

WORKERS
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UNITE

THE MILITANT

Weekly Organ of the Communist League of America [Opposition]

Published weekly by the Communist League of America (Opposition) at 84 East 10th Street, New York, N. Y. Entered as second class mail matter, November 28, 1928 at the Post Office at New York, N. Y. under the act of March 3, 1879.

VOLUME V, NO. 19 [WHOLE NO. 115]

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, MAY 7, 1932

PRICE 5 CENTS

The S.P. «Lefts» Program

The "militant" socialists have forced their attention upon the American movement by issuing a "Militant Program of the Socialist Party of America". The noise the Militants created in heralding their opposition to the party fathers prompted O'Neal to give them a spanking, issued as a criticism in the New Leader. But like all bureaucrats and upholders of the crimes of the Second International, O'Neal splashed a lot of words, set up a few straw men and evaded the whole issue. No doubt this kind of criticism will spur the "militants" to new conquests. In this advance of the "militants", it is well to point out what their present step means and to lay bare some of the contradictions.

The deepening crisis has caused this stir and forces the more enlightened members of the S. P. to seriously question the crimes of the Second International. For the rank and file of the "militants" it is a step forward, but for those "leaders" who were formerly supporting the Communists it is a big step backward. At least, one will have to give these "leaders" credit for one thing. They have set themselves for a big task. They intend to reform the Second International. Already sections of the more advanced workers in their rank and file are to the left of the "militant" program and are seriously questioning it.

The program is written in the fashion of a crafty lawyer who puts out a feeler, insinuating much, condemning considerably, but accusing no one in particular. The program points out some of the crimes of the Second International, but there is no hint as to who their European bed-fellows are. They seem to be afraid of stepping on somebody's toes. Like good politicians of the capitalist orders these "militants" leaders have left the door open for proper adjustments with the fathers at a later date.

The "militant program" accuses the Second International of crimes beyond class "redemption" and in the same breath advocates reforming this even more tragic than the position of the liberal who admits all the evils of capitalism and then sets out to cure it.

The reformers of the Second International speak of class struggle saying, "The moment this Marxian concept is abandoned, not only in theory but in practice as well, at that moment Socialism loses its significance." We are told this in 1932 by the "militant socialists", but this universal, open abandonment of the class struggle by Second International was heralded unashamedly to the workers of the world in 1914 and ever since then, and it is from then on that "Socialism" has lost "its significance". No group of "Lefts" can blow life into what is already dead. If the "militant socialists" blow anything into the American party we can be sure it will not be Marxism. They can blow into the Socialist Party some radical phrases, and make it more presentable for conditions of crisis. In this stage of increasing class struggle, capitalism must bring into life the American variety of social democracy, so ably preferred by the German "Comrades". If a few sincere but non-Marxian workers "leaders" allow themselves to be utilized together with the conscious fakery so much the better for the development of reformism in America, for the capitalists. The Second International served its master well in Europe. Why not give it a chance in America, even if it needs a little doctoring up for presentation? American capitalism had better make haste while there is time and construct some kind of a storm cellar for the coming class battles. Will the rank and file "militants" of the Socialist Party help in this process, or will they take the next step toward the Communist movement?

The program says, "It is a fundamental principle of Marxism that Socialism cannot be achieved as a result of a series of reforms within the framework of the Capitalist State." When the fathers of the party read this they became frightened, but as soon as they read the next sentence all their fear was quelled, for in its own peculiar way, in the language of the politicians, it lays the basis for the understanding of words and deeds. The next sentence of the program says, "Emancipation of the workers can begin only when the workers capture political power and constitute themselves the ruling class." Just another way of saying, we will shoot the capitalist to death with paper ballots. The question of what to do with the capitalist state (smash it) and what kind of a state will replace it, is left for people to guess as they please. This is no accident on the part of the "militant socialist leaders". These reformers of the reformers in America say the dictatorship of the proletariat is alright in Russia. But in America—that's a different question. Years ago the intense class struggle in Europe forced the "left" Socialist to accept the dictatorship in Russia as

a reality but in the next breath they said it was not for their country. And now, years later, the developing class struggle in America forces the "lefts" to say the same. Already we find some of the rank and filers objecting to these clever formulations, this lip service to revolution and action for reformism. They demand another step.

The program says, "At the same time, we set ourselves firmly against dictatorship in this country as long as democratic means of transition to a socialist society are still available." We will vote the capitalists out of power, and these defeated capitalists will give us the key to every mine, mill and factory; and the next day they will report to work in overalls." So say the "militants", who are going to use the democratic means of transition to socialism. What a mess. Shapiro, Coleman, Sinclair and Blanchard and their like. What kind of a game do you call this? They may be able to convince some followers that they "don't know any better" but we know them from before.

Every one remembers the last part of the Communist Manifesto and the last sentence. It is well to know the last words of the "militant socialist" program: "We must create and promote a spirit of intelligent hopefulness. Such an opportunity as is at hand for all of us to hasten the emancipation of the working class of America may not come again for generations. We call for action. Let us close ranks and go forward to reformism in our time." This gem of Socialism has two mistakes: ordinary and extraordinary. These reformers tell their followers that if they don't get busy and help them reform the reformers at once we may not have another chance for generations. We can settle this problem by informing the "militant socialists" that they will not reform the Second International in this generation and in the next generation there will be no need because the Second International will only be a terrible memory for the victorious world proletariat. —H. O.

Bourgeois Left Gains in French Elections

The first ballot of the French elections, last Sunday, although not decisive in its results, indicates a definite trend toward the bourgeois Left in the country. The die-hard policies of Andre Tardieu and his Right bloc, in control at the present time, seem to have driven broad layers of the French intermediate classes to the side of the moderate bourgeois parties. The Radical-Socialists under the leadership of the pan-European "pacifist" Edouard Herriot have already received 63 seats, the largest bloc of votes for any of the parties participating. The Left Republicans of Premier Tardieu received 37 seats, reducing their former strength considerably. The socialists with their 40 mandates also show a substantial gain. Comparisons with the results of the first ballot in the last elections (1928) demonstrate the trend toward the Left very distinctly.

The political line of Tardieu, particularly aggressive in its foreign relations, has opened up French industry and economy to counter-attacks by the other world powers. The high tariffs and the suspicious attitude aroused in the other countries has instigated the fear of "isolation" among the rather formidable middle layers of French society. The Radical-Socialists and the socialists have been for some time campaigning for disarmament and European "cooperation" and have been able to achieve a measure of success in their campaigns.

Growing unemployment and the worsening of the general conditions of the working class, due to the economic crisis which is first unfolding in all seriousness in France, produces still another and very important movement toward the radicalization of the masses. The socialists have, for their part, flirted with the idea of new reforms in their campaigns. That French imperialism, in its present precarious position, with an economic crisis on its hands and with a very wobbly and unrealistic political preponderance in Europe, will not be able to concede in any great measure to the road of social legislation, is a foregone conclusion.

The Radical-Socialists are quite conscious of this and hence the reports of their weariness of an alliance with the socialists. Despite the many protests and declarations of Herriot in the press, to the effect that he will not conclude any bloc with the Tardieu group, we cannot help remaining skeptical. The Radical-Socialists have the interests of the French master class well in mind, and just as in the past, they are apt to be more inclined to draw their conclusions from the eventual logic of French politics than from considerations of temporary gain implied in an alliance with the socialists.

Still, the socialists have been consistently making overtures to the Herriot

DEBATE

I. W. W. Representative
Communist Representative

Is the Program of the I. W. W.
Sufficient for the
Emancipation of the
Working Class?

AFFIRMATIVE:
C. B. Ellis
Editor, Industrial Solidarity

NEGATIVE:
James P. Cannon
Communist League of America
(Opposition)

on
SATURDAY, MAY 14th at 8 P. M.
at the
LABOR TEMPLE
14th Street and Second Avenue
ADMISSION: 20 Cents
Auspices: Joint Arrangement Committee

WEEKLY MILITANT DEPENDS UPON SUCCESS OF \$1,000 DRIVE

It is necessary to put the question bluntly: We depend absolutely on the thousand dollar press fund to keep the weekly MILITANT alive. In raising funds to sustain THE MILITANT and our other publications we have up to the present resorted to "normal" methods—soliciting subscriptions, renewals, etc. The situation of our press at the present time necessitates a much harder drive. We must put on more pressure, we must exert ourselves more and sacrifice more. The life of the weekly MILITANT is at stake.

The Strike in the N. Y. Building Trades

Between 30,000 and 40,000 New York building trades workers went on strike May 1st because of a failure to arrive at a wage scale agreement. The building trades employers association had previously, arbitrarily posted notice of wage cuts ranging from 25% to 30%. However, the immediate cause of the strike was the fact that the elevator manufacturers broke ranks and made a verbal promise to the elevator constructors' union of a day scale of \$11.20 instead of the \$10 announced in notices posted. The press carries statements to the effect that the leaders of the building trades council were otherwise prepared to accept the cut.

On Monday May the 2nd three unions still remained at work, the elevator constructors, the electricians and the iron and steel workers. But the following day the employers decided to make the shut-down complete and disperse with the service of these three union also. The officials of the bricklayers union evidently still expect to gain special favors. Their previous agreement carries a "no strike" clause, and they now insist upon arbitration.

How serious is the building trades union leadership about the strike? It

should be remembered that it is not at all called in protest against the wage cut, but rather in protest against a verbal promise for special consideration for one union. Secondly, the leadership made no preparation whatever for strike. It has made no proposals to solidify the unions of the seven or ten different international to resist the wage slashes. It has made no proposals for strike activities to prepare against possible scabbing. Thirdly, it made no efforts to establish some semblance of concerted action on a national scale. It is perfectly true that building cannot be transferred from one city to another, nevertheless the lack of concerted action has permitted opening wedges to be made in many cities where the building trades workers have already submitted to drastic wage cuts. Lastly, the union leadership was willing to accept the wage cut decree, had the employers remained united.

Conditions of the Unions

It is of course correct for unions to make all possible use of any break in the ranks of the employers; but such can be utilized only provided the organizations are prepared to make a serious fight. Of what there is no indication whatever.

The building trades unions in New York as well as elsewhere, have suffered serious membership losses. In the main, this has been due to the fact that, with the widespread heavy unemployment members have been unable to keep up their dues payments and the unions have failed to maintain closed shop conditions. To resist in a serious manner the present attacks upon the wage scale it is first of all necessary that real efforts should be made to regain what has been lost and to strengthen the unions. That strength, however, can be expressed effectively only when the unions arrive at a basis of unity of action. That such is not yet the case is amply demonstrated by the fact that three unions could remain at work after the strike was called. Moreover, there will be little possibility of preventing strike breaking unless such unity actually exists.

Must Prepare to Resist

It should be clear that the building trades workers by this time that a reduced scale of wages will not at all serve to increase the jobs. On the contrary, it is the continued unemployment and the surplus of hands available which is being utilized by the employers to reduce wages and

thus reduce the standard of living everywhere. To this should be added, that acceptance of one wage cut leaves the road open for the employers to press for more.

No matter how much the building trades unions have weakened from their own inherent craft weakness, and from their corrupt leadership, they are still the best organized section in the country. In other words, this means that it is still up to them to lead the fight against the general wage slashing. The cuts already suffered should therefore become a serious warning that it is now high time to prepare to lead that fight and to prepare to lead it on a national scale.

Militant Builders

Attention Militant Builders! To each comrade and sympathizer, who during the final month of the drive, May 1 to June 1, accounts for \$15 subs or donations to any of our papers we will give a free copy of Volume 1 of comrade Trotsky's History of the Russian Revolution. To each comrade who falls short of \$15 but reaches \$10, we will give a free copy of WHAT NEXT by comrade Trotsky. This is an opportunity no comrade can afford to overlook.

To the comrade who stands highest in the staff of Militant Builders at the close of the entire drive we will give free a bound volume of The Militant. To the comrade who stands second we will give a free copy of The Problems of the Chinese Revolution.

The record of the builders for the entire drive to date with the final month listed in parenthesis, is as follows:

- C. Hedlund, (6)—11; V. Dunne, (6)—9; L. Roseland, (3 1-2)—5; M. Dunne, (3)—8; L. Nagy, (2 1-2)—3; C. Furse, (2 1-2)—3; L. Basky, (1 1-2)—5; R. Sacharow, (1)—4; R. Ruskin, (1)—2; W. Curran, (1)—2; S. Zalmanoff, (1)—1; C. Cowan, (1)—5; F. Schulman, (1)—1; F. Barach, (1)—4; C. Johnson, (1)—2; S. Lassin, (1)—1; N. Berman (1)—1; G. Herman, (1); J. Ross, (1); C. Skoglund, 3; O. Coover, 2; J. Carr, 2; F. Cheloff, 2; G. Ray, 2; M. Gottlieb, 1; M. Koehler, 1; W. Wynne, 1; J. Carter, 1; H. Capellis, 1; W. Herman, 1; A. Swaback, 1; A. Glotzer, 1; L. Logan, 1; Kaldis, 1; M. Stirling, 1.

Stalinist - Lovestone Unity Negotiations

We have received the following two letters:

I.

Dear Comrades:
The unity negotiations with Lovestone have been going on for some time. Everything has been conducted in the quietest through secret personal conferences—and nothing has been put in writing on the party side. This precaution was explained to me as a measure "to prevent Lovestone from having anything to show which cannot be denied if the negotiations fall." My personal opinion, however, is that they will agree to an agreement. You may not will come with me, but these are my reasons.

I do know that several meetings between them have taken place. I understand that the C. I. representative also talked to Lovestone, but am not absolutely sure of this. The negotiations hinge at present on the Brandler question. The C. E. C. negotiators demanded a statement repudiating Brandler as the main condition for unity. They also insisted that Lovestone issue such a statement, personally, under his own signature, in addition to the statement by the group. This proposition was taken under advisement for some time.

Then another conference was arranged and Lovestone made the following reply: He will act together with the group and cannot issue any statement in his own name. The group will not issue any statement against Brandler before being readmitted into the party. However, if they were taken back into the party, they would "submit to party discipline" and carry out any instructions given them on any question.

A second demand of the C. E. C. I. was that the Lovestoneites issue a declaration to the effect that "the party line is right and has always been right". To this, Lovestone gave the same reply as above: no statements before the unity—submission to discipline, including declarations they are instructed to make—afterward.

The whole affair is provoking a new division in the upper circles of the informed functionaries. The former Lovestoneites, especially Stachel, are undoubtedly in favor of the unity and will do all they can to help Lovestone find a

graceful way in. The old-time Fosterites who have prospered in late years, are not very enthusiastic about the return of the Lovestone group and the consequent sharpening of "competition" for the places, which for these people have come to mean life itself. But it is hard to get direct expressions from many of them. They are so afraid of getting cross-ways with "the C. I. line" that they wait to make sure what is expected of them before committing themselves.

The most significant result of the unity negotiations with Lovestone is the effect on those who, like myself, were disoriented by the "left turn". It was the expulsion of Lovestone that really arrested our trend toward the Left Opposition. It certainly makes one feel foolish to think about it now and to realize that the readmission of the Lovestoneites will complete the circle and leave us where we started—with nothing to show for our "strategy" but a bad taste in the mouth.

It will also interest you to know that the "Soviet-American military alliance" issue caused some repercussions, even in the apparatus. When that famous editorial came to the Daily Worker office—it was written, I am told, by the C. I. man—it evoked strenuous protest at first from Harry Stannus. He is something of an editor or half-editor there and he began to mutter something about principles, Marxism, etc. You know he has occasional outbursts of this kind. However, he was promptly told that this editorial came from "the top" and he soon subsided.

Yours,
—P.

II.
From a Member of the Lovestone Group
Dear Comrades:

Last Thursday we held a general membership meeting of the group and heard the report on the unity negotiations with the party. Lovestone made the report.

He said the negotiations began several weeks ago soon after the unity mass meeting of our group in the Labor Temple. A few days ago, the reply of the C. I., signed by Kuusinen arrived. It said: "Conditions not acceptable". This was reported to Lovestone. Up to this present he has not replied.

The whole affair is provoking a new division in the upper circles of the informed functionaries. The former Lovestoneites, especially Stachel, are undoubtedly in favor of the unity and will do all they can to help Lovestone find a

Now on the Press! Problems of the Chinese Revolution by LEON TROTSKY

THE 1925-27 CHINESE REVOLUTION WAS ONE OF THE FIRST WORLD-IMPORTANT POLITICAL EVENTS IN WHICH TROTSKY'S OPPOSITION TO THE POLICY OF STALIN MANIFESTED ITSELF IN THE CONCRETE. IN THIS BOOK, QUOTATIONS FROM STALIN'S OWN WRITTEN WORDS AND SPEECHES ARE GIVEN AS WELL AS THOSE OF TROTSKY'S AND HIS SUPPORTERS.

READ THIS HISTORICAL DOCUMENT. COMPARE THE PROPOSED POLICIES OF THAT DAY WITH SUBSEQUENT EVENTS IN THE CHINESE REVOLUTION, THEN DECIDE WHO WAS CORRECT. YOU LEFT OPPOSITION DOES NOT FEAR YOUR JUDGMENT AFTER YOU HAVE SERIOUSLY READ AND STUDIED THIS BOOK.

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IN THE CANADIAN MOVEMENT

The State and the Trade Unions in Canada

(Continued from last issue)

The doctrine of Criminal Conspiracy was accepted in the early colonies of British North America. The historical details are of no great importance here. The arrest of twenty-four striking printers in Toronto in the seventies of the last century, on a charge of conspiracy, brought home to the workers that there was no law in the Dominion corresponding to the English Trade Union Act of 1871. In 1867 the British North America Act assigned the subject of criminal law to the Dominion and property and civil rights to provincial jurisdiction. Consequently, Parliament in 1872 passed a Trade Union Act identical in most respects with the English legislation of the previous year. It was laid down that the purposes of a trade union shall not by reason merely that they are in restraint of trade be deemed to be unlawful so as to render any member of such a union liable to criminal prosecution for conspiracy or otherwise. This is some sort of recognition of freedom of association.

Conspiracy and the Right to Strike
Section 590 of the Criminal Code deals with the right to strike in these terms: "No prosecution shall be maintainable against any person for conspiracy in refusing to work with or for any employer or workman or for doing any act or causing any act to be done for the purpose of a combination unless such act is punishable by statute." Thus the trade unions in Canada are relieved of the incidence of conspiracy to a very limited extent. For, unfortunately for the trade unionist, nearly every important act "done for the purpose of a combination" in the course of a strike is "punishable by statute." The definition of a "trade combination" in the Code restricts it to the workers in the direct employment of the employer involved in the dispute. Picketing is punishable by statute as "watching and besetting." The strike of workers in "public utilities" before invoking the conciliatory provisions of the "Industrial Disputes Investigation Act" is an indictable offence. A sympathetic strike may therefore become a wholesale violation of statutory prohibitions, and on top of that, a seditious conspiracy.

Sympathetic Strike Illegal
The case of the King versus Russell grew out of the Winnipeg General Strike of May 1919. The leaders were arrested and charged with seditious conspiracy. In their defence it was urged that the strike was the lawful act of a trade combination under section 590. But the Manitoba Court of Appeal ruled that: "The immunity provided by section 590 of the (Criminal) Code does not extend to a general 'sympathetic' strike. A conspiracy to bring about a strike involving no trade dispute between the strikers and their employers is illegal. The law in Canada applying thereto is the same as it was in England before the Trades Dispute Act of 1906, to which there is no similar enactment in Canada . . ."

Following the Winnipeg strike, the Trades and Labor Congress proposed that the government amend the definition of a "trade combination" by adding the words of the English Act (1906) "workmen means all persons employed in any trade or industry whether or not in the employment of the employer directly or involved in a trade agreement". The memorandum of the Department of Justice was solemnly stated "as a principle of the common law . . . that a combination of persons to do an unlawful act or to do a lawful act by unlawful means, is criminal, and it is moreover actionable civilly, if there be special damage. Compatible with this rule a sympathetic strike cannot practically be worked."

In other words, trade unions, which, finding the craft form utterly inadequate in the struggle with capitalist consolidations would parallel the latter by industrial unions, federations and alliances, are liable to be charged with conspiracy, if they engage in militant action in support of their members working in a given shop for a given employer. But that is not all. Only a strike growing out of a trade dispute within these narrow limits is "legal". A strike for any political purpose, for the release of class-war prisoners, against the transport of munitions, against intervention in the affairs of the Soviet Union, for social insurance, etc., would all be held illegal conspiracies. As to whether they can be "practically worked", if the Department of Justice lives long enough it will yet learn many things contrary to statutory provision.

The vulnerability of the trade unions to prosecution for illegal conspiracy has become more acute by virtue of the operation of Section 98 of the Criminal Code (its starting point was an order-in-council issued under the War-measures Act).

The section in question reads as follows: "98. Unlawful associations. Any association, organization, society or corporation, whose professed purpose or one of whose purposes is to bring about any governmental, industrial or economic change within Canada by use of force, violence, or physical injury to person or property, or by threats of such injury or which teaches, advocates, advises or defends the use of force, violence, terrorism, or physical injury to person or property, or threats of such injury, in order to accomplish such change, or for any other purpose or which shall by any means prosecute or pursue such purpose

or professed purpose, or shall so teach, advocate, or defend, shall be an unlawful association."

Observe the neighborly conjunction of the words "force" and "terrorism" with "industrial or economic change". Does it require an undue stretch of imagination to conceive that in the electric atmosphere of any considerable "trade dispute" the word "force" may be construed to embrace forms even of slight moral pressure? Thus in his charge to the jury Judge Metcalf in *The King versus Russell* declared that "sometimes it has a deterring effect upon peoples' minds by exposing them to have their motions watched and to encounter black looks". The same judge, commenting on section 132 of the Criminal Code which defines "seditious words" as "words expressing a seditious intention", added that "seditious" is a comprehensive term embracing all those practices whether, by word, deed, or writing which are likely to disturb the tranquility of the State, and to lead ignorant persons to endeavor to subvert the government and the laws of the Empire". The statement of objects not only of a union which subscribes to a socialist aim which as the abolition of the wage-system, but even of an organization which adheres to the conservative slogan "a fair day's pay for a fair day's work" may in the course of any dispute of consequence become "words, deeds, or writings, likely to disturb the tranquility" of the employing class, their police and their courts.

Picketing is a Crime and a Tort
The right to strike, if at all effectual, must carry with it the corollary right to organize the unorganized and persuade them to join the strike. In this connection, Section 501 of the Code makes it an indictable offence for anyone who "wrongfully and without lawful authority, with a view to compel any other person to abstain from doing anything which he has a lawful right to do, or to do anything from which he has a lawful right to abstain . . . (f) besets or watches the house or other place where such other person resides or works or carries on business or happens to be". If, moreover, the "watching and besetting" amounts to a common-law nuisance, it is within the prohibition of the statute (Section 221) as "an unlawful act or omission to discharge a legal duty, which act or omission endangers the lives, health, property or comfort of the public, or by which the public are obstructed in the exercise or enjoyment of any right common to all his Majesty's subjects". **Reynes versus The King**, a decision of the Supreme Court of Canada practically decided that "peaceful picketing without legal sanction, there being no legislation in Canada corresponding to Section 2, subsection of the British Trades Dispute Act of 1906."

As a "common-law nuisance", picketing is subject to be restricted by injunction. In *Canada Paper vs. Brown*, the court declared that "our Criminal Code fully reorganizes the right of a man to carry on his business without interference, let, or hindrance." Occasionally a court has said "Government by injunction is a thing abhorrent to the law of England and of this province." But abhorrent or not, the number of injunctions that issue to break strikes is on the increase.

"Incitement to Breach of Contract"
In the Dominion, the unions are subject to the doctrine of the courts that "for a number of persons to combine together to procure others to break contracts is unlawful, and if such others are induced to break and do break, their contracts, this constitutes an actionable wrong" and the unions will be mulcted in heavy damages". It is cold comfort for the trade union militant that the law on this subject is in a state of "chaotic uncertainty" and that many of the noble and learned law lords have confessed themselves baffled to draw a definite line between "acts whose real purpose is to advance the defendants' interests and acts whose real purpose is to injure the plaintiff in his trade." The British Act of 1906, as an aftermath of the famous *Taff-Vale Judgment*, and as a result of political pressure, provided that "an act done by a person in contemplation of a trade dispute shall not be actionable on the ground only that it induces some other person to break a contract of employment, or that it is an interference with the trade, business, or employment of some other person . . ." A further provision at that time relieved the unions of liability under the doctrine of "civil conspiracy."

The Criminal Code further makes certain statutory breaches of contract indictable offences. The worker connected with the supply of power, light, gas, water, or railroads who "willfully breaks any contract made by him" etc., that is who may desire to strike without the preliminaries of notice, negotiation, or "conciliation" is subject to fine or imprisonment.

III.
This bare outline of the legal vulnerability of the trade unions in the Dominion, should indicate how fatal on their part would be a policy of "neutrality", of indifferently passing by, like the Biblical Levite, on the other side of the road, while the Government is throttling the revolutionary vanguard. The Trades Congress officialdom has on several occasions, under rank and file pressure, made "representations" to the government, for the repeal or "amendment" of the obnoxious sections of the Code. But something more is required than a legal brief, read to a cabinet minister by a bureaucrat deputation. Whatever concessions have been wrung from the capitalist class in the past have been along the way of mass struggle and political action. Unions which abandon their

militant functions for defensive or offensive purposes, invite legal and governmental strangulation at the hands of a capitalist class which in the epoch of imperialism can less than ever afford to yield concessions from sheer "liberalism".

The deep-going economic crisis must work a molecular radicalization in the ranks of "organized labor". The Communists should throw overboard the self-stultifying Stalinist approach to the old unions as "social Fascist". That policy has only succeeded in wreaking the havoc of isolation, at a time when every

point of militant support in the mass organizations was necessary in defence of party legality. At that, despite the defeatist attitude to work in the reactionary unions, dozens of the most conservative locals and Trade Councils adopted the resolution circulated for the repeal of Section 98. The past has showed, proved, that where the charters of the A. F. of L. run up against the iron exigencies which impel the masses to action, such charters have the worth of a treaty guaranteeing Belgian neutrality.

—MAURICE SPECTOR.

Press Drive Under Way--2nd. Week

Although figures for the first week of the final month of the drive are not complete as we go to press (Thursday) we are able, on the basis of preliminary reports, to say that the drive has opened very encouragingly with \$100.00 towards our goal realized in less than a week. Our comrades and sympathizers all over the country are beginning to respond to our appeal for their assistance in making this drive a success. A comrade from Los Angeles writes, in renewing his subscription: "Just a few words about *The Militant* from an old party member. In the literature of the official party press of this country, each number of *The Militant* is like an invigorating breeze over a stagnant pool. Though disagreeing with the party on a number of questions *The Militant* is blasting its way to the hearts and minds of many party members and sympathizers by introducing healthy discussions among the radical workers."

Another comrade, from Chicago, writes: "Just a few minutes after reading the appeal for funds in *The Militant* I found the enclosed bill being waited in the breeze down Michigan Boulevard. The Chicago branch gets credit for this I understand." You bet! Against our goal of \$1,000, we have already realized \$100. This is due principally to the splendid showing made by the New York and Minneapolis branches. The quotas and results which we give below tell a story more eloquent than words.

	Quota	Reported
New York	\$25	\$58
Minneapolis	\$200	\$27.50
Chicago	\$100	\$ 3.00
Toronto	\$70	
Philadelphia	\$40	
Cleveland	\$40	
Boston	\$40	
Newark	\$35	\$ 2.00
Kansas City	\$30	
St. Louis	\$25	
Los Angeles	\$25	\$ 2.00
Youngstown	\$10	
New Haven	\$10	
Montreal	\$10	
Duluth	\$10	
Springfield, Ill.	\$10	
W. Frankfort, Ill.	\$10	
Trenton	\$ 5	
Miscellaneous		\$7.00
	\$1,000.00	\$100.00

The good showing made by New York is the result of its successful affair held April 30 with which it opened the final month of the drive. As previously reported the admission price of 25 cents entitled the holder to an 8 issue sub to

The Militant. This unique idea conceived and carried thru by the captains of the New York teams, comrades Craine and Bored, resulted in 29 new subs being added to New York's total. These 29 trial subs together with 4 others which the branch accounted for during the past week make its total to date, 71 and place it at the head of the standing once more. Will it be able to maintain its lead in face of Minneapolis' determined drive is the question everyone is asking.

Minneapolis continuing its powerful drive accounted for fifteen subs to *The Militant*, 4 to *Unser Kampf* and 2 to *Young Spartacus*. But what subs? They amount to \$27.50. One is a sub comrade Hedlund, our leading *Militant* builder, got for two and a half years. Another is one comrade Curran got by persuading a member of the opposing team, comrade Zalmanoff, to sign on the dotted line. Comrades, this method should not be overlooked!

Comrade Coover's report bodes no good for the other branches. "The April *Militant* drive in Minneapolis is closed. The No. 1 Team, M. Dunne, captain, scored a total to April 30, of 51 1-4 points. Not bad. But the No. 2 Team, Bill Curran, captain, scored a total of 56 1-2 points, giving it a lead of 5 1-4 points. The No. 2 Team should be the guests at the press entertainment but it looks now as if it will take all the members of both team to do the honors for the guests at the entertainment when it is finally pulled off. We are going to give the other branches a trimming in the question of the quotas as well as the final stage of the drive. I think the above figures will take care of New York to date on the sub drive in spite of their excellent idea of giving an 8 issue sub with each 25 cents admission. You will hear more from Minneapolis in the future."

To this honor roll must be added comrade Sacharow's report of the doings of the Chicago branch. "The branch has been divided into two teams and we may yet finish the sub campaign with a bang." Go to it, Chicago!

The standing of the branches reads as follows:
New York, 71; Minneapolis, 64; Chicago, 12; Newark, 4; Boston, 4; Youngstown, 4; Miscellaneous, 25.

St. Louis, Philadelphia, and Montreal remain where they were last week at \$1 each. The total has risen to 187, an increase of 60 over last week. Excellent! But not enough! The other branches should snap into it. It is not late. Let us hear from them!

Now everybody into the second week of the drive! This is collection week. Let us see what can be done!

LETTERS FROM THE MILITANTS

A. F. of L. Fakers Betray Sign Writers

NEW YORK, N. Y.—

The strike conducted by Sign Writers' Local 230 of the Brotherhood of Painters, Decorators and Paperhangers of America has ended in defeat for the workers. The union instead of renewing its agreement with the bosses which expired on March 30th was forced to grant a ten per cent cut. The rank and file of the union was persuaded by its bureaucratic leadership against its own interests to give the bosses the right to hire and fire and lay off at will. The union has also relinquished its control over overtime work. The bosses no longer need the union's permission to order the workers to work longer than the eight hours which now constitute the working day. There is now no practical difference in essentials between the unionized and non-union shops.

The union bureaucrats succeeded in putting through a change in the agreement: the bosses agreed to allow helpers to do apprentices' work and vice versa. This practically wipes out the difference between these workers. The helpers are a large majority of the workers in the trade. With unemployment at about sixty per cent, the bosses will give work to the helpers at the expense of the apprentices, satisfy temporarily and to some extent the dissatisfaction of the helpers, and enable the union officials to maintain their highly paid positions and the fiction that they serve the workers' interests. It is an old trick. Only workers ignorant of the fathomless corruption and treachery of A. F. of L. bureaucrats could be taken in by so palpably treacherous a maneuver.

In a union controlled by the workers in their own interests the formal elimination of the difference between helpers and apprentices already accomplished in reality, would be made a progressive step. Wide awake class conscious workers would fight to make this step conditional upon the introduction of the six hour day without reduction in pay and upon the same wage scale for apprentices and helpers.

The strike failed principally because the bosses were able to keep their shops running full blast without any difficulty. Scabbing by unemployed open shop workers and by members of the union was prevalent. To add their treacherous bit the union bureaucrats fooled the workers into picketing—not the shops where the scab displays were made—but the Broadway moving picture theatres where some of the signs were displayed!

To consummate their treachery the bureaucrats called upon a representative of the district council of the Brotherhood to put over the wage cut. This professional betrayer with a face as white as a cheese mouthed phrases about militancy, fighting, the working class, ad nauseam. His conclusion was—a ten per cent cut! The workers harried by the fear of permanently losing their jobs by trying to maintain an ineffective strike, and bamboozled by the district council representative's demagoguery, voted without dissent for the cut and the elimination from the agreement of the clauses demanded by the bosses.

Against the future attacks which their present victory will embolden the bosses to make, the workers must prepare. They must seriously undertake a campaign to organize the trade. As a prerequisite condition for this they must drastically reduce the enormously high initiation fees which is \$500 for helpers. (In our letter in *The Militant* of April 16th we used in this connection, the incorrect formulation: "—they must abolish the initiation fees.") The workers must propose the same wage scale for apprentices and helpers. The division into apprentices and helpers no longer corresponds to any real difference between them and serves only the interests of the bureaucrats by enabling them to play off the helpers against the apprentices or the other way around. The workers must also set up as one of their demands the six hour day with no reduction in pay. The six hour day is entirely practicable in the trade and can put back to work many workers now vainly looking for jobs.

These demands are the essentials of a program for which the workers can fight in resisting the attacks on the bosses. In trying to realize these demands they will have to fight the enemy in the union—the bureaucratic misleaders. This should not deter them. It is the road all workers in the A. F. of L. have to travel in fighting for their interests.

—T. STAMM.

To the Greek Party Members and Sympathizers

As you know from our reply to the Greek Stalinist bureaucrats which we printed in No. 4 of *Communists*, we still maintain that the *Empros*, one sidedness with regard to the local Greek press is very detrimental to the Communist movement because it creates fatal illusions among the workers that it is possible for some capitalist newspapers to support the interests of the working class.

Thanks to our vigilance and the Bolshevik criticism of the rank and file workers, the Stalinist bureaucrats were forced to change slightly their one sidedness and to attack the *Atlantis*. But at the same time we warned you that only through your constant vigilance and criticism we will succeed to force the Greek Stalinists to occupy themselves against both the *Atlantis* and the *National Herald* and also to utilize the precious columns of the *Empros* for the most burning questions of the class struggle.

The Stalinist editor in a signed statement attempts to justify himself with petty arguments which have nothing in common with Communist principles and thus he commits the worst blunders.

He froths at the ignorance of the party members of New York City and of a certain leading comrade outside of New York—whose letter and name are wisely withheld from the comrades—because they are blind and therefore can't see his brilliant scheme of capturing the Greek workers from the optimum of the capitalists.

His wisdom revealed to all the ignoramuses that the *National Herald* is an anti-Soviet sheet and supporter of Tammany Hall and as such should be attacked and destroyed, but he is unable to attack the *Atlantis* because he lacks the documents.

You very well know that *Atlantis* is a monarchist paper and a supporter of the Republican party and therefore no different in any degree as a class enemy from the *National Herald*.

Ironically enough, the *Atlantis* of April 30th, in an editorial, attacked the Soviet Union for its friendly attitude towards the "barbarians of the Near East, the Turks", and lamented the fall of the Romanoffs who have always supported the Greeks and the Greek Orthodox Church while the Bolsheviks supported Kemal Pasha to defeat the Greeks in Asia Minor. No comment is needed.

Every capitalist newspaper, without exception, is either an open or a concealed enemy of the working class and as such should never be spared from the attacks of a Communist organ.

To every genuine Communist there is no difference between a Tammany of a Republican organ and therefore any leniency or preference is detrimental to the movement.

Demand from the bureaucrats for explain in detail the reasons for the pseudo-radical attitude of the two newspapers as we did in our thesis. Although at present they have lost the confidence of the workers this fact should not deceive us and put us to sleep, but ought to keep us alert in order to fight effectively every new attempt of the capitalists to organize new (types) forms of organizations and it is not at all improbable (in order to arrest the radicalization of the workers) that they may adopt a progressive (socialist) program.

Comrades: Do you expect the high priests of Stalinism to correct this petty bourgeois editor. Only through your Bolshevik insistence some changes can be affected. The bureaucrats may undertake the usual task of making the editor a scapegoat but this does not whitewash their responsibility. The appointment of another mercenary without your consultation and freedom of criticism will not cure the evil.

It is your duty to demand freedom of discussion without fear of expulsion. The fact that the editor himself admits that many comrades share our opinions in this specific question proves that our criticism is healthy and unmask the slanders and calumnies of the appointed leaders.

Read *The Militant* every week for new developments.

—EDITORIAL BOARD OF COMMUNISTS.

The Negro and the Class Struggle

(Continued from last issue)

Revolutions and civil wars are always followed by "counter revolution" (reaction, terror, etc. against the exploited) unless the workers are able to carry the law over to the point where they seize power for themselves. During the struggle, concessions are necessary to gain the support of the exploited for the exploiters' war. But once the former makes haste to bring about a new alignment with the former enemy, under the hegemony of the new exploiter, against the exploited. The results of the civil war only confirmed this truth again.

The legal forms of capitalist rule were not sufficient for the needs of the plantation owners of the south. Lynch law was added—a necessary measure used against the whole exploited class whenever the formal legal means do not suffice to keep them in check. Lynch law exists for the Negro every minute of the day and night. But it is not the elimination of the lynch law that will free the Negro. Rather lynch law, as such, can only be done away with by the overthrow of capitalism. In the struggle to overthrow capitalism a necessary part is the constant struggle against lynch law and all forms of discrimination (discriminating law prohibiting admittance to, public and private buildings, schools, universities, parks, etc.; restrictions regarding jury service and civil service; disfranchisement; prohibition of intermarriage; lease system, chain gangs, etc., and admittance to working class organizations, trade unions etc.)

The Negro in America—bourgeoisie, petit-bourgeoisie, farmer and worker—stands as an oppressed racial minority, a national minority. Of course they are a minority of the nation; and in this sense, a mechanical one, they are a national minority. But in the political sense it is not so. A national minority are a people not only with racial differences, but a people with special differences of language, custom and religion, or with a separate national character or national interests. Politically speaking, national minorities always have the integral element of racial minority (race or branch of race). But a racial minority, in the hodge-podge of capitalist

society, does not necessarily signify national minority. On the other hand, racial oppression does not always mean the oppression of a national minority. This oppression may be inflicted on a national majority, as in the case of China and India. One could give countless examples of this kind in the past history.

America, the outstanding representative of Capitalism, is the best example to show the differences between a racial minority and a national minority. America is now a nation and its people take pride in their nationality, regardless of the descent, especially those Americans of the second and third generation of foreign descent. In the United States we find many racial groups making up the nation as "Americans". The Swedes, English, Spanish or French born in America, who may still have the "pure blood" of their race, can be considered as a racial minority (races of Europe) of the population of the United States. In this way they are catalogued mechanically as part of a national group. But, in spite of this, they cannot be considered as a national minority in the political sense.

The Negro was brought from Africa, from a system of Barbarism where nations as political states were only in the process of formation. He was hurried through the process and now is part of Capitalism. He brought with him racial characteristics, as well as traditions and modes of the past. However, his life in America has overbalanced that which was brought from the past, has modified it, has changed it. Capitalist America as forced him to adopt the language and religion and modes of the country and of the economic system as the DETERMINING FACTORS of this part of his make-up. The more complicated economic structure here in America has swallowed up the past. And, although it cannot be eliminated and it expresses itself in the new make-up, it is not the determining factor of the American Negro.

As an oppressed racial minority it is one question, and the question is the race form of the class struggle. As an oppressed national minority it is another question. The attempt to construe the Negro question this way can only result,

not in nationalism for the Negro, but in national reformism for the "Marxist". The idea of Self determination for national minorities (which include races or racial groups) is a compromise and concession; it is a transitional measure, a weapon against capitalism, providing it is used at the proper time, where, no other road out is possible. This is not the situation in America with the American Negro, as the Stalinites contend.

Objective conditions are still on the move for the Negro, and particularly since the world war. The shortage of labor in the War period, the stoppage of the immigration flow, and the development of capitalism at a faster pace in the South—all this moved the Negro into the stream of class struggle. The racial expression of the oppression of the Negro is no reason for a revolutionist to see the form (racial oppression) and enlarge this out of its true relation to the content of the class struggle.

The decisive section of the Negroes, in relation to the problem considered, is no longer the one which is "half slaves-half serfs", it is not petty bourgeois Negro. The decisive section in the class struggle, in the North as well as the South—in America as a whole, which is the proper way to look at the problem—is the Negro proletariat. His weight as a proletarian, if it is the decisive part (and even Stalinism does not deny this in words), will make up for his weakness in the "South" where Stalinism says the slogan of Self Determination is necessary.

The complicated race form of the class struggle for the Negro lays the main burden upon the Negro proletariat in relation to the rest of the Negroes, but not in relation to the white proletariat. The main burden of the relation of the Negro to the white proletariat rests upon the shoulders of the latter. The white worker must be ready to meet the Negro more than half way. He must go to the point—no matter how far—for the victory of the workers over capitalism. The Negro worker is necessary part of this problem for the victory not of the white workers but of the WORKERS regardless of their race.

(Continued in next issue)

IN THE INTERNATIONAL OF LABOR

Reviews and News of the Working Class and Revolutionary Movements

For a Turn in the Policy of the C. P. G.

BERLIN, GERMANY
"The attitude of a political party toward its mistakes is the most important and surest criterion of the sincerity of the party and the actual fulfillment of its duties to its class and to the working masses. To acknowledge a mistake openly, to lay bare its causes, to analyze throughly the circumstances which brought it about, soundly to test the means for the eradication of mistakes—these are the characteristics of a sincere party, this means to fulfill its duties, to train and teach the class and then also the masses". (Lenin, Works, Vol. 25, page 243.)

About 36.6 million votes were cast in the run-off elections. From this number Hindenburg received in round figures 19,350,000, the absolute majority, Hitler, 13,417,000 and Thaelmann 3,706,000. Hindenburg succeeded in winning about 800,000 votes as against the first election, Hitler about 2,080,000 while Thaelmann lost 1,276,000 votes. The 2.5 million voters who voted in the first election for Duestenberg went over in the run-off election mostly to Hitler.

De Rote Fahne of March 15th wrote immediately after the elections of March 13th that "the five million Thaelmann voters of March 13th are the most class-conscious, revolutionary determined part of the proletariat." The whole party press considered the votes cast for Thaelmann "as a clear avowal of revolutionary class struggle". Doubtless, a great number of votes lost by Thaelmann in the run-off elections are to be found among the abstainers. The results of the election in a series of proletarian districts, however, give a terrifying picture of the confusion created by the Stalin-Thaelmann leadership in the Communist ranks of Germany. In Red Wedding, in Berlin, Hindenburg received 98,398 (during the first elections 96,843), Hitler 49,616 (35,851 and Duestenberg 12,274). Thaelmann 77,755 (90,693). Similar changes from Thaelmann to Hitler occurred also in Neukoelln, Friedrichshain and Spandau, where at least 1,000 Communist voters gave their votes in the run-off elections to Hitler. Such is the picture in Berlin. In the country it stands out even in bolder relief. In the voting district of Leipzig, Duestenberg received on March 13th 36,000 votes, Thaelmann lost 23,000, Hitler won 59,000. In the district of Dresden-Bautzen: Duestenberg had 77,500 votes, Hindenburg won 15,000, Hitler 92,000, Thaelmann lost 38,000. In the district Chemnitz-Zwickau: Duestenberg had 35,000, Hindenburg won 35,000, Hitler 70,000, Thaelmann lost 50,000 votes. Similar and more striking results are to be observed in Mannheim, Frankfurt O. M., Hesse and other districts.

Die Rote Fahne cannot deny the fact of the swinging over of Communist voters to Hitler. It was forced to admit it in the issue of April 12th where it states that "the attempt of the Hitler and Hindenburg parties to break through the Communist front was repelled. . . . Only a very small number allowed itself to be misled into casting its votes for one or the other of the bourgeois candidates". What do these words mean? They mean nothing else but that in a time especially favorable for a Communist advance, a Communist party states with satisfaction that its class enemy, which is doomed by history to disappearance, has not succeeded in breaking through the Communist front and that—nevertheless, where it did succeed—the whole question was only of a small number of Communist hangers-on. This the bankrupt party bureaucracy writes at a time when the Communist Party of Germany could day in and day out have made inroads into the reformist and petty-bourgeois camps.

How could matters go so far, however, that Communist voters give their votes to Hindenburg and even to Hitler? Were the party comrades in the shops and employment exchanges then really fully armed against the theory of the "lesser evil" of the S. P. G.? They reproached the S. P. G. workers as being for Hindenburg and therefore also for the reaction. This was correct. But this argument could not carry that weight since the leadership of Thaelmann plunged the party into the policy of "referendums" together with the Nazis. The S. P. G. workers replied to them: Well, if you, Communists, carried through with Hitler the referendum in Prussia against Severing-Braun and are now pursuing the same policy in Saxony and Oldenburg, why can't we come out against Hitler with Severing-Braun? If for you Hitler is the "lesser evil" then Hindenburg can be the same for us!

In this way the party bureaucracy has robbed the party comrades of the possibility of convincing the S. P. G. workers. The theory of the "lesser evil" can celebrate victory due to the help rendered by the Thaelmann leadership.

How could Hitler obtain Communist votes? One must not forget for a moment that the majority of the party members consist now of new members recruited between the years 1930-31-32. These youthful elements naturally lacked Marxian training and Marxian traditions. It was the duty of the Communist party to supplement what was lacking through struggle and training. This could not happen because the policy of the party, particularly during these years, is a whole chain of back-sliding

from the Marxian line. How were the new members trained? On the basis of the people's revolution, on the basis of programs for national and social liberation, on the basis that the S. P. G. is now the main enemy, on the basis of "policy, the trade-unions" (R. T. U. O. Levy), on the basis of common referendums with the Nazis, on a rejection of the United Front with the S. P. G. and other worker's organizations. Is it any wonder then that a number of the youthful strata of the proletariat so trained should, out of despair over the failures of the party, give its votes to the class enemy in order to "cut the knot faster"? Are the party members of **Magdeburg** to blame who declared in a party conference that they had voted for Hitler in order to hasten the decisions, since Remmele had stated "after the Fascists, we come"? Their action is a product of the criminal policy which the present party leadership pursues. Not they are to blame but rather those very Stalinist theoreticians who confuse the Communist ranks. Is it not frightful when the **Vorwaerts**, the organ of the party of organized betrayal of the interests of the proletariat, dares to write on the 11th of March of the "counter-revolutionary" Trotskyists supply the S. P. G. leaders with arguments but solely and alone the present Thaelmann leadership.

The Fascist danger is great but the proletariat is not yet beaten. The recent demonstrations in the country, and especially in Berlin, show an upsurge of the **Berlin proletariat** not witnessed in many years. The Communist demonstration as well as that of the "Iron Front" filled the Lustgarten and the neighboring streets. Contrarywise, the demonstration of the Nazis was very small. That means that the proletariat is absolutely clear that the decision between them and the Fascists will be carried out into the streets. Significant of the demonstration of the "Iron Front" was the fact that

the S. P. G. speakers were applauded only when they spoke of the extra-parliamentary struggle against Fascism. Their speeches on the republic and the Weimar constitution were listened to in silence by the demonstrators. The fact that the Reichsbanner workers no longer, as formerly, withdraw before the Fascists but instead, actually defend themselves against them, shows that they are prepared against the will of their leaders to fight on the streets.

These heartening tidings the Thaelmann leadership does not know how to use. Instead of the constant prattling that Severing is a "social Fascist" and of writing in several passages of the editorial in the **Rote Fahne** of April 7th that "Severing cannot prohibit the S. A. (Fascist Storm Divisions)" it is the task of the party to use Severing's "actions" for the purposes of the revolution. The fact that the Fascists are ready to go so far as to poison the water-supply in the proletarian quarters by means of aniline dyes in order to come to power—as the documents from Wiesbaden testify should have served as the occasion for the party to carry through a decisive turn in the united front question. Here the possibility was given for the approach to the S. P. G. and to the trade-unions for the purpose of establishing the "class front of the proletariat". What a tremendous impression—just imagine—would this united march of the Berlin proletariat have made on the bourgeois and the Fascist. Such an outpouring would have filled three Lustgartens—a million Berlin workers on the streets.

And now in the Prussian elections it is not a question of normal parliamentary elections. Much more is involved! The policy of legalism of the Fascists is to come to a definite conclusion with this. They are still afraid of an open conflict with the working class although the workers are not yet fused into a united front. **The conquest of the state apparatus in Prussia by legal means is to serve them as the necessary condition**

for the successful outcome of their extra-parliamentary struggle for power. It is not the task of the Communists to support the Braun-Severing Government against the Fascists, that is clear. Still less is it the task of the Communists to support the Fascists, to make easier their road to power. The problem of the party now is to place itself in the forefront of the struggle against Fascism.

Lenin demanded of a Communist party the re-examination of its policies, the open acknowledgment of its mistakes. This must take place now, re-examination of the whole policy of recent years, acknowledgment before the working class of mistakes made. Turn towards the S. P. G. workers and trade-unions, scrap the national-Bolshevik theories,—a united front with the S. P. G. and the free trade unions. It must not happen as lately in Hamburg that the Reichsbanner workers attacked by Fascists refused the aid of Communists with the words: "Stop all referendums together with the Fascists. This makes the gulf between the S. P. G. and C. P. G. workers only greater."

The comrades of **Charlottenburg-Berlin** have voted in four of the party units with 85 votes to 15, against the theory of "social Fascism". This is a tremendous step forward in view of the conditions within the party. All worker Communists must follow this example. Tear into tatters the "general line" of the policy of defeat put forward by the party bureaucracy! Demand internal motion for a turn in the party policy! Demand the extra-ordinary party congress! Without a thorough reform of the party no victory over Fascism, no struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat is possible. Only in the way of Lenin—an open change of policy before the whole class, by taking into account the currents among the masses, by pushing them forward with a correct policy—only in this way is the victory of the proletariat conceivable.

—PERMANENTE REVOLUTION
(April 15, 1932)

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GERMAN SKETCHES

While the editorials of the **Permanente Revolution** permit the foreign comrades to get a good view of the fundamental lines of development in Germany, we should like to supplement them with the following few character sketches, so as to lend concreteness to the picture.

Minister of the Interior Groener
The most typical and the most prominent representative of the German bourgeoisie is undoubtedly this Suabian general who conceals beneath his demonstrative mufli the good old Prussian warrior heart. The head of the government, the Catholic Bruening, remains in the background, in line with the very best Jesuit traditions. It is preferable for them to have the General act as the symbol of the successes, and in the last analysis, of the failures of the regime of emergency decrees. The German bourgeoisie—which is still attempting to veer in its course between Fascism and democracy and is therefore forced, as never before, to conduct a policy of negotiations, of betrayals, of masked brutality—could not have found a better representative than this imperial general who was elastic enough, on the day of the collapse of the Empire, to save himself through an immediate and determined collaboration with the people whom he only yesterday had called traitors to the country, with the actual traitors to their class, with Ebert, Scheidemann and Co.

The policy which General and Minister of the Interior Groener carried out in the 14 days that intervened between the first and second ballots of the presidential elections, permits one to get a good grasp of the present as well as of the future orientation of the German bourgeoisie. In these weeks there took place the "sensational exposures" of Severing regarding the putschist plans of the Nazis, Groener, who is still in power—today, perhaps together with the social democrats and tomorrow most certainly, together with the Nazis is doing everything to discredit and to cow his faithful social democrats. Coolly smiling, he declared that these plans had also been

made known to him, but that they had not particularly excited him. He negotiated with the Nazis in their complaints against Severing, although he has always very glibly referred to them as people guilty of high treason. He openly handed a rebuff to the representative of Severing before the state court. He negotiated with the Brunswick Nazi government and has, without being in any way contradicted, assured them of his accord with their policy. He did not take the slightest measures against the so-called crown prince, who according to ancient Hohenzollern custom, broke his "word of honor" regarding his non-participation in politics and who openly agitated with adventures have left him, for the electric feeble means which his very intense

Only after Groener had been praised a short few weeks ago as a hearth of democracy by the social democrats and only after he had undertaken all these measures to strengthen Hitler and to weaken the social democracy, when he had already been able to get the results of the second ballot—for Groener is a very cautious gentleman—only then did he proceed to "prohibit" Hitler's private army, the Storm Divisions (S. A. Sturm Abteilungen).

We must not nurture too many illusions over this "prohibition". It took place days after the Nazis had been informed about everything, that is, after they had safely been able to bring everything that was of any value for them in this military apparatus—underground. Since their party apparatus can continue to function legally, the proscription has not weakened the Nazis in the least, as the increased terroristic acts against persons, buildings, meetings prove. Aside from this, the act of Groener has once more given them the halo of the only honest fighters against the present system in the eyes of many among the unemployed and in this manner, they have received considerable aid for their campaign in the Prussian elections. On the other hand, it has enabled Hitler to rid himself of the organizational influence of dissatisfied and unreliable elements who were concentrated precisely in these Storm Divisions. It may also be assumed that the proscription will disappear shortly after the Prussian elections.

The S. P. G. has likewise been strengthened considerably in its election campaign through this act, especially in so far as the C. P. G. is concerned. But the S. P. G. has paid dearly enough for this advantage. The real price they have paid is not yet known, but we can already hear today that it will "voluntarily" dissolve its Reichsbanner. The Austrian game with "general disarmament" is being repeated. While the Fascists will within a short time be in a position to reconstruct their armed divisions, the reformist organizations will stand at the end of this whole comedy, disorganized and with empty hands.

These are the undisputed and lasting results of the apparently contradictory, glamorous policy of Groener, treacherous in every respect against all parties involved.
Berlin, April 17, 1932
—BAUER.

Other sketches will appear in the forthcoming issues of **The Militant**.

Nine Years of the Struggle of the Left Opposition

The German Revolution of 1923 and the «Lessons of October»

A sharp dividing line marks off the period of the growth and progress of its decline and opportunist degeneration under the regime of Stalin-Zinoviev-Bucharin. This line is drawn by the revolutionary events in Germany towards the end of 1923 and the disputes that arose in the Russian party and the International around the lessons to be drawn from them. Just as the Bolshevik party grew steel-hard in the study of the 1905 revolution and the refutation of the Menshevik conception of its nature and problems, so Bolshevism today can be strengthened only in the study—not merely of the successful October revolution of 1917, but also of the defeated revolutions in Germany of 1923 and in China of 1925-1927. It is to an appraisal of the missed revolution in 1923 that comrade Trotsky devoted himself in his famous work "The Lessons of October".

The German Situation in 1923
The autumn of 1923 found Germany confronted with a revolutionary situation of the highest order. The country was passing through a violent crisis, greatly accentuated by the French occupation of the Ruhr which threatened to give Europe the acute war aspect that the Versailles Treaty was supposed to have ended. Not only were the masses of the workers expressing their mood by flocking to the standard of the Communist party—which was then reaching the highest point it has ever attained—but even the petty bourgeoisie, disintegrating, declassed and impoverished was being rallied in great numbers to the organizing center of the revolution. The nationalists and Fascists had by no means the same power and might which they enjoy at the present moment, for example, and the main bulwark of the capitalist regime, the social democracy, was experiencing a process of disintegration and dislocation to the left.

Every day brought increasing difficulties for the bourgeoisie desperately seeking for a way out of its crisis. Every day brought new accretions of strength to the Communists. The widespread network of factory councils was in the hands of the revolutionists. Every important factory had its militant "proletarische Hundertschaften", the well-knit nucleus for tomorrow's Red Guard. In Saxony and Thuringia, coalition governments had been formed by the "Left" social democrats and the Communists which, despite the radically false policies pursued in them by the Communist ministers, gave an index of the tremendous strength commanded by the party. So ripe was the situation that, as Trotsky says, "it became quite clear that the German bourgeoisie could extricate itself from this 'inextricable' position only if the Communist party did not understand at the right time that the position of the bourgeoisie was 'inextricable' and did not draw the necessary revolutionary conclusions."

The tragic outcome of the German revolution of 1923 was due, however, precisely to the fact that the German party leadership, and more than that, the leadership of the Communist International, did not understand what it should have, and by its capitulation without a struggle, enabled the German bourgeoisie to get that breathing space which, with subsequent aid from the United States in the form of the Dawes Plan, was the direct precursor of the so-called stabilization of Europe and the decline of the revolutionary wave.

In the face of its imperative tasks, with all the chances in its favor, when the moment came to strike the German party leadership simply quit the field of battle, permitted the armed intervention of the reactionary troops without offering resistance, and surrendered its positions without firing a shot. Only in Hamburg did heroic rear-guard street battles take place as a result of the failure of the Central Committee to arrive in time with the instructions changing the plan of battle previously arrived at.

How was it possible for such a situation to develop, with all the disastrous consequences which it subsequently entailed? The then leaders of the International, Zinoviev, Bucharin and Stalin, explained the whole thing away with a deceptive simplicity: Brandler and Thaelheimer, the heads of the German party, were to blame. The whole trouble lay, you see, in the fact that they had played a "parliamentary comedy" in the coalition government in Saxony and had failed to strike the decisive blow at the right time. But, added the Russian trinity, (and in this they were echoed by Brandler and Thaelheimer), the revolutionary situation is still ahead! A mistake has been made which we will easily and swiftly repair by putting the "Left" faction at the head of the party and removing Brandler and Thaelheimer. With a "Bolshevik" leadership and the revolutionary situation still at hand, the whole mistake will be made good and, incidentally, our wisdom and prestige will not only remain unimpaired but will be greatly enhanced in the minds of the party members.

In other words, the "art" of their leadership consisted exclusively of learning nothing from the events, of teaching nothing about their essential lessons, of finding a scapegoat upon whom the blame for the difficulties might be shifted, and of preserving intact the myth of bureaucratic infallibility.

The Russian Opposition, in the figure of comrade Trotsky, proceeded from an entirely different standpoint. It aimed at such an objective analysis of the events, as such an extraction of the lessons presented by the defeat, as would not only reveal who and what were at fault but would serve as a source of instruction to those Communist parties which still had before them the final struggle for the seizure of power. This aim was brilliantly achieved in "The Lessons of October".

The essence of this document lies in a masterful comparison of the problems confronting the Bolshevik party on the eve of its insurrection and how it solved them successfully and resolutely, with

the problems confronting the German and Bulgarian party leaders on the eve of their insurrections and how they failed to solve them with either resolution or success. An excellent summary of the key points in this work was made subsequently by comrade Trotsky himself.

"The ideas set out by me in the "Lessons of October" retain their full strength even now. Yes, even more, they receive confirmation over and over again after 1924.

"Among the numerous difficulties in a proletarian revolution there is a particular, definite, specific difficulty. It arises out of the position and tasks of the revolutionary party leadership. Even the most revolutionary parties run the risk of confronting the events, slogan and measures of struggle of yesterday that are being sharply precipitated, with the new tasks and requirements. And there cannot, after all, be a sharper turn of events than that required by the armed uprising. It is right here that the danger also arises that the policy of the party leadership and the party in general does not correspond to the action of the class and the requirements of the situation. During a relatively tranquil course of political life, such a contradiction can be straightened out, even though with losses, yet without a catastrophe. But in a time of violent crisis, it is precisely in that time that lacking to eliminate this contradiction and to redress the front, so to speak, under fire. The periods of the highest accentuation of a revolutionary crisis are by their very nature always only brief. This contradiction between a revolutionary leadership (vacillations, a temporizing attitude despite the assault of the bourgeoisie) and the objective situation, can lead in the course of a few weeks and even days to a catastrophe and to a loss of what took years of work to prepare. . . .

"... (In Germany) the situation was ripe and the leadership lagged behind. By the time this contradiction was straightened out, the situation had already changed, the masses receded and the relationship of forces became fundamentally worse.

"The German defeat of 1923 naturally had many national peculiarities. But it already contained many typical features, also, which signalled a general danger. This danger can be characterized as the crisis of the revolutionary leadership on the eve of the transition to armed uprising. The depths of a proletarian party are already by their very nature far less susceptible to bourgeois public opinion. Certain elements of the party leadership and the middle layers of the party will always unfailingly succumb in larger or smaller measure to the material and ideological terror of the bourgeoisie. Such a danger should not simply be rejected. To be sure there is no remedy against it suitable for all cases. Nevertheless the first step towards fighting it—is to grasp its nature and its source. The unflinching appearance or development of Right groupings in all the Com-

munist parties in the "pre-October" period is on the one hand a result of the greatest objective difficulties and dangers of this 'jump' but on the other hand the result of a furious assault of bourgeois public opinion. There also lies the whole import of the Right groupings. And that is just why irresolution and vacillations arise unfailingly in the Communist parties at the moment when it is most dangerous. With us, only a minority within the party leadership was seized by such vacillations in 1917, which were, however, overcome, thanks to the sharp energy of Lenin. In Germany, on the contrary, the leadership as a whole vacillated and that was carried over to the party and through it to the class. The revolutionary situation was thereby passed up. . . . All these were not of course the last crises of leadership in a decisive historical moment. To limit these inevitable crises to a minimum is one of the most important tasks of the Communist parties and the Comintern.

This can be achieved only when the experiences of October 1917 and the political content of the Right Opposition inside our party at that time are grasped and contrasted with the experiences of the German party in 1923. Therein lies the purport of the "Lessons of October."

The publication of this work at the beginning of 1924 aroused a terrific storm in the ranks of the Russian party bureaucracy. The vials of wrath of the ruling clique were poured out to the last drop upon Trotsky's head. What Zinoviev, Rykov, Stalin and Co. were concerned with was not so much the Marxian criticism to which Trotsky submitted the conduct of the German party leaders, but the fact that in drawing his striking analogy with the 1917 insurrection in Russia, Trotsky had revealed that vacillations and capitulatory tendencies similar to Brandler's had existed in the very highest spheres of the Bolshevik party.

The bureaucrat and the opportunist live from hand to mouth, and just as they refuse to see or hear, they dislike to look backward, or to have their own pasts spoken of, and analyzed. Add to this the fact that the cliques which was then busily engaged in usurping the control of the party was doing it by attempting to revise the truthful record of the October insurrection, and by unloading all responsibility for the German defeat, and you have the reasons for the furious assault which they promptly launched against Trotsky and the Opposition.

(To be continued)
—MAX SHACHTMAN.

SPECIAL ATTENTION
If you have one or more copies of the paper edition of the "Draft Program of the Communist International—A Criticism of Fundamentals" which you can spare, send it at once to Pioneer Publishers and we will reimburse you for it. We need twenty-five copies to make up the 100 for the bound volumes of all the pamphlets.

Stalin - Lovestone Parleys

(Continued from page 1)
The Russian party bloc? That would mean the end of Stalin? (This is what Lovestone told us. I don't know whether it is so, or not).
The C. I. man then told Lovestone to send a letter to the Polcom of the party making his proposition for unity. This letter was sent. Weinstein forwarded a copy of the letter to Moscow and negotiations were suspended for a while until the return of the party delegation then in Moscow.

When the delegation—Browder, Stachel and Wicks—returned, the negotiations were resumed. "Then", said Lovestone, "the party approached us for another conference". Gitlow represented our group this time. The party representative was Stachel. Stachel assured Gitlow that "the whole trade union policy would be revised gradually".
Gitlow said the group stood on the basis of the letter sent to the party. Stachel said he would report the interview to the Polcom and that an answer would be forthcoming. Up to Tuesday night the answer had not been received.
—B.

(Comment on the above letters will be found on page 4)

THE MILITANT
Published weekly by the Communist League of America (Opposition)
at 84 East 10th St., N. Y.
EDITORIAL BOARD
Martin Abern James P. Cannon
Max Shachtman Maurice Spector
Arne Swaback
Entered as second class mail matter November 28, 1928, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y. Under the act of March 3, 1879.
SATURDAY, MAY 7, 1932
Vol. 5, No. 19 (Whole No. 115)
Subscription rate: \$2.00 per year; foreign \$2.50. Five cents per copy.
Bundle rates, 3 cents per copy.

EDITORIAL NOTES

CENTRIST-RIGHT WING UNITY?

The Party members who have taken the official fulminations against the Lovestonites "renegades" in good faith, may be somewhat surprised to learn about the secret unity negotiations between the Party C. E. C. and these same "renegades", which have been going on now for some time.

There is nothing really surprising, from a political standpoint, in the fraternal conferences of the Right wing and Centrist factions. Neither is there any principle barrier to an actual consummation of the unity between them, although this does not appear the most probable outcome at the moment.

Lovestone would prefer to wait for further developments in the American movement before taking any decisive steps one way or another. But he is not allowed to forget for a moment the fearful insecurity of his groups position.

The Stalinists are not restrained from another deal with Lovestone and Co. by scruples over principle, since they have no principles; or, to put it more precisely and correctly, no principles of their own.

In the trade union field, and especially in the strategically important sector of the needle trades, the Lovestonites, feeding on the crude errors of the Party and adapting themselves to the pseudo-progressive wing of the bureaucracy, have strengthened their position.

Who is there to object to such a proposition in the leading circles of the Party, and for what reason? Certainly not those who shared the responsibility for the whole perfidious course of Lovestone over a period of years and only left him at the last moment, under command of Stalin.

The whole affair is a shocking revelation of the hollowness and futility of the official Party campaign against the Right wing. Those who were deceived by this "left turn"—which was calculated to disorientate the proletarian elements in the Party and arrest their development in the direction of the Left Opposition—may begin to come to life again and re-examine all that has transpired.

WEISBORD BLOWS THE WHISTLE

There are more ways of judging leaders and would-be leaders of the revolutionary labor movement than to read their programs and theses, just as there are more ways of judging Texas steers than to measure the length of their horns.

"It was stated by the witness for the state, Hoyle, and reported widely by the press, that when he went for the dynamite with Sodeberg he went from 'A Communist hall on East 27th Street' (which could be none other than Lovestone's headquarters) with several girls and in a car driven by a certain doctor.

When the dynamite had been procured and they had returned, according to Hoyle, they stored the dynamite for the night and part of the next day at the same headquarters.

"If this evidence is correct, then we see why Lovestone who expelled Sodeberg after he had been arrested, never published his expulsion and why Lovestone . . . later entered the defense himself. Did he feel they were all in the same boat?" (Our emphasis).

Let us rub our eyes and read this over again. Hoyle, whom Weisbord gives the euphemistic title of "witness for the state", is the stool pigeon and provocateur whose "evidence" sent the three marine workers to prison for long terms.

But Weisbord is not satisfied merely to put Hoyle on the witness stand again in the columns of his filthy sheet, and to dress up the stool-pigeon as a dignified "witness for the state". He has to bring out some of his testimony more clearly and to give it new implications against others in addition to those already sent to prison.

There is very little need for a revolutionist, or for an ordinary militant worker for that matter, to comment on this attempt to "put the finger" on the Lovestone group. The thing, like a policeman's badge, speaks for itself.

The Left Opposition is opposed to the Right wing group of Lovestone; and Weisbord, as the above-quoted testimony would indicate, is not at present friendly to it. But there the similarity of positions comes to an end.

Oppositionist Speaks at Party United Front Meet

HILLSIDE, N. J.— May Day was celebrated by the workers of Hillside, N. J. Sunday afternoon in the Workers' Home of Hillside under the auspices of the United Front May Day Committee.

On the Anniversary of Marx's Birth

May 5 is one of the notable days in the annals of working class history. That date, in 1818, inaugurated a period which closed with March 14, 1883, and embraced the life-span of the greatest thinker of our epoch, and for that matter of all times, the life-span of Karl Marx.

Karl Marx belongs to the revolutionary proletariat. It alone can properly appreciate him and his life's work. It alone can carry forward the great heritage which he has left it and which today enables it to stand erect, conscious of its growing maturity and of its true position as the life-beating pulse of mankind.

Karl Marx, a towering giant in the realms of thought and action, was a product of his age. His birth almost coincided with the stormy ushering in of the capitalist stage of society. His life became dedicated to the elaboration of the theoretical system which bears his name. A system built entirely upon the dynamics of the material world and itself throwing new life-giving fermentations into human society and setting new forces into motion.

To understand properly the Marxian system it is necessary first of all to learn to approach its study with the Marxian method of viewing all material things in motion. The purely static, or scholastic approach will get us hopelessly lost.

The Marxian system took form and assumed life and blood during the first stormy period of the capitalist cycle, when capitalism rapidly developed toward a position of mastery. It had as its immediate background the two im-

portant events, the great French revolution and the industrial revolution in England. It therefore took form essentially as a summing-up of the developing conditions. The Marxian system, which, of course, takes into account the discoveries of certain preceding thinkers, is a logical conception of the main social and economic phenomena of the present epoch.

The tumultuous events of the class struggle during the active, mature life of Marx became the great historical laboratory, from which not only the proletariat emerged definitely as a class, but which also helped to work out and to test his theoretical system. Of these main events must be mentioned in the first instance: The revolutions and counter-revolutions on the European continent, the organization of the First International and the Paris Commune. Each step of development Marx followed, not as a mere onlooker, but actively intervening with clear and decisive counsel to the proletariat and with scorching criticism virtually burning up the adversaries.

Marx kept in intimate contact with and studied the social and economic concepts and movements which had preceded him and of his time. He had early become influenced by French socialism and made himself acquainted with the ideas of the utopians. He utilized what was progressive in them but quickly settled account with their abstract "eternal truths" and "pure reason".

Marx studied the conspirative proletarian organizations of France, and elsewhere, which were mainly influenced and inspired by the sentimental utopias of Fourier and the revolutionary gospel of minority, conspirative action of Blanqui. He soon concluded that these were not the tactics to be pursued. He had witnessed the development, both of the pure and simple trade unionism in England as well as that of the Chartist movement, which, during the brief period of its existence, embodied, in an abbreviated picture, the whole course of the proletarian struggle.

While Marx had nothing but disdain and scorn for the vulgar economists of his time he set to work patiently at the herculean task of unraveling the economic laws of the various stages of society. For the study of these laws he made use of the discoveries already made by the classical school of bourgeois economy; which generally begins with William Petty in England, Boisguilbert in France and ends with Ricardo in England and Sismondi in France. He stripped this material of its idealist veil of the capitalist economic laws being "natural laws", and presented them as

laws dictated by historical relations of production corresponding to a given degree of development of the material forces of production. What had so much puzzled this school of economy Marx discovered and embodied in his concept of the production of surplus value.

But above all Marx participated in building the revolutionary proletarian party. From the founding of the Communist League and presentation of the Communist Manifesto, there is a continuous thread of building and teaching. It next appears in the lessons drawn from the fateful events of 1848-50. Again, in the theoretical and practical work within the First International, beginning with 1864, in the serious lessons drawn from the Paris Commune and finally, in 1875 in the criticism of the Gotha program. This criticism which can perhaps be termed the last outstanding act of Marx was occasioned by the program draft for the fusion congress of the two German socialist groups, the Lassalleans and the Eisenachers. Marx subjected that compromise program draft to a merciless criticism in which he again summed up in brief sentences the essence of his concepts.

Here we have, through a whole chain of events and activities, conclusions compressed into a theoretical system, each part of which forms a harmonious whole. The essence of Marxism stands out today as incontrovertibly as when proclaimed in the final paragraph of the Communist Manifesto:

"The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions. Let the ruling classes tremble at a Communist revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win."

We recall that many have been the attempts to construct a new system and invest it with the name of Marx by tearing out of their context some casual remarks made by Marx on episodic questions in order to destroy the real essence of the system itself. As a part of the general foul revisionism, we know, it brought disastrous results to the proletarian movement of the Second International. Most outstanding were the attempts to distort, to cover up and to repudiate the concept of the proletarian dictatorship and to substitute for it the peaceful democratic means at all costs. Often, in accomplishing this, was recourse, and for that matter still is being, taken to the observation made by Marx in the seventies on the possibility of peaceful revolution in England and in America, leaving out, of course, Marx's qualifying clause. In the seventies, as we know, conditions obtained which could indicate these two countries as possessing certain exceptional characteristics; and it is from actual conditions, from the specific stage of capitalist relations that Marxian strategy and tactics proceed in each instance. The conditions of these certain exceptional characteristics no longer exist today. That gives the episodic character to such an observation which only reformist snivellers can still attempt to distort. Revolutionists will have nothing in common with that but will endeavor to comprehend the Marxian system in its totality and in its real essence.

Another article on "Marx and Marxism" is to follow next week —Ed.

In the struggle with syndicalism and other currents in the working class movement in recent years the cause of Communism has been compromised by the ignorance of the official Stalinists and their abusive hooligan methods. This damage must be repaired and the struggle restored to its proper basis.

This is the significance of the debate to be held at the New York Labor Temple, 14th Street and Second Avenue, on Saturday, May 14th, at 8 P. M.

Stalinist Zig-zags on the Question of the «United Front»

by LEON TROTSKY

The former female social democrat Torhorst (from Duesseldorf), who has come over to the Communist party, spoke in the name of the party, in mid-January, in Frankfurt. In her official report, she said, "The leaders of the social democracy are sufficiently exposed, and it would be only a waste of energy to continue our efforts in this direction, with cooperation from above."

It is hardly necessary, however, to cite an isolated report. In the latest proclamation to reach me, DIE ROTE FAHNE (January 28, 1932) argues once again that the United Front can be established only against the social democratic leaders, and without them. Proof: "None will believe them who has lived through and has experienced the handiwork of these 'leaders' for the last 18 years." And what, may we ask, is to be done about those who have participated in politics less than 18 years, and even less than 18 months?

Since the outbreak of the war, several political generations have matured who must recapitulate the experience of older generations, even though within a greatly diminished scope. "The whole point of the matter is", Lenin coached the ultra-Leftists, "that we must not assume whatever is obsolete for us to be obsolete for the class, for the masses."

Moreover, even the older generation that did pass through the experience of 18 years hasn't at all broken with the leaders. On the contrary, it is just the social democracy that still retains many "old-timers", who are bound to the party by long standing traditions. It's sad, sure enough, that the masses learn so slowly. But in a godly measure to blame for this are the Communist "pedagogues" who have been unable to disclose palpably the criminal nature of reformism. The least that can be done now is to utilize the situation; and at the same time when the attention of the masses is strained to its highest pitch by mortal danger, to subject the reformists to a new and perhaps, for the nonce, a really decisive test.

Without so much as hiding or mitigating our opinion, of the social democratic leaders, we may and we must say to the social democratic workers, "Since, on the one hand, you are willing to fight together with us; and since, on the other, you are still unwilling to break with your leaders, here is what we suggest:

Force your leaders to join us in a common struggle for such and such practical aims, in such and such a manner; as for us, we, Communists, are ready." Can anything be more plain, more palpable, more convincing?

In precisely this sense I wrote—with the conscious intention of arousing the sincere horror of blockheads and the fake indignation of charlatans—that in the war against Fascism we were ready to conclude practical military alliances with the devil and his granddam, even with Noske and Zoergiebel*.

The official party, itself, violates its stillborn policy at every step. In its appeals for the "Red United Front" (with its own self), it invariably puts forward the demand for "the unconditional freedom of the proletarian press and the right to demonstrate, meet, and organize." This slogan is clear cut through and through. But whereby the Communist party speaks of proletarian and not only of Communist papers, meetings, etc., it thereby, in fact, puts forward the slogan of the United Front with that very social democracy that publishes workers' papers, calls meetings, etc. To put forward political slogans, which in themselves include the idea of the United Front with the social democracy, and to reject the making of practical agreements to fight for these slogans—that is the height of absurdity.

Muenzenberg, whose practical horse sense occasionally falls foul of "the general line", wrote in November (DIE ROTE AUFBAU), "It's true that National Socialism is the most reactionary, the most chauvinistic and the most bestial wing of the Fascist movement in Germany; and that all true left circles (!) are most vitally concerned in interfering with the growth in influence and power of this wing of German Fascism." If Hitler's party is "the most reactionary and most bestial" wing, then Bruening's régime is, at least, less bestial and less reactionary. Muenzenberg, here, is

stealthily flirting with the theory of the "lesser evil". To preserve a semblance of piety, he goes on to differentiate between different kinds of Fascism: mild, medium, and strong, as if it was a question of Turkish tobacco. However, if all "the left circles" (and have they no names?) are interested in the victory over Fascism, then isn't it imperative to put these "left circles" to a practical test?

Isn't it self-evident that Breitscheid's diplomatic and equivocal offer should have been grabbed with both hands; and that from one's own side, one should have submitted a concrete, carefully detailed and practical program for a joint struggle against Fascism; and have demanded joint sessions of the executives of both parties, with the participation of the executives of independent trade unions? Simultaneously, one should have carried energetically this same program down through all the layers of both parties and of the masses. The negotiations should have been carried on openly in the eyes of the entire nation: daily accounts should have appeared in the press without distortions and absurd fabrications. Such an agitation by its directness and incisiveness would tell with far greater effect on the worker than the incessant din on the subject of "social Fascism". Under such conditions, the social democracy could not hide for a single day behind the pasteboard pageant of "the Iron Front".

*The French periodical Cahiers du Bolchevisme, the most preposterous and illiterate of all Stalinist publications, pounced greedily upon this reference to the devil's granddam, never suspecting of course, that she has a long standing history in the Marxist press. The hour is not distant, we hope, when the revolutionary workers will send their ignorant and unscrupulous teachers to serve their apprenticeship with the above-mentioned granddam.

—L. TROTSKY. (To be Continued) (FROM WHAT NEXT?—Vital Questions for the German Proletariat)