

World Socialism

FRENCH and SWISS ELECTIONS

By HERBERT ZAM

A good deal of misrepresentation about the French municipal elections is going the rounds. The Communist press reports them as a Communist victory, paying a little lip-service to the united front. The right-wing, following the line of the Neo-Socialists, who in most instances supported the semi-Fascist bourgeois bloc,

is denouncing the united front as a capitulation to the Communists. An objective evaluation is necessary.

The French municipal elections were a decisive blow to the reactionary forces in France who are endeavoring to cement a Fascist front. That is the outstanding feature.

Had the workers' parties not set up an election agreement, there can be no doubt that the victory would have gone to the other camp. The fact that within the boundaries of this agreement, one or the other Party gained or lost, is incidental, and must not be distorted for factional advantage.

BIG COMMUNIST GAINS

The Communist Party gained very heavily in these elections. But its gains were due entirely to the election agreement with the Socialists and others. The Communist writes carefully forget to mention that the policy of the Communist Party in this election was a complete reversal of the policy it had been following for eight years. Its gains, therefore, appear to be phenomenal precisely because they represent a sudden reversal of an old course.

The value of the united front should therefore be clear to the Communist Party, which fought against it for so many years with much disastrous results. It is to be hoped that nothing will happen to cause the Communist International to make another of its well-known "turns." Some traces of the former policy still remain. The Party of Proletarian Unity and the Doriot group (who, incidentally, was expelled from the Communist Party precisely because he advocated a united front with the Socialists) are still denounced as "renegades" in the very same article which hails the united front, even though they contributed over one hundred thousand "determined anti-Fascist votes" to the United front.

ALSO SOCIALIST GAINS

The Socialist Party lost control in 39 municipalities and gained control in 33, a net loss of 6. However, the losses were largely unimportant small towns, while the gains represent large cities, including Marseilles, the second largest city in France, Nantes, Perpignan, Rochefort, Calais (for the first time in 30 years), Colmar, Laon, and others. Other important cities were retained with increased majorities, including Toulouse, Lille, Roubaix, Dunkirk, Mulhouse, Saint Nazaire, etc. In Paris itself, the representation was increased from 3 to 6. In the Paris region (which is the center of the Communist strength) the Socialists lost control in two municipalities, which passed over to the Communists, but gained control of fifteen new ones, now controlling 21 as against 8 previously.

Considering that since the last election the Right wing of the Socialist Party (Marquet-Renaudel) split off, and actively opposed the Party in this election in most instances, the Socialist Party came through with flying colors.

Those who assail the action of the French Party should say what policy they would propose. The Party had but one of three

choices—the united front, independent candidates, or a united front with some bourgeois parties. The second alternative would obviously have helped the reactionaries, who would thus have gained control even where they were a minority.

For the third alternative there was only the Herriot Party (Radical-Socialists) to consider. Its leadership wanted to make an alliance with the Fascists. The Party itself was divided on this issue. It is obviously a very unreliable element at best. To depend on it for a fight against fascism is the worst of follies. (Have we forgotten Bruening so soon?) The anti-Fascist block was able to swing a section of this Party (Pelletin group) to its support, against the wishes of the leadership.

Our French comrades acted correctly and they deserve the support of all revolutionary Socialists throughout the world.

SWISS REFERENDUM BEGUN BY SOCIALISTS

A tremendous vote was polled in favor of the "five-year plan" of social legislation which was initiated in Switzerland by the Socialist Party. The vote in the popular referendum was 424,878 in favor and 566,242 in opposition.

This is one of the largest votes ever cast for Socialist or labor measures, and the number of voters who took part was also a new record. In the important industrial districts of Berne, Basle, Soleure and Schaffhausen, majorities were cast in favor of the plan.

The objective of the plan was to insure "sufficient conditions of existence for all Swiss citizens" and to "maintain the consuming power of the people by combatting the general fall of wages and prices of farm and artisans products." The plan provided for finding work for the unemployed, maintenance of wages, prevention of foreclosures, establishment of unemployment insurance and relief, and regulation and control of exports, financial markets and trusts.

The referendum was vigorously opposed by all bourgeois parties. It was supported by the trade unions, the Peasant Party, and the Communist Party, in addition to the Socialist Party.

SUPPORTED BY C. P.

The New York Communist "Daily Worker" obviously was not aware of the fact that the Swiss Communist Party supported the plan, for in the issue of June 3 it carried an attack against the Swiss Socialist Party for supporting it. But after all, if the "Daily Worker" foreign editor can't find out that the Socialist Call is opposed to the coalition in Belgium, he can hardly be expected to know what's going on in far-off Switzerland!

The support for the Socialist plan by the Communists was announced at a united May Day meeting in Basle by the Communist Deputy Bedemann, who declared:

"The Communist Party will vote for the Socialist Plan to combat the crisis. We will fight for the

UNION MEETING IN PHILADELPHIA MAPS BOSS WAR

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to map a tremendous campaign for the organization of all industrial workers eligible to trade unions, which the resolution declared could supply protection far superior to that once afforded by the NRA and its codes.

The resolution was submitted by Samuel Laderman of the Pocket-book Makers Union and E. K. Hogan of the Brotherhood of Railway Carmen. Copies of the resolution will be sent by the Chicago Federation of Labor not only to the Executive Council but to other central bodies throughout the United States.

From employes of State St. department stores came the news that the loudly proclaimed statements by employers of no departure from code standards were for public consumption only. Just as when the bosses promised Hoover in 1929 that they would not slash wages—and started slicing as soon as they had left Washington—so now the temporary wage and hour stabilization has come to an end.

Marshall Field & Co., leading Chicago department store, was reported by employes to have cut \$14 a week wages to \$9 in a number of classifications. The Boston Store, leader in the cheaper division, made the working day a half hour longer, employes reported.

On the heels of the Chicago Federation of Labor's important action in petitioning for an emergency national convention, Local Cook County Socialist Party scheduled a mass meeting of trade unionists and Socialists in the Commandery Hall of the Capitol Building in the Chicago loop to discuss the death of the NRA and the new situation faced by labor as a result.

Speakers included Leo Krzycki, National Chairman of the Socialist Party and Vice-President of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, Joseph Jacobs, outstanding labor attorney and Socialist, Samuel Laderman of the Pocket-book Makers Union, Al Goldman, well known labor defense attorney, and Clarence Senior, National Secretary of the Socialist Party.

In anticipation of grilling and important responsibility for Socialists in their trade unions, the Labor Committee has also called a red-card meeting of all Socialists and trade unionists in the county for Monday, June 10, in Millinery Workers Hall, 60 East South Water Street, Chicago. The Socialist program in relation to the labor movement is also to furnish the chief item of discussion and action at the first meeting of the newly elected Illinois State Executive Committee of the Socialist Party of Illinois.

TOLEDO.—Organized labor has determined to meet the challenge

demands of the Socialist plan everywhere—in Parliament, in the factories, in the mills."

Commenting on this decision of the Communists, the "Berliner Tagewacht," central organ of the Swiss Socialist Party, stated:

UNITY NOW NEARER

"On the basis of this position it is possible to reestablish the unity of the working class. When we see how reaction and fascism profit from the division of the proletarian forces, we must all strive to overcome the split in the labor movement. A really active Socialist movement is the best prerequisite for this, and the Communists can again become part of it."

Thus it is clear that the Socialist plan, even in defeat, served to unify the working class.