

WORKERS
OF THE
WORLD.
UNITE

THE MILITANT



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The Wage-Cut Offensive

Towards Sharp Working Class Struggles of Resistance

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American capitalism is now embarking more definitely upon its long cherished aim of reducing the working class standard. It is seeking thereby to shift the burden of its economic difficulties further onto the backs of the workers. At the very inception of the present crisis the signal was given in the demand of the most powerful banking institutions for a lower cost of production—a demand growing in volume until now wage cuts follow all along the line.

No matter how great or how slender their prospects for revival, to the capitalist rulers there is hardly any doubt that the commencement must of necessity imply a measure of stabilization on a lower level than hitherto. A greatly contracted market and an enormous capacity of production makes that course compulsory. The lower level sought is first of all to be applied to the working class. While sought as a way out of the present crisis, it will not at all serve to diminish the contradictions of capitalism. On the contrary, it increases the antagonisms of present class relations.

The increasing class antagonisms can be expected to be expressed in sharpened struggles on a scale which has not yet been witnessed in the United States. As a first sign, there has already been a considerable increase in the number of strikes and conflicts during the first half of 1931 as compared to the six months previous.

Any actual beginnings of revival could not seriously alter these perspectives as it would first of all involve an increase of the burden upon the workers' backs.

The concrete illustrations are already at hand in the present wage-cut drive. The most serious aspect of this drive is in the fact that it is gravitating towards the basic and important industries. No one will believe that the workers employed by the U. S. Steel Corporation have escaped wage cuts. The board of directors' meeting held recently evidently realized that it would not be so good to administer a wage-cut dramatically just at the moment, when much ado was made about the Hoover administration "opposing" wage-cuts. It would perhaps too seriously compromise the administration. But the actual cut is merely postponed for the moment and will soon be put over more quietly. The coal miners throughout the country have already suffered a drastic deterioration of their conditions both by direct wage-cuts, decrease of tonnage rate, mechanization, speed-up and the ravages of unemployment. Added to that comes the announcement of the Rockefeller interests of 20 percent wage cut to be applied at its Colorado mines.

On the railroads, continued improvements of heavier equipments and machinery have already eliminated several hundred thousand jobs while increasing the hauling capacity. During the period of 1920-1929, 370,000 men thus lost their jobs. This year an additional 300,000 are unemployed. With such economies the owners, representing an alleged \$5,000,000,000 investment claiming insufficient "earnings" and have appealed to the Interstate Commerce Commission for the right to levy a 15 per cent increase on all freight rates. It is significant however, that during the latest years these rates have tended to decrease in face of the increased competition of truck hauling. If the right to apply this increase is granted, it evidently cannot be applied because of this growing competition. It becomes clear, then, that it is in reality a preparation for a wage cut. Whether the application is denied or proved inapplicable, in either case it will be used as a basis for the demand for a wage-cut.

According to reports submitted by employers to the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 210 establishments cut wages in June involving 25,645 workers with an average cut of 10.8 percent. Five plants reported wage increases affecting 182 workers. Inadequate as these reports are, they nevertheless help to bring out the general trend. Add to this the estimate made by the A. F. of L., fully as inadequate and extremely conservative, and it will help to make the picture clear. The A. F. of L. estimates that "if workers' incomes continue for the full year of 1931 at about the same level as the first half, they will lose \$10,500,000,000 from the 1929 level."

The employers attitude toward the unions in two instances of the present wage cut drive deserve particular attention. On July 12, the New York B. M. T. announced a new "agreement" with its 10,000 employees on the basis of a cut of 50 percent in the 2-cent-an-hour bonus paid for satisfactory work. It adds, "the motormen, being members of a union, are not affected by this agreement". This shows both the advantage of union organization as well as the fact that the B. M. T. is not yet ready to force the issue with a union. On the other hand there is the instance from the coal miners present situation. In Pennsylvania, during the present

strike, efforts were made by the Pittsburgh Terminal Coal company in particular to revive and put new life into the dead body of the U. M. W. to offset the growth of the National Miners Union. The strike now appears to be on the decline and evidently the operators are somewhat getting over their fear of the militant union for at the proposed Hoover conference on coal, the operators refused to sit jointly with the Lewis forces.

But it should not be forgotten for one moment that, for example, the coal operators' ignoring of all the unions in the field and continuing their brutal assaults upon the workers' standard, is due in a measure to the failure of the Centrist party leadership to utilize the real opportunity which were and still are available for a fighting united front. Let the National Miners Union take the steps for a genuine united front of the various sectional organizations which are split away from the decrepit U. M. W. and it will certainly mark the first serious hurdle in the way of the capitalist offensive. That is also the way to deal with the reformists and pseudo-progressives who in reality are only for the kind of "hurdles" which do not imply struggle. And the example of the coal miners is only one out of many.

Wage-cuts hit the workers in the most direct sense and become an important lever to help set them into motion against their class enemy. Regardless of all the servile and treasonable efforts of the capitalist labor agents to prevent their resistance the workers will move nevertheless, compelled by these circumstances. It will increase the abyss between the needs of the masses and the high paid gentry now in leadership of the existing major unions. New progressive currents will spring up within them and the opportunities for working class organization will advance also in the unorganized industries.

Even an upward conjuncture of American capitalist economy will fully embody such prospects. It will mean a real opportunity for Communist leadership. But the one essential step in the present situation, toward establishing it is a correct policy of welding the fighting ranks into a united front.

—A. S.

Trotsky Greet's Weekly Militant

National Committee of the Communist League of America (Opposition)

Dear Comrades:

Our little group in Kadikoy was very happy to receive our old friend, the *Militant*, in a new form. Let us hope that the paper, with its regular weekly appearance will now exercise not only a doubled but a tenfold influence.

I am sending you an article on the latest turn in Stalinist policy. The world capitalist press violently exaggerated the significance of this turn from its standpoint, but from our standpoint, its significance cannot be estimated too highly. We are approaching a critical stage in the U. S. S. R., which will also have to have its effects inside the party and inside the International. The world crisis, the Spanish revolution, the great events in Germany—all these put vast tasks before the *Militant*. We are fighting for genuinely scientific ideas and principles with inadequate technical, material and personal means. But correct ideas always end by making available for themselves the corresponding means and forces.

Yours,

Kadikoy, July 19, 1931

L. TROTSKY.

After the Massacre

Chicago Opposition Condemns Murders of Negro Workers

CHICAGO.—

Immediately following the cold-blooded massacre by Chicago police of the Negro workers gathered on the South Side of the city to prevent the eviction of a 72-year old Negro woman, the Chicago branch of the Communist League of America (Opposition) issued a leaflet condemning the police murder and calling upon the workers for a united protest. The leaflet reads as follows:

On August 3, unemployed workers under the leadership of the Unemployment Council, attempted to stop the eviction of a 72-year old Negro lady. They were met by squads of armed police—and three of the Negro workers were brutally murdered. Besides killing 3 unemployed workers, the Chicago police seriously wounded another, and arrested and clubbed scores of others.

The bosses—and their paid flunkies—have the blood of these unemployed workers on their hands! The bosses and their system are responsible for the murders of these three Negro workers!

The bosses through Mayor Gernak, have called together their lesser flunkies—Negro and white preachers, politicians, editors—to increase their efforts to break up the ever-growing unemployment movement by doling out charity in crumbs, by mass arrests of working class leaders,

and by police terror. For example, Mayor Cermak orders evictions stopped in the Negro sections for "a short time" till "the riots" calm down. We workers must answer by forcing the landlords and their city officials to stop ALL evictions in ALL working class neighborhoods! The bosses and their flunkies are also organizing charity campaigns to give "bread crumbs" relief to "worthy" families. We must expose this fake charity and fight for immediate unemployment insurance for all unemployed workers!

Thirdly, and most important, the bosses are increasing their drive against all militant workers, particularly against the Communists, because the Communists are the leaders in the working class struggles. The bosses are trying to build a smoke screen of a "Red scare" in order to divert attention away from the evictions, starvation, increased misery wage cuts, racial discriminations and police attacks upon our class. Expose this smoke screen! Answer the attacks of the bosses with greater unity, more solidarity, and bigger organized struggles against unemployment and wage cuts!

The Communist party must immediately call a genuine united front conference to mobilize a mass movement of all workers against the bosses' offensive and to increase the struggle against unemployment.

Down with the Red scare! Defend the workers' right to free speech and free assemblage!

Protest against the murder of the three unemployed. Demand the immediate release of the 22 arrested.

Fight for the six-hour day and the five day week with no reductions in pay. Fight for immediate unemployment insurance.

Build block unemployment councils of employed and unemployed workers.

Demand long-term credits for the Soviet Union from the bosses in order to give immediate work to tens of thousands of American workers and to help build the only workers' country—Soviet Russia!

Chicago Branch Communist League of America (Left Opposition).

Since the leaflet was issued, the party press reports an imposing demonstration of tens of thousands of Negro and white workers at the funeral of the militant Negroes murdered by Chicago's uniformed thugs.

that much worse. The end of police brutality can be produced only with the end of capitalist brutality and exploitation. The brutality can be resisted—not with reports but with the united front of the workers, determined that they shall enjoy as many rights of democratic procedure as they can extort by their strength from the capitalist dictators.

The Wickersham reports are a sign of the times in the sense stated above. The master class realizes the growing impatience of the masses. It gives them the assurances of "improvements"—in the form of promises, the food with which they always feed the workers,

Mass Arrests In Silk Strike

Left Wing Makes a Half Turn to Unity

Confronted with no serious break in the ranks of the Paterson silk strikers, the police agents of the bosses are proceeding to the attempt at breaking the backbone of the movement by the policy of mass arrests and the clubbing of pickets. Last Tuesday alone brought about the arrest of fifty-two strikers. While most of the pickets were seized by the police in front of a Paterson dye plant, more than a dozen others were arrested at the conclusion of a sharp encounter between the police and strikers who attempted to cross the city line leading to Clifton, neighboring upon Paterson where the strikers are attempting to get the support of the many silk workers employed. At the city line, the police threw a cordon across the street and for hours kept a mass of strikers from passing through. However, the militancy of the workers finally prevailed and despite police efforts, a number of them succeeded in breaking through the cordon of police. The latter thereupon pursued the pickets and succeeded in arresting fifteen of them.

Significant in the whole incident, which is but one of many others of a similar kind, is the fact that according to the reports the workers are members of the amalgamated A. F. of L. locals. The militancy of these workers, despite the fact that they are not affiliated to the left wing union leaves no room for doubt that the basis for a powerful unity movement of the two contesting sides in the workers' half of the strike, not only exists but can be strengthened with the most effective results for the strike.

The principal barrier in the road of the strike's development remains, as before, the fact that in reality two separate strikes are being conducted in Paterson, with two separate strike committees, picket lines and unions. To overcome this extremely harmful situation, fostered on the one hand by the Musteite-Lovestone leadership of the A. F. of L., which is more concerned with a speedy settlement with the bosses than with the spreading of the strike on a broad scale, and on the other hand by the Stalinist leadership of the National Textile Workers Union, which stubbornly puts its sectarian interests against the general interests of the movement—the *Militant* has from the very beginning proposed a genuine united front.

The *Daily Worker* now reports that "The United Front General Strike Committee has decided upon a definite mode of procedure to again attempt to bring about unity with the rank and file of workers who are still under the domination of the fake union. A committee of fifteen was elected by the strike committee this afternoon to present a program of unity to the rank and file workers of the Associated—A. F. of L., the chief points of which are that a committee of twenty-five rank and file shop workers from each union meet to discuss methods to obtain unity, that the basis of discussion shall be one united strike committee, one united picket line and a united front shop committee in each shop." (9-12-31.)

Such a meeting is a step in the right direction only if it is followed by other far more important and effective steps. If this meeting of workers from both unions is to be another of the "united fronts from below" made so "famous" by the Stalinists, then it is better that it not be held. Ninety-nine times out of a hundred such a procedure has only been a cheap sham, an excuse, a cover under which the real united front is smothered. It is imperatively necessary to conduct the broadest agitation among the ranks, the numbers of the A. F. of L. unions. That is the basis of the united front. But this remains hopelessly inadequate if these members are not given a program of action which they can develop to obtain the adherence to the united front of their organizations.

It is therefore necessary to take the next step immediately—precious, invaluable time has been lost. The Left wing must propose now—not after the strike, when it exercises its "self-criticism" in the party press, that a joint conference of the two unions be held at which methods of joint strike action and direction shall be worked out. Merely to approach a few isolated A. F. of L. members to join a united front "meeting" is not enough. It does not succeed in putting the reformist leaders—from Matthews to Muste and Gitlow—to the wall with the pointed demand that they join in united action. Unless this logical step is taken, the present "united front turn" of the Left wing will disappear into the sand like so many of its other tragic farces of the recent past.

After Prussian Elections

Stalinists Trail Behind Demagogues of the Hitlerite Camp

The referendum on the dissolution of the Prussian Diet initiated by the German Fascists and behind which the German Stalinists drew their followers in a miserable and disastrous caricature of a "united front", came to an end last Saturday, with a vote a few millions short of the amount necessary to accomplish the desired end. As a farcical aftermath, the bourgeois press here and the Fascist press in Germany are engaging in mutual criticism with the official Stalinist press—each claiming that the other "sabotaged the united front" and did not turn out in full force on Sunday to accomplish the dissolution of the Diet. The leadership in these recriminations is taken by the *Rote Fahne*, organ of the German party and . . . *Pravda*, once Lenin's mouthpiece. The latter is bitter at the Fascists for having come to the defense of the Diet by sabotaging the vote at the last minute.

The truth of the matter even without detailed reports from Germany which

we are awaiting, is undoubtedly that the Communist workers and sympathizers took the whole matter with more than a grain of salt, if not with actual revulsion against the policy of the official party leaders. When the Fascists first initiated the referendum, making the maximum out of the capital demagogically created by them, the party justly condemned the whole affair roundly and revealed its true nature to the workers. The *Rote Fahne* could not find terms sufficiently harsh to designate the maneuver of the potential German Mussolinis. But without much time having passed, the party made a complete turn about face and capitulated before the nationalist demagoguery which they had at first condemned. The expectations of the Thaelmanns and Remmeles was to win the Fascist workers to the Communist side by this perverted united front. In actuality nothing of the kind occurred. On the contrary, as has already been shown by the events, the social democratic workers were driven away from the Communists, against whom the socialist leaders cleverly exploited the "unity with the Fascists". The only "positive" result of the campaign has been that the party has won over a few hardshell nationalist leaders, generals, army officers and similar riff-raff of bourgeois society who announced their adherence to "Communism" on the basis of the fact that the Communist party alone has not "betrayed the nation", like the notorious Fascist, Lieutenant Scherzinger, who is orientating towards the Communist party on the basis of the fact that there are "no Jews in the Central Committee of the Communist party".

Such a trend of events can only signify the gravest dangers for German Communism.

Wickersham's Exposures

Capitalism's Agents Reveal a Few of Its Festering Sores

The Wickersham commission appointed by president Hoover has made another report public—this time on the condition of police rule throughout the country. Drawn up in the most statesmanlike language, the report nevertheless gives a damning portrayal of the corruption prevalent in that arm of capitalist majesty which is most directly entrusted with the preservation of property and its "rights". What is said is not particularly new. Every child in the street is well acquainted with the fact that corruption, bribery, degeneration and brutality rule the roost in the police departments of the country. Everybody knows that the "third degree" barbarism is practised in virtually every police station in the United States—particularly against the worker who cannot—like mallefants in office or high-caste gangsters and gunmen—hire an expensive lawyer, and more particularly against the radical worker who consciously directs his effects towards the improvement of the lot of his class.

Nor is the labor movement presented with anything new in the previous reports of the commission. Nor, further, should it be overcome with any gratitude to these "public men" who have revealed superficially some of the festering sores of the capitalist society which nurtures even their expositors. The commission is not opposed to the deportation of "aliens". It is solely concerned with eliminating the brutal "features" of the deportations—the breaking up of families arbitrarily, the frame-ups that are too obvious the arrests in the dark of

the moon, the deportation camps that have been established in all but name.

There is even less need for illusions about the concern the commission shows over the Mooney-Billings case. To them—confronted with the angry protests of hundreds of thousands of workers for years—it is only a question of maintaining the prestige of a cynically revealed capitalist class justice. The Mooney case is for them a "violation" of justice. To the conscious workers, it is the logical outcome of capitalist class persecution. Mooney and Billings will not come out of the living tomb because Messrs. Wickersham and Co. are "shocked". They will be released when the workers in their united strength compel the jailors to open the prison gates. The deportees will not be turned away from the class to which they belong, from the labor unions and revolutionary organizations to which they are devoted, just because Wickersham thinks that the procedure should not be so "raw". The deportation scandals of Hoover, Doak and Co. will be brought to an end when the workers realize that it is one form of the attack upon their whole class which must be resisted unitedly. The savagery of the police will not be ended by a bourgeois exposure. We have had these revelations from similar sources from time immemorial. They are a periodical sop to a working class that is becoming restless and discontented and requires another proof of the remedial ability of capitalist decadence. But after each revelation, conditions become

Almost 1,000 Pesetas Already Sent for the Spanish Opposition Press

As a result of a highly successful picnic last Sunday held under the Auspices of the New York branch of the League for the benefit of our Spanish comrades, the fund we are raising to help the Opposition in Spain to issue its weekly organ took a sharp jump upwards. A splendid spirit prevailed among the comrades and sympathizers at the picnic and following a short talk by comrade Swaback on the significance of the Spanish events, a good collection was taken up. The total income of the picnic after all expenses are deducted, has come to \$35.94.

As we go to press, our Chicago com-

rades inform us that they too are organizing a picnic for the Spanish Opposition, to be held on Sunday, August 23, at Elston Forest Preserves (see other page for ad), at which, in addition to other attractions an Iberian atmosphere will be created by the cooking and sale of tortillas, hot chile and tamales. All the profits of the picnic will go to our Spanish comrades.

Not all the other branches are quite up to snuff in this campaign, but we are expecting them to get into full swing in short order. Toronto reports a contribution shortly, a goodly percentage of which is to come from donations made

by members of the party—a good sign which should lead the comrades everywhere to make a similar attempt.

All told now, more than eighty dollars has been collected in the fund, which, at the present rate of exchange, comes to almost one thousand Spanish pesetas. The money has already been sent to Spain and will continue to be forwarded as rapidly as it is received at our office. The need of our Spanish comrades is very great. The situation offers magnificent possibilities for the growth of our movement. The American militants must be at the very top of the list—rivalled by nobody—in the aid they contribute to

the militant revolutionists who are leading the fight in Spain under our banner.

Since last week we have received the following contributions (unless otherwise noted, donations are from New York):

Total last week: \$22.70—James Costello, Youngstown: \$1.00—M. Meyer, Boston: \$2.25—M. Shapiro, Boston: \$.25—J. Levinburg, Boston: \$.15—New York list No. 1: \$.95—Harry Milton: \$.10—Julio S.: \$1.00—A. Nacio: \$.50—M. Morris: \$1.00—Carl Anthony: \$.20—125th St. meeting: \$.47—Bob: \$1.00—New York picnic: \$35.94—I. Dreyer: \$1.00—J. Berlin: \$1.00. Total to date: \$81.91.

FOR OUR NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Draft Thesis on the Youth Question

1. Capitalism draws the youth of the proletarian families into the productive process. The cheapness of its labor power, its physical and intellectual immaturity, its lack of trade union organization makes it particularly profitable objects for exploitation. These same characteristics and the needs growing out of them—need for physical and intellectual development, for play, "social life"—were left almost wholly unsatisfied. From a position of helpers and apprentices the youth was absorbed ever more into the general industries and process of capitalism.

These exceptional condition of exploitation the development of militarism as a support of the growing imperialism, and the need for the education of the youth for socialism resulted in the early formation of young worker and socialist youth organization.

2. The Y. C. L. was founded in November 1919 out of a need for an organization which would attract the working youth towards Communism, win, organize and train it for the Communist parties. The need for a special organization is called forth by the psychological peculiarities of youth—its immaturity and impulsiveness, its special activities—sports, "social" affairs, and its physical and intellectual requirements. These can be satisfied only by particular methods, activities and organization.

The Y. C. L. is broad educational organizations of youth. Communist training and education requires the intimate linking up of the theoretical with the practical, the study-group with the field of the class struggle. The Y. C. L. is in the forefront of the struggles of the working youth leads and organizes it for immediate economic and cultural needs and demands; struggles inside and outside the armed forces against capitalist militarism; develops itself in the struggle against the bourgeois and petty bourgeois (especially reformist) organizations and influence, as the cultural center and political leader of the youth.

The League which aspires to be the leader of a section of the working class, the youth, is politically subordinate to the Communist party, the vanguard of the proletariat as a whole. The strategy and tactics of the party are the strategy and tactics of the League. This political subordination is accompanied by the organizational autonomy of the League, i. e., its right to elect its own committees and officers, and regulate the League's inner policies and life. Political subordination is maintained by a capable party cadre inside the League, which directs and leads it, exchange of representatives on committees, and a sound Marxian policy in the class struggle which the Leaguers will readily follow. A thorough discussion of the party questions affecting the League should take place during the latter's pre-convention discussion.

The restatement of these elementary and fundamental principles of the Communist youth, laid down by the first three congresses of the Y. C. L., is made imperative by their revision, in theory and practice, by the present leaders of the Comintern and Y. C. L.

3. Limited experience with Communist youth work requires that youth tactics, demands, slogans and special organizational forms should be put forward not as dogmas or finished products which have universal validity but rather with a view of testing them in practice, examining the results, and thereby laying the ground for more effective tactics, slogans, etc. The Comintern under Zinoviev and later Bukharin and Stalin converted the Y. C. L.'s into factional pawns. Youth policies were completely subordinated to the factional requirements of the moment.

YOUTH IN AMERICA

4. Due to the increased mechanization and rationalization in American industry since the last war, youth labor is to be found in every important industry of the country. Over one-fourth of the workers in the U. S. are under the age of twenty-five—about twelve million. Of these, five million are between the ages of 10 and 19. There are over one million children employed under the age of 16, exclusive of those under 10.

For the youth between the ages of 18 and 24 who are being drawn in increasing numbers into the basic industries of the country (coal, metal) doing the same work as the unskilled adult, in many cases getting the same pay and suffering from the same oppressive conditions, the special forms of exploitation to which the young worker is submitted under the apprentice and helpers' systems are substituted for by the greater speed-up, and an increase in the intensity of exploitation. The youth in these industries are being increasingly absorbed into the unskilled proletariat. This strengthens the solidarity between the adult and youth (present coal strike). Special youth demands in such cases, do not arise out of the special economic position of the young workers but rather out of their psychological and physiological peculiarities and requirements—their immaturity, need for development, etc.

In those as well as in the light industries (electrical, radio electrical parts production, foods, etc.) special attention should be paid to the youth under the age of 18. Special hours of work, wages, conditions of labor can be determined only on the basis of the particular industry. At the same time the Y. C. L. should put forward demands which link up the struggles of the youth in the shop factory, mine and mill with the fight against the capitalists as a class.

The official Y. C. L. today utilizes its slogans and demands only on holiday occasions.

These demands should be put forward in the sense discussed in section 3. At present they can at best be agitational and propaganda demands. When the opportunity offers itself, either in an industry or in the country as a whole, they can be put forward as concrete immediate slogans of action.

The struggle for the youth demands should be accompanied by a comparison of the conditions of the young worker under capitalism and what it would be under a proletarian rule—as illustrated by the Soviet Union. The slogan for an annual month vacation with pay for youth under 23 can be made a powerful weapon against the Citizens' Military Training Camps.

At the same time a struggle for the unionization of the youth should be carried on. In textile, coal, automobile, radio etc., the youth should be organized into the revolutionary unions or leagues. Special youth forms of organization (committees or sections) should develop special forms of activities to attract and hold the young workers. In industries where the A. F. of L. has some control (men's clothing, building, hat manufacturing, etc.) and large sections of youth are employed, they are almost completely barred from the unions. Work among them is extremely important. It can be an aid in the building of Left wing groups in the unions. Further, the most persistent struggle must be carried on to remove all discriminatory rules and practices in all trade unions.

THE EFFECTS OF THE CRISIS

5. The working youth is especially hard hit by the present economic crises. The miserable wages previously received by the young workers made it impossible for them to save any money. Unemployment which has resulted in the throwing of over two million youth out of industry, reduces them to poverty, increases their misery. The conditions of the employed youth are being worsened by wage-cuts, and speed-up. The absence of trade union protection or social legislation makes their position extremely difficult.

The crisis has the effect of driving many working class students out of the schools. It helps shatter their illusions about the simplicity of getting out of their proletarian condition.

The plight of the young workers today is the best refutation of the much glorified American democracy, "fair play", and "equal opportunity for all" which the powerful bourgeois agencies, schools, press, church and youth organizations have hammered into their heads. The youth are beginning to see this. It furnishes the best objective conditions yet known in this country for the winning of large sections of youth away from bourgeois ideology, the Y. M. C. A., the Y. W. H. A., the Boy Scouts, etc., and for the Young Communist League. To accomplish this requires correct tactics in the class struggle, realistic youth demands and activities, a courageous, capable Marxist leadership in the Y. C. L.

THE AMERICAN LEAGUE

6. Even in this period of splendid opportunities for Communist youth work, the American League is not only a mere shadow of the party (claiming 2,000 members) but has lost more than fifty percent of its membership since the last convention two years ago. The crisis which has been gripping the international Communist and revolutionary movement for the last few years is especially acute in the Y. C. L. in this country. The reign of Stalinism in the Comintern its false strategy and tactics its incompetent leadership, internationally as well as nationally, combined with false youth tactics, are responsible for the present condition in the American Communist youth movement.

There is not a single field of its activities in which the League can show substantial accomplishments. No real educational activity is carried on inside the League; discussions on youth tactics, on trade union policies, etc., are a thing of the distant past. The so-called leaders, appointed by the party bureaucrats, are incompetents whose chief trait is their subservience and obedience.

In its most important function, that of educating the youth for Communism, the Y. C. L. has completely failed. This is best exemplified by the fact that the rapid and constant turnovers of membership in its ranks means, not that the party is recruiting from the League, but rather that the youth are turning away from the revolutionary movement. This is the major and most serious weakness of the League.

The youth leagues which in the early days of the Communist movement were in the forefront of the struggle against opportunism in the revolutionary movement are today blinded to the growing dangers of the complete degeneration of the Communist party. The real struggles and difficulties of the Russian Communists are unknown to them; they are taught to put unquestioned faith in the statements and policies of the leading faction in the Comintern and the Russian party.

In anti-militarist work, the League, although it has carried on some work in the armed forces in New York, has been extremely negligent. Little more than a few cries about the war danger in the Young Worker have been the sum and substance of the anti-militarist campaign. Even its own members are not taught the fundamentals of Communist anti-

ilitarist tactics.

The struggle against the withdrawal of the second class mailing privileges from the Young Worker was a complete failure. This was pre-determined by the weakness of the paper, its inability to reach large sections of youth, its almost worthless character as an educator and "collective organizer" of the young workers and the complete abandonment of the united front by the League as a method of winning the youth.

The work of the League among the children is best judged by the results; a sharp decline in the membership of the Young Pioneers; a complete absence of Communist child education in its ranks.

In the economic field, the League has had exceptional possibilities for growth. An overwhelming majority of the youth are outside of even the legal "jurisdiction" of the A. F. of L. unions. In the needle trades where most of them do auxiliary work, the so-called youth section of the Industrial Union confines itself to several open-air meetings in the regular market, the distribution of a few leaflets for several indoor meetings. No real or consistent work in the shop or factory.

The present West Pennsylvania and Ohio coal strike confronts a difficult task in the organization of the youth. While the latter is in the forefront of the struggles of today they can be held after the strike only by concrete youth forms of activity and organization. Towards this end, the Y. C. L. should immediately commence organizing units of its organization throughout the mining districts. These can serve as directing groups and bases for the formation of youth sections or committees of the National Miners' Union and in rallying the young workers for Communism. Youth demands should not be "imposed" by the leadership upon the youth but rather arise out of the ranks of the young miners.

OPPONENT YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS

In the United States, the ideological control of the capitalists over the young workers is maintained and increased by a virtual network of youth organizations. There is hardly an age or interest of the youth which is not covered. The proletarian children, while being taught in the schools to be good wage slaves, are attracted to such groups as the Boy and Girl Scouts where they are further imbued with a military and patriotic spirit. The one million children within the ranks of these two organizations are developed in the spirit of subservience and obedience.

The Y. M. C. A. with its over one and a quarter million members, the Y. W. H. A., six hundred thousand strong, with their yearly budgets of over sixty and a half million and thirty million dollars respectively are powerful institutions for holding back the youth from struggle. The sports clubs and teams, organized by the bosses in department stores, mail-order houses, factories, the American Athletic Union, with its two million members, as well as the religious youth organizations which have millions are organized and supported for the same or similar purposes.

The petty bourgeois organizations in this country are at present weak and unimportant. However, with the growth of youth militancy and activity, the possibilities for the development of such groups as the Young Peoples' Socialist League at present having no more than one thousand members, may be realized. Their actual success will depend to some extent on the activities of the Young Communist League and its ability to effectively combat the young socialist organizations.

The gigantic network of bourgeois youth organizations is reinforced by the military and semi-military organizations in the high schools and colleges (for example, the Reserve Officers' Training Corps), the Citizens' Military Training Camps (38,000), the National Guard (180,000) and the Army and Navy (120,000 and 80,000 respectively—exclusively of officers). The struggle for the American youth means a fight against these bourgeois youth and military organizations.

To date, the Y. C. L. has failed in such work. The Labor Sports Union, which can serve as an effective auxiliary to the League, consists of a handful of clubs completely divorced from the American youth. Since the 1930 Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Young Communist International, the American League has attempted to organize a series of youth auxiliaries, the Young Liberator (young Negro organization), the Young Defenders—youth section of International Labor Defense, Youth sections of International Workers' Order etc. The young workers attracted to these organizations can easily be won directly for the Y. C. L. The need for these groups does not exist. On the contrary, their formation has resulted in the almost complete stripping of the League of cultural and sports activities. The result: The Y. C. L. deprives itself of the possibility of becoming a mass youth organization; it conducts a minimum of educational and cultural work; it completely immerses itself in "practical" activity, that is, activity which the party bureaucrats lay down for them according to their factional requirements of the moment.

A thorough examination of the functions of Youth auxiliaries, and the actual activities of the existing ones is needed. If this is not done, this important part of League activity will continue to yield no results.

The Y. C. L. can make real progress only by the readmittance of the Left Opposition youth to its ranks and the opening of a thorough discussion on the tactics of the present leadership of the League, and the policies of the party which affect the Y. C. L. At the same time, the League must call for the reinstatement into the party of the expelled Left Communists and a free and thorough discussion of its strategy and tactics. In this way a basis will be laid for a complete change in the leadership of the party and league and a return to Marxist policies in the class struggle.

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THE WORK OF THE OPPOSITION

7. Since our last conference very little youth work has been conducted. With the exception of the irregular appearance of the Young Vanguard as a section of the Militant, and some youth work in New York City which ended last year, this part of Opposition activity has been neglected. This is partly explained by the need of our organization in the first period to consolidate the general Left Opposition faction, that is, devote ourselves almost exclusively to the propagation of our general views and their application to the party policies and activities. Added to this is the fact that outside of New York there are only a scattered handful of youth comrades in our ranks. That in New York itself most of the young comrades, not having been members of the Y. C. L. are inexperienced in youth work.

At the same time, we must recognize that the National Youth Committee and the National Committee seriously neglected to carry on the work possible in this field. Steps must be taken immediately to make up for this unnecessarily lost time.

The Left Opposition youth puts forward as its main tasks the winning of the members of the Y. C. L., especially the Communist cadre within it for our viewpoints and organization; participation in the activities and work of the Communist youth movement; carrying on of Communist educational activities inside and outside our organization and wherever possible, the conducting of independent youth work. The results of such work will mean the organization education and consolidation of a revolutionary, capable and advanced Communist youth cadre.

Towards this end we take the following steps:

1. The selection of a National Youth Committee of five headed by a youth organizer—youth representative on National Committee—to be in charge of national youth work.
2. Every branch to have at least one comrade in charge of local youth work to be responsible to the branch and the National Youth Committee.
3. Wherever feasible and beginning with New York, an endeavor should be made, with guarantees against its degeneration to organize a genuinely broad club of young workers and students, under the influence of the Opposition, but assured of a wide initiative and self-activity on the cultural, social and sports field.
4. The regular issuance of the Young Vanguard as a semi-monthly section of the weekly Militant which would coordinate the youth activity outlined above.
5. The preparations for the launching of a separate youth paper by the next conference.
6. The publication of a regular international youth bulletin.
7. The immediate organization of a fraction in the Young Communist League.
8. Establishment of correspondence with the youth of the Left Opposition in Europe and elsewhere.

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The British Scene

The Danger of Left Reformism

With the accelerated speed of England's growing decline from its world dominant imperialist position, the lines are becoming more clearly drawn for the contest of influence over the British working class. From the point of view of total population, the great majority composes the industrial proletariat. By history it has long ago been invested with the decisive role. But while the MacDonald type of workers' "leadership" is approaching the end of its career, it would be folly to assume that the influence of reformism is about at an end. In this respect, the sharpest contest is still to take place between the forces of social reform and those of social revolution.

It is still to be fought, with the British Communist Party becoming a much more serious contender than its present small numbers and unimportant position would indicate. Coming objective developments will inevitably count heavily in its favor even though it will face a much more cunning and much more "Left-appearing" form of reformism, quite distinguished from the now outright and open imperialist agents of the MacDonald, Henderson and Snowden type.

Reformism, having become pretty well discredited in England by the continuation of outright imperialist policies by the MacDonald government, is bringing forward new champions and new defenders. The "Left" wing within the labor party is feeling the new breeze of working class discontent and is endeavoring to set its sails accordingly. Many efforts are being made by these "Lefts", like Maxton, Lee, and Brockway to turn the labor government failures into capital for themselves. They sense the danger of growing working class dissatisfaction. They want "real and true reformism". To make the most possible capital out of the present situation their slogans and demands are becoming ever more "Left" in appearance. They are finding important allies amongst the trade union bureaucracy who, in their deadly fear of any developing working class struggle, have always endeavored to turn all hopes toward the labor party and the labor government. The record of this process of failures and defeats of the workers is now, because of the same fear, turning trade union leaders toward criticism of the "labor" government. While a definite split is unquestionably developing within the labor party, a radical and a reactionary differentiation, a closer examination will soon prove that the radical section is merely a "Leftist" variation of the same old miserable Fabian type of reformism.

A General Political Fermentation

Because of the outstanding parliamentary character of British politics at home made possible by her ruthless non-parliamentary politics within the colonial empire, the manifestations of political ferment are first of all expressed in the parliamentary sphere. Growing oppositions, halfway splits and regular splits, are taking place within all three major parliamentary parties. These, of course, all reflect the growing economic and political decline, the change of issues, and indicate that new problems are developing, problems which in the final analysis all bear directly on the question of class rule and the ability to hold the working class in subjection.

The already greatly declining Liberal party has practically lost a parliamentary section under Sir John Simon, to the Conservatives, while the balance of the group still hangs on to a horse-trading support of the "labor" government. Within the Conservative ranks there is developing the new united Empire party of Lord Rothermere and Beaverbrook. To an extent, this has hampered the Conservative party from taking immediate advantage of the Labor party weaknesses. But it is within the Labor party that the most important ferment, opposition and splits are taking place. Because of its contradictory position of a party supposedly representing labor and yet being in control of a capitalist government, its fermentation has become the deepest and the most clearly expressive of the recent evolution of the British empire; both in respect to the colonial field and in respect to events at home.

The present economic decline became expressed first in the split-off by the Mosley section going to the extreme Right. Both in the character of this group, as well as in its proposals for solution of England's plight, are undoubtedly contained serious Fascist elements. The endless petty pilferings of the "labor" government in its efforts to continue capitalist policies under a different label seems to have helped to lend a glamor of reality to the Mosleyites' demand for a system of economic planning and a semi-dictatorship. And it is not surprising that the former "Left" leader A. J. Cook and the former Communist sympathizer, J. F. Horabin could become signatories to their manifesto. Perhaps the member which this group gained from the parliamentary fraction of the Conservative ranks, W. E. D. Allen, most clearly expressed the methods by which Fascism aims to get a foothold. In a statement: eulogizing the Mosley platform he said: "Let us save the admittedly capitalist ship and when that ship is saved we can discuss without prejudice the distribution of the cargo."

At the April Scarborough I. L. P. conference Jimmie Maxton and the other "Lefts" taunted the "labor" government, but in a well-measured moderate tone, leaving sufficient loopholes open for a retreat. Maxton asserted: "The labor government has signally failed to achieve the end to which its policy was directed

—and that failure was not due to lack of efforts or lack of honesty, but because it was a capitalist objective, carried out in the main through the medium of capitalist machinery." Very well, if it was a capitalist objective, how can one then speak of failure to achieve the end to which its policy was directed? And granted to the hilt that this objective was carried out through the medium of a capitalist machinery—which is entirely true—do Maxton or the other "Lefts" draw the proper conclusion, namely to destroy this machinery and replace it with a proletarian machinery of government? Of course not. This is not their objective.

A motion for disaffiliation from the labor party at this conference suffered a defeat of 173 to 37. In many respects this I. L. P. conference repeats the tragic-comedy of the one of 1925. That was held after the experience of the first "labor" government and at the time of a rising wave of working class resistance. It approved, after much criticism the MacDonald policies 398 to 189. At the Liverpool labor party conference that same year the "Left" section loomed strong but completely capitulated when under fire. Not only was there no split as some of the more glib had expected but the conference, after settling the "Left" criticism, proceeded to exclude the Communists from the labor party.

Today also the prospects of splits are being whispered. The "Lefts" are becoming more radical in their utterances. David Kirkwood as a delegate to the recent Second International congress declared that "the labor government preferred to coalesce with liberals and conservatives to maintain capitalism instead of overthrowing it." The same Kirkwood has now been cited before the labor party disciplinary committee for having stated that, "the conditions of the worker are no better under a labor government." The New Leader, official organ of the I. L. P. entered in his defense a denial of his having made such statement. It would then be pertinent to ask "why not?" A genuine Left wing leader not only state so but also draw the proper conclusion therefrom. Seven M. P.'s of the I. L. P. "Left" section are also cited before the labor party disciplinary committee because of their voting to table the Anomalies Bill (the bill to correct the "abuse" of the dole).

The I. L. P. in the Past

Under pressure of the events of the world war the "Left" I. L. P. disaffiliated from the Second International. It at most proposed joining the Comintern, but found satisfaction in the Two-and-a-Hal International, to return a little while later to the Second. This excursion to the Left followed the working class pressure of the stormy struggles of 1917-1920. The ebbs of this period found them returning to the original camp where they, of course, belong. Again with the working class rise and the struggles growing towards the general strike of 1926 the "Lefts" became critical, they became more radical, they again addressed letters to the Comintern, some of them sent in conferences with the Russians in the Anglo-Russian Unity Committee. This was upon invitation of the Stalin-Bucarin bloc. A deal with the "Lefts"—not the workers genuinely moving towards the Left—but the Left coverings of the Fabian imperialist agents. They quickly returned from this second excursion with the defeat of the general strike, in which they had played their treacherous part.

Workers' discontent is again beginning to grow and this time with more genuine, more real possibilities. It is occurring in a period of growing working class disillusionment with the servile Crown lackeys in whom they had long placed their faith. We are in a period when comrade Trotsky's predictions, made in his "Whither England?", have increasing likelihood of coming true: "On the day when the English proletariat frees itself from the mental baseness of Fabianism, humanity, particularly in Europe, will increase in stature by at least a head."

But the gentlemen of the "Left" are also again beginning a new zig-zag, endeavoring to arrest this growth. Dialectically, it may be contended that it occurs this time on a higher plane, at least on a higher plane of maturity of the English proletariat. While these Left coverings and their apparent radicalization express the workers' discontent and in this sense records progress, they, of course act as a brake upon the movement—a reformist brake. The Left phraseology cannot be separated from the important question of basic program. Fenner Brockway, for example, now proposes a "bold socialist program", which would contain the essentials: "Assume control of finances by nationalizing the banks . . . Reconstruct basic industries under national ownership and direction . . . Meet increased productive power of rationalization by concentrating upon increasing the consuming power of the masses of the people . . . on a socialist basis to be fulfilled by national control of imports."

It is, however, well to remember the shudder of these mental offspring of the original Fabian school when in 1926 the Comintern tersely stated the problem of the English proletariat as the one of armed revolutionary force. This is not at all the program of the "Left" I. L. P. They intend merely to repeat the early MacDonald career of reformism in vain hopes that their projected embellishments will make it more palatable.

—ARNE SWABF

DISCUSSION ARTICLES

The Double Task of the Left Opposition

When the present Left Opposition were still members of the American party, the presentation of a thesis by the Executive Committee always brought out fundamental differences between the embryo three currents, which were more than mere tactical questions or questions of formulations. The difference may have started on tactical questions, but only the blind could not see the deep channels these questions led to. The break-up into three currents is a proof of this. Our thesis presented for discussion gives a Marxian analysis of conditions and in the main is correct. I think our group, not through bureaucratic suppression but through Marxian understanding is the closest knit group of our faction. Because we hold such an unanimous position on the main theoretical questions and don't have to "waste time" on these issues, we should devote a greater amount of time and discussion on the concretization of our international position for America. Therefore, for this purpose, I raise some tactical questions and questions of formulation of the thesis.

The section presenting the perspective of the Left Opposition, as a faction of the party, and not to build a new party; to win the membership of the Third International to our Marxian position and not to build a fourth international; and a role of reform in relation to the Soviet Union with its opposite in relation to capitalism, the theory of the permanent revolution is correct considering all factors of today. How to carry out this perspective is a question the thesis does not handle in all its aspects.

Wrong Views

The ultra-Lefts who desire a new party are wrong, likewise the other extreme of being a tail to the ACTIVITY of the party is wrong. First let us dispose of the question of criticism of the Center and then consider the relation of Marxian criticism to activity. A faster tempo of change from a negative criticism to a positive criticism of Centrism must be made. A turn toward speaking to the class (which includes the party) has been made which has increased our effectiveness in speaking to the party, just like a correct elevation of Centrism has made more effective our struggle against syndicalism and anarchism. This positive approach will accelerate the process of correction through greater pressure and on the other hand help correct our position in relation to party activity.

The line of march laid down in the thesis eliminates the danger of ultra-Leftism in the form of a new party and a fourth international, but it leaves wide open the door for sectarianism and for a "Marxian" retreat for tired radicals because the thesis does not explain our relation to party ACTIVITY, or rather lack of activity, with a Marxian line.

We have a double task in our relation as the Left Opposition. First, in relation to the Party—to correct it and win the members to our position, and second, in relation to the class, where the party has not penetrated or has no influence we must function as Communists. The thesis explains the first point, the relation of the Left Opposition to Centrism, to the party but the thesis does not even raise the second point, the relation to the class where the party's wrong policy or neglect leaves us to raise the banner of Communism and lash the party into understanding and activity (for example, the Spanish Revolution).

Does the thesis mean we are to be the tail of party activity? Does it mean we are to wait for the party bureaucrats to act? Does it mean we don't act where Centrism fails to act, but where we are capable of acting? They are strong compared to our forces, but any Marxist knows that numbers and wrong policy cannot correct the non-Marxist position; few in numbers with a correct policy can obtain numbers in activity, in struggle. Our action of the past and present disproves the very questions I raise, but the thesis does not disprove this. Our action disproves this in isolated examples in America to a greater extent in other sections and particularly in the Spanish Revolution.

Because this action is not explained, it results in ACTION on our part which is either tailism on the one hand and fourth international action on the other hand, where the party fails to act and lead. Only by explaining such can we eliminate both evils.

The Pressure of the Left

Concretely, for America, it means, where the party has failed to act through wrong policies, which results either in

wrong action or no action, and where we are able to carry out our Marxian position and are unable to impress the Centrists we must take the initiative and lead, forcing the party into activity and directing the class battles. The more pressure we can bring against the Centrist bureaucrats the more will the program of the Left Opposition become the program of the C. I. But the correct function of our forces, in the party, supporting the party as expelled members and in direct leadership where they fail or are incapable—is the way to increase the pressure of the Left, the party members and the class against the Stalin bureaucrats.

Where the party is leading a struggle or engaged in activity, it is our duty to support them, first with Marxian criticism of their strategy and tactics and second with all the activity possible. This is not tail-endism, if this kind of activity is coordinated with the other

The Party and the Opposition's Tasks

(Continued from Last Issue)

5. The Southern textile industries, the next field upon which the party mobilized its organizational forces, was, in a fashion demonstrative of all the reasons for the whole crop of party failures. Here they entered upon a virgin field, where the most elementary class manifestations were just beginning to show themselves, only to begin by raising all sorts of unapplicable slogans (Communists have long been taught that the raising of slogans for struggle must be conditioned upon the needs and understanding of the masses involved). In addition to raising unrealistic slogans, every type and kind of hedge-podge adventurism from Johnstone's "two color unions", to Dunne's "right of self defense", to Reed's cowardly desertion was indulged in. The first real test of struggle showed a number of desertions and manifestations of sheer cowardice on the part of a number of party leaders. This coupled with splendid capacities of struggle and sacrifice on the part of the workers generally as well as on the part of some of the younger party functionaries. The result of this whole campaign is that the party's much boasted "penetration of the South" has resulted in turning the movement in this region back for quite some time.

6. The unemployed crises following upon a period of decline of organized labor resistance was immediately greeted by the party with a central slogan (incorrectly formulated at that time) "Work or Wages". The advocacy of a line of action which posed no less a question than the "capture of the streets" and "open struggles with the police." This whole movement started off with a splendid demonstration on March 6, 1930, involving some few hundred thousand workers in the leading industrial cities. At these gatherings, party spokesmen raised slogans all of which were beyond the comprehension of a class on the downward path of resistance. Now after many months have passed with the definite lessons of unemployment and the general attack on living and wage standards having implanted their lessons upon the workers, an upswing of resistance is being more and more manifested. The party has reduced its whole campaign to the collection of signatures for petitions asking a bourgeois Congress to grant unemployed insurance. The absolute failure in the midst of favorable conditions to get any response to the calls for mobilization into "hunger marches" is sufficient answer to the party's loss of prestige amongst the unemployed.

The present crisis carries with it definite signs of thorough-going reshaping of the relations of classes which opens wide the question of the immediate role of the revolutionary movement. The party under Centrist leadership has failed in a proper evaluation of objective conditions. There is no reason to believe that the application of the reactionary concepts of "Socialism in one country" posed by the international bureaucracy will release its deadening hands from the revolutionary movements of the world. If we are to accept comrade Trotsky's analysis that the three tendencies in the Communist movement are not just tactical formulations but basic principles representing class departures, the conclusion forced upon us is that the Left Opposition represents the proletarian approach in the movement. The American Communist Party cannot any longer be classified as even possessing the potentialities of a "mass

phase I refer to, and that is—where the party fails to act and leaves the field open to the reformers or syndicalists it is our duty as Communists and particularly as Left Oppositionists, to fill the gaps left by the Centrists.

One can answer that our forces are too small, we will be lost in mass work, etc., etc. I am not calling for mass work of the Weisbord type. The wrong theoretical position puts Centrism in a position where they are incapable of carrying out many tasks Communists must. Our forces are too limited numerically to carry them out, even though we have a position and understanding of the needs and road to follow. Such, on our part, is a good "excuse" for not finishing the activity but it is no excuse for not starting such activity. The Bolshevik party in Russia by itself could not complete the revolution, neither can the Left Opposition by itself complete tasks in America which we are compelled to take up because the theoretical position, which causes wrong tactics and strategy of the Centrists, renders them incapable of taking up. Our Communist duty is this two-fold activity to properly support the party and the Third International.

—HUGO OEHLER.

party" in the face of its miserable failures in all fields. The base of its possible expansion instead of increasing is constantly shrinking. And if our evaluation of the basic currents within the American movement are correct then we can draw but one logical conclusion. The role of the Opposition must be that of training a cadre of well-equipped revolutionists who, in the coming developments will find the road of forging the basis of a real Communist party worthy of the name of vanguard of the working class. The example of the Bolsheviks who from 1903 to 1917 carried on and initiated independent activities, though formally a faction of the Russian social democracy, can well be accepted as a model for the immediate transitory period. The American Opposition, taking a stand of real leadership in the coming sharp struggles of the working class, will bring to our banner the many good revolutionary and Communist elements who have been driven away from the party by its opportunist policies. The task of the Opposition is boldly to pose and lead the way. There will be more gained by correct principle evaluations of objective work applied in Leninist fashion towards influencing the worth while proletarian elements who through sheer inertia are still left in the party than a score of disjointed participation in spontaneous struggles.

The road of the Opposition must be that of political leadership in the developing class struggle. The question of size and technical equipment can and will be overcome by healthy growth which is bound to result from the acceptance of real tasks. Size never daunted Lenin. Intransigence in principle applied as a living force, and developing with it, is the surest road of Communist growth. A faction of the party—yes, a living faction, steeling the iron of revolutionary will on the touchstone of struggles—that should and can be the immediate role of the Left Opposition in America, and internationally.

Revolutionary formulations coupled with defensive practices Lenin called the worst poison to inject into the body of the movement. It has been the lot of all consistent revolutionary groups to be accused of "impatience, syndicalist tendencies, Leftism, etc." If absolute faith in the abilities of the workers to develop along the course of revolutionary decisiveness will be sneered at by men of little faith, that should be a double sign of the soundness of our course.

The example of Lenin who, upon his return to Russia in the April days, upon finding that even his close associates (built up through years of common struggle) were showing signs of weakness in the face of decisions which implied sharp departures from the past was ready to go alone if necessary. This should always remain a living guide in the making of all decisions by the Opposition. "From the past we learn only how to act in the future, not to see possible failure but probable victory." (Lenin).

The Opposition will maintain real Marxian unity at only one price. Intransigence of principle tested in the living fires of application in the class struggle.

The course of our National Committee up to now has been one conditioned by a constant looking back and taking stock of limitations. That was after a fashion imposed upon us as a result of our historical genesis. Real growth of a revolutionary scope must be conditioned by a constant daring to scale ever greater and greater tasks.

One task posed before us must be that of a systematic examination of our composition. Is it healthy in the main, or is it not a fact that predominantly it is composed of elements who have not any direct contact with currents of workers in basic industries where the possibilities of real struggles in the future lie? The only real basis of political contact must be built up out of elements prepared to assume the task of establishing contacts in these industries. Systematic colonization, conditioned upon a membership prepared to assume new tasks involving a break with fixed relations, is the one road of Communist work. We have a young group who are well qualified to assume these tasks, yet up to now nothing has been done to utilize them. We must use our material with a full understanding that with our present perspectives there is only one road—the ability to fit and develop within the movement of the

working class—any elements coming into the movement with ties and considerations of a personal nature superseding the interest of the movement are totally unfit for membership. Systematic efforts should be made to fit the whole membership into contacts that will enable us to get a two-fold benefit. One: establish real influence with workers in the every day struggle. And secondly, obtain some badly needed seasoning for our membership. The job of publishing the basic theoretical material, the lack of which in the past was responsible for most of the ills in the movement unquestionably has been an immeasurable achievement. Part of the present limited resources of the League should be utilized to send out qualified organizers to establish contacts with elements close to us who are at present dispersed.

Our woeful lack of resources in the face of pressing situations, such as occurred in Southern Illinois a few months ago implies the pressing need of furnishing the National Office with a special organizational fund which will enable us to respond organizationally in the future in such emergencies. Manifestations such as the Duluth Longshoreman's strike described by F. in the Militant of June 21, show the absolute need of our ability to send capable organizers into favorable fields. Duluth will repeat themselves with greater frequency as the bankruptcy of Stalinism will show itself just as glaringly in the future.

The splendid example of launching our first weekly Militant in the face of almost insurmountable obstacles and achieving success bids fair to remain an example of fine revolutionary initiative that should point the road that the American Opposition must follow in facing all future problems. Let us honestly take stock of our past work, modestly appraise our achievements, and face the future with real Communist confidence in each other. The tasks of the Opposition are large, and cannot be faced until we have built up absolute confidence in our ranks. That can only be done by a real Leninist criticism motivated by an examination of realities, and not empty abstractions.

—S. M. ROSE.

Dizziness... from Failure

The crisis that has afflicted the United States has also been agitating the printers the last two years. For a long time the officers of "Big Six" (New York Typographical Union) have been successful in side-tracking the issue by telling the membership that there is no unemployment in the printing trade. When confronted with the question of some unemployed member as to why he could not get a job, he was told that if he is a printer he should be able to get a job. But not for long were they successful in side-tracking the issue. They had to recognize, under pressure of course, that there is a problem of unemployment. Different proposals were made and some of them carried, but were of little avail. The situation became very serious last winter and a proposal was made to force the newspaper men to work only five days a week and give the sixth day to a "sub" and tax the job and book men four percent, in order to be able to pay twenty dollars a week to the unemployed. Everybody, of course, expected of the "Amalgamationists"—as the champions of the cause of the unemployed—no other course but to support this proposition. How shocked were the unemployed "Amalgamationists" when they heard that the Amalgamation party had distributed a handbill appealing to the members of "Big Six" to defeat the proposition. The disastrous result of such a policy was the miserable showing at the election in May of the Amalgamation party, the candidate for president polling 400 votes of a total of 9,000 votes cast, whereas a few years ago, the candidate of the Amalgamation party got 2,600 votes out of a total of 8,000 votes cast.

Lately, I heard some rumors about the leadership having gotten a dose of "self-criticism", and this was declared to be a mistake. As has been shown subsequently, this report was incorrect. They are not to blame. Their teacher too, when he gets dizzy from failures, also calls them successes.

The above-mentioned tax expired at the end of July and, contrary to the expectations of some of the sponsors of the proposition, conditions are getting worse. A new tax was again recommended and as the previous tax did not cover the payments, and anticipating the worsening of conditions of unemployment, it was raised to six percent for the next ten weeks. Here was an opportunity for the "Amalgamation" party to correct their mistake. But lo and behold! Again a clever move. A handbill was again distributed by the Amalgamationists with the very snappy "catchline": "Defeat the wage cut referendum", thereby giving the most conservative element of the union a moral justification to vote against it. To show how the unemployed, the section of the workers where the Amalgamationists should look for support, voted on this proposition, I shall quote the returns of the secretary's chapel (chapel of the unemployed): for the proposition, 354, against 4.

The reason given by the "Amalgamationists" was, "If we defeat this proposition, the union will be forced to call a strike".

If there is a limit to stupidity, this is it.

—A PRINTER.

In the I.A.C.W.A.

Cliques Gird for Spoils

Clique fights and rivalry for jobs and control in the New York Amalgamated Clothing Workers organization are a matter of routine. The specific conditions in the clothing industry and the existing craft divisions that are a product of conditions that prevailed in the past and are a vestige of the old defunct United Garment Workers Union, foster these evils. Graft, corruption and demoralization permeate the organization from the very top to the lowest layers, embracing wide sections of the membership.

The specific conditions of the industry are the decentralized system of manufacture and contracting. The difficulties of control of widely scattered manufacturing units under a contracting system can only be overcome by a centralized industrial organization under democratic control. But the craft divisions are carefully guarded by the local officials who are not at all ready to give up their positions. Some locals, especially those in strategic positions, are firmly entrenched and dictate terms to the rest in the organization. Hillman has long failed in his attempts to subdue these recalcitrant local chiefs to his domination. He is now playing his game according to the formula: divide and rule, throwing one set of officials against the other by means of bribery with jobs. He has even created jobs outside the union organization for those of his favorites who failed in the game. These "unfortunates" are placed in the auxiliaries of the A. C. W. organization—the banks, cooperative houses unemployment insurance offices which are under Hillman's direct control.

In all these machinations of the officials the members are used as pawns, their ignorance and prejudices being exploited to create confusion and demoralization.

Hillman-Beckerman Struggle

An outstanding example of the devastating effect this condition has brought to the organization is the situation that has now developed on the basis of the conflict between Hillman and the Beckerman-Orlofsky clique, a situation that is pregnant with grave consequences for the whole organization. Hillman has for years allowed and even rendered support to a reign of terror and racketeering in the Cutters Local as a price for the services the Orlofsky-Beckerman gang furnished him in subjugating the tailors to the yoke of the piece-work and speed-up system. Today, these officials are a hindrance to Hillman's rule, their policies being in direct conflict with the trend those of Hillman have taken in recent years due to developments in the New York market.

The most important problem of the organization today is the unionization of the out-of-town shops that have succeeded in establishing themselves and are undermining the union conditions in New York with the aid of racketeers and gangsters who have found a strong base for their activities in the key locals of the organizations, like the Cutters' and Expressmen locals. Hillman's cry of racketeering is an echo of his campaign against the Left wing in the New York organization, when he pulled the doors wide open for these underworld people who are today menacing his domination.

The chiefs of these locals are now accused by Hillman (not publicly but in an underworld fashion) of interfering with his unionization campaigns and of complicity with the racketeers in the industry of pursuing their personal ends under the pretense of safeguarding the jobs of the cutters. They are charged with permitting cut garments to be shipped to non-union shops to be made up there in defiance of the rules of the organization. Presumably, Orlofsky and his gang are concerned with their own racket and resent Hillman's encroachment upon their private territory.

While Hillman is "solving" the out-of-town problem by granting out-of-town scab firms "A. C. W. agreements" for the mere price of a dues collecting, check-off system, Orlofsky is anxious to save his racket which is threatened by the exodus of the shops into the country places prompted by such a policy. Orlofsky as a local chief is orientated on New York, while Hillman's movements are unfettered.

Clique Conflicts in the Strike

These conflicting interests between Hillman and Orlofsky have been reflected in the last strike where one side has sabotaged the other.

The following instance presents a glaring illustration: The shops in the South Jersey towns, like Vineland, Hammonton and Egg Harbor, were stopped off for only one day and then the workers were sent back under a union agreement, while these shops have been directly maintained by manufacturers from New York for the purpose of getting their garments made

cheaper. The wages paid in those shops average \$10 per week. Thousands of workers are employed there under sweat-shop conditions. These workers resisted the strike call, because they had nothing to benefit by a walkout, and they feared that Hillman's promise to the New York workers to bring back the bundles to New York might be carried out and result in the loss of their jobs. Hillman, however did not carry out his promise, and many cutting rooms were shut down in New York because of the above out-of-town shops having swallowed up their work.

In retaliation, the cutters' officials have held back their cooperation in the strike and manifestly sabotaged it in a number of cases where cutting rooms are operated in full force with the local not interfering even to the extent of placing pickets there.

The pledges of support and cooperation of the officials of the various branches in the strike appear, in the face of what is really happening, to be mere lip service. Each is concerned with his personal interests and is looking for his ends in this strike. The consequences of this situation are bound to be disastrous for the conditions of the workers. This orgy of sabotage and betrayal is proceeding with full speed behind the backs of the workers, and the workers will pay the penalty for their inactivity.

Towards a Split

The fight between the cliques in the A. C. W. organization must inevitably result in a split between the Cutters Union and the New York Joint Board and the ruin of the last vestiges of union conditions for cutters and tailors in New York shops. To prevent such disaster is the duty of the Left wing movement in the A. C. W.

Unity of the tailors and cutters must be made the central slogan of the Rank and File movement. The attempts at splitting the organizations to insure domination are clearly manifest in the maneuvers of the Hillman and Orlofsky cliques. If a split occurs, both cliques will justify it and each, under the pretense of saving the union, will widen the breach and bring more demoralization in the ranks of the membership. The Left wing must throw in its forces to launch a campaign to unite the rank and file of the cutters and tailors branches for the struggle against the maneuvers of their officials.

The Rank and File Committee must also give serious attention to the out-of-town situation. The out-of-town shops must be organized simultaneously with those of New York. The Rank and File Committee cannot directly undertake this work because it is by its very nature limited to work in shops controlled by the A. C. W. But this work can and should be undertaken by the N. T. W. I. U. The workers in the out-of-town shops should be approached with a message of genuine unionism in opposition to the fake unionism of Hillman and Company.

In addition to these two tasks the Rank and File Committee must make clear its policy to the A. C. W. membership. The effects of the past mistakes of the Left wing have not yet been obliterated in the minds of the masses. But those mistakes have never been made clear to the workers and there is even a great deal of confusion still left in the minds of Left wingers. This condition greatly hinders the development of the movement. It can be removed by an honest and frank discussion of past and present policies.

With a program adapted to solve the vital problems of the industry, and a correct policy the Left wing, in close cooperation with the N. T. W. I. U., will be enabled to undertake successfully the launching of a broad mass movement to defeat the Hillman machine in the New York organization and lay the foundation for revolutionary industrial unionism among the men's clothing workers.

—ALBERT ORLAND.

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EDITORIAL NOTES

FREE SPEECH AND THE LABOR MOVEMENT

1930 was a tough year for free speech under the stars and stripes, according to the eleventh annual report of the American Civil Liberties Union, published last week. The sharpening of the class struggle, with the state authorities everywhere on the offensive against the rights of the workers, is reflected in the total of 1,363 free speech prosecutions compiled by the Union in its report. Contrasted with 228 similar prosecutions in 1928 the showing for the past year is a revelation of the alarming encroachments which the "democracy" of capitalism has been making on the legal position of the workers' movement.

Communists have borne the "brunt of the attack," says the report, as was to be expected since they stand everywhere in the vanguard of the fight. But the labor movement, in all of its manifestations suffered wherever it came into conflict with the ruling class. Free speech is thus an issue of the movement as a whole. From all indications, the current year will show a still greater increase of the prosecutions and attacks and will magnify the importance of the issue to a corresponding degree. It deserves more attention and a more clearly defined attitude on the part of the proletarian vanguard than it has been showing up to now.

In our opinion, it is a great mistake to take the abrogation of free speech for granted as a proof that there is no justice under capitalism. We know that well enough, but the knowledge is small consolation. The labor movement and its Communist nucleus needs the maximum of free expression and should not surrender it lightly. It is one of the penalties the ruling class must pay for its parliamentary form of government that it promises democratic rights and imbues the masses with a belief in their existence and their right to them. The extent to which they are really granted is another question. It depends among other things, upon the strength and the militancy of the resistance to their curtailment. And for this resistance, the Communists alone—an insignificant minority—are not sufficient. The issue hangs upon the volume of support from the masses of the workers, and it also draws strength within limits from the democratic sentiments of sections of the petty bourgeoisie.

Viewed in this light, the Communists ought to make a real effort to put the issue of free speech on the agenda of the labor movement as a whole, not merely of its Communist wing. To do this effectively, they will have to put aside the infantile shrieks about "Fascism" and put the question as it really stands. The rulers of America say this is a free and democratic country with a constitution which guarantees freedom of speech. The Communists should answer: Very well, let us have a little of this freedom for legal activity. They should go to the labor organizations everywhere with this appeal and organize them to fight for it. They should demand these legal rights not only for Communists, but for all labor organizations and parties, as Lenin demanded of the provisional government in Russia.

The Communists in America, as the Bolsheviks in Russia under Kerensky, should insist upon free and open discussion of all questions and point of view in order that the workers may judge fairly for themselves. They should stop their hoodlump tactics of breaking up meetings and become the champions of free discussion.

WHAT IS A RENEGADE?

Denunciation is an indispensable weapon in the arsenal of the proletarian revolutionists. Lenin insisted on it and explained that unless reformists and betrayers were exposed and denounced by their proper name the workers would not know whom to trust in the movement of crisis. In recent years, we have seen this principle, like all of Lenin's teachings, perverted and distorted and turned into its opposite. Denunciation and epithet have been employed so widely—and so falsely—that they lost, for a time, much of their meaning and power. Nevertheless, Lenin's idea retains all its validity and is beginning to show itself clearly again through the fog of slander and fakery. Events have helped this as they help every revolutionary principle.

Let us take the word "renegade." This epithet for turncoats and traitors is a sword of razor-edge in the hands of the proletariat to be used sparingly—and always surely. If it is disloyally employed to hack indiscriminately in every dispute within the camp of the revolution, it loses its sharpness to cut down traitors on their way to the camp of the enemy. But this, unfortunately, is the way it has been used, as we have seen in America for the past three years.

Who will forget the cry of "renegade" which Lovestone, seconded by Foster, hurled at the American section of the Left Opposition. It did not destroy us; it is true, for genuine internationalists wear an armor against it. Misused in this shameful way, the word lost its power and significance for a time. It became a jest, as useless as a blunted sword. And yet the word means something, it remains a weapon in the hands of those who use it honestly. The incidents in Paterson have done much to restore the meaning of the word, to re-

sharpen the sword for the Communist workers.

The course of the National Textile Workers Union in Paterson deserves criticism, and readers of the *Militant* know we have not spared it. We have criticized the official party in that situation from the standpoint—as is the case with everything the Opposition on an international scale has criticized in the official line—that it weakens the position of Communism before the reformists and the bourgeoisie whom they serve. But the Paterson affair has brought forth another kind of criticism—a criticism of the reformists for "errors" which helped the development of the Communist union there. The authors of this brand of criticism are the Lovestoneites, the people who first called us renegades.

Lovestone and Gitlow are sitting cheek-by-jowl with the reformists and reactionaries in Paterson, but they attack their policy no less than we attack the policy of the National Textile Workers and the Communist party. They roundly score the dilatory tactics of their friends in the *Revolutionary Age* for July 25. "The delay," they say, "has been very costly." And why? Because it "made it possible for the National Textile Workers Union . . . to assume leadership and to take the initiative in calling a general strike in Paterson." And that is not all. The reformists, by their mistake, let the Communists break through on another sector. "The hesitation and delay," says the statement, "have also made it possible for the National Textile Workers Union to enter the Allentown strike situation and spread dissension and disruption there." Serious errors indeed.

Did the Mustettes make any more "mistakes" which Lovestone and Gitlow noticed? Yes, they made one more and it is pointed out in the *Revolutionary Age* for August 1. The amalgamated unions stayed at work after the N. T. W. called its strike. But that was wrong only because it is poor strategy. "Nor is it in the interests of the amalgamated unions," says the Lovestone statement, "and the workers that follow them that a large number of workers should be firmly convinced of the charges of the N. T. W. U. that the August 3 strike proposal was issued for the express purpose of breaking the strike of the N. T. W. U., in other words, that it is a strike-breaking proposal."

And in the same statement—while the N. T. W. U. members were on the picket line and the Associated and the United Textile Workers Unions were in the shops—the expellers of the Left Opposition from the Communist party complain of the delay which, they say, "made it possible for the National Textile Workers Union which has no base in the industry and lacks the confidence of the workers, to inject itself into the situation."

Yes, the word Renegade has a meaning in spite of all the disloyal use that has been made of it. Its meaning is written clear for all to see in the statements quoted above.

It is reported that the "Communist Party (Majority Group)" is going to change its name. It is high time.

—J. P. C.

Leon Trotsky Writes on Stalin's Latest Speech

A New Zig-zag and the New Dangers

Stalin's speech at the conference of the economists on June 23, is of exceptional interest. Not because it contains any deep generalizations, broad perspectives, precise summaries, clear practical indications. There is nothing of this sort. Clipped thoughts, as always, deliberately ambiguous formulations which may be twisted one way or the other, the casting of the blame upon the executors complete disharmony between conclusions and premises—all these qualities and features of bureaucratic inconsistency permeate Stalin's speech through and through. But out of the confused web of the speech, facts break through which can no longer be passed over in silence. These facts give the speech its genuinely political significance. If it should be liberated from the shell, the following will be the result: "The Left Opposition, this time too, proved to be right. All its warnings have been justified. But we, the bureaucrats, with our rude slander and with our oppressions of the Opposition, proved to be the fools." Stalin, it is understood, expressed these thoughts in different words. He continued, of course, to thunder at "Trotskyism" with cast iron banalities. But it is not the bureaucratic logic of Stalin which interests us, but rather the dialectics of the economic process which is mightier than the mightiest bureaucratic incompleteness of thought.

THE FIVE YEAR PLAN IN FOUR YEARS

We learn from the speech that the execution of the industrial plan presents a "variegated picture." There are branches which have, for five months yielded an excess of forty percent over the corresponding period last year, there are branches which have grown twenty to thirty percent, and finally, there are branches which have yielded only six to ten percent of growth, and even less than that. As if in passing, Stalin remarks that to the last category belong the coal industry and heavy metallurgy, that is, the real base of industrialization. What is the relation of the different parts of economy among themselves? On this score, there is no reply. Yet, upon the reply to this question depends the fate of the Five Year Plan. With a wrong computation of the parts, a house in construction may collapse at the third or the fourth storey. With incorrect planning, and what is still more important, with the incorrect regulation of a plan in the process of its execution, the crisis may unfold towards the very end of the Five Year Plan and create insurmountable difficulties for the utilization and development of its indubitable successes. Nevertheless, the fact that heavy industry has shown, instead of a thirty to forty percent growth, only a growth of six percent, "and even less than that," is covered up by Stalin with the meaningless, trivial phrase: "The picture is variegated."

From the same speech, we learn that "in a number of enterprises and economic organizations, they long ago (!) ceased to count, to calculate, to make up actual balances of incomes and expenditures." When one reads these lines, he does not believe his eyes: How is this so? What then does the leadership of

industry consist of if its effectiveness is not measured and not checked up in an ever more precise manner? We learn further that "the regime of economy . . . rationalization of industry have long ago (!) gone out of style". Does the speaker weigh his own words? Don't they sound like a monstrous slander of Soviet economy, and primarily a merciless indictment of the highest command? "It is a fact," Stalin continues, "that lately the costs of production in a whole series of enterprises started to rise." We know what such words as "here and there", "in a whole series of enterprises" mean with Stalin. This means that the speaker is afraid of the facts, sneers them up, and minimizes them. Under the words "in a whole series of enterprises" is concealed heavy industry: Yielding six percent increase instead of forty percent, it at the same time drives upward the costs of production, undermining in this manner the possibility of its further growth. In addition to this, it turns out that calculation is thrown overboard, and rationalization is out of style. Does not the alarming conclusion come to the fore that the actual situation is even darker than it is presented by the speaker?

How could this happen? Why and how have accounting and calculation been thrown overboard? Stalin keeps silent about it. Since when are the walls of the economic plan built, not according to plumb line but according to the eye? With his characteristic precision, Stalin replies: "Long ago." How is it that the leaders did not notice it? Stalin is silent. We will reply in his stead. Calculation, which was not ideal even before, because the Soviet state has only begun to learn to keep an accounting on a state scale, was thrown completely overboard from the time that the bureaucratic leadership substituted for Marxian analysis of economy and flexible regulation, the naked administrative spur. The co-efficients of growth have become questions of bureaucratic prestige. Where is there place here for calculation? That director or chairman of a trust proved to be the hero who "completed and exceeded" the plan, having robbed the budget and having laid a mine, in the form of bad quality of production, under the adjacent branches of economy. On the contrary, the economists who tried to calculate correctly all the elements of production and did not drive out the sacred bureaucratic records, constantly fell into the category of the penalized. Now we hear from Stalin that in industry there is an "uninterrupted working week on paper", "successes on paper" ("a paper", that is, a false, accounting. Did not the Opposition warn in every number of its *Bulletin* that naked administrative pressure is much more capable of accelerating accounting under orders, but not industry itself: state figures are far more flexible than steel and coal? Didn't we write dozens of times that the further Stalin leads the Five Year Plan, the more extinguished are the lanterns? This was, of course, proclaimed a counter-revolutionary slander. All the blockheads, all the rogues, yelled about the "defeatism" of the Left Opposition. But what does the phrase: "have long ago ceased to count, to calculate" mean if not that

the apparatus-men have extinguished the lanterns? If long ago, then why did the chief mechanic keep silent so long? We wrote about the extinguished lanterns two years ago. The question arises: can anyone more clearly, more categorically, attest to his inconsistency? Isn't it clear that the transformation of the Five Year Plan into a four plan was an act of the most light-minded adventurism?

The basic conclusion is pointed out quite precisely in the draft of the platform of the International Opposition. "The administrative chase after 'maximum' tempos must give way to the elaboration of optimum (the most advantageous) tempos which do not guarantee the fulfillment of the command of the day for display purposes, but the constant growth of economy on the basis of the dynamic equilibrium, with a correct distribution of domestic means and a broad, planned utilization of the world market". (Page 43.)

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORKING FORCE

Stalin informs us, for the first time with such clarity, that the execution of the plan is hindered by the lack, not only of skilled workers but of live working forces in general. This fact may appear improbable at first sight. The Russian village has included within itself, from time immemorial, obvious and hidden reserves of surplus population which, moreover, increased annually by hundreds of thousands. The growth of the Soviet farms, the collectivization and the mechanization of agriculture should naturally have increased the number of those migrating from the village. The danger, it would appear, proceeded from the formation of gigantic reserves of the army of labor. But no, it appears that the attraction of the peasants to the city has ceased completely. Is it not because the contradictions between the city and the village have disappeared? After all, in the third year of the Five Year Plan, we "entered into socialism". But no, in Stalin's last speech, we do not see anything about the realization of socialism. The speaker became much more modest and confined himself to a simple reference to the improvement of the position of the peasant poor. We have no intention to contest the fact itself. However, as an explanation of the stopping of the flow of people from the village, it is completely insufficient. Have the conditions of life of over one hundred million peasants improved so radically that the cities have lost the power of attraction for them? This might be the case only if we assumed that the position of the city workers did not rise simultaneously during this time but was stationary or even lowered. Stalin brings us right up to this harsh conclusion, without, however, calling it by its name.

The chief place in his speech is devoted to the fact that industry is undermined by the "general" movement from enterprise to enterprise. At a time when the flow from the village to the city is stopped completely, the turnover within industry and partly away from industry altogether has grown immensely. Stalin informs us that in the majority of enterprises the composition of the workers changes "during half a year or even a quarter of a year by at least

from thirty to forty percent". This figure, which would appear improbable had it not come from Stalin, will appear particularly threatening if we take into consideration the administrative struggle which the trade union bureaucracy, together with that of the party and the Soviets, led against the turnover for the past years. The proverb says, "Let well enough alone". The growth of a turnover signifies that under the conditions existing in the third year of the Five Year Plan, the working masses feel restless. The chief reason for the turnover is seen by the bureaucracy in the incorrect system of wages, in its too great equalization. No matter how this question should be solved—we shall return to this later—it does not in itself exhaust the problem of the turnover to any extent. If, during half a year or even a quarter, the workers of an enterprise are renewed "at least thirty to forty percent", this means that not only the skilled upper strata but the working mass as a whole are in a position of perpetual migration. According to the words of Stalin, the worker makes it his aim to "work a little and then to go elsewhere, to a different place, to seek fortune". In this benign, but in essence tragic phrase, Stalin, without noticing it, approaches the basic defect of the Five Year Plan: the rude disturbing of the economic balance to the detriment of the workers. Gigantic electric stations, factories, are being constructed, great quantities of machinery, tractors, are turned out, the village is being collectivized but the proletarians, who should be the basic core of this whole gigantic process, migrate at the same time from place to place in search of "fortune". No, the flow of working forces from the village to the city ceased not because the peasantry achieved some sort of an ideal well-being, but because the position of the workers—this must be said honestly, clearly, openly—extraordinarily worsened in the last period.

The draft platform of the International Left Opposition says: "The standard of living of the workers and their role in the state—is the highest criterion of socialist successes." If the Stalinist bureaucracy would approach the tasks of planning and of a living regulation of economy from this standpoint, it would not miss fire so wildly, every time, it would not be compelled to conduct a policy of extravagant zig-zags, and would not be confronted by political dangers.

The Platform of the Russian Opposition warned five years ago: "The Mensheviks, agents of the bourgeoisie among the workers, point triumphantly to the material wretchedness of our workers. They are trying to rouse the proletariat against the Soviet state, to induce our workers to accept the bourgeois-Menshevik slogan, 'Back to capitalism.' The complacent official who sees 'Menshevism' in the Opposition's insistence upon improving the material condition of the workers, is performing the best possible service to Menshevism. He is pushing the workers under its yellow banner." (Page 42.)

One must not deceive himself. The physical migrations of the workers may become the pre-condition for political migrations.

(To Be Continued)
—LEON TROTSKY.

Problems of the Spanish Revolution

Mistakes of Comrade Maurin

(Continued from Last Issue)

The Theory of the Four Revolutions

According to comrade Maurin, there are four revolutions to be realized in Spain: the economic revolution, the political revolution, the religious revolution, and the national revolution.

This way of putting the question is wrong from every angle and has absolutely nothing in common with Marxism. All revolutions have an economic character. If they did not have, there would be no such revolutions, for they are characterized precisely by the fact that they radically transform economic relations. On the other hand an economic revolution which is not at the same time political would have no meaning, inasmuch as politics, as has been said time and again, is nothing but "concentrated economics". In this way, one cannot speak of an economic revolution and a political revolution as two distinct and separate ideas.

The religious revolution that upset Europe in the nineteenth century was precisely an economic and political revolution, characterized by the struggle of the bourgeoisie against feudalism, which had found its principal defender in the papacy. In Spain, in reality, it is not the problem of the religious revolution that is posed but rather the problem of the relations between the church and state, which is only one aspect of the bourgeois-democratic revolution. That is why in reality none of the religious revolutions of the sixteenth century can be considered as such. Religion is only the formality which covers up the struggle of capitalist society against feudalism.

The same can be said about the problem of nationalities. In our country, it is not the problem of a national revolution that is posed, but rather of a movement of emancipation of the na-

tionalties, which is simply nothing but one aspect of the bourgeois-democratic revolution.

In Spain, therefore, there is only one revolution to be carried out, as a consequence of the contradiction existing between the productive relations and the juridical-political superstructure. And this revolution can have at its head only the working class, establishing its dictatorship.

The Question of Nationalities

In dealing with the so-called "national revolution", Maurin made a declaration which produced great astonishment, not among the intellectuals of the *Ateneo*, as he claims, but among the Communists. "I am going to make an assertion," he said, approximately, "which may cause amazement: The Catalan-Balearic Communist Federation is separatist."

The astonishment of the Communists could not be more justified. The emancipation movement of the oppressed nationalities constitutes a revolutionary factor of the first order and plays a role of extraordinary importance in the bourgeois-democratic revolution. The Communist could by no means adopt an attitude of prohibition towards this movement, disdainfully considering that it "is an affair of the bourgeoisie" or combatting it in the name of an abstract internationalism which only serves in reality as a cover for imperialism, as a defense of despotic centralism. The Communist, who is the vigorous enemy of all oppression, will pronounce himself determinedly for the recognition of the right of the peoples to dispose freely of their destinies, including their right to separation from the state of which they form a part if that is their wish. On this point, there cannot be the slightest ambiguity. But, does this mean that the Communist should declare himself partisan of independence? In no way, least of all insofar as the Communists

of the oppressed nations are concerned. The duty of the Communist will consist of fighting against all chauvinism which seeks to liquidate the class struggle into a national unity, and of placing above the national differences the solidarity of the proletariat of all the peoples.

Maurin would not have adopted a fundamentally erroneous orientation in this highly important question if, instead of turning his back contemptuously to the Russian revolution, he had drunk directly at the fountain of the theory and the practice of the Bolshevik party. Lenin left us a perfectly constructed doctrine on the national question. Maurin ought to have drawn his inspiration from it, giving up his sterile attempt to create an absurd theory about "national revolution".

National Convention or Dictatorship of the Proletariat?

Insofar as the appreciation of the events in Spain is concerned, there is one point upon which all the tendencies of Communism concur: the Spanish revolution finds itself today in the bourgeois-democratic stage.

The differences come forward when it is a matter of settling the strategic and tactical line. The Stalinists, copying slavishly Lenin's formula of 1905-1907, finally abandoned by Lenin himself in 1917—and not its spirit—put forward the slogan of the "democratic dictatorship of the workers and the peasants" as if between the bourgeois republic and the dictatorship of the proletariat there could exist an intermediate regime. This conception led the Chinese revolution to an enormous disaster. The Communist Left Opposition, drawing its inspiration not from dead formulae but from living experience, declares that the bourgeois-democratic revolution can only be realized by the dictatorship of the proletariat. The Communists must not lose sight of this strategic line of

their position and they have to subordinate their tactics to it. This does not exclude, but on the contrary, it presupposes democratic slogans in the present period towards the end that the worker and peasant masses shall convince themselves, upon the basis of their own experience, that the only road leading to their emancipation is the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship.

Maurin who according to his declarations, is not an "orthodox" Communist (what does he mean by this? for up to now the orthodox Communist has everywhere been the one who remained true to the doctrine of revolutionary Marxism) but who, in reality, endeavors to adopt an intermediate line between Stalinism and the Communist Left Opposition, does not pronounce himself either for the position of the former or for that of the latter; but, as we have said, politics does not tolerate a vacuum; and that is why, seeing himself obliged to adopt a definite position, he chooses the road of the radical petty bourgeoisie. "The Constituent," he says, "cannot realize the democratic revolution. This must be the work of a national convention directed by the advanced elements of the *Ateneo* of Madrid." The author of these lines finds himself obliged to combat vigorously this false point of view which, should it triumph, would bring incalculable evil to the Spanish revolution. No assembly of the bourgeois democratic type—we contend—can realize the democratic revolution under the present circumstances. The Jacobins of today are the Communists and not the advanced elements of the *Ateneo*, typical representatives of the radical petty bourgeoisie condemned to impotence. The sole organism equivalent today to the French convention of the eighteenth century cannot be other than the congress of the Soviets or of the revolutionary Juntas, instruments of the dic-

tatorship of the proletariat and the supreme expression of proletarian democracy as against bourgeois democracy. The point of view of Maurin can only lead to diverting the masses from their true objectives and to strengthening their illusions in the possibility of a deep-going democratic revolution realized by the petty bourgeoisie.

The author of these lines has been bound to Maurin by an old and sincere friendship and it is not without sorrow that he has decided to combat his erroneous points of view. But, *amleus Plato, sed magis amica veritas* (Plato is my friend, but truth I hold more dear).

Only ideological clarity, the indispensable basis for effective action, can avert disaster for the Spanish revolution. We would like to believe, notwithstanding, that Maurin—although since his lecture in Madrid he has had disturbing relapses—will correct his mistakes and decide to rectify his equivocal position. It is ardently desired by all those who regard him as a force of the first order in the Spanish Communist movement. Barcelona.

—ANDRES NIN.

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Editorial Board

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