

World Socialism

DEMOCRACY AS A WEAPON

By HERBERT ZAM

In this issue of The CALL, there is published the statement on organic unity just adopted by the French Socialist Party. The statement is really a remarkable document. Abandoning all past prejudices, it shows that the French Socialist Party is grasping the realities of the present situation, is realizing that the only solution to the ever-increasing chaos of capitalism is the seizure of power by the working class led by a united revolutionary party, and the building of a Socialist society. Regardless of whether organic unity will or will not be achieved in the near future, the French Socialist Party is certainly doing fine pioneering work in courageously raising these questions and rescuing them from the realms of forbidden ideas.

In sharp contrast to this point of view is the statement on the united front recently published by the Prague Central Committee, representing the right wing of the German Socialist movement. While not opposed to occasional united activities in specific instances, a general united front with the Communist Party is rejected. This of course, is a matter only for the Party itself to decide. But what is of concern to all is the reasoning in support of this decision. After properly criticizing the Communist Party for its past negative attitude toward democracy, the statement continues:

"For the German Social-Democratic Party democracy is not a political expedient but a principle and an aim in the struggle."

The one thing we should have learned from the recent events in Germany, Austria and other countries is that democracy is either a weapon in the struggle for Socialism, or it is nothing at all. To look upon democracy (that is, bourgeois democracy) as a principle or an aim in the struggle, is objectively to abandon the struggle for Socialism.

Another peculiar reason given in the statement in opposition to the united front is: that it would give the Nazis an opportunity to raise the "bogey of Bolshevism" and drive followers of the Social-Democrats to the right, thus strengthening the fascist regime. For a Party whose every action is illegal, whose members and followers fill the concentration camps, whose leaders are exiled, to worry about the "bogey of Bolshevism" (as if Hitler can't raise that bogey without a united front) appears to us to be stretching credulity quite a bit. A united front in Germany may not be the best tactic at present, but the Prague Central Committee will have to give better reasons in support of its position than it has so far.

The Expulsion Of Torgler

Finally the Central Committee of the German Communist Party has announced the expulsion of Torgler, one of the defendants in the infamous Reichstag fire trial, from the Communist Party. Several months ago Torgler had been denounced by Dimitroff, his co-defendant, as a petty bourgeois weakling and turn-coat, but no other action was taken until now. The statement expelling him has very little to say about Torgler, however. It is devoted largely to a caustic attack against Maria Reese, another former communist who has evidently gone over to the Nazis, and with whom Torgler is collaborating in a book explaining his conversion. After her break with the Communist Party, Maria Reese was for a while associated with the Trotsky movement, and this is the central point of the statement: the implication being that Trotskyism is the direct road to Nazism. Had Torgler been a Trotskyist, the charge would have been different. He was a turn-coat, who not frankly state the

follower of the official line. He distinguished himself in the fight against all deviators, and particularly in his fight against the Brandler group in Germany. He was considered as one of the three leaders of the German communists, and the head of the communist parliamentary fraction. Therefore to try to give the impression that he was some sort of uneducated rank-and-filer, misled by Maria Reese, is an attempt to evade responsibility for an unfortunate incident.

After every severe defeat, there are found elements who repent their revolutionary past, who succumb to pressure of one type or another and either give up the struggle or go over to the enemy. These elements are found in every camp and in the vigorous fight against them, the true revolutionists will become strengthened. But they cannot be combatted by the method adopted by the German communists.

Labor Unity In France

The Congress for the reunification of the trade union movement in France will take place Jan. 28, according to a joint statement issued by the two trade union centers, CGT (Socialist-led) and CGTU (communist-led). The two organizations will first hold separate congresses, and then merge into a single Congress.

All of the preliminary matters have already been agreed upon except the composition of the Executive. It is likely that the old CGT will have a substantial majority of the new Executive, with minority representation for the CGTU. The constitution of the CGT has been agreed upon as a basis for the constitution of the united organization, which will be affiliated with the International Federation of Trade Unions.

Up to the unity Congress, the process of the unification of the individual organizations will continue. The latest industry in which unity has been established is railway transportation, which was dominated by the CGTU. The executive committee, elected consists of an even number of representatives from each side.

Communists Support Benes

In a recent issue of the communist Jewish Daily Freiheit, there appeared a question from a reader who wanted to know whether it was true that the communists in Czechoslovakia had voted for Benes for president. The Freiheit replied that the Socialists, who believe in class collaboration, had voted for Benes, but the pure communists had voted against. To check this story, we turn to the Freiheit's contemporary, the Moscow Ennes, where we find a Tass dispatch from Prague dated Dec. 18, reading:

"The results of the vote show that the entire coalition, including the communists and the Czech clericals, voted for Benes."

The manifesto of the Czech communists, as summarized in the Daily Worker for Jan. 9, declared:

"If the election to the Presidency involves a fight in which we have the deciding vote, we shall vote for Dr. Benes."

Actually the communists voted for Dr. Benes although their vote was in no way decisive. Benes's majority was sufficiently large to assure his election even if the communists had voted against him. The communists had voted against

Although President Roosevelt takes measure, here it is in action. Se dominated Puerto Rico with Gov

HEALTH

The Journal of the American Medical Association for December 14, 1935 printed an editorial note that should be known to the widest lay circles. It is a striking illustration of the return to medical valism of everything scientific and particularly of medicine in the "new" Germany.

Some time ago this Journal, which is the chief mouthpiece of the medical profession in the United States, published a series of articles on glandular physiology and therapy. This is not the proper occasion to explain the meaning of these words. The important thing is that this series attracted world-wide attention and that requests for the right to translate and republish the articles came from several countries, among which from a medical publisher in Germany. This was accorded. But it so happened that two of the articles had been written by two celebrated men, former German professors of medicine who, being Jews, have lost their teaching positions due to the advent of Nazism. Their names are well known everywhere among doctors and intelligent laymen. They are Zondek and Aschheim and at present they are practicing abroad.

Well, the publishing firm that was so eager to present this entire work to its medical countrymen had to give up the plan entirely and renounced the whole series. And so the German doctors will be deprived of the opportunity to read and study this excellent and much needed information without such attempts at evasion and misrepresentation?

Communists And War

We have received many inquiries from comrades throughout the country regarding the policy advocated by the communists in case of a war involving the Soviet Union. At the Madison Square Garden debate with Thomas Browder made the following declaration:

"It is time I think that the leaders of the militant Socialists should take a clear position on the defense of the Soviet Union. A situation can develop tomorrow when German and Japanese fascism will proceed to attack the Soviet Union. . . Will the militant Socialists adopt a position of neutrality? Will they advocate the slogan 'Keep America out of war'? Impossible!"

This quotation appears in the transcript of the debate which has just been published, and is obtainable from The CALL. It should serve to clear all doubts as to what the policy of the communists is.