

Renegades in the Socialist Party and the Franco-Soviet Pact

By T. REPARD

If proof were needed of the function which the renegades from Communism fulfill in respect to the Soviet Union, the united front and the struggle against fascism, evidence enough to gild the lily is available.

Renegades Are "Experts" in Anti-Soviet Attack

For two months now, the Socialist Call, organ of the "Militants" in the Socialist Party, has been laying down a barrage of slander and hatred against the Soviet Union and the Communist International on the occasion of the Franco-Soviet Pact. The chief, almost the exclusive, experts in this "gas" attack have been Ben Gitlow and Herbert Zam, two of those who found their way back into the most unscrupulous reformism by way of the Lovestonettes whose sparkling luminaries they were not so long ago. Zam is the foreign expert of the Call by virtue of a signed weekly column rivalled in prominence only by Norman Thomas' column. Both adorn the Editorial Board of the paper.

Herbert Zam Leads in "Gas" Attack

Zam reached a screaming crescendo in this anti-Soviet crusade in his latest column of July 13. It is headed "Communo-Chauvinism." The very first sentence sets the tenor of the piece: "The Communist International and all its individual sections are being rapidly pushed toward social-chauvinism, or more correctly speaking, toward communo-chauvinism, by the pres-

ent foreign policy of the Soviet Union." Then follow two columns of "analysis" in support of this opening shot.

Zam makes two main points and a few minor ones. Let us examine them one by one.

1. "When the Soviet Union signed the Kellogg Pact, the revolutionists did not have to fall in love with it. It was a gesture for peace by the Soviet Union. The Franco-Soviet Alliance is a gesture for war. It is active not passive. And it requires more than mere words to carry out—it requires armies: not Red Armies, but bourgeois armies, commanded by militarists and chauvinists. As the New York Communist *Freiheit* declares, 'What would be the use of a military alliance unless France is strong militarily?' A military alliance therefore requires that those who support it shall work to maintain the necessary military strength to make it effective. This is what the Communists have done. . . ."

Distorts Facts

Right at the outset, this argument falls into a miserable trap. As though peace can be separated from war! Not only are the facts distorted but there is a fundamental offense against the very ABC of revolutionary theory in the notion that an active step is, by virtue of that alone, criminal whereas a passive step may be applauded. Otherwise, why the emphasis on: "It is active not passive?"

Furthermore, we "did not have to fall in love" with the French imperialists in order to use them for our ends. On the contrary, a smashing defeat for a German Fas-

cist aggressor against the Soviet Union in which French imperialism is played against German imperialism would mean a terrible weakening of world capitalism as a whole, and especially of French capitalism because of its enormous investments even in Germany. This is far from love.

Franco-Soviet Pact is Peace Instrument

But Zam is not altogether mistaken in his feeling that the Franco-Soviet Pact differs from the Kellogg Pact. True! The former is an active instrument for peace. By means of the pact, the Soviet Union is enabled to break up the united capitalist front. By making use of the antagonisms within world capitalism, the Soviet Union has split the brigands into two opposing camps. This makes it the more unlikely that either side will fire the first shot. It is a united capitalism, and not a divided capitalism, which holds the main danger. In the fact that the Franco-Soviet Pact is active, not passive lies its usefulness. Passive means have been exhausted.

Hitler Arming Against Soviet Union

Furthermore, it must not be forgotten that the Franco-Soviet Pact is directed against no nation except as a nation directs it against itself. The pact is not a closed, bilateral alliance. Germany could enter it tomorrow. The fact that it chooses not to do so is proof that Hitler is hurrying on to attack against the Soviet Union and prefers not to put even a paper obstacle in the way.

If one imperialism cannot be used against another, why then did France sign this pact which Hitler so abhors?

"Travesty Upon History"

After quoting Thorez to the effect that "it would be monstrous to consider as imperialist the camp in which the land of socialism, the land of the working class, finds itself," Zam goes on to his second point.

2. "What is monstrous from a revolutionary point of view is Thorez's statement. Even if France, England and the United States are in one camp with the S. U., they still remain imperialists; they make war for imperialist motives; they will settle the war in an imperialist manner. . . . After the Bolshevik revolution in November, 1917, the Soviet Union found itself in the same camp with France, England and Japan. Did Lenin declare that due to the Soviet Union it was no longer an imperialist war? . . . On the contrary, Lenin and the Bolsheviks had no illusions about the 'democratic' allies, and hastened to pull out of their camp. . . . The policy of Stalin-Thorez is a direct descendant of Kereusky and a direct repudiation of Lenin."

Bolsheviks Never in Same Camp With Allies

What a travesty upon history! The Bolsheviks were never in the same camp with the Allies! As a matter of fact, after the defeat of Germany, the Allies were the main counter-revolutionary danger. The Bolsheviks signed the "pirate treaty" of Brest-Litovsk with Germany in which they gave important

concessions in order to get a breathing span for socialist construction. But when Germany fell, it was the Allies who supported the interventionists with both financial and military assistance. At that time, the Bolsheviks used defeated Germany against France and England who were the main danger.

Bolsheviks Always Oppose Imperialism

After the October Revolution, the Bolsheviks were equally opposed to both imperialist camps because there was nothing to choose between them. As events proved, both the Triple Entente and the Quadruple Alliance considered the Bolsheviks worse than defeat. But world capitalism has in the meantime grown weaker and more desperate. Fascism has come to power in two of the leading European nations of Europe. And, above all, the robber treaty of Versailles, after setting the stage for fascism has been swept out.

Making Use of Antagonisms Is Main Question

Today imperialist France temporarily finds it necessary to conclude a pact with the same socialist Fatherland which she did not even deign to recognize for almost a decade. Zam is worried too much about motives: "they (meaning France, etc.) make war for imperialist motives." But there are motives and motives. Motives do not operate in a vacuum. The concrete form which the same motives will take depends upon the objective situation plus a definite historical development.

For that reason, it is possible to

play the imperialist motives of France against the imperialist motives of Germany. France finds herself in a spot where she has nothing to gain from war and wants peace. In fact, Zam himself testifies to the fact that France today is hostile to Germany in the sentence: "A fascist France would be equally hostile to Germany, perhaps even more so." Apart from the further questions which a fascist France raises, and which are not our concern now, this means that the same motive, given a different situation may have very different results. Are we to take advantage of the antagonisms within world capitalism, or not? This, and this alone, is the main question.

Why is it that Zam is chosen to write this counter-revolutionary rot, week in, week out? After all, he is a new acquisition in the Socialist Party. Why did he find a place for himself so easily and so speedily?

Zam Is Anti-Communist Specialist

The answer lies in his specialty. Zam is the anti-Communist specialist. But not just an ordinary specialist. He brings his own contribution to the job, something all of them cannot do due to lack of training, if not of skill. His contribution has once and for all been classified as "redder than the rose." Hitler attacked the Franco-Soviet Pact because he claimed that it was directed against fascism in Germany. But Zam is no Hitler. He wails about it in a column which is headed, if you remember: "Communo-Chauvinism."

The Greeks should have had a word for him, too.