The Austrian Terror

by Jay Lovestone

AS we go to press, we are reliably informed that on Friday, May 20, and Saturday, May 21, there took place serious disturbances at the relief and unemployment offices in Vienna. Masses of jobless workers, aroused to action by the slashes in relief and the breakdown of the Nazi promises to provide work, demonstrated their indignation and protest.

In these demonstrations, members and followers of the Austrian Communist Opposition were in the forefront, lending inspiration and leadership to the spontaneous outbreak of the workers out of the depths of their desperation.

As a result of these demonstrations, scores of workers were arrested, including nearly a dozen leading figures of our movement. They face imprisonment, the concentration camp, perhaps death!

From X.Y., a veteran of the Austrian labor movement, we have received the following letter, dated May 7:

"The terror is great, incredible. Arrests run into the thousands and include Jews, socialists and Schuschnigg people . . . . Somehow, the Nazis have gotten possession of a long list of their enemies, and these people are certain to be arrested should any counter-propaganda appear. Thus, we sit in a mouse-trap waiting for it to snap shut . . . .

"But we are not yet beaten by any means. For the moment, we can do nothing but feel out the mood of the various sections of the working class. There exists tremendous confusion. Sections of the working class are being infected by Nazi demagogy and anti-Semitism. It is sometimes difficult to distinguish friend from foe. In the factories, where workers have known each other for a long time, things are considerably better . . . .

"I am risking this letter without knowing whether it will reach you . . . . I shall seek new connections. In spite of everything, we will fight on.

Revolutionary greetings,
X.Y.
For the Austrian Section
Of the I.C.O.

"In spite of everything, we will fight on . . . ." This is the spirit of the heroic Austrian working class. They have been defeated, crushed, but the war is not yet over. As long as their spirit remains undaunted, their day will come!

"In spite of everything, we will fight on . . . ." But fight on with what? How can they fight, unless we come to their assistance immediately, without delay? The socialists and trade unionists, the revolutionary workers of Austria, risking everything to keep alive the spirit of class struggle against capitalism and fascism, are fighting our battle thousands of miles away. The least we can do is to extend them instant aid—moral support and solidarity to sustain them in the long, uphill fight; financial support to give them the means to fight against such tremendous odds!

The Austrian workers are calling. What will be our answer? Remember—every minute counts and so does every dollar!

Send your contribution to the Austrian Workers Solidarity Fund, Jay Lovestone, treasurer, 131 West 33rd Street, New York City.

Do your bit in the world struggle against fascism and reaction!