

own vital interest, will take their places in the new society and under the conditions of this society. This is not the place for going further into the laws of motion of a communist society; it might be stated, however, that if Nomad had concerned himself more with these laws, he would have realized that the whole problem of the intellectuals is one of subordinate importance,--that the matter of much greater moment is to make it clear to the working class that even today it is in a position to build a real communist society and that any difficulties which may be occasioned by the intellectuals may be dealt with in the framework of the proletarian dictatorship.

- P. M. -

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NOTICE

Max Nomad will reply to this article in the next issue of the Council Correspondence.

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Forthcoming articles in the Council Correspondence:

- German Imperialism
- Marx and Lenin on the State
- Bolshevism in Spain?
- The Council Movement in England
- Planned Economy Nonsense in the Labor Movement
- Competition and Average Rate of Profit

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# INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL CORRESPONDENCE

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*For Theory and Discussion*

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INTERNATIONAL

# COUNCIL

## CORRESPONDENCE

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By the Groups of Council Communists of America

The period of progressive capitalist development is historically closed. The decline period of capital, a permanent condition of crisis, compels to ever greater convulsions of economy, to new imperialistic and military conflicts, to ever increasing unemployment and to general and absolute impoverishment of the workers. Thus is given the objective situation for the communist revolution in the capitalist countries. For the working class, there is only the revolutionary way out, which leads to the communist society. No one can deprive the workers of this task, which must be carried out by the class itself.

The publishers of Council Correspondence see in the acting self-initiative of the workers and in the growth of their self-consciousness the essential advance of the labor movement. We therefore combat the leadership policy of the old labor movement, and call upon the workers to take their fate in their own hands, to set aside the capitalist mode of production and themselves to administer and direct production and distribution in accordance with social rules having universal validity. As a fighting slogan and statement of goal we propose:

All power to the workers' councils! The means of production in the hands of the Workers!

### THE DEFEAT IN FRANCE.

There are defeats which are victories, and victories behind which lurks defeat. The victory of the "Popular Front" in France and the victory of the strikers are victories only in form. Behind the triumphal shout of the bureaucratic labor movement is concealed the fact that the revolutionary energy of the french proletariat has been squandered to no purpose. As a matter of fact, the french workers have suffered the first decisive defeat in the struggle against Capital.

France was drawn into the world crisis relatively late. Since 1933, however, the economic conditions have constantly grown worse. The index of production (on the basis of 100 for the year 1929) amounted to 76.7 in 1933; 71 in 1934; 67.4 in 1935; and 70.2 in 1936 (January-February). This stagnation is identical with the increasing impoverishment of the workers. In March 1936 the number of registered unemployed already amounted to 465,000. The deflationist policy of the government reduced wages and salaries more rapidly than domestic prices. The situation of the proletariat has become less and less tolerable and for a long while has resulted in an intensification of ill-humor which has now been discharged in the great wave of strikes.

Circumstances of foreign policy led to the conclusion of the franco-russian military pact. The nearness of the war danger made it necessary to speed up the ideological preparation of the masses. To this end, in view of the fact that french Fascism lacked a mass basis, owing to the relative retardation of the economic crisis in France, the french bourgeoisie was compelled to cast its eyes upon the labor parties. It seemed politically not inappropriate, or for the moment unavoidable, in the opinion of this bourgeoisie, to engage the labor organizations directly for its own purposes and to hold their fascist forces in reserve. At any rate, it did nothing to prevent or make impossible the parliamentary victory of the "Popular Front".

Because of the alliance with Russia, anti-Bolshevism was unpopular. The attitude of the french "communists", who in supporting the People's Front came out for a "strong, free and happy" France, the transformation of the Third International into the best defender of capitalist interests, and the momentary war value of the slogan of struggle of "democratic" against fascist countries,--these things raised the agitational value of the election slogans of the popular-front parties and stood in the way of the fascist propaganda. The united-front enthusiasm--that is, the fact that the Communist Party made itself the tail end of the Social Democracy--was likewise a propagandistic asset, which led to such repulsive results as the fraternization of the communists with officers of the french army. The communist parliamentarians gave their approval to increased military expenditures; their demands were in many cases still more reactionary than those of the Social Democracy, since the "communists" are still more interested than the socialists in the strengthening of the french fatherland. The communists now have two fatherlands to defend, while the socialists still like to content themselves with only one. And so the communists had more at stake than the socialists in a popular movement as broad as possible, and which went the whole length of communist offers to the fascists with a view to these latter joining the patriotic Front. As regards the social democrats, they want to govern only for their own bourgeoisie.

The labor parties have won in France with a fascist program. They were still more national than the fascists, and their economic program, which restricted itself to attacking "200 families"--that is, the stock holders of the Bank of France--and otherwise to stealing from Roosevelt's NRA anything available, was not very far removed from the fascist swindle in this respect. All that is nothing for any worker to get excited about, for such a program and such feats involve nothing in any way

original. In the present circumstances, the whole of the old labor movement is compelled, if it wants to maintain itself, to take up fascist slogans and to compete with the fascists for the honor of being able to govern for Capital.

Under these conditions the union between SP and CP is at the same time nothing more than a business connection. The SP was ready to aid in supporting, by the side of its own state capitalism, also that of the Russians. The struggle against Fascism is actually and loyally being conducted by these groups, so far as the thing is possible to the valets of Capital. In the first place, this "anti-fascist" struggle serves merely to veil the eventual conflict between imperialist groups of powers, the securing of french against german capital; for so long as the french bourgeoisie is obliged to fear german capital, the labor movement must be opposed to german fascism. There is also the fact that these labor leaders are conducting their anti-fascist struggle in their own interests: one bureaucracy is fighting against another bureaucracy. But at the same time, they conduct their struggle against Fascism constantly in the interest of Capital, which is capable of existing under the most various forms of government.

The french socialists with 146 deputies in the new Chamber have taken over the government for french capital. They are supported by the bourgeois-democratic "Radical Socialists" and covered in very large measure by the communists with 72 deputies and by a number of small splinter groups, without for the present participating in the government. The program of the new government is, like the electoral program, directed first against Fascism; which is only natural, as every government has to shake off the competition. Furthermore, it combats the war danger, and here too, of course, as in all other countries, thru the strengthening of the military capacities, for only one who is heavily armed can live in peace. Within the framework of the arming policy, the government's demands for nationalization of the armament industry are likewise quite natural, just as all the other "planned-economy factors" of the "socialization program" here acquire their deeper meaning. Practically, however, they are of less significance than they pretend: the war economy would of course automatically render necessary the centralization of power to determine all phases of social life. But even without war, this "planned economy" serves practically only to promote the interests of the capitalist strata which are favored even today and is an expression of the advancing concentration of capital.

A number of other trick demands is represented by the

new government; for example, it proposes to combat the influence of big capital upon politics, press and public finances. Such phrases are designed to please the petty bourgeois, but the reality which they conceal is something quite different. The people who set this demand on the order of the day are practically condemned to be the executive organ of big capital, and their role is accordingly reduced to that of voluntarily stultifying themselves. The rest of the government demands, such as a better credit policy, public works, etc., are all taken from the rooseveltian "socialism", the practical value of which has been clearly demonstrated in America the last few years. These policies have strengthened the power of monopoly capital, and nothing more. The baits thrown to the workers, such as collective contracts, eight-hour day, legislative sanction for competence to negotiate regarding rates of pay, etc., have already shown their insignificance in Germany, and no other fate is reserved for the french reformery. It is not politics which determines the economy; politics is only a part of profit production. The economy remains, as Leon Blum himself says, capitalistic; and capitalistic also remain its solutions of crisis. No crisis under capitalism can be solved except thru the sharpening of exploitation and the deepening of proletarian misery. The reform demands in the interest of the french workers, if put thru, would necessarily deepen the crisis and the deepening of the crisis would lead to the setting aside of the reforms. In a word: under capitalism in decline, reformism becomes objectively impossible. Anyone who contests this is a charlatan and has all the facts against him. One has only to glance at the fate of social reforms in the other countries. Serious struggle against impoverishment--a struggle which can be conducted only outside of parliaments--could at most compel Capital, if it wants to evade a decisive struggle with the workers, to change the methods of impoverishment; even Capital cannot affect the process of impoverishment. It is possible, for example, to the end of robbing and more sharply exploiting the masses, to make use of inflationist instead of deflationist methods; instead of cutting wages, the prices can be correspondingly raised. One and the same goal can be reached directly or indirectly, by straight or crooked paths. The working day can be shortened, and at the same time the thing can be made profitable by making the labor process more intense.

However, the incapacity of Capital to better the situation of the workers is also its problem. This problem may indeed cause the "labor leaders", in their desire to "understand both sides", many a headache, but the working class remains unphased. As little as Capital can voluntarily renounce an ever sharpened exploitation

of the proletariat, so little can the proletariat desist from uninterrupted struggle against impoverishment. Neither class moves as a result of understanding of its own or the general situation, but the acts of both classes are forced upon them thru the unregulated capitalist market mechanism. It is the task of the government, by means of force and cunning, to keep these two opposed tendencies within bounds which assure the perpetuity of exploitation society.

If the workers succeed in holding their position against Capital, the latter is obliged to oppress so much the more the other weaker strata of society,--the farmers, the middle class and the smaller capitals. The workers' resistance to pauperization can only lead to promoting the general pauperization. In this sense, the workers' resistance, without being capable of doing away with impoverishment, is of enormous revolutionary importance. It sharpens all the capitalist contradictions, and compels to constantly more accelerated impoverishment of ever broader strata. At a certain point of the development, the burden of impoverishment can no longer be divided at will among the various social strata, and the leveling process of impoverishment has come to a close. Then is reached the absolute and of all reformist policy. Until that time, the burdens of the permanent crisis may frequently still be shifted from one stratum of society to the other, but no one is in a position to help all strata of society at the same time. If the popular-front parties want to assure themselves of the middle class, they must be willing to worsen the situation of the workers. If they want to keep the confidence of the workers, then the other strata of society must be attacked. There is only the one thing to be done or the other. If the popular-front parties proceed against the middle class (and so in part against themselves,) they will only raise up Fascism, which will then have no choice but to combine with its enemy, monopoly capital, against the workers. If they spare the middle class, then they lose influence among the workers and thereby the support of Capital. They will be thrown out as unserviceable, their "life's work" will flow into the pockets of the fascists, who will take over the "inheritance" of the labor fakers. Only one thing is beyond the power both of the fascists and of the labor parties: they cannot attack big capital, for any damage to the interests of big capital sharpens the crisis and brings into question the whole of capitalist society. The weight of big capital within present society is too great to be experimented with. The society of today lives and dies with the fortunes of big capital, which has to be profitable in order to be at all. In order to attack big capital, capitalist society has to be overthrown; but

the overthrow of capitalist society is not in harmony with the interests of the labor organizations at work today, nor with those of the Blum government.

The time is past in which the fight for reforms could be conducted in any but a revolutionary way. But with this, reform also ceases to be the goal of its champions. The workers may think that they are fighting for reforms; if they wish, however, to put them thru, they are obliged to overthrow Capital. Once this is done, however, the reform no longer matters, for society itself is then mastered. And so the professional reformists have no choice but to turn against reforms. Their propaganda in favor of reforms becomes a swindle; practically, the propagandists themselves are fighting against them.

Any real change of the workers' situation under the present conditions, and increasingly also in France, means eventually civil war. In such a war, all capitalist interests, hence also the present-day labor parties, will automatically line up against the revolutionary workers. The only activity which in the meantime remains to the reformists is deception: they promise without themselves intending that the promises shall be kept. In this way the workers can for longer or shorter periods be held in leash, and in return the reformists are for the same length of time tolerated by the bourgeoisie. No group is today capable of representing more than its direct and immediate interests. No one can adopt a policy for long in advance. A policy often has the appearance of being planned, but that is not really so; it is only that in this case, quite accidentally, direct interests coincide with some which have a farther reach. With every step which Capital takes in order to satisfy its direct interests, it makes itself, from the historical standpoint, at the same time more impossible. But it cannot do otherwise; if it refrained from taking the step because it realized the eventual consequences, it would still go under. And so it can live only for the moment. And the matter is similar as regards the labor organization. The realization that it is impossible to deceive indefinitely, and so that at last they will be driven out, does not affect the momentary compulsion to deceive in order to exist at all.

The Popular Front, as well as the Blum government, can only deceive the masses, and will drive them more and more away from itself and into the arms of the fascists. The large middle class existing in France, and which everywhere forms the backbone of Fascism, will lend still more impulsion to the accelerated fascization. In the process of disappointment awaiting the masses, class solidarity is at the same time more and more disintegrated.

The workers are then just as willing to take a chance with the fascists as they had done unsuccessfully with the radicals. These latter are then not in a position to incite the masses to resistance against the fascists; they have served their time.

The concrete experience of all that was had in Germany. The same process is being repeated today in France; for the old labor movement refuses to learn, refuses to draw from the German experience the corresponding conclusions for France. It is bound to capitalism, and so is obliged, if it wants to live, to prepare the way for Fascism, even tho this latter will finally be its death.

The popular-front government can do no damage to the French bourgeoisie. Its only damage will be to the workers. The popular-front government is the government of French capital. There is no fear, as a Catholic academician writes in Figaro, that Leon Blum will be the master, but rather that he will not be master enough. If the Blum government fails to hold the French workers in check, if it fails to raise the profitability of capital, if it fails to govern sufficiently against the people, then it will be thrown out. The new government has to demonstrate that it is the best bulwark against the French workers. When it proceeds against the workers, it merely defends its own existence. Anyone who is for the popular-front government is against the workers and on the way to "Noske-socialism": someone must of course be the bloodhound.

Long before the accession of the Blum government, strike sentiment prevailed among the French workers. Encouraged by the victory of the Popular Front, certain that the new government was not in a position to bring the soldiery into action against them forthwith, the workers began their long-delayed strike. As a matter of fact, the Blum government was not in a position to come out openly against the strikers, as likewise the trade-union organizations were forced to accept the strike under the pressure of mass sentiment. The government considered it best to wait and leave the strangling of the strike to the professional labor leaders. The communists made themselves phraseologically even "the spearhead of the strikers", tho only in order to blunt its point. The enemy sat among the strikers themselves; their leaders were for the most part also their conscious and unconscious strike-breakers. The strike movement also helped the government somewhat in finding a parliamentary home for its NRA-swindle, and thus increased its prestige, for the government succeeded at the same time in making the strikes futile. Parliamentary action was directed against the strike, which it restricted in its development and deprived of its aggressive character. Instead

of bread, there were new laws which, apart from the ink, cost nothing. Laws which, even if they are literally complied with, are incapable of making any essential change in the situation of the proletariat. Frequently the strike seemed to get out of the hands of the labor leaders. It was hard to master and control because of its extension. This was at the same time its centralization, but without the experienced central committee, so that the strike had great force behind it. The syndicalist elements of the labor movement had also little reason to care for the apprehensions of the government, and their self-initiative made control still more difficult and at the same time prevented a violent intervention on the part of the government. The scope of the strike might have spoiled the career of the government at the very beginning, if it had come to a test of strength with the strikers. The best course was to harangue the strikers and throttle the strike by way of sympathy. The government forces gradually succeeded in breaking up the strike front and so in bringing the strike to a dreary end. The popular-front government thus had behind it its first betrayal of the workers; for the gains of the strike are paper ones, not real. The government's deception was praised by the communists as "cool-headedness and self-control of the workers." Enthusiastically they wrote: "The flood is mastering itself."

The remarkable thing about the strike was the tactic employed by the workers, that of remaining in the enterprises. As the first large-scale violation of the ideology of private property, this fact is of incalculable value to the entire working class. The occupancy of the enterprises leads on quite naturally to the direction of strikes by the workers themselves. The possibility of influence from the outside becomes more difficult; the spirit of solidarity grows stronger. From this point to the councils there is only a short step. The fact that the workers are going over more and more on their own initiative to occupying the enterprises will also compel the old labor organizations more and more to combat strikes which they are unable to control. The militancy of the workers unveils at the same time the treacherous character of the old labor movement. The old labor movement and the popular-front government will be compelled in their own interests to proceed against the workers in such a vile manner that at the same time they will hasten the process of digging their own grave.

Once the power of the strike was broken, the Blum government proceeded promptly to turn from the friendly phrase and take up the brutal suppression of the workers. The government began its struggle against "Right

and Left". Newspapers of the left CP-Opposition and other groups not in agreement with the ruling labor parties were forbidden, strikers arrested and thrown into jail. Laws are being prepared which are designed to hit all enemies of the present government, hence also the revolutionary workers turning against the betrayal perpetrated by the Blum government.

However, the masses of the workers are still pursuing the false hopes which they have set on the Popular-Front and their government. They will be bitterly disappointed. Once the government has become more firmly consolidated, if they should try again with their own weapon, the strike, to represent their interests, the Blum government will not be in a position to answer the call for bread with paper laws; for the laws cannot be made twice, and in spite of the laws the masses will slowly famish more and more. They will learn to thumb their noses at all constitutions and laws and, in the lack of sufficient class force, which today is being still more disintegrated by the old labor movement, they will flock to Fascism. Anyone who wants to fight against Fascism must today fight against Blum and the Popular Front. He must pronounce the truth that the french "victory" is in reality the beginning of a whole series of defeats. The workers are on the wrong path; with Blum and Thorez, they are marching straight into Fascism.

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NOTICE

Max Nomad's reply to the article "Dictatorship of the Intellectuals?", appearing in the last issue of the C.C., did not arrive early enough to be included in this issue. It will appear in the August issue of the C.C. The next issue will contain also an extensive report from Palestine under the title:

THE LAND OF PROMISE

and other interesting articles.

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## THE ROLE OF FASCISM

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The chief characteristic of fascism is that of organizing the petty capitalist and middle class with their narrow-minded spirit of private business into a mass organization, strong enough to check and beat the proletarian organizations. This class, squeezed in between the capitalist and the working class, unable to fight capitalism, is always ready to turn against the workers' class struggle. Tho it hates big capital and puts forth anti-capitalistic slogans, it is a tool in the hands of capitalism, which pays and directs its political action towards the subduing of the workers.

Its ideas and theories are directed chiefly against the class struggle, against the workers feeling and acting as a separate class. Against this, it brings forward a strong nationalistic feeling, the idea of the unity of the nation against foreign nations. In this nation workers have their place, not as a separate class, but combined with the employers as industrial and agrarian groups of production. Representatives of these groups form advisory boards for the government. This is called the Corporative State, founded on direct representation of the economic grouping of society, on capitalist labor. It is opposed to the parliamentary system for which fascism has hardly any use and which it denounces as a power of disruption, a mischievous preaching of internal dissension.

Parliamentarism is the expression of supremacy of the people, the citizens, and of the dependence of the government. Fascism puts the State above the citizens. The State, as organization of the nation, is the superior objective to which the citizens are subordinate. Not democracy, not the people's right, but authority, the people's duties stand first. It places the party chief at the head of the State, as a dictator, to rule with his party companions without interference from parliamentary delegates.

It is clear that this form of government corresponds to the needs of modern capitalism. In a highly developed capitalism economic power is not rooted, as it was in the beginning, in a numerous class of independent producers, but in a small group of big capitalists. Their interests can be served better by influencing a small body of absolute rulers, and their operations seem more

safely secured if all opposition of the workers and all public criticism is kept down with an iron fist. Hence a tendency is visible in all countries to increase the power of the central government and of the chieftans of the State. Tho this is also sometimes called fascism, it makes some difference whether parliamentary control is maintained, or an open dictatorial rule is established, founded upon the terrorism of a mighty party organization.

In Germany an analogous development of the national-socialist movement took place somewhat later. The revolution of 1918 had brought socialism into power but this power was made use of to protect capitalism. The socialists in the government let the capitalists operate as they liked. The petty capitalist classes seeing their antagonists on both sides now united and socialist officials involved in foul capitalist affairs considered socialist state concern and capitalist speculation as one common principle of corruption of an international gang of grafters. It opposed to them the honest small business of petty capitalists and the conservative old-time farmers. Young intellectuals of the universities who found their former monopoly of public offices infringed upon by detested socialist leaders, and former officers jobless thru the diminution of the army, organized the first groups of national-socialists.

They were eager nationalists because they belonged to the capitalist middle classes and were opposed to the internationalism of the ruling social-democracy. They called themselves socialist, because their petty-capitalistic feeling was hostile to big business and big finance. They were strongly anti-Semitic, too. Firstly, because Jewish capital played an important role in Germany especially in the large stores, which stores caused the ruin of the small shopkeepers. Secondly, because numerous Jewish intellectuals flooded the universities and the learned professions, and by their keener wits often -- e.g. as lawyers and physicians -- left their German competitors behind them.

Financially these national-socialists were backed by many big capitalist concerns, especially by the armament industry which felt its interests endangered by the increasing disarmament conferences. They formed the illegal fighting groups of capitalism against rising Bolshevism. Then came the world crisis, aggravating the conditions in Germany exhausted as it was by the peace treaty indemnities. The revolt of the desperate middle classes raised the National-Socialist Party to the position of the mightiest party and enabled it to seize the political power and to make its leader the dictator of Germany.

Seemingly this dictatorship of middle class ideas is directed against big capitalism as well as against the working class movement. It is clear, however, that a petty capitalist program of a return to former times of small business cannot be carried out. It soon became evident in Germany that big capitalism and the land-owning aristocracy are still the real masters behind the ruling National-Socialist Party. In reality this party acts as an instrument of capitalism to fight and destroy the workers' organization.

So strong was the power of the new slogans that they drew even a large number of workers with them, who joined the National-Socialist Party. The workers had learned to follow their leaders, but these leaders having disappointed them, were beaten by the stronger leaders. The splendour and the spiritual power of the socialist and communist ideals had waned. National-socialism promised the workers a better socialism, by class-peace instead of by class-war. If offered them their appropriate place in the nation as members of the united people not as a separate class.

Due to the victory of Fascism, or its equivalent, in certain countries, the working classes in these countries have been thrown back in their systematic upward strife for liberation. Their organizations have been wiped out, or in the case of the trade unions, put directly under the command of capitalist state officials. The workers' papers have been suppressed, free speech prohibited, socialist and communist propaganda forbidden and punished with imprisonment, concentration camps or long incarceration. In the enforced uniformity of opinion there is no room for revolutionary teachings. The way of regular progress towards proletarian power in the development of insight and organization by means of propaganda and discussions, the way to revolution and freedom, is blocked by the concrete wall of reaction.

So it appears on the surface. But, looking deeper into the problem, it only means that for the workers the smooth and peaceful way of growing to power is blocked. We said before that the right of free speech, the right of organizing, the right of propaganda and of forming political parties, were necessary for capitalism. It means that they are necessary to ensure a regular working of capitalist production and capitalist development. It means that, once they are gone, the class antagonisms must at last explode in heavy uprisings and violent revolutionary movements. The capitalist class has to decide whether it prefers this way.

It has its reasons for taking this way. It strongly feels that the heavy world crisis of today is shaking

the capitalist system in the heart. It knows that the diminished production is unable to feed the whole working class and at the same time to leave sufficient profits. It is resolved not to bear the losses itself. So it realizes that the workers, starved by unemployment, must rise and will rise in revolts. And it tries to forestall them by fortifying its own position, by forging the whole capitalist class into one strong unity, by putting the state power in strong armor, by tying the workers to this state by means of strong fetters, by robbing them of their old means of defense, their socialist spokesmen and their organizations. This is the reason why in these last years fascism became powerful.

Capitalism at one time seemed to be on to the best way of fooling the workers by means of sham-democracy and sham-reforms. Now it is turning the other way, to heavy oppression. This must drive the workers to resistance and to determined class fighting. Why does capitalism do so? Not of its own free will, but compelled by material, economic forces inherent in its innermost nature; by the heavy crisis which endangers its profits and arouses its fears for revolution.

Triumphant fascism boasts that it has blocked the way to communism forever. Its claim for this is because it has crushed the workers' movement. What it really crushed were only the ineffective, primitive forms. It destroyed the illusions, the old socialist beliefs, the socialist and communist parties -- all obsolete things hampering progress. It destroyed at the same time the old party divisions which incited workers against workers. It thereby has restored their natural class unity.

Parties are groups of common opinion; organizations are dependent on membership--both of these are secondary accidentals. Class is the primary reality founded in the nature of capitalism itself. By tradition the workers considered political opinion and organization membership as the real distinctions between workers and capitalists. They were thinking and feeling in terms of parties and unions--and by tradition may continue to do so for some time. Now they are constrained to think and feel in terms of class. Without any walls of partition, they stand one beside the other and they see that they are all comrades, subject to the same capitalist exploitation. No party discipline can call them to action; they will have to think out and make their own action when the burden of Fascist capitalism makes itself too heavily felt. The mist of opposing party opinions, of political slogans, of union narrowness, which dimmed the natural class consciousness, has been destroyed. Sharp and relentless the reality of capitalism confronts them, and to fight it they have only themselves, their class

unity to rely upon.

The political parties of the working class--we speak of Germany and Italy--have disappeared; only the leaders in exile continue to speak as if they were the parties. This does not mean that they have disappeared forever. If there should come an uprising of the working class, they will come back and present themselves again as leaders. They must be vanquished for the second time, now by the workers, by conscious recognition that they are obsolete.

This does not mean that there will be no more parties in the future, that their role is finished. New parties will arise undoubtedly in revolutionary periods to express in new situations the unavoidable differences of tactical opinions within the working class. Parties in this sense are necessary elements in social development. The working class cannot be given ready-made opinions and platforms from some Dictator Party which claims to do the thinking work for it, and forbids independent opinion. The working class has to think out and to find out the way for itself. Then opinions as to what is and what must be done will differ because their lives--tho in the main rather alike--were different in particulars. Groups of common opinion will be formed to discuss and to propagate their ideas, to fight the scientists of the capitalist class, to wage the spiritual contest with other groups. This is the way of self-education for the working class.

Parties in this sense may be called the scouting groups in the capitalist jungle. They have to investigate the ways, to study science and circumstances, to discuss these in mutual debate, to lay their ideas, their explanations, their advice before their fellow workers. In this way they are the necessary instruments to build up the intellectual power of the working class.

Their task is not to act instead of the workers, to do the real fighting work for the workers and to drag the class behind them. They will not have the power to put themselves in the place of the class. Class unity, class action will be paramount, party opinion subordinate.

## II

There are points of similarity between fascist Italy and Germany, and bolshevist Russia. They are ruled by dictators, the chiefs of dictator parties--the Communist Party in Russia, the Fascist Party in Italy, the National-Socialist Party in Germany. These parties are large, strongly organized groups which by their zeal and enthusiasm, their devotion to the cause, by their

discipline and energy are able to dominate state and country, and to enforce upon it the stamp of one hard, big unity.

This is a similarity in form; the contents are different. In Russia state capitalism builds up the productive forces; private capital is not tolerated. In Italy and Germany, the state and the ruling party are intimately connected with private large-scale capitalism. But here also a better economic organization is included in the fascist aims.

Big business always means a certain organization of production, transport and banking in the hands of a small number of directing individuals. And these comparatively few persons have control and power over the mass of lesser capitalists. Political rulers were already connected with these big capitalists before. Now the fascist program proclaims it to be the task of state power to direct and regulate the economic force. The increase of nationalism in all countries, and the preparing for world war, as expressed in the slogan of autarchy, i.e., the complete reliance of each state upon its own resources, imposes upon the political leaders a close cooperation with the leaders of industry. If in the old capitalism the state was a necessary instrument of industry, now industry becomes a necessary instrument of the state, too. Ruling the state and ruling industry is being merged into one. Imposing regulation upon private business now means that by the fascist power the bulk of the lesser capitalists are subjected still more completely to big business.

To be sure, in fascist capitalism the ruling class clings to the principle of private enterprise, if not for others, then at least for themselves. The silent contest of big capitalists, monopolists, bankers, for supremacy and profit goes on behind the scenes. If, however, the economic crisis lasts, then the increasing misery, the rebellions of workers or middle classes will compel the rulers to more efficient regulations of economic life. Already now, capitalist economists look to Russia and study its economics as a possible model, and as a way out. "Planned Economics" is the talk of politicians in many countries. A development of European and American capitalism in the direction of and into some form of state capitalism may offer itself as a means to prevent or to thwart or to turn back a proletarian revolution. This will be called socialism then. If we compare it to the last program, the "Plan" of the Belgian Social-Democratic party for regulating capitalism, the difference is not fundamental. The Belgian plan, indeed, may be called an attempt to compete with fascism in a salvation-action for capitalism.

If now we compare these three parties, the Social-Democratic Party, the Communist Party, the Fascist Party, we find that they have their chief aim in common. They want to dominate and rule the working class. Of course in order to save the workers, to make them happy, to make them free. They all say so.

Their means, their platforms are different; they are competitors, and each abuses the others calling them counter-revolutionaries or criminals.

Social-democracy makes an appeal to democracy; the workers shall choose their masters by vote. The Communist Party resorts to revolution; the workers shall rise at the call of the C.P., overthrow capitalist rule and put the C.P. into office. The fascists make an appeal to national feelings and petty-capitalist instincts. They all aspire to some form of state capitalism or state socialism where the working class is commanded and exploited by the state, by the community of leaders, directors, officials, the managers of production.

Their common basis is the opinion that the working masses are unable to conduct their own affairs. The incapable and stupid many, as they believe, must be led and educated by the capable few.

When the working class fights for its real freedom, in order to take the direction of the production, the rule of society into its own hands, it will find all these parties opposed to it.

-J.H.-

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LUXEMBURG vs. LENIN

While Lenin's position on the national question (1) was on the one hand determined by the social-democratic standpoint of pre-war time, which he had not completely overcome, and on the other appeared to him as a means of setting up and consolidating bolshevist mastery in Russia and its eventual extension on a world-wide scale, for Rosa Luxemburg it had no other meaning than that of a false policy which would be dearly paid for.

In contradistinction to Lenin, for whom, quite in keeping with his general position, organization and the conquest of power for the Party was the necessary pre-supposition for the victory of Socialism, Rosa Luxemburg's glance was directed to the class needs of the proletariat. Furthermore, while Lenin's theory and practice were tied up mainly with the backward conditions of Russia, Rosa Luxemburg constantly took as her starting point the more highly developed capitalist countries and hence was incapable of seeing in the "historical mission" of the working class a party-and-leadership problem. She laid more weight upon the spontaneous mass movements and the self-initiative of the workers than upon the growth of the organization and the quality of the leaders. Thus she differed fundamentally from Lenin in her appraisal of the factor of spontaneity in history and hence also as regards the role of organization in the class struggle. Before entering into these differences, however, we should like to contrast briefly the views of Luxemburg and Lenin on the Marxian theory of accumulation, since this question is very closely bound up with all the others.

The Collapse of Capitalism.

In her campaign against the Revisionists, Rosa Luxemburg had already emphasized that the labor movement must be prepared to face the question of revolution, not that of reform, since capitalism is inevitably heading toward collapse. In opposition to Revisionism, which strove to impute to capitalism an endless duration, she maintained that "with the assumption that capitalist accumulation has no economic limit, socialism loses its granite

(1) The first part of this article appeared in the Modern Monthly, September 1935.