is far from making compliments to the Polish regime. The fact of the matter is that the social democratic leaders have steered a wrong course in trying to substitute a conventional diplomatic formula for the political tasks of the proletariat.

JOINTLY ORGANIZE THE DEFENSE, DO NOT FORGET THE PAST, PREPARE FOR THE FUTURE

More prudent social democratic journalists translate their thought

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Stalinist Persecutions

Russian Left Opposition Forges Ahead in the Party

Moscow.—The most important fact here is the arrest of **former** Left Oppositionists, this time not rank and filers, but leaders....You probably already know about the arrests of I. N. Smirnov, Preobrazhensky, Ufimtzev, Ter-Vaganyan, Lifshitz, Gruenstein, Mrachkovsky, Pereverzev, and many others. In Leningrad, Olga Ravich was arrested. In Kharkov—Karetny, the wife of the People's Commissar of Agriculture of Ukraine, who himself, it is said, had and has no connection whatever with the Opposition. Mrachkovsky and Pereverzev were arrested in the Far East and they are being brought to Moscow. Many arrests were made in the Foreign Trade Department (in particular, the above-named Lifshitz). All told about a hundred people were arrested who at one time or another belonged to the cadres of the Left Opposition. The chief arrests were made in Moscow, Leningrad and Kharkov.*

As you know, the repressions in the party have been going on at full speed for the last few months, and are continually on the increase. But nevertheless the arrests of Smirnov, Preobrazhensky and the others have made a tremendous impression, not only because old party members with great reputations are involved but chiefly because those concerned are former Opposition and made the attempt at reconciliation with the Stalinist bureaucracy. The political connection between these arrests and the exile of Zinoviev and Kamenev is self-evident. Old revolutionists, experienced politicians made the attempt to find a common language with the apparatus. The experiment endured about four years and led to a break. In its own time, it was explained, in all the nuclei in the party, that "all the old Bolsheviks have broken with the Left Opposition" and that this fact alone meant its finish. It is indubitable that this declartion created a great impression upon wide party circles. At present the arrests of former Left Oppositionists create even a greater impression. But this time just to the contrary. Many say, "This proves that the Left Opposition has shown its correctness, since all those are now returning to

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* **I. N. Smirnov** and **Perobrazhensky**—Bolsheviks from the day the party was founded; they belonged to the center of the Left Opposition from the day it was organized.

Ufimtzev one of the leading Ural Bolsheviks and Oppositionists, in his own time he was sent to Vienna, as chairman of the trade bureau.

Ter-Vaganyan — old Bolshevik, founder and editor of the magazine "Under the Banner of Marvism", author of books on Plekhanov, on the national question, etc. **Gruenstein**—Lettish Bolshevik, spent many years sentenced to hard labor, hero of the Civil War, former chief of a Red Division, subsequently head of an aviation school. **Mrachkovsky**—Bolshevik from the foundation of the party, leading figure in the Urals, hero of the Civil War, subsequently in command of a military district. **Pereverzev**—old Bolshevik, one of the leaders of the Ukrainian Opposition, subsequently was sent to Berlin; Trotsky's letter to Pereverzev was intercepted and published in the press by the Stalinists on the eve of Trotsky's deportation to Alma Ata. **O. Ravich**—old Bolshevik, intimately connected with Lenin during the emigration period, member of the Petrograd Party Committee, etc.—Editor.

Workers' Youth Form Genuine United Front in New York Protest Struggle against Hitlerism

One hundred and nineteen delegates, representing fifty-five youth organizations met in New York, March 24-25, at a conference to plan concrete action in the struggle against German Fascism. The delegates were overwhelmingly Left wing and Communist, including the Young Communist League, the Young Communist League (Opposition)—Lovestone Group, the National Youth Committee of the Communist Left Opposition, the New York Spartacus Youth Club, and the National Student League. Several socialist groups were present, such as the Rand School Students Ass'n, which had initiated the conference, the Brookwood Labor College Fellowship—one of the delegates being a member of the National Committee of the YPSL, the New York University Socialist Club and the Rand School Debs' Club. Youth clubs, youth sections of Left wing unions, the Menorah society — a Jewish group, the Friends of India (Gandhi followers), the various workers' schools, and several sport organizations were represented.

The Conference opened with an address by the temporary chairman, the delegate from the group which initiated the Conference, the Rand School Student Ass'n. He read the appeal of the Left wing socialist parties to the Communist and Socialist internationals for a united front against Hitlerism. It contained a criticism of the German Social Democratic Party's policy of class collaboration, etc., and the sectarian policies of the Communist party. It further called for unity of the two Internationals on the basis of the class struggle.

Following this, the chairman of the provisional committee, comrade Joel, a member of the Communist party and representative of the Workers' School, gave the report for the Committee. He prefaced his report by a reply to the criticism of the Communists delivered by the previous speaker. He did not get very far when the overwhelming majority of the delegates—members of sympathizers of the YCL—**booed and hissed him** for criticizing the socialists!

Comrade Joel reported that the City Committee of the YPSL had forced several Yipsel circle delegates to withdraw from the provisional committee; that the City Committee refused to participate in the Conference and had even denied the floor to a delegation from the provisional committee to present to it the appeal for a united front. He proceeded to criticize this action when, once again, **the YCLers and sympathizers booed and hissed** and told him to stick to the subject. Several delegates, including the temporary chairman, rose and protested against comrade Joel's remarks.

Comrade Joe Carter of the National Youth Committee, Communist League of America (Oppostion), took the floor and stated that as a member of the provisional committee he protests against the interruptions of its spokesman. He declared that the committee had unanimously agreed to criticize the actions of the Yipsels in its report to the Conference, and that the delegates could discuss the report of comrade Joel when it was concluded. Joel continued with his speech explaining why it was imperative to criticize the Yipsel committee, the need for united front, and the present plans of the Committee for a mass demonstration on April 1 before the German consulate in New York.

Five speakers from different political tendencies were permitted to discuss the report. Herman of the YCL stated that talk against Fascism was insufficent; one's actions would show whether the organization is ready for a struggle against Hitlerism. Carter of the National Youth Committee of the Left Opposition, explained that the reason for the united front was that all workers' organizations, Communist, Socialist and trade union, were attacked by Fascism, that in the united front we retain our right of criticizing the groups participating. He declared that it was the social democracy which paved the way for Hitler and it was the

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New Ill. Mine Contract

Left Wing Criticizes Provisions of 2 Year Agreement

Gillespie, Ill.—The Scale Committee of the Progressive Miners Union of America has met with the operators holding contracts with the union, to renew the contract expiring April 1, and recommend to the membership of the union to sign a contract for two years. A referendum vote of the union will be held Saturday, the 25th. The Gillespie office has sent to all locals instructions and the contract to be voted upon, but up to this date, Wed., March 23, the majority of the miners have not yet seen the new contract or the amendments to the old contract as proposed by the Scale Commitee. Regardless of the changes or lack of changes in the new contract, the miners should have more time to study the contract, and to discuss it before the referendum vote is taken.

All indications show that the leadership of the PMA consider the contract they present as the most they could obtain from the operators at this time. The strategy of the Scale Committee and the present leadership seems to be the desire to obtain a two year contract instead of the one year contract in order to obtain a breathing spell which is to enable them to consolidate and strengthen their union. This intention may be the best but the way the action is being carried out is far from the best for the interest of the miners in the PMA.

Shortcomings of Contract

The shortcomings in the contract presented by the scale committee, at least of as much of the new contract as we are reliably informed on, are the following: The contract calls for a two year period instead of a one year period. Such a contract does not favor the miners and a militant union. On the contrary, such a contract will favor the Right wing in the union and the small operators with whom the contract is signed. At this stage of the crisis, and especially since we have the new banking laws that open wide the doors for inflation with possibilities of a wide price change, not downward, but upward, it is not advisable to sign a contract over such a long period, unless a special clause is inserted taking care of such price changes and inflation. The new contract does not provide for this.

There is no fundamental difference between the contract presented for referendum and the Lewis contract. Such a contract is presented when the PMA is far stronger than it was when it fought the other (Lewis) contract and had been forced to compromise. This present compromise comes without a struggle—if the referendum is carried, at least so far as the leadership is concerned.

The struggle for the shorter workday is left out entirely, and yet this is a burning problem for the whole working class and especially the miners. It is true that the PMA is confronting great odds and an uphill fight; against the operators, their state force, murder frame-ups, the Lewis machine and the general effects of the crisis, and therefore they will have to be careful in their struggle. The union must now fight for the lives of the Taylorville frame-up victims whom the Peabody Coal Company wants to burn in the electric chair. The PMA must win over Franklin County and all indications are that a powerful strike movement will be upon us within a period of days. Confronted with these conditions the leadership desires a base below them for the fight. All this is true but it is

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Party May Day Conference Reveals Inner Dispute on United Front Policy

Five hundred and thirty delegates from one hundred and sixteen organizations gathered to constitute the New York United Front May Day Conference, on Sunday, March 19th. For the most part, they were the same delegates who make up all the party united front masquerades hereabouts. Its breadth can be seen from the credentials committee report: four AF of L unions were represented by six delegates; there were no representatives from the Socialist party or YPSL.

The proceedings were the usual six-cyclinder, Stalinist machine affair. In last Sunday's dull routine points of great importance for the movement as a whole stood out and must become known to our movement.

Hathaway made the report. His speech was marked by the utmost confusion on the question of Fascism in Germany and the fight against it. According to him, the danger of war has become more acute since Hitler's accession to power, not because the inevitable development of a triumphant Fascism makes it the spear-head of the imperialist intervention of the USSR—according to Hathaway; the danger lies in Hitler's attempt to organize an anti-Versailles bloc to recapture the territory of Germany lost to the Allied powers.

Hathaway's analysis of the perspectives of German Fascism were the last word in confusion. He foretold its mechanical collapse! Italian Fascism, said he, improved the conditions of the masses because it came to power in the upward curve of the economic conjuncture! But Hitler has come to power in the period of the downward curve! The workers will become quickly disillusioned with Hitler's bankrupt program and the German Communist Party will continue the struggle against Hitler, taking advantage of his every failure to fulfill his demagogic promises!

But Hathaway surprised us mightily when he spoke on the question of broadening the conference and the united front. We thought he was reading from the **Militant!** To be sure, his speech on this point does not settle the question. He and his fellow-bureaucrats remain today the same Centrists there were yesterday and the day before. It is not excluded that, under the pressure of events, the C. I. turn and the criticism of the Left Opposition, they may, for a time, make an effort to carry out a correct united front policy. But even in this case, in view of the past, and the dubious circumstances surrounding the new half-turn, it will require more than occasional speeches to prove that a turn is being made in reality. That is in the best case.

How far the party is from a genuine turn can be seen from what followed. Wagenknecht, in the discussion following Hathaway's report, spoke for the united front from below. In the discussion both points of view found supporters. This can mean only that the utmost unclarity and possible dispute exists in the party on the united front question, which became obvious some time ago—and it is breaking out into the open. This was to be seen in the discusson between Nessin and Winter in the session of the Mooney Conference Organization Committee reported elsewhere in this issue. It was to be seen again in the discussion be-

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Bank Holiday Screens Advance in the Concentration of Big Capital

The "Bankers Holiday" has passed into history and will be recorded as one of the major moves of the financiers in their struggle to bring the antiquated banking structure up to the level of the present day needs of the American imperialists. For years they have been striving to legalize unlimited branch banking. They have been able, only through a bitter struggle and finally, a compromise, to obtain a partial victory in this field. The slow progress has been due to the dogged resistance carried on by the lesser sections of the exploiters who are at present caught in the middle of the struggle between the proletariat and bourgeoisie, and who in the final analysis, must trail behind one or the other camp.

The speed with which the state moritoria were called and the quick follow-up by the new national administration, with promises and minor concessions to the lesser exploiters, proved to be of sufficient force to line up the majority of the states to drive through the new law and for the power to be given to those in control of the reorganization of the banking structure. The majority of the industrialists and the urban and rural middle class were taken off their feet and fell in line for the "national emergency".

What Was Aimed At?

Regardless of the fact that the door is now wide open to inflation and indirect wage cuts, the main target aimed at and hit by the imperialists was the reorganization of the banking structure for the purpose of eliminating many more small banks and sectional banking influence over the dominating group; thereby, to organize the machinery so as to enable the bankers to mold a single national banking system out of the present dual system; finally, so as to liquidate the heavy internal debt bearing down upon the American industries.

Such liquidation in this period of attempted capitalist reorganization is called deflation by the capitalists but in no way conflicts, at this stage, with the currency inflation. On the contrary, liquidation of the internal debt proceeds through a two-fold process. On the one hand, bankruptcy, mergers and concentration——liquidation. And on the other hand, at the right moment, and properly "controlled" through a graduated plan—the process of inflation.

Senator Vandenberg, Republican from Michigan, in objecting to the present procedure said: "If the government continues to license banks on the present basis we are embarking upon the most ruthless deflation in the history of this or any other nation...we are going to needlessly massacre the savings of the American people." What else is to be expected? That is just what the Roosevelt administration must do in order to function for the group of imperialists that backed its campaign in the last election. It is a government action to hasten the process of weeding out the small banks. It took the crisis several years to weed out small banks through bankruptcy. The new laws speed up this process. The capitalist government "organizes" the **anarchy** of capitalist production, but it cannot organize capitalism production.

American imperialism must obtain markets and is doing everything possible on an international scale to obtain them. However, this

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LEAGUE ACTIVITIES

A Stalinist Meeting In Chicago

Chicago.—After months of campaigning, at mass meetings and in print, by the Left Opposition, the local German Stalinists have finally been made aware of the Fascist danger in Germany. At last they too got to the point of calling a protest meeting. But how? The anti-Fascist meeting held by the "Chicago Arbeiter Club" at the Social Turnhalle on March 5 gave new evidence of the false evaluation of the present events in Germany on part of the CP comrades. Instead of appearing as a brother organization of the KPD—that is, as Communists—they are hiding behind the mantle of the Arbeiter Club.

After a short speech in German, an English speech was made by comrade N. Blattner. It was an aggregate of platitudes often culminating in statements which had to be retracted immediately after loud guffaws from the audience. One of these gems was the contention that only recently "the Spanish Fascists and their king were chased out with machine guns" and that the same is bound to happen elsewhere. Asked who it was that chased out the Spanish Fascists and who it is that is standing at the head of the government in their place, the speaker was puzzled, but like a good Stalinist he quickly recovered to retort: "It was the Republicans and the social Fascists, who are only **slightly** different from the other Fascists."

Another such clumsy turn of speech was the assertion that the "the capitalist system has broken down everywhere except in the Soviet Union". That was meat of course for the Nazis present, who were profuse in their applause on this point. It was not at all surprising therefore when after the many questions asked, the speaker got sick at heart and instead of giving a factual answer to the question, replied with the well-known mudslinging method to many of the questions.

The Leninist application of the united front in the Kornilov period in Petersburg, cited by the Left Opposition, was painted as a Trotskyist lie by him. Lenin could not have given the instructions—because he was not in Petersburg! The demand of the Opposition for a united front with the social democratic party and the trade unions (from top to bottom) was distorted by the speaker in his reply as if the "Trotskyists" wanted to build an unconditional bloc with the social democracy. In his tirade against "counter-revolutionary Trotskyism" Blattner did not achieve anything new. His frenzy did not help him any either. The workers present listened attentively to the arguments presented and did not allow themselves to be swayed by the lynching spirit. In the discussion that followed our comrades Giganti, Mashow, Martin, Satir, Bornstein, etc., participated. The views of the Left Opposition were as adequately presented as is possible in the five minutes that are granted.

A resolution was proposed by comrade Martin and accepted by the meeting, demanding that the Arbeiter Club send out an appeal to **ALL** workers organizations for the purpose of forming a united front against Fascism. The Stalinists showed how they proposed to fight Fascism by a resolution which called merely for a telegram of protest against the Fascist terror to be sent to the German embassy in Washington! Literature and Militants were sold and discussion held long after the meeting was over. —F. M.

Oehler Meeting In St. Louis

St. Louis.—The two meetings arranged for comrade Oehler in St. Louis were well attended and the workers present were attentive and sympathetic to our viewpoint on the German question. The **Militant** as well as other literature was eagerly reached for.

In the next room, adjoining the hall where our meeting was held—on the South side—four or five Stalinists were in session. The purpose of their meeting was the formation of a "literary club", which evidently was a flop because no workers attended to hear the Stalinist interpretation of literature. They were invited to attend our meeting. They came in, sat down for about five minutes and then returned to their retreat to continue their literary discussion. It is significant that the leader of this group is Sernich, the Stalinist who is most active in expelling Left Oppositionists from the ILD in St. Louis.

At the North side meeting, Orville Smith, a young Stalinist fanatic, constantly made notes on a very large sheet of paper. Every one present noticing him thought he was making notes for a short speech on Germany from the Stalinist viewpoint. When he was finally given the floor for ten mintes (which was extended to fifteen) imagine our surprise when the only remark he made about Germany was that he knew nothing about it! The bankruptcy of this individual was further exposed by his admission that not only did he know nothing about Germany but that he knew nothing about anything else except St. Louis. This, from a representative of the political party of the world's greatest internationalist, Lenin! His entire fifteen minutes were devoted to the slander of the local members of the Opposition, particularly Roberts and Payer who have been active in party auxiliary organizations.

Other Stalinists also had their say. One of them asked the hoary question, "If Trotsky is a friend of the workers why was he exiled from the Soviet Union, the Workers Republic?" A German Stalinist remarked, that being a German, no one could tell him anything about the German situation! This individual walked out of the meeting in feigned disgust, evidently hoping that others would follow. His ruse failed as the other workers sat eagerly by waiting for comrade Oehler's reply. The reply was brief, because of lack of time, but nevertheless to the point—dealing crushing blows to the lies and slanders of the political bankrupts who call themselves Communists. At their complaint of lack of time to present their viewpoint (!) we offered them plenty of time if they would meet us in debate at some near date. This proposal left them stunned and wordless, and they walked out of the meeting considerably crestfallen.

—G. ROBERTS.

A United Front from the Top?

At the first session of the Congress Organization Commtitee of the N. Y. Free Tom Mooney Conference, in which Stalinists have the control, a serious discussion arose over the question of the united front. The question arose in connection with the problem of broadening the conference.

It was the unanimous sentiment of the Committee that the crux of the problem was the approach to the SP and A F of L. It was proposed to send a delegation to the SP City Central Committee and the AF of L Central Trades and Labor Alliance to invite them into the work of the conference. To bring them in, it was proposed to offer them a number of places on the Congress Organization Committee equal to the number held by any other single group. It was further proposed that the invitation specify that all participants agreed in advance not to "attack" other organizations. Nessin was elected to this delegation.

The Left Oppositon which is represented on the Committee proposed that the Committee issue a leaflet to the Socialist and A F of L workers asking them to raise in their organizations the questions of why their organizations did not participate in the Conference and asking them to demand that they participate as organizations. This was voted down. The vote was one for; all the others against.

Following the rejection of our proposal, Winter proposed an open letter to the SP and A F of L embodying the proposal of the delegation. A lively passage of arms took place over this proposition between Nessin and Winter. Nessin was opposed to the open letter. He argued that we must give the appearance of sincerity to our proposal to the SP and AF of L. He was afraid that an open letter would frighten them away.

The Left Opposition proposed an open letter to the SP and AF of L asking them to appoint committees to meet with a sub-committee of the Congress Committee to work out the means of drawing them into the work of the conference. The motion was defeated. Winter's carried.

As it stands now the party is swinging to the Right. The people who but yesterday thundered that the united front from below was the simon-pure Marxian version, are today beginning to tread in the steps of the Anglo-Russian Committee policy. From the united from below the Stalinist zigzag is moving toward the united front from the top. Therein lies the danger.

Bureaucratic Centrism cannot consistently carry out a correct policy. In the process of oscillating from the extreme of ultra-Leftism to the extreme of Right opportunism Stalinism strikes a point at which it appears to coincide with the Marxian policy of the Left Oppostion. The Left Opposition strives with all its influence to hold the policy to the correct line. But the nature of bureaucratic Centrism makes this impossible for the Stalinists. They continue their course.

At the present the direction is toward the united front from the top. Left Oppositionists must be on guard. —T. STAMM.

The Opposition in Bethlehem

Allentown-Bethlehem Pa. — We workers of this vicinity are fortunate enough to have been "educated" and "organized" by the 14th "organizer" sent to us since 1929 from the District office of the C. P. in Philadelphia. Each of these organizers—or rather disorganizers—claims that the previous one made all the blunders and mistakes, but that he (the present one) has the right pattern for the solution of all the workers' troubles. Let us see what comrade Powers—on orders from above—is doing.

In January 1933 the local branch of the Allentown S. P. issued a call for a united front conference. The conference was held in the same month, with the participation of 35 delegates representing about 25 organization. Among them were also organizations controlled by the C. P., mostly unemployed councils and fraternal organizations.

The purpose of the conference was to protest against the rapacious, commissary plan of Governor Pinchot, which intends to reduce the relief of adult workers to $.41 a week and $.27 for children. The demand was: cash relief of $7.00 per week and an additional $1.00 for each dependent, and other demands for relief.

It was also decided by the conference to hold a demonstration on Feb. 7, at which no other banners were to be displayed but those calling for relief. This was instigated by the S. P. delegation. This same delegation perpetrated another shameful deed upon the conference, by the move that thanks be extended to a gentleman, supposed to be from the chain stores, for his donation of $45.00 for leaflets. It was just a simple trick, for the money was never given. On Feb. 7 the demonstration started, on the basis of the united front, with a mass meeting in the Trainmen's Hall. On the platform was the S. P. organizer, Leary Heinbach and the C. P. organizer Powers. A resolutions committee was elected. After this, someone from the crowd of about 1200, moved that the Tom Mooney banner, which was displayed in the hall by Communist sympathizers, be removed and not be carried to the Court House where the resolutions committee was to present its demands to the county commissioners. (About 2000 people demonstrated at the court house.) This motion was seconded and a general melee began. A vote was finally taken. not against the Mooney banner but for Powers to get off the platform. The motion was carried by an overwhelming majority. The writer of these lines voted with the rest of the comrades against the removal of Powers. But we remained in the minority and Powers had to step down from the stage. This was defeat number one.

At the same time I had collected all available copies of the **Militant** and distributed them in and outside of the hall A few days later, the Slovak Rovnost Ludu (a Stalinist daily) wrote the usual—and not for the first time—slander against me, recommending that I be expelled from the Slovak Workers Club because of my "counter-revolutionary activities" At the instigation of Powers, they shamelessly called me "stool pigeon" and similar epithets. At the SWC in Allentown they, together with a few misled and fanatical workers, decided to expel me from the Slovak Workers Home for the simple reason that I distributed a few copies of the **Militant.**

After the Feb. 7 incident in the Trainmen's Hall, Powers decided to break with the united front, issuing a mimeographed leaflet calling the local leaders of the S. P. traitors to the Mooney cause. Simultaneously, he issued another leaflet calling the workers of Allentown to another demonstration at the Court House on Feb. 14th. About a half a dozen of us showed up! Defeat Number Two.

And now as a result of this stupid act of Powers the united front is completely smashed and the workers look at each others as enemies.

With the best of intentions and in a comradely spirit I called Powers' attention to the mistakes committed. But to no avail—the same epithets were hurled against me as previously.

After a few unemployed councils were formed, one was also organized in our township with our participation. Delegates were elected on Feb. 25 to the hunger march on Harrisburg on March 1. The delegates returned on March 4 and made a report in the Bethlehem Hungarian Hall. About 400 workers, mostly youngsters—the new recruits of the Stalinist machine educated on orders from above—turned out to listen to the delegates. It was torture to listen to the "reports". We pity these young enthusiasts, whom we regard as victims of Stalinist miseducation. These youngsters will be excellent material provided the party is in the hands of the memebrship, with workers democracy as its guiding internal principle All this should be with the goal in view to raise their political level, whch in turn will induce independent thinking from which springs the much needed initiative that is so sadly lacking today. —C. D.

Stalinists Merge With Balbontin

Important news! The Spanish C. P., which numbers two to three thousand members, has just "taken to its bosom" the Socialist Revolutionary Party...which numbers fully 8,000.

Let us call things by their name; the C. P. of Spain has gone from crisis to crisis, it has driven from its midst the Left Opposition, it separated from Maurin's Right wing group. Finally, on orders from Moscow, it expelled its entire Political Bureau (Bullejos-Adame Trilla). It has just taken a new step by merging with Balbontin's Socialist Revolutionary Party.

This "party", led by those who are called in Spain Jabalias (Bloody) Balbontin and Company, is supported partly by the radical bourgeoisie, partly by the poverty-stricken layers of the peasantry and the anarchist circles. It disseminates a sheet with quite a large circulation, La Tierra,—a truly demagogue piece of confusion! Mr. Balbontin, its leader, a notorious adventurer, is a deputy. He was, it seems, won over by Stalin and is preparing to take a trip to the USSR. So the die is cast.

The miserable roping of the Spanish C. P. into Mr. Balbontin's impossible menagerie illuminates its entire political course. Stalin and his clique expel the Bolshevik-Leninists from the party, it antagonizes the entire revolutionary vanguard, and it falls swooningly into the arms of....deputy Balbontin. It is hardly necessary to add that Mr. Balbontin has nothing whatever in common, neither immediately nor ultimately, with Communism. His union with the C. P. is a truly frightful marriage, which can contribute nothing to the Spanish proletariat but disastrous mistakes.

The Spanish Left Opposition must denounce to the proletariat this open sliding of Centrism into the positions of petty bourgeois radicalism. In order to raise the banner of Communism again, the first task it must achieve is the publication of a weekly paper.

International Workers' School

AMERICAN HISTORY

A Series of Lectures, by JACK WEBER
Given Every Monday, at 8 P. M.

April 3. European Background of American History
April 10. The Period of Colonization
April 17. The American Revolution
April 24. The Bourgeois coup d'Etat—the Constitution
May 1. Economic Development up to the Civil War
May 8. The Frontier and Its Influence
May 15. The Civil War—the Conflict between Opposed Economic Systems
May 22. The Reconstruction Period
May 29. Agrarian Movements
June 5. The Early Labor Movement
June 12. The Modern Labor Movement
June 19. American Imperialism

Outlines of each lecture and references will be given to all students.

THE HISTORY AND PRINCIPLES OF THE INTERNATIONAL LEFT OPPOSITION

A Series of Lectures by Max Shachtman, Editor of the Militant

Four sessions have already been held on the following topics: The Fight for Party Democracy: "The New Course" by Leon Trotsky. The Defeat of the German Revolution, 1923:—"The Lessons of October" by Leon Trotsky. The Opposition Program for Industrialization. The Left Opposition Pogram for Collectivization. The Anglo-Russian Committee. The Chinese Revolution of 1925-1927.

The sessions are held on WEDNESDAYS, at 8 P. M.

The May Day Conference

(Continued from page 1)

tween these two faces of the Stalinist Janus which took place in the resolutions committee of the May Day Conference.

Here, again, as in the Mooney Committee session, Nessin leans far to the Right. Winter's position is not as clear. He appears to stand half-way between the ultra-Leftist position of yesterday and the Right wing position of Nessin. No doubt further developments will make the picture clearer.

In the days when the Left Opposition was hammering on the gates of the Stalinist conferences organized under the ultra-Leftist sign of the united front from below the difference between our position on the united front question and the Lovestonite position was not as clear to the Communist workers as a whole as it is becoming today. This great advantage for us is an indirect result of the party's half turn on the united front question.

Heretofore, we had to fight for admisson to the conference. That is how we won the respect of the party membership.

Today we are all seated. We utilize the opportunity and the beginnings of worker's democracy accorded the Left Opposition to explain our conception of the united front, to elucidate our policy of face to the party, and to throw our weight into the scale to broaden en the conference from the point of view of strengthening Communism. The Lovestoneites pursue a different policy. They fill their conception of the united front with a content manifestly hostile to the party and sympathetic to the social democracy. As a result, they antagonize the conferences they attend. In this negative way, they differentiate themselves from us and help us make clearer the differences on this point among the three wings in the Communist movement.

The resolutions adopted by the conference were not satisfactory. The main resolution on May Day gave a false perspective of the war danger; it was Hathaway's. The Resolutions Committee voted down our motions to include demands for the six hour day and long term credits for the Soviet Uinon. The latter demand was simply ignored. In rejecting the first Winter explained that we have to distinguish our demands from those of the demagogic AF of L leadership! The special resolution on Fascism avoided most of the errors of Hathaway's speech but was an abstract protest. The Committee rejected our proposal to demand a united front of all working class organizations in Germany against Fascism.

The conference decided to issue an open letter to the Socialist party and A. F. of L. inviting them to participate in the organization of one united May Day demonstration. The conference agreed to allow all organizations participating in the demonstrations to march under their own banners. Hundreds of thousands of leaflets will be printed calling on all workers and workers' organizations to unite for a gigantic demonstration. The Left Opposition will do its utmost to achieve this aim.

—T. STAMM.

INTERNATIONAL WOMANS DAY IN DAVENPORT

Davenport, Iowa—International Women's Day was observed in Davenport, Iowa, by members of the Workerrs Educational Forum, sponsored by the Communist League of America (Oppositon). A meeting was held, with about 50 workers in attendance. Comrade Papcun, organizer, called the meeting to order and introduced the speaker, comrade Jessie Behr, who spoke on the subject, "Shall women work in factories?" This followed by questions and discussions—a few of the other comrades supporting the positive side of the topic.

Let us hope that this International Women's Day will have rallied more women comrades to the work of Communism.

—J. E. B.

Bank Holiday & Concentration

(Continued from page 1)

is only half of the process. At the same time they must reorganize and improve production at home in order to undersell the other capitalists on the world market. The liquidation of the internal debt is a major part of this. And the move the imperialists are making now with the banking structure is the key to this necessary change through a graduated plan of attack upon the lesser exploiters and the working class.

The banking crisis brought another factor to the surface that we have always pointed out. Now the evidence is clearer. We have rejected the theory current in the American Communist movement that the American imperialists were one bloc against the other sections and classes. We know that when it comes to a struggle against the working class or other imperialist nations their unity can be obtained in the fight because the interests of the groups of financiers run parallel. However, we also know that a constant fight between the groups of financiers to gain hegemony of the whole at the expense and elimination of the other sections of the American financiers is a point of elementary understanding to the Marxists, if it is not to many Stalinists.

To point out to the workers in the election campaign that Hoover and Roosevelt are heads and tails of the same coin is correct, but to stop at this point, as the Stalinists do, is to leave unanswered another important problem. Imperialists support both Hoover and Roosevelt but different groups of American financiers cast their lot with each office boy. It is true that in the main they are united against the industrialist, the middle class and the workers. This is natural. While they have this united front against the other lesser, exploiters and the workers, clearly revealed in their program, it is also true that the different groups of financiers have their struggle for domination. And at this point, we find the advantage of one group of financiers' candidate, Roosevelt, against the other group of financiers' candidate, Hoover. Roosevelt can talk against the "money interest", the "Wall Street crowd" and line up the support of the confused workers and the muddle-headed middle class and reformers. That is how the war lords in China "fight" imperialism and that is how the capitalist politicians from Roosevelt on down to the socialists fight "Wall Street".

It looks as though Mitchell is with the "wrong" group of financiers. Now there is a movement on foot to "draft" Pole as Controller. La Salle Street supports Pole against the Wall Street man, Governor Meyer of the Federal Reserve. Th truth is that it is not La Salle Street vs. Wall Street. The groups of financiers struggling for domination have their connections all the way down the banking structure.

Working class or capitalist politics must find the key to open the lever that will pull the greatest number of factors for the class interest. The group of imperialists supporting Roosevelt was successful in its first major move along this line. Will it be able to keep it up? At least Hoover may take lessons from Roosevelt. The idea is—that whenever you hand the bankers a billion, or the navy a half billion just hand the worker a glass of beer or any other slop and the misleaders of labor will call it fifty-fifty. —H. OEHLER

PEEKSKILL MEETING

For the first time the viewpoint of the Left Opposition was presented at a mass meeting of the progressive schol of Mohegan Colony, Peekskill, New York on Saturday, March 25. About 100 colonists heard comrade Carl Cowl analyze the German crisis and the urgent need of effecting a united front of workers organizations against Fascism. After considerable heated discussion, in which socialists, anarchists and Stalinists took issue, the speaker was invited to a debate or a symposium to be arranged in the near future, at which the position of the Left Opposition would again be presented.

MINNEAPOLIS MASS MEETING

A mass meeting against Fascist terror will be held in Minneapolis, **Saturday, April 8, at 8 P. M. in the Mayor's Reception Room of the Court House.** Comrades **V. R. Dunne** and **Clem Forsen** of the Communist League of America (Opposition) will be the speakers.

The American Capitalist Paradise

HOOVERVILLE

Continued from last issue

When months passed in constant fear of being thrown out of his shack by police, when his clothes and his shoes begin to wear out and his ambition and hope begin to fade, different psychological characteristics also appear in the resident of "Hooverville"; he starts drinking more heavily wherever and whenever he has a chance; he acquires a profound aversion to any activity; he develops a strange childish expectation that he may strike in some way, somehow, a tremendously promising opportunity. This is something like the alluring dream of marrying a millionaire's daughter. If this hoped-for opportunity were such that its realization might reasonably be expected he would start to battle anew for his life, till he wins out. But if one asks him of what nature is the opportunity he expects to find, he answers that it may happen that he will by chance "find a roll" in the streets: or save a rich man's son from the East River: or he may find suddenly a very good job; or he may invent something; or he may inherit a big fortune; or—or....

Led by such faint hope—very faint, almost nothing in his mind, but strong enough in his sentiment—he sticks to his cabin, hammers and patches it inside and out, and goes out for his "kill". He has lost his ability to concentrate on anything sensible.

How can such psychological features, seemingly fatal to any man, be explained? Life is dark and hopeless for him; nothing is left of his ambition, except gloomy thoughts and memories. The hopeless hand-to-mouth existence into which he has been forced by the capitalist system, is of all things least conducive to organizational inclinations. Under the influence of capitalistic propaganda for "better times", he not only becomes incapable of united class action, but ceases to desire it even, preferring to remain by himself in the isolation that is his lot in this society—he becomes an anti-social animal.

But after all, the case cannot be hopeless for us, the class-conscious section of the workers of Hooverville. We should systematically be on the job of educating and organizing the others. They are at present knit together by notions of nationality, common customs and "jungle-feeling": it is up to us to transform some of that into economic class consciousness. We should make that our goal.

If we could draw them into action, into the class struggle, then life with all its drawbacks would be worth while for all of them. They would have a purpose.

It is for the workers themselves to grasp the unwelcome opportunity placed in their hands by the capitalist class, to use their leisure time in sorting and arranging the values in their lives and direct it into collective mass action. The workers in Hooverville have a tremendous asset of non-work at their command. The realization of this exceptional opportunity depends mainly on the workers themselves and partly on the revolutionary organizations, particularly unemployed councils. Their forced leisure is the most effective tool they could wish for, provided they will use it constructively.

Granted that the workers' self-expression must come mainly through his own initiative, what should the revolutionary organizations do to help them along?

They should systematically inform them of all revolutionary mass activities by supplying them with leaflets and papers and have a few comrades reside in the "village" for that purpose. They should encourage and promise to help to defend their meager dwellings against the city authorities when the time comes for such a task. There is a tendency on the part of most workers in Hooverville to become so psychologically adjusted to their physical and social surroundings that they experience a strong dissatisfaction when attempts are made to transfer them to a new environment. This state of mind should be utilized and organized into physical resistance when such action is taken by police.

The worker's mind today is in a restless state and needs a steadying and vital element. The inspiring influence of mass demonstrations and action must reach these people, for whom the unemotional lecture hall and the printed page have little appeal. The unemployed councils should approach the settlement on this basis. The worker in Hooverville needs what every other worker needs—a satisfactory purpose in life apart from the business of making a mere living. The value of spare-time, constructively employed for the demands of immediate relief, should not be overlooked by the revolutionary worker.

The actual work in the East River Hooverville where there are at present 250 workers in 80 shacks, has been so far of a purely propaganda nature on the part of one comrade. For a short period he represented a small section of more advanced workers in downtown unemployed councils, and was functioning there in its executive committee. He also led a body of workers in the "relief March" to the City Hall, last September. The unfortunate incident on the corner of 7th Street and Avenue A last summer where two workers were killed, spelled the end of his work; he was told, indirectly, not to hang around the "hall" any longer. That checked the work temporarily, but that incident should not stop the councils from selecting others for the work.

The Hoovervilles should be converted, from what was first a mere geographical locality, into a real workers' stronghold; that is to say, a stronghold with sentiments, revolutionary spirit and a purpose of its own.

When the first man set off a piece of land and said "this is mine," the enslavement of the workers began, until we see now, in Rousseau's words **"man, born free, everywhere in chains".** This cannot go on much longer, the future belongs to the proletariat, not to capitalists, the profiteers, the landlords and the inheritors.

The psychological character of the workers in Hooverville is extremely emotional, impulsive, violent, irresolute and extreme in action, displaying mainly the harsher emotions and the less refined sentiments.

This is just what is needed. Comrade Trotsky wrote once: "All efforts ought to be made to concentrate the bitterness, the anger, the protest, the rage, the hatred of the masses, to give those emotions a common language, a common goal, to unite, to solidify ALL THE PARTICLES OF THE MASSES... to summon all the revolutionary forces to simultaneous action."

UNEMPLOYED COUNCILS — PENETRATE INTO A NEW TERRITIORY!

—PAUL SCHWALBE.

The Youth United Front in New York

(Continued from Page 1)

policies of the Communist party which played into the hands of social democracy. All talk of fusion with the socialists was nonsense and false. He supported Joel's criticism of the Yipsel attitude towards the Conference and asked the Conference officially to criticize the Yipsels and again invite them to participate in the April 1 demonstraton and the permanent committee of the Conference.

Resolutions on the defense of the Soviet Union, against the persecution of the Jews in Germany, for the release of all class war prisoners, and for a united front May Day demonstration against Fascism and for the class war prisoners were carried. A resolution calling upon the Communist International, the Labor and Socialst International and the International Committee of Left Socialist parties to cement a united front against Fascism was passed.

Another resolution was introduced from the floor by the Lovestoneites instructing the permanent committee to invite the YPSL to participate in the April 1 demonstration and elect a representative on the Committee. The Left Opposition introduced a counter-resolution which criticized the Yipsel boycott of the Conference and invited them to join the permanent committee and the April 1 demonstration. The first motion was passed. The Y. C Lers refused to criticize the Yipsels!

At the conclusion of the first session the Rand School delegates withdrew because of the criticism of the socialists and the Yipsels. This despite the fact that they had opened the Conference with a criticism of both the social democrats and the Communists. Later, however, they returned to the Conference.

In the next day's session the Young Communist League made a statement on the previous session: The official reports were poor; there was too much politcal squabbling. The YCL was to make it clear that it will refrain from all attacks on the participating groups during the period of the united front unless any of them violate the minimum program accepted. Thiswas a slap at comrade Joel of the Workers' School (that is, the Communist party)! It clearly reveals the opportunist nature of the Comintern manifesto's statement on not attacking the social democratic organizationns—for even the Yipsels who had refused to join the Conference were not to be criticized!

In the discussion of preparations for the demonstration before the German consulate it was pointed out that the only paper which carried the call for the Conference was the **Young Spartacus.** Other groups pledged that their press would carry announcements of the demonstration. A resolution to boycott the Olympics to be held in Berlin carried A permanent committee of eleven was elected from the different political tendencies present. The Left Opposition has one comrade on the committee. The Committee was empowered to broaden its membership and particularly to draw in the Yipsels, the Rand School, the Young Circle League and the League for Industrial Democracy.

All are urged to participate in the mass demonstration before the German consulate. The demonstrators will gather at Whitehall and South Sts., Saturday, April 1 at 11:00 A. M. Members of the Spartacus Youth Club and sympathizers of the Left Opposition will meet at our headquarters at 126 E. 16th Street, 10:30 A. M.

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

The next issue of the **Militant** will carry some highly important correspondences from Berlin which shed light on the true state of affairs there, as viewed by direct witnesses. In addition, there will be reports from other parts of Germany, as well.

-:- For the United Front of Defense Against Hitlerism -:-

(Continued from Page 1)

in this sense: they are not opponents of a "criticism based upon facts" but they are against suspicions, insults and calumnies. A very laudable attitude! But how is the limit to be found between permitted criticism and inadmissable campaigns? And where are the impartial judges? As a general rule, the criticism never pleases the criticized, above all when he can raise no objection to the essence of it.

The question of whether or not the criticism of the Communists is good or bad is a question apart. If the Communists and the social democrats had the same opinion on this subect, there wouldn't be two parties in the world, independent from each other. Let us concede that the polemic of the Communists is not worth much. Does that fact lessen the mortal danger of Fascism or do away with the need for joint resistance?

However, let us look at the other side of the picture: the polemic of the social democracy itself against Communism. The **Vorwaerts** (I am simply taking the first copy at hand) publishes the speech which Stampfer delivered on the subject of the non-aggression pact. In this same issue a cartoon has as its caption: The Bolsheviks are signing a non-aggression pact with Pilsudski, but they refuse to draw up a similar pact with the social democracy. Now, a cartoon is also a polemical "aggression", and it so happens that this particular one is most unfortunate. The **Vorwaerts** completely forgets the fact that a non-agression treaty existed between the Soviets and Germany during the period when the social democrat Mueller was at the head of the Reich government.

The **Vorwaerts** of February 15, on the same page, defends in the first column the idea of a non-aggression pact, and in the fourth column makes the accusation against the Communists that their factory committee at the Aschinger Co. betrayed the interests of the workers during the ngotiations for the new wage scale. They openly use the word "betrayed". The secret behind this polemic (is it a criticism based on facts or a campaign of slander?) is very simple: new electons to the factory committee of the Aschinger Co. were to take place at this time. Can we, in the interests of the united front, asks the **Vorwaerts** put an end to attacks of this sort? In order for that to happen, the **Vorwaerts** would have to stop being itself, that is, a social democratic journal. If the **Vorwaerts** believes what it prints on the subject of the Communists, its first duty is to open the eyes of the workers to the faults, crimes and "betrayals" of the latter. How could it be otherwise? The need for a fighting agreement flows from the existence of two parties, but it does not do away with the fact. Political life goes on. Each party, even though it adopts the frankest attitude on the question of the united front, cannot help thinking of its own future.

ADVERSARIES CLOSE RANKS IN THE FACE OF THE COMMON DANGER

Let us assume for the moment that a Communist member of the Aschinger Co. factory committee declares to the social democratic member: "Because the **Vorwaerts** characterized my attitude on the question of the wage-scale as an act of treason, I do not want to defend, together with you, my head and your neck from the Fascist bullets." No matter how indulgently we wanted to view this action, we could only characterize the reply as utterly insane.

The intelligent Communist, the serious Bolshevik, will say to the social democrat: "You are aware of my enmity to the views expressed by the **Vorwaerts.** I am devoting and shall devote all my energy to undermining the dangerous influence which this paper has among the workers. But I am doing that and shall do it by my speeches, by criticism and persuasion. But the Fascists want to do away arbitrarily with the existence of the **Vorwaerts.** I promise you that jointly with you I will defend your paper to the utmost of my ability, but I am waiting for you to say that at the first appeal you will likewise come to the defense of the **Rote Fahne,** regardless of your attitude towards its views." Is this not an irreproachable way of posing the question? Does not this method correspond with the fundamental interests of the whole of the proletariat?

The Bolshevik does not ask the social democrat to alter the opinion he has of Bolshevism and of the Bolshevik press. Moreover, he does not demand that the social democrat make a pledge for the duration of the agreement to keep silent on his opinion of Communism. Such a demand would be absolutely inexcusable. "So long", says the Communist, "as I have not convinced you and you have not convinced me, we shall criticize each other with full freedom, each using the arguments and expressions that he deems necessary. But when the Fascist wants to force a gag down our throats, we will repulse him together!" Can an intelligent social democratic worker counter this proposal with a refusal?

The polemics between Communist and social democratic newspapers, no matter how bitter it may be, cannot prevent the compositors of the papers from forming a fighting agreement to organize a joint defense of their presses from the attacks of the Fascist bands. The social democratic and Communist deputies in the Reichstag and the Landtags, the municipal counsellors, etc., are compelled to come to the physical defense of each other when the Nazis resort to loaded canes and chairs. Are more examples needed?

What is true in each particular case is also true as a general rule: the inevitable struggle in which social democracy and Communism are engaged for the leadership of the working class cannot and must not prevent them from closing their ranks when blows threaten the whole working class. Isn't this obvious?

TWO WEIGHTS AND TWO SCALES

The **Vorwaerts** is indignant because the Communists accuse the social democrats (Ebert, Scheidemann, Noske, Hermann Mueller, Grzesinsky) of paving the road for Hitler. The **Vorwaerts** has a legitimate right to indignation. But this remark is too much: how can we, it cries out, make a united front with such slanderers? What have we here? sentimentalism? prudish sensitiveness? No, that really smacks of hypocrisy. As a matter of fact, the leaders of the German social democracy cannot have forgotten that Wilhelm Liebknecht and August Bebel often asserted that the social democracy was ready, for the sake of definite objectives, to come to an agreement with the devil and his grandmother. The founders of the social democracy certainly did not demand that during this occasion the devil should check his horns in the museum and that his grandmother should become converted to Lutheranism. Whence then comes this prudish sensitiveness among the social democratic politicians who, since 1914, have made united fronts with the Kaiser, Ludendorff, Groener, Brueninfi, Hindenburg? Whence come these two weights and two scales: one for the bourgeois parties, the other for the Communists?

The leaders of the Center consider that every infidel who denies the dogmas of the Catholic Church, the only Savior, is one of the damned and shortly destined for eternal torments. That did not prevent Hilferding, who has no particular reason for believing in the immaculate conception, from establishing a united front with the Catholics in the government and in parliament. Together with the Center the social democrats set up the "Iron Front". However, not for a single instant did the Catholics cease their unbearable propaganda and their polemics in the churches. Why these demands on Hilferding's part with regard to the Communists? Either a complete cessation of mutual criticism, that is, of the struggle of tendencies within the working class, or a rejection of all joint action. "All or nothing!" The social democracy has never put such ultimatums to bourgeois society. Every social democratic worker should reflect upon these two weights and two measures.

Suppose at a meeting, even today, someone should ask Wels how it happens that the social democracy, which gave the republic its first chancellor and its first president, has led the country to Hitler. Wels will surely reply that to a large extent it is the fault of Bolshevism. Surely the day has not passed that the **Vorwaerts** will fail to repeat this explanation ad nauseum. Do you think that in the united front with the Communists it will forego its right and its duty to tell the workers what it considers to be truth? The Communists certainly have no need of that. The united front against Fascism is only one chapter in the book of the struggle of the proletariat. The chapters that went before cannot be effaced. The past cannot be forgotten. We must build on it. We preserve the memory of Ebert's alliance with Groener and of Noske's role. We remember under what conditions Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht died. We Bolsheviks have taught the workers to forget nothing. We do not ask the devil to cut off his tail: that would hurt him and we would not profit by it. We accept the devil just as nature has created him. We have no need of the repentance of the social democratic leaders nor of their loyalty to Marxism; but we do need **the will of the social democracy to struggle against the enemy which is actually threatening it with death.** For our part, we are ready to carry out in the joint struggle all the promises which we have made. We promise to fight courageously and to carry the fight to a finish. That is quite enough for a fighting agreement.

YOUR LEADERS DON'T WANT TO FIGHT!

However, it still remains to be known why the social democratic leaders speak at all: regarding polemics, non-aggression pacts and the disgusting manners of the Communists, instead of answering this simple question: in what way shall we fight the Fascists? For the simple reason that the social democratic leaders do not want to fight. They cherished the hope that Hindenburg would save them from Hitler. Now they are waiting for some other miracle. They do not want to fight. They lost the habit of fighting long ago. The struggle frightens them.

Stampfer wrote regarding the actions of the Fascist banditry at Eisleben: "Faith in right and justice has not yet died in Germany." (**Vorwaerts,** February 14.)

It is impossible to read these words without being revolted. Instead of a call for a fighting united front, we get the consoling words: "Faith in justice has not died." Now, the bourgeoisie has its justice, and the proletariat its own, too. Armed injustice always comes out on top of disarmed justice. The whole history of humanity proves this. Whoever makes an appeal to this self-evident "ghost" of "justice" is deceiving the workers. Whoever wants the victory of proletarian justice over Fascist violence, must agitate for the struggle and set up the organs of the proletarian united front.

It is impossible to find in the entire social democratic press a single line indicatng genune preparation for the struggle. There is not a single thing, merely some general phrases, postponements to some indefinite future, nebulous consolations. "Only let the Nazis start something, and then...." And the Nazis started something. They march forward step by step, they tranquilly take over one position after another. These petty bourgeois reactionary malefactors do not care for risks. Now, they do not need to risk anything at all: they are sure in advance that the enemy will retreat without a fight. And they are not mistaken in their calculations.

Of course, it oftens occurs that a combatant must retreat in order to get a good start for a leap forward. But the social democratic leaders are not inclined to make the leap forward. They do not want to leap. And all their dissertations are made in order to conceal this fact. Just a short time ago they kept asserting that so long as the Nazis do not quit the ground of legality, there is no room for a fight. Now we get a good look at what this legality was: a series of promissory notes on the coup d'Etat. Still, this coup d'Etat was possible only because the social democratic leaders lull the workers to sleep with phrases about the legality of the coup d'Etat and console them with hope of a new Reichstag yet more impotent than those that preceded it. The Fascists can ask for nothing better.

Today the social democracy has even ceased speaking of struggles in the indefinite future. On the subject of the already-begun destruction of the working-class organizations and press, the **Vorwaerts** "reminds" the government not to forget that "in a developed capitalist country the conditions of production group the workers in factories". These words indicate that the leadership of the social democracy accepts in advance the destruction of the political, economic and cultural organizations created by three generations of the proletariat. "In spite of this" the workers will remain grouped by the industries themselves. Well then, what good are proletarian organizations if the question can be solved so simply?

The leaders of the social democracy and the trade unions wash their hands, and relegate themselves to the sidelines while waiting. If the workers themselves, "grouped together by the industries", break the bonds of discipline and begin the struggle, the leaders, obviously, will intervene as they did in 1918, in the role of pacifiers and mediators and will force themselves on to the workers' backs to re-establish the positions they have lost.

The leaders conceal from the eyes of the masses their refusal to fight and their dread of the struggle by means of hollow phrases about non-agression pacts. Social democratic workers your leaders do not want to fight!

THEN IS OUR PROPOSAL A MANEUVER?

Here the social democrat will again interrupt us to say: "Since you do not believe in our leaders' desire to fight against Fascism, isn't your proposal for a united front an obvious maneuver?" Even more, he will repeat the reflections printed in the **Vorwaerts** to the effect that the workers need unity and not "maneuvers".

This type of argument has quite a convincing sound. In actuality it is an empty phrase. Yes, we Communists are positive that the social democratic and trade unions functionaries will continue to evade the struggle to the best of their ability. At the critical moment a large segment of the working class bureaucracy will pass directly over to the Fascists. The other segment, which succeeds in exporting its carefully hoarded financial resources to some other country, will emigrate at the opportune moment. All these actions have already begun and their further development is inevitable. But we do not confuse this segment, today the most influential in the reformist bureaucracy, with the social democratic party or the entirety of the trade unions. The proletarian nucleus of the party will fight with sure blows, and it will carry behind it a good-sized section of the apparatus. Exactly where will the line of demarcation pass between the turncoats, traitors and deserters, on one side, and those who want to fight, on the other? We can only find this out through experience. That is why, without possessing the slightest confidence in the social democratic bureaucracy, the Communists cannot abstain from addressing themselves to the whole party. Only in this manner will it be possible to separate those who want to fight from those who want to desert. If we are mistaken in our estimation of Wels, Breitscheid, Hilferding, Crispien and the rest, let them prove that we are liars by their actions. We will declare a **mea culpa** on the public squares. If all this is merely a "maneuver" on our part, it is a correct and necessary maneuver which serves the interests of the cause.

You social democrats remain in your party because you have faith in its program, in its tactics and in its leadership. This is a fact with which we reckon. You regard our criticism as false. That is your privilege. You are by no means obliged to believe the Communists on faith, and no serious Communist will demand this of you. But on their side the Communists have the right to put no confidence in the functionaries of the social democracy and not to consider the social democrats as Marxists, revolutionists, and genuine socialists. Otherwise, the Communists would have no need for the setting up of a separate party and a separate International. We must take the facts as they are. We must build the united front not in the clouds, but on the foundation which all the previous development has laid down. If you sincerely believe that your leadership will lead the workers to struggle against Fascism, then what Communist maneuver can you distrust? Then what is this maneuver of which the **Vorwaerts** is continually speaking? Think this out carefully: Is this not a maneuver on the part of your leaders who want to frighten you with the hollow word "maneuver" and thus keep you away from the united front?

(Conclusion in the next number)

—L. TROTSKY.

A Letter from Moscow About the Left Opposition

(Continued from Page 1)

it who had broken off." From mouth to mouth there is now being passed the statement presumably made by Zinoviev prior to his departure for exile, "The greatest historical mistake we made was our leaving the Opposition in 1927". It is reputed that Kamenev too joined in with him in so saying. I have no means of verifying this fact at its source. But the report in itself is quite characteristic of the circles with which Zinoviev and Kamenev were connected.

The sympathy for the Left Opposition has grown greatly, even within the apparatus circles, especially among old party members, who know and remember the past. "The Lefts have a program, real men, real character, and leaders". One chances to hear such remarks very often, sometimes where one would least expect them. However, among the apparatus functionaries, who were educated during the last period, there is considerable fear of the Left Opposition; should it come to power it would deal harshly with all those who in their own time took charge of Stalinist reprisals. It goes without saying that all such doubts and fears are carefully encouraged from above.

In the course of the last few months, arrests on a large scale have been made in factories. More than a hundred workers were arrested in the "Amo" factory, where Opposition circulars were distributed. A few dozen workers were nabbed in Sharkopodshipnik. There were arrests in the "Calibre" factory (30 to 40 workers) and in the Baltic factory in Leningrad. A circular, set up locally, was distributed at a factory in Kovrov; indubitably similar facts could be obtained in many other places. I send only those reports that have reached me.

I have already informed you that during the October days, at a brake-producing plant a portrait of Stalin was so drawn that the next morning it turned into a portrait of Trotsky. There was a great to-do about this; many were arrested but the offenders were not caught. From time to time "misunderstandings" of this type occur in other enterprises. At the factory "Proletarian Labor", on the 22nd of January, the leading article of the wall newspaper, dedicated to Lenin's anniversary, turned out to be completely composed of excerpts from Trotsky's articles on Lenin. A terrible rumpus! Many of the participants were excluded from the party.

The workers in factories are sullen, dissatisfied and irritable. The authorities are taking advantage of the passport system primarily in order to ship out of Moscow all the undesirable and even the least suspicious elements, in a political sense; among them all those Left Oppositionists who had repented at diverse times. The purpose behind this is clear; toward Spring stormy times are expected in factories and all those are being liquidated beforehand who have any chance of of serving as leaders in these agitations. This measure, just as many others, serves as a means of self-defense for the apparatus to the detriment of the party, for it is quite self-evident that the Left Oppositionists in whom the workers trust would have striven to lead every movement into Soviet channels.

In factories there spring up odd opposition groups which function with their own means and forces. During arrests there is found "Trotskyist" literature, chiefly home-made circulars, theses, extracts, etc. From out of "My Life" comrades have selected material for propaganda. On this ground, three Oppositionists were arrested. In many cases, the ideas of the Opposition get abroad intuitively. Workers are drawn to our slogans by different paths. At present the questions that are posed most acutely are those that deal with suppression, bureaucratic despotism, and unbearable conditions in factories and in the party. Recently, the party apparatus issued a secret circular with instructions to double the watch over hectographs and other multigraphing machines in offices; evidently, the Opposition utilizes these machines in order to publish its documents.

In January, at a Moscow party session, Kaganovich said, "in the Istrinsk region (near Moscow) for five months all the nuclei were in the hands of Trotskyists. And what happened? The apparatus proceeded to enter into a discussion with them instead of dealing with the Trotskyists as they ought to be dealt with." The same Kaganovich reported, "Khichkov, a woman worker in Leningrad, took the floor in her nucleus to announce that she did not believe in Zinoviev's counter-revolutionism. She was, of course, expelled immediately."

Arrests among the workers, especialy among the young Communists, take place continually. The majority of these arrests pass unnoticed. Party circles become acquainted with mass arrests only when the latter are connected with individuals more or less well-known. Thus, for instance, the following is current in connection with the arrest of the group of Nemchenko, a trade union functionary: first, a group of YCLers was arrested, among them Nemchenko's son. They were confronted with the indictment charging them with conspiring terroristic acts (!) and they were harshly cross-examined to make them divulge how they, the youngsters, had come to such ideas. Nemchenko's son is reported to have replied, "There's continual talk at home that the Chief is ruining the country." In this manner they got at Nemchenko and his friends.

It is, of course, possible that within some circle or other of the youth, which are deprived of leadership and of the possibility to discuss and criticize, there is actual talk going on about terroristic acts. But most probably, what is involved in the above matter and the like, is provocation for the purpose of intimidating and vilifying "liberal" parents. The struggle against those elements in the apparatus which are inclined toward the Opposition proceeds not only by means of arrests but with slander as well. Those who criticize are smeared with filth, being charged with embezzlement, graft, nepotism, etc., etc. This facilitates liquidation.

The following method is widely applied. During all sorts of authoritative conferences, particularly those connected with collectivization, industrialization, inflation, the conditions of the workers and other burning questions, the chairman proposes that the discussion proceed in the spirit of forthright frankness, presumably to give the "leaders" an opportunity to elucidate all sides of the question. Concurrently, every critical statement, particularly, if there seems to be behind it considerable reflection, serves invariably as a reason for inquiry and surveillance, and for ferreting out connections; and not infrequently it leads to the arrest of individual groups. It is said that Smilga suffered for his "critical" speech at a conference where the most touchy questions of rural economy were discussed. It is indubitable that Smilga, in any event, did not represent any Oppositionist or semi-Oppositonist group. But, nevertheless, he paid for his attempt to speak out upon the peasant policies of Stalin in the very intimate and super-authoritative circle.

From well informed sources the following is related about the manner in which the group of Eismont, Tolmachev and others was liquidated. While recruiting supporters, Eismont shared his views with a close intimate of his Nikolsky, speaking of the situation in the country and, in particular, of the necessity to get rid of Stalin. This confidant "shared" Eismont's views with functionaries from the Central Control Commission. Eismont was ordered to report there. "What are your relations with Nikolsky?" "The best", "You trust him?" "Yes". Thereupon Eismont was shown Nikolsky's testimony; and that was immediately followed up with an indictment charging preparation of....terroristic acts. Obviously, this indictment was in reference to this words about the necessity of "getting rid of Stalin". Eismont could not withstand the pressure and betrayed Tolmachev, and said that Rykov and Tomsky knew about his point of view. It is possible, of course, that Eismont merely referred to Tolmachev, Rykov and Tomsky, as witnesses who could testify that while he, Eismont, spoke out critically about Stalin's policies, he was much too far away from any idea of terrorism. A reference of this sort to authoritative witnesses could and must have become transformed, under the given conditons, into "betrayal", and have called for a charge being brought against Rykov and Tomsky, of their being informed, and their failing to report. As is well known, in its own time, the charge against Zinoviev and Kamenev in relation to Riutin and Sliepkov reduced itself to precisely the same thing.

In connection with the affair of the Eismont group, the word was carefully passed around among the party tops, that not only Rykov and Tomsky knew about "the conspirators" but also one member of the Politbueau; a delicate hint at Kalinin. There is no doubt that Kalinin is heart and soul with the Rights. It is also possible that in a super-cautious manner he is taking out insurance "to the Right."

At the Plenum of the CEC Voroshilov said, turning to Tomsky, "You cut out thinking that you are a leader. That's all over now. You want to deport yourself as a leader but you are just an ordinary party member. Begin working as a rank and file Communist in the nucleus; work in the wall newspaper; produce proof that you are deserving of trust."

Rykov unburdened himself at the Plenum in the following manner, "How can I prove my devotion to party, working only among the letter-carriers? Give me the opportunity to step out before the masses. Now, for example, I was refused permission by the district committee chairman when I wanted to make an address during a jubilee at the Park of Culture and Rest, where 30,000 participated." The same Voroshilov replied to Rykov at the Plenum, "And he was right in refusing—who knows what you would have said, and what line you might have defended. You learn how to work among the letter-carriers." At present, Voroshilov, at any rate, is not a rank and file member of the party, but a "leader".

One must not think, of course, that after the complete capitulation of the Right leaders, the attitude towards them has been radically changed. At the meeting of the Moscow Party militants, Kaganovich while reporting on the Plenum, spoke with great animosity not only about Rykov and Tomsky but also Bukharin. The latter, however, because the least dangerous, has been slightly pardoned.

Among the Rights there is great confusion. They are strong in moods but not in organization or ideas. They are now without central leaders. However, the arrests among the Rights continue. Recently there were important arrests in the People's Commissariat of Agriculture. A "wrecking" organization was discovered there, embracing many super-authoritative workers. At its head presumably were the chief of this commissariat, Konor, and his colleagues Kovarsky and Wolff. They are accused of having maintained connections with Petlura organizations in the Ukraine and in Kuban, and of even keeping in touch with the Petlura center in Poland. It is possible, of course, that there were isolated class enemies in the apparatus of the Commissariat, but the entire case as a whole represents an obvious amalgam. So far as I know, Konor was born in Galicia, joined the Bolsheviks during the imperialist war, or shortly thereafter; he participated in the Civil War, and I think he sympathized with the Left Opposition a few years ago. Of his later history I know nothing . . . Notwithstanding the curt and detailed character of the accusations, no one believes in their validity. Everybody is of the opinion that the "chief" is simply preparing for an instructive trial of those supposedly guilty of the collapse of rural economy.

The situation in Kazakstan is extremely onerous—the population has turned nomad...."Faithful" Goloshchekin, who brought Kazakstan to the outermost limits of disaster, has finally been replaced. However, there has been appointed in his stead the no less "faithful" Mirzoyan, former secretary of Baku. The matter goes no further than this shuffling of personalities.

On the soil of economic and other difficulties there are sprouting diverse hostile movements, among them nationalistic movements, in particular in Crimea, where many authoritative workers were arrested—Tartars.

Grain collections, as well as other rural operations, are taking place under fearful pressure in North Caucasus and the Ukraine. Merciless repressions encompass ever wider circles of peasantry, local Communists among them. The leadership has completely taken to the course of administrative force. No trace has been left of the former "idealization" of the peasant, in practise, at any rate. At present the Stalinist upper crust considers that it is possible to get out of the difficulties only by way of new and extremely enforced methods of subjection. All work is being undertaken in this spirit, especially since the last Plenum of the CEC. About 50,000 authoritative workers are being mobilized in the cities in order to put through the "decisive" policies in villages. They will be placed there in the Political sectons, in machine and tractor stations, in commissions for sowing and harvesting, in produce tax commissions, etc., etc. Their chief task is to break down the "softness" of the local Communists.

At the restricted and closed party militants meeting in Leningrad, Kirov said, "We will deal mercilessly not only with party members who carry on counter-revolutionary (i. e., Opposition) activities but with all those who shillyshally in factories or in villages, who do not fulfill the plans, etc... 400 members of the party have been already sent to Solovsky for failure to fulfill the plans." All this is being said for purposes of intimidation.

Dejection and depression are rife even among the highest circles of the apparatus. If anything, there are even fewer anecdotes being told, just as much because anecdotes are being punished (in cases of party members it has been decreed: there has been enough anecdotes; from now on anecdotes mean expulsion), as well as because the situation in the party and the country is not conducive to anecdotes. The revolutionary elements in the party seek out each other. The connections are established by psychological guesswork,—is he a Communist or no? By "Communist" is understood the honest party member, not a careerist, not an informer, not an agent of the apparatus. In other words, the word "Communist" is gradually becoming equivalent to the word "oppositionist" (conscious or unconscious). In order to discern one another, the comrades make use of the most diverse methods. Here is one of them: one of the interlocutors begins cursing Trotsky, not in the lofty official tones, but offhand, as if "casually". This alone serves as a sufficient token and affords the possibility to turn the conversation into proper channels.

THE SITUATION AMONG THE EXILES

I wish to write to you particularly about the exiles and their harsh situation. "Harsh" will hardly do. Their situation is horrible. Our comrades are literally thrown to the mercy of starvation and of the elements. They are given no work. They are deprived of rations; there is a scarcity of warm clothing; they cannot get out of the sufferings caused by cold and hunger. Opportunely enough, I received a letter yetserday from V. "They think to starve us out. We shan't repent. We are right. We shall starve to death, but we shall not repent."

We take up collections, but here this is tied up with the greatest risks. Helping an Oppositionist with a Chervonetz means placing yourself in the lists of the enemies, and running the chance of being exiled. And even money does not help, because nothing can be bought for it in the sections of exile, and practically nothing can be sent out of here. What is needed are coupons from the Torgsin, and foreign currency.

Do what you can abroad. Start a campaign for the benefit of the exiled Oppositionists. What is involved is the physical annihilation of our comrades, sincere and devoted revolutionists. Many of them have proved by decades of work their loyalty to the revolution, to Bolshevism and to the Soviet Government.

Just this moment there has arrived news of L. S. Sosnovsky's death in exile. Can this possibly be true? The news comes from among his relatives. The report has not been verified. More than once during the past few years, there have arrived dark reports about the deaths of comrades in exile, beginning with Rakovsky. But in many instances they turned out untrue. In such rumors there is expressed the alarm for old friends and leaders. I firmly hope that the report of Leon Semenovitch's death is untrue. I cannot bring myself to believe this rumor.

N. I. Muralov is now at Taganrog, ailing. From among the Democratic Centralists, V. M. Smirnov is still in Suzdalsk, in solitary confinement. Sapronov is in Theodosia. Politically nothing is heard about the Democratic Centralists, nor about the Workers' Opposition.

February 1933. —T. T.

MARCH ISSUE OF YOUNG SPARTACUS

The March number of **Young Spartacus,** which is ready for sale, is a lively issue containing articles on the burning questions of the day. Its leading article "Unite to Smash Fascism" discusses the manifesto of the Comintern for a united front with the Socialist International. The call for an anti-Fascist Conference signed by a number of youth groups including the National Youth Committee of the Left Opposition, the New York Spartacus Youth Club and the Young Communist League, an item on "Non-Aggression Pact or United Front", a review of comrade Trotsky's pamphlet "The Only Road" and quotations from the Stalinists and Social Democrats on Germany, make the issue a predominantly German campaign number.

Reports on the toy workers and anti-Fascist youth conferences, the Albany jobless and Tom Mooney Conference, the conditions of the homeless youth reflect the activities of the youth movement. Several items on the Young Communist League, "A YCLer Speaks" "Ninth Plenum of the Young Communist International" a statement of a Chicago comrade, the appeal of the Chicago Club against physical assaults on Left Oppositionists, etc. a letter of comrade Trotsky to the Spanish youth, the report of activites of the French Left Opposition youth, "Karl Marx's Confession", an article on the Paris Commune, reprints of two proclamations of the Commune, complete the lively number of our youth paper, **Young Spartacus.**

Comrades are urged to order bundle orders. Get subs and donations for our paper.

THE MILITANT

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The Crisis in German Communism

Alternatives in the Decisive Class Battles

Two days before the German Reichstag elections forty thousand Fascist storm troops, preceded by two hundred armed "auxiliary police" in Nazi uniform, marched through the streets of central and western Berlin. They were greeted by most of the Schupos (German police) with the Fascist salute. It was effective election propaganda, but more than that, it was an attempt to put force behind the Fascism claim that they are the "masters of Berlin". To the extent that one can speak of weight of election figures, the claim appeared to have been confirmed two days later; though the real contest is yet to come. The streets of Berlin will undoubtedly witness some serious aspects of this contest.

Out in the West End the brown-shirted paraders were greeted by Fascist flags from practically every window. In that section of the big and petty bourgeoisie they could return the greetings to their friends, not excluding the rich Jews. But in Berlin North, the working class section which includes Wedding, on that very same day the whole section was isolated by a strong police cordon and every house ransacked while the terror and the arrests were mounting. To have horny hands is sure grounds for suspicion and almost proof of guilt.

Such is now the normal procedure of expressions of everyday life not only in Berlin but throughout Germany. The contest for final and complete assertion of power is on and increasing in intensity even though, compared to what is to come, this is mere guerrilla warfare.

The False Outlook of the Stalinists

The election results expressed a serious setback to the revolutionary vanguard. Not even the screaming and empty boasts of victory made by the Moscow **Pravda** can hide that fact nor does this in the least change the reaction to these results within the disorganized ranks of the practically annihilated vanguard. The setback weighs heavy upon them. During these years of growing Fascist danger the Stalinist leadership of the official Communist party tried to combat Fascism and social democracy as two sections of the same camp—Fascism and social Fascism. That was the official policy of the Stalinized Comintern.

At the eleventh Comintern plenum held in April 1931, that is after the German Reichstag elections of September 1930 in which the Fascists recorded their first great forward sweep, Thaelmann, reporting on the German situation, said:

"After September 14, after the sensational successes of the National Socialists, its supporters throughout Germany nourished great expectations. We did not at that time permit ourselves to be misled by the panicky sentiment which partly existed within the whole working class and at any rate within social democracy. That there were even within our own ranks certain comrades who not only signalized but also overestimated the great danger of this development of Fascism, that is known to most comrades. But we (Thaelmann and fellow bureaucrats—A. S.) declare soberly and serenely that September 14 was in many respects Hitler's best day which will be followed not by better days but by worse."

Thaelmann in his report recognized that the social democratic workers have a different ideology of civil war from that of the Fascists, and that he proceeded to state the essence of the Stalinist view as follows:

"On the other hand we will witness that the Social Democrats will succeed also in Germany, as they are now already in a measure succeeding, to form terror groups for the civil war from their mass supporters, which will surely in the future fight side by side with the Fascists against us on the other side of the barricade."

Up until the very last moment, that is to the actual establishment of the Hitler government, on January 30 of this year, the Stalinists maintained that the main attacks must be concentrated upon the "social Fascists. What are the results of this policy?

The actual results are that the criminally false policy of the incompetent party leaders has so far saved the social democratic bureaucracy. As a party, the S. P. held its own in the elections. The votes cast for a workers party in Germany indicate conscious support for its policies. According to this there are today seven million workers still under social democratic influence and following the social democratic leaders. Perhaps one may reduce the number by about one million, allowing that many for various functionaries, trade union, co-operative and what is left of social democratic local governmental officials. Its former petty bourgeois support in general has already gone to Hitler. This leaves nevertheless the conscious support of six million workers, the solid section of the proletariat, workers engaged in industry, in the main employed workers with the tools of production in their hands. That is yet a formidable strength.

The social democratic bureaucracy has been saved because it was not at all put to the test in action before the eyes of these six million workers. They can now continue to prate about opposition to Fascism and sabotage action. Would it not have been far better to put them to the test and inevitable exposure so as to be recognized in their true light in front of these six million workers? Is it not now clear that a real Communist pressure for a united front in its genuine sense with social democracy, would not only have united the working class but would also have forced the hands of this treacherous bureaucracy? But it is precisely the fatally wrong policy pursued of centering the attacks against "social Fascism" instead of a united front with social democracy which has permitted the Fascist hordes to terrorize the working class in the streets, to sweep the elections and to sit in the government claiming the imposing support of seventeen million votes to be used as a preparation for the final coup d'Etat. This is the catastrophic record of the policies pursued by the Stalinist leadership to date.

In increasing measure the Fascist bands roam the streets exercising themselves, training themselves for the big battles in assassinations upon the workers. One look at a Nazi storm troop reveals its make-up. Speaking in a political sense it is the rag tag and bob tail of society. Their appearance is in general that of roaming bandits. Its ranks contain primarily petty bourgeois elements to a large extent recruited from the declassed section, those impoverished by the inflation and the crises. The slum proletariat which go to make up part of its ranks is generally recruited from those who as a regular part of their lives are down on the lowest step of the social ladder, and the shady elements. But it recruits also other more or less demoralized proletarian elements. For example in Germany of today there are about two to three million workers who have been unemployed so long that they have lost practically all semblance of unemployment insurance. A frightful demoralization results. These elements divide mainly between the C. P. and the Fascists, the most conscious going to the former.

Fascist-Stahlhelm Unity Aims at Working Class Destruction

A goodly portion of these elements are attracted by the socialistically colored demagogy of the Fascist movement. However as it nears the pinnacle of power the movement changes its program and its whole structure likewise undergoes a change. The petty bourgeois elements begin to recede toward the background and the movement assumes its real role of championing and defending the big bourgeoisie—the last defenders of the capitalist system. This change is already in the making in Germany.

The Stahlhelm on the other hand makes quite a different impression, not less reactionary but still different. They represent the old Prussian soldier type. They love to cover themselves with the decorations of war days, especially the iron cross. When they meet they click their heels and salute in the stiffest military fashion. In composition the Stahlhelm is made up of bourgeoisie, petty bourgeoisie of the more solid layers especially from the rural towns, and even workers from the Prussian landed estates. At its inception it was for the republic and democratic. Today its ideology is reactionary. In the recent elections it had a common ticket with the German nationalists. Jointly they express the political organization of the von Papen-Hugenburg-Seldte section of the Harzburg united front. The differentiation between this section and its bigger and much more turbulently violent half-brother, the Nazi, is still to come. And it may have some serious reverberations.

The common goal of destruction of the working class movement found them easily united. To the reactionary bourgeoisie the brown hordes promised something which it had never enjoyed before—complete security against strikes. They embody its hopes of doing away with the hated and troublesome working class demands. Their ravaging fury, worked up on high and heavy promises, is therefore unleashed first of all and most directly against the Communists. But the aim is much broader, as the many repressions against the social democrats show, yes, even going beyond to any section suspected of being allies to the working class parties. The broad aim is, of course, necessary if the Fascists are to realize their hope of conquest. But within it, also the the dangers of complications for the reactionary camp. Because of this it will surely yet have to make its retreats. Thus in more ways than one are the possibilities of difficulties in the Fascist path apt to become breathing spells for the proletariat, openings under the heavy attacks which it can utilize the better to gather its forces.

Workers Possess Remarkable Collectivity and Organizational Discipline

Meanwhile this heavy pall hangs over the working class, weighing upon it like an alp. The burden is carried in silence. But it is a grim silence foreshadowing serious events. It is something unnatural to witness German workers looking at a swaggering Fascist storm troop with eyes which express recognition of the enemy and then speaking their thoughts to one another in a careful whisper not destined for outside ears. No semblance of freedom of expression exists. For a long time all working class meetings and demonstration of any kind are totally prohibited. The same is the fate of the press, social democratic practically as well as the Communist. The Left Oppositon organ **Die Permanente Revolution** has been banned until the end of May.

There have been no mass demonstrations in Berlin since the mighty Reichsbanner meeting in the Lustgarten on Sunday, February 19. It was estimated well above 150,000. The Reichsbanner troops formed a solid gigantic square in the center. But they listened to their just re-elected leader Karl Holtermann proclaim the empty phrase previously coined by the Stalinist Remmele: "We come after Hitler". Then the demonstration dispersed. Such an event leaves a distinct impression of gigantic forces at hand but not being utilized.

On February 27, the social democrats of Berlin had engaged the "Sportpalast" for a commemoration of the fiftieth year of the death of Karl Marx. The commemoration speech was made by Friedrich Stampfer, the editor in chief of the Vorwaerts. But he had no more than commenced saying: "To be a Marxist requires a great knowledge, whereas to be an anti-Marxist one does not need to know anything", than the police found sufficient grounds to call a halt. The meeting was broken up. Moreover, it is now reported as a common opinion in capitalist political circles that when the newly elected Reichstag opens in the Potsdammer garrison church there will be admission for neither Communist nor social democratic deputies.

In Germany the highly developed technology has been accompanied with a thoroughgoing industrial discipline. In turn this has produced deep-rooted working class organizations and possessed the workers with a remarkable quality of collectivity and organizational discipline. The highly socialized production has produced in the German working masses its high degree of social consciousness and of class consciousnes as an inevitable result of a social system based upon class divisions. The German workers live practically the whole of their social lives within workers' organizations, in the political, economic and social spheres. They have their own workers political parties, trade unions, consumers co-operatives, workers sports organizations (Friends of nature, football, anglers, etc.) , workers freethinker associations, esperanto or chess players clubs; they come together in the huge people's houses existing in every city, in workers' movies and theatres and so forth. The German workers are born into organizational institutions and mostly receive their burial from them also. Broadly speaking, that is, excluding the C. P. and its auxiliaries, all these organizations are distinctly of a social democratic ideology and under social democratic leadership. As usual the Socialist party bureaucracy permits a wide latitude of opinion within these organzations, so long as its own direction and control is not seriously threatened.

(To be continued)

—ARNE SWABECK.

World Economic Situation Today

How It Stands Today and Its Next Perspectives

(Continued from last issue)

The factors which presided at the birth of the crisis may be resumed as follows: overproduction, the excessively high level of prices, and the inflation of credit. When production will be reduced to the point where it does not suffice any more even for the reduced consumption, so that the world stocks of raw materials begin to be drawn on; when prices will be reduced to the point where many producers will have to go out of production, on the one hand, while a certain amount of buying is encouraged by the low level on the other; and when the deflation of credit and the release of liquid capital has lowered the basic level of interest rates to the point where hungry capitalists will be more and more tempted by speculative affairs, then we have the economic framework within which a recovery can take place, provided the bourgeoisie is politically in positon to assert its interests as against the other classes of society.

But, if these economic and political conditions render an upturn possible, they are not sufficient of themselves to produce such an upturn. For this, the capitalists must find the means of re-establishing their profits and restoring the circulation of capital, for under capitalism the making of profits and their realization in the accumulation of capital determine economic activity or inactivity. Under the conditions of crisis, profit is to be found in unblocking the circulation of capital by reducing production, and in the super-exploitation of the proletariat by all methods—wage cuts, higher hours, speeding up. It is only when the capitalist again begins to find his profit in increasing production that he recovery in industrial and commercial activity begins again.

Now capitalist statistics are not kept with a view to facilitating Marxian economic research. The data are insufficient for even an approximate estimate of the rate of surplus value, and even the rate of profit can be estimated only on the basis of very incomplete and delayed data. The law of uneven development plays an important role there—the figures for France, for instance, are in general published much later than those of other large countries, while America has no official statistics at all on unemployment. Different figures arrive with different delays, ranging from 24 hours to two months, and often are not comparable among themselves.

For these reasons we have to be guided by rather summary and incomplete indications. But they will suffice to give us the broad lines of the present world developments.

Perspective for Coming Period

As early as August of last year, in studying these questions at Prinkipo with comrade Trotsky, we called the attention of our comrades to the following facts: that the prices of commodities, after an unprecedented decline, had begun to rise; that industrial production in certain lines, such as steel, was no longer sufficient even to maintain fixed capital; that interest rates had reached such a low point that speculation was beginning to take hold of the markets, and that in general the most important preconditions for an ultimate recovery were beginning to be outlined.

This perspective was reinforced by the beginning of the wave of workers' resistance in England, later in Germany, where it was accompanied by a beginning of re-employment of laid-off workers.

Comrade Trotsky had proven as far back as the Third Congress of the C. I. in 1921, in an economic situation which in certain ways resembled the present one, that a recovery under certain conditions would result in reinforcing the militancy and aggressiveness of the workers. He polemicized against those who believed that the perspectives of working class action depended on the uninterrupted intensification of the crisis, and that a recovery would weaken the fighting spirit of the proletariat. He showed that while, in fact, a long period of capitalist stabilization, such as that before the war, there could no longer be a question of such a stabilization within the general crisis of capitalism, but rather only of a partial and temporary recovery. As all well know, the events fully confirmed him. In America, for instance, the great railway shop strike of 1922 came after the turn in the crisis toward recovery was no longer doubtful.

We have continued to study the later developments of the situation. In September and in October, we reported that the first uncertain signs of an ultimate recovery, in the fluid and intangible realm of stock exchange speculation and in the commodities markets, had been consolidated for the time being without making further headway, between the high points of August and the lows of June, but that only a little progress could be seen in the tangible domains of industrial production and in trade.

There is nothing surprising in this. We must not expect the recovery to be uniform and homogeneous, any more than the crisis which preceded it or the period of stabilization before that. The law of uneven development is fully manifested here: uneven development as among various countries, and as among different branches of economic life. In America, for instance, in 1929, industrial production began to fall after the month of June, but the solemn warning of the world crash was given only by the break on the New York Stock Exchange in October. On the other hand, industrial production in France continued to increase until the month of June, 1930. We must therefore expect still more striking disparities, even apparent contradictions, in the course of the development of the world crisis.

What conclusions do we then draw from an examination of the available statistics?

1. For several months now, the world crisis, instead of continuing to grow sharper, seems to have stabilized itself at a level fairly close to the lowest point attained so far.

2. The political and economic pre-conditions for a recovery exist. It is therefore not excluded that the present temporary breathing-spell may develop to the point of becoming a real recovery, that is, the crisis may then be transformed into a depression.

3. On the other hand, in view of the intensity of the crisis, the political as well as the economic convulsions in the world capitalist system (rise of Hitler), and the progress of internal contradictions within the general crisis of post-war capitalism, it is unlikely that such a recovery could be followed by a prolonged period of stabilization, not to speak of prosperity. On the contrary, it is rather probable that the unsolved and unsolvable contradictions will be aggravated by the efforts of each country to draw the maximum of profit from the recovery, under conditions where the bourgeois slogan of "international collaboration" has become more ridiculous and lying than ever.

4. The class struggle could in all probability take on even greater sharpness under such conditions, and the radicalization of the masses, based on a stronger strategic situation for the worker whose labor would again be in demand, could be extended, beginning with more effective resistance in the field of economic struggles, up to the most advanced political demands.

The Reformist Theory and the Stalinists

That the reformists should vacillate, between the hope of a near future of social peace and the fear that the crisis will never finish, that is only to be expected. Their theoreticians have deformed the Marxian analysis of the crisis to the point of assimilating it to the "American" doctrine that the capitalist, in his own well-understood self-interest, should pay higher wages in order to increase the purchasing power of the workers. That is the logical consequence of the theory of social collaboration, in which the worker disappears as the creator of surplus value and appears as a simple consumer. Under these conditions, according to the social democrats, if the capitalist out of sheer meanness continues to reduce wages instead of increasing them during the crisis, evidently will never end.

But that the official Comunist parties should use such a line of reasoning, when they say that only a bourgeois optimist can foresee the "end of the crisis", because the reductions in wages continue the crisis, that is a cause for surprise. For obviously the reductions in wages serve to re-establish the profit of the capitalist, which is the moving power of economy under a capitalist regime.

For this reason Varga, in the **Inprecorr**, is compelled, first to deny obstinately that there are any symptoms of an ultimate recovery, second to admit the existence of a "stagnation at approximately the present level", of "the ultimate attainment of the bottom of the crisis", of the "bottom of the crisis" itself.

All this is the purest "third period", this time rebaptised "end of the partial stabilization of capitalism" Already! after three and a half years of crisis it seems fair enough to say that the partial stabilization is over. There is nothing to be surprised at therefore in the fact that the theoreticians of the C. P. of Germany, in their monthly paper **Die International**, have begun to speak of a "fourth period". For this they were soundly scolded in an issue of the **Inprecorr** late last year as being "in appearance very radical, but having for its actual result a weakening of the work of the Communist parties". And the "third period", then, not to speak of the "end of capitalist stabilization"? The Stalinists prefer to keep to the fallacious perspectives of the radicalization of the masses through the crisis without taking into account the historical experience and even that of the recent past.

But it is not only a question of criticizing; we must prepare ourselves, theoretically and practically, to take our place in the revival of the militant spirit of the working class, foreseeing as clearly as possible the turns in the objective situation, and adapting our strategy and our tactics to it. The slogans for which the International Left Opposition has been struggling for years—workers' control of production, credits and economic collaboration with the Soviet Union, the Soviet United States of Europe—seen in these perspectives, acquire the greatest importance for the revolutionary movement of the world proletariat.

—B. J. FIELD.

Trotsky's masterly analysis "The Only Road" has been all set up and is ready to go to press. We have been unduly detained by lack of funds. Send funds and donations to help us publish this work immediately.

Some Fundamental Aspects of the Present Crisis in Germany

In the last issue of **Die Weltbuehne** (the radical bourgeois Berlin periodical) to reach here, Hellmuth von Gerlach, the well-known pacifist, who has since been reported under arrest and subject to the tortures of the Fascist police, quotes the following conversation between a Nazi leader and a prominent French journalist:

Nazi: "We know quite well that Germany needs fifteen years to come to power again economically and fifteen more in order to be in shape as a military power."

Frenchman: "But the corridor?"

Nazi: "The question of the corridor can be solved of itself, without war. It wont take long before Russia cracks. Then we leave the Poles the Ukraine as far as Odessa and we, in turn, get the Corridor and Danzig". (**Weltbuehne**, February 28.)

This solution of the Nazi chieftain is, of course, rather over-simplified. In their calculations, the German reactionaries, intoxicated with their recent and rather easy successes, are counting without their host—the international working class. The latter on the other hand has not as yet, by far, said its last word. But it is necessary to face the situation clearly, to look eye to eye with the facts. And the facts point to a shifting of the specific gravity of the world political situation from Germany where world reaction has been able to put a feather into its cap, to Soviet Russia, which is from all indications, the next butt of its attack. The defense of the Soviet Union as the fortress of the world revolution stands first on the order of the day for the international proletarian movement. A genuine defense of the world revolution and its Soviet fortress requires a recounting and an evaluation of the set-back already suffered in Germany.

The Warning of the Opposition

When the International Left Opposition first sounded the alarm over the Hitler danger and raised the implications it had for the USSR and the progress of the world revolution, the Stalinists accused us of a counter-revolutionary design to draw the attentions of the workers away from the threat of Japanese invasion in the East. In doing this, the shining lights of bureaucratic Centrism only exposed their own lack of foresight, their own poverty of fundamental international perspective and orientation. Blinded by their "practicality", by their empiricism, these pretenders to Communist leadership only see a danger when they come up square against it. So it has been with the Hitler danger, to which they are only now, two years after the Bolshevik-Leninists warned against it, waking up.

The Left Opposition foresaw the danger in its time thanks to its internationalist orientation, the guiding line for which is furnished by the Marxist conception of the permanent revolution. Only that conception, viewing the class struggle as an international phenomenon and its revolutionary solution as a solution to be realized decisively only on a world scale, provides the foresight that is necessary in coping with the problems posed for the Communists in the present epoch. The Stalinist conception of "socialism in one country", repudiating, as it does, the fundamental ideas of Marxism, of necessity leads to blind groping, to the bungling of the strategical problems posed, to the perpetration of crimes against the revolution, to the heaping up of defeats for the proletariat.

The breath-taking events of the last few weeks and months in Germany are a case in point. The Fascist reaction is almost without obstruction consolidating its power and preparing for its next steps in the East. These blows are struck in the face not of an unorganized proletariat, but of the best organized working class in the whole capitalist world. Germany possesses not only the strongest social democracy in the world, but the strongest Communist party—outside of the USSR—as well. In accounting for the events that have transpired, in analyzing the set-back that has been suffered, it is therefore indispensible and of the greatest import to probe the basic policies of these two tremendous forces, the policies which failed to stand the test and the leaderships that failed to stand the test. The basic policies of the social democracy have long been those of treachery to the working class and the betrayal they achieved in helping Hitler to power was all the less surprising because it merely complemented their treacheries of 1914 and 1918. The key to a successful resistance of the Fascist danger naturally rested with the Communists and their ability to win the majority of the working class from the social democrats and for revolutionary struggle. That involved, above all, the highly important and concrete question of the application of the Leninist united front tactic. But in evaluating the events, it is once more necessary to give a complete characterization of the social democracy, especially insofar as it has a bearing also upon an understanding of the Stalinist role in the situation.

The German social democracy started out on its road of working class betrayal by substituting for the Marxian perspective of the permanent revolution, the perspective of national socialist reformism.

"The conception of the permanent revolution was set up by the great Communists of the middle of the XIX century, by Marx and his adherents, in opposition to that democratic ideology which, as is known, presumed that all questions should be settled peacefully, in a reformist or evolutionary way, by the erection of the 'rational' or democratic state. Marx regarded the bourgeois revolution of '48 as the direct introduction to the proletarian revolution. Marx 'erred'. Yet his error has a factual and not a methodological character. The revolution of 1848 did not turn into the socialist revolution. But that is just why it also did not achieve democracy. As to the German revolution of 1918: it is a proletarian revolution decapitated by the social democracy; more correctly, it is the bourgeois **counter-revolution**, which is compelled to preserve pseudo-democratic forms after the victory of the proletariat."—(Trotsky.)

The petty bourgeois character of the social democratic bureaucracy that grew up before the war, turning aside from the revolutionary outlook of the great founders, directed the movement into the quagmire of "realistic" and "practical" reforms. The course of the petty bourgeois leadership led to the capitulation to the monarchy in August 1914. The fulfillment of the petty bourgeois ideal, after the collapse of the monarchy in 1918, involved the decapitation of the proletarian revolution, the counter-revolutionary obstruction of the permanent course of the revolution and was crowned by the setting up of the "democratic" Weimar republic. That only the proletarian dictatorship can complete the democratic revolution, that the Weimar type of republic can only head off this course, that it is impotent in preventing the re-entrenchment of the reaction—all this has been amply proved by the development of events culminating in the coming to power of the Fascists. The treacherous role of the social democracy, begining with the capitulation to the Hohenzollerns in 1914, proceeding through the betrayal of the revolution of 1918 and degenerating into the lowest depths with the policy of the "lesser evil" paved the road for the Fascist victory in 1933. That is an established fact. The rejection of the concept of the permanent revolution, the petty bourgeois ideal of national socialist reformism, has worked, in the last analysis, as a trap for the social democracy itself and has served to aid the growth and the seizure of power by the Fascists, whose purpose it is to liquidate the working class movement of Germany built up in the course of more than half a century.

The responsibility of the Stalinists, for years undisputed in the leadership of the Bolshevik party and the Communist International which arose in the struggle against the social democracy and its treachery, assumes thereby all the greater significance. The whole past of the social democracy anticipated **their** role in the Hitler disaster. But why did not the **Communist** party, the German section of the Bolshevik International prove equal to the task? This is the paramount question that is posed by the German events. This is the question upon the answer to which depends the successful preparation for the tasks that face us at present. Without the correct answer to this question it will be impossible to make up for lost time, to repair the losses already suffered and to arm for **future** action.

—SAM GORDON.

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(Another article on this question will follow in the next issue.)

Left Wing Criticizes Provisions of New Illinois Mine Contract

(Continued from page 1)

equally as true that a union of the working class will **ALWAYS** face similar conditions and the united front of the bosses, the state and the labor fakers. The question is: will the two year contract, with no essential difference from the Lewis contract, strengthen or weaken the PMA in the struggle against the operators, the state and the Lewis machine? Our opinion is that the present contract will weaken rather than strengthen the union in the struggle. This is the opinion of the Left wing in the PMA.

The Right Wing Wants "Peace"

The unions came into existence through mass pressure and mass struggles and can only grow through such struggles. The growing Right wing in the union want less mass struggles and long contracts and the respect of the "best people" in the mining towns. The Right wing want "peace", but the Left wing knows that you can only have "peace" if you are strong enough to maintain the union and its conditions. It is the Left wing and the progressives who are carrying on the dangerous work in Franklin county, men whom the Stalinists call traitors.

We may ask the question: How much work will the PMA miners obtain this summer? Very little. In fact, a strike struggle for a better contract, rallying the UMWA miners throughout the nation behind this program will cut the ground from underneath the Lewis control and strengthen the PMA. The PMA is far stronger today than it was when first organized and a far greater influence. It has an excelent chances of winning a better contract after such a fight than by compromising with no gains, before a fight. With such a strike struggle carried on during the coming period, on a national scale, the PMA union would be stronger in the fall than it is now. It is very doubtful if the PMA could be smashed in such a short period. Rather, the PMA would gain throughout the country. The miners are asked to sign a contract, not **after a defeated strike,** when compromise must be necessary, but **before a strike,** and when the summer slack period is approaching and most of the mines will be shut down. Trade union leaders must know how to compromise, but in America we need little warning along this line except to the hot headed ultra-Lefts. Above all we do not want compromise before a struggle, before the battle and when we have grown stronger.

—HUGO OEHLER.

Chicago R.R. Conference

The Association of Railway Executives concluded a meeting at the Drake Hotel in Chicago that was attended by executives of fifty nine roads. They held a one-day closed session and elected R. V. Fletcher as general counsel of the association. None of the members would comment on the procedings or the plans but the **Chicago Tribune** says the following, "It was understood that four major issues dominated the discussions; plans of the Democratic administration for railroad relief; consolidations, mergers, and readjustments in the industry; reduction of passenger rates; revision of the wage scales."

What more need be told to the working class? They want government help for their bankrupt industries, mergers and reduced passenger rates to meet modern bus and air transportation and more wage cuts for the workers. This is the railway executives' method of reorganizing to find a way out of the crisis. It is the same method of reorganization used by the other exploiters.

The executives of the fifty-nine roads realize that the necessity of unity in fighting the depression so that they can shift the burden on the working class and small stock holders The 21 crafts of the railway industry have not yet realized this need on their part. The workers in every terminal must establish railroad councils of representatives of the 21 crafts. They must follow the lead of the Minneapolis Railroad Council to fight the plans of the railroads.