

# INTERNATIONAL BULLETIN OF THE COMMUNIST LEFT OPPOSITION

ENGLISH EDITION Published for the International Secretariat by the Communist League of America (Opposition), 84 East 10 Street, New York PRICE 10 CENTS

No. 1

February 1, 1931

## C O N T E N T S

AN APPEAL to the PROLETARIANS OF THE WORLD!

EDITORIAL NOTES:- List of Organizations Adhering To The International Conference of the Opposition.

GERMANY:- The Left Opposition And The Party.

BEIGIUM:- The Crisis in the Opposition:

1. Resolution of the Charleroi Federation.
2. Report on the Political Orientation of the Communist Opposition by the Executive Bureau of the Opposition.

FRANCE:- The Development of the Opposition:

The Situation of the Deported Oppositionists in the U. S. S. R.

AUSTRIA:- What is the situation of the Opposition in Austria?

\*\*\*\*\*

## N O T E !

The first issue of the "INTERNATIONAL BULLETIN" of the Left Opposition has been late in making its appearance, due to obvious and unavoidable technical difficulties. The subsequent issues of the BULLETIN will appear in rapid succession until the English edition will have caught up with those that have already appeared in Paris in the French and German languages. The material contained in the coming issues will be of invaluable importance as a record of growth and development of the INTERNATIONAL LEFT OPPOSITION. We hope in a short time to have made such arrangements as will make it possible to publish the English edition simultaneous with the issuance of the original edition in France. We urgently request our readers to contribute their maximum co-operation in increasing the circulation of this BULLETIN so that it may reach the bulk of the revolutionary workers in the English-speaking countries throughout the world.



IMPORTANT CORRECTIONS.  
to the "International Bulletin No. 1"

Page 1: line one should read: "The International Communist Left Opposition appeals (not only) to its own adherents etc."

Page 3: seventh line from the bottom: "reacting bureaucrat-ically to the blows of the opposition and the pressure of the working class"...

Page 4: line 15: "in the party itself disintegration (proceeds) in two directions..."

Page 5: line 25: "(while) the Communist Left of the capital-ist countries..."

Page 8: line 6: "The 'International Bulletin' should be the arm in this discussion..."

Page 9: line 6 from the bottom: "It is also necessary to note that (1) several national groups etc..."

Page 12: line 14: "... in the measure in which it will be able etc...."

Page 24: large center paragraph, third line: "is not (un)-important..."

Page 28: Next to last paragraph, line 6: "proletariat, who are at the head..."

(All words in parentheses have been omitted, all those underlined, were misspelled.)

\*\*\*\*\*

N O T E

No. 3 of the INTERNATIONAL BULLETIN will be out within a fortnight after this issue. It will contain an article describing the development and the activities of the Czechoslovakian Left Opposition, important organizational decisions of the International Bureau, further information on the Greek and the Bulgarian Oppositions and a special section devoted to the Chinese Left Opposition, etc. It will be noted that some of the documents published to date in the English edition of the Bulletin are somewhat out of date. This is of course due to the lack of facilities for an English edition when they first appeared. In the future the English edition will appear as far as possible simultaneously with the French and the German editions. A special section devoted to American questions is being prepared for one of the forthcoming issues.

The Editors.

## TO THE PROLETARIANS OF THE WORLD!

The International Communist Left Opposition appeals, <sup>(not only)</sup> to its own adherents, but to all the Communists and to the workers of the whole world. It unites the best forces, the Marxist wing of the parties of the Communist International.

It is now bound together solidly by the unbreakable bonds of proletarian internationalism to elaborate a firm political line, in order to carry on a genuine international struggle.

The imperialist world everywhere is living in very serious social convulsions which show in an ever clearer manner its incapacity to solve the crises it constantly provokes. Millions of unemployed exist in a permanent form. Profound social and political crises are unfolding in Germany, in Austria, Spain, England, America, China, India, etc. The legendary prosperity of the United States itself has been transformed into a crisis which is especially marked by a growing unemployment. The crisis has spread throughout the world.

In spite of all its efforts, the bourgeoisie is showing itself incapable of solving its permanent crisis. Against the bourgeoisie stand the working masses, whom the social democracy helps to subjugate to the former. In Austria, the social democracy sells the workers to the Fascists and reaction. In Germany, it submits the workers to the fire of Zoergiebel and Mueller. In England, it plays the outright role of agent of the bourgeoisie, betraying even the moderate promises it made before the elections brought it into power; it orders the massacre of the Indian proletarian revolutionists.

Only the revolutionary movement, with the proletarian party, thanks to the teachings of Marx and Lenin, can lead the proletariat to its liberation, creating the foundations for the new society which will liberate all of humanity.

Today, it is precisely in the revolutionary movement itself that grave difficulties come forth. The principal contradiction in the revolutionary movement today is the growing cleavage between the revolutionary possibilities, the favorable conditions for calling the masses to struggle, and the capacity and degree of preparation of the official Communist parties. A profound crisis is now ravaging the Communist International. In every country the parties have lost great numbers of their members. Their influence on the masses and the development of the mass organizations have declined. In many countries, they have ruined and discredited the revolutionary movement for many years. Never has the theoretical and political level of the Communist parties been lower than today. Corruption, the artificial selection of leaderships, arbitrariness, bureaucratism, the spasmodic leaps from Right to Left and back again, are the evils that corrode the vital force of the movement. In the recent period, a whole wing of the official movement has left it, and now occupies a position more or less approaching the social democracy: the Brandler Opposition in Germany, the Workers' and Peasants' party of Louis Sellier of France, the Lovestone group in the United States. On the other hand, the Communist Opposition, which embraces the best workers and militants of the International, has been and continues to be expelled almost in its entirety. The most brutal repression, especially in the U.S.S.R., is exercised against it. The structure of the International has undergone profound changes. It has abandoned the policy outlined by the first four con-

resses of the International, in which Lenin collaborated; but for that it has had to expel the founders of the Communist International and those who led it during this period. The crisis is in full swing; it contributes to rendering the revolutionary proletariat impotent in the new struggles and in the accomplishment of its historic mission.

The crisis is for the most part a reflection and a direct consequence of the crisis developing in the Russian Communist party and the Soviet Union as a whole. The roots of the crisis lie in the general conditions created principally by the failure of the revolution of the Western proletariat in the years immediately following the imperialist war; the Western proletariat was unable to give the Russian proletariat the aid without which it cannot complete the revolution it victoriously began. The U.S.S.R. alone cannot abolish a society divided into classes nor construct socialism. It can defend the bases of a socialist society against the encirclement of the capitalist world until the proletariat of the advanced capitalist countries come to its aid.

This demands a correct class policy which maintains the supremacy of the socialist elements over the capitalist elements, which maintains the supremacy of the industrialized city over the village, which systematically raises the living standard of the workers and poor peasants, and above all bases its general policy on the perspective of the international revolution. This was the policy in the first period of the October revolution. But after the death of Lenin, after the heavy defeats suffered in Germany, Bulgaria, and Esthonia, the Soviet Union entered a period of social political reaction in the party and in the country itself.

It is in this epoch that, turning from the international revolutionary course, the theory of socialism in one country was crystallized. Instead of dominating the capitalist elements in the country, they were strengthened; instead of helping the poor peasant, the Kulak was allowed to strengthen himself; instead of procuring advantages for the factory workers, full power was given to the bureaucracy of the factory management and the trade unions; instead of extending workers' democracy in the party, the party was stifled under an unprecedented bureaucratic apparatus. In order to realize this policy of reaction, of "national socialism", a monstrous campaign of falsification, of suppression, of distortion, of intimidation and the mobilization of all the reactionary elements in the country was undertaken against the Leninists. For having fought against the growth of the neo-bourgeoisie, the Opposition (Bolshevik-Leninists) was expelled from the party, exiled, deported, and imprisoned.

This policy had as a counterpart in the Communist International, a policy zigzagging from opportunism to adventurism, a policy ordered by the Russian party representing a state power. Thus, Stalin and Bucharin tied the Chinese workers and peasants to the power of Chiang-Kai-Shek; thus, they prevented the English Communists from fighting against the traitors in the general strike; thus, reacting bureaucratically to the blows of the Opposition and the pressure of the working class, the Centrist apparatus, without a policy of its own, led the parties into adventures like the Canton putsch, the August 1st, and its whole philosophy of the "third period".

The adventurist policy of the C.I. naturally found its counterpart in the economic adventurism of the Stalin faction in the U.S.S.R. After supporting the Kulak for years, the Centrists

suddenly wanted to liquidate him in a few years. They have set on foot a program of industrialization and the collectivization of agriculture, conceived and executed bureaucratically. But every attempt to carry out a program of proletarian dictatorship and of the liquidation of the capitalist class, based on the theory of socialism in one country, is doomed to failure. That is why the recent course of the Stalinist apparatus has forced the International Left Opposition to cry out to the working class of the entire world. The Russian Revolution is in danger, the Soviet Union is approaching a critical period, we must intensify our efforts to correct its course. The arbitrary bureaucratic pressure upon the collectivization of the countryside and of agriculture has accentuated the contradiction between the village and the city, between agriculture and industry. The city proletariat is in the process of losing the leadership over the village. The vanguard is becoming more and more disorganized. In the party itself a disintegration <sup>PROCEEDS</sup> in two directions; on the one side the cleavage between the apparatus and the membership has become abysmal and on the other side, the sharp and clear distinction of the party as the vanguard of the class is losing itself in a tendency to dissolve the party into the class. Its theoretical level has fallen; its cohesion has been broken by the uninterrupted working-week which does not provide for a period of collective rest. The dangers of inflation are becoming more acute every day. The apparatus itself has been forced to retreat before the latest results of its course. But all the experiences of the past show that this retreat will not prevent them from falling into the other extreme: passivity towards the classes hostile to the proletariat, dragging the party on the road of right wing liquidation. A new liquidationist turn has made its appearance and is beginning to develop on a broad scale. After a period of adventurist excitement, the parties weakened and demoralized, fall back into apathy and opportunist routine, masked by bureaucratically optimistic phrases. In the U.S.S.R. the 16th Congress of the Bolshevik party suppressed the Right while retreating in the economic domain; in Germany, in France the shouted phrase, the call for barricades at every moment of trade union and political activity are succeeded by a return to greater opportunist practices: passivity, hypocrisy and falsehood towards the proletariat.

We must learn to transform this retreat into a victory for the line of the Opposition and appeal to the workers to fight for a correct policy in their party.

=====

The International Left Opposition speaks openly to the conscious workers of the entire world: The Soviet Union, the proletarian dictatorship, the Communist International, the vanguard of the working class, are in danger; the ruling regime in Russia and the International are heading for a catastrophe. The militant Communists everywhere, the revolutionary fighters, must join the Left Opposition and raise the banner of Bolshevism.

This is now the great historic task of all the revolutionary parties, wherever they are to be found. In order to carry out this task, the Communist Opposition groups of Europe and America have united with the Opposition (Bolshevik-Leninists) of the Russian Communist Party to centralize, clarify and organize the struggle. We will be accused of wanting to create a "Fourth International", This baseless accusation will not stop us. It is not these bureaucratic accusers who have founded and built up the International of Lenin. It is not they who have inherited the teachings of Lenin,

and of Marx, the lessons of revolutionary struggle. The moral and political heritage of the Leninist International belongs to the Opposition which proudly defends it. No one will wrest it from us!

The International Left Opposition was born out of the development of the Communist International, to which it is indissolubly bound by its past. The weakening of the International could not help but affect the development of the Opposition. The defeats we have suffered and the strengthening of the social democracy have hurt the Left wing of Communism above all. The Centrist apparatus which grew stronger with the enfeeblement of the revolutionary movement utilized all the advantages of the situation. Having at its disposal a powerful press, the telegraph, radio, etc. it systematically distorted the point of view of the Opposition for years, making the Opposition responsible for all its mistakes of yesterday. It threw confusion into the ranks of Communism, and at this price it achieved its aim, the crushing of the Leninist wing of the International.

The Opposition must not forget its origin. It was born in the U.S.S.R. At first, it was constrained by the exceptional conditions of the proletarian dictatorship and by the regime of bureaucratic strangulation in the party. The point of view of the Opposition was spread only in fragments, making it extremely difficult to create a common ideological base. In this way, the Russian opposition carried out the course of redressing the party without any shocks or convulsions dangerous to the dictatorship, while the Communist Left of the capitalist countries was necessarily obliged to extreme restraint. But the Centrist bureaucracy found means of crushing the Opposition by organizational methods, always at the price of strangling the party. The complete absence of party democracy in the Communist International for a long time retarded the development and the training of the Opposition cadres. The theoretical works of the Opposition, its analyses, its evaluations, its perspectives and its slogans never emerged beyond limited circles. The absence of numerous cadres, capable of working actively in all the branches of the labor movement for our ideas, greatly facilitated the struggle of Centrism against the Opposition.

Without large cadres, without intimate international contacts, the Opposition was in the first period transformed into a number of dispersed national groups whose principal activity was propaganda. Each had to find its path by its own means. In this fact lies the danger today of discord, indecision and national limitedness. We must add that at every turn there were expelled from the Communist International diverse groups often of entirely opposed character. All claimed to belong to the Opposition, but many of them systematically compromised the Opposition by manifestations of opportunism, anarcho-syndicalism and petty bourgeois diletantism. It suffices to recall the Urbahns faction which in Germany has caused the greatest harm to the Communist Left by striving to incorporate all the caricatured ideas which Stalin ascribed to the Opposition. France too has known a good many distortions of the Opposition's point of view. This phenomenon has appeared in different degrees in most of the countries.

Thus it happened that the very same conditions which produced the inevitable progress of the Opposition later on, also led to a certain weakening of the Opposition in its first stage.

Nevertheless we can already register some real successes in the recent period and the start of a new development in the sense of international cooperation. To a great extent, they are due to the good work of ideological demarcation, to an improvement of the spirit and the cadres. In some cases, this work was accomplished (with difficulty and seemingly weakened the Opposition. But in reality it has prepared a serious basis for new advances in the near future.

In France, the publication of "La Verite" and the transformation of "La Lutte De Classes" into a theoretical monthly review fighting for the Communist League (Opposition), which is the Left faction of the party, marks an important turning point in the development of the French Opposition. In Germany, the past year witnessed a long internal struggle which terminated in the inevitable split of the Leninbund: This made possible the fusion of the best elements of the Leninbund with the Wedding Opposition and that of the Palatinate into the Unified Opposition of the German C.P. The German Opposition is sure to make great progress in the way of political action. Already the appearance of the semi-monthly "Der Kommunist" and its ardent struggle among the workers in the party have brought it far on its road.

Thanks to the traditions of the October revolution, official communism, regardless of its enfeeblement, still unites the most active parts of the working class in many countries. That is why the Left Opposition rejects the slogan of a sect and a fourth International. It considers itself as a faction whose aim is the redressment of the Communist International on a genuine Marxian-Leninist foundation. For the same reason it never withdraws from the activity of the proletarian vanguard.

The Opposition takes a stand on every question. It criticises pitilessly the mistakes of the official leadership in the demonstrations, the strikes, etc. At the same time it participates in the struggles of the proletarian vanguard and wins its confidence without making any concessions to the official leaders. In the same manner, the Opposition calls the workers to vote for the candidates of the Communist party, in the parliamentary and municipal elections, etc., at the same time developing independently its criticism and attempting to force the candidates to submit formal political obligations.

The general policy of the Marxist Left is facilitated by the formation of an outspoken Right Wing, which the Centrists have expelled. The Right Opposition bears an essentially national character. It has refused to take a stand on the question of the character of the Russian Revolution. Its internationalism limits itself to friendly visits from one "national group" to another. It is guided by the old social democratic principle: live and let live! The perfect type is furnished by the Workers and Peasants Party, formed in France after the expulsion of several municipalist leaders. It is a party which has openly orientated itself towards the social-democracy.

The Communist Left builds its policies on the basis of an analysis of the developments in the world as a whole. For us, each country is part of a whole. From this flows the necessity of studying the national estimation of the situation in all its concrete precision. If, in our general estimation of the situation we proceed

from the general to the particular, in our actions and in our daily struggles we proceed from the particular to the general. The peculiarities of every situation appear all the more clearly and concretely to us the better we recognize the whole. That is why the international unification of the Left Opposition is the premise of a correct revolutionary policy in each country, that is for the revolutionary utilization of every national peculiarity.

\*=====

The Communist Left Opposition whose first international gathering was held in April 1930, appeals to all the Communist workers, to all the militant revolutionaries, to rally under its banner. The deep crisis which today traverses the Communist movement; the tasks with which it is faced at present and which it must solve with the least delay, demand a strengthening of the bond which unites the International Left Opposition.

By its daily activity, through its papers, side by side with the revolutionary vanguard, the Opposition must recruit the Communist workers who will enter its ranks and struggle energetically within them.

Nothing will help more forcibly than the profound ties which unite and will always continue to unite the International Opposition more firmly in its revolutionary struggle.

LONG LIVE THE PROLETARIAN DICTATORSHIP IN RUSSIA!

LONG LIVE THE LENINIST COMINTERN!

LONG LIVE THE WORLD REVOLUTION!

\*\*\*\*\*  
\*\*\*\*\*  
\*\*\*\*\*

---

#### EDITORIAL NOTES

The "International Bulletin" provides the International Left Opposition with a necessary medium for work.

The publication of this "Bulletin" was decided upon by the first international meeting of the Left Opposition held at Paris, April 6th, 1930. At this meeting the representatives of eight countries (Germany, United States, Belgium, Spain, France, Hungary, Czechoslovakia) attended.

This first meeting had the task of considering under what conditions the work must be orientated for the convocation of an international conference, which would unite the Opposition groups existing in the different countries into one common organization, the international left fraction of the Communist International.

The necessity for the unification of the International Left Opposition, is the necessity for the Marxist wing of our

Communist International to formulate precisely and uniformly its tactics and its program. This result cannot be obtained with one stroke but it must be acquired as quickly as possible, thru an ample discussion between the groups in order that the International Conference may be convened with the least delay.

The "International Bulletin" should be the aim in this discussion, the means by which the Left Opposition will reinforce and determine its action by raising its past and present experience in the proletarian struggle to the level of theoretical labors.

The "International Bulletin" should have appeared earlier. Technical difficulties delayed its appearance. According to the decisions of the first international meeting, it will appear at least twice a month.

The meeting of April 6, 1930, has elected a provisional International Secretariat of the Left Opposition, which consists of three members: a Russian, a French and a German comrade. The "International Bulletin" is published under the responsible direction of this Secretariat.

The "Bulletin" should serve as a base for intensified discussion in each group of the International Left Opposition. Each group must participate in the reinforcement and unification of the entire Opposition on clear principles.

\*\*\*\*\*

#### LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS:

The following organizations have already joined the International Conference of the Left Opposition:

##### U.S.S.R.

1. Opposition of the C.P.R. (Bolshevik-Leninists) publishes the Bulletin of the Opposition. (Bolshevik-Leninists) which appears approximately once a month, #6 Rue de Milan, Paris.

##### GERMANY:

2. Unified Left Opposition of the C.P. of Germany (Bolshevik-Leninists) publishes "Der Kommunist", semi-monthly paper, Wiesenstrasse 6, Berlin, N.20, Germany.

##### AUSTRIA:

3. I-Communist Opposition of Austria (Left Communist) publishes "Der Neue Mahnruf" Gartengasse 1. Wien, 5 Bez, Austria.
4. II- Austrian C.B. (Opposition) (Frey Group) publishes "Arbeiter Stimme" monthly paper, Hyrtgasse 19/4, Wien XVI, Austria.

##### ARGENTINA:

5. Communist Opposition Committee, publishes "La Verdad" Entre Rios 1562, Buenos Aires, Argentina.

BELGIUM:

6. Opposition Group of the C.P. of Belgium, publishes Le Communiste, semi-monthly newspaper #114 Rue L'Independence, Brussels.

BRAZIL:

7. Communist Lenin Committee, publishes "A Luta de Classe" semi-monthly paper.

SPAIN:

8. Spanish Communist Opposition, publishes "Contra La Corriente". (Has not appeared as yet).

UNITED STATES:

9. Communist League of America (Opposition), publishes the "Militant", semi-monthly organ, #84 East 10th St. N.Y.C. U.S.

FRANCE:

10. Communist League (Opposition), publishes "La Verite" weekly newspaper, #45 Boulevard de la Villette, and "La Lutte de Classe," monthly review, same address, Paris.

GREECE:

11. Archives of Marxism: publishes pamphlets and contributes to the trade union newspapers.

HUNGARY:

12. Communist Opposition Group.

ITALY:

13. (1)- Italian Left faction, publishes "Prometeo", semi-monthly newspaper, #114 Rue de L'Independence, Brussels, Belgium.

14. (2)- New Opposition of the Italian C.P.

MEXICO:

15. Communist Opposition of Mexico, publishes "Claridad" a monthly organ.

CHEKO-SLOVAKIA:

16. (1)- Left Opposition Group (Lerneroviez group).

17. (2)- Left Opposition (Prague fraction).

It is also necessary to note that: (1) several [redacted] national groups have not yet been able to submit detailed information (England, China, Indo-China).

(2) the Jewish comrades of the Communist League of France (Opposition) publish a monthly bulletin in Yiddish-"Clarta" which is distributed internationally.

G E R M A N Y .PARTY & OPPOSITION IN GERMANY

On the First of May, 1930, the German Communist Party organized a mass demonstration in Berlin in which twice as many workers participated as in the demonstration of the S.P.G. which 40 to 50 thousand workers attended. And this - despite the fact that the S.P.G. had at its disposal the powerful apparatus of the trade unions, despite the fact that their organized members in Berlin number 78,000.

In spite of the disastrous mistakes of its leadership, the C.P.G. in contrast to all other sections of the Comintern with the exception of the U.S.S.R. - has remained a mass party, a party which still holds the sympathies of three million workers and which actually unites a majority of the workers in decisive regions at elections, especially in Berlin. More than in any other capitalist country, Communism in Germany has by hard revolutionary struggles full of sacrifices, penetrated into and gained a firm foothold among the more advanced strata of the working class.

Nevertheless, the degeneration of the German Party proceeds without resistance; but this process does not ensue in the same frantic pace which we witness in France, in Czechoslovakia; not as precipitantly without interruptions as in the other sections of the Comintern. For example - take the results of the factory council elections. The Party has lost decisive positions, traditional fortresses, (e.g. Leuna works). On the other hand it has gained ground in numerous less important places - above all where it appeared for the first time. The total result undoubtedly represents a very serious weakening of the Party's influence on decisive fronts, among the decisive sections of the working-class. This is most clearly demonstrated by the mass actions of the Party, as the unemployment movement above all has proven. The masses who respond to the call of the Party at the elections or on the First of May, thereby demonstrating especially against the social democracy, refuse to follow the Party in almost all its actions, because they have given up all hope of achieving anything through actions planned on the basis of the Party's slogans.

No doubt, a few more years of Thaelmann leadership will infect even the robust organism of the German Party to such an extent that it will discredit communism in Germany in so great a measure that the German Party will sink to the level of the French or the Czechoslovak Party. The slow pace of the degeneration inside the C.P.G. aside from the circumstances cited above, can be reduced and not in the last place -- to the fact that for almost two years a coalition government offered the most favorable objective possibilities for an upward development of the C.P.G. In the new stage which has begun with the departure of the S.P.G. from the coalition, the Party is struggling under considerably less favorable conditions. This fact will likewise not remain without any influence on the pace of degeneration.

The internal decay of the Party is developing much faster than the decline of its influence. The oldest members of the Party, members of long years standing, its most experienced and

most independent cadres, are being forced to the background more and more. A new type of Party worker is stepping to the fore - the "Red Front Fighter". Since the prescription of the Red Front Fighters (May 1929) large layers of these politically extremely undeveloped workers enter the Party. The political education, which was lacking there, is not being given them here. The methods of Prussian drill, implanted into the Red Front Fighters League by Thaelmann and Leow, are now being introduced into the Party. The principles of inner party democracy, of independent thinking are being replaced by the R.F.L. -man, with the slogan of "iron discipline". The "iron discipline", which is demanded in the name of the "immediately maturing revolution", is not only a slogan of the Party leadership, but a password of the R.F.L. members, who have been in the Party for only a few months.

Aside from these new strata of members, in the past year, since the Berlin municipal elections, numerous workers have been won over by the Party. The Party leadership utilizes these inexperienced workers who are eager for work by skillfully setting them in motion against the older, critically inclined cadres. Indeed, the Party has more than once openly declared that the politically unorganized are very often more revolutionary than the Party membership. Won over for the Party, the politically unorganized of yesterday are incited against the "decrepit old membership".

The constant collisions between the old cadres and the younger party generation dominates the inner party life and lead in most cases to the elimination of the "old". The composition of the party changes at a fast tempo. Alongside with the old cadres, the dearly bought experiences of the party are set aside and the "infantile maladies of the party" find fertile soil in the illusions of the younger party generation.

These phenomena impede the development of a strong left opposition in the party, our main task in Germany, extraordinarily. The old cadres of the opposition must transform themselves internally in a far reaching way, in order to fulfill their central task. The opposition disposes of a large number of strong influential positions in the provinces, especially in the Palatinate, Leipzig, Koenigsburg, etc. In these parts the opposition cadres have for the most part long ago been expelled. This holds especially true for the Palatinate and Koenigsburg. They have been forced to lead a more or less independent political life, especially in these places, where only small or no groups of the party exist.

The question of a left wing in the party is posed in a most burning fashion in Berlin. In view of the dominating position of the party in Berlin, the question of the establishment of a strong opposition movement in Berlin is the cardinal question of the whole German opposition. The old cadres of former Lefts in Berlin have for the greatest part been destroyed. A great part of the Leninbund membership has fallen into indifference. Only a small part has remained with Urbahn. Of the former Maslow Left only an insignificant part has developed itself to the level of the international opposition. On the other hand, a fairly powerful left wing workers' group has remained in the party in the Wedding district, which represents a very important inner party position of the German opposition.

In Germany, where the party plays so important a role in the every day class struggle, although it is not always a progressive role-- all questions of the struggle are posed in an incomparably sharper and more pregnant form than in other countries, in which the party has more of a propagandist role. The Left Opposition cannot therefore restrict itself to the propagation of the central ideas of the international Opposition alone, but it must understand to demonstrate to the workers the irreproachable contrast between the "general line" of the Party and the line of the Left Opposition in every front of the class struggle, by constant and intransigent struggle against the strong Right Wing Opposition and against all sectarian tendencies (Leninbund). The Left Opposition will be able to fulfill this task only in the measure in which it will be able to elaborate a platform and in the process of this work overcome all the antiquated traditions of the past which still exist.

K.L.




---



---

## F R A N C E .

### The Development Of The Opposition.

In France the Left Opposition - as a definite political tendency - was born of the errors of the amorphous opposition groupings which existed here between 1924 and 1929, as well as of the assimilated experiences of the Opposition nuclei in the International, and in the first place of the Russian Left Opposition. The publication of the weekly paper, "La Verite", the development of "La Lutte de Classe", finally our constitution as a faction into the "Communist League (Opposition)" marked the decisive steps for the Left Opposition in France.

Due to the regular appearance, since last year of the weekly "La Verite" and due to the systematic activities of the Communist League, the Left Opposition in France has finally found its path. In the beginning many obstacles faced the organization, because of the low level of the proletarian struggles in France of late years and because of the feeble response brought forth by the diverse and confused nuclei of the Opposition that had succeeded one another or fused between 1924 and 1929. The life of the Opposition during that epoch was reduced to the theoretical justification of the isolated "chiefs", achieved with the aid of the theses and the activity of the Russian Opposition. No regular publication of a journal bound up with the workers' vanguard, no connections with the proletarian struggle, no serious political delimitation was attempted. Each attempted to have some narrow groups bear the responsibility for its own past policies. Some did this by hiding behind talk about the authority of the Russian Opposition. Others, by speaking ambiguously about the development of the International Opposition, while falling into Right Opportunism. The revolution is a great devourer of men, but

but the periods of reflux in the revolutionary movement have even more disastrous results. The crises in the Party since 1924 have led hundreds of good militants into the worst sort of errors. The heritage of the Opposition in 1929 was almost entirely negative. Souvarine, Loriet have dropped back into liberal verbosity. Monatte has arrived at "pure" anti-communist syndicalism. The Paz group was rapidly enough dissolved after the first blow - (Sino-Russian conflict, Declaration of Rakovsky in October, 1929). But such a period of disintegration is also the prerequisite for the reconstitution of new cadres.

At present, the Left Opposition is orientating itself along the only path on which it can develop. It understands its function as that of an active faction of the Party, participating in the support of the Party membership in its struggles, for the victory of the Left Opposition within the framework of the International.

The work is developing on the following basis: -

The French Communist Party has suffered a particularly serious degeneration in relation to the other parties of the C.I. Had it not been based directly on the unions of the C.G.T.U., which it has in turn caused to degenerate, it would have ceased to count as a political factor in the political life of the country. This degeneration does not in the least change the line of development of our struggle. On the contrary, it makes only more imperious the task of acting as the Left Marxist faction of the Party, which will reform and regenerate it in the course of the communist struggle itself. But we must not conceal the deep decline of the Party, so manifest in July-August, 1930, thru the inexistence of the Party in the North, in the strike against the workers' segment of social insurance, which involved 150,000 workers. Our Party once numbered 120,000 members. Today it has from about 15 to 18,000. At least 100,000 have joined the Party in the last five years and left it in the same period. The C.G.T.U. itself which once numbered 500,000 members has only a little more than 300,000 today, despite the fact that we have just passed a very favorable period (1927-28) for activity and recruitment in the revolutionary unions.

In order to understand the significance of this decrease it is necessary to contrast it with the increase of the reformist organizations. The C.G.T. has surpassed the 700,000 point in membership, the S.P. has more than 160,000 members, and a large number of workers have joined just lately.

However, the enormous mistakes of the Party and the profit which the social democracy has derived from them do not prevent the Communist Party from being the only center of regroupment for the revolutionary workers. The circulation of "Humanite" and the votes received in the elections prove it. On this point too there has been a considerable decline, especially in the last year, that is, after the full application of the "third period" strategy. In the general elections of 1928 the Party received more than one million ~~xxxxxxx~~ votes, but all the partial elections since mark a decided decrease for the candidates of the Party and sometimes, especially in the rural districts, even the complete liquidation of Party influence. The circulation of "Humanite" which rose to more than 215,000

copies in 1927 has fallen to 140-150,000 copies at present. All this makes the intercession of the Left Opposition in the internal political life of the Party, even more urgent, in order, by basing itself on the clear-sighted workers, restore the Marxist political line. For the reason for the decline of our Party is not, as the opportunist leaders want to make us believe, the balance application of the political instructions of the leadership, but the political line itself, which is in permanent contradiction to the interests of the proletarian struggle, even in the most favorable circumstances.

Finally, we must underscore the complete collapse of the Party's cadres. In this domain "spontaneity" is being completely relied upon, always, and inevitable, covered by bureaucratism. Each comrade who permits himself to criticize, is removed from work, selections are made solely on the basis of loyalty to the apparatus, which counts on a regular, spontaneous influx of younger comrades. Under these conditions, the drop in the ideological level, which has never been very high, has attained alarming proportions.

\*\*\*\*\*

The Left Opposition has approached its tasks with amplitude and courage, without overestimating its present forces. It has developed the struggle for straight contacts with the Party membership, despite the bureaucratic pressure. The Opposition already plays a role which the bureaucrats cannot deny, that of arousing and encouraging the workers to healthy criticism against the centrist leadership and the proposals for work which demand a serious Left Marxist line.

The regular publication of "La Verite" has been the principal weapons which made possible the work begun. Then the organization of the Left Opposition as a faction in the Communist League (Opposition) permitted us to undertake more systematic labors for the struggle, the participation in proletarian battles as well as the political education of the Left Wing comrades in a word, the edification of new cadres indispensable for the regeneration of our Party. In this direction serious work has already been accomplished with the monthly publication of "La Lutte de Classes", which has to a certain extent played the role of an international publication of the Left Opposition. Comrades from all countries have collaborated on it, by contributing to the study of international political and economic problems.

An important field for work has also been opened to the Left Opposition in the C.G.T.U. A correct trade union policy is the prerequisite for the penetration by the methods of Communist Marxist struggle into the masses of the working class. This policy has been abandoned at the very moment, one may say, when the Communist Party, after repelling the influence of the anarchists has won decisive influence in the unions of the C.G.T.U. After that period (1925) and in especially accelerated form in late years, the centrist bureaucracy of the Party carried over its own convulsions into the C.G.T.U., that is to say, it imposed the same false political line to the trade union organizations as to the Party, it began to use the same methods of persuasion. The inevitable result was the rise of a characteristic

Right Wing Opposition, which under the subterfuge of struggle against the pressure of the Party bureaucracy upon the unions, fights in reality against communism, and for the national and international perspectives of the reformists.

The Communist Opposition can fight for the welfare of the trade union organizations only on the basis of pitiless criticism of the policies of the centrist leaders, against the Right wing liquidators united in the "Committee for the Independence of the Trade Unions". A united opposition arose and was organized on this basis, supported by our Communist Opposition. Persistent activity by the workers in the revolutionary unions, to introduce a correct trade union policy under the influence of the "united opposition" should permit us to put into application an effective united front tactic, a precise estimation of daily and partial demands, a correct political development of strikes with the approval of the working masses.

The Communist Opposition must work feverishly to realize a correct policy in the C.G.T.U., aiding and supporting the "United opposition" in the C.G.T. Only with the general line of the Left Opposition on national as well as international problems and questions will the revolutionary unions be able to accomplish their task of assembling the entire working class around the slogans and the revolutionary program of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

By coming ever nearer to the healthy base of the Party, by organizing and uniting the numerous workers whom the disastrous policies of centrism have repelled or distracted, by drawing daily and without pity, the balance of the defeats of centrism and by utilizing every partial or implicit recognition of the correctness of our views- the Left Opposition must establish its fundamental political line and elaborate a platform, proposing to the workers and seeking to improve and test it in the struggle together with the working masses. Much work must as yet be done in this direction and much must be learned.

This is the prerequisite for victory, that is, for the liquidation of the errors of the past and the methodical preparation for the struggle.

N.



A U S T R I AWhere Does The Opposition Movement Stand?

There are three groups in Austria that call themselves the Left Opposition: (1) The "Communist Party of Austria - (Opposition)" around comrade Frey, which publishes a monthly organ the "Arbeiterstimme"; (2) a group around the semi-monthly paper "Der Neue Mahnruf" and (3) a so-called little inner-party group.

For some time negotiations have been going on between these groups with the purpose of creating a unified organization with the international orientation of the Left Opposition. We shall only speak of the latest phase of the development.

In February of this year the "internal group of the Party", after a discussion with the comrades of the "Mahnruf" group set forth a project of unification, which was also sent to comrade Frey. Here is the essence of the proposal:

After declaring that the negotiations for unification "must not take as a point of departure the Austrian tradition of factional struggle" the following essential political points are indicated:

- 1) Agreement with the fundamental part of the program of the Russian Opposition and the rejection of conceptions regarding the class character of the Soviet State, the perspectives of its development and the strategic tasks deriving from all these, tending toward the position of Urhahn or Kersch.
- 2) Rejection of the Comintern's theory of the "third period" as well as the Right wing theory of "stabilization".
- 3) The Austrian situation is characterized by a "growth of the structural crises, the fascist danger, the defeat of the proletariat, the ideological-political (not organizational) dissolution of the social democracy, the complete bankruptcy of the C.P. and the great passivity of the Austrian working masses, a passivity due to all these conditions.

Rejecting the theory of a second party; the tasks of the Opposition consist in spreading revolutionary propaganda among the proletarian masses, in criticizing mercilessly centrism in the C.I. and in the Austrian Communist Party and in supporting and participating in the revolutionary actions of the proletariat. The groups have as a common aim, the creation of a movement which will be formed into the pillar of a revolutionary party. We must leave aside the scholastic question whether the present CP. can be renovated or not. We propose: - the unification of all the groups into a unified Left Opposition; the publication of an official organ of this Left Opposition, profiting by the positions previously acquired; the formation of a solid organization on the basis of democratic centralism; the adhesion to and active participation of this organization in the development of the International Left Opposition.

The "Mahnruf" group replied to these proposals in a letter which it also sent to the Schlämm group (Internationally allied with the Brandlerites) and also proposed the creation of a broad "working community of the Austrian Communists". We will attempt to reproduce the fundamental ideas of this document, which is in places unclear, if not self contradictory.

These comrades are categorically for the unification of all opposition groups on a common political basis; they are opposed from the very first against sabotage of common work, which may be caused by the past differences of the various groups while still in the party. The fundamental point of departure should be the attitude towards the Austrian C.P., the C.I., and the U.S.S.R.

They think that "every attempt to save the Austrian Communist Party, to rebuild it, is vain" and they motivate this argument by the "peculiar situation in Austria, in relation to other countries (Germany-for example). The Austrian C.P. has never been a mass party. The state of chronic crisis in which it exists, its heavy faults, have compromised communism in the eyes of the working class". According to them, the "nucleus" of the revolutionary working class still is to be found in the Social-democratic party (evidently this does not mean to say that this "nucleus" of the revolutionary working class is already consciously and actively revolutionary). "It is the complete incompetence of the C.P. that prevents this nucleus from detaching itself". They do not reject the conquest of workers who still remain in the Austrian C.P. or who have been side-tracked by it". They do not want "to play with the idea of a second party at an inopportune moment". The essential task, according to them, consists in "preparing large layers of workers to separate themselves from the social-democratic party" by carrying on "Communist propaganda in the existing mass organizations (trade unions, free thinkers, etc.)"..... "basing ourselves in this work on a press with communist principles."

After indicating the links existing between the different phenomena in the crisis of the Austrian C.P. and the relations between the crisis in the C.I. to the events in the U.S.S.R., after speaking of the great danger which they have seen "from the beginning in the 'monopoly' which the R.C.P. has held inside the C.I., due to certain historic conditions", these comrades, departing from the position mentioned above, declare:-

"In no case can we lead a struggle for the regeneration of the Communist movement in Austria, where no Communist party exists, under the slogan "Save the C.I.!" Here we must criticize most severely the methods and policies of both the Second and Third International." Regarding the U.S.S.R. the comrades emphasize that which ought to principally unite them as "the absolute determination to defend the proletarian dictatorship"... "Whoever still sanctions the expulsion of Trotsky, the assassination of Blumkin, as well as all the terrorism exercised against the Communist Opposition in Russia, whoever attempts to excuse or pass over in silence this state of affairs, cannot have any thing in common with us".

They consider it contrary to common sense and foolish to want to force the Austrian workers to simply make transcripts from the Russian Opposition, since these communists come to the Opposition because of the experiences they have undergone in Austria", and because they are in no position to "reconcile the correctness of these transcripts with Russian reality". But at the same time they approve completely the essential point of the program of the Russian and International Left Opposition, that is to say "the rejection of the theory according to which it is possible to build up Socialism in one country, a theory which is an insult to Marxism".

They are against organizational adherence to the international left opposition. The only motive for this attitude issuing from their document is that they think it "superfluous" for the opposition "before having itself become an organization, to align itself to any foreign organized groupings".

• As to the comrades around Frey, one can see from their documents by means of a hasty perusal, that they are perfectly in accord with the essential points of the unification project and on the tasks of the opposition. They only make one reservation regarding the formulation on the perspectives of development of the party.

On the other hand, they attach particular attention to the questions concerning the factional past. With a brief phrase they skim over their own past. Relative to the struggle of the Russian Opposition, they are ready to "recognize as erroneous their old orientation towards the C.I. against the Russian Opposition". On the other hand they demand, in a rather long expose, that the Russian Opposition and the "internal group of the party" approve their factional struggle in its entirety as being Leninist and objectively as well as subjectively in the interests of the Party and the C.I. (underlined in the original). They demand, besides, that the "internal group of the Party" recognize as false the struggle carried on inside the Party against the Frey group, and that the Russian Opposition, on the other hand, condemn the expulsion of this group which it is supposed to have approved. The "internal group of the Party" refused and in a letter dated March 25, 1930, declared that only one comrade of their group had participated in the internal factional struggles, and that according to them, the Russian Opposition has no mistake to rectify in this matter, demanding that they drop these factional considerations in the question of unification.

After that, the comrades sent a letter to Comrade Trotsky on the 9th of April, 1930. The essential contents of the letter, beside the subject mentioned above, are the identification of the opinions, declarations and proceedings of the representative of the "internal group of the party", Max Graef, and of the group ~~xxxxxxx~~ itself with the person of Comrade Trotsky. The "internal group of the party" is characterized in this letter as a stupid, ridiculous grouping.

The letter also says that comrade Graef "has been and remains your legitimate representative. We have always considered him as such and will continue to, even when he attempts to ascribe

to his mission a private character. Whatever Graef is doing, is being done in your name". And further... "finally, we have invited him (Graef) to demonstrate by a project for unification, how he, that is to say, you picture this unification."

Continuing in the same vein they declare: "The fundamental line particularly of the letter of March 25, 1930, (cited above by us) of the 'internal group of the party' is determined by you (Comrade Trotsky). We are, therefore, obliged to consider that letter as your reply." The letter itself, they say in their letter is "politically deceitful as well as provocative".

Another specimen:- while discussions are in process between the "Mahnruf" group and the "internal group of the party" ARBEITERSTIMME finds it necessary to bring the affair to light in a long article. A description of the factional past of the different comrades in the "internal group of the party" which is not lacking in salt and in humorous anecdotes, is politically crowned by the designation of the "internal group of the party" as the "Max and Moritz (nincompoops of a sort) group", and to top it all the following:- "Really, it is not necessary to lose so many words on the subject of these four personalities though they advertise everywhere that Trotsky supports them. However, it does seem that Trotsky is actually behind them, and considers them as "his group in Austria". And still further..... "We will combat and reject every kind of representative of the C.I. of this brand in the Opposition and in the Party".

-----

These are the pitiful results which we extract from numerous documents. The violence, the declared hostility of the polemics, the heaping up of secondary matters and of old grudges are all the more regrettable, because reflections made in passing speak of the agreement in principle on the fundamental questions of the revolutionary opposition movement. All the comrades of the International Left Opposition and even the Austrian comrades will agree with us when we say that the situation of the Austrian working class, betrayed by the Social-democracy and abandoned by the leadership of the Communist Party, demands nothing else more urgent than the creation of a unified left-wing movement capable of ridding itself of all these trifles, of all the rubbish of the past and accomplishing in a determined manner its revolutionary task.

--Jan.--

\*\*\*\*\*  
 \*\*\*\*\*  
 \*\*\*\*\*  
 \*\*\*\*\*  
 \*\*\*\*\*

---

Letters of Adherence to the International Conference From The  
 FREY and MAHRUF GROUPS.

After the above article had been prepared for publication, the International Secretariat received the following two (2) letters:-

(1)

TO THE SECRETARIAT OF THE COMMUNIST OPPOSITION AT PARIS:

Dear Comrades:

In regard to your letter of the 27th of March, 1930, addressed to LA LUTTE DE CLASSES and LA VERITE, we are at present in a position to declare the following to our satisfaction:

Various circumstances have caused us to consider a comrade of the Left Opposition, residing in Vienna as a representative of Comrade Trotsky or of the Russian Opposition. The attitude of this comrade made us suppose that on a whole series of questions preliminary discussion was necessary between us and the Russian Opposition.

In the meantime, we have received a copy of the letter which Comrade Trotsky sent you on April 21, 1930. We attach to this letter our reply to Comrade Trotsky. Comrade Trotsky's letter of April 21, 1930, proves to us that the comrade in question is not a representative of Comrade Trotsky or of the Russian Opposition.

Consequently, we cannot consider the attitude of this comrade as that of Trotsky or of the Russian Opposition. At present, we are, therefore, prepared on our side -

- 1) To take a position on your letter of March 10, 1930,
- 2) To declare quite formally our adherence,
- 3) To take a position retrospectively, on the decisions of the Paris Conference of April 6, 1930.

OUR POSITION ON THE LETTER OF MARCH 10, 1930.

I. The best path to take in order to achieve the international unity of the Left Communist organizations seems to us to be a well prepared international conference.

II. The most important problems that ought to be discussed in order to obtain a uniform platform for the Left Opposition are, in our opinion, the following:-

- (a) The Russian question.
- (b) The Indian question (the Chinese lessons).
- (c) Lessons of the Anglo-Russian tactic.
- (d) The Trade Union question.
- (e) The systematic definition of our line:-

- 1) In relation to the Bucharin-Rykov-Brandler line.
- 2) In relation to Centrism (Stalin).
- 3) In relation to the Ultra-Lefts.
- 4) In relation to the line of the groups tending to anarchism.

- (f) The relations between our international organization and the C.I., and the relations between the national Opposition organizations to their respective Communist Parties.

B E L G I U MThe Crisis of the Opposition.

The Belgian Opposition is passing thru a crisis which will be decisive for its future. It broke out in an acute manner in the months of September and October, 1929, after the Opposition had already been in the struggle for a year, on the question of the Sino-Russian conflict.

On this question, the Executive of the Opposition took a position radically opposed to that of the International Opposition. It defended the viewpoint that the Stalinist bureaucracy must return immediately the East-Chinese railway to the reactionary Chinese militarists, above all in order to maintain peace. From this flowed great unclarity on the situation in the U.S.S.R., China, and our role in the Communist International.

The Charleroi Federation, on the other hand, defended the position taken by the International Opposition.

The discussion which followed caused a clash between Charleroi and the Opposition on a whole series of questions. This discussion is still going on, with the view of clearly settling all the differences.

RESOLUTION OF THE CHARLEROI FEDERATION:

The opinion of the Opposition Federation of Charleroi (Belgium) on the unification Conference of International Left Communist Opposition.

Knowing the need of close international connections for the Opposition groups and the scattered Left communist elements, inspired by the desire to struggle for the reconstruction of the Third International, the Charleroi Federation approves the initiative taken by the VERIE group in convoking an international conference of the Communist Left Opposition groups. In its opinion the proposed conference ought to have for its essential aim the termination of an ambiguous situation which has lasted only too long and which has borne great discredit to the real Communist Left Opposition by permitting the Stalinists to exploit against the Russian Left Opposition, led by Comrade Trotsky, the political errors committed by groups and persons declaring themselves for the Left Opposition, who by their actions are directly opposed to the fundamental policies of the Russian Opposition fighting with conviction for the reconstruction of the Communist International and with the certain belief that the Russian Revolutionary forces today stifled by the bureaucratic Stalinist regime, but inseparably attached to the regime of the Soviets for the defense of the U.S.S.R. will under the political leadership of the Communist Opposition prevent the return of the bourgeoisie to power and rebuild the Russian Communist Party.

The conference must permit us to draw a very clear line of demarcation between the groups and the elements who are in agreement with the Russian Left Opposition (Bolshevik-Leninists) and the groups calling themselves "left communists" who despair of the reconstruction of the Comintern and who consider themselves

accomplished, or if not accomplished, then inevitable in Russia, who are avowed or hidden partisans of the creation of a Fourth International, openly or secretly sympathizing with syndicalist or political groups hostile to communism. This demarcation must be made on the basis of an examination of the general activity of the groups, of their organization, their policies and especially of the position they held in the Sino-Russian conflict which will permit us to judge in what measure they bring their actions in accord with their declarations for the defense of the U.S.S.R. After this line has been established, the groups of the Communist Left Opposition who are in agreement with the Russian Opposition must break with all the groups who claim to be communists but do not want to work with conviction for the reconstruction of the Communist International.

They must unite internationally and fight openly with the will to wipe out the groups who can only perpetuate the ambiguity and the confusion, preventing the workers from seeing the true form of the International Communist Opposition, and the political aims which the latter pursue.

Immediately upon its unification, the Communist Opposition must pitilessly combat and expel from its ranks the leading elements (whichever they are) who openly or clandestinely want their activity to be exempt from control from the base and from the directing committee of the International Opposition.

For, if on the one hand the survival in the ranks of the Opposition of a vain and authoritarian bureaucratic spirit, of leaders hostile to the active control of the base, a spirit which has poisoned the life of the Communist International, will constitute a mortal danger for the communist Opposition unless it is uprooted at the start. On the other hand, the spirit of national independence of the groups versus the control (which does not mean to execute orders without discussion) of an international Opposition executive constitutes another very serious danger, because it most often only covers up the desire for the personal independence of the leaders of groups who want to act arbitrarily within the framework of the National or Local policy.

Practically this spirit of national independence of the groups that "circumstantially" claim to be communist, is really anti-communist.

These two dangers must be combatted and repelled, if the Left Communist Opposition wants to achieve an internal homogeneity which will be the best guarantee for the success in its work among the masses.

In our opinion it is only in that measure in which from the first, the unified communist Opposition, remembering the precious lessons of the crisis of communism, will be able to discard these confused elements, the leaders incapable of re-uniting the labor movement, capable only of derailing and hanging on to the communist Opposition for fear of fading out politically, that it will be able to seriously and enthusiastically withstand the test of the great problems facing it.

The CHARLES FOI FEDERATION of the  
COMMUNIST OPPOSITION.

REPORT ON THE POLITICAL ORIENTATION OF THE COMMUNIST OPPOSITION

By the Executive Committee of the Belgium Opposition.

-0-

At the Third Congress, the C.I. adopted a theoretical and practical statute apparently satisfactory to all Marxists. Its long and wordy formulation, however, displayed a hardly concealed formalism. It was in parts, an untrustworthy commentary on the experiences of the Bolshevik Party of October. In his last speech before the Fourth Congress, Lenin criticised energetically the theses presented to the Third Congress.

The application of these theses was disastrous.

We must state very clearly that in fact, the period which followed the Fourth Congress marks a less sudden turn as far as the permanent Executive of the International is concerned than is often believed.

The fact that one of the most prominent faint hearts of the October had from the first been placed at the head of the International is not important. Zinoviev combined with his insuperable political schematism a rare capacity for intrigue. Lenin and Trotsky could under exceptional circumstances make up for Zinoviev's defects. But their own pre-occupation did not allow them to observe and crush the many contrivances to which Zinoviev and some of his satellites devoted themselves. They remained arbitrarily, above all real control of the cadres of the International.

I. In the Western sections of the C.I. there were only the most feeble attempts made to struggle against the Zinovievist regime. And generally, the inexperienced people who undertook this struggle opened themselves to attack because of their leftism. Their resistance was easily crushed.

Even before the fourth congress, the regime of "Courtesans" had been inaugurated in the C.I., making it at times, especially difficult for Communists, to work conscientiously for the formation of truly solid, experienced and inured sections. So, that when the C.I. had defined in detail its directions and its methods of organization, the latter especially had already become greatly distorted in their immediate application.

It was thus that the secret diplomacy of the leading circles caring very little about effective control and scrupulous execution of the decisions of the congresses, performing the worst sort of empirical amputations on the cadres of the International had already sensibly replaced democratic centralism, the backbone of the organizational system prescribed by the Third Congress.

All this is of extreme importance for the history of the Communist International and the heritage of experience it has left to those who are to-day its true successors.

The German October of 1923 had been preceded partially by the practice of double bookkeeping, partially by the distortion

of the internal life of the sections, thus fostering the emulation of the careerists and the zeal of the bureaucrats. These calamities had the greatest influence on the labors which the C.I. presented as objective estimations. Its scientific work had already become largely obscured by an official scholasticism, which the plotters and the incapables had turned into a sort of letter of credit. It is due mostly to this situation and the relations it represents between the leading center of the C.I. and its sections that the catastrophe of the German October of 1923 and the swift decline of many of the other sections took place.

II.- Nevertheless it is certain that the death of Lenin and the deep crisis which was beginning to break out in the Russian Party after the fourth congress, precipitated and accentuated in an enormous measure the decay of the C.I. leadership.

As long as the party, faithful to Marxism and its traditions remained on the road of conquest of socialism, it was an enormous force in building up the C.I. Had not this political line been interrupted, it is very likely that the C.I., under the pressure of the better elements within it, would have been able to uproot the unhealthy practices which destroyed and paralyzed part of its cadres and undermined its moral credit among the masses. From the moment the Bolshevik Party, confronted by the enormous difficulties of defending the U.S.S.R., deviated from its old path, and became rudely distorted by national socialism and opportunism, it was transformed into a terrible power for the destruction of the C.I.

Previously, the Bolshevik Party predominated in the International because of its theoretical prominence, its incomparable revolutionary experience and especially because of its political knowledge and its heroism, which aided powerfully the formation of the vanguard of the world revolution. It began by the control and conduct of the proletarian state, which with a correct estimation of conditions definitely involved it in an implacable struggle against capitalism in every part of the world.

After the overthrow of Marxist policy in the Russian Bolshevik Party, its predominance only served to demand by means of pressure and corruption the strict and bureaucratic submission of the functionaries in the cadres of the International.

III.- The struggle over the expulsion of the Russian Opposition had a great influence in the formation of International Opposition groupings. However, that was not their only source. For a long time before the expulsion of the Russian Opposition, left elements had led a consistent struggle against the opportunists in the sections of the C.I. Due to the Sinovievist regime this struggle was very difficult and rarely had a really definite character, especially in the period of revolutionary reflux.

However, it is impossible to face the problem of rebuilding the Communist movement without taking into consideration the whole development of the internal struggle in the sections of the C.I. A minute study of the differences which took place

in the various sections, especially those which deal with national peculiarities, will re-enforce the entire international Communist Opposition. It will aid it considerably in determining the cause of the mistakes, blunders and failures of the C. I.

IV.- The question of the reconstruction of the Communist movement poses at present, four fundamental questions:

- 1) The present position of the U.S.S.R.
- 2) The relations between the Soviet State and the Russian Communist Party.
- 3) The relations between the Russian Communist Party and the C.I.
- 4) The position of the Opposition with regard to the C.I.

### 1) THE PRESENT POSITION OF THE U.S.S.R.

The proletariat still remains in power in the U.S.S.R. But for several years the leadership and its exertion of power have nourished influences that are adverse and extremely dangerous to the vital interest of the world revolutionary movement. To-day the revolutionary vanguard which does not consent to the errors and the crimes of this leadership lives in Russia under the application of the most violent terror. The Stalinist leaders of the Russian C.P. fight with all the material and organizational weapons of which they dispose and with every measure possible. To this they add unheard of defamation and political falsehood. These counter-revolutionary policies have their origin in the fact that the leadership of the R.C.P. refuse to solve the problems which face the Russian revolution in the framework of the world revolutionary movement and the international circumstances in which the latter must carry on its struggle.

This lack of understanding of the objective conditions for the victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R. has ended by the domination of empirical adventurism in all the undertakings of both the R.C.P. and the C.I.

In the period of the XV Congress of the R.C.P. the platform of the Russian Opposition had recounted, combated and corrected the errors of the leadership with the greatest clarity. Its predictions concerning the eventual adoption of its policies have been completely realized. Only the perseverance in a false policy disorientates and corrupts the revolutionary organizations which apply it practically, more and more every day. This view is elementary and the latest news concerning the daily life of the R.C.P. confirm it on every point.

Thus, in this same domain, the craze of "collectivization" by decrees reveals an even more serious disparagement than the support given the kulak in the period preceding the 15th Congress and criticised at the time by the Opposition. Since no serious and conscientious effort has been made to correct the official policies, events themselves have brought about an even more accentuated and fatal lack of continuity in Stalinist policy.

The contradiction under which the opportunists of the R.C.P. are fighting one another has often forced them, while destroying the opposition politically and physically, to serve themselves with the formulae of the latter. But as always happens with opportunists, the application of correct theoretical formulae becomes their caricature in practice.

The prolonged absence of a correct policy and the almost complete divorcement of the bureaucracy from the laboring masses, which results from it, has in effect led to the destruction of the Party.

In the course of the period of general collectivization the admission of factories and whole trades into the Party was brought about and even stressed. In reality this means nothing less than the substitution of the class for the Party and the consummate domination of the autocratic bureaucracy.

This also means that less than ever will any criticism be tolerated, that an implacable terror rules over the Party, that all revolutionary action is driven on to the road of factionalism and illegal action.

Within the framework of the Party the bureaucrat and the servile moth-eaten and ignorant functionary are giving an unforgettable lesson to the last layer of revolutionaries whose conscience has not as yet been extinguished. The younger generation within its cadres has been raised and educated under such conditions that it has either been driven to the most impetuous revolt against the bureaucratic leadership of the Party, or to a degrading admiration of its worst stupidities. A small minority of the elements in revolt have taken the road of the opposition. They have entered the school of revolutionary integrity and under exceptionally difficult conditions. They have linked themselves up with bold Bolshevik tradition and their determination defies all tests.

The majority, however, contains all the refuse of the degenerated older generation, unhampered in its political degeneration by a single memory, by a single characteristic acquired in the heroic days. The younger generation combines with the arrogances and cynicism of its revolutionary mentality, the banal mysticism of industrial Americanization to which Stalinist phantasy so easily suits itself in economics.

The present situation in the U.S.S.R. may be summarized in reality as a sort of silent duel, bloody and violent between an opportunist leadership and the creative forces of the October Revolution itself. The enormous possibilities of the latter, their resistance to the most mortal blows are attested by successes, nevertheless, whose proletarian and revolutionary character has to-day certainly been compromised.

The scope of production, the method of socialist rationalization which it alone has permitted to be set forth for us, both insofar as immediate technical procedure is concerned as well as in the question of its progress and its general and periodic elevation to a higher place, the multiple and tremendous cultural acquisitions of the revolution have not victoriously opposed their permanency to the misdeeds and crimes of opportunism.

Up to the present, the dogmatic obstinacy and incapacity of Stalin have not yet been able to get the best of the October revolution.

Nevertheless, its safety demands of the Opposition, now more than ever, a relentless struggle against the internal enemy.

## 2) THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE SOVIET STATE & THE RUSSIAN COMMUNIST PARTY.

The proletarian state, established in the U.S.S.R. due to the backward character of the country and its isolation, has been faced with internal and external problems of an unheard of complexity, problems practically new for Marxists. Its economic dependence on the world market, its political and diplomatic relations with the different capitalist countries, its general situation in the universal political and social complex, contradictions in which the various parties are constantly undergoing an exchange of mutual influences, expose it to the permanent dangers of manifold distortions. All these have been crystallized at the end of several years in the formation of the State bureaucracy forgetful and sometimes completely ignorant of their revolutionary tasks.

The proletarian state, while it remains the political expression of the supreme interests of the laboring classes, is nevertheless susceptible to the pressure of counter-revolutionary classes. The proletarian class has at its head the organ of its historic destiny, the Communist Party, whose task is to extricate the apparatus of the state from the traps and the abscesses of reaction.

Because of its very structure the direct interpenetration of its cadres and those of the state, the many canals of influence of which the counter-revolution disposes, from the state apparatus to the party itself, the party has no chance to struggle victoriously against its own weakness, if it does not consolidate more and more its bonds with the revolutionary classes.

Through vigorous control of the state apparatus, the Russian C.P. remains the most powerful revolutionary weapon in the hands of the C.I. The overthrow of this control, thru the bureaucratic transformation of the Soviet state and the formation of bureaucratic castes, politically corrupt, in-capable and opposed to the interests of the proletariat, at the head of the Russian party has also entailed the direct influence of the counter-revolution on the leadership of the C.I.

## 3) THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE R.C.P. AND THE C.I.

In reality, the C.I. has no independent leadership, all its "high" functionaries, holding sway over the "supreme" organs of the C.I. find themselves, it must be said with brutal frankness, materially and politically dependent upon the autocratic bureaucracy of the R.C.P. For some years, every Marxist who has emerged from the squeaky Stalinist uniform has been massacred and exposed to persecution by the automatic ---

At the foundation of the C.I. the R.C.P. dominated by its political capacity, by its incomparable revolutionary experiences, by its example of heroism and fortitude. To-day it dominates by the knout, by money, corruption, disloyalty and falsehood in the best case. That marks the degree of the decline of the C.I. The Marxist elements in it, those who have wanted it really to preserve its revolutionary leadership and its combativity, have been thrown out of its ranks. There remain the careerists, the bureaucrats encrusted in Stalinist fatalism, and the adventurers of the worst sort.

In the domain of doctrines the C.I. has borrowed from the R.C.P. and its present leadership all the negations of the decisions of the first three congresses and its corruption. In practice these same phenomena present themselves with such accumulated gravity that evidently the stupid transposition of the slogans hatched in the Moscovite hot-houses for all the longitudes and latitudes of the globe, finish by leaving only a sort of political delirium tremens of official Communism and repels for good the most healthy sections of the proletariat.

The great mistakes of the C.I., in the course of the last few years, in the Chinese revolution, in the trade-union movement, in the formation of new revolutionary cadres, in the selection of the old, have been committed under the direct impulse of the Russian leaders whose commands and votes do not admit any discussion.

#### 4) THE RELATIONS OF THE OPPOSITION TO THE C.I.

In the divers countries in which it has sprung up and under quite different circumstances, the Left Opposition has attempted to continue the Marxist tradition against the opportunist and putschist sectarians of Stalinism. In a great measure it has succeeded, excepting the mistakes which this new step inevitably involved.

What must be the general tendency in the present period, with regard to the struggle against the C.I. leadership?

It is incontestable that in the immediate future, the defense of the Russian revolution, its welfare depends largely on the Russian Opposition. The international Opposition can come to its assistance, but it is useless and dangerous to exaggerate its forces.

The crisis in the Russian party is driving toward a new turn. The international reaction knows it and is on the watch. They know very well that the removal of effective control of power from the workers, the strangulation of the party, its criminal dissolution into two classes, the scheming of collectivization, its abortions and its disordered retreats are factors in their favor.

All depends on the possibilities for action, on the re-enforcements and organization of the Opposition. We must have absolute confidence in its efforts, without deciding in advance what path it must adopt in order to prevent a decisive march of the Stalinist faction towards Thermidor. Stalin's declaration that it will not

cede its power without an outbreak of civil war retains its value as an admonition and applies more than ever to the relations existing between the autocratic bonapartist bureaucracy and the Opposition.

II. If the process of abatement of the proletarian power is prolonged, the international Opposition will have an opportunity to take a more and more important part in the defense of the acquisitions of the Russian revolution. But to attain this end, it will have to overthrow implacably the policies of the C.I. The latter are nothing but agitational means against intervention. Instead of such a course, each Opposition group must organize a broad struggle of the masses against the bourgeoisie in the capitalist country in which it exists, at the same time taking into account the specific conditions. No group can guarantee a real and effective defense of the Russian revolution without creating in its own country a revolutionary movement capable of leading a victorious struggle against the dominating class.

### III.

In many countries, notably in Germany and France, the Opposition groups cannot think of forming a new party. They must organize themselves as factions working within the party, combatting pitilessly Stalinist policy, unmasking without reserve the servility and the impotence of its leaders and plan in the measure in which their forces develop, to fill the gap left by the party in the domain of Communist action.

However, we must not have any illusions about the possibilities of working within the party and of its regeneration by this road. It would be an unpardonable mistake to leave out of account the regime established by the Stalinist bureaucracy. Every clear and principled Opposition will be followed by automatic expulsion.

On the other hand, a diplomatic maneuvering, boring from within, must be rejected without any hesitation. It will only add a mortifying medicine to the bureaucratic putrefaction of the party, an infective medicine.

Whether they want to or not, the Opposition groups must influence from without the workers blinded and fanatic, who still remain in the party, but who are capable of recovery, nevertheless.

IV. In other countries, especially in Belgium, the Opposition must plan the construction of a new party. But, no matter how feeble the official section of the C.I. might be, no matter how irremediable its discredit and no matter how criminal the conduct of its tiny chiefs rising as mass leaders on the ruins of their little party, the new party cannot be created simply by the impatient will to replace the weak results which have been obtained or destroyed.

In a certain measure the mass of the workers refer the discredit of the party upon the Opposition. All will depart from the premises of the Opposition course only by a period of patient cautious work, giving our utmost attention to the elimination of all the empirical methods of the C.I.

These who despair of our possibilities, of a new Communist upsurge in this country, are allowing themselves to be blinded by the present difficulties, by the confusion of the moment, by our material weakness.

Those who fret at this weakness without substituting a more profound propaganda for their superficial agitation, without substituting for pseudo-Marxist doctrinaire phrase-mongering a serious analysis of the conditions for our work, simply prove that they do not understand our present tasks.

#### V.

The most disquieting point in the situation is our remoteness from the masses and our inability to carry out the task as the political guide of the masses.

The return to the united front policy must be foremost concern to us. The return to this theoretically correct policy implies the rejection of the machinations and devices employed by the C.I. so often in place of class manoeuvres. The united front policy consists of persistent denunciation of all opportunism and of constant attention to offers of class action with all proletarian organizations possible.

In certain countries, where trade union organization is particularly fragmentary, and where the traditions of revolutionary trade unionism are opposed to those of reformism, this policy requires great care. It does not suffice to theoretically and correctly condemn revolutionary syndicalism, opposed to the Communist Party or opposed to the formation of a Communist Party. The more rigorously the more precisely, the more lucidly this is done, the better for the Opposition. But it will neglect part of its task, if it does not realize to what degree the faulty leadership of the C.I. has rejected certain syndicalists opposed to the Communist Party. If its criticism must be clear, its action must be free from great mistakes and it would be a great mistake to neglect possibilities of class action in common with syndicalists.

#### VI.

The tested tactic of the united front must be extended by the Opposition everywhere, when the possibility exists, even to the C.I. itself. This tactic demands a maximum of provision in the demands put forth by the Opposition itself without any illusions about the actual attitude of the C.I. leaders, about their real intentions to apply correct and consistent revolutionary policy.

(IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE "INTERNATIONAL BULLETIN"-

concerning- "THE DRAFT PROPOSAL" of the EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE of the BELGIAN OPPOSITION- Letter to the Executive Committee of the Belgian Opposition)

FOR THE OPPOSITIONISTS DEPORTED  
AND IMPRISONED BY THE  
STALINIST BUREAUCRACY

The International Left Opposition considers one of its first tasks to be effective solidarity with our Opposition comrades imprisoned and deported to different parts of Siberia by Stalin.

We must keep the question on the agenda of the Opposition organizations permanently. Our comrades, who suffer most of all militants in the vanguard of the proletarian international, must be esteemed as the most precious part of the Opposition.

Against the efforts of Stalin to destroy the cadres of the Russian Opposition physically; we must oppose our unceasing propaganda on their behalf among the revolutionary workers of all countries. We must not neglect a single opportunity to appeal to the members of the Party that they pronounce themselves on the facts of the Stalinist reprisals. We must issue precise information in leaflets, take the floor at communist meetings, and explain to the workers that which the bureaucrats do not inform them of and that which they do not explain.

We must exert constant pressure on the centrist forces responsible for the condition in which our comrades live, responsible for the imprisonment of hundreds of revolutionaries; responsible for the exile of comrade Trotsky.

We must make money collections to aid our comrades directly. These funds must be submitted to the editors of the "INTERNATIONAL BULLETIN" who will transmit it to the responsible comrades of the "Russian Bulletin."

The question of the life of our Russian comrades is the question of the life of the proletarian dictatorship in the U.S.S.R. itself. Hundreds of militants are suffering day by day because they are the ferment of a healthy working-class reaction against the grave-diggers of the October. Rakovsky, Sosnovsky, and dozens of tried Bolshevik militants are being maltreated; Trotsky is in exile.

These facts and numerous similar facts must be the object of constant exposition before the eyes of the Communist workers, because we want with their aid to regenerate the International to struggle to the end for the defense of the dictatorship in Soviet Russia-- and this can be done only with the support of the militants, today deceived, who represent the fundamental interests of the working-class in the revolution.

-- THE EDITORS --



TO ALL THE ORGANIZATIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL OPPOSITION!!

In this issue we have published documents on Germany, Belgium, France and Austria.

In the next number we will publish documents about the United States, Italy, Spain, U.S.S.R., China and Greece.

We will also publish all the replies concerning the forthcoming International Conference; which have already been received by the Secretariat.

In this issue there are the replies coming from the two Austrian groups, which we have published without delay, since they greatly supplement information given in the article "Where Does the Opposition Movement Stand?".

The extremely difficult technical conditions under which the Bulletin appears obliges us to call the following points to the attention of the comrades of all countries:

- 1.. Each organization must send concrete statements on the political and organizational situations as well as their national and international perspectives.
- 2.. Each organization must immediately undertake the collection of funds in order to guarantee the regular appearance of the Bulletin. This point is important. (A circular has, by the way, been sent out on this subject.)
- 3.. It is necessary to fully utilize in the internal discussion documents furnished by the Bulletin and to communicate all decisions, resolutions, etc., adopted on this subject to the secretary. Documents like the appeal which opens this number should be reprinted in the press.

-- THE STAFF --

NOTE ON THE ENGLISH EDITION

Extraordinary financial and technical hardships have accompanied the publication of the first issue of the BULLETIN in English--which accounts for its belated appearance and rather uneven makeup. But the ground has been broken and the appearance of the first number in English marks a great step forward among the English speaking Communists for the International Left Opposition. The subsequent issues will however most certainly show great improvements technically over this one, and will contain a wealth of material on the various international questions, indispensable to Communist clarification and progress.

READ and SPREAD the INTERNATIONAL BULLETIN AMONG ALL COMMUNIST