

**Social Democracy—
Stepping Stone To
Fascism**

or

**OTTO BAUERS'
Latest Discovery**

ADDRESS DELIVERED TO EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST
YOUTH INTERNATIONAL DEC. 1932

D. Z. MANUILSKY

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PREFACE

The following address of D. Z. Manuisky deals with the chief questions now on the anvil of discussion in the workers' movement. In the form of a reply to the political report of Otto Bauer, secretary of the Social Democratic Party of Austria, and a leading figure in the Second (Labour and Socialist) International, to the Party Congress, Manuisky traverses the whole field of Democracy and Dictatorship, Fascism and Parliament, Reforms and "Public Control," Reaction and Revolution, comparing the Russian and Austrian paths, and concluding with the position of the Communist International on the United Front with Social Democracy—leaders or rank and file. Bauer, in his report, had recourse to numerous historical analogies—French, German and Russian Revolutions, etc., with which Manuisky has, perforce, to deal.

Otto Bauer (of whom Lenin said that he was "the best of the social-traitors," declaring immediately afterwards that he meant by this "a learned idiot, utterly incorrigible")* has long occupied the post of leader of the so-called "Austro-Marxist" school of thought, which consists, as the following work so clearly shows, in a remarkably astute dressing-up of capitalist policy in Marxian phrases, i.e., pseudo-Marxism.

A long list of works appears after his name: including the notorious "Rationalisierung und Fehlrationalisierung" (Rationalisation and False Rationalisation), which is dealt with in detail in the companion pamphlet to this—"Marxism and Social-

*Kuusinen "Prepare for Power."

Democracy," by Bela Kun. He is the leader of the Left manœuvres in the official Second International, being the proposer of the Defence of the Soviet Union motion, moved last July.

It should be added that, in addition to providing an exposition of the Communist position in regard to Germany and Austria to-day, this address, so far from being exclusively Continental in its scope, has an amazingly illuminating bearing on precisely those questions now uppermost in the Labour Movement of England and America.

We have in mind the Decisions of the Leicester Conference of the British Labour Party—and the "National Plans" for the various industries (Electricity, Banks, London Passenger Transport Bill), as well as the assiduous propaganda of the Socialist League—echoed in America. Manuilsky shows by the example of Vienna that a Socialist island in a national Capitalist sea is impossible. His remarks on municipal corruption in the case of Social-Democratic officials have been shown recently to apply to places far from Austria.

The fact that since this address was delivered, Vienna has finally succumbed to the Fascist menace, makes it prophetic.

Is Social-Democracy a Stepping-Stone to Fascism ?

By D. Z. MANUILSKY

I wish to deal in my address with the speech delivered by Otto Bauer at the last Social-Democratic Party Conference. My reasons for this are as follows :

Firstly, I shall illustrate by its example the correctness of the position taken by the XIIth Plenum of the E.C.C.I.

Otto Bauer's speech represents the quintessence of the social-democratic estimate of the present situation. By showing the utter futility of this estimate, by showing where it will lead the working masses, I shall contrast it to our own methods of revolutionary struggle, the methods of the Comintern.

History has brought the international working class face to face with the question: capitalism or socialism? The minds of millions of workers, and especially the minds of millions among the younger generation of the working class, are working strenuously on this question, which causes no small disquietude to the social-democrats. In Austria, the question of capitalism or socialism, the question of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie or the dictatorship of the proletariat, is refracted through the prism of discussion on proletarian dictatorship and democracy becoming fascist. And this question, on which the young workers are racking their brains, is worthy of attention.

Secondly, the plenum of the Youth International ought to have paid special attention to the methods

of our agitation among the masses. Our agitation, our Party agitation and above all our Y.C.L. agitation, suffers from being too stereotyped. It repeats the formulæ of our decisions, being unable to find an approach to the ideas which are filling the minds of the masses. We usually talk in the language and thoughts of our functionaries, and appeal chiefly to them. But yet we have millions of young workers before us who do not know our formulæ, and think in terms of the concrete happenings of the day. We have before us social-democratic parties which are still strong, and besides these, fascist groups, which emit a whole arsenal of arguments whose falseness the workers, and especially the working youth, find difficulty in detecting. The task of our agitation is to reply to the arguments of our opponents with arguments. This constitutes a most important part of the work at present, if we really want to convert the youth leagues into broad mass organisations. In my criticism of Otto Bauer to-day, I have in view, above all, the social-democratic workers in the Y.S.I.,* the Young Socialist or Labour Leaguer. I appeal to their minds, to their class conscience, to their feeling of proletarian consciousness, stating in advance that much of what I shall say and prove needs no proof at all in yours.

Thirdly, Otto Bauer raised the question of negotiations between the Second and the Third Internationals on the subject of the united front in his speech. And I must reply to this question.

Finally, in his speech, Otto Bauer touched on the lessons of the 1918 revolution in Central Europe and the lessons of post-war social-democratic policy based on the "defence of democracy." He gave a charac-

*Socialist Youth International.

terisation of the present situation from the point of view of the Second International, a situation which he describes in Austria as "counter-revolutionary," etc.

At the present time, comrades, a whole generation of working youth in capitalist countries is entering into conscious political life—persons who did not pass through the war, or the revolutionary events of 1918 in Central Europe, and who were only partially embraced by the period of so-called capitalist stabilisation. The Communists' criticism which is given of the position of the social-democrats in the revolution, and, later on, in the period of capitalist stabilisation is but slightly known to this generation. Precisely for this reason, it is not out of place to devote one speech to the ideological position of social-democracy and its offshoot—the Y.S.I.—at this plenum. I would mention that in spending so much time on the speech of Bauer, it is far from being my intention to open a discussion with him. We want to open a discussion on the basic questions of the world workers' movement between Communist workers and the social-democratic workers, between Y.C.L.ers and Y.S.I.ers.

With this introduction, I will pass directly to the main question.

THE AUSTRIAN PROLETARIAT FOURTEEN YEARS AFTER.

Time was—in the Fourteenth Century—when the Black Death swept over Europe, and destroyed about one-third of the population of the European continent. According to the chroniclers of the time, those were days of horror. Whole villages, whole sections of cities, perished. People went about like condemned persons. Every human face reflected dumb horror and despair. The houses were like graves. No songs

or laughter were heard. The ominous silence of the graveyard held sway over both town and countryside. The gravediggers' carts could not carry off the dead quickly enough. And then the Catholic Church called for capitulation before this frightful calamity, the result of the ignorance and barbarity of the age, and declared that the plague was a punishment sent from God.

Over six centuries have passed since then. And now the menacing plague of crisis is raging over the capitalist world. No smoke issues from the factory chimneys. Death and poverty stalk abroad through the working-class quarters of the towns. In every workers' family there is mourning, as in the time of the world war. These victims of industry are the millions of unemployed who have been thrown out of the factories and workshops. People haunt the streets like shadows—hungry, hungering for work. And just as in the plague of the Middle Ages, the Catholic Church called for submission to the hand of God, the present-day social-democrats instill into the masses the idea of patience with the greatest social evil of our epoch—capitalism.

But of all capitalist countries of Central Europe, Austria suffers most from the crisis. Its toiling masses starved even before the world crisis began. And now in Vienna alone there are over 200,000 registered unemployed, of whom 75,000 have lost their right to receive relief. This means 200,000 workers' tragedies, of which only dry summaries find their way into the capitalist press reporting the increase of suicides among the unemployed.

Towns like Steyr, Donauwitz, etc., have perished. Systematic malnutrition among the great masses of the population of Vienna is a thing which hits the

children particularly hard. The magazine "*Wiener klinische Wochenschrift*" gives terrible facts regarding the plight of the children, basing its account on the observations of Dr. Abels, the head of a clinic. In Vienna during the last three years, the proportion of newly-born infants with defective skulls and bones increased from 10 to 35 per cent. And what fate awaits the generation of working-class children who are now, in the crisis years, commencing an independent life?

Austria is starving more than any other country in Central Europe, because Austria was defeated in the world war, because it was dismembered. Austria is starving because its working masses trusted the Austrian social-democrats, led by Victor Adler, Otto Bauer, Renner, etc. Do the Austrian workers remember what the *Arbeiter-Zeitung* wrote in defence of the robber imperialist war?

"Never did a party act so nobly and powerfully as German social-democracy, which has shown itself so worthy of this profoundly serious moment," wrote the *Arbeiter-Zeitung* in an article entitled "The Great Day of the German Nation." "Thus, the German people are marching solidly into the war to preserve their existence as a state and as a nation."

What did the Austrian workers get out of this "great day" of the German nation? An ocean of blood at the front, terrible starvation in the rear. The war not only led to the bankruptcy of the ruling classes of Austria-Hungary; it also exposed the bankruptcy of the war policy of Austrian social-democracy. Austria is starving because in 1918, when the Austro-Hungarian monarchy was overthrown, the working masses believed the social-democrats when they told them that they must only aim at bourgeois "demo-

cracy" in the form of a capitalist republic, without touching the foundations of capitalism. At the end of the world imperialist war, history provided exceptionally favourable conditions for the overthrow of capitalism. Millions of the toilers had weapons in their hands. In Europe, there were no less than twenty millions under arms, mostly workers and peasants. They had access to field-guns, machine-guns, tanks, armoured cars. The bourgeoisie were in fear and trembling, expecting an eruption of the volcano at any moment.

The masses were rising up against the war which had lasted almost four years; their class instinct told them that they must put an end to the social and political order which had led them into war and disaster. The working class of Austria were organized better than the working class of Russia. The nationalities downtrodden by the ruling classes of the old Austro-Hungarian empire were the natural allies of the proletariat in their struggle for social liberation. It was only the policy of social-democracy, which, by limiting the aims of the revolution to the winning of a capitalist republic, delivered the toiling masses of these nationalities into the power of their corrupt bourgeoisie and social-democratic politicians. The whole of Central Europe was enveloped in the flames of revolution. In Germany and Austria-Hungary, the workers and soldiers founded Soviets. On the vast plains of Russia the proletariat had already overthrown the power of their landlords and capitalists, swept away the government of Kerensky and established the proletarian dictatorship. And what was taking place in the camp of the Entente and its "victorious" armies? The Austrian workers should read the memoirs of Poincaré and Churchill, about which the social-democrats are deliberately

silent. Mutinies, hushed up by the press, were taking place both in the French and the British army. Whole army corps, whole armies, were "infected" with the spirit of active struggle against war and capitalism.

"The soldiers are shouting 'Down with war' and 'Long live the Russian Revolution,'" writes Poincaré anxiously in his diary. "Mutiny in the 21st Army Corps. . . . Men refuse to go into the trenches. Next day another division of the 7th Corps refused to go into position."

Exactly a week later: "Five corps almost entirely infected." In a single day, 18 men were shot as a warning to others.

Poincaré writes of the "collective madness" which had taken hold of the French army. In his consternation, he asks: "Has general disorder arrived?"

And here are the memoirs of Painlevé. In May, 1917, the units on the Somme were holding open-air meetings, demanding that the war be stopped immediately, and stating their readiness to follow the revolutionary example of the Russian army. In Soissons in 1917, two regiments occupied the railway station and seized trains, to move on Paris and dissolve Parliament. On July 7th the situation at the front was so serious that Marshal Petain demanded the restoration of field court-martial. Along the whole front between Soissons and Paris, only two divisions in the whole army were considered to be more or less reliable.

From the admissions of another of the imperialist war-lords, Churchill, we find that "on both sides of the Straits of Dover unrest and disorder had commenced."

“In a single week,” we read in the memoirs of Churchill, “we received information from various points of more than 30 cases of insubordination among the troops. In some cases considerable bodies of soldiers refused to recognize any authority for several days.”

Things went so far that Soviets of soldiers' deputies were organised and there were open mutinies in army units (at Luton and at Calais, where the mutineers held the town in their hands, etc.)

Was this not a revolutionary situation which should have been utilized by the Labour Party? Was not this the situation which had been forecast by all the international congresses of the Second International before the war? At the congress of Stuttgart, the socialist parties stated that in case of war they must take advantage of it “to inflame the masses of the people and hasten on the fall of capitalist class rule.” Was this so or not, comrades? What really proletarian party could allow these masses to let their weapons out of their hands, to hand themselves over to the mercy of the bourgeoisie? But it was precisely to disarm the masses that the social-democrats exerted all their efforts. Even in the overthrow of the monarchy in the central empires, they lagged behind the masses, resisting like a bullock being led to slaughter.

It is a historic fact that such leaders of German social-democracy as Ebert were even against a republic, and wanted to save the Hohenzollern dynasty, at the very time when hundreds of thousands of Berlin workers were in the streets demanding the formation of Soviets. It is a historic fact that in Germany the social-democrats defended the monarchy to the last moment, and only agreed to a bourgeois

republic under the pressure of the Entente, which put forward this demand as a condition for peace negotiations. Scheidemann openly speaks of this in his memoirs. If the social-democrats had not actively struggled against the proletarian revolution in Central Europe in 1918, the world would now bear a different aspect. There would now be no crisis, no unemployment, no fascism, no capitalist offensive. The ominous flames of the war in the Far East would not be menacing the workers of all countries with the danger of a new world war.

— Otto Bauer now tries to scare the Austrian workers by telling them that the Russian working class had to carry on a bloody civil war for two years in the struggle for the victory of the proletarian revolution. But the reason the toiling masses of the Soviet Union had to shed their blood so freely was that the social-democrats not only deserted the Soviet proletariat in its hard struggle, but actively fought on the side of all those who were trying to throttle the Russian proletarian revolution.

Can the Austrian workers forget that the troops of the Austrian and German republics occupied the Ukraine after the revolution in these countries, until the masses of German and Austrian soldiers themselves began to get on trains and go home? Can they forget that the government of social-democratic representatives in Germany supported the military adventures of Avilov-Bermont, who advanced on Latvia as one of the scenes of proletarian revolution? Was it not the duty, not only of a proletarian revolution, but of a consistent democratic revolution in Austria and Germany, to stop hostile actions against the country of proletarian dictatorship? The Austrian workers in 1918 were hoodwinked into believing that they

would arrive at socialism by a different path from that of the Russian workers—not by the path of the proletarian dictatorship, but through bourgeois democracy. And now the Austrian workers are starving, because they believed the Austrian social-democrats when they told them that with the world dominated by monopoly capitalism and undergoing a general crisis, the capitalist world would come to democracy and not to the blackest reaction, because they believed in the phantom of the non-existent “democracy above classes,” which is nothing more or less than ordinary bourgeois dictatorship.

Fourteen years have now passed since this “democratic” experiment was tried. The toiling masses of Austria and the U.S.S.R. are summing up the results of world-wide importance derived from the Russian and from the Austrian paths of development respectively. In the U.S.S.R. the proletariat is successfully completing the first Five-Year Plan, and marching on to the building of a classless society in the second Five-Year Plan. The working class of the U.S.S.R., relentlessly crushing all counter-revolutionary elements, is daily making the positions of the working masses, the positions of socialism under construction stronger and stronger.

And what about Austria? Whither has the path of Austrian social-democracy led the working class? In fourteen years of “democracy above classes” it has steadily, step by step, slipped into fascism.

From where did fascism arrive? Fascism is not a natural calamity like the Black Death in the Middle Ages. It is a social movement including part of the oppressed classes. Why did the urban poor and the peasants in Russia, oppressed by the yoke of capitalism, come under the leadership of the proletariat,

while in Austria a considerable part of them flocked over to fascism, delivering themselves up to monopoly capital? Because the whole post-war policy of Austrian social-democracy drove these masses into the arms of fascism. The entire experience of the world workers' movement teaches us that when capitalism becomes bankrupt, while the class which must be the grave-digger of capitalism does not fulfil its historic mission, then other forces arise which will try in their own way, in a capitalist way, to solve the contradictions of the capitalist system. This was the case in Italy, when a revolutionary situation was allowed to slip by in 1920. In the summer of 1920 the workers seized the factories, the government was utterly helpless, and one serious blow on the part of the proletariat would have been enough to annihilate the fascist movement. But there was not yet a Communist Party, while Italian social-democracy, like Austrian and German social-democracy in 1919, betrayed the proletariat at the decisive moment. It was the treachery of the social-democrats that gave rise to the victory of fascism in 1922.

Fascism in Austria grew precisely because it was helped to grow by Austrian social-democracy, which surrendered one position of the working class after another without a struggle, calling on the workers to refrain from resistance to the offensive of fascism. Having replaced the class struggle by parliamentary coalitions, social-democracy paved the way for fascism, lulling the vigilance of the working class to sleep—and then confronting them with accomplished facts. The policy of July 20th is not only a crime of German social-democracy. Austrian social-democracy is also leading the workers to it—through a whole series of little preparatory “July 20ths.” It was not “socialism by degrees” which social-democracy dis-

seminated, but "fascism by degrees," and this penetrated into the system of capitalist democracy thanks to the entire post-war policy of Austrian social-democracy.

The Austrian proletarian looks around him with a feeling of profound perplexity, of infinite bitterness. With sadness he asks himself: "In 1918 I had arms, I was a menacing force for the ruling classes. I could dictate my will to the class enemy. But I sacrificed all this on the altar of 'democracy above classes.' But where is this 'democracy above classes?'" In reality this is capitalist democracy, the democracy of the Rothschild subsidy, under which capitalism and exploitation are left untouched, under which crisis and unemployment remain. "I was told in 1914 that I must take a gun and go to fight in the Carpathians or I should be enslaved. But has capitalism enslaved me any the less in 1932 than in 1914? I was told in 1918 that the proletarian revolution would bring me starvation; but never did the Austrian worker, his wife and children, starve as they are starving now. In the Vienna lodging-houses for homeless people there were 427,000 persons in 1927 and over 700,000 in 1931.

"Ever since 1918 they have been scaring me with the story that in Austria, as in Hungary, a proletarian revolution would lead to the defeat of the working class and the triumph of fascism. But the Austrian working class is now sustaining blow after blow, without fighting back against the class enemy. Fascism is growing, is coming nearer, because of this very policy of retreat."

The proletariat feels that the gains which it wrested from the bourgeoisie during the revolution of 1918 are now being filched one after another, that the

party which, after the event, declared these revolutionary gains of the working class to be the result of its reformist policy, has surrendered these gains one after another to the bourgeoisie.

The proletariat feels that it has been betrayed quietly, imperceptibly; some diabolical hand seems to have cunningly and capably led it up to this unhappy position. And it asks itself in distress, who is to blame for all this? And in its head another question is clamouring for an answer: Why does the Russian worker have no unemployment, no fascism, when he went boldly along another path, the path of establishing and consolidating his own revolutionary dictatorship, alone against all the bourgeoisie of the world and against international social democracy? And this is a question with which hundreds of thousands of social-democratic workers at the present time are racking their brains.

But here come the social-democrats with a ready answer to these doubts. "You dream of the 1918 revolution," they say. "But in Austria the proletarian revolution in 1918 could not have won, because Austria is not Russia. In Austria, a bourgeois republic was established, with a 'social' content added to it by the active participation of the proletariat in the revolution. This is not the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. The rule of the bourgeoisie is limited by those social gains which the Austrian proletariat won in the revolution. Social-democracy is the strongest party in the state system of the Austrian republic. It presses on the ruling classes with all the weight of the organized working class, thus restraining the growth of fascism in Austria. If the social-democrats have nevertheless not been able to stop the growth of fascism, it is because of the

crisis and the bankruptcy of capitalism which have led to a 'counter-revolutionary situation' in Austria. And as social-democracy has to fight for 'democracy' and 'socialism' under the circumstances of a counter-revolutionary situation, it frequently has to retreat, and therefore the results of its policy are not always satisfactory to the masses. But to-day is not the stormy revolutionary period of 1918. By taking their stand upon legality and the defence of the bourgeois republic, and opposing the attempts of fascism to violate legality, the social-democrats are saving the masses from civil war. But if the ruling classes take to violence, Austrian social-democracy will reply with violence. Austrian social-democracy cannot in principle base itself on force and proletarian dictatorship like the Russian Bolsheviki, because this position of the Russian Bolsheviki is the result of the specific conditions obtaining in Russia, which has passed directly from tsarism to socialism. The method taken by the Russian Bolsheviki is not obligatory for the proletariat of other countries, just as, for example, the methods of the French Jacobins were not obligatory for the bourgeoisie in the bourgeois revolutions of the last century. The working class in Austria grew up in a 'constitutional' atmosphere. Within the framework of capitalism, it obtained such victories on the basis of general electoral rights as the socialist municipality of Vienna. And if now heavy blows are nevertheless being struck at Austrian social-democracy, it is because the working class does not defend this democracy enough. The basic task of the Austrian working class is to make Austria into a 'democratic island' in the surrounding ring of Central European fascism."

This is just how Otto Bauer replied to the Austrian working class at the last Social-Democratic Party

Conference. And the task of the Communists is to give their answer to the proletarian masses of Austria, to tear the arguments of the Austro-Marxists to shreds, point by point.

COULD THE REVOLUTION IN CENTRAL EUROPE HAVE CONQUERED IN 1918 AS A PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION?

Otto Bauer replies in the negative to this question, drawing a historical parallel with the Russian revolution of 1917. According to Bauer, the Russian revolution was able to conquer as a proletarian revolution owing to three basic reasons. Firstly, the peasants of Russia defended the proletarian revolution owing to their low level of political consciousness and lack of organization, the result of the economic backwardness of Russia. Secondly, because agrarian Russia, which had sources of raw material, was able to feed itself without the help of the imperialist states. Thirdly, because Russia's enormous extent has doomed to defeat all armed intervention of capitalist powers since the days of Napoleon.

If we examine these arguments produced by the 1932 edition of Austrian social-democracy, it would follow from them that the proletarian revolution in Russia was able to win owing to its economic backwardness; that the higher the industrial developments of the advanced capitalist countries, the further they are from a proletarian revolution. Otto Bauer is now turning the main argument put forward by international social-democracy in the first years after the October Revolution inside out, proving that the proletarian revolution could not win in Russia owing to its economic backwardness. The social-democratic press at that time wrote that what the Bolsheviks called the October Revolution was only

a "mutiny of the declassed soldiery," that Russia with its low productive forces was not capable of a proletarian revolution, that highly industrialized Europe stood nearer to a socialist revolution than Russia, which had only just abolished tsarism. Now everything is reversed. The "Marxist" Otto Bauer claims that the economic advantage of the industrial development of Central Europe is a factor which hinders the advent of proletarian revolution.

The Russian peasants are not made of different class stuff from the peasants of Central Europe. If they supported the proletarian revolution in Russia, it was just because this revolution put an end to one of the bloodiest of wars, in which their sons were dying by hundreds of thousands and millions in the interests of a hostile class. They supported it because it gave them the land formerly held by the big landlords, the monasteries and the tsar, together with the implements belonging to it, abolished their debts to the tsarist banks, raised them to the dominating position in the state next to the proletariat, opening up to them and to their children the road to the commanding posts in the government, in industry, in agriculture, and in the army, filling the colleges and universities with natives of the village. But who has proved that these tasks could not have been carried out by a really revolutionary workers' party in Central Europe, winning the poorer peasants to the side of the proletariat and maintaining neutrality with the middle peasants? The confiscation of the land and implements of the Prussian Junkers, whose privileges were left untouched by the German Social-Democrats, the abolition of debts to banks for the Austrian peasants, with a full guarantee from the government of the proletarian dictatorship that they would have the right to dispose freely of the agricul-

tural produce from their individual farms, the supply of cheap agricultural machinery for the peasants, a marked improvement in the lot of the agricultural labourers—all this would have welded the vast majority of the peasants together in close alliance with the proletariat, and not have delivered the peasantry, as now, into the power of fascist demagoguery.

Russia could feed itself. This is true. But the Russian proletariat, betrayed by international social-democracy, was not confronted with the starvation which Otto Bauer is now employing to scare the Austrian workers. To avoid starvation, says Otto Bauer, the proletariat of Central Europe had to capitulate to the Entente, which alone was able to give bread to the Austrian workers. But had the proletariat of Central Europe adopted a correct revolutionary policy, Russia would have been able to feed Central Europe. Had there been an alliance between the Russian proletarian revolution and the proletarian revolution of Central Europe, it would not have been necessary for the Russian proletariat to resort to war communism, to wage a hard struggle for bread to feed the workers' centres and the Red detachments of workers and peasants who were fighting against counter-revolution, both foreign and domestic. Had there been close political and economic collaboration between the proletarian republics, not only would victory over the interventionists and counter-revolutionists have been many times easier, but the restoration of the nation's economic life would have proceeded much more rapidly. The government of the proletarian dictatorship in Russia would have sent bread and raw materials to the workers of Central Europe, and the industry of Central Europe, controlled by the proletariat, would have found a vast market in Russia. And if now, after an interval of

sixteen years, Otto Bauer recommends this policy of economic collaboration between capitalist Austria and the U.S.S.R., why was this policy impossible between proletarian Austria and proletarian Russia from the very first days of the revolution? The proletarian revolution of the U.S.S.R. took this line from the first days of the German revolution, offering the government of social-democratic representatives to send shiploads of grain immediately to the German proletariat. The refusal of Haase to accept this help is one of the most dastardly betrayals of the cause of the proletarian revolution and solidarity ever known in history. The younger generation of Austrian workers should be reminded of this episode.

There is no doubt, of course, that the proletariat of the U.S.S.R. was helped by the extent of its territory. But the proletarian revolution in Central Europe would have enlarged this territory and strengthened the defences of the proletariat of the U.S.S.R. and of Central Europe. And this territory would have increased not only in a military, strategic and geographical sense, but in a political sense too. Can you so distort facts as to pretend that the revolution in Central Europe was a revolution in an Austrian province isolated from all the outside world, and therefore doomed to defeat? In 1918 the point at issue was a proletarian revolution in Central Europe, in the very countries where productive forces, to a far greater extent than the productive forces of tsarist Russia, were ripe for socialism. Could not the proletarian revolution in Central Europe, finding its support in the proletarian revolution of Russia, have evoked a mighty response in other capitalist countries, have led the proletariat of other countries to follow suit? A revolution in Central Europe would have reversed the whole balance of international

forces. It would not only have met with response in the Balkans, but would have brought the French and British proletariat into such a revolutionary state that, even if we suppose that the proletarian revolution had not conquered there, the British and French proletariat would have upset the intervention of the capitalist world, just as they helped to upset the intervention of the capitalist world in Russia. The burden of Versailles would not have been forced on the proletariat of Central Europe. The Versailles "peace" treaty would have been exploded just as effectively as was the Brest peace which was forced on the proletariat of the U.S.S.R. by German imperialism. It was precisely the capitulation of social-democracy to imperialism and its betrayal of the proletarian revolution in Central Europe which led to the dismemberment of Central Europe into small parts, which led to the terrible situation into which the Allies thrust the working masses of Austria, converting the country into a kind of Monaco for themselves.

Otto Bauer and the Austrian social-democrats are never tired of harping on the example of the Hungarian soviet power—which was crushed. But the Hungarian Soviet Republic fell for the very reason that it was betrayed by the Social-Democrats of the Central Empires—and above all by Austrian social-democracy. Do the Austrian workers remember how Otto Bauer, who was foreign minister in 1919, made the excuse of neutrality and refused the request to issue part of the weapons from the arsenals of the late Austro-Hungarian army for the Hungarian Republic, which was being bled to death? Another reason why the Hungarian Soviet Republic fell was because the Communist Party made the mistake of believing the Hun-

garian Social-Democrats, and making an alliance with them. And it is known that no sooner had the first difficulties appeared than Hungarian social-democracy stabbed the Hungarian proletarian dictatorship in the back. Finally, the tragic end of the Hungarian Soviet Republic was connected with the fact that Otto Bauer and the whole of the Second International, either by their neutrality or by direct support, helped the intervention of the bourgeoisie against the proletarian revolution in the U.S.S.R. The Russian workers and peasants had to defend themselves against the intervention organized by England and France, against the armies of Denikin and Kolchak, against the Czecho-Slovaks, etc.; they were cut off from the Hungarian proletariat. And now Otto Bauer cites the treachery of the Austrian and German social-democrats as an "objective" law demonstrating the inevitability of the defeat of revolution in Central Europe. But why was the proletarian revolution bound to be defeated in the revolutionary conditions of 1918, while Austria alone, divided and partitioned, must in the opinion of Otto Bauer now stand firm as an "island of democracy" in the midst of a ring of European fascism (Germany, Italy, Yugo-Slavia, Hungary, etc.)?

Is there a shade of logic, of political sense in all this?

WAS THERE AND IS THERE A DICTATORSHIP OF THE
BOURGEOISIE IN AUSTRIA?

In the bourgeois republic, replies Otto Bauer, there is no dictatorship. It does not mean the unlimited rule of the bourgeoisie. Here the bourgeoisie rule with the help of bourgeois parties, the electors of which are the petty-bourgeoisie, peasants,

office workers and officials, and the bourgeoisie are compelled to make concessions to them. In his reply, Otto Bauer tries to slur over the fundamental question of *in whose hands the power lies* by general talk about the "concessions" made by the bourgeoisie, in limiting their dictatorship. In reality, he neglects the question of the class essence of power, giving in its stead a legal distinction between the parliamentary form of government and dictatorship, and this "legal" (juridical) attitude to the question of "democracy" and "dictatorship" is typical of all international social fascism. The latter needs it for the infamous purposes of its practical policy, so that it can put into a single category—the dictatorship in the U.S.S.R. where the workers hold the power, and the fascist dictatorship in Italy or Germany where the bourgeoisie held the power, combining them into the general conception of "dictatorship" and contrasting them to "democracy."

The question of who holds the real power is decided by *which class owns the means of production*. Thus—and only thus—have revolutionary Marxists invariably put the question of the character of class rule. The number of "concessions" made by the ruling class may change the *form* of class domination—but not its essence. The very extent of these "concessions" depends on the relationship of forces as determined by the class struggle of the proletariat. Alike in monarchies or republics, or fascist dictatorships, the means of production, the banks, the railroads, a considerable part of the land, etc., are in the hands of the capitalists, bankers and landlords. The form may change, but the content of class rule under capitalism remains the same—the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. The people at the helm of state may change. The political parties of the bourgeoisie

may change. The "rights" and "lefts" may replace each other. As circumstances demand, they put forward the various political programs of their governments, but all these parties and governments are defenders of the institution of private property and capitalism. The bourgeoisie and the landlords, irrespective of any friction that may take place between them, find it profitable, as the commanding class, to have two agents—the "rights" and the "lefts," the "democrats" and the fascists—so as to fool the masses the more easily.

The change of the various bourgeois parties in power does not alter the fact that the whole apparatus of state violence remains in the hands of the bourgeoisie—the police, the detectives, the army, the jails, etc. In this apparatus, continuity invariably prevails; only the higher officials change, because the party which comes to power, as the result of a general election, provides sinecures as a reward for its professional politicians who are recruited chiefly from the so-called liberal professions. The whole of the basic personnel of the state apparatus, the schools and the church, consisting as it does of faithful servants of the bourgeoisie and capitalism formed by tens of years of careful selection, pass from left to right or vice versa. Therefore the task of the proletariat, as a class which stands for the annihilation of capitalism, is for the proletarian revolution to destroy this old apparatus of class rule, and build a new apparatus of proletarian dictatorship. Because the electors of bourgeois political parties are the petty bourgeoisie, the officials and the peasantry, the nature of these parties does not change, for these classes and social groups occupy an intermediate position. They waver between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. They respect force and usually join the

side which possesses and displays this force. Though fascism in a number of countries relies on the petty bourgeoisie, this does not alter the basic fact that fascism is an agent of monopoly capital.

Every political party, whatever it may say about itself, if it stands for capitalism, is a party of bourgeois dictatorship, no matter whether the form be fascist or parliamentary. And we have to judge of social-democracy and its Austrian leader, Otto Bauer, not by their declarations on "socialism" but by their deeds. In reality, the social-democrats are a party which stands for the conservation of capitalism. All their post-war history shows it.

After the revolution of 1918, the German and Austrian social-democrats were in power, but the existing order did not change an iota. The basis of capitalism remained untouched and the means of production remained in the hands of the old ruling classes. Did the bourgeoisie in England lose their privileges because the Labour Party was in power twice—in 1924 and in 1929-31? On the contrary, everybody knows that the Labour government carried through a series of measures whose aim was to lower wages and reduce insurance benefit, sweeping away all that the British working class had gained during a number of years.

THE STRUGGLE OF AUSTRO-GERMAN SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY FOR "SOCIALISM"

Social-democratic workers are often at a loss to know why we Communists speak of social-democracy as the party of social-fascism. But this description does not contain a shade of polemic or exaggeration. It is merely the statement of a historical fact in the general evolution of social-democracy. If in the

epoch of the general crisis of monopoly capitalism, its general tendencies lead to fascization, *i.e.*, to the abolition of the social and political gains of the working class, to an increased resorting to methods of political terror and the growth of reaction, a party which in practice repudiates the proletarian revolution, and therefore stands for capitalism, cannot help passing through the whole of capitalism's process of evolution, together with it.

Why did Austrian social-democracy declare that the famous Twenty-Eighth Decree, which cut down the already meagre unemployment benefit, was a victory for its policy of the "lesser evil." It explains this measure by stern necessity occasioned by the difficult situation of Austrian capitalism. Capitalism is passing through a crisis. It must maintain its accustomed profits, and for this purpose it makes attacks on wages and social insurance. Social-democracy, like a convict chained to a cart, passes through the whole gamut of "difficulties" together with decaying capitalism, endeavouring to persuade the workers to accept every new reduction of their standard of living without a murmur. But this position expresses the historic fact of the fascization of social-democracy.

Under the circumstances of a severe world crisis, the bourgeoisie are deliberately allowing social-democracy to take power as a result of parliamentary elections in a number of countries, so that they will be able to carry out the "reforms" which the bourgeoisie require in order to maintain their profits, not by their own hands, but through the agency of social-democracy. Such was the case in England, such is the case at the present time in Sweden, where a social-democratic government was formed a few

months ago. Whereas the pre-war reformism of social-democracy consisted in an attempt to divert the workers from the struggle for the overthrow of capitalism by various trifling concessions on the part of the bourgeoisie, at the present time, under conditions of crisis, we have social-democratic reformism turned inside out, "reformism" which gradually places the working class in a worse and worse position. And this is the fascization of social-democracy. In order to conceal this process of fascization, social-democracy announces the capitulationist slogan—"The period of reform has ended, the winning of socialism is at hand." But when social-democracy is in power, as in Sweden, or when it was in power, as in England, Germany and Austria, where did it win, or try to win, socialism? What has happened to the famous socialization projects of Otto Bauer and Hilferding of the revolutionary period of 1918? It is sufficient to remember what the social-democratic newspapers wrote in these revolutionary years when they abandoned socialization. We must not take the ruined heritage which capitalism leaves behind it at the present time, they said. Socialism cannot be built up on the ruins of productive forces, but only by taking over from the bourgeoisie the normally functioning apparatus of capitalist economy. Therefore the years of post-war economic ruin and inflation were followed by capitalist stabilization. The social-democratic theoreticians have made a complete right-about-face in their arguments. They began to put forward the theory of "organized capitalism." But it was found that even with the "organized" functioning apparatus of capitalist economy, the social-democrats were not in a position to win socialism, because in the period of capitalist stabilization the position of the

bourgeoisie becomes stronger, while the proletariat becomes weaker.

In short, revolution cannot be made either from ruins—or from surplus.

THE SOCIALISM OF THE "COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY SITUATION."

But now the world crisis appears with all its awful consequences for the workers, while the process of fascization becomes more rapid both in the apparatus of the capitalist state, and in the whole system of bourgeois political parties. Otto Bauer deliberately slurs over the process of revolutionization going on among the masses, and in his celebrated speech describes the situation as a "counter-revolutionary situation." That same party which did not so much let slip, but rather destroyed, the revolutionary situation existing in Austria in 1918 for the winning of socialism, considers a "counter-revolutionary situation" to be the most suitable for the winning of socialism by democratic paths. This characterization is not a chance slip of the tongue on the part of Otto Bauer, because the "socialism" of social-democracy in a "counter-revolutionary situation" is nothing more or less than the economic program of fascism. When Otto Bauer announced the bandit measures of the Austrian bourgeoisie in transferring the liabilities of the bankrupt *Creditanstalt* bank on to the shoulders of the workers and peasants by means of "nationalization" to be a step on the way to socialism, this is defending the fascist "socialism of a counter-revolutionary situation." When another social-fascist cynic, Hilferding, saw a "bit of socialism" in the decrees of Brüning for the reduction of wages, because they represented state inter-

ference, this expressed the organic fusion of the programs of fascism and social-democracy. The whole theory of modern social-democracy on "state capitalism" is nothing but the ideological justification of the fascization of bourgeois dictatorship. It is exactly adjusted to the practical measures of capital's offensive against the working class.

But how can we reconcile the statement of Otto Bauer on a "counter-revolutionary situation" with his other thesis that in Austria the bourgeoisie do not at present enjoy unlimited domination. It is precisely in a "counter-revolutionary situation" that all the features of "unlimited" bourgeois dictatorship stand out in especially sharp relief.

IS THERE A COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY SITUATION IN AUSTRIA?

It is another question as to whether there is a counter-revolutionary situation in Austria at all. What are the characteristic signs of the victory of counter-revolution? There are three.

Firstly, when the bourgeoisie, with the collaboration of social-democracy, have defeated the working class and the toiling population in open struggle, temporarily crushing the revolution, they consolidate their rule buoyed up on the wave of an improving economic situation—an improved situation which helps the counter-revolution to grow into a more or less stable regime of bourgeois dictatorship.

Secondly, the intermediate classes and social groups, above all the urban petty bourgeoisie and the peasantry, scared by the magnitude of the revolution, flock over to the side of the big bourgeoisie and form a united "national front" against the working class,

which has been defeated in the fight. It is precisely this circumstance which creates consolidation in the bourgeois counter-revolutionary camp, when there is a certain amount of confusion in the camp of revolution.

Thirdly, the proletariat, which is isolated from other classes deserted by all its temporary allies, is so weakened, that for a number of years it is incapable of any further great class struggles. In the period of counter-revolution, it is not radicalization which takes place in the ranks of the working class, not the growth of a new revolutionary wave, but the ebb of the wave, a certain swing of the masses to the right.

If we examine the situation in Austria from this point of view, it is quite clear that there cannot be any question of a counter-revolutionary situation. Things in Austria are moving, objectively speaking, towards the maturing of a revolutionary crisis. The legend of a "counter-revolutionary situation" was invented by Otto Bauer so as to demobilize the Austrian workers, to hinder their radicalization. What kind of a struggle can there be, anyway, if the Austrian proletariat finds itself faced with a counter-revolutionary situation? In the arsenal of Austrian social-democracy, the scare-crow of the counter-revolutionary situation is intended for the same part as the legend of "the hand of god" at the time of the Black Death in the Middle Ages.

Characteristic for Austria is the fact that the great mass of the Austrian social-democratic workers, systematically restrained by social-democracy, have not fought against the bourgeoisie as they should. When the working class came out, as it did, on its own initiative, on July 15, 1927, against the will of the social-democratic leaders, the movement did not

spread, because social-democracy undermined the struggle. The Austrian proletariat were not defeated in open fight. Under the leadership of social-democracy, they have continually retreated. But it is not a movement to the Right which we see going on now among the working class in Austria, but a sharp swing to the Left, which is compelling Otto Bauer to make new zigzag manoeuvres on the question of the U.S.S.R., the united front, etc. This is the first point.

The second point is that Austrian social-democracy has not solved and could not solve any of the tasks of the proletarian revolution in 1918, as, let us say, the bourgeoisie solved the tasks of the bourgeois revolution in the nineteenth century in its own capitalist reactionary way. The gains won by the Austrian proletariat in its struggle do not contain anything socialistic. Austrian social-democracy deliberately announced these gains to be "a bit of socialism," so as to calm the proletariat and keep them back from proletarian revolution. The tasks of the proletarian revolution still remain to be solved. The Austrian bourgeoisie are not faced with an improvement in the economic situation but with a decline. The general crisis of capitalism can and will be ended only by a proletarian revolution.

Thirdly, only an agent of the bourgeoisie, anxious to scare the Austrian workers with talk of a "counter-revolutionary situation," could speak of consolidation in the camp of the bourgeoisie, in the present conditions of world economic crisis. The growth of the fascist movement in Austria at the present time does not by any means signify the consolidation of the bourgeoisie. If, on the one hand, it is accompanied by an intensification in the methods of

political reaction, on the other hand it is also a symptom of the economic and political break-down of capitalism now beginning.

The ravings of reaction only serve to show how uncertain is the bourgeoisie as to what to-morrow may bring. "Autumn flies bite hardest!" The discontent of the masses of the petty bourgeoisie with the system of exploitation compels the fascists to speak to these masses in the language of anti-capitalist demagoguery. But this demagoguery is beginning to lose its credit among the masses. A break-down is maturing in the camp of fascism itself.

THE TACTICS OF AVOIDING CIVIL WAR.

In Austria there is no "counter-revolutionary situation," but the Austrian social-democrats and Otto Bauer have done everything in their power to create one. They have led the working class of Austria from defeat to defeat by sounding a retreat with systematic regularity. The situation which has arisen in Austria to-day is the result of this policy. In Austria the bourgeoisie are attacking just because they know that Austrian social-democracy will not offer any real resistance, that its threats to use violence are empty, that Austrian social-democracy is only capable of violence against the revolutionary workers, that in the event of an Austrian July 20th, it will act in just the same way as did German social-democracy. The bourgeoisie know that Seitz, the Mayor of Vienna, is just about as "capable" of a revolutionary struggle as Severing or Grzesinski. And to remove any doubt on this, it is sufficient to recall the way that the Austrian workers have gone since 1918. There are certain historic dates which the Austrian working class has not the right to forget.

These are the dates when it was defeated without a fight, when the positions won by it in revolution were treacherously betrayed by Austrian social-democracy. Can they forget such dates as the "self-disbanding" of the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, the disarming of the Red battalions of national defence by the social-democratic minister Eldersch, and the shooting down of the demonstrations of workers—who were protesting against this measure?

Let us take a few facts from recent years.

May 17, 1927—The issue of arms to the workers from the military arsenal.

July 15, 1927—Direct betrayal of the Vienna workers' uprising. Otto Bauer favoured coalition with Seitz "to liquidate the catastrophe."

May 28, 1928—The Gutenberg pact which opened the factory gates to the fascists.

October 7, 1928—Support for the first mass march of the fascist Heimwehr on Wiener Neustadt, and the breaking up of the counter-demonstration of the workers.

December 7, 1929—Parliament votes for "reform of the constitution," for emergency decrees, for recruiting the fascist Heimwehr to help the police, for the use of armed force against the workers, etc.

February 2, 1930—Seitz permits a big fascist demonstration in spite of his own decree against all demonstrations.

April 5, 1930—Parliament votes for the "law against terror," *i.e.*, in defence of strike-breakers and fascism in the factories.

June 13, 1930—The law to disarm mass organizations, which in practice disarmed the workers in face of the openly arming fascists.

May 28, 1931—The voting of a state guarantee for the debts of Rothschild's *Creditanstalt*.

October 8, 1931—The vote to give emergency economic powers to the reactionary Buresch government.

In view of these facts, let the Austrian workers judge whether Communists are right in saying that Austrian social-democracy has worked tirelessly to strengthen the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. And if the economic position of the bourgeoisie has nevertheless been undermined by the crisis, it is not the fault of Otto Bauer and his party, but the result of natural processes of the general crisis of capitalism. If the Austrian workers wish to fix the moment at which Austrian fascism was born, they must seek it on the day when the workers' Soviets gave way to the Austrian democratic parliament. The further efforts of Austrian social-democracy to drag the working class backwards have continually altered the relationship of forces, and not altered them in favour of the proletariat. In Austria there has been no development from abstract democracy to bourgeois dictatorship; what has taken place is a shifting of forces within the framework of one and the same bourgeois dictatorship.

REPUDIATION OF VIOLENCE IS REPUDIATION OF THE
CLASS STRUGGLE.

Otto Bauer professes that the concessions made by the bourgeoisie to the working masses have changed the class character of bourgeois domination. It is no longer the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, but democracy. Terrified by the spectre of proletarian revolution in 1918, the bourgeoisie of Central Europe

consented to a number of big reforms as the "lesser evil" to save capitalism and their own privileges. But these "reforms" changed the class character of the bourgeois dictatorship in Austria just as little as the introduction of the N.E.P. in Russia, for example, changed the class character of the proletarian dictatorship in the U.S.S.R. The policy of the bourgeois dictatorship depends, of course, on the relationship of forces, but this relationship of forces is determined by the intensity of the class struggle waged by the proletariat. If the Austrian proletariat, as a result of the 1918 revolution, secured big successes in Austria even within the limits of the capitalist system and the bourgeois dictatorship, it was precisely because in 1918, contrary to the wishes of the social-democratic leaders, it used revolutionary methods of violence, and overthrew the power of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. Now, after the event, these reforms, won by the mass struggle of the working class, are ascribed by the social-democrats to the virtues of their own policy of parliamentary reform, to the virtues of Austrian democracy. But it was precisely the reformist and parliamentary policy of social-democracy which led to the gradual loss of all these gains.

Take any strike as an example. At the very dawn of the Russian workers' movement, Lenin described the strike as a school of war. The strike is one of the forms of class struggle in which class compulsion is a characteristic factor. This compulsion contains elements of a certain "violence" on the part of the proletarian class which is attempting to force its demands on the bourgeoisie. Who is the agent of this class-compulsion? The working mass itself. It forces the strike upon the reformist trade unions, which usually resist until the last moment before call-

ing on the masses to struggle. The role of the reformist trade union leaders is to carry on negotiations. They conduct these negotiations with the obvious intention of breaking the struggle of the striking workers. But if the stubbornness of the strikers nevertheless does not give way and the employer makes some concessions, the reformist leaders seize on these concessions in order to disseminate disintegration in the strike front of the strikers, and very frequently they are able to carry the less steadfast elements with them for a premature agreement, and thus to break the strike. Having broken the strike, the reformist leaders proudly announce that the concessions won by the struggle of the strikers are the fruit of their "wise" and able policy of negotiation. They claim the results of the workers' struggle as their own achievements. Cannot the same be said of the part played by social-democracy in regard to the concessions made by the bourgeoisie in 1918? These reforms had a dual significance. For the Austrian proletariat, they were the modest gains of its revolution; for social-democracy they were a means of splitting the revolutionary front of the working class and breaking the proletarian revolution in Austria.

In the overwhelming majority of cases, a strike does not pursue an untrammelled course of unimpeded "compulsion." It comes into conflict with the bourgeoisie's apparatus of violence which is on the side of the employers. The working masses reply with violence to the violence of the gendarmes and the police. Violence is the soul of the revolutionary class struggle of the proletariat. Squeeze the soul out of the class struggle and the result is a lot of liberal Bauerite jabbering about the class struggle which, in practice, replaces the class struggle by the policy

of class collaboration. On March 5, 1852, Marx wrote to Weydemeyer that "the class struggle will inevitably lead to the dictatorship of the proletariat." He who repudiates the dictatorship of the proletariat to-day also repudiates the class struggle of the proletariat. And he who removes the class struggle from the arsenal of defensive weapons of the working class will inevitably lead the proletariat into the same plight as the workers have been led to by Austrian social-democracy. It could not be otherwise, for the class struggle is an inalienable law of every class society.

How can we explain the fact that there are so few economic strikes in Austria and Germany except by the fact that Austrian and German social-democracy have repudiated the class struggle in practice? In Poland, Spain and Greece, which are also in the throes of a severe economic crisis, the working class is carrying on strikes, gaining successes and holding up the offensive of the employers. In Austria, where the working class is better organized than in other countries, where social-democracy has 700,000 members and the reformist trade unions have 580,000 members, the working class is retreating without a fight. And this capitulationist position adopted by Austrian social-democracy on the question of strikes is an integral part of its capitulationist position on the question of the proletarian dictatorship.

PREPARING THE ROUT OF THE PROLETARIAT.

In the Linz program, Austrian social-democracy threatened to answer with violence if the ruling class resorted to violence first. Since then social-democracy in Austria has repeatedly had good grounds to reply to violence. Such, for example, was the case on

August 18, 1929, after the first fascist attack on the workers in St. Lorentz. Such was the case on September 13, 1931, during the Heimwehr *Putsch*. In all these cases, social-democracy preferred to employ methods of "persuasion" in dealing with the class enemy of the proletariat. The whole idea of these ostensibly "Fabian" tactics is to lead the proletariat to defeat.

The ruling classes are proceeding to open civil war, but not on the spur of the moment, not at any trifling excuse. They are making preparations, assuring themselves by a number of preliminary measures of those favourable positions which guarantee victory. They do not begin to shoot and provoke the oppressed masses until they have sufficiently disorganized and disarmed the latter. From month to month the ruling classes persistently get ready for violence on a large scale by a whole series of acts of "violence" on a smaller scale. And woe to the class which passively accepts to-day's small acts of violence in the hope of resisting the "great violence" of to-morrow! The tactic of the "lesser evil" reckons on just such a disarming of the proletariat. It conforms fully with the process of fascization which has gone on in Austria during recent years, and here, too, lies the real meaning of the treacherous tactics of Austrian social-democracy. "Attack" and "defense"? Where can you draw a clear line of demarcation between them in the class struggle or in war? The class which systematically retreats without holding up the enemy, without ever launching an attack, such a class, like an army in war, will inevitably be defeated.

OTTO BAUER AGAINST JACOBIN DEMOCRACY.

Otto Bauer declares the proletarian dictatorship to be a specific form proper to the Russian revolution and the Russian proletariat. In support of this theory, he quotes a historical analogy. France, he says, got rid of the relics of feudalism by the Jacobin method, *i.e.*, by a revolutionary democratic dictatorship. But this method was not one which the bourgeoisie of other countries were obliged to follow, for they carried through their bourgeois revolutions without employing Jacobin methods. The same applies to the proletarian dictatorship in the Soviet Union.

It is difficult to read such a statement without a sense of shame, because Otto Bauer here comes forward, after the event, as a defender of the method by which the tasks of the bourgeois revolution are solved by *reactionary* means, by an agreement between the bourgeois and the feudal classes. Let us remember what was the essence of the Jacobin revolutionary democratic dictatorship. It consisted precisely in the fact that the petty bourgeoisie and the plebeian elements in town and country seized the hegemony at the decisive moment of the revolution and succeeded "by the blows of their terrible hammer in obliterating all the feudal ruins from the face of France as if by magic." (Marx.) The Jacobin dictatorship solved the tasks of the bourgeois revolution by the stern use of violence against the aristocracy, the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie, the reactionary clergy, the courtiers, the royal family, etc. It executed the monarchist plotters and confiscated their property. And this unflinching justice meted out to the old reactionary classes enabled it to rouse the lower strata of the population to the struggle, and with their aid to conquer counter-

revolution at home and the coalition of armies of all European reaction which were advancing upon revolutionary France. The French Revolution of 1793 solved the tasks of the bourgeois revolution in a "plebeian" revolutionary-democratic manner, differing in this respect, for example, from the revolution of 1848 in Germany, for the latter developed under the leadership of the counter-revolutionary liberal bourgeoisie—who betrayed the revolution by coming to terms with the aristocracy. The revolution of 1848 in Germany was incomplete. It not only failed to strike a real blow at the Junkers, but it paved the way for a counter-revolutionary solution of the task of the bourgeois transformation of Germany "from above," under the leadership of the Junkers. The fact that the monarchy existed in Germany until November, 1918, that the big Prussian landowners have remained untouched up to the present day, that the Junkers of East Prussia and the barons have a strong influence on the policy of the German republic in 1932, is a striking proof of this anti-democratic, counter-revolutionary solution of the tasks of the German bourgeois revolution in 1848.

It is no accident that Otto Bauer attacks democracy in this way. The fascization of social-democracy also finds its expression in the fact that in the epoch of monopoly capitalism, which has deprived the bourgeoisie of the possibility of following that democratic path which was characteristic of capitalism during the historical period of its rise, social-democracy represents an anti-democratic party. It was precisely for this reason that German social-democracy in 1918 did not carry the tasks of the bourgeois revolution to their logical conclusion, but left the Prussian Junkers in full possession of their economic foundations. It is just for this reason that the Second International

is opposed to the plebeian democratic method of solving the tasks of the bourgeois democratic revolution in the colonies; it is for this reason that it supports Chang-Kai-shek against the Soviet Red Army in China; it is for this reason that its leaders talk of the danger of upheavals in the colonies.

VIENNA—A “SOCIALIST” ISLAND.

Let us take the “trump card” of Austrian social-democracy—the municipality of Vienna. We know that throughout the whole post-war policy of Austrian social-democracy, the municipality of Vienna has played the same part as the Prussian government played in the policy of German social-democracy. If, in the opinion of Wels, the Prussian government was the bulwark of the Weimar Constitution, the municipality of Vienna, which is in the hands of the social-democrats, is, in the opinion of Otto Bauer, the citadel of Austrian social-democracy and of the working class against the attacks of fascism. Can it be that the municipality of Vienna is a “bit of socialism” within the system of bourgeois dictatorship? If Otto Bauer considers that the proletariat in socialist Austria, relying on its own armed force, on the support of the proletariat of the U.S.S.R. organized as the state of the proletarian dictatorship, on the support of the working class of Germany and of the whole world, would be unable to hold out more than a few days, then how can the “socialism” of Vienna, absolutely unarmed, without even its own police, how can it hold out as a citadel of “socialism” within the system of the capitalist state? The class character of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie in Austria is just as little altered by the fact that the Austrian social-democrats have their seats in the

municipality of Vienna as was the character of the bourgeois dictatorship in Germany by the fact that the German social-democrats had their seats in the apparatus of the Prussian government.

The municipality of Vienna is a part of the whole system of the capitalist state. Its acts are based on the bourgeois laws of this state which protect capitalist property. Its "reforms" and its measures may introduce certain correctives into the way the requirements of the great toiling masses of Vienna's population are met, but the class character of the municipality of Vienna as a branch of the capitalist state is not changed by them. If a social-democratic chauffeur drives a car belonging to a transport company, the machine does not become an instrument of socialist production. And if Seitz is commissioned by the bourgeoisie to direct the municipal economy of Vienna, this economy does not thereby acquire a socialist character. On the contrary, it is subject to all the laws of capitalism. The economic crisis has the same influence upon it as it has upon a private enterprise. It feels the pressure of the law of capitalist competition. Just like a private company, it cuts down the number of workers employed in the municipal enterprises, lowers wages, reduces the quantity and quality of municipal services at the disposal of the working population; cuts down house-building, closes "surplus" schools, etc. The same thing happens with municipal "socialism" as with co-operative "socialism" in capitalist society. It is merely a branch in the whole system of capitalist economy. And if the social-democrats in the municipality of Vienna were conscientiously concerned with really helping the working population, not a single Communist proletarian would hurl reproaches at such a municipality.

But the social-democrats disseminate illusions among the masses through their theories that Vienna is a socialist island in the midst of a capitalist ocean. In the municipality, the social-democrats carry on the same policy of conciliation with the bourgeoisie as in the Austrian parliament. They come into daily contact with the representatives of the bourgeoisie, talk to them not as revolutionaries who are compelled for the time being to live in capitalist society, but as people who have one and the same platform—that of a commonwealth “above classes.” When social-democracy penetrated into the municipality of Vienna, it left the whole reactionary apparatus untouched. We know that social-democratic officials in the service of a capitalist government are gradually trained to look upon themselves as part and parcel of the whole state apparatus. They assimilate themselves into the new environment, take on the same shade of political opinion, the same habits, the same manœuvres, the same manner of life as their fascist and semi-fascist petty-bourgeois surroundings. “Being determines consciousness.” The social-democratic official is gradually taught to look upon himself as one who embodies the sovereignty of the state, becoming permeated with a psychology proper to its servant and defender. It seems to him that the proletariat ought to feel blessed by history because he, the “socialist,” has wormed his way into the apparatus of the capitalist state. For him, the interests of the state overshadow everything. This idea of the state stands above classes or people. The idea of the state is his “instrument of production” by means of which he creates respect and esteem for himself in capitalist society. Without this state, he is nothing. If he is thrown out to-morrow, he is the dust of the earth, and therefore if the fascist party

comes into power to-morrow, he can change colour without much difficulty.

It is in this light of a "regeneration" that we should regard the fascization of those numerous strata among the social-democrats who have grown into the state apparatus of the bourgeois dictatorship. After July 20th, the Papen-Schleicher government in Germany replaced the chiefs but allowed large numbers of social-democratic officials to remain at their posts, knowing that these people would prove true and faithful servants of fascist reaction. This stratum of social-democratic officials who have been recruited for years past from among the "best people" in the social-democratic party, forms a living bridge from social-democracy to fascism.

But this stratum is not made of iron and steel. It is not indifferent to the benefits of life which capitalist society proffers anyone not afraid to exceed the law somewhat. Municipal economy is connected with all kinds of contracts and deliveries from private firms, which extends a wide field of action to those who consider the good of the state and their own personal advantage identical. In capitalist society, corruption is a natural phenomenon like unemployment, prostitution, venereal disease, tuberculosis, etc. The Sklarek case, which caused such a sensation in Germany, only raised the fringe of the curtain, affording a glimpse of the backstairs activities of the corrupt "socialist" municipal politicians, who differ little from their bourgeois colleagues in their avarice and feverish greed for personal gain.

But, it may be asked, what relation has all this to the starving unemployed social-democratic worker of Vienna who is sitting with his family without bread, without potatoes or coal in winter-time?

Where are his "socialist gains" now? What does he gain from the fact that Seitz and the social-democratic officials are in the municipality of Vienna? Social-democracy takes pride in the fact that it taxed Rothschild in Vienna. But the Soviet workers took everything from the Rothschilds, and handed it over to the toilers. Social-democracy boasts that it has developed cheap housebuilding in Vienna. But in Vienna, of 1,200,000 rooms, only 500,000 are for workers; the remainder constitute the luxurious quarters of rich and well-to-do elements, *i.e.*, a mere handful of the population. Contrast this with the proletarian revolution in the U.S.S.R. which has raised up millions of Russian workers and peasants from surroundings of lice and filth, giving them access to the palaces of the tsar and of the financial magnates. In Moscow, at the centre, the industrial workers formed only 3-5 per cent. of the population before the revolution, whereas now they are the owners of all the houses in the Red capital. Let the social-democratic workers of Vienna observe what the Soviet power has done to build houses for the workers in the Donbas, in Baku and in other cities. They say that in 1922 the municipality of Vienna opened sanatoriums with 2,500 beds for consumptives. But in 1931, at the very time when tuberculosis was beginning to claim victims right and left among the workers, the number of beds was reduced to 1,000. In the U.S.S.R. all the palaces of the rich and the grand dukes in the Crimea, all the sanatoriums in the old health resorts are now at the sole disposal of the toilers. They say that Vienna, led by Seitz, has made improvements in the working-class quarters of the city. What has been done by the Soviet power to improve the working-class quarters? The main attention of the municipal soviets has been concen-

trated on this task. The first improvements to be introduced into working-class quarters were, as a rule, street cars, water supply and sewerage. New street car systems have been built in large working-class centres such as Baku, Grozny, Sverdlovsk, Makeyevka, Molotovo, Chelyabinsk, Stalino, etc. Many palaces, clubs, day nurseries, schools, sanatoriums, clinics, hospitals, forest schools, rest homes, parks of culture and rest, universities, factory kitchens, etc., etc., have been built. All for the workers, for their wives and children! They say that "socialist" Vienna is redeeming winter clothing from the pawnshops for some categories of the unemployed. But the U.S.S.R. has developed a speed of industrialization, socialist construction, unprecedented in the history of mankind, destroying the terrible scourge of unemployment entirely on one-sixth of the globe. They say that Vienna has developed a school system. In the U.S.S.R., 2,500,000 workers and peasants are studying in universities, colleges, workers' faculties and trade schools at the expense of the government. One half of the whole population of the country is taking part in some form of study. The circulation of newspapers has increased from 2,700,000 to 40,000,000. During the last ten years, thirty billion rubles have been spent on social and cultural construction. And what is the Soviet power doing in the matter of mastering technical knowledge? During the last three years the number of engineers and technicians in the country has increased four-fold. In 1930 there were 68,000 engineers and technicians in heavy industry alone, while in 1932 the number had increased to 228,000. Seventy per cent. of the students in Soviet universities are industrial workers and collective farmers.

IS THE WORKING CLASS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DEFEAT OF DEMOCRACY?

And yet Otto Bauer wonders why "democracy" has lost prestige among the workers. Almost a century and a half has passed since the great French Revolution. The international working class has seen "democracy" at work. Through its own experience, it has come to realize its true nature.

Since 1918 the Austrian workers have sustained more than one blow from this "democracy," *i.e.*, capitalism in the republican form of the bourgeois dictatorship. But since then they have seen the proletarian revolution in the U.S.S.R. They have seen the party of the working class in the U.S.S.R., the Bolshevik Party, tackling the gigantic work of socialist construction. Socialism in the U.S.S.R. has not yet completely killed the faith of the international working class in "democracy," but it is killing it every day, and will ultimately kill it for good. And the fact that the Austrian workers are not showing enthusiasm in the defense of "democracy" now is no proof at all of a counter-revolutionary situation, but is an expression of the process of radicalization going on among the working class. This is only the first stage of radicalization as yet, in which the repudiation of democracy has not yet turned into revolutionary action on the part of the masses. The central question is whether the social-democrats will be able to restrain the transition of the masses from the repudiation of democracy to the revolutionary struggle for the proletarian dictatorship. If we suppose that social-democracy might succeed in this, it would mean nothing more or less than the victory of fascism. Fascism would conquer—and could not help conquering, if there were complete passivity on

the part of the working class which has lost its faith in bourgeois democracy. And therefore Otto Bauer and his party, by doing everything possible to prevent this transition, dragging the working class backwards to an objectively hopeless cause which is historically out-of-date, are only assisting fascism.

And now Otto Bauer fastens responsibility on the workers for the bankruptcy of social-democracy's policy. If fascism is increasing in Austria, then it is just because the workers are not defending democracy enough. If Braun, Severing and Grzesinski were thrown out of the Prussian government, it was because the German working class did not move a finger to prevent it. But why should the German workers "defend" Grzesinski and Severing when they are not defended by their own *Partei Vorstand*,* when they are not defended by their own social-democratic police, when both they themselves and the *Partei Vorstand* shun any "defense" of the masses like the plague, realizing that working-class mass action will go beyond mere defense of the Prussian government and lead to a struggle against the capitalist system in general? If the Communist Party of Germany called on the working masses to act against the Papen-Schleicher government in reply to July 20th, it was not for the purpose of bringing Grzesinski in triumph to the Berlin *Polizei presidium* and Severing to the Prussian Ministry of Home Affairs on their backs, but in order to resist reaction in the form of both its wings—Papen-Schleicher on the one hand and Grzesinski-Severing on the other. The German workers have learned to know the police methods of Severing's "democracy" from their own experience. To the unemployed in their demon-

*E.C.

strations, it was immaterial whether they were beaten with rubber clubs at the orders of Severing, or those of Schleicher. The closing down of the Communist Press was practised by the government of Braun and Severing no less than that of Schleicher. The attack on social insurance, on the wages of the German working class, began at the time when Braun and Severing were in the Prussian government. Schleicher's fascist dictatorship grew organically out of Severing's "democracy," continuing its reactionary course of action. And now that the social democratic Prussian government has finally compromised itself as the servant of reaction, Otto Bauer demands that the German workers should fight and shed their blood for Braun and Severing.

WHO DEFENDS DEMOCRACY?

History is full of examples in which an extreme reactionary party deliberately puts forward another, slightly less, reactionary party as a pawn into the foreground of the political arena, in order to compromise the latter in the eyes of the masses by the use of repression, so as to sweep it away and occupy its place. When the bourgeois republic led by Cavaignac destroyed the July revolt of the Paris proletariat in 1848, the fate of that same bourgeois republic was sealed. Napoleon the Little knew on December 2, 1852, just as Schleicher knew on July 20, 1932, that the masses will not move in order to defend the "lesser evil."

The "less" reactionary party, which destroys the extreme Left, is preparing its own doom, paving the way for extreme reaction. The moderate wing of the bourgeoisie, which sent the Jacobins to the guillotine in the Thermidor days of the French Revolution,

paved the way not only for the Napoleonic Empire—but also for the monarchist restoration. The Austrian social-democratic workers should firmly grasp these lessons of history. They must understand that the real defender of democracy is not he who says that he is defending the republic against the fascist dictatorship, defending democracy against fascism. Cavaignac was, subjectively speaking, the same republican general as Otto Bauer is a supporter of democracy, but both of them, by adhering in a conservative manner to the existing political forms, were in reality paving the way for the victory of reaction. The Communist workers who struggle against the bourgeois republic and bourgeois democracy for proletarian democracy are doing more to bar the path to fascism than all the social-democratic party with its daily declamations about “democracy.” It is not the extreme Left and the “extreme” revolutionary tactics which lead to reaction, as the social-democratic press claims every day. What leads to reaction is the capitulationist policy of conciliation with reaction, which Austrian social-democracy has pursued for many years. But social-democracy presented this policy to the masses as the guarantee of the salvation of democracy. Why, then, has “democracy” suffered such defeats at the present time in Austria?

THE UNITED FRONT.

What has prevented Austrian social-democracy from utilizing to the full the fruits of its tactics in the matter of saving “democracy”? Maybe it was the Communists? Maybe it was they who split the “democratic” front of the working class?

We know that this false argument is produced against the Communist Party of Germany by the

German social-democrats. But in Austria the situation is different. Here the Communists have not yet really tackled the task of winning over a majority of the working class, as they have done in Germany. Here the Communists are still in a minority. According to the boast of Otto Bauer, Austrian social-democracy has almost a monopoly in the ranks of the Austrian workers. The unity of the working class, according to Otto Bauer, has become an accomplished fact in the ranks of Austrian social-democracy. Let us suppose for a moment that this is the case. But then, what a terrible responsibility falls on that party which possesses a monopoly for the application of its methods of "barring" the path to fascist reaction! Why is it that reaction has conquered in Austria with its "united" workers' movement just as it has done in Germany where there is a split in the working class?

Possibly the cause of the Austrian proletariat's weakness is to be found in the splitting of the international workers' movement? Possibly the responsibility for the bankruptcy of Austrian social-democracy's policy falls on the proletariat of the U.S.S.R., which has "split" the world working-class movement by taking the path of proletarian revolution? No, comrades, it is not here a question of cleavage, but of the fact that one part of the working class, under the influence of social-democracy, is entering into a *bloc* with the bourgeoisie against the other part of the working class, the Communist part, and if the working class in Austria still retains some vestiges of "democracy," it is just because a mighty bulwark against world reaction exists on one-sixth of the globe. What would the capitalist world be like if this proletarian bulwark did not exist? Where would the policy of social-democracy have led the international

working class? If there is as yet no new imperialist war, if the capitalist offensive has not converted the European workers into Chinese coolies and Indian pariahs in spite of all the capitulationist tactics of international social-democracy, if fascism is not triumphant along the whole front, it is just because the government of proletarian dictatorship which is victoriously constructing socialism stands as a counterpoise to world capital and world reaction, because the organized movement of World Communism, united into the world-wide Party of the Communist International, is barring the path of world reaction. The whole capitalist world is seized with terror before the spectre of Communism and Proletarian Revolution.

But the importance of the organized Communist movement does not consist only in the tremendous echo which its slogans meet with among the working masses of all countries. This importance is to be attributed to the tenets of the Communist International—the tenets of irreconcilable class struggle. Whether the Communist workers in capitalist countries succeed in forming a broad united front with the social-democratic workers or not, the Communists will fight just as devotedly against the capitalist offensive, against fascism, against war, as they have fought up till now. They will always be an active factor against reaction in all its forms. It is not the Communists who are holding things up! In places where they have not formally entered the "united front," they have done everything that lay in their power for this united front of working-class struggle, making tremendous sacrifices for the cause of the working class. In places where the social-democratic workers are commencing the struggle against the bourgeoisie, no power wielded by the

social-democratic authorities will prevent the Communists from standing shoulder to shoulder with the social-democratic workers in this struggle.

The problem of the united front encounters *the attitude of the social-democratic workers*. There cannot be a united front if there is no class struggle of the proletariat which stands in profound contradiction to the whole policy of Austrian social-democracy and its leader, Otto Bauer. But the united workers' front of Communist and social-democratic workers would increase the fighting forces of the working class many-fold. It would permit the proletariat not only to hold up the attack of the enemy, but to take the offensive itself. Let the millions of social-democratic workers only reflect what the international working class would represent now, with its vast mass organizations, basing itself on the proletarian revolution of the U.S.S.R., if such a united front of struggle *on the basis of the class struggle* were really brought about. And if the Communist Parties were really confronted with social-democratic organizations whose leaders now adopted the standpoint of the class struggle like the rank and file masses, the duty of the Communist Parties would be to conclude an agreement in order to bring about a united front with these leaders. But this state of affairs does not exist. It is just for this reason that the broad working masses, whose class instinct impels them to unity in the class struggle, must take the initiative of the united front into their own hands. The establishment of the united front must be *the cause of millions of workers*. And we Communists know that thus and thus alone will the unity of the international working class be restored. We Communists expose our ideas, our program, our demands, our methods of struggle, our tactics, to the verdict of the masses. We believe

in the masses, we believe in their class consciousness and their revolutionary sense. It is precisely we Communists who stand for the broadest rank and file democracy in carrying out the united front. Can the social-democratic leaders say the same? Why do they, who have shouted so much about the methods of "orders from Moscow," from the Comintern, not wish to put the decision of the question of the united working-class front into the hands of the masses? What has become of all the declarations about democracy inside the working class? Why are they so afraid of the public verdict of the proletariat?

Otto Bauer proposes to bring about the united front by means of direct negotiations with "Moscow." Negotiations with whom? With Otto Bauer, with Dr. Renner? It is not worth the trouble. Since 1914-18 the Communists have forgotten nothing—but they have learned a great deal. If it is a question of social-democratic meetings of the rank and file workers in the factories, the Comintern would not be carrying out its elementary duty if it did not discuss with these workers how to organize the united front with the rank and file workers better, what difficulties need to be overcome, in order to bring about a united class struggle. We Communists would listen most attentively to the criticism of these social-democratic workers who have been connected for years with Austrian social-democracy. And we are convinced that, as people of one class, we should find a common class language. Such a comradely discussion could only help to overcome the psychological aloofness which is artificially inflamed by the social-democratic leaders among the social-democratic workers, and would hasten the formation of the united front of the Austrian workers' movement. But the united front of struggle cannot be replaced by the Comintern

“from above.” It can only be formed from below. And if Otto Bauer transfers the centre of the question of the formation of the united front of struggle to negotiations between the “two Internationals,” it is precisely because he wants to break the united front of the working class which is already being formed in a number of countries. Otto Bauer promises the Austrian workers that these negotiations will become possible in another and more serious situation, *i.e.*, at the time of a war of the imperialist world against the Soviet Union. If Otto Bauer has already spoken so openly about war, we think it necessary to reply to him with the same frankness what we also are thinking about the position of international social-democracy in case of a war against the Soviet Union. We do not doubt that the working class of the whole world, hundreds of thousands and millions of social-democratic workers among them, will be on the side of the Soviet Union when the capitalist world attacks it, irrespective of what position is occupied by the Second International. But we have also no doubt that the leaders of the social-democratic party and its higher functionaries will deal a stab in the back at the proletariat of the U.S.S.R., will come out on the side of the bourgeoisie in this war just as they came out on its side during the war of 1914. The treachery of international social-democracy in 1914 was not a mere chance or transitory occurrence. It has been borne out by the whole post-war evolution of international social-democracy, by July 20th, by its whole attitude regarding the question of the U.S.S.R. There may be individual deserters, there may be shades of difference in their positions, as there are now, but the leading sections of the whole Second International will be on the other side of the barricade. It is not Otto Bauer

who will express the opinion of these sections, but people like Noske. The Otto Bauers will only conceal by their "Left" phrases, the open services which they render to reaction on the same scale as Noske.

War, like proletarian revolution, creates a single line of barricades between the classes. It is impossible to be between the two camps. Anyone who is prepared in advance to join the line of defence of the Soviet Union and proletarian revolution will not talk to the masses to-day in the language of Otto Bauer. He will act and talk like those workers who are fighting alongside the Communists against fascism and the capitalist offensive in a number of European countries. The Communists call on their class brothers, the social-democratic proletarians, to take this line. The Austrian and German Communists say to them: Brothers, welded to us by common want, oppression and exploitation, we, like you, wish for unity and we call on you to stand together against capital in one steel united phalanx. We do not want to manoeuvre in our relations with you, but to fight shoulder to shoulder with you for our common class cause. We Communists are not trying to break up your unity, we are not trying to undermine your mass strength, but to give to the unity and mass strength of the working class that basis of class struggle, without which this strength will become weakness, while "unity" will be exploited by the Otto Bauers for collaboration with the bourgeoisie. And if we succeed in forming this united front together with you, we shall secure the victory of the working class over capitalism.

RESOLUTION OF PRESIDIUUM E.C.C.I. ON THE SITUATION IN GERMANY (April 1st)

IN the conditions of the tremendous sharpening of the economic and political situation in Germany, when, on the one hand, the Communist Party had already become a tremendous force in the working class, and a revolutionary crisis was rapidly maturing, when, on the other hand, the deep contradictions among the ruling classes themselves had become clear and the Fascist dictatorship in the shape of the von Papen and Schleicher Government was not in a position to stop the growth of Communism and find any way out of the ever-intensifying economic crisis, the German bourgeoisie delegated the establishment of an open Fascist dictatorship to the Fascist Hitler and his "National Socialist" Party.

The victory of Hitler and the establishment of the power of the "National Socialists" was possible owing to the following circumstances.

German Social-Democracy, which had the support of the majority of the proletariat in the November Revolution of 1918, split the working class.

Instead of carrying the revolution forward to the dictatorship of the proletariat and Socialism, which was the duty of a workers' party, it, in alliance with the bourgeoisie and the generals of the Kaiser, suppressed the uprising of the revolutionary masses and laid the basis for a profound split in the working class of Germany.

In the conditions of imperialism and still more so in a country which had been defeated in the imperialist war and whose capitalism had been deeply undermined by the general crisis of the capitalist system, the Weimar "democratic" bourgeois republic could only be a reactionary dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

Continual and gradual concessions to reaction, a gradual repeal of one point of the constitution after another, of one gain of the workers after another, the gradual Fascisation of the whole apparatus of the State, so greatly discredited the Weimar coalition and

the Weimar republic that it lost all serious significance in the eyes of the broad masses.

It can be understood, therefore, that at a time of the most intense economic crisis, which increased the burden of the external Versailles national oppression, and when, due to the Social-Democrats, the working class was split and consequently not strong enough to carry the urban petty-bourgeoisie and the peasant masses with it—there was bound to arise, and actually there did arise, a tempestuous outburst of German nationalism and Chauvinism which considerably strengthened the political situation of the bourgeoisie and brought to the surface the most demagogic nationalist party—the party of the “National Socialists.”

The Communist workers organised and carried on a struggle against the capitalist and Fascist offensive.

They supported even the slightest action of the Social-Democratic workers against capital, wherever such actions took place.

In pursuing its line of struggle for the revolutionary unity of the working class against the Social-Democratic united front with the bourgeoisie, the Communist Party, as the only revolutionary leader of the German proletariat, in spite of the strike-breaking tactics of Social-Democracy, called on the working class for a general political strike on July 20th, 1932, when the Fascists dispersed the Social-Democratic Prussian Government, and on January 30th, 1933, when Hitler came into power in Germany.

In order to carry on this strike, the Communist Party proposed a united front to the Social-Democratic Party and the reformist trade unions.

The development of the struggle of the working class against the bourgeoisie and Fascism, and a general strike, would have caused the hesitating toiling masses of peasants and the urban petty-bourgeoisie to follow the proletariat.

But the Social-Democrats, continuing their previous policy, and directing themselves to further collaboration with the bourgeoisie, fettered the initiative of the masses through the network of centralised organisations which followed their lead—first of all the reformist trade unions.

The bourgeoisie was able, without serious resist-

ance, to hand over the Governmental power in the country to the National Socialists, who acted against the working class by the methods of provocation, bloody terror and political banditry.

In analysing the conditions for a victorious uprising of the working class, Lenin said that a decisive battle can be considered as fully mature—

IF “all the class forces which are hostile to us have become sufficiently entangled, have sufficiently come into conflict with each other, have sufficiently weakened themselves by a struggle which is beyond their strength”;

IF “all the vacillating, hesitating, unstable, intermediate elements, i.e., the petty-bourgeoisie, petty-bourgeois democracy as distinguished from the bourgeoisie, have sufficiently exposed themselves to the people, have sufficiently disgraced themselves by their practical bankruptcy”;

IF “among the working class mass sentiment has begun, and is rising strongly, in favour of supporting the most decisive, supremely bold and revolutionary activity against the bourgeoisie;

“Then the revolution has matured, and if we have properly taken into account all the conditions mentioned above . . . and have properly selected the moment, our victory is assured.”

The characteristic feature of the circumstances of the time of the Hitler coup was that these conditions for a victorious rising had not yet managed to mature at that moment. They only existed in an embryonic state.

As for the vanguard of the working class—the Communist Party—it did not wish to slip into rash adventures, and of course could not compensate for the missing factors by its own actions.

“It is impossible to win with the vanguard alone,” says Lenin. “To throw the vanguard alone into the decisive fight while the whole of the class, the whole of the broad masses, have not occupied the position either of direct support of the vanguard or at least of friendly neutrality towards it . . . would not only be foolish, but a crime.”

Such were the circumstances which decided the retreat of the working class and the victory of the party of the counter-revolutionary Fascists in Germany.

Thus, in the last analysis, the establishment of the

Fascist dictatorship in Germany is the result of the Social-Democratic policy of collaboration with the bourgeoisie throughout the whole period of existence of the Weimar Republic.

The Social-Democrats repeatedly stated that they would not object to Hitler coming into power in a "constitutional" manner. But after Hitler assumed power, "Vorwaerts," on February 2nd, stated that without Social-Democracy a person like Hitler could not have become Chancellor of the Reich.

Wels stated the same thing on March 23rd, in his declaration in the Reichstag, in which he said that the services Social-Democracy had rendered to the "National Socialists" were very great, because it was thanks to the policy that Social-Democracy pursued that Hitler was able to come to power.

There is no need to mention Leipart, Loebe and other Social-Democratic leaders who completely support the Fascists.

The Communist Party was right in giving the name of Social-Fascists to the Social-Democrats.

But the Fascist Dictatorship, basing itself on armed gangs of National Socialists and "Steel Helmets" and commencing civil war against the working class, abolishing all the rights of the proletariat, is at the same time smashing the Social-Democratic theory that it is possible to win a parliamentary majority by means of elections and to develop peacefully towards Socialism without revolution.

It is destroying the Social-Democratic theory of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie and the policy of the "lesser evil," and is destroying all the democratic illusions among the broad masses of workers.

It is proving that the Government is not a superstructure rising above classes, but a weapon of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, that the real State power is the armed bands of storm troops, "Steel Helmets," police and officers, who are governing in the name of the bourgeoisie and the Junkers.

The working class is actually becoming convinced that the Communists were right when for a number of years they fought against democratic illusions, against the Social-Democratic policy of the "lesser evil" and collaboration with the bourgeoisie.

Meanwhile, the frantic dictatorship of Hitler,

which has started civil war in the country, cannot solve a single political and economic question of contemporary Germany.

The poverty and want of the masses are increasing day by day.

The position of industry is growing worse because the adventurous policy of the Government is only accelerating the contraction of the home and foreign market.

There are not, and there cannot be, any prospects of a serious reduction of unemployment. There is no possibility of giving work and employment to all the adherents of the National Socialists. In place of the National Socialists who are given jobs, other workers will be dismissed.

The continuation of the moratorium until October and the introduction of quotas on imports of agricultural products, can only satisfy a small section of the most well-to-do peasants for a very short period, but cannot stop growth of want, poverty and discontent among the broad peasant masses.

The demagogic attacks on the big stores and Jewish capital cannot help the impoverished petty-bourgeoisie, whose position will grow proportionately worse with the further fall of the purchasing power of the home market.

The giving of microscopic help to the needy with bread and pork was only a sop for the elections. In view of the worsening economic situation, the increase of unemployment relief by two marks a month, cannot but be taken back.

It is becoming clear that Hitler is leading Germany to economic catastrophe, which is becoming more and more inevitable.

The National Socialist movement grew up first of all as a nationalist and Chauvinist movement of the petty-bourgeoisie and part of the peasant masses, led by officers and Government officials from the Kaiser's days against the Versailles Treaty.

The two months in which Hitler has been in power have been just one chauvinist tirade against proletarian internationalism and against "world Bolshevism."

It is a policy of sharpening relations with all countries without discrimination. Such a policy will not

only fail to strengthen Germany, but will weaken it still further and isolate it.

The attempts of the Government to violate the Versailles Treaty under such conditions and to obtain successes in foreign policy, even if only unity with Austria, so as to raise its prestige, will lead only to a further sharpening of the whole international situation and a tremendous growth of the war danger.

Every day of the Hitler Government will reveal with greater clearness the manner in which the masses who follow Hitler have been tricked.

Every day will show with greater clearness that Hitler is leading Germany to catastrophe.

The present period of calm after the victory of Fascism is temporary.

The revolutionary upsurge in Germany will inevitably grow in spite of the Fascist terror. The resistance of the masses to Fascism is bound to increase. The establishment of an open Fascist Dictatorship, by destroying all the democratic illusions among the masses and liberating them from the influence of social-democracy, accelerates the rate of Germany's development towards proletarian revolution.

The task of the Communists must be to explain to the masses that the Hitler Government is leading the country to catastrophe.

It is now necessary to warn the masses with greater energy than ever before that the only salvation for the toiling masses from still greater poverty and want, the only way to avoid catastrophe, is the proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

It is necessary to strive to rally all the forces of the working class and form a united front of the Social-Democratic and Communist workers for the struggle against the class enemies.

It is necessary to strengthen the Party and strengthen all the mass organisations of the working class—to prepare the masses for decisive revolutionary battles. For the overthrow of the capitalism and for the overthrow of the Fascist dictatorship by an armed rising.

In view of all this, the Presidium of the E.C.C.I. approves the programme of practical activities planned by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Germany.

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