

WORKERS  
OF THE  
WORLD.  
UNITE

# THE MILITANT



Weekly Organ of the Communist League of America [Opposition]

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## Reply of the Steel Workers

Preparations to Resist Wage Cuts on the Order of the Day

It has already been amply demonstrated that the 10 percent wage cut decided upon by the board of directors of the United States Steel corporation, affecting about 220,000 workers on Oct. 1, became the signal to a whole series of wage cuts for a number of the biggest industrial concerns, such as the General Motors, the United States Rubber Co., the Colorado Fuel and Iron Co., the B. F. Goodrich Co., the Northern Pacific Railroad, the biggest Arizona copper companies, several New England textile concerns, and the other major steel corporations. Similarly the reaction of the steel workers to this slashing of their standard will in many respects be determining for the working class as a whole.

**Wages and Living Costs**  
By Ethelbert Stewart, the United States Commissioner of Labor Statistics, we are informed that since December 1925, during that period as the basic figure of 100 both for cost of living of the American workman and for total payroll in manufacturing industry, when compared to June 1931, there has been a total drop of only 15 per cent in the cost of living but of 40 per cent in the total payroll. These are telling figures. The total payroll, of course, includes in this case the present heavy unemployment. But that is precisely the biggest curse of capitalist society today. When one adds to this the drab prospect of much more deep-going wage slashes, as already haughtily proclaimed by the barons of finance and industry, the outlook for the working class indeed becomes one fraught with sinister import.

To what extent and how effectively can the steel workers take up a serious resistance to these attacks? For the moment this is quite a crucial question. What the attitude is of the American Federation of Labor leadership and what can be expected from them we have so often pointed out in these columns. Throughout the whole present period of wage cutting, the bombastic statements by Green and other A. F. of L. officials about "standing like the rock of Gibraltar against wage cuts", are just so much empty chatter. It is not associated with an appeal to the workers and preparations for their resistance; and such could not be expected from imperialist agents. Their empty proclamations to organize the automobile industry and the Southern textile field were not even worth the paper they were written on. Now they address themselves to the employers saying that wage cuts will not help the recovery of industry. But, it is, of course, a well known fact that the employers' aim is to unload the whole burden of the crisis upon the backs of the workers as a means of facilitating an industrial recovery. Hence the wage cuts.

The steel workers cannot look for any leadership or assistance from the A. F. of L. The difficulties in their way are indeed great. Herded into their miserable hovels, working and living under the most brutal industrial and political oppression, with armies of privately owned police and a complete spy system watching their every move within the plants and within the company owned cities in which they live, only the greatest power of solidarity and consciously planned militant organization can batter down such walls. It is a well-known fact that the steel barons have already before this wage cut announcement taken all possible precaution to forestall effective resistance. Undoubtedly they even have their spy system busily engaged not only in attempting to prevent any sign of organization but also to provoke abortive actions which can easily be defeated.

**Past Experiences**  
The steel industry is rich in experiences of spontaneous strikes on a local scale arising out of grievances, of special conditions, within single plants. Though entirely unorganized, many such strikes have been successfully won by the workers. But the industry is also rich in experiences of strikes of a national character around issues of national importance "won" by the employers. The powers of the steel trust are as mighty today as before. The forces of state suppression and the private armies of police and gunmen are as much at their disposal as ever. But today we also have all the potentialities of a coming new wave of rising resistance of the working class in face of which the power of the mightiest trusts might be reduced to rather small proportions. In this lies real hope for the present.

It will be recalled that during the time of the mighty wave of organization of the steel workers in 1919, the labor movement as a whole was experiencing an upward curve. A growth of organization and a growth of militancy. So much so, that the reactionary A. F. of L. leaders found themselves compelled to engage in this campaign of organization and strike. That they did it reluctantly is true. That they used every opportunity for betrayal is equally true. Nevertheless there was an almost irresistible sweep of organization and struggle. And yet the steel trust, aided by these factors mentioned, "won" the battle and since crushed practically all remnants of union organization.

Today, the possibilities for dissension, division and betrayal of these imperialist agents are lessened. The possibilities for Communists and militants as a

real factor in leadership of organization and resistance are much greater. These become two additional positive points of real value in favor of the steel workers. We are again facing an issue of national proportions and importance—a wage slashing throughout the industry. But the steel workers as yet remain practically without any trace of organization or actual preparation for struggle.

In face of this situation serious-minded revolutionists can look upon with deep apprehension upon the attitude of the official party leaders proclaiming, and apparently pushing forward for local strikes against the present wage cut, expecting them, as stated by Foster, to "spread like wildfire". This is not the method or tactic to pursue. Local strikes in face of this national issue carry all the dangers of becoming abortive of facilitating isolation of the most militant sections to become easily crushed as a means of administering decisive defeats before the main forces can be collected; before any adequate preparations and organization can be accomplished.

Unquestionably the wage cut in the steel industry can become a real incentive toward organization. That itself is the main task. Amongst revolutionists there should be no dispute about that. Organization in preparations for a nationwide strike should be the issue at present.

—ARNE SWABECK.

## 23,000 Strike in Lawrence, Mass. Will Left Wing Repeat Errors?

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As we go to press, the report is received of the walkout of 23,000 textile workers in Lawrence, Mass., the second strike of the Lawrence workers in recent months. The alignment of the forces is not yet clear as this is written, but the wide scope of the strike and the militancy and determination of the workers is attested by the speed and numbers with which they have struck against the mill barons.

The A. F. of L. unions appear to be on the scene first, despite the fact that the last strike enabled the Left wing, through the National Textile Workers Union, to get a foothold in that famous textile district. The characteristic blunders of the Stalinist leadership at that time caused the Left wing to lose all that it had gained and more than that, what it might have gained. Past experi-

ences are eloquent and bitter testimony to the treachery of the A. F. of L. leadership, particularly in the recent textile strikes. The opportunity for a militant strike and a militant leadership is at hand in Lawrence now. But it will be lost fatally if the Left wing pursues the policy of sectarianism, bombast and bluff which has just had such catastrophic results in Paterson. Will the sober and responsible Left wing militants continue to allow the Stalinist incompetents to continue their rejection of the Leninist united front, a rejection which has been proved so ruinous of late?

See page FOUR of this issue for comrade Trotsky's keen analysis of the lessons of the recent referendum for the dissolution of the Prussian Landtag and the policy of the German Stalinists.

## Hoover Announces New «Crisis Cure»

The latest Hoover conference, this time with the bankers who dominate the financial and industrial life of the country, and then, formally, with representatives in Congress of both parties, has brought forth a new panacea for the curing of the ills which are eating into the vitals of American imperialism. The new apostolic revelation from the White House advocates the establishment of a central corporation, with a revolving fund of at least half a billion dollars, which is to rediscount banking assets which are not now eligible for such service at Federal Reserve Banks. The aim is to free the so-called "frozen assets" of the smaller banks which have been hit in past months, and further to set up the means

for furnishing loans to industry. In the background of the new plan hovers the question of foreign debts to the United States, and, by that, the all-pervading question of reparations. On this, Hoover makes only a vague reference, without indicating that there is to be any change from the policy enunciated by him at the time the debts-reparations moratorium was first proposed.

Only those who are permanently gullible will find it possible to believe that the new Hoover plan of action will succeed in liquidating the acute crisis through which the United States is passing. The principal problem for the American ruling class, and its governmental agent, Hoover, to solve, is that of setting the wheels of industry into motion on a scale which would at least approximate that of the late "prosperity" period. This problem Hoover has not even come close to solving by his numerous "conferences" in the past, and surely not by his oracular pronouncements that the "depression" was but slight and temporary. Freeing the frozen assets of hundreds of banks is a stop-gap in the situation. But it does not accomplish what is imperatively needed by capitalism: the extension of the market. The wage cuts have only succeeded in narrowing down the standards of living of the masses throughout the world has only accentuated this state of affairs. Falling commodity prices, which have accentuated the decline in foreign trade, do not yet appear to have come to a halt in their careening downward.

Will the new central rediscount ban solve these key problems? Hardly. That it may bring a momentary relief to some of the banks, particularly in the rural sections, is possible. But the vital need of the millions who have been suffering, the most intense misery since the commencement of the crisis, the foodless homes and the homeless families, can look forward to no amelioration of their lot. Under the best possible circumstances imaginable, with the setting into motion of the productive apparatus once more, the burdens of the wage cuts, the standing army of unemployed which is now and will be a permanent phenomenon in the United States, will weigh like mountains upon the living conditions of the American proletariat.

Each new plan produced by the capitalist sages and statesmen only demonstrates once more their hopeless bankruptcy. Even the respite that they may gain are only breathing spaces for the ruling class in their remorseless march towards the end. It is the workers' mission to speed the day to force concessions from bloated wealth, to act with resolution and militancy in the struggle for a new society.

## Where Is Rakovsky?

Where is Christian Rakovsky? What is Stalin doing to him? What is happening with the unbending fighter against the imperialist war, the soldier of the Bolshevik revolution, the founder of the Communist International, the head of the Ukrainian Soviet Republic, the Bolshevik Ambassador to France, the sterling leader

of the Bolshevik-Leninist Opposition, expelled from the Russian party after the Fifteenth Congress and buried alive in exile?

The reports we receive are highly alarming. Neither in Moscow nor in Leningrad has anybody exact information about where Rakovsky is and under what conditions he is living. Two versions are being whispered about: according to one, Rakovsky is to have been transferred to Astrachan and placed under a "special regime"; according to the other, he is to have been interned as being in an "abnormal mental state". The versions are not contradictory. If Rakovsky is at Astrachan, which is quite possible, he is not at liberty, otherwise everybody who knows it. The "special regime" is the regime of complete isolation. It is quite possible and even probable that in order to explain away this isolation, the Stalinist agents are referring to Rakovsky's mental state. In one of his last reports, Yaroslavsky quoted certain letters and declarations of Rakovsky. Yaroslavsky went to Yagoda, of the G. P. U., to have him furnish political arguments to justify the crimes against the Left Opposition. Yaroslavsky's latest reports were enough to indicate the preparation of new repressions against this old revolutionist. These suppositions coincided entirely, as we see, with the absence of any exact information about Rakovsky and with the rumors spread about him.

Rakovsky was already deported to Astrachan before being transferred to Barnaul. The climate of Astrachan, a malarial breeding ground, is disastrous for Rakovsky. At the time of Stalin's "liberalism", Rakovsky was transferred from Astrachan upon the insistence of the doctors. If he has been sent back there, it means that Stalin has set himself

the immediate task of exterminating Rakovsky in the shortest possible time! This corresponds entirely with the general policy of Stalin, with his personal character and above all with his position at the present moment.

With the destruction of both the Left and the Right Oppositions, Stalin has finally revealed himself before the party and the proletariat. Economic developments have reached an extremely critical point. It is now impossible to throw the responsibility upon anyone. Before the working class, before its vanguard, stands the question of changing the policy, of changing the regime in the party and the Soviets—consequently, the question, above all, of the political fate of Stalin and his clique. That explains the new fury of repression against the Left Opposition: on the one hand, the base falsification of Yaroslavsky against Trotsky; on the other, the sinister measures of Stalin against Rakovsky. These complement each other.

Stalin is determined to achieve the complete physical annihilation of the thousands of imprisoned and exiled Left Oppositionists in the U. S. S. R., the flower of the Bolshevik core of the movement. Above all is he set upon sending Rakovsky to his grave. We say this openly and place the responsibility where it belongs.

To allow such an act to go by unchallenged by the militant workers would be a shameful calamity. The voices of protest must be raised so loudly and insistently that Stalin is compelled to retreat from his diabolical plan of extermination. In the party, in the Left wing organizations, everywhere, the demand must be made: Release the fighters of the October revolution! Stop the repressions against the Left Opposition! And above all, hands off Christian Rakovsky!

## What About Paterson?

The Stalinists Unload Responsibility for Their Bankruptcy

The October 5, 1931, issue of the *Daily Worker* contains the following astounding letter on its editorial page from an organizer of the National Textile Workers Union and a reply by the acting editor of the party's central organ, which we quote here in full:

**'WANTED': INFORMATION**  
"Dear Jorge," writes a comrade from South Carolina:—

"I see by the papers that Bill Murdoch is still national secretary of the National Textile Workers Union. This is interesting to me, as I am an organizer for that union, but 'way down South.' I had thought he might be still in jail, or deported by now.

"And speaking of mislaid strikes, as you did the other day, I see a little story on the second page of today's *Daily Worker*, which implies that the Paterson strike is over, when it says: "During the strike, the militancy . . ." etc.

"This also is of special interest to me, since I am doing N. T. W. U. work.

I read the *Daily* every day, also *Labor Unity* and the *Southern Worker* each week, but I have no idea if the Paterson strike is still on, won, lost or anything about it. Maybe you can enlighten me. "I believe the N. T. W. U. had a National Council meeting on September 5, where undoubtedly some important matters were discussed. I would be interested to learn what took place. As I have not heard a word from the National Office of the N. T. W. U. since the early part of August, in spite of repeated requests, possibly you can let me have a few facts."

"Well, we knew that the comrade was 'sold down the river', but we are handicapped in answering by grape-vine telegram as the old abolitionists used to do.

"Firstly, we don't know, either, what has become of the Paterson strike. Maybe there never was a strike and we just imagined it. Maybe there was and maybe it's still on. We don't know and it seems doubtful whether the organizer of it knows, either.

"Maybe, in fact, there just ain't any National Textile Workers Union at all. Maybe it's what the philosophers call a

'social myth'. And maybe, finally, the Trade Union Unity League might do something about it."

The bewilderment if the Southern organizer is entirely understandable. For many days, the *Worker* has not printed a single word about the Paterson strike, as though it had never taken place. For weeks before that, the party leaders in charge of the N. T. W. U. forces in Paterson blared out, in big headlines and long stories, the announcement of their fabulous successes in the strike. Lacking actual support from the bulk of the silk workers, due to the radically false policy pursued by the Stalinists, the latter sought every day to make up for this lack by abuse, faked stories, bluff and bombast. At virtually every stage of the strike, the Left wing found itself to be outwitted by the A. F. of L.-Muste-Lovestone combination, which was itself sedulously preparing to surrender the strike and the strikers.

The proposals made by the Militant, which urged the Left wing to become the banner-bearer of the fight for unity of the strikers, were rejected by the callously cynical strategists of the Stalin school. They were going to prove how superior was their line of conduct in the strike.

Now the proof is evident to all. The party and Left wing forces have suffered a crushing defeat. What is left of the strike is apparently in the hands of reactionary fakers and their "progressive" strump-holders. The *Daily Worker* does not even presume to speak of the strike any longer. Harrison George, acting editor of the *Worker*, member of the Political Bureau, highest body of the party, professes a complete ignorance about what has happened to the strike! Under cover of dull wit, George acknowledges what the party has not dared to grant publicly: that the result of the party's participation in Paterson is an admission of complete, disgraceful, unextinguished bankruptcy.

George pretends not to know a thing about the strike. Quite a comprehensive reply for a member of the almighty (Continued on page 2)

## OPEN FORUM

Oct. 9th. THE RISE AND FALL OF THE MACDONALD LABOR GOVT  
Lecture by Arne Swabek

Oct. 16th. Lessons of Recent Strike Struggles  
(Coal miners and Paterson Textile strikes)

Lecture by James P. Cannon  
Oct. 23rd. Communism and Syndicalism in Spain

Lecture by Max Shachtman  
Oct. 30th. Tom Mooney's Appeal for a United Front

Lecture by James P. Cannon  
LABOR TEMPLE, 14th St., and 2nd Ave.  
Admission: 25 Cents

Unemployed admitted free with Unemployed Council card

Questions and Discussion

## Second National Conference Marks Step Forward

The second national conference of the Communist League of America (Opposition) has completed its tasks through a four days session of fruitful discussion held in New York City, September 24 to 27 inclusive. In the unanimous opinion of all delegates it recorded a substantial forward step for the Left Opposition in taking account of the past, both of achievements and of shortcomings, as well as in its adoption of a guiding policy for future work.

A completely free and untrammelled discussion during a preceding sixty days period, conducted without any trace of the factional or bureaucratic encumbrances which have now become the rule in the official parties, culminated at this conference in such a way that the delegates could return to their branches with a conviction of having attained further strength to the future cadres of the American Communist movement. This does not mean that no difference of viewpoints were presented, for example, on such issues as an evaluation of present trend of economic and political processes as well as in regards to interpretation of the role of the Left Opposition in its practical tasks. There were such

differences. However, in every fundamental aspect the discussion resulted in practically unanimous conclusions.

With comrade Coover from Minneapolis in the chair for the first day's session, the credential committee reported the following branches represented: Toronto, Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, St. Louis, Kansas City and Minneapolis. Smaller branches, such as Montreal, New Haven and Richmond, could not see their way to send delegates and in general bearing upon reducing the size of the delegation, for example, from such distant points as Chicago and Minneapolis. The delegates were practically exclusively workers direct from the shops, many unemployed and compelled to beat their way to the conference or to travel on local expenses; hence, the inevitable reduction of size. Not only that but some regularly elected delegates, because of these economic reasons, had to be replaced by alternatives. In this respect a certain weakness became manifest by the absence of those experienced comrades who could otherwise have contributed much.

In spite of these handicaps, the second conference succeeded as expected in

marking a new stage when compared to the first held a little better than two years ago. At the first conference the pivotal point became the one of elaboration of a platform based upon the general international views of the Left Opposition with an endeavor to apply it in the sense of building a functioning group in the United States and Canada.

Compared to this, the second conference could record a developing degree of maturity. Several experiences were already at hand not only of results of our propaganda activities but also of our becoming a factor of actual intervention in the Communist movement. Thus it had a firmer foundation to build upon and could further elaborate these views in conformity with the additional requirements of a situation of intensifying developments in the class struggle. Fully cognizant of this more advanced stage, the second conference adopted in full the views contained in the various theses presented by the National Committee, endorsed its stewardship during the past period and decided to continue the leadership with an addition of two members to the National Committee. Thus the committee is now constituted with the

following membership: Martin Abern, James P. Cannon, Vincent Dunne, Albert Grotzer, Hugo Oehler, Max Shachtman, Carl Skoglund, Maurice Spector and Arne Swabek.

It cannot be denied that since the first conference, that is, during the early period following it, a certain organizational slump set in, which naturally also had its political repercussions. The center became greatly weakened, the necessary means for carrying on the work were seriously curtailed and naturally elements of friction. One of the blows was expressed in the inability to continue the weekly publication of the *Militant* which had begun in November 1929, about one year after the first expulsions of Left Oppositionists. Yet the great vitality of the organization, the power of the Left Opposition platform made it possible to weather this period with only minor disorganization in a few branches. So much so that capitulations or actual loss of membership during these trying difficulties were exceedingly rare within our ranks.

This experience the conference faced (Continued on page 3)

affected in their pay—a stand which has already brought promises from the government of possible readjustment. But precisely because there exists no capable Communist leadership the movement seems likely to come to nothing.

It was necessary for the Party to enter this struggle perfectly clear about two things: the immediate steps to be taken by the workers, led by the party, to meet the Government's attack; the organization necessary and the ways of fighting; and the role of a revolutionary party in such a situation. On both these points the party blundered—it still avoids any clear answer to the question being asked by all workers "How are we to fight!" There can only be one reply since in such a situation the workers have only one weapon to commence such a fight with—general strike action. The party leadership asked whether strike action is their policy reply that strike action is a "weapon that needs to be used "wisely". True enough—but coming from those who for the last four years have sought strikes on every little protest, have held up ridiculous "immediate demands for the workers to strike for, who have used the strike weapon on very "unwisely" and mainly to impress their Stalinist pay-master, it signifies a cowardly running away from the issues of the day. For the present Party campaign of demonstrations is meaningless and merely a parallel campaign to that of the I. L. P. If it is not run for the purpose of securing general action by the workers. When this is pointed out and when the results of this policy are seen in secret maneuvers with Maxton, Kirkwood and Brockway, the reply of the present leadership is to attack the party comrades of the "Left" and allow numerous right errors to go unchecked. Probably nothing could show the essentially reformist attitude of the Party leadership more strikingly than their attitude towards the sailors. The cuts in pay of the sailors received no attention from the Party and were

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# IN THE INTERNATIONAL OF LABOR

## Reviews and News of the Working Class and Revolutionary Movements

### GERMANY

## THE COMING WINTER

(Continued from Last Issue)

The special acuteness of the German crisis rests upon the position into which German capitalism landed through the end of the war. It lost substantial sources of raw material and its best markets. On the other hand, it established, with the aid of foreign credits, a huge productive apparatus which it could never utilize fully, which burdened it enormously, and part of which it cannot yet decide to liquidate. This is the actual reason for the special German crisis; not the Young Plan, as the Fascist demagogues say and the Centrists parrot after them. How little a change in the Young Plan could influence the crisis is shown by the absolute lack of success of the Hoover moratorium. The German bourgeoisie, which has become completely dependent upon the big powers, must fight for more in order to achieve its imperialist emancipation. The world economic crisis, which accentuated all the foreign political relations and strivings, and illuminated their direct connection with domestic policy, also evoked a turn in German foreign policy, which is represented by the Bruening of the emergency decrees, German imperialism, in possession of a powerful productive apparatus, and on the other hand pressed by the crisis, places its claims to equal rights against the French striving for hegemony. We recall the speeches of Minister Treviranus on the Polish corridor, the armored cruiser construction, Bernsdorff's disarmament demands in the League of Nations, the Russian credits, and finally, as the crowning of the whole, the German-Austrian customs union.

The German bourgeoisie suffered for the time being a crushing defeat. Not only in Geneva, but by the withdrawal of credits, it was driven by France, in the bank crash, to the very edge of the abyss. French imperialism, checkmated the game of the Eastern orientation by the Russo-French pact—and yet the German bourgeoisie has not capitulated as yet. This is above all things the expression of its internal strength, which even made possible this whole foreign political maneuver. It endeavors, by squeezing down upon the toilers to the last ounce, to hold out by the so-called self-aid until it receives aid from America or England, which will have to oppose a too strong growth of French influence. That is its second "trump". A capitulation to France would be the expression of its growing internal difficulties.

We see what enormous importance the development of the American crisis has for the fate of the German revolution.

### The Policy of the German C. P.

We have already seen that the bourgeoisie could stand all the blows it received with the aid of the Social Democratic Party. We must, however, raise the question: how could the S. D. P. remain the leader of the starving millions of workers for so long a time? Formerly, it was able to keep the workers away from Communism by the preservation of small reforms. But today, it no longer preserves these small reforms, but rather participates in the most far-reaching elimination of them. A continued existence of the S. D. P. with such a scope in the present crisis can only be explained by the absolutely false and powerless policy of the Communist party. An examination of its policy, unfortunately, confirms this assumption to the highest degree. On the basis of the Centrist construction of the third period, the policy of the C. P. rested upon three pillars: the acute revolutionary situation (1929!), social-fascism, founding of new trade unions. There was no policy of united front. By the "turn" of 1930-1931, the estimation of the situation was indeed moderated and a policy of the united front schematically dictated; the pillars of social-fascism and their own trade unions, however, remained.

With regard to social-fascism, the Left Opposition repeatedly pointed out the absolutely theoretical falsity of this conception. In practice, it formed an insurmountable wall between Communist and social democratic workers.

Separate trade union organizations (R. G. O.—Red Trade Union Organizations) could not even embrace one-fifth of the party membership. They are about one-hundredth as large as the reformist unions. As a result, it is also incapable of effectively influencing the daily struggles of the proletariat. In the trade unions themselves, the influence of the Communists, who are either expelled or else bound hand and foot by the ultra-Leftist policy, is reduced to nothing. The bourgeois press reports triumphantly that this year's trade union congress was the first since the war at which there was not a single Communist party delegate.

Neither could the party succeed in the organization of the enormous unemployed masses, for, with the deceptive expectation of an automatic radicalization of the unemployed, it rejected the proposals of the Left Opposition for forming a united front with the slogans of Russian credits, etc. The struggle against Fascism offered the best possibility of putting the party at the head of the proletariat. Here too a luckless policy destroyed everything. After the party had pursued a big-mouthed ostrich policy towards the growth of Fascism, it was seized with panic before the September

elections. Instead of vanquishing Fascism by a proletarian ideology, it endeavored to smash it by adapting itself to the Fascist ideology. There appeared the program for "national and social emancipation", the slogan of the "people's revolution" was proclaimed instead of the proletarian revolution, and finally, a direct united front was concluded with the Fascists at the referendum. This opportunistic policy, which is dictated solely by vote-catching endeavors and not by the actual relationships of the class struggle, which overlooks the fact that the united front is possible with the social democratic workers on the basis of a common principled basis of the class struggle, that there is no such basis with the blood-stained Fascist murderers, brought the C. P. G., outside of a few bankrupted lieutenants, nothing but confusion in its own ranks and a strengthened mistrust of many honest and class-conscious workers.

One would, however, fall into error in assuming that the party is not growing. The elementary pressure of the crisis is so great that it grows in spite of its policy. At all events, the fluctuations are so enormous (forty percent in 1930—fluctuation appears to be a concomitant of Stalinism) that it does not find it possible to constitute real cadres. Since the old, experienced members are mostly expelled or driven into passivity, the quality is a bad one. This is shown by the spread of anti-Semitism which is even rampant in the party press. That is how it is possible that in spite of all the election successes and in spite of the numerical strength, the party is incompetent in the decisive moments of extra-parliamentary action: in the economic struggles, in the struggle against the emergency decrees, in the bank crash. Of course, the party is completely bureaucratized; in actuality, there are no discussions and no elections. Corruption is inevitable as a concomitant of bureaucratism. It is an expression of the political bureaucratization of the party that one day it can make an unprincipled united front with the Fascists against the "social-Fascists" in the Prussian referendum; both overnight, upon command from above, without inquiring of the membership.

This disproportion between the strength and inner power of the party and the objectively revolutionary situation (however complicated it may be by Fascism) explains the otherwise obscure development of Germany. The objective situation remains the primary measure of the perspective. The objective situation is: sharpening of the crisis; collapse of banks and factories; rise of unemployment; decline of unemployment support; decline of wages; increase of hunger. The objection situation is: further collapse of the petty bourgeoisie in town and country. Even the bourgeoisie, at the sharp curves of the breath-taking decline, lives through moments of completely hopeless despair. Their old parties are disintegrating.

In the proletariat, dissatisfaction is constantly on the increase. Weak as the will to struggle still is, the will to unity is nevertheless great. All these phenomena permit the assumption that despair outside the factories and hunger inside the factories will lead to spontaneous outbreaks this Winter. All this, however, can only lead to the victory of reaction, which has up to now constantly and boldly attacked, unless the Communist party understands how to assemble and to lead the majority of the proletariat. The premises for this would be a re-arming of the party down to the ranks. That such a re-arming is possible in a very short time is demonstrated by the history of the Bolshevik party in April 1917. A re-establishment of the party upon a real united front tactic in the economic struggles, with democratic slogans, in the struggle against Fascism and Bruening, would give the party good prospects for the seizure of power. The Left Opposition is fighting for the propagation of the slogan which alone can make the situation fruitful. It examines the magnificent experiences which unfolded before its very eyes in order to learn from them, and it fights in the ranks of Communism for the revolution, come how it may. Berlin, September 1931.

—ERVIN BAUER.

## What About Paterson?

(Continued from page 1)

Political Bureau! But it is quite certain that the workers in the field and in the ranks are ignorant of what the outcome has been. And that because the irresponsible cavaliers in charge of the party have neither told them, nor attempted to make an explanation, nor attempted to draw the tragic lessons from the results, nor attempted to examine into the "line" in the light of experiences gained—in a word: the Posters, Browders and Georges perpetrated a crime against the movement with their obstinately stupid policy in Paterson, and they now conveniently wash their hands of the whole matter—"We don't know what has become of the Paterson strike" . . . and they don't seem to care.

George insinuatingly refers to the guilt of the "T. U. U. L. (which) might do something about it". The trick will not work. These cheap politicians are trying to unload their joint responsibility upon Foster alone (who is the formal head of the T. U. U. L.), because Browder, George and Co. are conducting an underground factional fight against Foster. The responsibility for the Paterson tragedy rests upon the shoulders of all of them. Let them explain. Let the worker-Communists in the party call the bureaucrats and their policies to task!

## British Crisis Sharpens

### Militant Correspondents Describe Moods of the Workers

(Continued from page 1)

ignored in their slogans: then the Atlantic Fleet went on strike and the Daily Worker filled its front page with babblings about the Atlantic Fleet but avoided any definite appeal to the sailors; that is they did not urge any form of organization or action upon the sailors but merely applauded their action. The German Communist Paper has been suspended for four weeks for a direct appeal to the English sailors whilst the English Communist Daily avoids this and beyond sending "greetings" plays no part in the sailors' struggle whatsoever.

The need is for effective organization of all the workers for mass demonstrations and for strike action: for a real revolutionary leadership: for courage and determination. Indecisiveness, hesitation avoidance of direct and clear preparation for widespread strike action, friendly overtures to the "Left" of the I. L. P., talk of the General Election, hiding of the revolutionary implications of the struggle, these things are helping to confuse and weaken the workers and to prevent real resistance to the economy cuts and to the heavy wage-reductions threatened. Whether such a leadership can come forward in the party it is impossible to say, but there are signs that efforts are being made to force the issues into open Party discussion.

♦♦♦

The full extent of the National Government's economies are now known: it is beginning to be clear that this attack is preliminary to widespread wage reductions, affecting all sections of the working class. Talk of "balancing the budget" has now given place to talk of the need to revive industry and trade. For the financial crisis is only the reflection of the existing industrial crisis: the outflow of gold is due to the increasing excess of imports over exports, so great that the enormous tribute levied by British capitalism from foreign investments cannot cover it, and only a revival of industry and increased exports can save the whole of British imperialism. Because under capitalism present methods must go on the only "solution" possible for the ruling class is wage-cuts. The Budget has been "balanced" by reducing the wages of state employees and by cutting the benefits of the unemployed; trade can only be revived by heavy wage reductions in the principal industries.

Arthur Hayday, M. P., in his presidential address to the Trades Union Congress said: "To restore our export trade to equilibrium, if the wage-cutting policy were adopted, would involve wage reductions of 20 to 30 per cent". That the wage-cutting policy will be

adopted we need not doubt: it is as certain as the fact that the trade union and labor leaders will not offer any real resistance to the Government's economies. For the extent of the wage reductions and of the strength of the workers' resistance to these demands depends very much upon the nature of the opposition to the National Government's economies.

### Parliamentary Opposition

The Labor Party's "opposition" has been revealed as one of words and very weak "words" at that! Indeed, there is widespread suspicion that the whole affair has been "rigged": this instinctive feeling is very widespread among the workers.

The role of the Labor opposition is clear enough: it is to divert the growing fury and revolt of the workers into "safe" parliamentary channels. More than ever before is the parliamentary deceit clear to all and the uselessness of the Labor Party's opposition opens the way to the development of a powerful mass movement led by the Communist Party.

In the weakness and cowardice of the Party leadership lies great danger for the workers of England. Hesitant for days, unwilling to move without sanction from Moscow; locals, all initiative destroyed by the suppression of discussion and by the attacks on critical comrades, did nothing save run meetings, and the party as a whole could return no answer to the question of the workers "what do you suggest we should do?" This remains unchanged: the party has no definite policy and even distorts and alters resolutions passed by militant trade union branches in order to avoid being committed too definitely. Where steps have been taken by locals, results have followed but in the vast majority of districts the workers are being offered denunciations of the T. U. C. of the Labor Party, of the I. L. P., and nothing beyond that. The need of the hour is the uniting of the organized and unorganized workers together with the unemployed in each district for action; mass demonstrations and preparation for widespread strike action. No other course is possible save confusion.

### The Party

The implications of widespread action against the economies are obvious: any real and effective struggle would intensify the crisis and line up openly the two classes for warfare with the state forces at the disposal of the employees. A revolutionary party should face the implications, prepare the workers to face them and lead into struggle a conscious working-class: to avoid clear explanation and preparation is treachery. The party is avoiding it and is thus almost indistin-

guishable from the Independent Labor Party. Time is all important but the signs are that the leadership of the English party will fail to utilize this great chance and that their failure will be paid for heavily by the English workers.

It is the task of Left Oppositionists in England to rouse the party membership against the present policy and methods of the party leaders: to force discussion and full consideration of the position immediately and to win to the party workers who will fight inside it for a return to the Communism of Lenin and Trotsky.

—ANGLICUS.

London, September 15, 1931.

### A LETTER FROM CORNWALL

The naval mutiny was a nerve-shattering blow to the Government, of course, and this financial crisis, with the suspension of the gold standard, will reduce them to second childhood. Some of the London capitalist papers, judging by today's Daily Telegraph are trying to minimize the effect of the suspension by pointing out that it comes after the budget has been balanced. Today's Telegraph keeps up its courage as follows: "The budget is balanced, and the budget will remain balanced. Half or more than half the sting of this enforced submission is removed now that the consequences can be faced by the British Government with fortitude and composure."

Previously the article had admitted that it was precisely with the object of preventing Great Britain from going off the gold standard that the present National Government was formed. "Events however," it pathetically remarks, "have been too strong and too hard for them." Then it goes on trying to keep up the courage of its readers.

"There is no need to fear a flight from the pound on the parallel of the flight from the mark of the franc. British currency is not inflated. The financial condition of the country is fundamentally sound. Nothing therefore in the shape of a currency slide need be anticipated, though some depreciation must be expected. But it can be reduced to a minimum if the British people will keep their heads as, by their official declaration, the Prime Minister and his colleagues are resolved to keep theirs."

When the news of the mutiny came the reaction was much the same. There was an endeavor to show that it was hardly to be called a mutiny at all. True, the men flatly disobeyed the orders to get up anchors and refused to go to sea. But they did not lay hands on their officers or work havoc on the ships. The fine tradition of the British navy for discipline and devotion remain intact, etc., etc.

The reaction of the workers I was able to speak to was one of pure joy. They were delighted when the news came through. . . .

—M. SHOOTER.

Helston, September 21, 1931

## A View of the Struggle in Madrid

The repression against the Communist Party of Spain grows tighter every day. The end of the party congress in the Asturias was marked by the arrest of the principal leaders of the party, administratively, without misdemeanor. . . . Communists and syndicalists populate the prisons and floating jails by the hundreds.

In the proletarian sections, the repression arouses indignation; but the party, instead of gathering together the workers' organizations by a real united front, giving to the action undertaken a vast scope pressing the socialist and syndicalist leaders to the wall—organizes with its own forces "mass" demonstrations. I had the occasion to participate Sunday in two of them which I will describe to you:

From morning on, together with members of the Youth, we circled around the proletarian neighborhood, in many streets resounded the voice of the **Mundo Obrero** newboys and our young friends pointed out to us every news stand with satisfaction. On a lamp-post, a small poster pasted high up: **Mundo Obrero** has been seized by the republican police. Numerous stickers, "Form your Soviets in every factory", and in this Saint Denis of Madrid where the party in the last elections had a large number of votes, there is a warm enthusiasm for Communism.

We arrive at an illegal meeting of a nucleus. An old militant speaks to us of the great difficulties of organization and work. "The party meetings, even though they are legal, are forbidden, but we go off a great distance and the meetings are held anyway." As a group, we go off to the place of the demonstration where we arrive a few minutes before 8 (that is, much in advance, for the time in Spain. . . .) The same spectacle presents itself to me as in Paris: general indecision amulating groups, cafe terraces occupied by demonstrators. Little by little, the circulation becomes intense, almost a thousand young workers are scattered there. Eight o'clock has struck about an hour ago. . . . and the police (12 mounted and 20 on foot and a few flat-faces) begin to "scrape off" and to "filter through". Where a small determined group would have made possible at least a relative demonstration, this initiative is left to a handful of cops who attack every small group in the usual police manner.

No shouting, no singing, the police become unnerved, the horsemen mount the

sidewalks. . . . a group of Youth take refuge in the neighboring hospital, the cops receive a few stones, pistols are unhesitatingly drawn, a few shots fired and the entrenched workers are dislodged, not without arrests. . . . Something of an agitation continues on the place for a few hours.

The next day, the second demonstration was to take place at the prison. This prison surrounded by a huge square of high walls, composed of central buildings arranged in a cross, offered a surprising spectacle: Almost a thousand workers, very young for the most part, formed an endless line between the prison wall and a cordon of police. . . .

Their hands strengthened by their advantages of the morning, the police this time took the offensive brutally. It was an abrupt assault, the cordon of visitors was arbitrarily swept away. A platoon of cavalry, sabres drawn, charged, followed by a hundred "seguridades" (security police), who, with their long swords did not miss any of those spared by the cavalry.

Our position not having been wiped out yet, my comrade and I sought to move on; but, impassable and determined, two "seguridades" barred the road by drawing their sabres. We are forced to retrace our steps. By misfortune, cavalry and footmen have turned about face and they approach to "clear out" our corner. Nothing to do about it. We must "get out". We pass with a few thracks.

In small groups, the workers discuss this new defeat, where a thousand workers who came to demonstrate were dispersed by 150 guards! The more we would be the better, said the numerous workers, and the attitude of the local N. C. of L. was severely criticized. But why, then, does the party allow its anarchist leaders to sink off? Why doesn't it take proposals for a united front?

"**Todos a la calle!**" Result: ten seriously wounded, numerous arrests.

A comrade informs me: This evening there's a meeting of the Labor Defense, a Cortes deputy, a sympathizer, will speak. It is an invitation and we shall go there. The hall doors are closed, and a troop of Guardia Civil, mounted, rides around, provoking. The meeting is prohibited and the street belongs to this civil guards, with green uniforms, light yellow trappings, black oil-cloth bloomers, swarthy complexioned country lads, whose hands never leave the pommel of their sabres. We mix with the groups and make acquaintance with a party com-

rade who speaks French. I will repeat here his words: "In Madrid the party has grown enormously. We have, including three hundred youth, a thousand members. There are few important factories here, and we are organized on the basis of local nuclei, many of them by localities which meet every week. Our difficulties are enormous, the workers who come to us are absolutely raw politically: impregnated with anarchist traditions, our cadres are scattered by the persecutions. Throughout Spain, the party has 12,000 members (?) and the sale of **Mundo Obrero** is 25,000 (?). The youth paper sells 500 copies in Madrid and 4,000 throughout Spain. In Catalonia, it is true, our forces are virtually zero, but they are rising little by little, the Bloc is disintegrating. The Trotskyists? There are none in Spain (?), there are some fine militants (sic), Garcia Lavid, Andrade, Nin and a few others; but that is all, they cannot recruit among the workers (!) to whom the various internal disputes are unknown. As for me, I respect many of these comrades, their place is with us. Trotsky is a revolutionist; without him, October was in danger, but the Russian party rejected him—that's discipline. I read **Comunismo** it is the best Communist review, but we are so persecuted that we need one party. You say that our leaders will oppose it? But here we. . . the leaders! In reality, the party hasn't any. It is only now that we are forming our cadres. Yes, of course we need a correct policy."

We step before a news-stand where is sold the issue of an illustrated review which has Trotsky's photograph on the first page, with the title "Trotsky in prison in Madrid". Our comrade remarks: You see, there's propaganda for all of us. A personage appeared to interest himself very persistently in our conversation, and we must separate, but our comrade holds my hand: Tell me, how is Trotsky getting along? I answer him, and he concludes: "You know, you take the steps (literally) and he'll come back to the U. S. S. R., and tell him that the Spanish Communists know well enough that he is a revolutionist!" I answered him that in that case, he ought to extend his judgment to the conceptions of the whole Opposition and to act accordingly. We parted, and I recount the words of a local Communist; he expresses a mentality which permits the Opposition to conduct a profitable work.

—RAY.

### U. S. S. R.

## LETTERS FROM OPPOSITIONISTS

After having served my three years of deportations. I have obtained a "minus 20" and I am now at N. Here (and in the district) I have found an important group of deported Oppositionists. Here are also "old ones" who have served their three years and have obtained their "minus"; there are also youth and a former capitulator. The latter was sent here under Article 58 for three years, following the mass arrests made among the capitulators in the Spring of this year. These arrests were made in connection with our leaflets (on the trial of the saboteurs, etc.). Even though these leaflets were issued by our active group in Moscow, the repressions strongly acted also those who had left us. In general, the publication of each leaflet is accompanied in Moscow by raids in mass (and frequently by arrests) among all those who, in any way whatsoever, ever had anything to do with the Opposition.

The deported youth produced a very happy impression. Most of them are workers; they joined the Opposition in the last two years and they are completely unknown to us. They came to our ideas independently, "spontaneously". On their own initiative, often without any contact with the organization, they began the factional work, they issued leaflets, etc. This youth today constitutes a very important actor in the deportation. How many are there of them? A thousand, two thousand, or more?—I find it hard to say: my horizon of observation is too limited to judge. At all events, they are numerous.

From the solitary, only unimportant letters are allowed to go through. In the solidarity of Verchnie-Uralsk, we are two hundred and fifty and this number is constantly augmented. We have learned that following a protest of those in solitary confinement at Verchnie-Uralsk, they took away the "initiator" of this protest, comrade Yanuchevsky. Since collective protests are not permitted in the solitary, we proceed in the following manner: a comrade makes an individual protest and the others adhere to it. This was also the case with comrade Yanuchevsky. He was conveyed to Moscow, to the internal prison of the G. P. U. and he is condemned, it seems, to ten (!) years in a concentration camp. . . .

Since then it has been months that we have had no news of him, nor do we know where he is or what has become of him. That is just how the Schwabes disappeared without a trace, after having spent many months of detention in the internal prison of the G. P. U. One of them is seriously affected by tuberculosis.

We have learned even if after a great delay, of the document, magnificent in its persuasive force, of Christian-Georg evitch Rakovsky on the trial of the saboteurs. Christian G. shows why sabotage has developed and upon what it supports itself. Ch. G. says that on the basis of his experience in the work at Paris, he could give vast and valuable material on the connections of the saboteurs with the White emigration and the French bourgeoisie.

Comrade Rakovsky has been placed under extremely painful material conditions. The state of his health arouses among all of us a tremendous uneasiness. There is no doubt that the Stalinist clique has condemned Rakovsky to a sure physical destruction. Continual house-raids, the encirclement of G. P. U. provocateurs absolute isolation, pernicious illness, material privation—there are the conditions under which Christian Georgievitch lives. From the political point of view, Rakovsky is in an active and valiant state of mind; he reacts immediately to all the events but his writings reach us very rarely. . . . July 1931

—P.

### FROM AN ECONOMIC DIRECTOR

The situation is critical in the field of construction material: Gigantic and urgent constructions like the Kuznetstroy and the Magnitogorsk are guaranteed with only 75% of the construction material; construction on the average are assured for 50% or less. How, under these conditions, can one count on the realization of the construction plan? 518 factories which, according to the plan, should be completed and put to work in the third year of the five year plan, will not attain this point. But instead of giving up the five year plan, in four years and of reducing the unrealizable program in a methodical manner, and thereby assuring the urgent constructions with 100% in construction material, the Stalinist leadership continues to build the factories. . . . by half. The criterion of bureaucratic prestige dominates everything. The wastes of "anarchy" attains an unbelievable degree: the economic organizations snatch construction material from each other.

Under the unbridled pressure of the apparatus, we endeavor to follow untenable rhythms. The tension of forces is terrific. Everybody is fatigued, the workers who are sincerely enthusiastic over industrialization. All this feeds the Right wing sentiments. . . . August 16, 1931

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# Secr't Greets Conference

## Increasing Problems Face the International Left Opposition

To the Communist League of America Dear Comrades:

The International Secretariat sends its warmest greetings to the Second National Conference of the American section of the Left Opposition, which we are sure will contribute towards fortifying your organization and which will be the point of departure of a new period of development. The International Opposition, for material reasons, cannot participate effectively in your Conference and also, as a result of great difficulties, it cannot bring the necessary contribution to your discussion.

The tasks that are posed at the present moment for the Communist movement and specifically for our Left faction, are of so wide a scope that they necessitate that the political work of clearing up, of enlightenment, of delimitation and the corresponding organizational work which have been undertaken, especially in the last two years, be followed up at a more sustained pace, a more accelerated rhythm. The events in Spain have begun without a Communist party, but also without an organized Opposition, having at its disposal trained militants, known organs. In the present situation in Germany, there does exist a numerically strong C. P. but one without political leadership, and the Opposition is still much too weak to be able to exercise a substantial political role there. In England, the ruin of the C. P., caused by the policy of the Anglo-Russian Committee, permits the leaders of the Labor party to hold back the masses affected by the crisis; there too, the Opposition is unable to give the party its strength, its vitality, being itself in its very first stages.

You insist very rightly in your thesis on the importance of the United States in the world and the weight it bears upon European economy. This relationship of forces which our comrade Trotsky already brought to light a few years ago, has lately been forced upon the blindest. Imperialism seeks more and more to put Europe on ration; its policy will not fail to aggravate and exacerbate the conflicts in Europe. But also the curtailed position of Europe will have repercussions in the United States; and there, as in Europe, the burdens which world capitalism will seek to have the working masses bear, will be so heavy that the latter, in order to oppose it, will be drawn into great struggles.

The world crisis, which continues to develop, will only increase the favorable objective conditions for the revolutionary movement. The issue from the development of the crisis depends, thus, essentially upon subjective factors, upon the capacity of the Comintern and its sections, consequently, upon the capacity of the International Left Opposition to shift the political course of the C. I.

In this sense, the results already obtained by the Communist League of America are very substantial. Your theses, those of the Opposition Youth, the discussion they have aroused, as well as the weekly appearance of the *Militant*, are indications of this. Another indication of your consolidation lies in the

manner in which you have been able to oppose the confusionist tendencies of Weisbord and to reject them without undergoing a crisis as painful as those which many European sections experienced.

But in order to assure from now on a rapid and vigorous development of the Left Opposition—in America as elsewhere—we must very quickly apply ourselves to strengthening the organization of the Left Opposition. The Bolshevik party, where they applied themselves to delimiting clearly the organization of a group, few in numbers as it was, should serve us as an example. Ideological correctness is intimately bound up with the solidity of the organization. It was inevitable that, at the outset, the inadequacies, the political inexperience of the Opposition groupings, should be translated into the field of organization. But at the present moment, it is high time and it is possible to have the Opposition take a step forward in this field. Two years of work, of efforts, of experience, are finding themselves concretized in the theses, in the resolutions to your national conference, as well as in other important sections of the Opposition (the French League, the Archio-Marxists). In this way, each Opposition militant will find a firmer basis for his activity. In this way, the sections of the Left Opposition will be able to strengthen their work within the Communist party.

One of the most important tasks of the present moment is an organic consolidation of the Left Opposition within the Communist parties and the Comintern. The defeats of the past years, the present bankruptcy, have piled up profound discontentment in the masses who follow the parties, as well as among their members. The rupture of the party with the broad masses has been reflected in the parties. At the moment when the proletariat, resisting violently the capitalist offensive, will seek its road, all the elements, all the groups which have remained in the party without pronouncing themselves openly upon their policy, will also emerge from their passivity in order to seek actively to orient the policy of the C. P. The action of the Left Opposition upon these elements will be all the greater if its external action upon the party (which expulsion has imposed

upon it) will have, corresponding to it, an action within its own ranks, where the activity of all the Oppositionists will be coordinated in order to return the Comintern, against the Centrists, to the path of Marxism which will lead it to victory.

We wish you the accomplishment of a fruitful labor, and we send you, dear comrades, our Communist greetings.

For the International Secretariat, M. MILL.

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# A Ferment in the Chicago Y. C. L.

On September 14, 1931, three former members of the Executive Committee of District 8, Young Communist League, issued a statement to all members on why two, Norman Satir and Ruth Andras, have been expelled from membership, and one, Nathan Gould, is about to meet the same fate (he has since been expelled also).

The charges of these comrades are: that based on a system of bureaucracy, a regime of terror, of expulsion, an incapable district and national leadership has attached itself to the Y. C. L. and prevents the League from efficiently fulfilling its role.

The same leadership, in order to maintain its position, has had to line up comrades against Satir who had taken a critical attitude towards the activity of the National Committee, spread lies and slanders, suppress articles written for the pre-convention discussion, not allow anybody time to present any position opposing the National Committee and that the party leadership has condoned and encouraged the younger bureaucrats.

The document charges that the last convention of the Y. C. L. was not a Communist convention, because there was no pre-convention thesis, no discussion involving the membership. The statement goes on to tell what the League bureaucracy is attempting to hide: political bankruptcy (if that term can be applied to a leadership which never was capable). According to the Y. C. L. letter, the National Committee of the American League has: (1) been absent from the economic field; (2) not formulated any youth demands; (3) no shop nuclei; (4) no anti-militarist work; (5) no opponent work; (6) crisis in sports and Pioneers; (7) League still isolated. To these, the trio add four additional points: (8) no single shock plan was completed; (9) the ideological level of the League is at its lowest; (10) bureaucracy is the prevailing system; (11) the National Committee is entirely incapable of independent analyses or formulation of correct policies; (12) all gains that were made, were made after the Y. C. L. threat of removal and these gains are microscopic.

According to the present leadership, the League membership (using "third period" mathematics) is "around 3,000". Even if these figures are correct, they show a great discrepancy between potential possibilities and actual results. Yet, many join the Y. C. L. continuously, but go through it like water through a sieve. Why?

The main reason for this, the statement goes on to say, is the low ideological level of the membership. Theory, while openly paid lip-service, is secretly sneered at as a pre-"third period" prejudice. Then the document says:

"To expect the leadership to change their attitude on this matter is hopeless. Because this leadership can only exist as long as widespread ignorance prevails . . . political consciousness would mean the doom of this leadership".

Secondly, the strangling hold of the bureaucracy. Democratic centralism—the highest degree of democracy with the highest degree of centralism, becomes the handing down of decisions by the higher committees to the lower ranks with the air of a royal decree, or in-

fallible papal bull. The ranks must say, "To hear is to do." The efficient methods of Communist leadership are replaced by the carrying out of decisions by a membership who have no understanding of the reasons for the decision. Self-criticism becomes greatly similar to the confession-box proceedings of the Catholic Church. Like the Catholic Church, too, the only ones allowed to receive confession, to give chastisement or to allow absolution are higher bodies, while the "very, very low", if they attempt criticism, become "enemies of the working class".

Thirdly, the document goes on to show how these leaders are created. Not the most developed, ideologically and practically, but the "politically dishonest, opportunist and careerists—who will agree with everything that the higher bodies propose . . . ignoramus" rise to the leadership. The proletarian leadership becomes merely a blind "They take no real part in the work of the leadership."

The practical proposals of these protesting comrades then follow:

1. A broad and free discussion.
2. The discussion must be followed by a real convention.
3. The present leadership must be replaced by tempered young Communists.
4. Regular reports to the membership by the leaders.
5. Democratic centralism—free elections by and responsibility to the membership.
6. Broad discussions on all important questions.
7. Right of Communist criticism of leaders.
8. Bureaucracy must be destroyed.
9. Raise the theoretical level.
10. Proper relations between the Youth and the party.

With a call to the membership not to heed the bureaucrats' instructions to disassociate themselves from the signing comrades, the statement ends: "Oust the bureaucrats! Build the League!"

—C. C.

The following is the statement of the Youth Committee of the Chicago branch of the Communist League of America (Opposition) on the recent developments in the Y. C. L.:

In Chicago, the statement of Norman Satir, Ruth Andras and Nathan Gould against the bureaucracy in the Y. C. L. has met with a warm welcome from the members of the Y. C. L. This in spite of a long and arduous campaign of slander.

While young comrades are not as well versed or experienced and therefore more easily misled than the older com-

rades, the psychological factors make bureaucracy more repugnant among the youth than ever among the adults. These signs of stirring life, which the Left Opposition always knew to be present, is a favorable portent.

The statement has obvious shortcomings. It fails to answer the *whence* of this bureaucracy. Its source, according to the statement, is a mystery, it sprang up from nowhere. That source is the Y. C. L. leadership and behind them the Stalinist revisionists of the teachings of Marx and Lenin in the C. I. Unless these comrades recognize this, their correct labors will be ineffectual. Every leadership will tend towards bureaucracy for the ideas of the Stalinist revisionists, not having ideological correctness, can only be defended by bureaucracy.

How long will a leadership that is honest and theoretically firm stand for "socialism in one country"; the Anglo-Russian Committee betrayal, the Chiang Kai-Shek alliance, the "third period", "social-Fascism", for the dubbing of Trotsky and the International Left Opposition as counter-revolutionists? The only kind of leadership the C. I. and the Y. C. I. bureaucrats can tolerate are bureaucratic ignoramuses. Any other kind could not tolerate the C. I. and Y. C. I. leaders.

The decline in membership is an international phenomenon when we discuss quality. When we discuss quantity, with the exception of Russia, where the reason for the exception is obvious, and Germany, where the situation is so favorable that members stream in, in spite of the bureaucrats, the same holds true in the entire International. The same causes in our brother Leagues produce the same effects as in the American League.

Our support of their statement will undoubtedly cause these comrades to be subjected to the epithet of "Trotskyists" which the bureaucrats will fling at them, as though that disposes of the questions raised. Do not permit this to divert your attention from the fight. Spread the rebellion, district and nation wide! Our support as our criticism, is given in a comradely fashion. The ousting of the bureaucracy, the re-arousing of the interest in Marxism, the study of the tactics and strategy of the movement, leads every sincere young revolutionist forward on the path towards the International Left Opposition.

We urge all comrades to study the position of the Left Opposition. Youth Committee, C. L. A. (O.) Chicago branch.

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# 2<sup>ND</sup> Conference

(Continued from page 1)

squarely, analysed its reasons and became so much more convinced of our great vitality and powerful political position, by the splendid upward curve which could be recorded following immediately upon the slump. The branches of Boston, Philadelphia and St. Louis, which had witnessed particular difficulties, were re-established. New members were gained everywhere and to a yet greater degree, new contacts of sympathetic elements within and around the party. We rapidly increased our literature supply by printing new pamphlets and books by comrade Trotsky and extended its distribution. The Program of Expansion became a means of setting definite political objects for the material support given by all our contributors. Thus we organized the Pioneers Publishers, opening up new avenues for propaganda activities. We re-established the *Militant* as a weekly, strengthened the staff and made a small beginning toward field organizing work. Progress in rapid strides had political manifestations in important issues of the class struggle, to such an extent that the intervention could be felt, both by growing sympathy as well as by its pressure upon policies of the party bureaucrats, but also in the fact that the American League began to become more of an active participant in the international Left Opposition movement. The second conference could, of course, only accept this as a small beginning, but nevertheless a beginning in the right direction.

## The Political Report

While it may be difficult to determine which item on the conference agenda, or which report made, called forth the greatest attention or most thorough discussion by the delegates, it stands to reason that in the discussion on the general political thesis most of the vital issues were concentrated. It was also in this document that a certain tactical departure from past position was presented in regards to our views toward the labor party question. Comrade Shachtman delivered the report for the National Committee and most every delegate made valuable contributions. All were unanimous in indorsing the general line represented by the thesis with possibly one exception, which advanced a view that the present crisis marked the beginning of the definite downward curve for United States capitalism whether or not it

could emerge from it at the cost of other imperialist powers and of its own working class. Then also, on the very vital question of our position as a faction of the Communist movement, discussion centered around a specific interpretation of what this implies. However, there was unanimous agreement that our platform is correct, i. e., that our orientation is directly upon the Communist movement, of which the Comintern, and in the United States, the official party is the center, as the only historically progressive force, to which our appeal, despite the blunders and mistakes of its bureaucratic leadership, is addressed for the purpose of re-establishing its Marxian foundation. But to make this effective the delegates again reaffirmed the necessity of organizing the Communists inside and outside the Communist Party of the United States on the platform of the Left Opposition.

As already mentioned, the second conference made a tactical departure from the views presented in our platform, adopted in 1929, in regards to the labor party question. While we then still carried remnants of officially adopted party views we considered it feasible under certain conditions for Communists to raise the slogan of organization of a labor party. In this respect, our thesis presented a change away from such views and found unanimous indorsement from the delegates, not, however, overlooking the fact that should a labor party come into existence upon a working class and trade union basis it would become necessary for us to consider our relation as Communists towards it, depending upon the general conditions existing.

The trade union discussion, report of which was made for the National Committee by comrade Swaback, was the second point on the agenda but with no less attention. It is particularly in this field that we have witnessed the sharpest clashes of policy with the Stalinist party apparatus and naturally more so with the Right wing views of the Lovestone group. That is because the issues present themselves here in the most concrete form, already in the initial stage of each specific struggle. We have had the very recent experiences of the strikes in the mine field and in Paterson. We have had the general experience of the T. U. U. L. unions under control of the party bureaucrats as well as the emergence of other new unions under leadership of social reform-

ists. All this rich material at hand in the view of the delegates had served to vindicate more decisively the views and the platform of the Left Opposition and complete unanimity prevailed in indorsing the National Committee thesis.

While space makes it necessary to treat the other reports more briefly, they received fully as much attention and created just as live and fundamental a discussion as the other reports mentioned. The next in order was the report on the international situation and the development and growth of the Left Opposition within the various countries. While it contained many important lessons of the birth pangs of a movement—expressed in this case particularly in groups and elements professing adherence at first to the Russian Left Opposition and later to the International Secretariat but without accepting its views thus having made several operations and splits necessary—all in all the main lesson accepted by the delegates became the one of striving much more seriously and consciously for a real international orientation. That is to function more actively and more directly as a part of the international movement and participate in all of its problems and achievements. As to the latter the conference could take joy in the great progress, to mention only two instances, the rapid growth organizationally and in revolutionary influence of our Left Opposition in Spain and the unification of four distinct Left Opposition groups in China into one organization.

A small token of this spirit the conference expressed in its cable greetings to the new weekly Left Opposition paper in Spain the "El Soviet" and to comrade Trotsky. Similarly it also expressed its feeling of solidarity with the thousands of Bolshevik-Leninist prisoners now in the Stalin prison camps in Siberia.

## On the Soviet Union

In discussing the report on the situation within the Soviet Union the conference was fortunate in having the draft thesis presented by comrade Trotsky. It met with unanimous approval. The youth question received more serious attention than at our first conference. This is natural as we have since that time gained quite a good number of young members. A couple of valuable amendments were made to the youth thesis before its final acceptance and prospects are very good that the youth committee to be selected by our National Committee will find a splendid field for its work. We would be remiss if we failed to mention that several amendments and proposals were on hand from the branch-

es pertaining to the various issues and problems before the conference. But since all were in conformity with the general views presented in the various documents and reports, only altering formulations or adding minor points, it became quite easy to select only those which could really mean an improvement.

In the organization report, the second conference received a graphic picture of the developments which had taken place and had proposals presented for means of further strengthening in an organizational sense. A further elaborated constitution presented also served that purpose. The discussion in particular centered around concrete experiences in the tasks of building a Communist organization supplemented by experiences on a local scale as told by the delegates. Its general tenor became the one of deeper penetration into the party, every member active in the existing party auxiliaries and mass organizations, more definite expression of the requirements for membership in the League, definite requirements for entering into its leading bodies, etc. In sum and substance, it can be said that with the acceptance of the report and the proposals made by the National Committee one more important forward step will be recorded. One step toward more clearly defining our purposes, our duties and obligations and to prepare for a more solidly knit body of revolutionists conscious of their tasks and able to carry them out.

The pitiful attempt made by Weisbord to represent himself and his few supporters as a group adhering to the International Left Opposition, and his proposal to send representatives to our conference to discuss what he considered as following from his pretended adherence, namely to "unite" the alleged "two" groups, met with a very stern rebuke from the conference. The resolution adopted unanimously upon this question is printed elsewhere in this issue, suffice only to say that the conference had no time for this imposter pretending to adhere to our movement while at the same time using every opportunity to show that he has nothing in common with our views. Yet the conference did decide to call upon those who may follow Weisbord, those who really have sincere intentions of supporting the Left Opposition to do so by joining our League.

Having settled in a thorough and exhaustive manner all of the main issues presented by the National Committee reports the conference found itself compelled to deal very briefly with other problems arising. For example the Negro question and what is at present

its main immediate aspect viz. the correctness of the slogan of "Right of Self-determination" as well as all the implications which would necessarily flow from such a slogan. While a general consensus of opinion exists within our ranks of deep scepticism in regards to the correctness of this slogan the conference accepted the National Committee on this question. It decided to instruct the National Committee to create a commission which is to make an exhaustive study of this problem in such a way that when a policy is finally arrived at it can be fully motivated and definitely based on Marxian conclusions. Similarly in regards to the specific issues and tasks of the present acute unemployment situation the conference decided to instruct the National Committee to finally elaborate the draft resolution presented.

It can truthfully be said that the first manifestation of the second conference actually marking a real forward step were apparent in the splendid banquet arranged by the New York branch in honor of the conference on Saturday, Sept. 26. A total of 150 plates were set and every place filled with comrades who came to give their enthusiastic indorsement. At several instances the hall virtually rocked with the applause given to the remarks of the speakers when picturing the advance of the Left Opposition and forecasting the future prospects and tasks. Beyond the fondest expectations, and in spite of existing unemployment and economic difficulties, that sentiment was translated into action in a collection of \$207.13 for the future work of the League. Two comrades representing the militant miners of Pennsylvania and Ohio appeared to make an appeal for their fellow workers. They were invited to sit at the banquet and a collection was taken up on their behalf amounting to \$24.85, the contributions being started off by a donation from the National Committee.

Such examples are a telling answer to the Stalinist bureaucrats who have been exuberant in their predictions of collapse to the Left Opposition. But with each such prediction we have appeared stronger. We are stronger in numbers and stronger in influence with constantly growing sympathetic contacts. We have succeeded at this conference in preparing to meet our organizational requirements. All proposals were worked out on the basis of the experiences accumulated. We have made provisions for a stronger and more definitely defined constitution, a beginning toward a functioning staff, more effective use of propaganda and educational material, organiza-

tional tours, utilization of voluntary organizers, recruiting of new members, etc. We have made provisions for much more effective utilization of the many young members who have joined our ranks. A shortcoming of the past, but with prospects of really taking up youth work in the future as it should be taken up.

## Conference Achievements

While these may be considered small achievements let us point to the yet more important facts as emerging from the second conference.

1. Our experiences during the longer existence and difficult struggle of the International Left Opposition, the facts of which were assembled and analysed collectively at this conference, has confirmed in all of its major aspects the correctness of our position.
2. Our strength is re-inforced in a developing maturity toward a Marxian evaluation of political and economic processes as well as of the needs and tasks of the revolutionary movement.
3. We are establishing ourselves more firmly and more clearly as a faction of the Communist movement orienting ourselves mainly upon this movement for an uncompromising struggle to restore our party to again become the party of Lenin capable of fulfilling its great historical mission.
4. We are increasingly strengthening ourselves for more active and more direct intervention in the class struggle as a force presenting and fighting for our definite views of strategy and policy to be pursued, be it in the trade union field or elsewhere, be it in regards to a correct conception and practice of the working class united front or other major issues.
5. Our decisions at the second conference, despite any differences of opinion and freely expressed, were arrived at unanimously on all major questions of policy. This itself gives the nearest possible guarantee which can be given for a collectively functioning leadership.
6. We have succeeded in marking one further step toward a broader and more precise understanding and practise of internationalism in a revolutionary sense. The inevitable conclusion flowing from this must be our more active collaboration in the solution of problems of the International Left Opposition movement.

With this we feel certain that we can confidently face the future which belongs to the developing world proletarian revolution.

—ARNE SWABECK.

# Leon Trotsky: Against National Communism! Lessons of the "Red" Referendum

(Continued from Last Issue)

After this, it would have been necessary to open as broad and open a discussion as possible, because it is necessary for the leaders, even for such infallible ones as Heinz Neumann and Remmele, to listen attentively at every turn to the voice of the mass. It is necessary to listen not only to the official words which the Communist speaks from time to time, but also to those deeper thoughts more close to the masses which hide themselves beneath his words. It is necessary not to command workers, but to know how to learn from them.

If the discussion had been an open one, then probably one of the participants would have made a speech something like this: "Thaelmann is right when he demands that regardless of the undoubted changes in the situation, we must not, because of the relation of forces, strive to a revolutionary event. But precisely for that reason the most extreme decisive elements are forcing an outbreak, as we see. Are we able, in such a situation, to save the time essential for us in order to effect preparatory changes in the relation of forces; that is, to snatch the basic proletarian masses from under the influence of the social democracy and thereby force the despairing lower strata of the petty bourgeoisie to turn their face to the proletariat and their backs to Fascism? Certainly, if the opportunity presents itself. And what if the Fascists, against our will, bring the matter to an uprising in the near future? Will the proletarian revolution then be once more foredoomed to a heavy defeat?"

Then Thaelmann, if he were a Marxist, would have answered roughly thus: "It is self-understood that the choice of the moment of decisive struggle depends not only on us, but also on our enemies. We are in entire agreement that the task of our strategy at the present moment is to make difficult, and not to facilitate, for our enemies the forcing of an outbreak. But if our enemies nevertheless declare war on us, we, of course, must accept, because there is not and there cannot be a heavier, more destructive, more annihilating, more demoralizing defeat than the surrender of great historical positions without a struggle. If the Fascists take the initiative for an outbreak on themselves—if it is clear for the popular masses—they will push to our side the broad layers of the toiling masses. In that case, we would have all the greater chances to obtain a victory the more clearly we show and prove today to the working millions that we do not at all intend to accomplish revolutions without them and against them. We must therefore state clearly to the social democratic, Christian and non-party workers: the Fascists, a small minority, wish to overthrow the present government in order to seize power. We Communists consider the present government the enemy of the proletariat but this government supports itself on your confidence and your votes; we wish to overthrow this government by means of an alliance with you and not by means of an alliance with the Fascists against you. If the Fascists attempt to organize an uprising then we Communists will fight with you until the last drop of blood—not in order to defend the government of Braun-Breuning but in order to save from being strangled and annihilated the flower of the proletariat, the workers' organizations, the workers' press, not only our Communist press, but also your press. We are ready together with you to defend any workers' home whatsoever, any printing plant of a workers' press, from the attacks of the Fascists. But we demand from you that you pledge yourselves to come to our aid in case of a threat to our organizations. We propose a united front of the working class against the Fascists—the more firmly and persistently we will carry out this policy, applying it to all questions, the more difficult it will be for the Fascists to catch us unawares and the smaller will be the chances to defeat us in open struggle. Thus would have answered our hypothetical Thaelmann.

But here Heinz-Neumann, the orator permeated through and through with great ideas, takes the floor. Nothing will come of such a policy anyway, he says. The social democratic leaders will say to the workers, "Do not believe the Communists, they are not at all concerned about saving the workers' organizations, but wish only to seize power; they consider us to be social-Fascists and they do not make any distinctions between us and the Nationalists. That is why the policy that Thaelmann proposed would simply make us look ridiculous in the eyes of the social democratic workers."

To this Thaelmann should have had to answer: To call the social democrats Fascists, that is certainly a stupidity into which we collide at every critical moment and which prevents us from finding the way to the social democratic workers. To renounce this stupidity is the best thing we can do. As to the accusation that under the pretense of the defense of the working class and its organizations, we desire simply to seize power, we will say to the social democratic workers: Yes, we Communists strive to conquer power, but for that we

require the unconditional majority of the working class. The attempt to seize power, supporting oneself on a minority, is a contemptible adventure with which we have nothing in common. We are not able to force the majority of the workers to follow us, we are only able to convince them. If the Fascists should defeat the working class, then it would be impossible even to speak of the conquest of power by the Communists. To protect the working class and its organizations from the Fascists signifies for us to assure ourselves of the possibility to convince the working class and to lead it behind us. We are unable, therefore, to arrive to power otherwise than by protecting, if necessary with arms in hand, all the elements of workers democracy in the capitalist state.

To that Thaelmann might have added: In order to win the firm inextinguishable trust of the majority of the workers, we must above all renounce throwing dust in their eyes, to exaggerate our forces, to close our eyes to facts, or still worse, to distort them. It is necessary to state what is. We shall not deceive our enemies, we have thousands of organs for testing. By deceiving the workers, we deceive ourselves. By pretending to be very strong, we only weaken ourselves. Therein, friends, lies no lack of confidence,

no "pessimism". Ought we to be pessimists? Before us there are gigantic possibilities. For us there is an unlimited future. The fate of Germany, the fate of Europe, the fate of the whole world depends on us. But precisely he who firmly believes in the revolutionary future has no need for illusions. Marxian realism is a prerequisite of revolutionary optimism.

Thus would Thaelmann have answered if he were a Marxist. But, unfortunately, he is not a Marxist.

### Why Was the Party Silent?

But how then was it possible for the party to remain silent? The report of Thaelmann, representing a turn of 180 degrees in the question of the referendum was accepted without discussion. Thus it was proposed from above, but proposed means ordered. All the accounts of the Rote Fahne report that at all the assemblies of the party, the referendum was adopted "unanimously". This unanimity is represented as a sign of the particular strength of the party. When or where has there yet been in the history of the revolutionary movement such dumb "monolithism"? The Thaelmanns and the Remmeles swear by Bolshevism. But the whole history of Bolshevism is the history of intense in-

ternal struggle in which the party won its position and hammered out its methods. The history of the year 1917, the greatest year in the history of the party, is full of tense internal struggles, as is also the history of the first five years after the conquest of power, despite this—not one split, not one widespread expulsion for political motives. But—at the head of the Bolshevik party there stood leaders of growth, another tempering and another authority than the Thaelmanns, Remmeles and Neumanns. Whence then this terrible present-day "monolithism", this destructive unanimity which transforms each turn of the unfortunate leaders into an absolute law for the gigantic party?

"No discussions!" Because, as the Rote Fahne explains, "in this situation it is not speeches but action we need." Repulsive hypocrisy! The party must accomplish "deeds", but renounce participating in their preparatory deliberation. And with what deed are we concerned at present? With the question of placing the cross on the ballot, although in the final balance of proletarian crosses there is not even the possibility of ascertaining whether it is not the Fascist cross. [Hakenkreuz—the Fascist swastika.] Without doubts, without consider-

ation, without questions, without even anxiety in your eyes, accept the new wild jump of the present holy leaders, otherwise you are—a renegade, a counter-revolutionary! This is the ultimatum that the international Stalinist bureaucracy holds as a revolver against the temple of each militant.

### What Does Stalin Say?

Did Stalin actually sanction in advance the new zig-zag? No one knows that, just as no one knows the opinions of Stalin on the Spanish revolution. Stalin remains silent. When more modest leaders, beginning with Lenin, wished to exert influence on the policy of a brother party, they made speeches and they wrote articles. The point lay in the fact that they had something to say. Stalin has nothing to say. He uses cunning with the historical process just as he uses cunning with individual people. He does not consider how to help the Spanish or German proletariat take a step forward, but how to guarantee for himself in advance a political loop-hole.

An unsurpassable example of the duality of Stalin in the basic questions of the world revolution, is his attitude towards the German events in the year 1923. Let us recall what he wrote to

Zinoviev and Bucharin in August of the same year. "Ought the Communists strive (at the present stage) to seize power without the Social Democrats? Are they ripe yet for that—in that, in my opinion, consists the question. At the same time of the taking of power we had in Russia such reserves as (1) peace, (2) land to the peasants, (3) the support of the enormous majority of the working class, (4) sympathy of the peasantry. At present, the German Communists possess no such thing. It is true that they have as their neighbor the Soviet country, which we had not, but what can we do for them at the present moment? If, at present, the power of Germany would fall, so to speak, and the Communists would seize it they would collapse with a crash. That is in 'the best case'. But in the worst case—they would smash into smithereens and be thrust backwards. In my estimation, we must hold back the Germans and not encourage them." Stalin stood, this way, at the Right of Brandler who, in August-September 1923 considered, on the contrary, that the conquest of power in Germany would not present any difficulties, but that the difficulties would begin on the next day after the conquest of power. The official opinion of the Comintern at present is that the Brandlerites in the Fall of 1923 let pass an exceedingly revolutionary situation. The leading accuser of the Brandlerites is—Stalin. Has he, however, explained to the Comintern the question of his own position in that year? No, for that there is not the least necessity; it is sufficient to forbid the sections of the Comintern to raise the question.

In the same fashion, Stalin attempts to play also with the question of the referendum. Thaelmann\* is unable to reveal the fact that Stalin worked through his agents in the German Central Committee and himself remained ambiguously in the rear. In the case of a victory of the New Line all the Manuilskys and Remmeles would proclaim that the initiative was Stalin's. In case of a defeat, Stalin would retain the full possibility to find a guilty one. In precisely this lies the quintessence of his strategy. In this field he is powerful.

### What does "Pravda" Say?

And what then does Pravda, the leading journal of the leading party in the Communist International, say? Pravda was unable to present one serious article, an attempt at an analysis of the situation in Germany. From the large programmatic speech of Thaelmann it shamefully produces a half-dozen phrases. And indeed what can the present headless, spineless Pravda, servile to the bureaucracy and tangled in contradictions say? What can the Pravda speak about when Stalin remains silent?

Pravda of July 24 explained the Berlin turn in the following fashion: "Failure to participate in the referendum would signify that the Communists support the present reactionary Landtag". The whole matter is here reduced to a simple vote of lack of confidence. But why then in such a case did not the Communists take the initiative in the referendum, why did they struggle for several months against this initiative, and why on the July 21 did they suddenly kneel down before it? The argument of Pravda is a belated argument of parliamentary cretinism, and nothing else.

On the August 11, after the referendum, Pravda changed its argumentation: "The purpose of the participation in the referendum consists for the party in the extra-parliamentary mobilization of the masses. But was it not for precisely that reason, for the extra-parliamentary mobilization of the masses, that the day of August 1st was assigned? We shall not now stop for a criticism of calendar Red Days. But on the First of August, the Communist party mobilized the masses under its own slogans and under its own leadership. For what reason, then, in a week's time, was a new mobilization necessary, moreover of such a nature that the mobilized do not see one another, that no one of them is able to calculate their numbers, that they themselves, nor their friends, nor their enemies, are able to distinguish them from their deadly enemies.

On the following day in the number of August 12 Pravda declares, no more, no less, than that "the results of the voting signified . . . the greatest blow of all that the working class has yet dealt the social democracy." We will not produce the figures of the statistics of the referendum. They are known to all (except to the readers of the Pravda) and they strike the idiotic and shameful boasting of Pravda in the face. To lie to the workers, to throw dust in their eyes, these people consider to be in the very nature of things.

Official Leninism is crushed and trampled under the heels of bureaucratic epigonism. But unofficial Leninism lives, let not the unbridled functionaries think that all will pass over for them with impunity. The scientifically founded ideas of the proletarian revolution are stronger than the apparatus, stronger than any amount of money stronger than the fiercest repression. In the matter of apparatus, money and repression, our class enemies are incomparably stronger than the present Stalinist bureaucracy. But nevertheless, on the territory of Russia, we conquered them. We demonstrated that it was possible to conquer them. The revolutionary proletariat shall conquer them all over. For that it needs a correct policy in the struggle for its right to carry on the policy of Marx and Lenin.

\*The question of whether Thaelmann was against the turn and only subordinated himself to Remmele and Neumann, who found support in Moscow, does not occupy us here, being entirely personal and episodic: the question is that of the system. Thaelmann did not dare to appeal to the party and consequently bears the entire responsibility.

## A Syndicalist Voyage to the Ranks of Stalinism

With a triumphant fanfare, the Daily Worker (10-2-31) makes much ado of the application of Sam Scarlett, an old-time I. W. W. militant for membership in the Communist Party of Canada. The Daily Worker in commenting upon Scarlett's adherence to the Communists, declares:

"Again the victory of socialist construction in the Soviet Union has shown a capacity for winning over to Communism the really revolutionary elements among the anarcho-syndicalist workers of past years."

It is a correct step for Scarlett to join the Communist Party. The Left Opposition has pointed out time and again the failure of the Communist movement in the United States and Canada and throughout the world, to attract the revolutionary syndicalist to the banner of Communism, and has explained why the Communist parties have failed. Foremost, there stood out the basic theoretical weakness of the syndicalist, the I. W. W., to grasp the cardinal necessity of a political party of the working class, and the dictatorship of the proletariat, as the instruments of the workers and all exploited peoples to achieve and to maintain the power of the masses against the class enemies.

But there was also the pedantic, smart-aleck and bureaucratic attitude of two-by-four functionaries of the Communist party toward the militant I. W. W. workers, participants and leaders of magnificent battles in the class struggle. Coupled with the mechanical measures utilized to win adherents of the I. W. W., these conditions served further to disgust or dismay I. W. W. militants still unclear on theoretical, principle and tactical issues avowed by the Communists. So the fundamental appeal of the Russian revolution and Communism brought only handfuls of the I. W. W. to the party wher hundreds and thousands might have come.

### Catching up with the Revolution

In the 14th year of the Russian revolution, Scarlett only now finds it possible to join the Communist party, to endorse the Communist International. This act is understandable for ordinary workers just coming to comprehend the class struggle and looking for methods to throw off the shackles of wage slavery. The path of a worker, blinded by capitalist prejudices and education toward class consciousness and the revolutionary movement is, at the outset, slow for the lone worker and, for the mass of workers, is speeded up only under the impetus and blows of stupendous class struggles and political developments, economic upheavals (Russian revolution, Spanish revolution, economic crisis, general strike, etc.) But this cannot explain Scarlett's late entry, for Scarlett is a militant of many years standing. Why should he but at this day join the Communists?

Scarlett has finally caught up with the Russian revolution. He says, in his statement printed in the Daily Worker (10-2-31) that "we (the I. W. W.) underestimated the role of the proletarian dictatorship, and maintained our anarcho-syndicalist opposition to all forms of government, capitalist or proletarian." The ex-syndicalist or I. W. W. Scarlett now arrives at and sees the role of a vanguard organization of the proletariat, of a political party of the working class; he now "recognizes" the "State"; he draws the distinction between the aim and function of government in the hands of the capitalist class as an oppressor of the workers, and a Soviet Government, through the medium of the proletarian dictatorship, as the defender and guide of the workers and all the exploited peoples.

We may thus assume that Scarlett will struggle hereafter against the "epigones of syndicalism" who dominate the degenerated I. W. W. of today with false and outworn doctrines of the emancipation of the working class solely through the method of "industrial action" and the industrial union. By such "ideas", the I. W. W. remains factually and historically in the swamp of reaction.

Scarlett is correct when he says that "lack of self-criticism and inability to alter the opinions of yesterday on the basis of the facts of today led to fossilization and degeneracy" (of the I. W. W.). But will Scarlett, in thus stepping ahead, now apply this critique and approach to the problems that today face

the Communist party and the Comintern? Let us see.

### Scarlett on the Field of National Socialism

Scarlett unlike the liberal and treacherous "Friends" of the Soviet Union, takes his stand on the field of Communism itself. The Left Opposition has charged that the Communist parties and the Comintern itself are neglecting or ignoring the basic problems and issues of the struggle for political power within the respective capitalist countries and on an international scale. Under the orders and guidance of the Stalinist Comintern the respective Communist parties tend to become transformed largely into auxiliary agencies for the preservation of the Soviet Union, and to push the basic issue of the international proletarian revolution into the attic of history and pure speculation. The Stalinist Comintern draws its theoretical outlook into the closed shell of "socialism in one country" and, with its narrow horizon, fails even to see that the preservation of the Soviet Union itself is predicated upon the support of a proletarian revolution in Western countries.

Scarlett himself accepts this narrow Stalinist theory. Like the Daily Worker in its opening sentence, Scarlett says, "The political line of the Communist Party is correct. It is necessary to build socialism in a territory which is industrially and politically backward." He is impressed with the "amazing progress of industrialization"; he watches the revolution change from the "haystack" to the "smoke-stack stage".

With these lines we see how Scarlett comes to the Communist Party. From the theoretical swamp of the I. W. W. he progresses to the need of a political party of the working class, etc., only to fall into the anti-Marxian, Stalinist and reactionary swamp of the theory of socialism in one country. Neither the effusion of the Daily Worker nor of Scarlett carry the burning spirit of international revolution and socialism, for a genuine

Comintern. Both begin and end with the glorification of Soviet industrial successes, even as liberals hail these successes. The Left Opposition forecast, planned and worked for these successes, despite Bucharin's and Stalin's hopelessness and pessimism.

From what considerations does Scarlett come to accept the theory that a complete Soviet industry and economy can be built independently in the Soviet Union without the assistance of the workers in other countries and through international proletarian revolution?

The Struggle Against Bureaucracy. Further, has Scarlett failed to note, in his 14 years of lonely progress to Communism, the specific problems and contradictions developing in the Soviet Union, arising both from objective factors and the Stalinist destroyers of revolutionary theory and revolutions themselves (China, Germany, etc.) Is Scarlett blind to the changes in Soviet industry in respect to continuous loss of workers' control in the shops, lack of Communist direction, etc.?

In the old I. W. W. emphasis was laid, and no doubt endorsed by Scarlett too, on the unskilled workers, the most exploited, the lowest workers, whom the I. W. W. reached in the wheat fields, the lumber camps, the oil territories, the waterfront, etc. Potentially, these were the most revolutionary, workers with nothing to lose and all to win. The old I. W. W. fought militantly for free speech, in and outside of the organization, for democratic methods, against fakers and bureaucrats. These were strong points on the I. W. W. side.

Will Scarlett react to these good qualities of a revolutionary syndicalist and a Communist, and will he now fight for workers' democracy within the Communist party and Comintern? Will he oppose the bureaucracy in the Communist Party of Canada, the United States and the Comintern?

In "Problems of the Development of the U. S. S. R.", Trotsky has accurately

forecast the present and impending difficulties in the Soviet Union, arising out of the successes of industrialization and agricultural collectivization, and the contradictions of the temporary existence side by side of a Soviet State and a remaining capitalist world. Despite Stalin and Litvinoff, the U. S. S. R. and capitalism cannot indefinitely co-exist side by side peacefully. Will Scarlett and the thousands of new Communists continue to ignore the program of the Left Opposition on these growing problems?

The Comintern bureaucracy, with its false policies, continues to corrode and poison the vitals of the Comintern and its sections, the Soviet Government and the working class. In the Soviet Union, Stalinist methods create ever wider differentiations economically among the masses, particularly the city proletariat. Workers, poorly paid, shift from job to job in hope of economic betterment. Stalinism and its lackeys everywhere make no effort to close these gaps, but only to justify them in the name of "industrialization". Stalinism makes a caricature of a correct policy of Soviet building, as set forth by the Left Opposition.

The Left Opposition has exposed the inadequacies of the theoretical position of Stalinism and its terrible results for the proletariat everywhere. For struggling for a change of the Comintern line, for the reformation of the Comintern, Oppositionists by the thousands have been imprisoned, exiled and even shot. What has Scarlett to say to all this?

Will he fight for the reinstatement of the thousands of Left Oppositionists to their rightful places in the Communist movement?

Having taken one step forward to the Communist party, will he remain, as now, on the ground of Stalinist national-socialism or will he take another step forward to the Leninist position of international socialism? —MARTIN ABERN.

## Conference Acts on Weisbord

In regard to the proposal from the Weisbord group to have representatives appear before our conference to present its views in regards to what it calls the existence of two groups adhering to the International Left Opposition, the Credentials Committee recommends to the Conference:

The Conference rejects the proposal to have representatives of the Weisbord group appear to present its views for the following reasons:

(1) That the Communist League has already discussed the views of Weisbord and those who may collaborate with him, both within our units and in the Militant and decisively rejected these views as having nothing in common with those of the Left Opposition. We therefore see nothing further to discuss at this conference.

(2) The International Secretariat in its resolution has also decisively rejected any pretense of the Weisbord group to claim adherence to the International Left Opposition and has declared that this group has nothing in common with our views.

(3) In accordance with this, the National Committee has already previously rejected any proposals from the Weisbord group for presentation of its views to us, while Weisbord has continued his impermissible attacks upon the views and leadership of the Left Opposition.

(4) We propose that the convention endorse this policy maintained by the National Committee.

(5) We propose the Conference affirm the fact that there is only one section of the International Opposition in this country, the Communist League of America (Opposition) and reject the ridiculous pretenses of Weisbord and those who agree with him, of adherence to the International Left Opposition and the principles it stands for.

(6) We propose that the conference call upon all those supporters of Weisbord and his views who seriously wish to support the Left Opposition, to trans-

late it into action by definitely opposing the attacks of Weisbord upon the Left Opposition, by severing all collaboration with him and by individually joining the only section of the Left Opposition in the United States, the Communist League of America (Opposition).

The National Conference unanimously adopted the above report of the Credentials Committee to which the letter from Weisbord has been referred.

## Issue Is Skipped

A number of circumstances combined last week to prevent the appearance of the Militant, and we have therefore decided reluctantly to forego the issue. Our national conference extended for a longer period than originally planned, and the various departing delegations, plus a brief illness of the editor, created such a dislocation of the editorial department as made impossible the publication of last week's Militant. We ask the indulgence of our readers for the failure to appear and assure all of them there will be no further interruption of the regularity of the paper's appearance every week.

## Classes

Monday: 8 P. M.  
History of the Communist International  
Instructor: Max Shachtman  
Wednesday: 8 P. M.  
Marxism  
Instructor: Arne Swaback  
Fundamentals of Communism  
Instructor: Martin Abern  
Registration Fee: \$1.00 — one dollar per course — unemployed workers — Special rates  
Opening Week: Oct. 19th  
Register at 84 East 10th St., at once

## Expulsions Begin in Spartacus Club

The New York Spartacus Club, a working class organization under the leadership of the Stalinists, is now the scene of an expulsion campaign against all those who presume to differ in their political views from those of the party bureaucrats. At last Sunday's meeting of the club, two of its members, comrades Harry Kumondareas and L. Hidus, were charged with "anti-working class activity" on the grounds of which they were to be expelled. The party fraction had been mobilized to its fullest extent and the Stalinist proposal was put. It immediately transpired that the "anti-working class activity" of the two comrades of explaining to workers in the club what were the differences agitating the present-day Communist movement. The anger of the bureaucracy arises from the fact that somebody sought to disturb the foundations upon which their power rests—the ignorance in which they keep the Communist workers.

A number of Club members rose to the defense of the accused and in the attacks made by the party fraction upon the latter it was made clear that the reason for the expulsion was the sympathy of the two comrades for the Left Opposition, whose views have been growing popular in the ranks of the Club. The Club was organized as a non-party movement which would embrace workers of all political and economic views. With the appearance of some Left Oppositionists, the Stalinists are forgetting all this and are determined to destroy the Club rather than allow the participation of Left Opposition workers and sympathizers.

Despite the mobilization of the party fraction, the vote to expel comrade Kumondareas stood at 34 in favor and 14 opposed. The absence of comrade Hidus at the meeting that day delayed a decision on his case, which is to come up for action next meeting. The determination of the Stalinists to split the movement must be met everywhere with the greatest resistance.

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