

INTERNATIONAL

COUNCIL

CORRESPONDENCE

For Theory and Discussion

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REVIEWS

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CORRESPONDENCE

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

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

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

TO OUR READERS, CONTRIBUTORS, AND SUBSCRIBERS

FELLOW-WORKERS:

Beginning January, 1938, the COUNCIL CORRESPONDENCE will appear in printed form, with a new format, and under a new name.

It has long been our desire to create a magazine of greater attraction and of wider appeal, and to multiply the issues of the periodical so as to reach a larger audience. This project has rendered obsolete the old mimeograph method of publication.

The new magazine will be called LIVING MARXISM, with INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL CORRESPONDENCE as a subtitle to denote the roots of the magazine. A statement of its principles and policy will appear in the first issue.

Because of the expense involved in the printing, we must, however, reluctantly, increase the price to 15 cent for each issue and to \$ 1.50 for each yearly subscription. Since this raise in price alone will not enable us to meet the expense, we are compelled to ask our friends to contribute as much as possible to this project. The number of our subscribers must be increased; the circulation must be raised; donations to the Press Fund must be forthcoming. Only with the help of our readers may we carry through our plans.

COUNCIL CORRESPONDENCE

THE MATERIALISTIC INTERPRETATION OF HISTORY

The economic conditions, which we consider as the determinative basis in the history of society, we understand to be the manner in which men in a given society produce their means of subsistence and the ways in which they effect the exchange of products among themselves. The entire technique of production and transportation is here included. According to our conception this technique determines the mode of exchange, of distribution of products, and, after the disintegration of the tribal system, the division of society into classes, the conditions of master and slave, of State, of politic, law, etc. Further, among the economic conditions under which these phenomena obtain, must be included the geographical environment, and also the actual remains of former phases of economic evolution which often persisted by force of tradition, inertia, or because of circumstances which surrounds that form of society.

Even if technique largely depends on the condition of science, yet, in a greater measure, does the latter depend on the condition of and the need for technique. If society is in the need of the development of a certain technique, this helps science more than ten universities. The science of hydrostatics was the sole result of the need that Italy felt in the 16th and 17th centuries of controlling the course of her torrents in the mountains. We began to understand the science of electricity only when we discovered its practical application.

We hold, that in the final analysis, economic conditions constitute the determinative factor in historical evolution. Here, therefore, we must hold in view two points: a) That the political, juridical, philosophical, religious, literary, artistic, etc., evolutions are based on the economic evolution. They all re-act upon each other and upon the economic basis. It does not mean that the economic factor is the sole active cause and all the others merely passive effects. But the whole situation presents a mutual interaction among the various forces on the basis of economic necessity, which latter force ultimately prevails. The State, for instance, exerts an influence by means of protective tariffs, free exchange, good or bad revenue laws; and even the boundless stupidity and impotence of the German petty bourgeoisie - which grew out of Germany's economic misery during the period from 1648 to 1830, and which first manifested itself in piety, then in sentimentality and fawning servility before the nobles and princes - was not without

its economic consequences. It was one of the greatest obstacles to the renaissance and was not shaken off until the revolutionary and Napolianic wars made the economic wretchedness unbearable. History is not as some would imagine for the sake of their greater convenience, an automatic effect of the economic situation, but men themselves make their history. Certain it is, however, that men act in accordance with the prevailing conditions that dominate their field of action. And among these the economic circumstances, however much influenced by political and ideological forces, are always of chief importance. In the final reckoning they constitute the decisive factor and form the golden thread which guides the student to the correct, all-comprehensive, understanding of the subject.

b) Men make their own history, but not as the result of a general volition nor in accordance with some general plan, - not even in a given limited social group. Men's aspirations appose each other. Out of this circumstance, in every similar group, arises an imperative Need whose chance concomitant or accidentally is at once the complement and the form of its manifestation. The need or necessity which here underlies every chance appearance is in the end the economic necessity. The so-called great man appears. But the fact that it happens to be a certain great man, appearing at a certain time at a certain given place, is simply mere chance. But if we eliminate him there arises an immediate demand for a substitute, and this substitute is in time found. That Napoleon became a military dictator - of which the French republic, exhausted by civil wars, stood in need - was mere chance; but that in the event of Napoleon's non-appearance there would have been another to occupy his place is proven by the fact that in every instance in which there was such a need the man was found - Caesar, Augustus, Cromwell, etc. If it happened to be Marx who discovered the law of historical materialism, yet Thierry, Mignet, Guizot, who up to 1850 were writing English histories, proves that such a notion already existed, and the discovery of the same idea by Morgan further proves that the times were ripe for such an event and the discovery was an imperative need.

And so it is with every other true or apparent accidentality in history. The farther the field that we may be examining recedes from the economic, and the nearer it approaches the merely abstract ideology, the more we shall find in its evolution - such accidentalities appearing on the scene, and the more does the curve of its evolution fluctuate. If one should attempt, however, to trace the axis of this curve, one should find that the longer the time period observed and the larger the field thus treated, the more nearly does this axis run parallel to the axis of the economic evolution.

F. Engels

THE ITALIAN CORPORATIVE STATE.

Fascism has set itself the task of doing away with the class struggle. The impossible, "Peaceful cooperation" between exploiters and exploited, is to take its place. In reality, fascism only suppresses by force the class struggle from below, and assures thereby the privileges of the ruling class. The fascistic system attempts to create the impression that it is capable of protecting, at one and the same time, the interests of both classes. To give the appearance that it would be possible to protect also the workers' interests, the theory of the corporative state was advanced. It goes without saying that in reality such a "corporative state" is an impossibility. Superficial observers could be led to believe, however, that the realization of the fascistic ideals is a question of time only, in the same manner as some people speak about the building up of socialism in Russia. In this respect it does not seem superfluous to elaborate on the thoughts which Mussolini has presented in a book on "The Corporative State" (Vallecchi Editore Firenze).

As early as Nov. 14, 1933, a "radical change in the executive policy of fascism with regard to the corporations" was announced at the general meeting of the National Committee of the Corporations. In a later meeting, Mussolini gave the following explanation: "The National Council of Corporations defines the corporations as that instrument which, under the protection of the state, realizes the integral, organic and unanimous discipline of the productive forces, to further the development of wealth, political power and the well-being of the Italian people; it declares that the number of corporations necessary for the primary fields of production is to correspond fundamentally to the actual needs of the national economy. It decrees that the General Staff of the corporations must include the representatives of the administrative bodies, of the party, capital, labor and of technique. It defines as the specific task of the corporations: mediation, advisory functions such as the important problems of obligatory character, and furthermore, thru the National Council, the establishment of laws to regulate the economic activity of the nation. It leaves to the great fascistic council the decision over the politico-organic expansion along the lines of the existing constitution, and in agreement with the rules of the corporations."

During subsequent comment on these principles, the question was put forward whether the existing economic crisis is to be considered a crisis within the system,

or of the system. Mussolini suggests, as a way out of the capitalistic crisis, that the state assumes the leadership. The period of a liberal economy has passed, according to him, and so have syndicates, cartels and trusts. The socialist solution of the problem (production for use instead of for profit) is, of course, refuted and so is that form called "state socialism", as existing in Russia. The fascist "solution" - the establishment of a corporative state - is to guarantee "a higher social justice."

The form of organization of the corporative state is further discussed in the "Carta del Lavoro". Point 4 reads: "Under the mutual labor contract, solidarity of the various groups active in the productive process is expressed essentially in the fact that the contradictory interests of employers and employees will be settled somehow, and will be subordinated to the production process".

It is admitted that employers and workers have conflicting interests; to bridge the gap between these contradictions is the work of the corporations. The law of Feb. 5, 1924 finally provides for 22 such corporations: eight in the agricultural, industrial and commercial field of production; eight in the field of industrial and commercial distribution, and six for commercial productive activity.

Delegates representing the fascist party as well as delegates in equal number representing employers and employees will be sent to each corporation. Thus do the representatives of the ruling party constitute the decisive factor. Their influence, indeed, is increased thru the law of 1934 which, in article 2, quotes: "The corporations will be presided by a secretary and under-secretary of state, or the secretary of the fascist party". The aim of this system is very clear: transferring the class differences to a level where there are only creatures of fascism who at least guarantee "economic peace".

If the workers' representatives could be elected voluntarily, then the class contradictions within the mutual professional bodies would be expressed much sharper than, for instance, in the individual organizations in democratic countries. This is well known to the Duce, who, after all, enjoys a Marxian past and precisely for this reason he created corporations for whole economic branches and not for single industries or industrial products. Frankly, this is expressed as follows: "The principle aims to avoid the shortcomings of the two systems of the corporation, those for single products or for single industries. Establishing corporations for

single products would mean to allow the opposition between employers and employees to rise again".

Thus the corporations are to be regarded as a sort of economic council, as we find them in democratic countries in addition to employers' and employees' organizations. The difference is that in Italy these economic councils play the decisive role, and the unions, which exist at least nominally according to a decree in 1926, function only as puppets. However, the situation was evidently already planned by the said decree which contains, under article 43, the following clause: "The corporation is not an independent judiciary organ, but is to be considered an administrative organ of the state". The state determines its function and pays the cost of administration.

This statement, which we read under article 47 of the same decree, is ridiculous: "Collective agreements are to be concluded by the legally recognized trade unions. All other collective agreements are void". Significant is the phrase: "legally recognized". Although article II of the "Carta del Lavoro" of April 21, 1927 reads: "There exists professional and trade union organizational liberty", only the legally recognized organizations, those that are under the direct control of the state, are entitled to "defend the interests of the workers".

It is of interest to note that even the brutal terror of the fascist dictatorship deems it necessary to preserve a "good appearance". The state which ships its soldiers to Abyssinia in order to use them as "volunteers" in Spain seems to have scruples against showing openly that the ruling class is the capitalist class. But the beautifully planned cooperative system represents, in the final analysis, nothing more than a class hungry for profits, exploiting the masses to the limit in order to assure itself the necessary dividends.

- Hartwig -

NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENTS ARE GOOD BUSINESS

"It is good business for the United States to keep China's vast but undeveloped resources out of Japanese control, despite the short-sighted attitude, from the viewpoint of their own self-interest, of some big business men in this country. Secondly, China remains the greatest potential market and source of capital investment in the world. Our present stake in China is but a tiny fraction of our potential stake in a unified revived China. Political friendship may be a first-rate business asset." The NEW MASSES (Communist Party) Sept. 17, 1937.

THE PASSING OF MARXIAN ORTHODOXY.

Bernstein - Kautsky - Luxemburg - Lenin

Nothing reveals in such glaring colors the enormous contrasts which have existed in the last 30 years between the being and consciousness, between the ideology and the actuality of the proletarian movement as does the final issue of that great dispute whose first passage at arms has come down in the annals of party history under the name of the "Bernstein Debate". Having to do with both the theory and the practice of the socialist movement, it erupted publicly for the first time in the German and international Social Democracy, now a generation ago, shortly after the death of Friedrich Engels. When at that time Edward Bernstein, who was already able to look back upon important achievements in the field of Marxism, expressed for the first time from his exile in London his "heretical" opinions (drawn mainly from study of the English labor movement) regarding the real relation between theory and practice in the German and all-European socialist movement of the time, his views and designs were for the moment and still for a long while thereafter, both among friends and foes, uniformly misinterpreted and misunderstood.

In the entire bourgeois press and specialized literature his work "Die Voraussetzungen des Sozialismus und die Aufgaben der Sozialdemokratie" (#) was greeted with hymns of joy and showered with paens of praise. The leader of the then just founded National Socialist party--the social-imperialist ideologist Friedrich Naumann--declared in his sheet, without circumlocution: "Bernstein is our farthest advanced post in the camp of the Social Democracy". And in broad circles of the liberal bourgeoisie there existed at the time the confident hope that this first fundamental "revisionist" of Marxism in the Marxist camp would formally also separate himself from the socialist movement and desert to the bourgeois reform movement.

These hopes of the bourgeoisie found their counterpart in a strong sentiment from the camp of the social-democratic party and trade-union movement of the time. However much the leaders of this movement were privately clear on the point that Bernstein's "revision" of the Marxist program of the Social Democracy was nothing more than the public blurring out of the development which had long since been accomplished in practice and

(#) Translated by Edith C. Harvey under the title "Evolutionary Socialism: A Criticism & Affirmation" and published in London (1909) by the Independent Labor Party.

thru which the social-democratic movement had been transformed from a revolutionary class-struggle movement into a political and social reform movement, still they took good care not to give utterance to this inner knowledge toward the outside. Bernstein having ended his book with his advice to the party that it "might venture to appear what it is: a democratically socialist reform party", he was confidentially tapped on the shoulder (in a private letter published later) by that sly old demagog of the party executive committee, Ignaz Auer, with the friendly warning: "My dear Eddy, that is something which one does, but does not say." In their public utterances, all the practical and theoretical spokesmen of the German and of the International Social Democracy, the Bebels and Kautskys, Victor Adlers and Plechanovs, and by whatever name they are called, were opposed to the insolent blabber of the carefully guarded secret. At the party congress in Hanover in 1899, in a four-day debate opened by Bebel with a six-hour report, Bernstein was subjected to a regular trial. He barely managed to avoid formal exclusion from the party. For many years thereafter, Bernstein was the butt of attack before the members and the voters, in the press and party meetings, at the great official party and trade-union congresses; and notwithstanding the fact that Bernstein's revisionism had already been victorious in the trade unions and finally was no longer to be resisted in the party either, the anti-capitalist revolutionary "class-struggle party" continued to be played without hesitation, literally to the very last moment--that is, until just before the closing of the social peace pact of 1914, followed by the pact of partnership between Capital and Labor in 1918.

For this double-faced attitude toward the first serious attempt at a theoretical formulation of the actual ends and means of the bourgeois labor policy which they actually practiced, the practical and theoretical representatives of the policy pursued by the social-democratic party executive and the affiliated trade-union apparatus had their good reasons. Just as today the representatives of the communist party apparatus in Russia and in all national sections of the communist International, in order to veil the actual character of their policy, need the pious legend of the ever advancing "construction of socialism in the Soviet Union" and of the "revolutionary" character (guaranteed if only by that very fact) of the whole policy and tactic, at any particular time, of all communist party leaderships in all countries, so at that time the crafty demagogs in the social-democratic party executive and at the head of the trade-union apparatus needed for the concealment of their actual tendencies, the pious legend that the movement which they were con-

ducting was obliged, to be sure, for the present time, to restrict itself to merely tinkering at the bourgeois State and the capitalist economic order by way of all sorts of reforms, but that "in its final goal" it was on the way to the social revolution, to the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the abolition of the capitalist economic and social order.

But it was not only the demagogs of the social-democratic party executive and their "theoretical" advocates who, thru the pseudo-struggle which they waged at that time against Bernstein's revisionism, lent aid to the danger of an advancing reformist and bourgeois degeneration of the socialist movement. Rather in the same direction with them there worked for a considerable time, unconsciously and against their will, also such radical revolutionary theoreticians as Rosa Luxemburg in Germany and Lenin in Russia, who according to their subjective design conducted a serious and uncompromising struggle against the tendency expressed by Bernstein. When at the present time and on the basis of the new experiences of the last three decades, we look back on those earlier directional struggles within the German and all-European labor movement, it is somewhat tragic to see how deeply even Luxemburg and Lenin were stuck in the illusion that "Bernsteinism" represented only a deviation from the basically revolutionary character of the then social-democratic movement, and with what objectively inadequate formulas they too sought to conduct the struggle against the bourgeois degeneration of the socialist party and trade-union policy.

Rosa Luxemburg closed her polemic against Bernstein, published in the year 1900 under the title "Sozialreform oder Revolution?" (#) with the catastrophically false prophecy that "Bernstein's theory was the first, and at the same time the last attempt to give a theoretic base to opportunism". She was of the opinion that opportunism, in Bernstein's book in theory, and in Schippel's position on the question of militarism in practice, "had gone so far that nothing more remained for it to do." And altho Bernstein had emphatically stated that he "almost completely accepted the present practice of the Social Democracy" and at the same time had devastatingly laid bare the entire practical insignificance of the then usual revolutionary phrase of the "final goal" with his open acknowledgement: "The final goal, of whatsoever nature, is nothing to me; the movement everything", still Rosa Luxemburg, in a remarkable ideological bedazzlement, did not direct her critical

(#) "Reform or Revolution", Three Arrows Press, 21 E. 17th St., New York. 25 cents.

counter-attack against the social-democratic practice but against Bernstein's theory, which was nothing more than a truthful expression of the actual character of that practice. The feature by which the social-democratic movement was distinguished from the bourgeois reform policy, she saw not in practice but expressly in the "final goal" added on to this practice merely as ideology and very often even only as a phrase. She declared passionately that "the final goal of socialism constitutes the only decisive factor distinguishing the social-democratic movement from bourgeois democracy and from bourgeois radicalism, the only factor transforming the entire labor movement from a vain effort to repair the capitalist order into a class struggle against this order, for the suppression of this order". This general "final goal" which according to the words of Rosa Luxemburg should be everything, and by which the social-democratic movement of that time was distinguished from bourgeois reform politics, revealed itself in subsequent actual history as in fact that nothing which Bernstein, the sober observer of reality, had already termed it.

For all those people whose eyes have not yet been opened by all the facts of the last fifteen years, a convincing confirmation of this historical state of affairs is furnished by the express declarations on the matter which have come from the main participants themselves on the occasion of the various "marxian" anniversary celebrations of recent times. Among these belongs, for example, that memorable banquet which was arranged in 1924 by the exemplars of social-democratic Marxism, who were assembled in London for the 60th anniversary celebration of the first "International Working Men's Association" in honor of the 70th birthday of Kautsky. Here the historical "dispute" between Kautsky's "revolutionary" "orthodox Marxism" and Bernstein's "revisionist" reformism found its harmonious close in those "words of friendship" (reported by "Vorwaerts") spoken by the 75-year old Bernstein in honor of the 70-year old Kautsky and in the symbolical embracing ceremony by which the words were followed: "When Bernstein had ended, and the two old men whose names have long since become honorable to a younger, the third, generation, embraced each other and remained for several seconds clasped together, -- who on that occasion could avoid being moved, who could wish to avoid it?" And in the year 1930, the 75-year old Kautsky writes in exactly the same sense in the social-democratic "Kampf" of Vienna, in honor of the 80th birthday of Bernstein: "In party-political matters we have been since 1880 siamese twins. Even such persons can quarrel occasionally. We have attended to that now and then quite extensively. But even at such times it was impossible to speak of

the one without thinking also of the other."

Subsequent testimonials of Bernstein and Kautsky illuminate quite clearly the tragic misunderstanding with which in the pre-war period those german left-radicals who, under the slogan "revolutionary final goal against reformist daily practice," sought to conduct the struggle against the practical and in the last analysis also theoretical bourgeoisification of the social-democratic labor movement, in reality merely supported and promoted this historical process of development carried out by Bernstein and Kautsky in their respective roles. With due allowances, the same may be said, however, of still another slogan by means of which in the same period the russian marxist Lenin, in his own country and on an international scale, sought to draw the dividing line between the bourgeois and the "revolutionary" labor policy. Just as Rosa Luxemburg in her subjective consciousness was the sharpest adversary of Bernsteinism, and in the first edition of "Reform or Revolution?" in the year 1900 still expressly demanded Bernstein's exclusion from the social-democratic party, so also was Lenin subjectively a deadly enemy of the "renegade" Bernstein, and of all the heretical deviations committed by him, in his "herostratically (#) celebrated" book, from the pure and undefiled doctrine of the "revolutionary" marxist program. But exactly like Luxemburg and the german left-radical social democrats, so also the bolshevist social democrat Lenin made use, for this struggle against social-democratic revisionism, of a wholly ideological platform, in that he sought the guarantee for the "revolutionary" character of the labor movement, not in its actual economic and social class content, but expressly only in the leadership of this struggle by way of the revolutionary PARTY guided by a correct marxist theory.

-Korsch-

(#) An allusion to Herostratus of Ephesus who tried to immortalize himself by burning the temple of Diana. - Translator.

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UNION DEMOCRACY: (Chicago Daily News, Nov. 9, 1937)

A mass meeting of taxicab drivers, unauthorized by the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, was called today. Rebel drivers of the Union, not only fighting for a voice in their affairs, but protesting the close collaboration being practised by their I.B.T. czars with the monopoly cab companies called the meeting to examine changes in Roberts Rules of Order, which they declare have been inaugurated by the bosses of the union. The most significant change, according to the cab drivers is in a section which enables the chairman to say: "All those in favor signify by saying, Aye; all those opposed, line up for a tap on the skull".

ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF GERMANY

In discussing with fellow-workers the history of the modern organized labor movement, we discovered that actually little is known of the events that led to the founding of the Third International, and of subsequent happenings. To furnish workers an understanding of this organization, we have decided to publish in the Council Correspondence, and to continue in LIVING MARXISM, a series of articles devoted to the communist movement rising out of the Second International, and culminating in the Third. The following article appeared in 1926 in PROLETARIER, the theoretical organ of the Communist Labor Party of Germany (K.A.P.D.) Other articles will follow dealing with the early modern communist movements in Russia, Holland, Austria, France, Italy, England and America. Discussion of this series is welcome.

The first nuclei of the Spartakus Bund were organized early in 1915 during the first controversies within social democracy about the 'lesson of the fourth of August'. "The history of the German pre-revolutionary epoch during war time is not only the history of a struggle against the war and for the organization of the revolution against fatalism, but it is also the history of tremendous disputes between the various factions of the proletariat". (Drahn-Leonhard, "Underground Literature in revolutionary Germany during the World-war") A brief analysis of these disputes will reveal the relationship between the Communist Party of today and the Spartakus Bund of 1915-18.

The Activity of Karl Liebknecht

The open agitation against the war policy of the social-democratic party bureaucracy begins with K. Liebknecht. Amidst chauvinistic instigation and provocation he was the first who raised the voice of the class struggle. In him ^{is} personified the re-awakening of socialist ideology. But the proletariat would not do justice to this staunch and fervid fighter if it restricts itself to the mere chanting of hymns; history does not record emotions but only facts, and historical facts compel us to state that because of the existing conditions, Liebknecht could not advance beyond the stage of a leader of a vanguard within the shell of social democracy. He was first of

all a parliamentarian, -perhaps even the last real labor parliamentarian who sincerely believed that this institution could be used as a revolutionary "tribunal". He beheld the bankruptcy of the social-democratic leaders, but he did not identify the leadership with the party. To him the party was still a revolutionary instrument ready and willing to act in a revolutionary sense as soon as it has rid itself of its defunct functionaries. This was the premise of his struggle from the beginning of the war until his death January 15, 1919. What has been said of Rosa Luxemburg applies also to Liebknecht: between his theoretical concepts and his practical activity lay a wide gap. He believed in the masses and in spontaneous action but considered the leader the propelling force. As leader, he broke the party discipline, and he hoped the masses would follow him and with him would conquer the defunct party machine. When the masses within the party did not respond to the extent expected, then, even when he saw the impossibility of changing the course and ideology of the organization, he did not call for the building up of new class formations over and against the old apparatus.

His policy was the "policy of the twofold perspective", as it became known later through the successor of the Spartakus Bund, the Communist Party, which today proclaims that the interests of the proletarian revolution are identical with the Russian state program of economic reconstruction.

On August 4, 1914, the Reichstag deputies of German Social Democracy audibly demonstrated their close relationship to capitalism by voting for the war loans. By this act the social democratic party officially ceased to be the avant garde for the proletarian revolution. "It was no catastrophe, it was rather the logical step of a movement whose development pointed towards that direction ever since the party congress at Erfurt", said Johann Knief, consequent left winger, in Arbeiter-Politik, June 24, 1916.

The forces responsible for the collapse of the German S.P. must not be looked for in the party program or in the resolutions adopted at party congresses, but rather in the structure and mechanism of the organizational apparatus, viz: the political party, the trade unions, and the consumer's co-operatives. These organizations -with a membership totalling several millions- were too closely linked up with the capitalist system; in fact, their existence depended upon the existence of the capitalist system itself. It is the tragedy of the proletarian struggle for emancipation that the workers realize too late the character

and role these organizations have played and are still playing.

Traditions and concepts of organizational unity were so strong that even the fervid Liebknecht - who already before the war had fought many bitter struggles against the old bureaucracy - capitulated. In his pamphlet "Klassenkampf gegen den Krieg", he explains his position as follows: "Regarding the technic of dissident voting, there was neither practice nor clarity. At the first voting for the war loans I confined myself merely to opposition within the party faction of the Reichstag. The collapse of the party had not as yet come to the fore, I had still reasons to believe that the party would soon realize its error. To keep discipline, therefore, I considered my major task". Even after the National Executive had vetoed his demand for public meetings under the slogan "Against war-for peace", he nourished the hope that a revival of the party was still possible. Valiantly he fought within the Reichstag faction against the second war loan. But he was defeated and was even refused the right to issue a minority declaration. On December 1, 1914 - a few days before the Reichstag session - Rosa Luxemburg informed him that Mehring and Karski advised him, in the event that he remained alone, to refrain from a minority declaration. Suddenly he realized that the new brand of social patriotism was not merely a mistake, but a definite policy; he rejected the advice, broke the discipline; voted against the war loans; and issued a minority declaration. This declaration was disappointing, since it did not contain one single word regarding the causes that led to the bankruptcy of social democracy; not one word about the task of the revolutionary proletariat. Instead, it denounced the "war of Defense" by showing that imperialist developments are wholly responsible. "A speedy, no nation humiliating peace, a peace without conquests must be demanded. All efforts towards that direction must be welcomed". Thus spoke Liebknecht, but this is not the language of the revolutionary proletariat, and one asks dubiously how it was possible that such demands could be raised by a man who seemed to be well acquainted with the imperialist character of the nations at war, and who should have known that only proletarian mass action could stop a war. Here again Liebknecht proved that he had not yet passed the phase known as "revolutionary parliamentarism". The following quotation, taken from "Unterirdische Literatur", by Drahn-Leonhard, will throw even more light on Liebknecht's hazy views. "The emergency loans find my approval. They are, however not nearly large enough. I approve of everything which would ease the lot of

our men at the front, our wounded and sick. For such purposes there is no loan large enough". Even Zinoviev rebuked this and said that it resembled a series of disharmonic chords; on the one hand Liebknecht denounced the imperialist character of the war, and on the other hand he demanded nothing but peace." If everything Liebknecht said about the character and cause of the war is correct - and it is correct - then socialists have only one course to follow, namely, to transform the imperialist war into the civil war". (Zinoviev in "Gegen den Strom", p.40).

#)

The Social-democratic Arbeitsgemeinschaft

The centre faction of the party, though opposed to the war policy of the executive, also believed in the possibility of rebuilding the party into a useful weapon for the class struggle. Since this belief was its only platform, it had no aim other than to preserve the unity. With iron consequence it followed the party executive from bad to worse until, finally, it had no choice but to cover and defend the anti-proletarian policy of the party as a whole.

But the left-wing Liebknecht group also nourished the illusion that the influence and power of the party bureaucracy could be undermined and that a clean break wasn't necessary. The result of this "united front" tactic was the same then as it is today: Prevention of revolutionary class development. Today the Communist Party proclaims that it is the party of Wilhelm Liebknecht and August Bebel and "must be considered the consequent proletarian opposition within bourgeois society - as equally important as was the 2nd International during its boom period". (Resolution, executive committee of the Comintern, quoted in Rote Fahne, July 1923.) In a similar vein Karl Liebknecht expressed his affiliation with social democracy in a speech before workers in Berlin December 1914 when he said that "Social democracy must reconquer its lost respect in actual struggle. If the party refuses now to fight against the war, then neither the workers nor the party's opponents will take it seriously after the war. Now is the crucial time, now we must assure the party's success in the future". (Quoted by Drahn-Leonhard). Instead of propagating separation, Karl Liebknecht wrote christmas

#) Literally translated "Arbeitsgemeinschaft" means work-community, a term which can be applied to any kind of co-operative activity. It refers here to discussion groups within the party which tried to find new means of combating the party executive as well as the capitalist state.

letters to the pacifist newspaper of the Independent Labour Party in which he said: "Not our principles failed but rather our representatives . . . Only delusion can demand the continuation of the war until complete surrender of the enemy . . . The well-being of all people is inseparably inter-connected". (Klassenkampf gegen den Krieg, p.45).

In Liebknechts Politischen Nachlass, published by F. Pfemphert in "Die Aktion", - articles written while imprisoned - one finds many clear thoughts about the character of the old organization. Liebknecht began to realize that revolutionary policy must lead from mere lip service to actual struggle, and that the fight against capitalism could be carried on successfully only after the victory of the workers over the trade unions. ("Legien and his henchman"; Legien was president of "Allgemeiner Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund.")

The praxis of the Liebknecht group, however, differed widely from its leader's correct theoretical concepts and conformed to his advice, viz: to remain in the existing organizations merely for propaganda possibilities. This position indicates Liebknecht's adherence to the "boring from within" policy. All leaflets and manifestos by the two imprisoned leaders of the movement, Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, stressed the importance of this tactic. After the arrest of Liebknecht for his speech on Potsdamer Platz, Berlin, May 1, 1916, there appeared a leaflet issued by the Spartakus Bund and containing the sentences, "The German government wants to put a German Reichstag deputy behind prison bars because he dared to propagate world peace. Not even the most odious enemies of Liebknecht would question his integrity; and such a man the government wants to punish, to strip of honor, and to make it impossible to continue his service for those sections of our people who elected him and whose confidence he wholeheartedly enjoys". (Quoted by Drahm-Leonhard). This is the manner in which the old social democracy and the party centre spoke of "civil rights", but they never understood that the struggle for power between capital and labor had no connection with the honor concepts of the bourgeoisie, - a term which was frequently used however by the protagonists of "revolutionary parliamentarism" in order to cover up their confusion and dishonesty. The Spartakus groups, in following this line, were incapable of grasping the real perspectives of the revolutionary struggle. They had to remain loyal to the centre, which believed in Ludendorff's military success and Bethman-Hollwig's peace declarations at one and the same time. The desire on the part of the centre to carry water on both shoulders came to a sudden end when the

government issued a statement to the effect that peace negotiations were inopportune at this time. (December 1915). The centre began to fight -- in parliament. Before the March session of the Reichstag, threatening frictions developed within the S.P. faction. They were caused by the leaders of the right, Ebert and Scheidemann, who bolted when permission was given the minority to appoint a speaker. The difficulties, however, were overcome by Hugo Haase, President of the party and leader of the centre, who spoke in behalf of the minority. Stressing the necessity for party unity, he advised the formation of "Arbeitsgemeinschaften" which should attempt to iron out the differences. His proposition met with general approval, and soon afterwards we could see Bernstein, father of revisionism, shaking hands with Kautsky, official guardian of Marxism. Party unity seemed to be assured - for the time being at least.

Three months before this notable event, New Year 1916, the followers of Rosa Luxemburg and Franz Mehring had organized the group "Internationale". The program of this group, however, did not even reach the conclusions Rosa Luxemburg had arrived at in her "junius brochure". This pamphlet, revealing the imperialist motives of the war, demanded increased intensity of the class struggle to end the war. It correctly pointed out that defensive wars do not exist any more, and regardless of whether a war ends in victory or defeat, the result will always be a defeat to socialism and democracy. It is of importance to note that both "junius" and the "Internationale" defended democracy. Here we find the key to the many contradictions and tactical blunders that were committed by this group. Credit must be given to Karl Radek for his excellent exposé on the reformist policy of "junius" and her group. Writing in J. Knieg's Bremer "Arbeiter-Politik", Vol. I. Nos. 6, 7, 8; 1916, Radek reasons as follows: inasmuch as the program accuses the party executive of treachery 1) against the basic principles of international socialism, 2) against the life interests of the working class, and 3) against the democratic interests of all people, it is merely a repetition of Karl Liebknecht's Labour Leader letter whose strange naivety led to just as much confusion as Rosa Luxemburg's "junius brochure". Radek fully appreciates "junius" fight against the flimsy arguments of the social patriots, but he simultaneously criticized her for not having analyzed the reasons for the two year old crisis within social democracy.

It is of little significance to speculate whether or not different conclusions would have changed the tactics of the group "Internationale". Today we can record

the historical fact that both, 'Junius' and her group, traveled on the same road with the official party, though it was somewhat to the left of it.

There is one paragraph in the 'Junius brochure' which, on account of its importance, necessitates a brief exposé. Junius poses the question, should social democracy sell out the German state to the enemy because this state does not meet the demand of the people for self-determination, and because the war is an imperialist war. (p.82) "Passivity must never be the principle of a revolutionary party," Junius declares; social democracy should have pursued an independent class policy to compel the ruling class to grant the peoples the right of self-determination in the hope of creating thereby potential allies against the imperialist war. Social democracy should have demanded immediate formation of people's militias and the arming of the entire male population, because the people's decision for or against war is just as important as the "immediate withdrawal of decrees which prohibit the exercise of democratic rights, inasmuch as political freedom is the prerequisite for national defense". In order to give her argument more weight she quotes Marx and Engels whose position during the Paris Commune 1871 she considers a fitting parallel. But Radek correctly rebukes her by pointing out that national bourgeois revolutions of the 1848 type are things of the past and that her program stands in utter contradiction to her otherwise correct analysis of the imperialist epoch. The tactics of the Jacobins are out-dated because the present war does not represent any more the conflict between feudal and bourgeois countries but rather a conflict between imperialist nations. However, should it be possible for the workers in England to gain control of the government, and should the imperialist nations in such a case continue the war against England, then it would be the task of the English working class to defend the victorious socialism of their country. Such a war would not remain a national duty; but would become an international duty, since it would mean the beginning of the social revolution throughout Europe. (In "Arbeiter-Politik").

We stressed these points to show that Rosa Luxemburg did not understand the course of historical development and that she, therefore, was unable to propose a revolutionary program of action. Her program only beclouded the crisis within social democracy and increased the confusion among the workers. For these reasons the group "Internationale" was doomed to insignificance.

(To be continued).

NEW PAMPHLETS

WHAT HAS BECOME OF THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION? by M. Yvon.
Translated by Integer. International Review, N.Y.
64 pp. 25 cents.

The industrializing of Russia, rising out of the urgencies of world-competition, has brought about an appalling poverty and oppression for the Russian masses. A man who has spent eleven years in Russia as worker, manager and member of the Communist Party there, has here recorded their misery in a formidable massing of facts. From these statistics we learn that real wages have declined since the pre-war period; that the worker has less to eat now than in the days of the Tsar; that incomes range from 80 to 30,000 rubles a month, to create the class divisions of privation and privilege that are ever attendant on such a disparity of income. The Russian Revolution has inaugurated a period, not of liberation for the workers, but of harsher exploitation in which work is glorified and from which not even the sick are exempt. "Izvestia" for Sept. 17, 1934 is quoted as follows: "Science gives the word (invalidity) an entirely relative significance and permits us to return to production a great number of our invalids." The brutality of this society causes the author to believe that Capitalism may be followed by a system of even greater bondage. But his description of the Russian society is a description of State-Capitalism, and the laws that govern Capitalism govern Russia. It is marked by the same inherent contradictions; it has the same objective limit. The class struggle still seethes there, as the author admits; and the thousands who are exiled, imprisoned, and executed as "trotskyists" symptomize the economic unrest in that society and indicate its ultimate doom.

This pamphlet is rich in statistics on Russia and can be a weapon in the hands of a revolutionary worker.

C. I. O. -- PROMISE OR MENACE? Published by Industrial Union Party. 62 pp. 5 cents.

In this pamphlet is bound a sequence of articles and editorials that appeared in the INDUSTRIAL UNIONIST on the subject of John L. Lewis. This treatment of Lewis is marked by oversimplification. We apparently are to assume that Lewis misleads the workers because he is inherently a villain, and that the Communist and Socialist Parties support him because they are depraved and muddled--both explanations are offered. The economic forces of which Lewis is symptomatic, and