The Real Meaning of the "New Turn"

By Will Herberg

IN the analysis of the "new turn" in the Comintern contained in the last issue of *Revolutionary Age* (the article: *Again a "New Turn" in the Comintern,* by Herbert Zam) it is declared:

"In reality the Ecci is continuing its ultra-left adventurist line which is at the bottom of the leftist errors committed thruout the Comintern. . . . The Ecci is quite ready to destroy a Reimann or a Shatzkin but the basic policies which are responsible for the errors of the Reimanns and the Shatzkins remain intact and even become worse!"

This point of view is absolutely correct and represents the essential point of departure in the estimation of the coming period in the Comintern. Only by clearly appreciating this fact is it possible to avoid falling into confusion before the unprincipled "new turns" at which the diplomatic strategists in the Ecci are such past masters.

What is the essential political feature of the present crisis in the Communist International? It is: the rapidly developing gap between the successful proletarian revolution in the Soviet Union and the steady building up of Socialism, on the one hand, and the retarded pace of the revolution in West Europe and America on the other—this gap, *as long as it is not bridged by the development of a real international collective leadership for the Comintern*—necessarily leads the present Ecci to a false estimation of the objective situation and conditions of struggle in the capitalist world and to a radically false tactical line. In essence this false approach of the Ecci is due to the refusal to recognize the "retarded pace" (Lenin) and the special paths of development of the world revolution. *This is the essence of ultra-leftism.* That is why, no matter how many turns and twists it may undergo, no matter how it may seem to veer one way or the other, the line of the Ecci will remain the same: *ultra-left and sectarian,* until the crisis is overcome and a real right-about-face instituted in the strategical course of the Comintern!

It is characteristic of the present crisis in the Comintern that the recent "turn against the ultra-left" proceeds quite harmoniously side by side with the most dangerous ultra-left vagaries yet seen in the Comintern. This exposes as clear as daylight the real meaning, the real content of the "new turn." It shows it to be nothing more than an attempt to shunt into "safe" channels (by the method of finding a scapegoat) of the dissatisfaction and resentment that has been steadily growing in the various Parties, in the face of the manifest chaos, demoralization and isolation in the Comintern. It shows itself as a cloak under which the old ultra-left course can be continued and aggravated. Nothing proves this more clearly than the series of articles by Manuilsky, the recognized spokesman of the Ecci that appeared recently in *Pravda* (January 3 and 4, 1930.) From these articles as well as from some of the recent documents and declarations of the Ecci let us see what the "new turn" really amounts to.

1. *On the question of the world economic situation*: Here is what Comrade Manuilsky states as to the present economic situation of world capitalism.

"As we know, the economic crisis was not limited only to the United States; its echo also made itself felt in other countries closely connected with the U.S.A., in the first place Canada and the most important Latin American countries, but also in Europe and especially in those countries where the investments of American capitalism are quite large (Sweden—the match concern of Kruger). All eastern Europe . . . is in a state of a general economic crisis. These countries show the necessity of raising the question of the consequences of the world crisis which shall not find our Parties unprepared."

The leading editorial article in *Inprecorr* (Vol. 10, No. 4) declares that:

"The present crisis of 1930 *differs from the international crisis of* 1920 *in that it is developing along with a simultaneous rise of the revolutionary tide and powerful advance of Socialist construction in the Soviet Union, that is, it is accompanied by two decisive circumstances which are bound to render the consequences of this crisis more serious for* ***capitalism.***"

2. *On the question of stabilization and radicalization.* On this Comrade Manuilsky makes himself quite clear:

"What are the direct results of the economic crisis? The shattering of capitalist stabilization, the sharpening of capitalist contradictions, the fast tempo of radicalization of the working class, which is accompanied by the dissatisfaction of the bankrupt petty bourgeoisie. . . . "

No document is ever issued by the Ecci nowadays or by the official Party leaderships that does not pay its respects to the "shattering of capitalist stabilization," to "the oncoming revolutionary wave," etc. But Comrade Manuilsky—the new champion against ultra-leftism—goes further:

"The crisis may become fatal for capitalist society! Its consequences in a condition of strained capitalist contradictions may be as large as those of the world war of 1914-1918. *The process of ripening of the revolutionary situation in a number of countries will develop very fast . . . We are moving towards gigantic strikes which will take the form of political strikes. The question of the struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat will be put on the order of the day. . . . "*

Naturally, the *Rote Fahne* (central organ of the C.P. of Germany) speaks with great assurance of *"the rapid advent of the German Red October"* while the *Daily Worker* chimes in with:

"Out of the present deepgoing economic disturbances, growing more acute each day and spreading to the farthest ends of the capitalist world—can very likely come again the struggle for class power by the workers in more than one capitalist country."

3. *On the question of the Social-democracy*: Just as the X Plenum declared that *"in this period social-reformism dies out!"* so does Comrade Manuilsky discover that Social-democracy is rapidly nearing its end—at a time, we should note, when Social-democracy and social-reformism generally has strengthened its positions in practically every capitalist country.

"The crisis may sound like a funeral march for international Social-democracy and the international social-reformists whose influence in the labor movement was closely connected with capitalist stabilization. The crash of stabilization will undermine the roots of international Social- democracy and may finish what was not fully done during the world war and the October revolution in the sense of liquidating the influence of Social-democracy upon the working class."

4. *On the question of tactics.* The Ecci's analysis of the objective situation has its immediate consequences for its tactical line; Comrade Manuilsky hastens to point this out:

"The question of the world economic crisis is the starting point of our immediate revolutionary perspectives. On the basis of this we must prepare our trade union tactics, our tactical line in the factories. . . . "

Such is the real aspect of the "new turn!" The right hand knoweth not what the left hand is doing! The Ecci's "struggle against the ultra-left" is a *sham battle* because the Ecci itself is the original fountain and source of the ultra-left sickness. In one breath Comrade Manuilsky inveighs against "the ultra-left bombast and exaggeration"—on the part of the specially chosen scapegoat; in the other, he officially declares that the struggle for power is coming on the order of business in a number of European countries, that "the funeral march of the Social-democracy" is being sounded, that the sectarian tactics in mass work must be continued and even aggravated . . . !

But such diplomatic manouver and hypocritical twists and turns to shift responsibility expose themselves. The growing opposition movement and sentiment in the Comintern cannot be "dealt with" in this manner. This crisis in the Comintern-growing acuter every day—demands a complete change of strategical line and method of leadership on the part of the Ecci. This change can only be brought about by the Party masses themselves and not by the Ecci from above!

What Is Happe

by Bertra

IN December the Mexican police arrested thirty-two members of the C.S.U.M. (Red Unions), of the Communist Party, and of the Young Communist League. A dozen of these, Latin-Americans of non-Mexican birth, were summarily deported without trial. Five, Eduardo Callero, Alfonso Cuellar, Santiago Diaz, Antonio Rodriguez and Pablo Santamaria, were condemned to a living death (also without a trial) by imprisonment in the remote penal colony on the tropical islands knows as Islas Marias—a hell on earth, if ever there was one.

This was only one of a series of acts of terror which have been perpetrated over a long period of time by the government of Mexico under the guidance and direction of the Mexican Viceroy of King Morgan, Ambassador Morrow, against the Mexican working class and the Mexican anti-imperialist movement. These acts include the assassination of a series of Communist and trade union leaders, the deportation of others, the expulsion of political refugees fleeing from the brutal dictatorship of Uncle Sam's servile tools in Cuba and other Latin American countries, the suppression of the official organ of the Communist Party of Mexico, *El Machete,* the disarming of peasants, the shooting of their leaders, nullification of the land laws, the nullification of the provisions of the Constitution concerning minerals, oil, and sub-soil rights and the general surrender of the country and its toiling masses to the pillage of the financial overlords of 26 Broadway and 23 Wall Street.

It has long been the boast of the cynical agents of Wall Street at present at the helm in Mexico that "on the foreigners we use the 33 (Article 33 is the clause of the Mexican Constitution authorizing the deportation of "pernicious foreigners" and originally aimed against the oil magnates and imperialist agents) and on the natives we use the 30-30 (the small-bore rifle commonly used in the Mexican military campaigns)." One by one many of the best leaders of the Mexican workers and peasants have been assassinated and the 30-30 has not been limited in its application to natives alone as proved by the assassination of the Cuban Communist, Julio Antonio Mella.

On January 23, the Mexican Government broke off relations with the Soviet Union and a few days later, as the Soviet