

copy
THE WORKERS' PARTY OF SOUTH AFRICA

141 Longmarket Street,

CAPE TOWN.

2nd Feb. 1935.

To the Secretary,
Bolshevik Leninist League,
JOHANNESBURG.

Dear Comrade,

Your letter of 23rd Jan. to the C.L.S.A. was received by us with very great pleasure and was submitted on 29th Jan. to the new organisation. I am glad to say that we found ourselves able to accept the basis on which the B.L.L. is prepared to merge with the said C.L.S.A. After having dealt with your 4 Points one by one, the meeting was unanimous in its decision.

Concerning Point 1. The name unanimously recommended by the B.L.L. naturally gave rise to some little discussion, but the reasons advanced in your letter were so cogent that we speedily decided to forsake the name C.L.S.A. in favour of "The Workers' Party of South Africa". We all prefer "Party" to "League".

Concerning Point 2. The temporary non-enforcement of the probation period (see Constitution, Art.4, Sec.3) as formally enunciated in Point 2 of your letter, our meeting regarded as reasonable and signified its acceptance in the following motion: "Up to the first Conference the B.L.L. can take full responsibility, under the Constitution, to suspend the probation clause." Nevertheless, in connection with a later paragraph in your letter (see page 2, penultimate par.), our meeting desired to add a warning of possible danger in the decision "to keep the party doors open" for an indefinite period. Our reasons for insisting on a probationary period are clearly to be seen in the Thesis on the Party Constitution. Doubtless we all agree that the true revolutionary quality is a product of intensive training, habitual self-discipline, and persistent organised endeavour in the class struggle leading into the revolutionary struggle. Wide open party doors would be likely to admit many who are wholly incapable of the determination and sacrifice involved. We recognise, however, that your position is

in one important particular different from our own. You will be gathering in raw recruits and from the outset training them with a view to the revolutionary party. Our main recruiting ground is the Lenin Club, which receives those who are attracted to us and teaches them Marxian principles and propagandist methods, and brings together persons of varying degrees of conviction. Before admitting them to the definitely revolutionary organisation, we must make very sure that they take the decisive step forward into the Workers' Party with full enlightenment and resolution, knowing that there must be a change in the old easygoing Club intimacy between those who are only Club members and those who are also members of the Party. To sum up, we agree to your formulated Point 2 on the first page of your letter, but we deprecate the amplified statement in the penultimate paragraph on the second page.

Concerning Point 3 and Point 4. With these points we are in unreserved and cordial agreement. We regret, indeed, that in the intense and strenuous effort of launching this new venture we have in some details inadvertently fallen short of correct procedure, especially in the allowance of sufficient time for all the needful preliminaries.

Along with this letter we send you the Minutes of our Inaugural Meeting on Jan.29 and also a brief report of the proceedings which culminated in that meeting.

With renewed assurance of our very great satisfaction in the establishment of an organic unity between the movement in Johannesburg and Cape Town and with comradely greetings from the Cape branch of the Workers' Party of South Africa,

yours for Communism,

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THE WORKERS' PARTY OF SOUTH AFRICA.

141 Longmarket Street,

Cape Town.

4th Feb.1935

The Secretary,
The Workers' Party of S.Africa,
Johannesburg.

Dear Comrade,

A number of matters calling for report or attention obliges me to follow up my letter of 2nd inst, with yet another.

1. The Party Constitution. In the Constitution, for the period up to the First Conference, we have fixed 5 as the number of the Central Committee, numbers being yet very small.
2. The Central Committee. A Central Committee of 5 means the General Secretary and 4 other members. We have taken it for granted that, until the First Conference is held, making regular elections possible, two of the members would be chosen in Johannesburg and two in Cape Town. The General Secretary ought also of course to be chosen by the Party Conference. As that is at present impossible, and as most urgent complications here forced us last week to constitute the new organisation without even another day's delay, the meeting of the Party members here on Jan.29 unanimously elected Comrade Koston, that is, myself, as General Secretary, and by majority vote Comrades Burlak and Goodlatte as members of the Central Committee.

The irregularity, like some others, can be rectified at our First Conference. Then, when we shall be meeting together as one whole, and members of each group will be in actual touch with those of the other group, the General Secretary will be elected by the whole body, as will also the other members of the Central Committee. Meanwhile we undertake to refrain from any public use of the title.

3. Connection with the International Secretariat. We are sending to the International Secretariat (i) copies of all the Theses we received relating to the formation of the Party, (ii) a copy of ~~the~~ the Constitution, (iii) a Report of proceedings, together with (iv) a covering letter informing the I.S. of the merger and asking for affiliation of the Workers' Party of South Africa as a section

of the International League.

Their reply will be duly communicated to you.

4. The Workers' Party and the Lenin Club. As a large number of Lenin Club members have not so far joined the Workers' Party, and as some of these comrades, notably Comrades Averbuch, C. van Gelderen, H. van Gelderen, and Pick, appear to be definitely hostile to the fundamental principles of the Theses, it is wholly desirable that, for the time being, there should be no leakage of information concerning the Party from any member of the Workers' Party to any member of the Lenin Club who is not also a member of the Party. (The members of the W.P.S.A. here are so far Comrades Banfield, Burlak, Elias, Epstein, G. Gool, J. Gool, Gordon, Koston, Goodlatte, Matthews, Solomon.)

The Lenin Club will now be an educational and propagandist body. The exact relations between it ^{and} the Workers' Party will be worked out in the near future.

5. Copies of Constitution and Theses. As soon as these are available in the finally accepted form, we shall send you copies. Please let us know at your convenience how many copies you will want.

6. "The Spark." We should like to get the "Spark" started by the 20th March, if possible, and to continue it as a monthly organ. This will be possible only with your fullest co-operation. We should want, both from you and from our members here articles well in advance of the publication month. Articles written here would of course be sent you in advance for the criticism of your members of the Central Committee.

7. Unemployed and Relief Workers in the Cape Town area. We are very busy just now in an endeavour to organise unemployed and relief-workers.

With comradely greetings,

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THE WORKERS PARTY OF SOUTH AFRICA.

141 Longmarket Street,
CAPE TOWN.

13th February, 1935

The Secretary,
Workers Party of South Africa,
JOHANNESBURG.

Dear Comrade,

If you will refer to our letter of the 4th inst. you will notice that we would like to have the first issue of the "Spark" out by the 20th March.

This can be done only if we get busy immediately.

We propose that the first issue consist of the following:-

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|---|-------------------|
| 1. Editorial | by Comrade Burlak |
| 2. Native Question | " " Goodlatte |
| 3. Political Survey of Here and Abroad | by Johannesburg |
| 4. The War Danger | " Koston |
| 6. News (a) Unemployed Workers Council, (b) Anti-Fascist League
(c) Johannesburg News. | |

The Anti-Fascist League can be written up by you and we can add a bit about its doings here. The Political Survey should be a monthly feature like Dutt's "Notes of the Month". Then we suggest that you get busy on two series of articles.

1. A history of the labour movement in S.A. with special emphasis on the role of the C.P.
2. An A B C of Communism.

These series, if ready, could start in the second issue.

The Editorial Board Here consists of Burlak, Goodlatte, and Koston. Naturally, we expect you to appoint your Editorial Board.

If we really want to publish on time we have to get to work. As soon as our articles have been written we will send them up to you for criticism, and vice versa. If you have suggestions about the first issue please let me know immediately.

The enclosed proof, with corrections, will give you an idea of how it will look. The number of pages will, naturally, depend on the length of the articles.

Finance. We propose to sell at a penny a copy; Cape Town pays the postage ~~from~~ to Johannesburg; and that you remit a half-penny for every copy you sell.

How many copies will you want? Furthermore, what Johannesburg address do you want to publish at the bottom of the last page? If you have a list of people outside of Johannesburg to whom you want it sent will you send us that list? It will save duplicating postages.

Naturally, we are taking on the cost at the start. We reckon on raising a regular monthly donation from our sympathisers to the amount of £ 3.10.0. This ought to see us through as a beginning. If we get into debt we will have to think of ways of getting out of debt again.

We are anxious to hear from you soon.

With comradely greetings,

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P.O.Box 3301,
Johannesburg.
16/2/35.

21st. February, 1935
P.K.

Amph

Dear Koston,

I am enclosing the minutes of our last meeting (not yet confirmed) to give you an idea of the situation here. Read 'em and weep!

Gordon arrived - a real windfall for our group - and must have obtained a horrifying impression of our membership from the first meeting he attended as you may gather from the minutes. Today Gordon with Saperstein and myself put up a calico sign ~~high over~~ 50 feet long and 12 feet high over an electric sign on the roof of a high building in the centre of town. The stunt worked well and the new legend "Release The ~~aal~~mann" could be seen for miles flashing on and off against the sky, until a strong wind tore down half the sign. The calico and paint were donated by Buirski. Even if, as is likely, the C.P. is "blamed" for this, the members and sympathisers of the C.P. will at least know that the "counter-revolutionaries" were the real culprits.

I am enclosing also a copy of a letter posted on the wall newspaper of the Garment Workers Club by Solly Sachs. He attacks the local C.P. leaders while defending the Comintern. A characteristic right wingers attitude. As the letter came to us by an underground route, please treat it as confidential; we are anxious to keep these sources of information intact.

Saperstein behaved like a schoolboy in giving Purdy "a couple of cracks" but he insists that his action was justifiable and intends, he says, to write to Cape Town explaining his position. He declares that I am "under Purdy's thumb", that I have shown a vacillating and conciliatory attitude towards Purdy, etc. etc. Purdy on the other hand accuses me of being "inflexible, dictatorial" and so on - the very reverse of Saperstein's characterisation. Actually Saperstein is short sighted and cannot see farther than the present position. He attacks without evidence to support his accusations and expects us even to put ourselves in the wrong in order to oust Purdy.

The Laundry Workers' Union after a brief revival at the last general meeting is moving rapidly towards collapse and no factory gate meetings can rebuild the union. Three months ago Purdy was instructed by the League to write a history of the strike. This he did not do until last week I hinted that if he did not write the history - somebody would have to. In the face of this possibility he has got to work, but I fancy there will be two conflicting versions of what took place.

Please let me have your opinion as soon as possible on the course of action regarding the Wage Determination referred to in the minutes. I think that the manoeuvre of calling a general meeting to discuss the Wage Board is the last desperate hope of rebuilding the Laundry Workers Union.

The main problem before our branch now is the formulation of the programme of action. The most imperative task is to build up our strength and a club would seem to be the best possible recruiting ground. I have a practical plan and am trying to put it into operation.

Only on the basis of an increased membership and a body of sympathisers will we be able to proceed with any considerable agitation and propaganda, trade union work or political training of our own members.

Our collapsed L.W.U. and Com Molifi's work in Alexandra Township are but meagre activities after nearly a year of existence.

Our editorial board here will probably include Purdy, Gordon and myself and I can foresee endless trouble from Purdy not only to us but to you in Cape Town. Coms Saperstein and Kahn for this reason voted for complete control of "the Spark" by Cape Town comrades. One thing is certain, Purdy will not accept the scheme of contents you have suggested but will insist on sending in some theses of his own. Also we will be bogged up for hours defending C.T. articles against Purdy's criticisms. A good test would be to send something by Lenin with a rank and filers name as author. This would finish Lenin as a theoretician!

Yours for communism,

R. Lee.

P.S. Sunday, 17/2/35: Last night the "Release Thaelmann" sign was patched up and it has been up all day today.

WORKERS PARTY OF SOUTH AFRICA. (Johannesburg Branch,)
154 Marshall Street,
Johannesburg.
16/2/35.

21st February, 1935
P.K.

Secretary,
Workers Party of South Africa,
Cape Town.

Dear Comrade,

Your letters dated 2nd and 4th Feb and the accompanying copies of the report and minutes have been received by us and discussed at the meeting of the Bolshevick Leninist League on Feb, 7th 1935. A formal motion "that the Bolshevick Leninist League hereby constitutes itself the Johannesburg branch of the Workers Party of South Africa" was unanimously passed. Coms Purdy and Lee (myself) were elected as members of the Central Committee.

Your letter dated 13th Feb is now in our hands and will be placed before the branch membership at the earliest opportunity.

At the meeting of our branch on 14th Feb. it was decided to propose to the Cape Town branch that a joint Editorial Board be formed consisting of three members elected by each branch. The Johannesburg Editorial Board will probably be elected at the next branch meeting.

The Central Committee of the African Laundry Workers Union has not met for three weeks in spite of notices and messages to its members. This month only eight members have paid their subscription and we are experiencing great difficulty in keeping the office open.

Comrade Molifi, of our branch, has organised a Workers Committee in Alexandra Township where he lives. This committee is conducting an agitation on the basis of struggle for everyday demands. Two meetings have already been held in protest against an increase in bus fares and bad treatment on the buses. These meetings were attended by about three hundred workers. Comrade Molifi, although unable to attend branch meetings regularly, is busy making contacts and is preparing to introduce W.P.S.A. speakers to meetings of the Workers Committee.

At our last branch meeting Com Saperstein was suspended from membership for one month as a result of making a physical attack upon the chairman, Com Purdy.

Com Gordon has reported to our branch and is participating in our activities.

The establishment of unity between ourselves and the

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movement in Cape Town has opened up new perspectives and our members are facing with renewed enthusiasm, the tasks which face our party in the near future.

With communist greetings,
Yours fraternally,

R. Lee.

Secretary.

WORKERS PARTY OF SOUTH AFRICA

P.O.Box 1940,
CAPE TOWN.

22nd. February, 1935.

Dear Comrade Gordon,

Purely by chance, but very fortunately, it so happened that I was the first person to enter the Lenin Club rooms last night. I found your letter and opened it immediately.

A rapid perusal of your letter (it is dated 18th Feb.) convinced me that you had made a grave error in addressing it to the Secretary of the Lenin Club. It should be obvious to you that the internal matters of the Johannesburg branch of the Workers Party are not the business of the Lenin Club. A second reading by Comrade Goodlatte convinced her of the same. Comrade Burlak has as yet not seen the letter. I did not show it to him last night because he was giving us a lecture on "Soviet Russia" and I did not wish to distract him. However, we are meeting to discuss your letter and other correspondence from Johannesburg tonight.

I cannot too strongly emphasize the point that what happens inside the Workers Party is the sole concern of the Workers Party. It is no business of the Lenin Club, or of any of the members of the Lenin Club.

We are hoping that you have not written any personal letters to any of the members of the Lenin Club in the same vein. If you have, the mischief is done.

If you write again to the Club, please do not refer to your letter of the 18th.

Comrade Lee, in a letter, calls you a "real windfall". That may be all right for Johannesburg, - but here we feel your loss. Naturally, we hope for yourself that you find a job in Johannesburg but we would be very pleased if you had to come back to Cape Town. The work of the Unemployed Council has been divided up amongst us. Of course, our contact with the Council is not as ~~xxxx~~ close now as it was when you were here. But the work is going forward, slowly it is true, but going ahead. Members are coming in. Meetings are being held at Athlone and will be held at Kensington, Goodwood, etc. We shall send reports to the Johannesburg comrades.

The Lenin Club is growing. Last night Starke joined up. Naturally, with this influx of new members like L. Cooper, M. Alexander, Starke, etc., the character of the Club will change. This is all to the good. It gives us more time to devote to our real activities. The Lenin Club's Constitution Committee will meet soon and frame a constitution that will be in harmony with this new division of the work.

Keep us informed of your doings, and how you get on. You can write to us at either address, P.O.Box 1940 or Modern Books (Pty) Ltd., 141 Longmarket Street. In either case address the envelope to me personally but head your letter Secretary, W.P.S.A.

Yours fraternally,

Secretary.

P.O.Box 1940,
CAPE TOWN.

23rd February, 1935.

Secretary,
W.P.S.A.,
JOHANNESBURG.

Dear Comrade,

We gladly excuse the slight tardiness of your reply because of the good news it brings us. We are very pleased to learn the results of your discussions and to hear that your motion to be the Johannesburg section of the Party was accepted unanimously. By the way, we would like to have a copy of the minutes of your meeting of the 7th February.

With reference to the exchange of Minutes, we think that we ought to decide now whether to exchange Minutes only when they have been confirmed or whether to exchange them as soon as the respective Secretaries have written them. Both methods have advantages and disadvantages. We would prefer the latter, exchange of Minutes as soon as they are written, as it would save time. If Minutes are altered before confirmation the alterations are usually noted in the Minutes of the meeting at which the alterations are made. Which method do you prefer?

We do hope that the Laundry Workers Union will not suffer too much because of its Central Committee. "Not meeting for three weeks" sounds very serious.

The work of Comrade Molifi seems to be the real thing. We hope it goes forward.

About the "Spark", we have been reading the "Bantu World" and "Umteteli" regularly for the past six months paying particular attention to their correspondence columns. We have managed to draw up a list of Natives throughout the country who, judging by their letters to these papers, seem intelligent. We propose to send them the "Spark" gratis for six months and then write them a letter asking them what they think of it and would they care to subscribe. What do you think of this plan? Could you prepare a list from other sources?

I am instructed by my Central Committee to draw your attention to the list of sympathisers which appears in our minutes of the 10th February. This list is strictly confidential.

With communist greetings,
Yours fraternally,

Secretary.

Enclosed; Minutes of 3rd, 10th, and 19th February.

141 Longmarket Street,
Cape Town.

25th February, 1935.

Dear Lee,

I have yours of the 16th. What a mess.

And I have made it slightly worse. If you consult the Minutes of our meeting of the 22nd you will notice that among "Correspondence" is listed the Minutes of your meeting of Feb. 15th. It was only later, after our C.C. Meeting, that I remembered that your Minutes of the 15th were enclosed in your letter to me and not to the Party. Of course, Burlak, Goodlatte, and myself discussed your personal letter to me.

I really do not know what to do about this. Suggest that you keep back our Minutes of the 22nd for a time unless it does not matter that it is known to the Johannesburg section that we have the Minutes of the 15th.

About Gordon being a "windfall", you will see from our Minutes that he has dropped a brick. Luckily it not not land. You will have to watch Gordon, he is very young, unsophisticated and not too discreet. He can be goaded into talking too much.

Naturally, I have not written to Johannesburg as instructed by my Central Committee about the Laundry Union because of this mix up with the Minutes. However, our Minutes show clearly where we stand on this point. I have no desire to amplify this point.

The "calico stunt" is a waste of time. These "adventures" should be left to the Stalinists.

Thanks for the piece by S. Sachs. We know him.

Judging from your Minutes of the 15th Purdy is a queer case and Saperstein another. I see we are going to have our hands full. By the way, what is Saperstein, a pugilist?

We ought to have an article on the Laundry strike for the "Spark". Also one on the Furniture Workers Strike. Will you see what you can do about this?

I want to write more, but I really cannot. Today is mail day and I am kept hopping.

Yours for Communism.

March 25th 1935

London,
27th February 1935

Dear Com. Kpsten a,
Your letter, a reply to mine from Southampton, together with The theses on War, Trade Unions and Native questions, received. I am sorry that I was unable to write you sooner, but I am sure that you will forgive me for I could not write you an "impartial" account of what happened in France. Hence, the inevitable delay, procrastination.

For those sections of the L.C.I. which only knew one side of the question, the taking up of a position was very easy indeed. However in the more important sections the entry of the Bolshevik-Leninist League of France into the Social-Democratic S.F.I.O. had shattering consequences. In France, a split in two; Germany likewise; Poland a split in three sections; Greece the collapse of our section; USA, no split, but Bauer has a group led by Oehler, which got 11 votes out of 42 at the last Convention of the L. League. Holland and Belgium, were at first against the entry (although on different grounds. They considered the entry as a tactical move), but now I understand have come over to the Vidalists (i.e. the entrants into the S.F.I.O.)

I have studied the question and have now convinced myself that Bauer's position is the correct one. I will give you a "biased" account of the whole question as I see it now.

It is clear to anyone who wants to see, and does not look through eye-glasses ~~coloured~~ coloured with a hero-worshipping sentimentality to L.T., that the Bolshevik-Leninists of France (the Vidalists) have embarked on a policy of the reform of the Social-Democratic party of France (which is a section of the Second International) thereby liquidating our principle of the impossibility of reforming the Second International or any one of its sections, and have in addition to this, capitulated to Blum as the price of their admission into the S.F.I.O. This statement may sound incredible to you, . . . But the facts speak louder than a few articles in the Militant or New International which give only one side of the question. I will proceed point by point.

In an article published in the New International (October, 1934) entitled "The French League and the Socialist Party", Vidal has the following passage: "The destiny of the proletariat depends, in large measure in our epoch, upon the resolute manner with which Social-Democracy will succeed in the brief interval which is vouchsafed it by the march of development, in breaking with the bourgeois state, in transforming itself and in preparing itself for the decisive struggle against Fascism. The very fact that the destiny of the proletariat can thus depend upon the destiny of Social-Democracy is the consequence of the bankruptcy of the Communist International as the leading party of the international proletariat and the acuteness of the class struggles" (my emphasis)

Here for the first time since 1915 we are told by a Bolshevik that the destiny of the proletariat depends upon Social-Democracy! Not upon the Fourth International which, we believed, will be built up out of neither International exclusively, but upon Social-Democracy which will "transform" itself and "prepare itself in the struggle against Fascism". The Communist International is bankrupt (this is stated clearly) therefore the destiny of the proletariat depends upon Social-Democracy". But, you may object, Vidal in speaking about the destiny of the proletariat depending upon social democracy, puts a proviso; provided it transforms itself. ("in the short period vouchsafed it by the march of development!") Precisely! Here is where the belief of the Vidalists in

the reforming (or transforming) of the Social-Democracy comes in, and their embarking on the policy of achieving it by entering the S.F.I.O. !

Vidal when he speaks of the Social-Democracy being more capable of fighting Fascism than the Stalinists (as a "consequence of the bankruptcy of the Communist International") draws a line of distinction between fighting and fighting. Now what does Vidal mean by the statement that the Social-Democracy will fight against Fascism? He cannot mean by fighting a mere resistance to Fascism, for this the Stalinists also do (here I am speaking like Vidal about the Social-Democracy as ~~the~~ a party), then it is a real fight that Vidal has in mind, a fight that must lead to victory, in so far as victory is in general possible. But do the Social-Democracy fight?

in a "New International"

L. Fersen gives a number of facts about the recent Spanish insurrection which are very instructive as the latest lesson proving how far the destiny of the proletariat can depend upon Social-Democracy.

He describes how the insurrection has been "planned," how it was "prepared" on a conspiratorial basis etc., etc., and yet it failed. Was it an accident that it failed? No. "In the first place the leadership lacked energy, not daring to launch the movement in its full intensity. When the order was given for the general strike it was said that it should commence peacefully in order to resort to the insurrection afterwards.....In spite of the order having been given at the last moment it is not likely that it would have been of much consequence if the militia had been in readiness for action.....But the militiamen were without arms. The party held on to the guns until the last moment in the hope that a government crisis would be solved without the entrance of the Christian-Fascists into the Cabinet, in which case there would have been no armed struggle". In other words they remained reformist to the end. And thus because of this belief that "the government crisis will be solved without the entrance of the Christian-Fascists" betrayed the workers struggle. A little further Fersen hits the nail on the head when he states that "in the activity of the S.P. during the preparation for the armed struggle, the most important consideration was that of assuring the retreat if there were occasion for it, rather than taking means to armed victory if a struggle took place." Do you call that fight against Fascism, when people are concerned ~~not~~ with retreat how to retreat than be victorious, or a mere feeble resistance to fascism when it is already too late, when it must lead to defeat! And this was already the most leftward party in the Second International! Yet, the "destiny of the proletariat depends upon social-democracy!" Poor proletariat!

But Vidal will argue, the SFIO is no more a social-democratic party but a centrist party. If we are for the entry, say into the English I.L.P., why should we be against the entry into the centrist SFIO? But is the SFIO really a centrist party?

What are the facts? Blum and Faure are still in the leadership and complete control of the party (they have even succeeded in muzzling the Vidalists in criticising Blum as I will prove to you on a further page); The party still belongs to the Second International; it defends openly the treacherous role of the reformist trade unions; it calls the British Labour Party its "sister" party; recently the party came out for the nationalization of the bank by reformist means; etc. etc. Is this not enough to prove that "what is going on in reality under the label: Second International" is nothing else but....Second International?

But are not these apparent things, mere "labels", must not we take the more fundamental things the leftward current in the party? Quite so! But we cannot judge a party by the existence of a leftward current, merely, but must evaluate the strength of this leftward current. The fact that Blum and Faure, the reformists ~~are~~ still in control of the party; the fact that the party belongs to the Second International; the fact that it still defends the treachery of the reformist trade unions; etc. etc.

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all these facts are a reflection of the strength of the leftward current in the party which was not strong enough to force a break with the Second International, was not strong enough to drive out the Blum's, was not strong enough to force a real change in the policy of the party, was not strong enough quantitatively in order to change quantity into quality, in order to change it from a reformist into a centrist party. "What is going on in reality under the label of: Second International", remains Second International, Reformism, Social-Democracy. "Are these definitions correct?" to quote Com. Vidal again, "Yes and No" replies Vidal, but we add: more yes (and very much more yes) than no. I repeat, that the degree of strength of the leftward current, requires to transform the Social-Democratic party into a centrist one was not there and the "label" still truly describes the nature of the party: Social-Democratic.

But the Vidalists have not ^{only} undertaken ~~the~~ hard (but worthy for revolutionaries I suppose) job of reforming the Social-Democratic party of France, but reforming it without criticism.

If there is a person who is hindering the united front (as far as the S.P. is concerned) who is reducing it into feeble peaceful meetings, which must inevitably lead to defeat, it is Blum the most cunning, rotten, reformist swine, who was "forced" to accept the Bolshevik-Leninists into the S.F.I.O. And it is to precisely to this professional betrayer of the working class, that the Vidalists have capitulated by accepting not to criticise him. In the article already mentioned Vidal says: "The Socialist Party can take a leading part in the mass fighting united front only in the event that it sets the task clearly and purges its ranks of the Right wing and masked opponents of revolutionary struggle" (my emphasis) What does this emphasised part mean? This is how the Bolsheviks "criticise" Blum! Here Vidal mentions clearly the Right wing. And who else? "Masked opponents of revolutionary struggle". Here when it comes to naming the others, Vidal suddenly betakes himself on the magic carpet of the Arabian Nights arrives at a strange country where all the opponents of revolutionary struggle are wearing "masks" and because of that you cannot name them. The workers in the S.P. you see, have a Right wing and then also an anonymous enemy who is disguised under a mask of revolutionary phraseology a "masked opponent of revolutionary struggle" who is destined to remain masked anonymous, as far as the Bolsheviks in the SFIO. are concerned, and not exposed before the workers, because when you tear down his mask, whom will you find if not our old friend Blum in all his glory, before whom the Vidalists have capitulated as the price for their entry into the SFIO. This is how we follow our principle of "state what is"! Can you win the workers by such methods of "criticism"? Certainly not. To use Vidal's own phrase "The problem is not one that can be solved by any diplomatic turn of the phrase"... as Vidal believes.

Do you want more proof? The No. 223 of La Verite published an attack on Blum, because Blum praised in the Chamber his "dear friend" M. Baerhou who was at that time assassinated. But the National Committee of the SFIO called in our Bolsheviks to the meeting and told them if they wanted to remain in the SFIO they must stop this issue. And the Vidalists, who have entered the SFIO "Without renouncing its past and its ideas"... whilst saying what is" have stopped the issue of La Verite.

Do you want still more proof? The Militant of November 10th 1934 reprinted an article from La Verite dealing with the fall of the Doumerge government. In it the writer (P. Franck who is the present leader of the Vidalists. I met him in Paris and I will write you about him and all the other comrades I met at another date) attacks on the one hand Frossard, the leader of the Right wing, for his attitude that there is no possibility to beat back the reactionary bands by the forces of the working class alone and that therefore the S.P. must enter the government; on the other hand he attacked Marceau Pivert the leader of the Left wing

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