

World Socialism

ANTI-FASCIST OR ANTI-CAPITALIST

By HERBERT ZAM

With the passage of the reactionary electoral reform and the dissolution of the Sejm, the political situation in Poland has become very tense. The new elections have been set for September, but they are considered of little importance, as the struggle over the new laws will take place outside of the Sejm and by other means than election campaigns.

The organized working class has already expressed its attitude by a series of brief general strikes covering all sections of the country. This indicated what the general character of the struggle will be—extra-parliamentary. The Socialist Party, continuing in this direction, has decided to boycott the election.

This course of action is also being followed by the trade unions, the Bund (Jewish Socialists), the communists, the more radical section of the national minorities (Ukrainians, Germans, Jews), the Peasant Party, and the National Democratic Party. During the electoral campaign a series of extra-parliamentary actions will be organized to discredit the election and mobilize the masses against the new laws.

Cooperation

The problem of the cooperation of the various opposition parties and groups in the anti-government campaign is now occupying the respective organizations, especially in the ranks of the working class. Basic differences have already manifested themselves.

The Socialist Party proposes an anti-fascist front to include the Socialists, labor unions, Bund, Peasant Party and radical national minorities; the front to have an anti-capitalist character, and not merely an anti-fascist and pro-democratic one; the communists to be excluded.

The Bund and the left wing of the Socialist Party oppose a united front with the Peasant Party as a whole, but favors united action with its left wing. They favor the inclusion of the communists. They agree with the Socialist Party as to the character of the anti-fascist front.

The Congress of the Peasant Party decided for common action with all parties willing to fight for a more democratic electoral system, including the National Democrats, and presumably also the communists.

In radical circles somewhat of a sensation was created by the proposals of the communists, showing how great the swing to the extreme right has become. At first the communists even favored participating in the new elections, and changed their position only when the boycott movement gained its present proportions. Now the communists propose to set up an anti-fascist "peoples" front, the character of which should be anti-fascist and pro-democratic and which should include not only the Peasant Party as a whole, but also the National Democrats.

The right wing, we might even say reactionary, character of this proposal can be seen best by taking a glance at the Peasant Party and the National Democratic Party.

Peasant Party

The Peasant Party is not an entity. It is really an amalgamation of three more or less autonomous groups. It is already splitting apart. The dominant section, the old Piast, led by Witos, who was three times premier under Pilsudski, represents the big landowners and well-to-do farmers. It is reactionary, opposed to the granting of rights to national minorities and semi-fascist in its current politics. The left wing of the party is made up of the old Wyzwolenie Party and the old Peasant Union. It

represents the small farmers and peasants and the agricultural laborers. It advocates agrarian reform, expropriation of the big landowners without compensation and separation of Church and State.

Here is a case where the sheep must be separated from the goats. The left wing of the party is progressive; the right wing is reactionary. The position of the Bund is obviously the correct one.

The National Democratic Party is also boycotting the elections. Because it is "democratic" or anti-fascist? Not at all! It has its own good reasons. Mallory's "Political Handbook of the World" describes the National Democratic Party as follows:

"Conservative, nationalistic, democratic; advocates amendment of constitution based on equilibrium between executive and legislative powers; represents largely the well-to-do classes of merchants, landowners, and professional circles, intellectuals retail merchants, small bourgeoisie and some peasants and workmen. Opposes parties favoring regional self-government for national minorities and radical agrarian reforms; pro-Catholic and anti-revolutionary. Considered to have fascist tendencies. Party has strong control of university students." (My emphasis—H. Z.)

And this is the party with which the communists wish to form a "Peoples' Front"!

The Communists

Here again, as in France, the position of the communists on all important questions is to the right, not only of the left Socialists, but also of the right-wing Socialists! No Socialist today favors a united front with the National Democrats, but the communists have "courage" even for this. And, of course, if the "N. D.'s" are to be included in a united front its program cannot have an anti-capitalist tinge.

The communists are making the same error here as in France, and their error has a common origin. Their estimate of a party today does not depend on the role that party plays in the class struggle in its own country, but on its position on foreign questions, specifically its diplomatic policy with regard to the Soviet Union. They want a united front with the "N. D.'s" because that party, for its own interests, is opposed to the pro-German orientation of the government. In France, also, the communists forget that one can favor the Franc-Soviet pact and still be a bitter enemy of the labor movement.

The shortcomings of the anti-fascist front in France, which the Socialists are now trying to correct, is that it does not have a definite anti-capitalist orientation, leading eventually to a struggle for power and the formation of a workers' government. The Socialists wish to avoid this error in Poland. This is what the communists forget. This is also forgotten by others such as "John Powers" in The New Leader, who for months has been directing a drum fire against the united front in France. "Powers" calls to his assistance criticism of the united front by the French comrades—but there's a hitch. The French Socialists criticize the united front from the left; "Powers" from the right. The French Socialists want to consolidate the united front and make it more effective; "Powers" wants to liquidate it. The French Socialists wish to avoid a repetition of the German events; "Powers" wants to follow in the footsteps of Braun.

To the extent that there is a choice between the German and the French roads in the battle

BIG-PROFIT TENE



When some of the remarkable furriedly moved into a courthouse and up to make "big profits" predicted i

Collective Fa

By FANNY SIMON

MERIDA, Yuc., Mexico (FP)—About 220 communal land organizations, or ejidos, have already been organized in Yucatan by the Mexican government, according to the head of the Agricultural Credit Bank, a branch of the National Credit Bank, established to help organize and provide funds for the ejidos. Of this number about 100 produce henequen or sisal, and 50 have been established from land taken by the government from the big estates, or haciendas.

The government is forcing the owners to rent their machinery to the cooperatives formed from their estates. Where the owner refuses, the government assumes control over the machinery and turns it over to the cooperative.

This aspect of the agrarian program is new and has been initiated only since Cardenas has been president of Mexico. Formerly land division never included henequen plantations. Nor were workers living on these plantations entitled to the land that was taken to form ejidos. Until the recent agrarian law, only day laborers in the villages were entitled to ejidos.

Pushes Socialization

Cardenas has amplified the agrarian program and seems to be pushing it. He has reformed the agrarian laws to include in the category of those entitled to land the workers on the haciendas, or the "peones acasilladas."

When the program of dividing the land of the large haciendas was first started, it frequently met with opposition from the peones acasilladas. When part of the land was taken to form an ejido with the people from the villages, those

against fascism, there is no doubt that every intelligent Socialist will prefer the French road, even with its shortcomings.

A Postscript

P.S. "Powers" challenged an article I wrote on Czechoslovakia recently. In doing this, he only displayed his prejudice, not his love for accuracy. All pertinent facts were taken either from the speech of Dr. Czech or from the official report of the convention—and in each case were identified as authoritative by quotation marks.

I urge "Powers" to continue reading this column if he is really desirous of more information as to the progress of united action between Socialists and communists.