

# International Gramsci Journal

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Volume 1  
Issue 3 *International Gramsci Journal*

Article 5

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2011

## The articles by Gramsci published in English in International Press Correspondence

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### Recommended Citation

Boothman, Derek and Gramsci, Antonio, The articles by Gramsci published in English in International Press Correspondence, *International Gramsci Journal*, 1(3), 2011, 23-36.  
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## The articles by Gramsci published in English in International Press Correspondence

### Abstract

The articles included here represent most of what Gramsci published in the Comintern journal International Press Correspondence, under his own name or one of his pseudonyms of the period, G. (sometimes Giovanni) Masci. 1 In much of this period Inprecorr was coming out more or less twice a week, with articles from all parts of the world, including from Russia, with articles written by the various Party and Union leaders. Even during the period of great polemics which basically started just before Lenin's death and carried on over the whole of this period, the Inprecorr in its various languages of publication, carried articles giving all points of view written by all the participants in the controversies. This was true both of the Russian communists, so the Trotsky controversy was given full airing from both sides, and of those involved in other debates outside Russia. In Italy, for example, it was not only the extreme left of Amadeo Bordiga that was present in the Party, and that found space in the pages of Inprecorr, but also the right of Angelo Tasca – one of the Turin Ordine Nuovo group and, up to near the end of Gramsci's stay in Moscow, one who had the ear of the Comintern leadership. And another on the right was Antonio Graziadei, an economist judged to hold a "revisionist" stance, whose views were expressed fully both in Inprecorr and in book International Press Correspondence came out regularly in Russian, French, German and English (with the abbreviation Inprecorr), and sometimes, it seems, also in a Spanish edition. The period of the articles published here ranges from 1922, up through Gramsci's half-year stay in Vienna (December 1923 to May 1924), and on to the last period when, after his election as a parliamentary deputy, he was able to return to Italy on the basis of parliamentary immunity. With his new status as a deputy he could in theory evade the warrant that had been put out for his arrest in February 1923.

## The articles by Gramsci published in English in *International Press Correspondence*

Introduced by Derek Boothman

The articles included here represent most of what Gramsci published in the Comintern journal *International Press Correspondence*, under his own name or one of his pseudonyms of the period, G. (sometimes Giovanni) Masci.<sup>1</sup> *International Press Correspondence* came out regularly in Russian, French, German and English (with the abbreviation *Inprecorr*), and sometimes, it seems, also in a Spanish edition. The period of the articles published here ranges from 1922, up through Gramsci's half-year stay in Vienna (December 1923 to May 1924), and on to the last period when, after his election as a parliamentary deputy, he was able to return to Italy on the basis of parliamentary immunity. With his new status as a deputy he could in theory evade the warrant that had been put out for his arrest in February 1923.

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<sup>1</sup> This pseudonym is seen here, for example, in the list of contributors on the title page of the 4 January 1924 issue, but not the article itself, where his name is wrongly given as "J. Masci".

form (referred to by Gramsci in the last of the pieces here) and rebutted by other, non-Italian Marxist economists, again in *Inprecorr*.

The pages of the journal with Gramsci's articles have been scanned into a computer and adjusted to give an image which is a close approximation to but, for various reasons, not absolutely exact image of the original page; parts of other articles on the same pages as those of Gramsci, have here been deleted. Taking his articles in order, the first – published in *Inprecorr*, it seems, on 19 April 1922 – deals with the Genoa conference that tried to introduce some order into the capitalist economies and establish, through the Soviet foreign minister Chicherin, a relationship with the young Soviet Union. In this article, as in the later one on “Italy and Yugoslavia”, there is a mention of “Fiume”, the city known in most places outside Italy as “Rijeka” (both words meaning “river”) and situated along the Dalmatian coast in current day Croatia. Soon after writing this article on the Genoa Conference, at the end of May Gramsci left for Moscow, arriving there on 3 June 1922, and very shortly afterwards was admitted to a sanatorium at Serebryanyi Bor (Silver Wood), now a suburb of Moscow but then somewhat outside the city, with what turned out to be a total nervous breakdown. This meant he was out of circulation for most things except for very urgent party business, usually meaning letters drafted by another comrade and co-signed by him, until the autumn of that year, when he was well enough to attend the IV Congress of the Comintern (5 November–5 December 1922). In this period in the sanatorium one of the other patients was Evgeniya Schucht, a communist whose Party membership had been sponsored by Lenin, a long-standing family friend, and through Evgeniya, he met her sister Jul'ka who became Gramsci's wife and mother of his two children; another sister, Tatiana, was to become his main physical and psychological support in prison.

Gramsci came back into circulation just in time for the IV Congress, and was well enough to write the article published in *Inprecorr* as “The Mussolini Government”. This however does not get quite as far as the title suggests, stopping instead at the discussion of the previous, and last, non-fascist government for the next two decades, that of Luigi Facta. Giovanni Giolitti was, as usual in that period, the dominant figure behind the scenes attempting – but not very successfully – to control the course of events, and he is here the main target of Gramsci's criticisms

of the “liberal” forces. The article breaks off rather suddenly before arriving at the point of the formation of the Mussolini Government announced in the title. It may be that this is indeed the end of the article, but it may also be for example that a page went missing from the article consigned by Gramsci to the editors of *Inprecorr*. Certainly the French version of the article in *La Correspondance Internationale*, on which Quentin Hoare's translation was based (*Selections from Political Writings (1921-1926)*, Lawrence and Wishart: London, 1978: 129-31) breaks off at the same point before getting to the formation of the Mussolini government after the March on Rome in October 1922 and the King's nomination of Mussolini as prime minister on 31 October 1922. The text of the article printed in the English language edition of *Inprecorr*, and translated at the time from Gramsci's Italian, naturally is different in its wording but not its meaning, from the Hoare translation. Here as elsewhere, the translation, or perhaps the type-setting, shows signs of being rather hurried and there are more mistakes than usual in typing, or in the transliteration of names, the correct forms being “Giolitti”, “Turati” and “Fasci di Combattimento”.

The “Letter from Italy” printed in the opening number (3 January 1924) of Volume 4 of *Inprecorr* which bears the by-line “G. Masci (Rome)”, maybe in order to confuse the fascist secret police, but modern readers should not be confused since, first, this is indeed Gramsci and, second, he was in Vienna. The article is of interest perhaps most of all for its attempt to sketch out a class analysis of the social power base of fascism, though marred by an temporary over-optimism about the supposed short-lived nature of fascist trade unionism. One can probably get as good a description of the challenge made to these unions by the communist forces on the left, since in its very first period fascism, or parts of it, did certainly find itself in a rather rocky position.

Almost immediately after this “Letter from Italy” we find another article, this time on the Yugoslav question, which he had been following, and on which there is a very interesting and important letter, to be published in the forthcoming edition of his pre-prison letters. Gramsci's stay in Moscow had in fact been prolonged slightly, to the beginning of December 1923, i.e. beyond what had been foreseen, to allow him to attend the Comintern conference on the Balkans. And in the fourth number of *Inprecorr* (24 January) of 1924, there is an article of his headed

“Italy and Yugoslavia”. Then, while still in Vienna partially directing Italian Party operations from relatively close to Italy and hoping to be able to return there, *Inprecorr* published another article of his, this time about the elections held at the start of April 1924. Again the by-line “G. Masci (Rome)” should not deceive. This article was written and published only a few days after the elections and it is apparent from what he writes that not all the results had been confirmed, since the list formed by the Communist Party and allies actually obtained two more seats (nineteen) than he here seems to think (seventeen). The maximalists obtained 22 deputies, as said in the article, and the reformists 24. Amendola’s list in the South got seven deputies and the “constitutional opposition” as a whole 14 (see Paolo Spriano, *Storia del Partito Comunista Italiano, Vol. 1: Da Bordiga a Gramsci*, Einaudi, Turin, 1967: 340). In the case of this article more than in others, however, the binding of the journal is so tight that some words and figures in the margin are difficult and even impossible to decipher. Where possible we have filled in the incomplete words with additions in square brackets.

As we know Gramsci was elected as a parliamentary deputy at the April elections. And later that year, in August 1924, after a hard-fought battle in the Italian Party, the new Central Committee that emerged after the V Congress of the Comintern, nominated him General Secretary.<sup>2</sup> It is then not surprising that the chronologically last article published here is of a rather different nature from the 1922 to 1924 ones. It is in fact a report to the Italian Party Central Committee and in effect begins to sketch out the line that was to form at least one of the main planks of the platform approved by the III Congress of the Party, held illegally in the French city of Lyon the following January. Here the copy of the *Inprecorr* article is good, key names and terms are highlighted in bold type; any imperfection (e.g. “cation” for “caution” are due to the typing or typesetting of the original). Gramsci’s theses (political report) to the III Italian Party Congress and his assessment of the Congress itself are available in English in the Hoare volume referred to above, but preparation of an English version of the entire set of the five theses of the majority, representing Gramsci’s full position at that time, is underway in a volume to be edited, annotated and introduced by Adam David Morton and the current author, *A Grand and Terrible World*:

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<sup>2</sup> These events will be reconstructed in the English pre-prison letters volume, where newly found documentary evidence will also be provided about his assumption of the general secretaryship.

*Gramsci's Pre-prison Letters*. In the summer of 1925, however, we see Gramsci at work on the so-called “Bolshevization” of the Party, but a Bolshevization that for him meant collaboration of everyone, irrespective of their particular political position, in the leadership of the Party, with all contributing to the formation of policy and then being bound by a collectively arrived at decision. Indeed he expresses the hope in this article that “we”, meaning the Party majority “shall arrive at an understanding with Bordiga”, who had, together with Bukharin, been offered joint vice-presidency of the International, but turned it down. This view of Gramsci's of what constituted Bolshevization and the relation between majorities and minorities was, in the international communist movement, more observed in the breach than in the observance and leads on to the disagreement he expressed with the Russian Party the year afterwards, but that issue will be dealt with afresh in the forthcoming volume.

The English-language articles presented in this number of the *IGJ* are based on microfiche and paper copies of *Inprecorr* consulted mainly at the Marx Memorial Library and at the European University Institute in Fiesole, just outside Florence in central Italy, and the author wishes to thank the librarians and staff of both places. Pretty well all collections of *Inprecorr* seem incomplete, with numbers missing, so there is certainly at least one other article on “The Vatican and Italy” printed at the time in an English translation which up to now has “escaped”. This is one that is available in other languages, including a retranslation into Italian, a process which is also the case with other articles here that one can see in an Italian version. The translation process leads of course to inaccuracies, whether translation was done at the time or decades later. A note of caution should therefore be introduced when one reads the articles here. And a further note of caution should be added since, in the absence of the originals in Italian, and knowing the editorial practices of many journals – including *Inprecorr* – some changes from Gramsci's originals might have been introduced. It is known that yet another article by Gramsci appeared in another Comintern journal in the first half of the 1920s, dealing with the situation in the “red two years” in Turin. Republication of this, the longest article that he wrote before the famous essay on the Southern question, is being delayed in the hope of being able to compare it with the original handwritten manuscript, which has

only just come to light as a result of archival research by the present author, by Adam David Morton and by Emilia Kosterina.

The translation service at the Comintern was exceptionally advanced for its time, and indeed in the Archives one sees notes asking, for example, for documents to be translated at great speed so that the Comintern leadership had a reliable version in their hands within a couple of days. The translators were obviously working under great pressure and with great efficiency. What one does notice however is often a somewhat stilted nature to the translation itself, with literal reproductions of the style, wording and at times grammatical structures of the original language, understandable given the situation in which the translators were working. We have not changed these aspects of the translated articles, nor the typing or type-setting mistakes as regards spelling and punctuation.

We should here like to thank Daniele Negretti for invaluable help in producing as good a copy as could be hoped for with present computer technology; without his help this contribution to the *IGJ* would indeed have been far more laborious.

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The articles are presented below in chronological order. Approximate dates are given where possible:

- The Genoa Conference and Italy, *Inprecorr* Vol. 2, No. 28, p. 211, (19 April 1922).
- The Mussolini government, *Inprecorr* Vol. 3, No. 102, p. 824.
- Fascism: Letter from Italy, *Inprecorr* Vol. 4, No. 1. (3 January 1924).
- Italy and Yugoslavia, *Inprecorr* Vol. 4, No. 4, pp. 25-26. (24 January 1924).
- Election Results in Italy, *Inprecorr* Vol. 4, No. 25, p. 231.
- The situation in the Communist party of Italy, *Inprecorr* Vol. 5, No. 60, pp. 835-6.



lations with Russia. This led him to take the initiative in Cannes for the convocation of the Genoa Conference.

The foreign policy of Benito Mussolini, the leader of the Fascists is in complete agreement with that of Nitti, the representative of Big Business and high finance. These circles are interested in the coal district on the Black Sea. This explains why they display a very sympathetic attitude towards an international financial consortium for the capitalistic exploitation of Soviet Russia's resources. They thus hope at the same time to do good business and to obtain their own sphere of influence on the Black Sea.

All the vacillations of Italian foreign policy are caused by the intensification of the class war and the consequent disintegration of the social forces. It is thus necessary to give an exposition of the Italian situation in order to illuminate the reactions in foreign policy which are therewith connected.

The trend to the left of the People's Party and the fact that several of its most prominent leaders, such as Deputy Meda, have expressed themselves in favor of this new political tendency have led to a split within the military caste, a large number of whose members are Catholics.

However, for the great majority of these groups the Conference has only this significance: the reintroduction of Germany into European economy. That also explains why circles are now supporting the Genoa Conference, who at first bitterly fought it and even employed it as a pretext for the overthrow of the Bonomi Cabinet. Among these latter the most prominent are the supporters of Gioiotti, the Fascists and the Nationalists.

## The Genoa Conference and Italy.

by Antonio Gramsci (Turin).

\*\*One problem dominates Italian foreign policy: the establishment of Italian supremacy in the Adriatic and the annexation of Fiume and Dalmatia to Italy. The question now arises: What is the attitude of Germany and Russia to this foreign policy?

Before the war Yugoslavia was predominantly influenced by powerful Russia. Even to-day its existence is very closely connected with the fate of Russia, of course not so very much in connection with the form of government of the latter, i. e., not whether Russia has a feudal, bourgeois or proletarian government, but rather because it is the natural ally of the Slavic population in the Balkans. When Russia is weak, Yugoslavia is weak and this weakness permits Italy to extend its imperialism to the Balkans. This is furthermore the form of nationalistic propaganda in Italy, which at the same time is the immediate expression of the policy of the agrarian large landowners and the military caste.

Russia is a most serious competitor of Italian agriculture. Before the war Italy imported 1,600,000 tons of grain from Russia, and the great land owners were protected by the state by the imposition of an import duty to the extent of 3.75 lire per hundredweight. It is thus very natural that an impoverished, ruined Russia is in their eyes much more desirable than an economically efficient Russia which would be able to export its grain surplus.

In Italy the industrial workers are only-third of the entire working class. The other two-thirds are agricultural workers or peasants. Even the Italian Socialist Party was at the beginning more a peasants' than a workers' party. This also in part explains its divergences from a proletarian standpoint and its vacillating policy. The new attitude of the People's Party, the party of the Catholic peasants, has thus also obtained very great importance for Parliamentary politics as well as for Italian foreign policy.

As the civil war, which the large landowners deliberately commenced in order to carry on a large-scale offensive against the Catholic peasantry, spread and grew in intensity, the People's Party turned more and more to the left and the reaction of this changer in its attitude was very soon evident in Italian foreign policy. Premier Bonomi, who was in very large degree influenced by the People's Party, changed his attitude towards Russia and showed a certain inclination towards the reestablishment of re-

Italian General Staff, came into force precisely on August 2nd 1914. This general committed suicide during the period of Italian neutrality. As soon as the Crown began to favor the new pro-Entente policy, Giolitti was forcibly put aside by the new leading groups, the representatives of the heavy industry, the big agrarians and of the General Staff, which even went so far as to conspire to assassinate him.

The new political forces, which made their appearance after the armistice, had already consolidated themselves during the war. The peasants formed themselves into three powerful organizations—the Socialist Party, the People's Party (Catholic) and the ex-soldiers' associations. The Socialist Party organized more than a million agricultural laborers and small farmers in Central and Northern Italy. The people's party grouped around itself as many small landed proprietors and middle peasants in the same districts. The ex-soldiers' associations established themselves especially in southern Italy in the more backward regions which had no political traditions. The struggle against the big landowners soon grew in intensity throughout Italy. The estates were invaded and the landowners were compelled to emigrate to the chief towns of the agrarian districts—Bologna, Florence, Bari, Naples. Since 1919 they began to organize their citizens' battalions in order to struggle against the "tyranny of the peasants" in the rural districts. What was needed most in this great upheaval of the rural working classes was a clear and precise watchword, a uniform, firm and determined policy and a concrete political program.

The Socialist Party should have dominated the situation, but the People's Party outstripped it. Sixty per cent of the membership of the Socialist Party were peasants. Of the 156 socialist members of parliament, 110 were elected by the rural districts. Four-fifths of the co-operatives with socialist management were agricultural co-operatives. The Socialist Party reflected the chaos reigning in the minds of the rural population in connection with the program and ideology of the party. Its activity consisted in nothing but maximalist declamations, noisy declarations in parliament and a flourish of trumpets. All the attempts from within the Socialist Party to make working class questions and proletarian ideology predominate, were combatted by the most dishonest means. Thus during the session of the National Socialist Council, held in Milan in April 1920, Serrati went so far as to say that the general strike which had broken out at that period in Piedmont and which was supported by all the workers, had been artificially stimulated by irresponsible agents of the Moscow government.

In March 1920, the possessing classes began to organize the counter-offensive. On March 7th, the first national conference of Italian manufacturers was convened in Milan which established the General Confederation of Italian Industries. During this Conference a precise and complete plan of united capitalist action was elaborated, in which everything was foreseen, from the disciplined and methodical organization of the manufacturing and commercial class down to the minute study of all the means and weapons of struggle against the workers' trade unions, and even down to the political rehabilitation of Giovanni Giolitti.

In the beginning of April, the new organization already obtained its first political success: the Socialist Party condemned, as anarchical and irresponsible, the great Piedmont strike in defence of the workshop committees and for the workers' control of industry. This party threatened to dissolve the Turin Section which has conducted the strike. On June 15th, Giovanni Giolitti formed his Cabinet by compromising with the agrarians and the General Staff, represented by Bonomi, Minister of War. There then began a feverish counter-revolutionary organizational work owing to the fear of the seizure of the workshops and factories by the workers, which was even expected by the reformist leaders who met at the conference of the Federation of Metal Workers which was held in Genoa in June of last year. In July, the Ministry for War, headed by Bonomi began to demobilize about 60 000 officers in the following manner: the officers were demobilized, retaining  $\frac{2}{3}$  of their pay. Most of them were sent to the most important political centres with the understanding that they would join the "Fascisti di Combattimento". Hitherto the latter had been a small organization of socialist, anarchist, syndicalist and republican elements favouring the participation of Italy in the war on the side of the Entente. The Giolitti government made enormous efforts to bring about a rapprochement between the Confederation of Industries and the Agrarian Associations, especially in Central and Northern Italy. It is at this period that the first armed Fascist detachments made their appearance, and that the first terrorist acts were committed. The seizure of the factories by the metal workers took place at a time when all this work was only in its preparatory stage. The Giolitti government was compelled to adopt a conciliatory attitude and to have recourse to homeopathic treatment rather than to surgical operations.

## The Mussolini Government

By Gramsci.

The factors of the Italian crisis, which was lately settled in a rather violent manner by the Fascist Party assuming power, may be briefly summed up as follows.

The Italian bourgeoisie has succeeded in organizing its State not so much by its own intrinsic strength, as by the fact that its victory over the feudal and semi-feudal classes was favored by a series of circumstances of an international character (the policy of Napoleon III in 1852—1860, the Austro-Prussian War in 1866, the French defeat at Sedan, and the subsequent development of the German Empire). Thus the Italian bourgeois State developed differently and more slowly than many others. The Italian regime was purely constitutional. On the eve of the war the division of power had not yet taken place, the parliamentary prerogatives were very limited and there were no great political parliamentary parties. At that time the Italian bourgeoisie had to defend the unity and integrity of the State against the repeated attacks of the reactionary forces, which were chiefly represented by an alliance of the great landowners with the Vatican. The big industrial and commercial bourgeoisie, led by Giolitti, endeavoured to meet the situation by an alliance between all the urban classes, with the class of the agricultural laborers (the first proposal of collaboration with the government was made to Turati in the early part of the century.) This could not however be termed a step forward in the development of the constitutional State towards parliamentary democracy. This was rather in the nature of urgent concessions made by a paternal government to the working masses organized in trade unions and agricultural co-operatives.

The world war destroyed all these attempts. Giolitti, in agreement with the Crown, had pledged himself in 1912 to act in conjunction with Germany in the 1914 war (the military convention signed in Berlin in 1912 by General Pollio, chief of the

## FASCISM

### Letter from Italy.

By G. Masci (Rome).

At the Conference held on the 19<sup>th</sup> December under the direct auspices and in the presence of the Prime Minister Mussolini, between the leaders of Italian industry and the principal leaders of the Fascist Trade Unions, the complete failure of the program and the practice of Fascism in the spheres of Trade Unionism had to be recognized.

The feverish attempts made by Fascism, before and after having obtained power, in order to create a trade union movement which would be at its service, are well known. It is also known, how these attempts, while succeeding to a rather considerable degree in the agrarian field, have failed almost completely in the industrial sphere. It was easy for the Fascists, in view of the life and working conditions of the poor peasants, and of the rural workers dispersed in a great number of villages with feeble ties between the Trade Unions, to destroy the Socialist organizations of the land workers and to force the rural masses by means of physical terror and of the economic boycott, to enter into their corporations. It was otherwise in the industrial sphere, except with the railway employees, amongst whom much can be obtained by state coercion and by the ever threatening menace of discharge, and also with the dockers who had already their strictly guild-like organization determined by the conditions in the traffic at the Italian ports which is developing very spasmodically, in relation to the preponderance of exports and imports and to the seasonal activities for grain, coals and coffee.

In the large industrial towns, the Fascists only succeeded in gathering inconsiderable groups, consisting nearly everywhere of unemployed and of criminal elements, who, by means of the Fascist party ticket obtain impunity for sabotage, theft in workshops and personal violence against foremen. And yet it was necessary for Fascist politics to win the masses at any price.

The Fascist Government can only maintain power for any time so far as it renders life impossible to other organizations which are not Fascist. Mussolini bases his power on large strata of the petty bourgeoisie, which (since they have no function in the productive life and hence do not feel the antagonisms and the contradictions resulting from it), in fact believe the class struggle to be a diabolical invention of the socialists and communists. The entire so-called hierarchic conception of Fascism is dependent upon that fact. It is indispensable for this conception that no independent organization of a typical class character exist and that the modern social life be organized in a series of petty corporations subject to and controlled by the Fascist elite, being the concentrated expression of all the prejudices and utopian visions of the petty bourgeoisie. Hence the necessity for Integral Trade Unionism, which is a revised conception of the Christian democratic Trade Unionism, substituting the defunct nation for the religious idea.

This program was resolutely opposed by the industrialists, who refused to enter the Fascist corporations, viz. to allow themselves to be controlled by Rossoni and his like. The Fascists, some months ago, in face of the repulses by the industrialists, began a demagogic fight, which went so far as to their announcing and propagating in great style a general strike of the metallurgical and textile workers. The campaign against the industrialists culminated immediately after the visit paid by Mussolini to the Fiat works of Turin on the anniversary of the Fascist "March on Rome". The workers of the Fiat, six or seven thousand of whom had been gathered in the courtyard of the factory in order to hear a speech by Mussolini, received the leader of the Fascists in a hostile manner. The Fascists accused the Turin industrialists of having fostered the anti-Fascist spirit of the masses, of preferring to treat with reformist organizations instead of with Fascist ones, of discharging from the Works the Fascist workers, thus preventing the development of the Corporations and so on; they went so far as to attack personally in a coffee-house the chief of the Fiat, Senator Giovanni Agnelli. The situation became very serious for the industrialists as well as for the Government. The Communist Trade Unions Committee intervened in the agitation, inviting the working masses to take part in the struggle against the industrialists in order to enlarge the movement, even though the struggle had been engaged in by the Fascists. The agitation was stifled by the central leaders of

the Fascists, and the Conference held on the 19th of December was convened. In the speech Mussolini delivered there, he recognized, that it is impossible to organize worker and industrialists in one and the same trade union. Integral Trade Unionism, according to Mussolini may be applied, only in the sphere of agrarian production. The Fascists have to respect the organizational independence of the industrialists and have to work only in order to avoid the outbreak of class conflicts. The meaning of these words is clear. The Fascists abandon even the keeping up of the appearance, not only of a struggle against the industrialists, but also of any attempt to equilibrate, under their arbitrary control, the interests of the classes and they have only the confessed task of organizing the workers in order to surrender them to the capitalists bound hand and foot. This is the beginning of the end of the Fascist Trade Unionism. Immediately after the Conference, many land owners protested loudly against the discriminating treatment shown by Fascism to industry and to agriculture. They denounced the violence which they said the Fascist Trade Union Organizers exercised to the detriment of the owners' interests, by compelling them to respect labour contracts which of course they declare to be absurd and opposed to the interests of the nation, and they claim to be allowed to reconstitute the General Confederation of Agriculture which had been absorbed by the Fascist corporations. At Parma the agrarians have placed themselves in direct opposition to Fascism provoking a whole series of incidents and conflicts. At Reggio Emilia, the deputy Cerrini, former Under-Secretary of State to the Government of Mussolini, has been expelled from the Fasci and leads a raging campaign in favour of the organizational independence of the land owners.

It is to be remarked how great a success was obtained by the tactics applied by our Party, in order to unmask before the masses the Fascist Trade Unions Leaders who had raised such a hub hub against the industrialists. It is true, these tactics procured to the Fascists the satisfaction of having meetings attended by many thousands of workers, but they led also to forcing the Fascists to the wall, to causing them to cut their words and to discrediting them even in the eyes of the most backward portion of the working masses. If these tactics were generalized and also extended to the agrarian field, it would be possible to accelerate in a high degree the disintegration of Fascism and hence the reorganization of the revolutionary forces. But against this there are the reformist socialists as well as the maximalist socialists who still have control over the Trade Union Centrals and of the only periodicals of a proletarian character till published in Italy. Thus they demonstrate yet once more that they do not really intend to fight against Fascism. It is true, they risk much if they want to attack Fascism in order to contend with it, within its own Trade Unions or in the agitations sometimes got up by it, for control and leadership of the masses entering the movement. On the other hand, it is certain that large strata, not only of rural workers, but also of factory workers who have no other chance of fighting against the bourgeoisie are drawn to these agitations by the Fascist demagoguery, hoping thus to wring something from their employers. The intransigence shown by the reformist and maximalist gentry, is in fact no intransigence against Fascism, but against the poorest and most backward portion of the workers. Moreover, it is never true to itself and makes many concessions to the Fascist who are governing.

English Edition.

Unpublished Manuscripts - Please reprint

## - INTERNATIONAL -

Vol. 4 No. 4

PRESS

24<sup>th</sup> January 1924

## CORRESPONDENCE

Editorial Offices: Langegasse 26/12, Vienna VIII — Central Despatching Department: Berggasse 31, Vienna IX  
— Postal Address, to which all remittances should be sent by registered mail: Postamt 64, Schlessfach 29, Vienna VIII  
— Telegraphic Address: Inprecorr, Vienna.

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Ehrenfried Wagner: The Suffering of the  
Children of the German Barricade Fighters

#### In the Colonies

J. B.: Autocracy in Palestine.

### POLITICS

#### Italy and Yugoslavia.

By G. Masci (Rome).

The conclusion of the agreement between Italy and Yugoslavia, which liquidates the question of Fiume and opens up a new period in the history of the relations between both countries, has its origin particularly in the following three series of facts:

1. The approaching commencement of the election campaign in Italy. The Fascist government wants to deprive the constitutional opposition of one of the most important causes of its success and of its development among the bourgeoisie: the complete failure of the Fascist foreign policy, which had isolated Italy in Europe.

2. The coming to power in Greece of the government of Venizelos. The government of Mussolini had to convince itself, that it could not do two jobs at the same time. Venizelos is the politician who, since the discussion of Versailles up to the present time, has contributed most of all to thwart and to destroy the expansionist plans of Italian imperialism. In the conflict with Yugoslavia, Italy was hampered by the treaties; in the conflict with Greece, however, the treaties are in favour of Italy, and in the agreement recently concluded, it is directly affirmed, that Italy and Yugoslavia pledge themselves to maintain the "Status quo" established by the treaties. Closely connected with this is the policy of France towards the Little Entente, which would have become an immediate danger for Italy, if the conflict for Fiume had become intensified, as seemed probable until very recent time.

3. The new plan of foreign policy, which until 1922 had been a personal one of Mussolini's, now becomes the official government policy. With this plan are connected the agreement between Italy and Spain; the policy of approachment to the Soviet-Union; the conflict between Italy, feebly aided by Spain, on the one hand and England and France on the other, regarding the Tangier question. A prelude to all this had been the Italo-Greek conflict and the landing of Italian troops at Corfu,

a measure which was in no way warranted by the murder of General Tellini, but was probably only part of a larger concerted plan.

It has always been the personal conviction of Mussolini (and in this Mussolini approached more to the policy of the "Corriere della Sera", of the "Stampa" and the adherents of Nitti, than to great majority of the Fascists, and in particular of the nationalists who had subsequently entered the Fascist party), that Italy must not remain hypnotised regarding the question of Fiume and of Dalmatia, which rendered the creation of military security in the Adriatic impossible, but that she must obtain this security by means of concessions to Yugoslavia and must acquire the liberty of movement necessary for a large-scale action in the Mediterranean, especially in its eastern part.

The question of Dalmatia was already practically liquidated from the moment, when the triumph of the reactionary parties in Yugoslavia and the suppression of the peasants' movement assured the Italian proprietors of the Dalmatian great landed estates, that their rights were not to be curtailed in favour of the Croat peasants. In Dalmatia there prevails a state of affairs similar to that in the Baltic countries and in Galicia, i. e. a difference of nationality between the landowners who inhabit the towns, and the mass of peasants who cultivate the soil. In the first King's speech delivered at Belgrade after the return of the dynasty, it was announced that the Italian owners of the great landed estates of Dalmatia were to be expropriated, that the Croat peasants were to be freed from all feudal bonds and were to be granted portions of land. The situation has since entirely changed. Already in the last year the Italian troops evacuated the occupied zones of Dalmatia, and nothing of a disastrous nature for the owners has taken place. The newspaper campaign, fostered by the agrarians, has completely ceased, and the recent treaty has settled the question once for all.

The further development of the new Italian foreign policy will furnish an answer to the questions being raised at present by a portion of the press: Is the Italian-Yugoslavian agreement directed more against France than against England? An objective examination of the situation and an acquaintance with the opinions expressed by Mussolini during his career as a

fascist journalist, justifies us in predicting that, substantially, Italian foreign policy will become more anti-English though preserving the appearance of the character of impartiality between France and England. The fact must not be overlooked, that the Fascist Party, as a petty bourgeois nationalist mass, exerts a continual pressure on the government. The Fascisti would like to initiate a direct policy of complete independence from the hegemonic Powers which are at present contending against one another for world dominion. But it is clear that the economic weakness of Italy compels a compromise between the making of mere affirmations for the purpose of internal propaganda on the one hand and the real policy on the other. And therefore the adventurous and bluffing character of Fascist foreign policy still continues.

## POLITICS

### The Results of the Elections in Italy.

#### A First Impression.

By G. Masci (Rome).

All parties declare themselves satisfied with the results of the elections, because all parties up to the eve of the poll had [had] no criterion, not even an approximative one, wherewith to make forecasts, and all of them felt themselves to be crushed by the Fascist terror. This statement typifies the essential feature of the Italian situation which is characterized by the disorganization of the masses, by the impossibility of holding meetings and by the feeble circulation of the papers openly in opposition to Fascism. The first results known up to now (the definite results, owing to the complication of the election law, will only be known by the 14th or 15th April) permit us to draw some very important conclusions which are indispensable for understanding the general orientation of the future political struggle in Italy:

1. The constitutional opposition (Amendola, Bonomi) has known that it has behind it a rapidly disappearing minority of the public opinion. In Italy, even among large strata of the working class, the legend had arisen that the bourgeoisie itself, through its progressive and radical wing, would carry out an "anti-fascist revolution"; the elections have destroyed this legend, [thus] putting before the Turati Reformists in a decisive and emphatic manner the question of abandoning the old political theme of the block with the bourgeois left in favour of the workers' and peasants' block.

2. The working class has revealed resistive forces exceeding [all] expectations. At Milan, the combined votes of the three parties Communist, Maximalist and Reformist, have, in 1924, passed those which the Socialist Party polled in 1919, i.e. in the period of the highest revolutionary development: the [\*\*\*] 000 votes in 1919 have grown to 66,000 in 1924. The working class has proved in a magnificent manner its historical function [as] champion in this sphere of opposition to Fascism; the results [of] the elections declare that against Fascism no other opposition [is] possible than revolutionary opposition. The Communist Party [is] the sole workers' party which has scored an electoral success: [it] had thirteen deputies in the last legislature, and it now has [seventeen]. The Reformists have sunk from 83 deputies to [24]; the Maximalists from 46 to 22. In the industrial towns (except [Milan] the Communist Party has polled more votes than the maximalists, in some towns, especially in the South of Italy, it [has] polled more votes than the Maximalists and Reformists together. The indication is a clear one: the revolutionary proletariat is reorganizing itself around the Communist Party and abandoning the Maximalist Party which has the majority of its sympathisers among the rural wage-earners.

3. The peasant mass has been disintegrated by Fascism. [It] has in a large part forsaken the banner of the Party of the

Popolari and has formed a whole series of local political groupings which presented themselves at the elections as opposition parties; the Popolari Party from 106 seats has sunk to 39.

The electoral law, supported by the state apparatus and by the Fascist organization, has manufactured a large majority for the government of Mussolini: 4,264,454 votes for the "National list" and 39,080 votes for the Fascist minority list B., with the total of 374 seats out of 535 of which, however, only 260 are officially members of the Fascist Party. To what extent these figures reflect the real state of mind of the population can be judged by the following fact: in all towns with over 75,000 inhabitants (except Bologna), the Nationalist is in an unquestioned minority, as compared with the combined votes of the opposition. The smaller the centers and the more the Fascist pressure is able to control the votes of the individual citizens, the more the voting became plebiscites right up to 100% for the National list and for the list B.

In any case, Fascism has obtained a victory, and the Mussolini government has been strengthened by the elections both as regards at home and abroad, a fact which will have very notable consequences. The new Chamber will assume a true and proper character of a Fascist Constituent Assembly, this means, that it will legalise Fascism by reforming the National Constitution and by formally abolishing the democratic liberties which have ceased to exist in fact. It is therefore not improbable (already an allusion in this regard was contained in the program speech of Amendola) that the democratic opposition will raise the demand for new elections, in order to convoke a true and proper Constituent Assembly with the definite task of revising the Statutes, and by means of this slogan it will again seek to create a good basis for a Left Bloc.

The Communist Party which emerges politically strengthened from the elections, will therefore have a well defined task to fulfil: it must continue and intensify the campaign for the proletarian united front and for the workers' and peasants' government, to this end taking advantage of the parliamentary tribune. The peasants who have been shattered by the elections and who, in their great majority, have been compelled by means of terror to vote for Fascism, will realize more continually that from the present situation, the only way out is by revolutionary means. In the South of Italy, the Fascists have only by means of unheard of acts of violence succeeded in subordinating the peasants masses on the election day, throughout this whole area (which comprises one third of the territory of Italy) the Communist Party formerly had not even one deputy, and now it has three: one in Sicilia, one in Apulia and one in Campania. The economic situation of these populations is a terrible one: emigration has been rendered impossible by the American immigration laws, and the area of land under cultivation has for this harvest been decreased by the great land-owners. The Fascist terror can only for a short time prevent a wave of revolts, as took place in the decades from 1860—1870 and from 1890—1900. The tree Communists elected in the South therefore have historic significance which can surpass all expectations.



## The Situation in the Communist Party of Italy.

By Gramsci (Rome).

Comrade Gramsci recently gave a detailed report before the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Italy, on the inner situation in the Italian Party. We give below the most essential parts of this report. Ed.

The conditions under which the CP. of Italy has to fight, are extremely difficult. It has to fight on two fronts against the Fascist terror and against the reformist terror exercised by the trade unions of the *D'Aragona* type. The regime of terror has considerably weakened the powers of the Italian trade unions. The reformist leaders exploit (this state of affairs for their own ends, and undermining the action of the revolutionary minority in the trade unions. The masses are anxious for unity, and to carry on the fight within the "Confederazione Generale del Lavoro" (Federation of Free Trade Unions). The reformist leaders thus find themselves obliged, to oppose the organisation of the masses. At the last congress of the Trade Union Federation *D'Aragona* proclaimed that the number of members in the Trade Union Federation must not be permitted to exceed one million. This means that the leaders of the free trade unions only want 5.5% out of 15 million Italian workers to be organised. As adherents of the Social Democratic policy of joint action with the bourgeois parties, they do not want to organise the peasantry, since this would weaken the basis of the bourgeois democratic parties.

How is reformism to be combatted and yet a split in the trade union movement to be avoided? We see one possibility only: the **organisation of factory nuclei**. Since the reformists oppose the concentration of revolutionary forces, it is the task of the factory nuclei to gather all the factory workers around the Party, and to strengthen the "Inner Factory Committees" or, where these do not exist, to form Propaganda Committees. These last should be mass organisations adapted to developing the trade union movement, and to participating in the general struggles against capitalism and against the ruling regime.

In this respect the Italian communists are in a much more difficult position than the Russian Bolsheviks before the war, for they have to hold their own simultaneously against Fascist reaction and against reformist reaction. But the more difficult the situation, the firmer must be the establishment of the communist factory nuclei, both with regard to ideology and to organisation.

In these questions there is no disagreement in the standpoints held by the Communist Party of Italy and the Communist International. The Italian Commission of the Enlarged Executive was occupied solely and exclusively with the **inner** Bolshevisation of the Italian Communist Party.

Comrade **Bordiga**, who was called upon to take part in the work of the Enlarged Executive, has declined to do so, although he agreed, at the V. World Congress, to form one of the Executive of the Communist International. His attitude is the more regrettable that in the **Trotsky** question he adopted a standpoint not only acutely antagonistic to that of the Executive, but even antagonistic to that of **Trotsky** himself. It is to be regretted that comrade **Bordiga** would not take part in the discussion on the **Trotsky** question; if he had gone to Moscow for this purpose, he would have had the opportunity of hearing the views and proclamations of the Executive and the opinions of the Parties, and could at the same time have expressed his own views.

The Commission which should have discussed this question with comrade **Bordiga** has continued to pursue the policy which the Party must pursue if the Bolshevik idea is to be helped to victory. It has examined the general conditions ruling in the Communist Party of Italy with reference to the **five fundamental characteristics** demanded by **Lenin** of every really revolutionary Communist Party. These five points are as follows.

1. Every communist must be a Marxist. (Today we say, Marxist-Leninist.)
2. Every communist must take his place in the front ranks of proletarian action.
3. Every communist must abhor mere revolutionary phraseology, he must be at the same time a revolutionary and a real politician.

4. Every communist must submit his will to that of his Party, and judge everything from the standpoint of his Party. (He must be a truly disciplined member of the Party, in the highest sense of the word.)

5. Every communist must be an internationalist.

We may say that the CP. of Italy fulfils the second condition, but none of the other four.

The CP. of Italy lacks a thorough Marxist-Leninist teaching. In this lack we observe the remains of the traditions of the Socialist movement in Italy, which avoided those theoretical discussions which might have aroused the interest of the masses, and contributed to their ideological education. This state of affairs is extremely regrettable, and comrade **Bordiga** contributes to its continuance by confusing the tendency, peculiar to reformists, of substituting general "cultural work" for revolutionary political action, with the endeavours of the Communist Party to so raise the intellectual level of its members that they are able to grasp the immediate and distant goals of the revolutionary movement.

The Party has succeeded in developing a feeling for discipline in its ranks. But a lack of **international spirit** is still observable in its relations to the Communist International. The **Bordiga** group, which thinks to ennoble itself with the designation of "Italian Left" has created a sort of local patriotism inconsistent with the discipline of a world organisation. The situation created by comrade **Bordiga** is similar to that created by comrade **Serrati** after the II. Congress in Moscow, and that situation led to the expulsion of the Maximalists from the Communist International.

The greatest weakness of the Party lies however in its love for the revolutionary phrase so often stigmatised by **Lenin**. If this does not characterise **Bordiga** himself, it characterises the elements grouping themselves around him. The extremism of **Bordiga** is the result of the special conditions of life obtaining among the Italian working class. But the Italian working class forms only a minority of the working population. It is concentrated for the most part to one part of the country. Under these circumstances their Party falls easily under the influence of those middle strata who are capable to a certain extent of steering the workers into a course actually opposed to their interests. On the other hand the situation in the **Socialist Party** up to the time of the **Leghorn Congress** was calculated to develop **Bordiga's** ideology.

**Lenin**, in his "Infantile Diseases of 'Radicalism' in Communism", defines this situation in the following sentences:

"In a Party where there is a **Turati** and a **Serrati** who does not combat **Turati**, there must inevitably be a **Bordiga** as well."

But it is less naturally inevitable that comrade **Bordiga** should have preserved his ideology in our Communist Party. The struggle against opportunism has rendered **Bordiga** so pessimistic that he is sceptical as to the possibility of saving the proletariat and its Party from the intrusion of petty bourgeois ideology, except by the employment of extremely scottish tactics, which would however contradict the two leading principles of Bolshevism: The unification of the workers with the peasants, and the hegemony of the proletariat in the revolutionary movement.

Are there still other tendencies in the Communist Party of Italy? What is their nature, and what dangers do they represent? An examination into the inner situation in the Party convinces us that it has not yet attained that degree of revolutionary maturity characteristic of a really Bolshevik Party, and that it has not even succeeded as yet in amalgamating into a whole the various groups of which it is composed. The CP. of Italy has been formed out of three groups.

1. **Bordiga's** antiparliamentary fraction (fraction abstaining from voting).

2. The group of the "Ordine Nuovo" ("New Order") and of the "Avanti" ("Forward") in Turin.

3. The **Gennari-Marabini** group.

**Bordiga's** fraction was formed as national organisation before the **Leghorn Congress**, but it occupied itself solely with the inner life of the Socialist party, without possessing the political experience imperative for mass action.

The "**Ordine Nuovo**" group formed an actual fraction in the province of **Piedmont**. It developed its action among the masses, and showed itself capable of establishing a close connection between the inner problems of the Party and the demands of the Piedmontese proletariat.

The overwhelming majority of the members of the CP. of Italy are elements which remained in the Communist International after the Leghorn Congress, headed by numerous of the old leading comrades of the Socialist party: **Gennari, Marabini, Bombacci, Misiano, Salvatore, Graziadei etc.**

Without a full comprehension of the various elements composing the CP. of Italy it is impossible to understand either its crises or its present situation.

The situation was made worse last year by the affiliation of the "**Fraction of the III. International**" of the "**Maximalist Party**" to us. This "Fraction of the III. International" formerly carried on bitter personal and sectarian struggles within the Maximalist party, it deals with the fundamental questions of policy and organisation as being of secondary importance.

For instance there is a **Graziadei** question. We have to combat the deviations spread abroad in his last book. It would be wrong to assert that comrade Graziadei is a political danger, and that his revisionist conception of Marxism could generate an ideological current. But his reformism might contribute to strengthen the Right tendencies still concealed in the Party.

The affiliation of the "Fraction of the III. International", which has retained its Maximalist character to a great degree, might even afford the Right tendencies a certain organisatory basis.

It must be granted in general that a **Right** danger is probable in our Party. The masses, disappointed by the failures of the "constitutional opposition" (of the Socialists and bourgeois), have streamed into our Party and strengthened it, but not to the extent to which they have streamed to Fascism, which has succeeded in establishing itself. In this situation a Right wing might easily come into existence — if it does not exist already — which, despairing of being able to overthrow the Fascist regime rapidly enough, adopts a policy of passivity which would make it possible for the bourgeoisie to exploit the proletariat for anti-Fascist election manoeuvres. In any case, the Party must recognise that the Right danger is a probability, and must first meet this danger by ideological influence; later, if necessary, with the aid of disciplinary measures.

The **danger** from the **Right** is merely probable, whilst that from the **Left** is obvious. This Left danger forms an obstacle to the development of the Party. It must therefore be combatted by propaganda and by political action. The action taken by the "**Extrem Left**" threatens the unity of our organisation, for it strives to form a party within the Party, and to replace Party discipline by fraction discipline. We have not the slightest wish to break with comrade Bordiga and those who call themselves his friends. Nor do we seek to alter the fundamentals of the Party as created at the Leghorn Congress and confirmed at the Rome Congress. What we must demand is that our Party does not content itself with a mechanical affiliation to the Communist International, but actually appropriates the principles and discipline of the Comintern. But in actual fact 90 % of our Party members, if not more, have today no knowledge whatever of the methods of organisation upon which our relations to the International are based. We believe that we shall arrive at an understanding with Comrade **Bordiga**, and we trust that he believes this a well, and as desirous of it as we are.

The **CP. of Italy** will hold its **Conference** shortly. In the discussion preceding the Party Conference we shall have to deal with the present political situation and the tasks of the Party in Italy. Since the last parliamentary elections the CP. of Italy has been carrying on energetic political work, participated in by most of its members. Thanks to this work, the Party has tripled its membership. Our Party has shown much energy and realisation of actualities in preaching the problem of revolution in Italy as the problem of the alliance between the workers and the peasantry. In short, the CP. of Italy has become an important factor in the political life of the country.

In the course of the above mentioned work a certain unification of character, a **homogeneity** has been developed within the Party. This homogeneity, one of the most important results of our Bolshevisation, must be firmly and finally established by

our Party Conference. We shall discuss the international situation and the proportions of social forces in Italy, concentrating our efforts upon the two following points: The **development of our Party**, which must be such as to render the Party capable of leading the proletariat to victory (the problem of Bolshevisation); and the political **action** which must be carried on for the purpose of gathering together all anti-capitalist forces and establishing a workers' state. To this end it is necessary to study the conditions in Italy with the utmost exactitude, so that the revolutionary alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry may be established, and the hegemony of the proletariats thus secured.