

Bordiga Tells of Italian Workers' Struggle

(Special to the DAILY WORKER)

MOSCOW, July 9 (By Mail).—The twenty-third session of the Fifth Congress of the Comintern listened to reports on Fascism. One was delivered by Bordiga of Italy and the other by Freimuth of Germany. They showed that international Fascism, while presenting national differences, is still one of the most valuable weapons of the capitalist class in its struggle to beat back the rising revolution. For the workers it is of the utmost importance to find the methods by which Fascism can be met and overcome.

Bordiga said:
I presented to the Fourth Congress a report on the question of Fascism dealing with a very decisive period of the history of Fascism in Italy; that is to say, with the conquest of power by Mussolini. I must deal now with another phase of Fascist development which is connected, as you know, with the Matteotti affair.

Mentions Matteotti.
At this juncture it is of particular interest to study this important social and political phenomenon.

I am, of course, not going to repeat what I said about Fascism in my first report from the historical point of view. I will merely remind you of the fundamental criticism in connection with the phenomena now before us and with which I dealt in my first report.

It has been said that the development of the governmental crisis in Italy represented Fascism as the political negation of the period during which the liberal and democratic bourgeoisie of the left was in power in Italy. According to this point of view, Fascism came as a reaction against the concession post-war policy of Giolitti, etc. We think, on the contrary, that there is a dialectic connection between the two periods, and that the attitude which the Italian bourgeoisie adopted at first during the crisis which convulsed the state after the war was paving the way for Fascism.

Fascism From Farms.

Fascism began in the agricultural district. This is a characteristic fact. The attack on the positions of the red proletariat began in Italy in the agricultural districts. But if it is true that Fascism began its actions in the non-industrial districts, we must not imagine that it is purely a movement in the interests of the agrarian bourgeoisie and of the big land owners. On the contrary, it is a movement which represents also the interests of the big industrial, financial and commercial bourgeoisie. It is an attempt at counter revolutionary unity of all the forces of the bourgeoisie. At the first glance, Fascism by its outward aspect does not seem to be an organization of the important social classes which we have just named. It rather appears as a movement of the middle classes, of war veterans, of bourgeois intellectuals and of all other sections which the proletariat could not bring over to its side.

Fascism is not a revolutionary movement. It is rather a movement for the preservation of what exists already, and it does not present us with a new program. It merely brings forward a new factor which was entirely lacking in the old parties, a formidable fighting organization, both political and military.

Anti-Proletarian.

What are the relations between Fascism and the proletariat?

Its name alone shows that it is an anti-socialist and therefore an anti-proletarian movement. From beginning to end it appears as the destroyer of even the smallest conquests of the working class. But even if Fascism is not the old extreme right reaction with its concomitant of martial law, terror, emergency legislation, and official prohibition of red and revolutionary organizations, it is something more than that. It is a more modern, cunning movement which endeavors at the same time to do propaganda among the masses, and even adopts the principles of trade union organization. It endeavors to form economic workers' organizations. It is self-evident that we cannot compare these trade union organizations with the red trade unions. But we must admit that this is a very strong theoretical argument against trade unions and even against revolutionary trade unionism, which maintains that the most effective weapon for the proletarian struggle is economic organization. Facts have shown us that this weapon can be very well used for counter-revolutionary purposes.

"Class Co-operation."

In fact, Fascism has merely adopted, but in a new form, the old platform of left bourgeois parties and of the social democrats, namely, class co-operation. Fascism exploits also in the same fashion national and patriotic ideology.

Thereupon Bordiga dealt with the facts which characterized the Fascist conquest of power. We did not have armed action, but a mobilization of

Zinoviev Discusses Problems and Types of Workers' Government

Editor's Note.—In this section of his report to the Fifth World Congress, Gregory Zinoviev, chairman of the Communist International, takes up the question of the problems and types of Workers' Governments as follows:

CHAPTER IX. Problem of Workers' Government. Types of "Workers' Governments."

THE main point is that in the resolution is the following passage: There are various labor party governments as the one in power in England now, but not all are proletarian governments. For D'Arragona, every workers' government is good. For Radek, for Brandler, for many comrades in Czechoslovakia, I feel it is the same. Although they realize that it is not the dictatorship of the proletariat.

We have now collected some experience and must say frankly that the essence of the slogan for us is: a method of agitation and of organizing the masses. We must, of course, take advantage of the situation created by the existence of a labor government, like that of MacDonald's. The workers' government is for us the most powerful and popular formula for the dictatorship of the proletariat. The workers and peasants perform the deed and then understand it. We must adopt the popular formula as we did in the Russian Revolution. This is no small question, it is not a question of mere style, but a question whether we are a party which can touch the peasants and soldiers where they are most receptive, a party which is not a sect but a mass party as the Bolsheviks were. Every bourgeois government is at the same time a capitalist government, but not every workers' government is a real proletarian government, i. e. a revolutionary weapon of proletarian power. The Communist International must take account of the following possibilities:

1. A liberal labor government. Such a government existed in Australia; such a government may soon arise in England in the near future.
2. A social democratic workers' government (Germany).
3. A workers' and peasants' government. Such a possibility exists in the Balkans, Czechoslovakia, etc.
4. A workers' government with Communist participation.
5. A genuine proletarian workers' government, which can be realized in its pure form only by the Communist Party.

I know many comrades, nevertheless, have a great objection to the tactics of the united front as such. I can offer these comrades only one comfort. I say to them that the united front and the workers' government are only instruments for the mobilization and organization of the working masses. If that does not please them I propose a compromise. Win the support of the majority of the working class in your country, and we will immediately absolve you from the use of these instruments (laughter). If you have a majority of the most important strata of the proletariat, certainly you may allow yourself to be less strict in the use of these tactics. But, in the most im-

Fascism which threatened with a revolutionary seizure of power, and a sort of defensive mobilization by the state which even declared martial law at a certain moment. But this resistance did not materialize. Armed action did not take place; we have a compromise instead of it.

We absolutely denied that there is a question of revolution, as Fascism maintains. The Fascists say we can make this revolution whenever we like. But revolution is not a thing which can be done at will; neither is it at the disposal even of the boldest of political leaders, for even he cannot make events happen whenever he wills it.

Only Shift of Leaders.

Therefore, no revolution took place. There was a change in the leadership of the bourgeois class, but this change does not represent a change of the program of the Italian bourgeoisie neither from the economic and social nor from the home policy point of view.

It is true that there were persecutions against Communists, but the legal procedure was the ordinary procedure of the land and no emergency legislation was introduced. The old laws are very democratic and liberal, and this enabled us to come out of the trial with flying colors. This does not mean that there were no serious persecutions against the proletariat, but what I want to say is that in this purely political lawsuit, which was supposed to deal a death blow to the revolutionary general staff, the new situation created by Fascism did not make any difference.

Bordiga reviewed the economic situation in Italy under the Fascist regime and showed that in reality it has become worse, for today the lira is lower than it ever was before. Mussolini's contention is that it could have fallen lower still if it had not been for Fascism, an utterly worthless argument.

Middle-Class Awakening.

The Fascist government has not kept its promises, and there is great disillusionment in the class on whose support Fascism depended, namely,

American Delegation Endorses Zinoviev Report

RESOLUTION ON THE REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL.

Submitted by the American Delegation.

THE American Delegation endorses the report of the Executive Committee of the Third International as presented by Comrade Zinoviev. The American Delegation wishes to lay particular stress on its agreement with the policies of the Communist International as regards the following questions:

1. The United Front has proved to be a powerful weapon in the hands of the various Communist Parties, drawing the masses into the sphere of influence of the Communist Parties, accelerating the struggle of the working class for power, exposing the reactionary character of the social democrats and the official labor union leaders. It has also proven a valuable means of drawing the backward masses of the American working class nearer to the class struggle and to the Communist Party.
2. The American Delegation is in full agreement with the measures and decisions of the Communist International as regards the application of the policy of the United Front in the various countries.
3. The slogan of "Workers' and Farmers' Government" has been of great value in stimulating the class spirit and the will to power among the working masses. We emphasize that only the revolutionary use of the slogan of Workers' and Farmers' Gov-

ernment as opposed to the slogan of a liberal labor government or "coalition" government; and as a symbol of the proletarian dictatorship will prove a weapon in the class struggle for power.

portant countries the fact is that we have not yet this majority. We must understand how to approach the masses as they are, to win them over, to lead them on the way to bolshevism, and then be able to modify these tactics.

We Must Conform to Concrete Situation.

It is not necessary to mould all the parties according to the same pattern. On the contrary, we must put the question quite concretely, in accordance with the conditions prevailing in the particular country. The Russian proverb says: "Don't spoil a barrel of honey with a spoonful of tar." Radek and other theoreticians of the "right" insist on pouring a spoonful of opportunistic tar into the barrel of good united-front honey. We throw away the tar, and preserve the good honey of the united-front tactics and share it out in proper proportion to each country.

I have read that in Czechoslovakia, Hula and other comrades are much disturbed because we now say everywhere there must be a united front from below, and that we will not modify this according to circumstances in each country. Neurath was quite right in his article against Hula, in which he said that the executive never proposed this. The E. C. never proposed this. We said that in Germany conditions were so ripe that we must now call for unity from below.

the middle class.

I want to deal now with the methods of the Fascist government towards the real proletariat. I have just told you that our trial showed the inefficiency of the official defensive legal means of the Fascist state. But the latter used many other methods against the proletariat, and these methods are very serious for us, for our comrades have been charged as common criminals for actions which were in reality sanguinary encounters between the Fascists and the proletariat, especially when the latter was represented by Communists.

Fascists enjoy complete immunity even if there is overwhelming evidence against them. But terrible sentences are passed on workers who dared to defend themselves against fascist attacks. There is an amnesty which acquits all those who committed crimes for a national purpose. This amnesty is, of course, extended to only fascists, while revolutionaries are kept in prison and recently are sentenced to 10 and 20 years.

Official "Freedom."

We have in fact a government which uses the basest means of persecution against the working class which is driven to despair. Officially, all guarantees are honored. It is allowed to form Communist parties and to organize an anarchist movement, etc., but in reality there is coercion of a very formidable nature. Officially, there is freedom of the press, but the provincial prefects can issue the orders at any time to suspend papers.

As to the trade unions, great pressure is exercised by the fascist government which compelled workers to enter into fascist trade-unions by means of violence. The premises of red trade-unions were destroyed. But fascist activities in industrial organizations were not very successful. The fact is that the Italian proletariat is disorganized, instead of being organized, in fascist trade-unions. Sometimes there are workers' demonstrations, under the official leadership of fascist trade-unions, because they are allowed to take action in defence of their demands.

workers form the iron-class force of the Russian revolution. We consider the criticism made by the German Left against the Right is fully justified, and we endorse the decision of the Communist International supporting the German left majority.

3. Reorganization of the various parties on the basis of shop nuclei is considered by the American delegation of primary importance. All efforts should be made by the various Parties, including the American Party, to reconstruct their organization on this revolutionary basis which alone makes it possible to mobilize the Party and the working class for action under the leadership of the Communist Party.

4. The Trade Union policy of the Communist International is the revolutionary policy of staying with the organized masses in their existing trade unions and prosecuting the daily struggle as Communists, side by side with the backward workers, in order to win them away from their reactionary leaders and to capture the masses of the trade union membership, mobilize it under Communist leadership in the revolutionary struggle for power. We wish to emphasize as strongly as possible our agreement with this policy, especially as expressed in the decision of the Communist International on the question of the German trade unions.

5. The report of the Executive Committee concerning the Russian and the German Communist Parties is unreservedly endorsed by the American Delegation. We support the old guard of the Russian Party which in connection with the broad masses of shop and factory

At the same moment, we said it was obviously quite otherwise in Poland, and also in Austria and other countries. The whole art of the International consists in making concrete use of tactics because the situation is extremely varied in each country. We have never said that all parties should be treated alike. Will Comrade Smeral inform Hula of this.

Finally, and once more: with regard to the workers' and peasants' government, it is nothing more than a method of agitation and propaganda and mobilization of the masses. It is, as I said in 1922, a pseudonym for the dictatorship of the proletariat. Meyer opposed this, as did also Radek, partly. But not a single man of our Russian Party, because for us it was quite clear. Our mistake consisted only in that many did not perceive this. Radek and Company were angry with us not merely about the style but were developing reformist tendencies.

Attention to the Peasantry.

You will remember that I was the originator of the slogan of a workers' and peasants' government at the meeting of the Enlarged Executive. How did that come about? Because of the realization that we were marching forward in a number of countries and were getting pretty near to the problem of the seizure of power. I will not boast that I felt even then that German conditions

were becoming ripe. But we had the sub-conscious feeling that the question of power was progressing fairly rapidly in several countries. And that is why we always tried to tell the various parties: "Pay attention to your peasants!"

Of course, a party which is nowhere near power does not need to do this. It remains merely a party to a section of the toiling masses. But from the moment that the party seriously thinks of power, becomes a mass party, it must consider how the peasants will act, and how the country will react to the government of the party. Therefore our slogan of a workers' and peasants' government expresses the fact that in many countries we are approaching the problem of power. It is the expression for the hegemony of the proletariat in the revolution and the leadership of the party of the proletariat. For us it was in a certain sense a transition from revolutionary propaganda to revolutionary deed.

There is a difference between agitation and propaganda. The best definition of this difference was made by Plekhanov when he was a Marxist: "Propaganda means conveying certain complexes of ideas to a small circle of people; agitation means spreading one main idea among a great mass of people." I think this definition is good enough for us. It is correct. Thus our slogan arose from

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What is the present position of the Mussolini government and what is the general defeat which might lead to interesting developments. The situation can change much more rapidly than we expected before the Matteotti affair took place. It is clear that the position of the fascists will be much more difficult in the future and that the possibility of anti-fascist action has taken place.

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The problem which confronts the revolutionaries as follows: "How are we to use this situation and what is to be our attitude? The Party must insist on the autonomous role which was assigned to it. It must adopt the slogan of the liquidation of all anti-fascist oppositions, and must replace them by an open and direct action of the Communist movement. There are certain facts which have given prominence to our Party. Since the election and since other manifestations and demonstrations of the activity and vitality of our Party, our adversaries have adopted a different language toward us. The fascist press wants to enter into polemics with us almost daily in connection with the Matteotti affair, and this draws public

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