

Swiss Communist Party

Gerard Bulliard ~ The Superheating

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If there is one timely subject in Switzerland, it is the one on which has been bestowed the qualifier, "superheated." Gallons of ink have already been spilled over this extremely complex problem and numerous meetings in all spheres and social classes of the country were caused by it, which includes innumerable sessions of the various national committees and subcommittees, professional organizations, trade unions, etc. The National Council itself has devoted a lot of time to it.

Finally it turns out that the solutions recommended once more are bound to favor capital, the monopolies and the exploiters.

Certain Communist Party members told us recently that they had followed the activity of our Swiss Communist Party with interest, even with passion. Why?

Simply because everyone knows that the conditions in Switzerland are not comparable with those of all other nations. The struggle for socialism is extremely difficult in our country. Look at the young people, for instance. We think they live in the euphoria of the fat years. They do not remember, and for a very good reason, the period of the lean years, especially the years 1930 to 1938. That period of terrible crisis and unemployment deeply affected the workers who lived through it, and we do desire that experiences like in those years will never recur.

The youth, unfortunately, does not concern itself

enough with the future, unaware that an air castle requires no stone but collapses under the slightest roar. "After us, the deluge," the rising generation seems to say, and those who "sink" are the prophets of doom! Only one must look at things as they really are. This prosperity, or so-called prosperity, relative rather than real, tends to be for the thoughtless youth the cicada of the fable which, having sung all summer . . . , well, one knows the rest.

But can one reproach this young generation about its lack of awareness of social problems? Who is to be blamed for this lack of interest? What does one do in a capitalist country like Switzerland to make the young and the less young understand the reality of the situation? Are we not eager to maintain this state of affairs, even to develop it further? Of course. With their bars and American fashions and all their facilities for credit buying, outfitted with motor bikes and cars, in short, one does not deprive them of much.

"Not much," that's what the exploiters say. The essential thing, however, is what one actually does not provide for youth. Swiss comforts or, more precisely, the comforts of the workers and the middle class are artificial. In our country, one gives with one hand and takes from the other, if not from both. Taxes are exorbitant, the cost of living keeps going up and has already passed the safety margin. If one "agrees," for instance, on a 5 percent wage increase, one immediately takes steps to raise the prices for primary consumer goods by 6, 7 or 8 percent. Up above they are scandalized when workers after long struggles get a slight wage increase but consumer goods are "modestly" increased. And it is not the Vaud coffee-house keepers these days who contradict us! Incidentally, with the risk of being reproached by certain of our restaurateur and hotelier friends, this altogether lofty profession includes, as we know, numerous middlemen who likewise profit from the situation. To think, as a matter of fact, that the customers pay the hotel personnel, at least the bar tender and waitresses, the same "paying pigs" also pay for the music, thanks, once again, to the American juke boxes, and one must ask oneself how far the profit lure can go and whether it does not come rather close to "fraud." Here we talk about the restaurant business²² but we could just as well be talking about numerous other businesses in which exploitation and robbery are authorized and normal.

The indifference of the young could easily be corrected. The lack of interest in public affairs, and of the Swiss workers in general, does not stem exclusively from the ephemeral and problematic appearance of prosperity. Thus far

there was no one to initiate the young, and the less young, the country and city workers, had enough betrayal and capitulation among the defenders of their interests. For a long time the Swiss trade unions have adopted an absolute cooperation with management, and such a "belly-flop" becomes understandable if one considers that these trade union leaders, old fighters that they are, come from the penpushing ranks who like their bottles of wine, banquets and other joyous diversions offered them by management, and who capitulated in exchange. As comrade Treyvaud of Lausanne has said, every 4 or 5 years the trade union secretaries should have to quit their jobs to return to the trowel or the loom. Thus regenerated, the labor union bureaus would certainly be more alive, more disposed to resuming the struggles of yesteryear and less so to accepting this hideous labor peace which management has imposed.

And not only those woeful "Swiss socialists," the servile renegades from the working class, or the bigoted "Christian socialists," the grovelers without scope, might have once dreamt of starting a fierce class struggle against the mercantile management and the rotten bourgeoisie.

No more, moreover, than the popists who too years ago lost the confidence of the working masses and, closely modeled on modern, Khrushchevian, revisionism, have tolled the knell of their aspirations. Their ranks are thinning like a shagreen, and it makes sense that this party, in following its path, is almost reduced to dust.

Let us be precise: When we refer to the above-mentioned parties it is always the leaders that we are referring to and not the comrades and members who are victims of the savoring intrigues of those in charge. The members of these parties, the cheated workers, should become aware of the treason of their leaders and vigorously react, be it by fighting with their strength within the parties and trade unions, or by leaving and coming to reinforce the young Swiss Communist Party, which follows a straight line on the road to socialism and shrinks at no obstacle and no struggle in order to achieve the noble aim it has assumed toward the triumph of Marxism-Leninism and the elimination of all forms of exploitation. Our revolutionary program will bring to the working masses of our country an impulse which will in the end provide that splendid existence which they aspire. By adopting the Marxist-Leninist principles to the exigencies of the Swiss people, by organizing energetic and determined struggles against the exploiters, the glorious road will end in an oasis of happiness. We have no illusions and know well enough that it will be difficult. All workers will have to join us, and on this union depends the final

success. Our Party is only a little more than 6 months old. It is young and is growing harmoniously. But it will from now on be on the scene. Henceforth, the barrage will begin between us Communists and them, the profiteers. And we shall be without pity. We will not be able to swallow everything in one gulp. We promise little for the beginning. But we shall keep our promises, and it also is a fact that the small rivulets become large streams. Our Party is on the way of growing bigger and bigger, and that is a good omen. The signs of already numerous sympathies and encouragement are certain aphrodisiacs for us and can only lend impulse to our actions. We take advantage of the opportunity to thank all workers who have written to us or sent small contributions to encourage us. We need the help of all the progressives, all the workers, to continue our struggles.

But since we were talking about the "overheating" problem, let us return to it to say that capital is responsible for this alarming situation and this with the blessings from the bosses who run the country and who are almost all the powerful presidents or members of the administrative councils of the big monopolies, the large-scale industries or commercial firms with Swiss, American and, chiefly, German capital. As a rule they quit the Federal Council to become administrators of the various corporations and profiteers with immense benefits. The birds ready their nests from Bern and come to occupy them when they are well healed. And dear Petitpierre of Nestle and other "vintages" of this genre are not the ones to complain of their gilded cage. Less so since he is reaching his 65th birthday and then can take advantage, poor as he is, of his old-age insurance for which he worked so hard in his days.

A red page is found within this issue of L'Etincelle. This page 5 gives you the text of an appeal which we are now distributing in the French-speaking cantons of Switzerland by the tens of thousands. The content gives you an idea of our first demands. Others will follow but let us not mix them together. Here we do not repeat our demands except the demand for reducing the military budget of the incredible Swiss Army.

What also deceives the Swiss citizens is that Bern gives them, or believes it gives them, the illusion of democracy. Voting takes place. If Bern has decided beforehand that it be "yes" but the citizens come up with a "no" majority, one twists it a bit and ends up all the same by transforming the no into yes. And this is the way it almost always is.

There has been enough of this now, you gentlemen on top!

The Swiss Communist Party which has an easy conscience and owes you nothing will unite all conscious workers under one banner, their own. And we shall not hesitate, if necessary, to roll up our sleeves to wipe out those who think they still have the power further to exploit and disregard the working people, the peasants, workers, artisans or intellectuals. We shall see!

This overheating is the result of the policy of maximum profits and of the scandalous exploitation of the proletariat. Swiss and foreign labor in Switzerland suffer the most perfect exploitation imaginable. The labor periods are intolerable, the most elementary rules of hygiene are often ignored and yet no one raises his voice to call for a halt.

The decisions to "struggle" (sic) against the overheating taken by the Swiss authorities are favored by the trusts and by big capital. At the very moment when everywhere else one encourages the building of Houses of Culture, stadiums, sports arenas and corresponding installations, the "small Swiss" are suspended. Absolutely no assurance is given on the construction of low-rent housing. Construction is slowed down because the necessary credits are lacking. Roads risk remaining "Swiss footpaths" for a long time. In short, the workers, peasants, artisans and small businessmen will be the only ones to lose by it. Maximum profit margins remain the same in the large enterprises, rentals cost more and more and become increasingly scarce, the more one persists in wanting to eliminate all controls. And the spectre of property by stage is not suitable for straightening matters out.

Dispositions made are fragile, if not temporary; in no case are they solutions. On the other hand, a strict control on incoming foreign labor should be introduced and here one should first think of qualified labor instead of quantity. A salary and decent housing guarantee for all should be required. Yet nothing will be changed for the habitual profiteers, and this overheating problem has to be reviewed in its entirety and solved by entirely other means. We can in no case prove "those of Berne" in this matter and will not accept it: once again the workers are to be the suckers.

Let us repeat: there are industries and trusts that should be nationalized even if the big special interest of the capitalists will suffer. One day, one will not ask the millionaires for their opinion, one will simply nationalize, and that is all.

And only then will one proceed toward the creation of a new Switzerland, a true Switzerland, a Switzerland based on the infallible principles of Marxism-Leninism, the only guarantee for peace, democracy, social justice, equality and freedom under the direction of the dictatorship of the proletariat.