

american socialist quarterly

7 East 15th Street

New York City

Official theoretical organ of the Socialist Party of America.

CONTRIBUTORS:

Otto Bauer, Norman Thomas, James O'Neal, G. D. H. Cole, Clarence Senior, Mark Starr, Harold J. Laski, Algernon Lee, Vincenzo Vacirca, Karl Kautsky, Louis Waldman, Maynard C. Krueger, Siegfried Lipschitz, David J. Saposs, Kirby Page, S. A. DeWitt.

EDITORIAL STAFF:

David P. Berenberg, Haim Kantorovitch, Devere Allen, Andrew J. Biemiller, Roy Burt, Harry W. Laidler, and Anna Bercowitz, managing editor.

One dollar a year—Special rates for bundle orders.

ASQ REPRINTS

Towards Socialist Reorientation

By HAIM KANTOROVITCH

REPRINT No. 1. Just off the press. 24 pages, 5c; 50c for 12 copies; \$4.00 for 100 copies.

Order from

AMERICAN SOCIALIST QUARTERLY

7 EAST 15TH STREET

NEW YORK, N. Y.

or

SOCIALIST PARTY OF AMERICA

549 Randolph Street

Chicago, Ill.

ISSUES OF THE DAY SERIES

Official publications of the National Office

No. 2—Taxes and Tax Dodgers—By Mayor Daniel W. Hoan.

No. 3—The New Deal, A Socialist Analysis—By Norman Thomas.

No. 4—Inflation, Who Wins and Who Loses—By Maynard C. Krueger.

Prices: 1 copy, 10c; 12 copies 50c; 100 copies, \$3.50.

ORDER FROM

SOCIALIST PARTY OF AMERICA

549 Randolph St.

Chicago, Ill.

The Struggle for Revolutionary Socialism

By HEINRICH EHRLICH

as well as other Bund publications obtainable from the

THE BUND CLUB OF NEW YORK

c/o I. Shatzkin, 200 Manhattan Ave., New York, N. Y.

25c a copy. Special rates for bundle orders.

The Struggle for Revolutionary Socialism

By

Heinrich Ehrlich

Translated by

HAIM KANTOROVITCH
and ANNA BERCOVITZ

Published
by the
BUND
CLUB
of
New York

PRICE 25 CENTS

**The Struggle for
Revolutionary
S o c i a l i s m**

By Heinrich Ehrlich

INTRODUCTION

By Haim Kantorovitch

Since the last International Socialist Conference was held in Paris, August 1933, a veritable war against the minority in the Labor and Socialist International has begun in certain sections of our party in this country. Comrades, who for years have been sleeping peacefully and contentedly, have suddenly come to life, have become active and have begun to save the Socialist Party from the danger of extremism.

Who are these "extremists" who endanger the party? They are the comrades who believe that the socialist movement, all over the world, has reached a point where it can not simply go on contentedly from defeat to defeat; they are the comrades who believe that the social-reformist way, adopted by, and forced upon the entire socialist movement by the German Social Democratic Party, has failed ignominiously, and that the socialist movement must return to revolutionary Marxian Socialism if it is to live.

At the last International Conference eighteen out of three hundred delegates took this attitude. The American critics of this minority of eighteen gloat over the small number of votes polled by the minority as evidence not only of how wrong they are, but also how impractical. Only eighteen votes out of three hundred. That surely is "bad business." No practical salesman will undertake to deal in wares for which there is such small demand! Besides our critics even found out that all this extremism is the result of the lack of anti-communist literature in English. The "youngsters" have

Published by
THE BUND CLUB OF NEW YORK
1934

no choice. If they must read, they read communist or quasi-communist literature, and are therefore always under this communist influence. That is why they become "militants," "extremists," and disturb the peace of the old comrades. Now, that the "League for Democratic Socialism" has become busy and published a book and a pamphlet, everything will again be all right.

The criticism is leveled particularly against the American supporters of the minority resolution, against the majority of the American delegation (4 out of 6) to the International Conference that voted for it. The American reader is deliberately given to understand that "leftism" is an American malady. (Because there is not enough "right" literature in English.) That this is not true, the reader will find out from Comrade Ehrlich's report, which was submitted to the Polish Bund.

However, the reader will not have a true picture of the present state of mind of the International Socialist movement even from Comrade Ehrlich's report. Since Comrade Ehrlich's report was published, great changes have taken place in the most important Socialist parties in the world.

The French Socialist Party has made a decided turn to the left. Its extreme right wing, under the leadership of Renaudel and Marquet, has split away, thereby weakening the right wing of the party, while some left groups that remained outside the party have now joined it, thereby strengthening the left wing.

The Polish Socialist Party at its national convention, recently held, adopted most of the left wing resolutions.

The German Social Democratic Party has adopted a new program. That new program unequivocally repudiates social reformism, and signifies a full return to revolutionary Marxian Socialism. The Austrian Party has always been a "left" party, and after its heroic revolutionary struggle against fascism, is even more left than it was before. Should an

international Socialist conference now be held, the voting would be entirely different. The eighteen would probably be many times as great.

This does not of course imply that the minority resolution as it was presented to the Paris Conference is the best formulation of the principles of revolutionary Socialism. Undoubtedly, it suffers somewhat from lack of clarity. Certain expressions should be changed. On the concept of proletarian dictatorship, as distinct from the Communist perversion of that term, there is need for greater clarification. But the spirit of it, the fundamental principles embodied in it, would now be acceptable to the growing number of Socialists for whom the tragic lesson of Germany and Austria have not been in vain.

Singularly little is known in our party of what really took place at the International Conference. Our English press neither discussed the conference agenda before the conference, nor its decisions after it was held. Some of our foreign language papers on the other hand, printed misleading reports. With the exception of the small and sketchy mimeographed report of the American delegation, nothing has been written on this important subject. Comrade Ehrlich's report, which is now made available to the American reader, is not only the first, but the only detailed report, that gives a coherent picture of what really happened at the Paris Conference.

Comrade Heinrich Ehrlich is one of the foremost leaders of the Jewish Socialist Party, the *Bund* of Poland. He is a man of wide and varied culture; he has behind him decades of experience in the socialist and revolutionary movement in Russia and in Poland and knows the international socialist movement as no one else does.

The *Bund*, under the leadership of such comrades as Ehrlich and others, was among the few socialist organizations that did not succumb to the war hysteria, and never for a

moment gave up its internationalist position during the war. When the war hysteria yielded its place to the Bolshevik hysteria, and the Communist International was organized to split or subdue all non-communist parties, the Polish Bund was again among the very few revolutionary socialist organizations that successfully withstood the attacks of the Communist International. And, while the Bund in Russia was forcefully suppressed, as were all other Socialist parties, the Bund in Poland remained true to its revolutionary traditions. It did not answer, as did other parties, the attacks of the Communist International by turning to the right. It succumbed neither to communist hysteria nor to social-reformist despair. In face of all difficulties, it preserved its unity and revolutionary socialist integrity.

For some years the *Bund* refused to join the Labor and Socialist International. It made efforts, together with other left Socialist parties to organize a new revolutionary international socialist organization that could bring about the unity of the Socialist and Communist Internationals. The experiences that these left Socialist parties had with the Communist International, however, convinced the *Bund* that the Communist International does not want unity, and what is more, is constantly losing its influence in the international proletarian movement. The *Bund* realized what the other left Socialist parties are gradually realizing now, that the Communist International has been gradually evolving into a counter-revolutionary force. The events in Germany have confirmed it. On the eve of the Vienna Conference the *Bund* joined the Labor and Socialist International. It was comrade Ehrlich who raised the banner of revolutionary Socialism at the Vienna Conference, and it was the *Bund* that organized and led the left minority at the last conference in Paris.

THE STRUGGLE FOR REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALISM

Report of H. Ehrlich

On the Labor and Socialist International Conference held in Paris, August 21-25, 1933.

There are still a considerable number of leaders in the Labor and Socialist International who believe that all that is necessary to solve the difficult problems of the movement is to gloss over them in their speeches. Once this is done, they believe that the problems will solve themselves, that they will disappear like smoke.

It is difficult to imagine a more senseless or a more harmful policy. It is possible of course, that some of the old leaders of the International really are not aware of the serious crisis through which the international workers' movement is passing. Some of them may even imagine that every thing can be remedied by emotional speeches. A few prominent leaders have, even at this very moment, a shallow concept of internationalism, and cannot raise themselves above the narrow circles of their own national movement. As long as everything is well "at home" they are not particularly inclined to concern themselves too deeply with the problems of the international movement. There is, however, no dearth of leaders in the International who are conscious of the crisis. Most of them, we are sorry to say, however, believe that the best answer to the malicious and hypocritical outcries of the bourgeois politicians (concerning the bankruptcy of Socialism) is official optimism: reports that glowingly cite the "unanimity," "unity," "readiness to fight" that seemingly prevail in the International. All that can be accomplished by such reports is to increase the disillusionment of the workers and to lull them to sleep, thereby only harming

our movement and benefiting our class enemies. In contradiction to the reformists on the one side, and the Communists on the other, we maintain that what is most essential to the proletarian movement is clarity and truth. At no time has the need for a clear understanding of the real situation in the movement been as necessary as today.

Chapter I CONFUSION

The decision to hold an international conference was made some nine or ten months before the conference was actually called together in Paris, the latter part of August, 1933. Even at the time of the decision, two parties, the British Labor Party and the Swedish Social Democratic Party, were opposed to convening such a conference. The majorities of the parties within the International however, voted for the conference.

Soon after the decision had been reached, the German catastrophe occurred. It would naturally be assumed that the German upheaval would have acted as a powerful incentive for the leaders to hasten the call for the conference. The German political upheaval necessitated, and made imperative, a thorough and fundamental analysis, and an immediate adoption of a policy, by means of which the danger of Fascism all over Europe could be met. However, instead of acting as an impelling factor in hastening the call for the conference, the German catastrophe had the opposite effect and weakened the desire for it. The collapse of the German reformism created a frightful ideological confusion among the leaders in the International, who were chiefly responsible for this reformism, because for many years they had defended it. They were forlorn. They wanted to postpone the hour of the unavoidable reckoning. A member of the International Bureau told me at Paris that practically none of the members of the Bureau wanted the conference. That the conference was held after all was due to the fact

that no one member of the Bureau was willing to move it further postponement.

This spirit of indecision animated the entire conference.

It was assumed at first that the conference was purely informative, that its main purpose was to raise questions, to afford an opportunity for exchange of opinions, but not to adopt any binding resolutions. When the Bureau assembled on August 18, 1933, it became manifest that the original intent of a purely informative conference would not be possible. Once the conference was held, it was unthinkable that the conference should end without the adoption of some kind of a declaration.

But, what was the conference to adopt? A manifesto? A resolution? Or only theses to a resolution? The latter was adopted. But even this decision came to naught. The conference did adopt a resolution. The same thing happened with reference to a second decision of the Bureau on Germany.

The conference was to be a closed session. Only representatives of the socialist press were to be admitted. The Secretariat itself was supposed to issue detailed releases to the press. The Bureau held that even at such a closed conference, a frank and open discussion of the German situation at the plenary session was not advisable. All matters pertaining to past happenings, especially concerning Germany, were to be discussed at the Executive Committee meetings to be held August 19-20. At the plenary sessions the only problem for discussion was "What Next." (As if it were possible to divide the past from the future, that which has been, from that which is to be.)

When the session of the Executive Committee was called to order, there was not a member on the Executive who had the least desire to discuss the past, particularly the German past.

Chapter II

WELS AND STAMPFER ON THE GERMAN CATASTROPHE

The meeting opened with a report by the secretary of the International, Friedrich Adler. The report contained nothing about the German catastrophe which had not been known before. Following the reading of the report Otto Wels spoke.

Wels stated that he was fully aware of the blow received by the international socialist movement as a result of the German catastrophe. Also, that he was fully aware of the disillusionment and the disappointment in the leadership of the German Social Democratic movement. But, he continued, the German Social Democratic Party was really not to be blamed for the failure in Germany. The Social Democrats lost their hold on the Prussian government, not on the twentieth of July, when Von Papen set aside the Braun-Severing administration, but a month previous, when the administration had lost its majority in the Prussian Landtag elections. Braun wanted to resign immediately after these elections, but the executive committee of the party did not permit him to do so, and decided that it must hold on to power as long as possible. How we could hold on to power, no one, not even the leaders knew.

Why did not the Social Democratic Party declare a general strike immediately after July 20? Because, said Wels, a general strike would have involved the Bavarian workers. The ruling party in Bavaria was the Catholic Center Party which was then fighting Hitler. The Social Democratic Party was afraid that a general strike would have catapulted that party into the arms of Hitler. Nor could the Social Democrats consider an armed uprising because they were not sure of the behavior of the police. It was therefore decided to devote all energies to preparations for the next elections.

The influence of Hitler had begun to wane. In the November elections, which followed the July elections, Hitler lost two and a half million votes. The Social Democratic Party believed that this was the beginning of the end of Hitler. He was, however, saved by Von Papen, who succeeded in persuading Hindenburg to turn over the chancellorship to him.

The potential strength of the party had as yet not been touched. At the time, when asked about conditions in Germany at a meeting of the Bureau of the International, Wels felt justified in answering that Social Democracy was well prepared to meet the situation. Soon after, conflicts began to manifest themselves between different tendencies within the Social Democratic Party, between the party and the trade unions, and even between the party and the Reichsbanner. A conflict with the Reichsbanner had taken place much earlier, during the brief period of the Von Schleicher chancellorship. Von Schleicher wanted to centralize and bring under government supervision all sport and defense organizations in Germany. The reaction of the party to this proposal was negative. The Reichsbanner, however, was ready to take a positive position. When Schleicher was replaced by Hitler, these conflicts, of course, disappeared but the conflict with the trade unions became more acute. The Social Democratic Party was set on a general strike. It did not, however, want to call the strike without the consent of the trade unions. The trade unions declared that in principle they agreed, but . . . every occasion and every date proposed to them, was considered inadvisable. When the Karl Liebknecht house was taken by the Hitler forces, and the Communist Party was about to be declared illegal, Wels asked Leipart whether this was not the strategic moment in which to act. Leipart replied that it was too early. After the Reichstag fire, Leipart declared that a general strike was inconceivable because it would lead to civil war.

Within a very short time it was "too late." The new era of adaptation to the new regime had begun. Wels cited numerous efforts on the part of the trade unions to adapt themselves,—how the workers in various communities influenced the leaders not to resist the new regime for fear that the workers would be condemned to starvation, how he, Wels, appealed to Leipart, to urge the trade unions not to participate in the Hitler May 1st celebration, and how Leipart, already a broken man said "Now we must."

When Wels concluded, there was weak applause. A cold, oppressive atmosphere reigned. The chairman asked whether any one wanted the floor. No one responded. After prolonged silence, the Italian Modigliani arose. He did not want to criticize, he only wanted to understand, he explained, and therefore would like to put a few questions. Was it true, that the Social Democratic Police Commissioner of Berlin, Grezesinski, declared at the time of the July 20, 1932 decree, which set aside the Braum-Severing government in Prussia, that he was ready to arrest the Von Papen government, but that the executive committee of the party had forbidden him to do so?

Did the German Social Democrats believe that the coalition policies which they pursued were right and were productive of good results?

Why did the Social Democratic Party allow the Reichswehr to come under the domination of the reactionary elements? Why did they not make an effort during the early period of the Reichswehr's existence to retain their control over it?

These questions were answered by the former editor of the Berlin "Vorwaerts," Friedrich Stampfer, now editor of the "Neue Vorwaerts" published in Carlsbad.

He gave no direct answer to the first question. In essence, however, he confirmed the reports to which Modigliani referred. He confirmed Wels' statement to the effect that the

German Social Democratic Party had lost its control July 20, 1932. When Von Papen, on the 20th of July, set aside the Braun-Severing government, he was simply executing an order of the new Prussian Landtag passed with the aid of the votes of the Nazis, the German Nationalists and the Communists.

What were the forces which we could have mustered for the battle line, Stampfer asked? The Communist Party did proclaim a general strike. But, the mood of the communist masses was more characteristic than the decisions of the Communist Party. When the news that the Braun-Severing government had been deposed reached a large communist mass meeting in Kassel, it was received with cheers and enthusiasm. This was not surprising. It was the result of years of communist training.

With reference to the police force, the situation was just as bad. Grzesinski could count on only part of the Berlin police force, and since the Braun-Severing Government no longer existed legally, such an act on the part of the police would simply have been mutiny. . . .

As to the second question, Stampfer said that the Social Democratic Party never favored coalition. It was happy whenever it could leave a coalition government, but the situation was of such a nature that it was always compelled to participate.

Reactionary officers organized the Reichswehr, Stampfer replied to the third question, and it was they who chose the human material for it. The Social Democratic Party did call on the workers to join, but the workers being weary of war and reluctant again to bear arms refused. The Social Democratic organization of Berlin even forbade the "Vorwaerts" to print appeals to the workers urging them to join the Reichswehr. Hence, it is the fault of the German workers themselves that the Reichswehr became the tool of the reactionaries.

Again the chairman asked if there were any one who desired to take the floor. Another prolonged silence followed. Then the representative of Hungary, Buchinger, arose. The German Social Democratic Party, he said, could not have acted otherwise in the face of the Versailles treaty, the economic crisis and other objective determining factors. The party was under compulsion, but this was not understood by the masses. The Socialist International must therefore issue a pamphlet explaining the entire matter. . . .

Other speakers followed—Victor Tchernoff; a representative from Argentine. The matter of the Matteotti affair was brought up, and the entire discussion drifted away from the subject. I then took the floor in order to state the attitude of the Bund.

The Attitude of The Bund

I began by stating that the conference had been convened too late. Instead of hastening the call to the conference, the German events had just the opposite effect and delayed it. I expressed the conviction that the conference could not simply confine itself to discursive sessions as originally planned. The workers of the world were, as a result of our sessions, awaiting word of encouragement and direction. It was also necessary to reply to the babble of the bourgeois press, since the German tragedy, about the bankruptcy of Socialism. This could not be done merely by adopting theses as proposed by the Bureau. I supported the motion of Comrade Bracke that the conference issue a fiery manifesto, but at the same time I thought that this in itself would not be enough. I proposed also, that the conference adopt a set of resolutions which could serve as directives for the proletarian struggle in the near future.

I then proceeded to discuss the German situation.

I began by discussing the speech of the Hungarian delegate. His mode of thinking seemed to me to be typical of a

great number of leaders in the International. There is a strange fatalism in their attitude to the socialist movement. Whatever may happen, they are always prepared to justify it on the basis of "objective conditions." Whatever happened must have happened. The proof is that it has happened. There are even some leaders in the International who somehow manage to explain and justify everything done in the reformist parties as well as in Soviet Russia! As a result, the International is transformed into an institution which simply registers everything that happens. Before the German catastrophe we were assured that "Germany is not Italy." Afterwards, we simply registered our defeat and considered it something that was unavoidable. Shall we wait until sometime in the future when we shall come together again to register a new defeat? Do we need an international for such registrations? No, this is not the function of the International. It is the function of the International to be the guide and leader. If the latter be true, then we cannot be content simply with registering facts. We must judge them. It is not judgment of man with which we are concerned but judgment of political theories and tactics.

Modigliani asked the German delegates what they thought of the coalition policy of their party. Why ask such a question? Can there be more than one answer? Hitler is dictator of Germany, the leaders of the German Social Democratic Party are in exile, thousands of proletarians have been murdered, tens of thousands are in the concentration camps. That is the answer to Modigliani's query about the results of the coalition policy. It has strengthened the forces of the middle-class, paralyzed the forces of the working class, shackled the power of resistance of the party. When it should have acted on the 20th of July, the party was powerless to do anything. It did not call the general strike, not because "it was afraid to catapult the Catholic Center Party into the arms of Hitler"; the Catholic Center is under Hit-

ler's heel anyhow. This is on a par with Stampfer's explanation that "We could not call on the police to defend the Braun-Severing government, because under those conditions it would have been mutiny against the state."

Stampfer's statement about the history of the German Reichswehr is very characteristic. He wants to place the responsibility for the reactionary character of the Reichswehr upon the workers. They did not want to join the Reichswehr he says, because they were weary of the war and because they disliked the carrying of arms. But, I asked, why on the other hand did the Austrian workers join the Austrian military organizations, which at first numbered 90 percent Social Democrats? Why did the Russian workers join the Red Army? Were they less war weary than the German workers? Were they more in love with arms? No, it was because, at the head of the latter organizations, the workers saw leaders of their own whom they loved and trusted. The German Social Democratic Party, on the other hand, allowed reactionary officers who were hated and distrusted by the workers, to head the Reichswehr. And why should the German worker have joined the German Reichswehr? To serve a government controlled by capitalist parties? To defend the formal democracy of the German capitalist republic? This certainly could not awaken their enthusiasm. No, it is not the workers who are responsible for what the Reichswehr developed into; the responsibility rests on the policies of the German Social Democratic Party. The "Neue Vorwaerts" now calls on the German workers to fight for social democracy. Why didn't it do so when they had all of the power in their hands?

We must learn something from such an experience. We of course know how great a degree of responsibility rests upon the Communists. Their adventurist policy and especially their belief that they can serve the proletariat by splitting its ranks, have suffered ignominious defeat in Germany. But no

less is the defeat of the reformist policy, the policy of hanging on to formal democracy and legality. This must be made clear, not only that we may correctly judge the past, but also that we may learn how to act in the future. During the past few years, the German comrades continuously assured us that "Germany is not Italy." And what we now have in Germany is far worse than what we ever had in Italy. Now, our French comrades tell us that France is not Germany, and our English comrades are certain that England is not Germany. It would be our greatest misfortune if we were to allow ourselves to be lulled by this sense of false security. It would be still more unfortunate if it prevented us from realizing that the danger of Fascism is world wide, and that the only way to fight against it, is to fight for revolutionary Socialism. It is claimed, and justly so, that the key to the international situation at present is Germany. Should a revolutionary situation arise in Germany now, it would certainly mean a revolutionary situation for all of Europe. And vice versa, if a revolutionary situation should arise in any other great European country, or in more than one country, it would at once react on Germany. It would make the revolutionary struggle of the German working class much easier. We must always bear this in mind.

Wels replied to my speech. There wasn't a trace of his former self-assurance. He was ready to admit that the toleration policy was a mistake, but that on the whole the German Social Democratic Party was under compulsion. No resistance was possible in 1932 because there was no militancy among the workers. When in 1920, he sent out directions for the general strike against the Kapp Putsch, he felt as if he had applied a torch to a powder magazine. In July 1932, the same slogan for a general strike would have had the effect of throwing a torch into a barrel of wet straw.

Other important matters were discussed at that meeting. Of especial interest was Soviet Russia. The representative

of the Ukrainian Social Democratic Party, Fedenko, spoke about the famine in the Soviet Ukraine. He stated that the famine had grown to terrible dimensions. He thought the repressive measures of the Soviet government towards the Ukraine were responsible for it. The Soviet government requisitioned too large a share of the Ukrainian grain. He demanded that the Executive pass a resolution protesting against persecution of the Ukrainian nation.

Comrade Abramovitch replied sharply, stating that the famine was not a Ukrainian phenomenon, but an all-Russian problem, and that although it might reveal some defects in the general policies of the Soviet government, conditions in the Ukraine could not be ascribed to national persecution. This was pure nationalistic nonsense.

Renaudel also expressed the view that a protest resolution couldn't be adopted on the basis of a declaration by one member of the Executive. No decision was reached. The Executive Committee adjourned. The International conference was scheduled for the following morning.

The German Question at the International Conference

Before I report on the general work of the conference, I want to finish with the German question as discussed at the conference.

I have already said that there was little discussion on Germany at the meeting of the Executive Committee. There was still less at the conference. Only the representatives of the opposition spoke, and even they did not fully express themselves, merely hinting at the real problems. What can be the explanation? To a certain extent, it seems to me it can be explained psychologically. Most of the leaders of the German Social Democratic Party whom I met at the conference impressed me as broken men. Many of the delegates could not bring themselves to differentiate between their personal

feelings towards the German comrades and matters of principle. They could not rid themselves of the feeling that to criticize these comrades openly was to beat down the downtrodden.

On the other hand, many of the delegates were stirred by political motives. They did not think it politically wise to openly criticize the German Party, for were they not also in a certain sense responsible! The present International, for the ten years since its formation, has continually held that public criticism of inner party affairs was tactless and absolutely not permissible. Most parties within the International, have on the whole, openly and wholeheartedly defended the German Social Democratic Party. And this was not because of friendship, but because of the simple fact that reformism was not a monopoly of the Germans. Essentially, most of the parties in the International followed the same path the German party followed. Criticism of the German party would have been self-criticism. As a result there was nothing for them to do but to keep silent.

Some German delegates, however, did speak. And I do want to say a few words about these speeches. The first to speak was Otto Wels. This speech was unlike the one he delivered at the Executive. There, he spoke as a broken down man, as one conscious of his guilt, although without courage to admit it, as one who tries to explain away instead of defending his actions. At the executive session, Wels realized that he was addressing members of the International only.

In his speech at the conference, however, he was surer of himself. He took the offensive. He thought it necessary at this conference to "cast aside the accusations" that the German Social Democracy was not nationalistic enough, that it had not shown sufficient interest in the needs of the German nation. In short, in speaking as he did, Wels had his German audience in mind rather than the audience at the conference.

It was a harrowing speech. Incidentally my gaze fell on

the French delegate Marquet. With his characteristic smile, he listened to Wels. Marquet himself hasn't too great a belief in internationalism. What a joy it must have been to him to listen to the nationalistic utterances of Wels.

The speech of the second German delegate, Comrade Aufhauser, was of an entirely different character. "The German Social Democratic Party" he said, "has never been a homogeneous reformist bloc. During the entire post war period there were sharp ideological struggles within the party." Aufhauser himself belonged to the moderately left wing. His speech was cautious in its form, but very critical in its content. The faults of the German Party lay much further back than July 1932, or for that matter the first few years after the war. They rooted back to 1914. He spoke of the fetishism of political democracy among the German Social Democrats. He recalled the haste with which political power was turned over to the bourgeois constituent assembly in 1919, and what a fatal mistake it had been not to organize a workers' government after the victorious general strike of 1920 (against the Kapp Putsch). He stated how unfortunate it was that the trade unions were entirely independent of the Socialist movement. Aufhauser spoke of the inevitability of an "educational dictatorship" as a transitory step to Socialism. He finished his speech with a few enthusiastic remarks about the new proletarian youth in Germany which was heroically building a new united revolutionary movement and laying the cornerstone for the future socialist Germany.

Aufhauser's speech was not the only effective speech at the conference. But no other speech impressed the delegates quite as much as this one did. It was a German delegate who spoke, one who had gone through all of the experiences himself. And what was more, one who had never belonged to the extremists of the party. The speech by a third German delegate, Comrade Bebel, was of the same character. Bebel was the president of the German Social Democratic Group

in the Saxon Landtag, the same Bebel who was among the first victims of the Nazi victory. In a private conversation with me, he expressed his complete agreement with the minority resolutions introduced at the conference. Why neither he nor Aufhauser afterwards voted for these resolutions still remains the inner secret of the German delegation.

Reformism Is Still Alive

Some comrades would like to have us believe that reformism is purely a matter of imagination. It is true, they admit, that it did exist before the war, but it does not exist now. They should have heard the speech of the Danish delegate, Comrade Andersen. That would have convinced them that reformism was still very much alive.

"It would be very unfortunate," he said, "if the workers, as a result of our discussions, would gather the impression that recent events compel us to seek new ways and new methods for carrying on our struggle. I should like to warn against the statements made here to the effect that the German events mean the end and bankruptcy of reformism. It is one of those slogans that result in dangerous illusions and leads to dangerous generalizations."

Andersen affirmed that reformism was alive and should continue to be alive, and that it had produced good results in the country in which it had developed.

Andersen's was not the only speech of its kind. Reformist, through and through were also the speeches of Dalton of England, Vougt of Sweden, Winter of Vzecho-Slovakia, to say nothing of the French delegates, Renaudel and Marquet. Dalton ironically referred to the "Marxian prayers" at the conference. More pronouncedly, the same thought was expressed by delegate Vougt.

"The conference must remember that the expression Marxism is at present used in a variety of ways. I doubt whether it is so wise to say that we are Marxian and want to become

more Marxian than we are (this was in reply to a statement by Adler. H.E.). Adler said we need more internationalism. That's true, but we must first clearly understand what that means. There is danger that we may develop a formula which may be beautiful but which may not be applicable. If the International wants to succeed it must openly and unequivocally state, regardless of all theories destined for the far distant future, that we defend democracy, the freedom of nations. We do not want a proletarian dictatorship. We want to preserve the democratic institutions."

And again,

"Let us discuss the conquest of power, but let us talk less about how to go about making revolutions. When the International will appeal to the League of Nations for peace and freedom, for the struggle against war, and for the defense of democracy, its purpose will be clearly understood, and its power will be manifest."

This group of delegates (England, Sweden, Denmark and Holland) clearly formed a distinct group at the Paris conference. Their representatives utilized every opportunity to express their reformist attitudes. They felt very sure of themselves. Hardly any of them ever mentioned Germany. This is easy to understand. Had they mentioned Germany they could hardly have avoided the question of why there were such lamentable results in Germany if the way they recommended was so desirable. This group of delegates drew only one conclusion from the German catastrophe: Since the German Social Democratic Party, the most important party in the International, had failed, the leadership must fall to those countries where there was "sound democracy." The Swedish delegate Vougt, maintained this quite openly. "We must understand," he said, "that the International will find its strength and leadership in those countries where the working class and democracy are still alive and forceful,"

However, this group of northern parties which fought so valiantly to defend democracy against the attacks of the left wing, does not practice democracy to any appreciable extent within its own ranks. Not a single representative of the opposition in their own parties was to be found in their combined delegations. This created the erroneous impression that there were no oppositions in their parties. At the Paris conference this group really constituted a homogeneous reformist bloc that tried to force its will upon the conference.

In addition to this extreme right group, there was a second group of delegates, which together with the northern group constituted the majority of the delegates. To this second group belong such countries as Austria, Belgium, part of France and Switzerland. These countries are threatened in greater measure by Fascism than the northern countries. In addition they have a more intensive party life than the British or the Swedish parties. They could not fail to note the German events. These events served as a powerful stimulus to party thought. But ideological party clarification has as yet not been achieved in these countries. The struggle between new and old is still going on in these countries. Meanwhile, they are vacillating.

The resolution of the conference was the result of the compromise between these two groups.

The Majority Resolution

There were three problems on the agenda of the conference: one, the road to power; two, the struggle for proletarian unity; three, the war danger. All three were united under one heading "The Tactics and Strategy of the Working Class." All three were discussed together. As a result, from the beginning to the end of the conference, the discussion drifted from one topic to another, with the result that not one of the subjects was discussed thoroughly. It is therefore

quite natural that no real solution was reached on any of them. The right leaders of the International felt that the disillusionment of the workers would be intensified if the conference were to end without a definite statement. But they could not give a positive and unequivocal answer to any of these problems. They chose "the middle of the road." They adopted a resolution that says nothing. They gave an answer that does not solve.

Let us take the first problem. The discussion of this problem centered around (a) the question of democracy and dictatorship; (b) our relations to the middle class. The right wing leaders at the conference tried stubbornly to convince the conference that democracy was good and dictatorship bad. As if any one, even the most unthinking communist, would believe that fascist dictatorship was better than democracy. The question is whether the working class can attain power and begin realizing the socialist ideal through purely democratic means. The decline of capitalism seems to carry with it the decline of bourgeois democracy. Capitalism is becoming fascistic. Can the working class win in the race against Fascism by purely democratic means? Can it, on the road to its goal, succeed without resorting to the proletarian dictatorship?

To these questions the resolution offers no answer. The only "new" note in the resolution is that in those countries where Fascism has already been victorious, the working class will have to use revolutionary means to fight it. When this resolution was discussed in the resolutions committee, the writer asked whether it had been worth while calling an international conference to proclaim this axiomatic truth. Was this the only thing we had learned from the German events? Even under the Hitler regime an effort was made in Germany to fight Fascism by reformist means. On the 17th of May some Socialists even voted confidence in the Hitler regime. It did not help them. The reformist way

was blocked for them. What then is new in this resolution? The international working class movement adhered to the methods of the revolutionary class struggle long before the advent of Fascism. Does this resolution imply that in those countries where Fascism has not yet arrived, revolutionary methods of the class struggle are inapplicable? This attitude was shared by all of the representatives of the left wing minority in the resolutions committee.

As a result of the discussion, only one section of the resolution was accentuated. This section deals with those countries in which democracy is in immediate danger of Fascism. In these countries the resolution says,—“The working class must endeavor by every means at its disposal to repel the attacks of Fascism.” But at the Vienna Conference, 1931, the same thought had been expressed even more forcefully than at Paris. No wonder. At Vienna it was still possible to hope that the fascist reaction could be intimidated by a threatening resolution.

Equally fruitless was the debate about the so-called middle classes. No one doubts that the working class needs the support of these classes for its victory. The problem that confronts us is how to get that support. By adapting ourselves to these classes, by entering into coalitions with bourgeois parties which up to now represented these classes? Or, should the working class try to influence these classes directly, through its determined revolutionary program and revolutionary tactics? To this problem there was no answer by the conference.

A vehement argument took place at the conference, or rather behind the scenes, that is in committee, on the problem of the struggle for unity of the working class. This problem has a history behind it. Let us briefly recount this history. On February 19, 1933, the Bureau of the International published its well known manifesto on the united front with the Communists. This was done mainly under pressure of the

conditions in Germany. The manifesto was greeted with joy by all sections of the International. On March 5, that is, on the day of the German elections, the Communist International replied. The reply was insincere and cowardly. On March 18, the Executive Committee of the International met to reply to the Communist International. But, meanwhile noteworthy events had occurred. During those two weeks, the mighty German labor movement had collapsed. From the point of view of the German Social Democratic leaders, the united front as a defense against Hitlerism lost all practical value. And the Communist International felt relieved of the “oppressive burden” of the possibility of a real united front. The communist leaders invented the formula of “the positive role” of Hitlerism. Hitler had accomplished, in a short space of time what the Communists long had tried to do without success, namely the destruction of the Social Democratic Party. Under these circumstances the Executive Committee of the International, with enthusiasm lacking, declared that although it did not believe in the sincerity of the Communist International, it was nevertheless still ready to negotiate further for a united front. But it made no new advances to the Communist International.

At the Paris Conference, a number of parties demanded that the International take concrete steps for the realization of the united front. They constitute the entire French delegation, with the exception of the Renaudel-Marquet group, the entire Austrian delegation, the left minority of the Italian Party, led by Nenni, and Grimm of Switzerland. The mood of the French Party is characterized by the fact that in committee meetings even Renaudel made the following declaration: “For my own part, as well as for the group which I represent, I may state that we are against concrete proposals for a united front, but I hold that the International, once having made a decision, should not retract it. I will therefore not vote against such a proposal.”

The delegations from England, Sweden, Denmark and Holland vehemently opposed any concrete proposals. This was particularly true of the first two. The friction within the committee was so strong that the first committee of four was unable to present any resolution whatsoever to the conference. The "happy compromise" was found by another committee of eleven, which adopted a very general resolution that affirms "the determined will of the International to do everything in its power to reunite the splintered forces of the working class." In the resolution, there isn't even a hint of any concrete steps which might be taken towards the realization of this unity. The conference had found a formula which made it possible for two opposite tendencies to make the following opposed declarations. The Swedish delegate Vougt declared in the name of the Swedish and Danish delegates, that according to their interpretation of the resolution the Executive Committee had no right to approach the Communist International or negotiate with it, while Otto Bauer declared, in the name of the majority of the committee, that the Executive Committee had the right.

In the debates at the conference little was said about the struggle against the dangers of war. The resolution constitutes only a minor part of the general declaration. The problem of war danger was discussed extensively before the conference at the meeting of the joint disarmament committee of the Socialist and Trade Union Internationals.

The resolution which this committee submitted is impossible. It was almost inconceivable after what the world had gone through in the last two years that a workers' organization could still come out with such moldy thoughts. In the face of the complete failure of the Disarmament Conference, the framers of the resolution declare, as if nothing had happened, that "The general Disarmament Conference of the League of Nations must resume its work without further delay with the determination to secure an effective reduction

of armaments." The resolution solemnly declares that above all else, "Among the measures they consider most essential the two Internationals underline the necessity for the complete abolition of the private manufacture of armaments and the creation of a system of supervision exercised permanently that would function in all countries." As if world peace would be assured if the business of manufacturing munitions were controlled by fascist governments instead of by private manufacturers!

The resolution does state that the "general strike remains the supreme weapon of working class action against war," after all means of political and parliamentary pressure have been "tried and proved unavailing." But this method of combat should be applied against that government which is guilty of provoking war. The resolution explains explicitly the procedure by which the "guilty" nation may be recognized (with the help of the League of Nations).

A painful discussion took place in the resolutions committee. Leon Blum said he could not imagine that the conference could unanimously accept such a resolution. The English delegate Gillies replied that the non-acceptance of this resolution would precipitate a serious crisis in the relations between the Socialist and Trade Union Internationals.

The meeting of the committee was recessed. A new meeting of the joint committee was called. A compromise was then reached which consisted in adding a paragraph to the resolution which stipulates how Socialist parties must act in case of war: They will have to preserve the independence and fighting spirit of their organizations. And they are to uphold their international relations. But what does this mean? Does it mean that Socialists will be allowed to support a war or participate during war time in coalition governments with bourgeois parties? Or not? The obligation to uphold the independence of the party does not at all refer to such a situation. Was there a party which participated

in such coalitions during the war, which did not claim that it was preserving its independence?

This question also remained unanswered. The terrible spectre of "civil peace," (Burgfrieden) of socialist war politics again crept out in the conference hall.

The resolution adopted by the conference indicates that reformism exists not merely in the imagination of the left wingers, but is a formidable danger to the international socialist movement. Events in recent years have brought confusion into the ranks of the reformists. But reformism is alive and the possibility of reformist mistakes and crimes has not been eliminated. To fight against this danger, to utilize its ideological failures in the interest of revolutionary Socialism, that is the task of the left wing within the Socialist International.

The Left Minority at The Paris Conference

When the Bund delegation arrived in Paris, we found we were not the only left wing delegation. We found many friends and co-workers. Among the first of these were Comrades Zyromski and Senior.

Zyromski is one of the leaders of the Bataille Socialist group in the French Party, that is of the group which had an absolute majority at the last convention of the French Party. At the Paris Conference, Zyromski's group was in the minority. At the Vienna Conference this group did not take an independent position, but at the Paris Conference they took a position in opposition to the majority of the French delegation. On the eve of the conference we had no means of knowing how many of the French delegation would vote with the minority. It soon, however, became clear that a formidable part would openly join the minority opposition, and another part would give its silent approval.

Comrade Clarence Senior is the national secretary of the Socialist Party of America. We had met him at the Vienna

Conference. At that time he was in the minority of the American delegation and participated in the caucuses of the left delegates. At the Paris Conference, however, Comrade Senior headed a delegation which was left in its majority. (Four lefts of six delegates.)

We were soon joined by Comrade Spaak of Belgium. He was the only left winger in the Belgium delegation. He is, however, now the leader of a group within the Belgian Party that is constantly growing in numbers and influence. Our group was also joined by two Italian delegates, and one from the Esthonian Party.

Besides, another Italian delegate, and part of the Swiss delegation were in close contact with us. Also nine of the conference guests expressed their complete agreement with the minority resolution. Unfortunately, because of the political situation in Latvia, no Lettish delegate was present. It is almost certain that the Lettish delegation would have been with the opposition.

The opposition thus assembled twelve signatures for its resolution, and eighteen votes. (The guests, of course, could neither sign nor vote.) Eighteen votes out of three hundred! Well, that's more than the five out of three hundred polled at the Vienna Conference. This is a very small vote, but to understand it one must bear the following circumstances in mind:

No matter how democratic a party may be, a considerable amount of conservatism manifests itself in clinging to its old established leadership, especially when it comes to the election of delegates to the International conference.

Therefore although many significant changes may occur within a party, these changes do not find expression among the delegates at the International congresses. This is where tradition clings longer and is more obdurate.

Again, it had been the practice at the International to vote according to the unit rule. If a party were right in its ma-

majority, the entire delegation voted right. The left minorities within these parties could not find expression.

There was still one more rule in the post war International. All resolutions had to be adopted unanimously. This was supposed to indicate unity in the International. In reality it served to cover up the inner contradictions within it.

This rule was broken for the first time in Vienna. We were appealed to on all sides, not to destroy the unity of the International. In Paris, no appeals of this kind were made. It was clear that the minority would propose its own resolutions. Comrade Adler, secretary of the International, officially recognized our right to demand a procedure of voting that would permit us to express our ideas and to count our vote.

In the harmful practice of supposed unity a break has been made, but the tradition itself has not yet been broken. The fear of voting counter to the majority was still very strong among the delegates. At the Vienna Conference there were many delegates who were dissatisfied with the majority resolutions. Their number increased at the Paris Conference, but they lacked the courage to vote with the minority, especially when the minority was so small.

Under these circumstances, it is much more important to analyze the forces behind the majority and the minority at the conference than the actual votes cast by them.

Who in addition to our own party, the Bund, is with the minority? Even if we are careful not to exaggerate, we may say that it has behind it a large part of the French Party, a majority of the American Party, part of the Italian Party, and part of the Estonian Party. These represented the eighteen votes cast by the minority resolution. The Swiss delegates were not present when the vote was taken. (One of its delegates, Robert Grimm expressed his regrets in his speech that the Vienna Two and a Half International had been dissolved too early.) The Lettish delegation had, as before stated, been unable to attend. Comrade Spaak partici-

pated in the framing of the resolution and brilliantly defended it at the conference. But, he had no right to vote with us because of the unit rule.

I will not go into an analysis of the votes cast for the majority resolution, and the relation of the forces between right and left in the different parties. I cannot however refrain from analyzing the vote of one delegation. Forty votes were cast for the majority resolution by Otto Wels in the name of the German delegation. I doubt whether any one in the International believes that Wels now has the right to speak in the name of the Social Democratic workers in Germany.

And last, one more thing that is of great importance. Among the majority delegates at the Paris Conference, a frightful ideological confusion, and as a consequence a mood of depression, reigned. Otto Bauer said: ". . . At no time were the differences of opinion within our International so great as today. The differences of opinion are as deep as the difference between a Socialist Cabinet minister of Sweden, and the tortured socialist worker in a Hitler concentration camp."

A lively and hopeful mood prevailed among the left wing delegates. It came as a result of a real, sincere unity of thought.

Before the conference, we held at least ten caucuses. Together, we framed the resolutions, discussed tactics at the conference, and mapped out our future work. There was not one disturbing element in our discussions. In order to achieve unity, we were not compelled to resort to any compromise. When Comrade Alter expressed our views at the conference there was not one among the left wing delegates who did not fully agree with him. The same may be said about the speeches of Zyromski and Spaak. During the entire time we worked in an atmosphere of warm comradeship and true internationalism.

In this unanimity Paris resembled Vienna. In Vienna, we also had no differences of opinion, but we had a foreboding of the coming splits which later took place in Germany, Holland and England. Our delegation warned the comrades against this fatal step, but we left Vienna with heavy hearts. We felt that our warning would not hinder our comrades from making a false step. At the Paris Conference we already had behind us the sad experiences of the Sozialistische Arbeiter Partei in Germany, the Independent Labor Party in England and others. None of us now had any doubts about our organizational path for the future.

We consider the Paris Conference the starting point of a new offensive on the part of revolutionary Socialism. We believe that the time is now ripe for an international congress that should decide on definite, clear political directives for the international socialist movement. Since the majority at this conference took the attitude that this was nothing but a consultative session, we made use of it as best we could to make our ideas clear. At the conclusion of the conference, Comrade Zyromski declared in the name of the minority that "the theoretical and tactical differences expressed in our discussions must, as rapidly as possible, be brought before the entire membership of the International in order that by free interplay of inner democracy the membership could decide upon the principles of the struggle that must now be raised along the entire class front of the International." Our declaration further said: "In order to help towards greater clarification of the present dangerous situation, we leave our resolutions to the judgment of the organized masses, having the fullest confidence in their class instincts, in their willingness to fight, and in their longing for true democracy."

We, the left wing delegates, left Paris with the determination to wage the struggle for our revolutionary ideas among the many millions of the masses within the International,

and to do this with the closest and most brotherly sort of cooperation.

I have dealt with the mood at the conference in such detail not only because it is important in itself, and of course interesting, but also because I now want to tell you about another conference that took place in Paris at the same time, the conference of the left socialist parties and groups. I want to tell you what a sorry picture of ideological confusion permeated that conference.

The Conference of the Left Socialist Parties in Paris The Make-Up of the Conference

The conference of the left wing socialist parties was held in Paris immediately preceeding the conference of the Socialist International. Eighteen parties and groups participated, fourteen with power to vote, each having one vote. Who were these participants and what did they represent?

The Independent Labor Party of England needs no introduction. The Bund had always been in close contact with the ILP. I will discuss the present situation in the ILP later.

The Independent Socialist Party, its youth section and the so-called Revolutionary Socialist Party came from Holland. In the last elections, for the first time the Independent Socialist Party put up its own candidates and polled twenty thousand votes, but elected no one. The Revolutionary Socialist Party succeeded in electing one of its candidates.

The Norwegian Labor Party was present. The Bund had also been in close contact with this party.

The Sozialistische Arbeiter Partei of Germany was also represented. It is hardly necessary to tell you what happened to this party after the Hitler victory. The SAP has practically disintegrated. The Central Committee of the SAP

officially declared the party dissolved. Later, a group of active members, mostly former member of the opposition communist groups came together and declared the party still alive. There is no way of knowing what its strength and influence may now be.

Two communist opposition groups participated, one from Sweden, the other from Spain. In Sweden, as is well known, there are two communist parties, one an orthodox Stalinist which has no significance whatsoever, and the other an opposition. The latter has a few representatives in Parliament who frequently vote with the Socialist Democratic faction. The Spanish Communist Federation (opposition) claims to have eighteen thousand members.

The French group known as the Pupists, that is the Party of Proletarian Unity, and its youth section also participated. It is a very weak group constantly growing weaker. The Italian Maximalists were there, and the International Bureau of the Trotskyites, the Polish Independents, and a number of other absolutely insignificant groups like the Lenin Bund of Germany, the Communist Group of Ruth Fischer, the so-called Socialist Unity Group of Roumania, the Russian Left Social Revolutionists, the extreme left group of the French Socialist Party, the so-called Action Socialiste. Each of these groups consists of a few people, the largest among them being the French group, which at the last French Party convention polled seventy-four votes out of 3000.

A painful incident occurred with reference to this last group. After its representative had formulated the attitude of his group to the other delegates at the conference, a representative of the Independent Socialist Party of Holland moved that the entire group, Action Socialiste, should be expelled from the conference. The situation became very embarrassing. At last the delegate from Holland withdrew his motion, and the representative of the Action Socialiste then declared that he was only an observer.

The Situation in the Independent Labor Party

The conference devoted considerable attention to the situation in the ILP. This party is in a critical condition. Since the ILP left the Labor Party and the Labor and Socialist International and began to establish close connections with the Communist International, a communist wing has arisen that practically dominates the leadership of the party. It is characteristic of the situation in the ILP, that neither Fenner Brockway, who until recently was chairman of the Party, or Paton, its secretary of many years standing represented it. Fenner Brockway was there with no voice, only as chairman of the International Bureau of Left Parties. Paton did have the right to vote, but . . . as representative of the Polish Independents who gave him the mandate. Of the well known leaders of the ILP only Maxton was among the delegates, and he ran third. The other two were new persons who represented the new pro-communist tendency in the party.

How disastrous this new policy of the ILP has been is evident. The party is going to pieces and the Communists make no secret of the fact that all they desire of the ILP is to recruit from it as large a following as possible for their own party, and to destroy the rest.

The tragic condition in which the ILP now finds itself is lamented by all of its friends. Every one at the left wing conference was very much concerned about the ILP. The representative of the Norwegian Labor Party declared that "The tendency in the ILP towards the Communist International has surprised our Party which considers this tendency catastrophic." The representative of the Communist Opposition Party of Sweden told the ILP delegates of the experiences that his party had had with the Communist International. He declared openly that no good can result in follow-

ing this policy. The ILP decided to open negotiations with the Comintern. His party had done that long ago. The negotiations had brought no results. The Comintern will either subjugate the ILP or split it. The ILP was already full of inner conflicts. The splitting process had already begun. He warned the English comrades that they were pursuing a false and treacherous path.

The representative of the Spanish Communist Federation agreed fully with the Swedish delegate. His party, he said, had had the same experiences with the Communist International. The representative of the Revolutionary Socialist Party followed and declared that he "warns the ILP against its present policy because it is clear that the Communist International will destroy it."

This was the position also of the old, experienced leaders of the ILP as well as of the entire conference, with the exception of the two new comrades who represented the ILP.

The conference naturally did not assemble for the purpose of warning the ILP. It had more important work to do. Its major objective was to discuss and to draw logical conclusions from the German events, and as a result, to decide whether a new international of left parties should be organized. This question consumed most of the time, the two days of the conference. On this question the ILP stood alone. All of the other parties were against it. But when it came to a vote, it became clear that among the other delegations there were also deep differences of opinion, frightful confusion and distrust of each other.

Where Does the Responsibility for the German Catastrophe Lie?

On the question of the responsibility for the German catastrophe all with the exception of the ILP were agreed. The

responsibility rests upon both parties—the Social Democratic and the Communist, as well as upon both Internationals. The main question in the discussion was on the measure of responsibility of each of these parties.

The representative of the ILP held that the events in Germany had demonstrated the complete bankruptcy of the Social Democratic policies. The Communist Party, of course, was also responsible, but "in its revolutionary concepts it appeared to be sound. Its failure is the result only of its incorrect tactics."

All other parties opposed this point of view.

The representative of the Independent Party of Holland declared that both parties in Germany and both Internationals were bankrupt. The failure of the communist movement is much greater than that of the Social Democratic movement. He hoped, he said, that at this hour the Communist International would have done something decisive in Germany. But, the communist movement in Germany was destroyed just as completely as the Social Democratic movement. Moreover, he had believed that Soviet Russia, the vanguard of the proletarian movement of the world, would take the initiative in some such decisive action, that it would even be ready to sacrifice some of its own economic positions in order to take up the fight against Hitlerism. Instead, Soviet Russia stretched out its hand to Hitler right after his victory, and entered into an agreement with him. The speaker went on further to relate the reply that his party received with reference to an economic boycott against Hitler's Germany. The reply was that the economic interests of Soviet Russia did not permit it to participate in such a boycott. Consequently, the communists could not accept it either. The Independents of Holland believe however, that international solidarity should come above all else: "If one branch of the International movement will be allowed to put its own interests

above the interests of the movement, it will harm the entire movement."

The representative of the Sozialistische Arbeiter Partei very energetically declared that he could not share the views of the ILP. "The policy of the Communist International in its practice, as well as in its results, was explicitly counter-revolutionary." The Sozialistische Arbeiter Partei was of the opinion, that "without Stalin, there would be no Hitler." "An energetic struggle must be waged against the Communist International." "The policy of the Communist International weakens and undermines the position of Soviet Russia."

The representative of the Lenin Bund declared that he was also of the opinion that the Communist International was counter revolutionary in its results.

The Trotskyites together with the Sozialistische Arbeiter Partei of Germany and the Revolutionary Socialist Party of Holland introduced a resolution which contained an extraordinarily sharp criticism of the Communist International in Europe and Asia. The resolution rejects emphatically the theory of "Socialism in one country" and declares that "the Communist Party of Germany, under unusually favorable circumstances of economic, social and political crisis, had shown that it was absolutely incompetent as a revolutionary party. And this incompetency has brought upon it, its utter destruction." The resolution further stated that "the present Communist International has learned nothing from the German catastrophe, and can be nothing but an impediment to the revolutionary upsurge of the proletariat."

I have dealt only with the most characteristic statements, but I think that this is sufficient. The attitude of the entire conference was contrary to the attitude of the ILP on the Communist International. The question before the conference then was, what now? What should be done? On this important question no unanimity could be found.

For and Against a Fourth International

Let us again begin with the ILP.

In conformity with its attitude towards the Communist International the ILP is opposed to the formation of a new, a "fourth" international. Its representative at the conference declared that his party was seeking "unity of all revolutionary efforts." This means a united front of all left socialist parties and the Communist International. The ILP is ready to admit that this is impossible under the present conditions and the present policies of the Communist International. If the left wing parties were again publicly to criticize the Communist International, in the opinion of the ILP this would not make unity more possible, but less possible. A new international would be even more harmful than a united front, because that would mean war with the Communist International. The ILP, so its representative stated, sees the defects of the Communist International, but considers it a revolutionary international and believes that through close association and cooperation, it may be possible to improve it. If it should be proved that the Communist International is a counter-revolutionary organization, the ILP would then agree to the formation of a new international. It does not, however, believe this will prove to be true.

The Trotskyites, the SAP and the Revolutionary Socialists of Holland were opposed to such a position. They proposed that the conference declare, frankly and openly, that there were no possibilities of reforming either of the existing Internationals. The only thing to be done was to organize a new international.

The representative of the Revolutionary Socialist Party of Holland expressed the opinion that the organization of a new international was most pressing because, if the fight against the Communist International will not be taken up at once, the latter will proceed with its work which is destructive and harmful to the international working-class movement.

The Independent Party of Holland also declared itself in favor of a fourth international. The words of Peter Schmidt, its representative, were very characteristic. He was the reporter for the resolutions committee. In his summation of the general discussion, he asked the ILP whether it thought the road it was pursuing led to the masses. He believed that it did not. "The ILP has succeeded 'succssfully' in isolating itself from the working masses. Its policies led to the disintegration of the party, now divided into many factions, which are occupied in discussing, not tactics to be pursued by their own party, but only its relations to other parties. The efforts to cooperate with the Communist International have resulted in failure in every European country. Testimonials to this effect have been submitted at our meeting, by no less than ten representatives of ten different parties and groups."

Schmidt and his party were therefore for a new international. In the discussion, speaking for himself and not for his party, he used one very "original" additional argument for a fourth international. Eighty percent of the party which he represents, he said, consists of very young people, for whom neither of the two existing Internationals has any special significance. Therefore he was in favor of a new international.

Also in favor of a new international was the representative of the Lenin-Bund. But, he said, we must be clear about the new conditions under which the new international will have to carry on its work. Many European countries have adopted state capitalism. This also applies to the Soviet Union.

The other countries represented, for motives of their own, were against the formation of a fourth international. The representative of the French Pupists thought the worst evil in the working class movement was the poisonous relations and the bitter struggles not only between Socialists and

Communists, but between Communist and Communist, as evidenced by this left conference. An appeal for unity should be made to all parties of both existing Internationals.

The representative of the Spanish Communist Federation drew the attention of the conference to the fact that both existing Internationals were quite strong. He did not believe that efforts for a new international would prove successful. To assure the success of a new international, two things were necessary: Some great historical event, and at least, one large party to serve as a backbone. Neither of these is present.

Most "original" of all was the representative of the French group Action Socialiste. He did not think a new international was necessary because the work of such an international could be done by . . . the Amsterdam Anti-War Congress, or the Paris Anti-Fascist Congress. He was sharply rebuked by the representatives of the Revolutionary Socialist Party of Poland who "informed" him that both congresses were nothing but "Communist comedies."

An entirely different view was taken by the Norwegian Labor Party. Its representatives came out categorically against a new international. Should the conference decide upon a new international, the Norwegian Party would sever its connections with the International Left Opposition. "It was time to stop isolating ourselves from the masses," its representative said. Instead, we should seek greater contact with them. In our time unity is of greater importance than anything else. The Norwegian Labor Party believes that there are elements within both the Socialist and the Communist Internationals that sympathize with the opinions and attitudes of the left conference, and that it is possible to conduct propaganda within both Internationals to this end. We must strive to cooperate with these elements. It is to be regretted that no way has been found to make possible participation by these elements in our conference.

Many caustic remarks were hurled at the Norwegian Party for this attitude. The Swedish delegate remarked that the Norwegian Labor Party had moved to the right at its last party convention. The Trotskyites said that the Norwegian Party was moving towards the Socialist International, etc. Peter Schmidt (Holland) declared that although his party was for a new international, it would participate in no action that would isolate it from such parties as the Norwegian Party.

Another painful incident occurred at the conference when the question of an international committee to help the victims of terror was discussed. Steinberg (Russian Left Social Revolutionary) reminded his comrades of Socialists in Russian jails and in exile. A Trotskyite then remarked that the victims of the Bolshevik terror must also, of course, be helped, but a distinction must always be made between revolutionists and counter-revolutionists. Steinberg understood well the meaning of this "distinction" and protested against the Trotskyite allusion to the Left S.R. as counter-revolutionists.

The proposal for a fourth international was defeated. A resolution, ten to four, was adopted which declared that both Internationals were bankrupt, but the resolution doesn't contain one word about a new international.

Other questions were discussed at the conference, but these discussions have no political significance.

The Socialist Movement After the Paris Conference

The Paris Conference of the Labor and Socialist International satisfied no one. Its decisions are pale. The resolution on war and disarmament is harmful. Some comrades were so disappointed that they began to consider the position of the left wing in the L.S.I. hopeless. Let us see.

One must be blind not to be able to discern the tremendous

changes that have taken place during the past year in the mood of the proletarian masses organized with in the L.S.I. Among those unable to see the changes are comrades who can not free themselves from the false idea that the radicalization of the socialist masses can be expressed in one form only: in leaving the Socialist International. Experience has shown the contrary. The socialist masses are being radicalized, but they have no thought of leaving the L.S.I.

The events in Germany have, of course, affected the workers of Germany more than the workers of any other country. From all that we know about present day Germany, the German workers are less inclined to leave their party in favor of any other party, such as the Communist Party or the S.A.P., or any other of the numerous communist opposition groups. But, they are turning aside decisively from the tactics formerly used by their party*. They are discarding the intellectual hegemony of their erstwhile leaders, and under the horrible conditions of the Hitler terror, are building up a new party with a fresh and revolutionary spirit.

This process is apparent not only in Germany. Is not the French situation where the battle between the left and right wing is being fought out before our very eyes at the present moment characteristic? Does not this indicate the radicalization of the masses? The French Socialist Party was unique in its form of organization. In no socialist party did such laxity exist, such lack of discipline. Today we see signs of a complete reversal in this respect in the French Socialist Party. The socialist workers of France show a determined and well-ordered will to eradicate the inner laxness of the party, to convert it into a strong well disciplined, well organized army, into a valid, powerful instrument, in their struggle for free-

*Since this was written the German Social Democratic Party has adopted a new program which repudiates its former social reformism, and signifies a return to revolutionary Socialism. (Translators).

dom. Is it necessary to have more convincing evidence of the road the French Socialist Party is now taking than the fact that the party mercilessly expelled from its ranks the most prominent and talented representatives of French reformism, people who for years and years had the mandate to speak in the name of the party, both within France proper and in the international arena.

The deep radicalization of the Belgian labor movement has frequently been described in the columns of our press. In Switzerland, under the neighbourly influence of Germany, a fascist movement is developing, but at the same time, the strength and class consciousness of the Swiss proletariat is growing.

And now England. It is about time that we discarded the foolish habit introduced into the working class movement by the Communists, namely, the habit of identifying a movement with one or the other of its right wing leaders. The German Social Democratic Party has been known by the term, Noske; the French by Paul-Boncour or Renaudel; the English by MacDonald. Today, all of these have been expelled from the working-class movements of their respective countries, or have left them of their own accord because they found themselves in absolute contradiction to the movements. It would therefore be incorrect and unwise to describe the large working class movement of England which is so energetically striving to attain power and which is creating such panic in the hearts of the English bourgeoisie, as identical with the name of one or the other of its right leaders.

These examples are sufficient to demonstrate that for the Socialist International, for the millions organized in it, the German events in particular, and the experiences of the past few years in general, have been not in vain.

A thoroughgoing radicalization appears to be developing among these masses. And this is not one iota less important

than the evolution of the two or three hundred representatives who assembled at the International Conference and Congress.

Besides, while writing about the Paris Conference of the Labor and Socialist International, I have shown that even the atmosphere of the conference was different from that which prevailed heretofore. Aside from an outspoken reform wing on the one side and a left wing on the other, there was a centrist group which had not yet severed itself ideologically from reformism. The firmness of their belief was, as a result of events and because of pressure from below, materially weakened and completely broken.

* * *

Certainly, the tempo of development in the international working class does not satisfy us. We would prefer that it be accelerated. But simply to sigh over it will get us nowhere. Perhaps some one has a remedy for accelerating the pace. We would welcome his secret.

Or perhaps there may be another camp in the international working class movement, where the situation will offer broader perspectives, promise a speedier liberation for the masses of the world. Let us see what prospects there are in the Communist International and in the left socialist parties which are grouped around the so-called International Committee. (Left Socialist Parties and Communist Opposition groups.)

The Communist International

If the German events have inflicted a severe blow on the entire international working class movement, on all of its organizations, it has actually been a catastrophe for the Communist International.

Until recently even non-communist workers seriously discussed the future perspectives of the Communist Interna-

tional; the role it is destined to play in the revolutionary movement. The communist opposition groups of all sorts have oriented themselves solely on the basis of the Communist International. They maintained that the Communist International was all right, that its basic principles were sound, but that the present leadership was ineffective and for that reason they wanted no dealings with any other proletarian party or group. As their chief task they accepted the ideological struggle "to correct the line" of the Communist International. The Communist opposition placed these tasks before themselves, both when they were still in the Communist Party and later when they had already been expelled from their parties.

But this selfsame orientation towards the Communist International, this same belief that it was the only sound, active, revolutionary organization of the proletariat, and that sooner or later, they would succeed in eradicating the occasional mistakes of its tactics, this orientation and belief was also held by a number of left wing groups in the international socialist movement. One of the basic causes of the splits in the last few years in the various socialist parties was the hold the Communist International had on the left wing groups. This is best exemplified in the fact that in almost every one of the parties which split away, there developed immediately after their formation a vehement inner struggle between pro- and non-communist elements. This was true in the German SAP and is true today in the English ILP.

Besides, even the left opposition in numerous socialist parties, oppositions which never had thought of splitting away from their party and had immeasurable reservations in regard to the policies of the Communist International, could not rid themselves of the belief that it would improve, and hence were inclined to urge that their parties adopt a favorable orientation in that direction. How long is it since even we, the majority of the Bund, had to listen to the reproaches

in our own party, that we were "too optimistic" with reference to the Socialist International and "too pessimistic" with reference to the Communist International.

And suddenly! what a radical change. At first it was almost impossible to believe our own eyes when we read the statements about the Communist International in the official report of the conference of the left socialist parties: that there was no hope of improving the Communist International; that the policies followed were counter-revolutionary; that the Communist International has been a disturbing element in the development of the revolutionary movement; that but for Stalin, there would have been no Hitler; the bankruptcy of the Communist International was greater than the bankruptcy of reformism, etc. And more resolutely and vehemently than any who defended this position, were those representatives of the purely communist groups. It creates the impression that these people, after years of being blinded by the light of the German blaze, suddenly saw that "the king was naked."

And really the facts speak for themselves. The Communist International has existed for fifteen years and its sections for a similar period. Not a single working class organization was ever born under such a lucky star. The Communist parties had the most far-reaching and all embracing support of the Communist International. The reflection of the aureole of the Russian Revolution fell upon them. The most insignificant Communist "felled" his ideological opponent with arguments about the Soviet Union. Like that particular fly, who lit on the horn of the ox, each of them boasted "*WE* plowed the field." And the socio-economic and political conditions under which the Communist parties worked were also extraordinarily favorable: crises, unemployment, decay of the capitalist system, the numerous mistakes of the reformist parties.

And the result?

In the great majority of countries, the Communist parties gave no indication of being able to occupy a more or less recognized position in the movement. The Communist International literally pulled them by their ears in order to drag them out of their nullity, but the only results were . . . the long ears of the communist leadership. The parties themselves, however, could not raise themselves above the state of nullity.

There were three countries in which the Communists did exert some influence, leaving aside of course, the Soviet Union. These countries were Czecho-Slovakia, France and Germany. In the first two countries, Communism very soon vitiated its domination. So there remained Germany. The same cause that fed the Hitler movement aided also in the success of the Communist Party. Here the Communist International celebrated its greatest victories. At first Communism constituted one quarter, later one third of the general movement. The communists polled 5,000,000 votes as compared with 7,000,000 of the Social Democratic Party on March 5, 1933. At the last moment they had 42 percent of the general movement. And what were the consequences? Even with its strong organizational apparatus, even with its majority in Berlin, even with its 5,000,000 voters and the support of Moscow, without the Social Democrats, Communism was unable to lift a finger, to strike a blow. It couldn't even offer Fascism the slightest opposition. Moreover, it appeared that just where the success of the idea of splitting the movement, which is the central idea of Communism, was most successful, where the knife that split struck deeper into the living body of the working class—there the defeat of the working class was worst, was most painful. Do we need a more bloody indication that Communism is bankrupt?

As an international force, as a factor in proletarian life, the Communist International, after the German debacle, practically shrivelled up as far as its ideological influence was

concerned. A feeling of horror creeps over one when he reads the Stalinist press of today. It never presented such spiritual aridity as it now does. In the socialist movement, numerous articles, pamphlets and books continuously appear in which the German events are fearlessly analyzed and discussed. In these discussions, the policies of the German Social Democratic Party are summed up, embodying a more or less severe criticism of reformism in general. Here it is felt unmistakably, that collective thought is intensively active. We can already check off some very fine accomplishments in this direction. And now look at communist literature. Inertia and stagnation reign supreme. And . . . self-contentedness. The Comintern is always right and so are its prophets—Stalin, Thaelmann, Cachin, Lensky . . .

One of the reproaches hurled by Trotsky against Stalin is that he has lost all interest in the world revolution. He simply brushed the world revolution aside. Here, Trotsky surely is correct. Stalin believes that the safety of the Soviet Union can be adequately assured by entering into numerous non-aggression pacts with capitalist and even with fascist governments. Although no one believes that Stalin himself really thinks that the policies of the Communist International are correct, he nevertheless, does not permit any open criticism on this point. To criticize and revise may, heaven forbid, lead to the discovery that even the sun has spots, and that even the Russian Communist Party can make mistakes. Even if Stalin were to permit criticism, this criticism would be of the same nature as all other "self-criticism" for which the Communist International is so well known. It would be more apologetics than criticism. The communist theoretician would as usual have one eye fixed on Stalin and the other on the defects of the communist movement, always being afraid that, in his revision, he might go further than Stalin would like.

No, there is no hope in the Communist International. No

longer can anything be expected from it. After the German catastrophe bourgeois writers of all countries began chanting about the bankruptcy of Socialism. According to them only two ways were open, Communism or Fascism. The experiences of the recent past have shown that the working class did not take these prognoses too seriously. As an example let us cite the workers of Geneva, who only recently cast seventeen thousand votes for socialist candidates as against two hundred and eleven votes for communist candidates. This is true not only in Geneva but everywhere.

The condition of the Socialist International certainly is not satisfactory, but the Communist International is in no better shape. And what about the International Committee of the left parties? Does any hope lie there?

In The Camp of The International Committee

As I said before, there were great differences of opinion among the delegates who attended the Labor and Socialist Conference. They were all agreed, however, on one thing, that the place for a socialist party was within the Socialist International. The Socialist International with its millions of members all over the world is the only ground on which the differences of opinion must be fought out. All parties, without exception, attempt to gain ideological control over the existing International.

The parties and groups that came to the left conference, on the other hand, could not even agree among themselves about the fundamental principles and the main characteristics of the new international, which some of them wanted to organize. They do not even agree on the question of whether they should continue their present international connections. If they disband their present International Committee, what other international connections will they establish? Those of our comrades who believe that our party,

the Bund, should orientate itself to the left socialist conference which was held in Paris must try to answer the following questions. To which part of that conference should we orientate ourselves? With which of these parties should we go? Along which of the variously conflicting roads proposed at that conference shall we travel?

Shall we choose the way of the I. L. P.? The I. L. P. is opposed to the organization of a new international; it still orientates itself on the Communist International. Acknowledging all mistakes and defects of the Communist International, it nevertheless believes that it is the only basically sound international organization. For some inexplicable reason, the I. L. P. believes that it can succeed in reforming the Communist International where others have failed.

It is clear that we cannot adopt the attitude of the I. L. P. Shall we adopt the attitude of the Norwegian Labor Party? Let us see what its attitude is. It orientates itself to the revolutionary elements in both the Socialist and Communist Internationals. It is against the organization of a new international because, "we already have one International too many." The Norwegian comrades are for an international proletarian congress in which both the Socialist and Communist Internationals should participate. They refuse to participate in any international congress where only part of the working class will be represented.

What does this mean? It can have no other meaning but that the Norwegian Labor Party repudiates the tactics of splits, that it is not only against a new international, but that the two existing Internationals must unite into one international. It is ready to participate in any action that may bring about this unity, but refuses to participate in anything that will perpetuate the cleavage in the movement.

This is practically what our party, the Bund, stands for. It is true that while we are part of the Socialist International the Norwegian Party is outside. But this is simply a logical

contradiction between their reasoning and practice. If a party believes that it cannot join the Socialist International because it cannot work together with reformist parties, how then do they hope to have one International where these reformist parties will participate? That in practice the Norwegian Labor Party is glad to work with and obtain the support of the parties in the Socialist International has recently been demonstrated. In the last election campaign, the Swedish Social Democratic Party, which is part of the Socialist International, contributed considerably to the victory of the Norwegian Party. In this joint work both parties had necessarily to put forward everything that they had in common and omit what divided them.

Moreover, if the Norwegian Party believes that the Communist International cannot be improved from the inside, and participation is meaningless, that any cooperation with it is harmful, and believes on the other hand that there are revolutionary elements within the Socialist International with which they must cooperate, and believes also that this cooperation has for its purpose the union of all proletarian forces, would it not then be much wiser to join the Socialist International, thereby strengthening the revolutionary forces within it, for a concerted attack on reformism?

We do not know how long the Norwegian Labor Party will be able to hold to this untenable position on the question of the International. At the last left international conference it was accused of "developing in the direction of the Socialist International." There certainly is some truth to this statement. On the other hand in one of the recent bulletins of the L. S. I., a friendly and sympathetic article was published on the Norwegian Party, its recent victories and its future plans.

Three other groups represented at the left conference were the left Social Revolutionary Party, the French group known

as Pupists, and the Italian Maximalist group. All three are insignificant and have no influence whatsoever on the proletarian movement. The position, however, which they took on the question of the formation of a new international is practically the same as that of the Norwegian Labor Party.

The two right communist opposition parties, from Sweden and from Spain, had great forebodings about the organization of a new international, but they could be whipped into shape. The most important groups at that conference were the Trozkyites, the German SAP, the SAP of Holland, and the Revolutionary Socialist Party of Holland. These groups claim to represent a true, purified Communism, free from all Stalinist deviations. When asked however, what this purified Communism may be, they say it is uncompromising class struggle and orientation on the dictatorship of the proletariat. But this is not true. Uncompromising class struggle and the dictatorship of the proletariat is also part of the left Socialist platform. When Comrade Zyromski (France) replied to Bauer, in the name of the minority at the LSI conference, he stressed mainly the thought that the working class can have no other orientation than proletarian dictatorship. This pure Communism therefore, must be something other and something more than just uncompromising class struggle and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

We have always been decided opponents of the policy of splits. As long as these splits were directed in the name of the Russian Revolution, by Zinoviev and Trotsky, we could understand it, even though we could not justify it. At that time, Zinoviev and Trotsky hoped that by using the authority of the Soviet Union, they would succeed in first destroying and later creating a new proletarian unity under their banner. It would be absolutely nonsensical to believe that what Trotsky could not do when he had the authority of Moscow

behind him, he can now do, having nothing but Prinkipo* behind him.

In one of Trotsky's articles on the Communist International we find the following words: "It is not enough to give the masses a new address; it is necessary to find them wherever they are, and then to lead them." Trotsky says this with reference to the trade union movement, in criticism of the harmful splitting tactics of the Communist International.

I am not a Trotskyist. Nevertheless, I am sure Trotsky could not accept the belief that the task of the trade union movement, in the present period of the decay of capitalism, should be nothing more than the fight for higher wages, and better conditions. Together with us, Trotsky surely believes that the task of the trade union movement today must be to fight together with the political organization of labor for the realization of Socialism. If, however, revolutionists and reformists could, according to Trotsky, fight for this goal in the same trade unions, why not in the same political parties?

Again, this really means a separate tactical line for the trade union movement, and a separate tactical line for the political movement. That was all right for the "orthodox" Communists, who believed that the chief enemy was social democracy or social fascism. When these "orthodox" Communists were compelled to advise their followers to remain in the existing trade unions, they had to draw a line of distinction between the trade unions and the political movement. They had to work out a theory which would justify participation in reformist trade unions, but prohibit any cooperation in the political movement. The "orthodox" Communists had to give up this theory and adopt a new one. Both the trade union and the political movement must be split. But the Trotskyites repudiate this theory of social fascism. They claim to be for a real, genuine united

*Prinkipo is the island in Turkey to which Trotsky was exiled by Stalin.

front, with no tricks or manoeuvres attached to it. What is the sense therefore of having two measures; one for the trade union movement, and one for the political movement?

To give the masses a new address is not enough, says Trotsky. It is necessary to find them where they are. But this is just as true of the political as of the trade union movement. Let us take a few examples. The German SAP gave the German masses a new address, but the masses did not come. The Party has practically disappeared. The group now calling itself the SAP, is really a communisticly inclined new edition of the old party. What drawing power this new address will have for the masses remains to be seen.

The SAP of Holland and the ILP of England also sent the masses new addresses. What success they have had we all know. At the left conference it was openly stated that the ILP had never been so isolated from the masses as it now is. Right and left oppositions have been giving new addresses to the masses constantly, but no one even made an inquiry. Whatever adherents they get is simply due to the fact that numbers of disillusioned Communists feel compelled to leave the Communist International and come to these "new addresses" as temporary guests. They come, they rest, they refresh themselves, and go forth. If all these addresses have failed to attract the masses is there any reason to believe that the remedy is another new address? (The Fourth International). If we want to accomplish anything in the labor movement, no new address post is necessary. We must go to the working masses where they are. We must find them and not wait until they find us. We must find them and lead them.

MINORITY RESOLUTION ON THE STRUGGLE FOR POWER

Presented at the Conference of the Labor and Socialist International, Paris, 1933. Supported by a Majority of the American Delegation.

Recent events in Germany constitute a serious defeat for the international working class.

In one of the most highly industrialized countries in the world, where the working class possessed powerful organizations, during an economic crisis which demonstrates in conclusive manner the failure of the capitalist system, the most savage of all the capitalist dictatorships, the Hitler dictatorship, has just gained its victory.

A brutal and bloody fight against the Labor movement, the enslavement of the working masses, an unleashed nationalism coupled with a ferocious anti-semitism have been the characteristics of the first phase of the new German regime.

Hitler as the servant of German capitalism has succeeded, by means of a semi-Radicalism in the sphere of social policy as well as by means of chauvinist demagogy, in attracting to his movement millions of people belonging to the ruined middle classes and numerous unemployed who have been driven to despair by the persistence of their misery. These are the elements which see in Hitlerism a promise of economic and national emancipation and supported by the armed forces of the government who have turned Fascist, have secured the victory of Fascism in Germany.

This victory has on the other hand been helped by the grave errors committed by the German working class party.

The Labor forces were on the one hand paralyzed by a

tragic division which was to a great extent the result of the policy of the Communists, who considered as the principal enemy of the working class, not the steadily more menacing forces of Fascism, but Social-Democracy.

On the other hand the reformist policies of the Social-Democratic Party, hoping by means of class collaboration to improve in an enduring manner the conditions of the working class and to prepare its accession to power, have not only not led to the goal but have been revealed as a source of weakness for the proletariat in its fight against Fascism.

The German events condemn at one and the same time the failure of the Communist policy of division and the reformist policy of Socialism.

The experience of the last year has demonstrated that the prolonged economic crises, the frenzied attempts of the bourgeoisie to maintain its privileges in spite of all and to maintain by all means its position from the menace of Socialism, place before the Labor and peasant parties the necessity of fighting to realize Socialism as the immediate objective of their struggle.

The only choice before these classes is that between complete destruction under Fascism and the immediate struggle for Socialism.

The Conference declares that it is not the task of the Socialist parties to attempt to straighten out the capitalist world or even to collaborate in such attempts. It declares on the contrary that by whatever means they are going to achieve power they must not secure the exercise of power within the structure of the capitalist regime but must utilize power in order to destroy the bourgeois state and install the dictatorship of the revolutionary party during the period of Socialist construction.

During the period of struggle for the conquest of power as well as later during the exercise of power, the Socialist parties must remain faithful to the principle of proletarian

democracy which is the only guarantee for the development of the dictatorship by the revolutionary classes into a dictatorship of the workers and peasants. Dictatorship must be exercised under the permanent control of organizations free to negotiate, to choose their representatives and to determine themselves their line of action.

The Conference appeals to the international working class for the most efficient material and moral support of the Socialist movement of Germany which is fighting courageously against Hitlerism under the most difficult and most horrible conditions. The Conference makes it a duty of all Socialist parties to organize an economic political and moral boycott of Hitler Germany.

But the Conference is conscious of the fact that the struggle against Fascism in the countries under Fascist domination as well as in the other countries cannot become efficacious without a clearly and precisely defined line of policy.

The dissolution of the present regime makes the existence of capitalism within the framework of bourgeois democracy more and more impossible. Capitalism itself is turning Fascist. That is why the fight against Fascism can only be led by forces which are resolutely anti-Fascist and by a decided adherence to Socialist reconstruction of society.

It is evident that the working class will defend energetically its democratic achievements against all reactionary attempts but the struggle against Fascism cannot have as its goal the maintenance or re-establishment of bourgeois democracy which is based on economic inequality but that of constructing a real Socialist democracy.

In view of the fact that Fascism is the proof of the lack of hesitation of the bourgeoisie to depart from its own legality when it considers it useful in order to defend its privileges, it is necessary that the working class begins to prepare at

once for a struggle by all the means which may secure victory.

In most countries this implies an adaptation of Socialist organizations to the new conditions of the struggle. Whilst continuing their normal activities the Socialist parties will prepare without fail for the necessities of direct action.

The Conference calls the attention of the working class to the need for conducting towards Socialism the middle classes who have been impoverished by the crisis and whose revolt has in several countries been expressed in the rise of Fascism.

This goal can only be reached by the elaboration of a program and by the development of activities capable of rallying the middle classes who are plunged in growing misery due to the present regime, by extending to them a guarantee of the provision of work through the Socialist solution of the crisis.

The fight against Fascism is intimately bound up with the fight against the crisis. The Vienna Congress of the L. S. I. aptly characterized the crisis as a crisis of the regime itself which cannot be conquered except by a series of measures constituting the first step towards the transformation of the present regime into a Socialist regime.

The experiences of the last two years have only confirmed this point of view. They have on the one hand demonstrated the incapacity of the capitalist governments in face of the crisis in their respective countries and on the other hand the failure of all the economic conferences called together to find a solution of the crisis on a general international basis.

The Conference declares that it would be vain to awaken the hopes of the working masses by making them believe that new efforts on the part of capitalist governments could provide them with a remedy for their misery.

The Conference expresses its conviction that a Socialist

government which attacks the very sources of the capitalist system is capable of succeeding by utilizing all productive sources in eliminating unemployment and preparing in this way the basis of an international Socialist economic system.

This problem can only be realized by a government representing the interests of the workers, the peasants and all those impoverished people who are suffering from the crisis. That is why the struggle for the conquest of power cannot be separated from the struggle against the crisis and why the seizure of power by the revolutionary classes is the necessary condition for a solution of the crisis and the problems of unemployment.

The conference registers the impotence and the default of all international organizations founded by capitalist governments as the League of Nations, the Disarmament Conference, the Economic Conference, etc.

The Conference affirms that the working classes can expect nothing from these institutions and that they can only count on their own efforts in their struggle against Fascism, the crisis and war.

(signed) Alter ("Bund" Poland)
Andreesen (Estonia)
Bianco (Italy)
Boconi (Italy)
Ehrlich ("Bund" Poland)
Felix (U. S. A.)
Krueger (U.S.A.)
Levinson (U. S. A.)
Senior (U. S. A.)
Pivert (France)
Zyromski (France)
Spaak (Belgium)