

# The MILITANT

Semi-Monthly Organ of the Opposition Group in the Workers (Communist) Party of America

"It is necessary that every member of the Party should study calmly and with the greatest objectivity, first the substance of the differences of opinion, and then the development of the struggles within the Party. Neither the one nor the other can be done unless the documents of both sides are published. He who takes somebody's word for it is a hopeless idiot, who can be disposed of with a simple gesture of the hand."—Lenin

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## Platform of the Communist Opposition

Addressed to the Sixth National Convention of the Workers (Communist) Party

By JAMES P. CANNON, ARNE SWABECK, MARTIN ABERN and MAX SHACHTMAN

### The Position of the Russian Revolution

The present position of the Russian Revolution and its Marxist-Leninist foundation is the dominating factor in the world movement that must determine the course of every Communist and revolutionary worker. It overshadows all other questions. An examination of its present status and an analysis of the conditions of its development are prerequisites to the solution of all other main problems of the strategy and tactics of the revolutionary movement. Just as the revolutionary Communist movement all over the world was moulded and hardened in estimating the significance of the events of 1914-1917, marked by the collapse of the Second International and the rise of the Bolshevik Revolution, so world Bolshevism, its maintenance and growth, is conditioned upon the estimation of the course of events in the Soviet Union and the Communist International in the period of the last four to five years. All other questions are subordinated to this and flow from it.

The collapse of the Russian Revolution as the dictatorship of the proletariat would signify the retardation for decades of the revolutionary movement in Europe and America and the uprisings of the colonial peoples, whose main point of support today is the victory of the Russian October. A collapse would be followed by an unequalled reign of reaction throughout the world and would entail a restoration of world imperialist rule without precedent in the last two or three decades. Our primary concern is therefore with the fate of the Russian Revolution which directly affects the fate of all the Communist Parties. The defense of the Russian Revolution against external attacks and internal dangers is therefore the first and foremost task of all Communists and every conscious worker. We are defenders of the Russian Revolution since 1917. There is no break in the continuity of our position for our present fight is directly connected with and follows from our whole previous line.

The attitude of official optimism and light-minded equanimity which finds that all is as it should be, without inquiry as to the actual facts and the basic trends of development,—and seeks to prohibit such inquiry—is the worst kind of "support" that can be given the revolution. This attitude is actually one of criminal neglect and results in disarming the proletariat before its enemies and deluding it before difficulties. To base oneself only on faith and precedent is to drug oneself into impotence. Communists must give conscious and understanding help.

The origin of the present crisis in the Soviet Union lies in the contradiction between the existence of a Soviet régime in a country with a predominantly peasant economy, and the pressure of the capitalist encirclement. This crisis has been sharpened and aggravated by the false policies of the leadership. These policies are rooted, further, in the overestimation by the present leadership of the duration and depth of the temporary stabilization of capitalism which began after the defeat of the German and Bulgarian proletariat in 1923.

Our entire epoch is one of capitalism in dissolution, of imperialist wars and of the socialist revolution of the proletariat. Imperialism is the final stage of capitalism, of the domination of finance-capital, monopolies and international trusts, of the division and redivision of the world among the imperialist powers, wherein the only method of "remedying" the disproportion between productive development and capital accumulation on the one hand and the division of markets, colonies and

spheres of influence on the other, is the resort to imperialist war. In sharpening the contradictions between the productive forces of world economy and national state barriers, imperialism evoked the last war and is preparing the next. This does not exclude, within the period of the decline of capitalism, the possibility of a partial economic revival or even the development of productive forces. Lenin at the Second Congress of the Communist International rightly pointed out that there was "no absolutely hopeless situation." The state of preparedness of the proletariat to wage a revolutionary struggle for power is a determining factor in the destruction of capitalism. Thanks to the treachery of the reformist social democracy, to the strategic though temporary post-war concessions of the bourgeoisie, and to the weakness or bad leadership of the Communist Parties, the bourgeoisie has been able to achieve the present relative stabilization of capitalism.

But this estimate of the current stabilization differs radically from that implied in the Stalinist, revisionist "theory" of socialism in one country, that is, a stabilization for decades, for a whole epoch. This conception, which is an approach to the social democratic view of capitalism as organically stabilized, found expression in the resolution of the 14th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union on Stalin's political report, which declared that "in the domain of international relations, it is quite clear the period of 'respite' is transforming itself into a veritable epoch." Later, the resolution of the Enlarged Executive of the C. I. of July 1927, spoke without restrictions of the technical, economic and political stabilization of capitalism. History's answer to this estimate was

the Chinese Revolution, the British General Strike, the Indonesian uprising and the Vienna events, not to mention the millions of unemployed. The estimate of stabilization given at the Sixth World Congress is so eclectic that it permits of varying interpretations.

### Revision of Leninism and the Crisis in the Comintern

Upon this essentially erroneous estimate was based the theory of the possibility of the complete construction of a socialist society in one country, (Russia), a theory entirely alien to the teachings of Marx, Engels and Lenin, and directly contrary to every principle of revolutionary internationalism. Integrally combined with this reactionary "theory" is the idea that a self-sufficing national economy can be maintained if only the danger of imperialist military intervention is warded off. That this inevitably leads to opportunism before the world bourgeoisie, (particularly before the United States which is the basic counter-revolutionary force in the world today), is shown in the signing of the Kellogg Pact by the Soviet Union and the notorious Litvinov proposals. That it leads to abandonment of all that Lenin taught on the revolutionary struggle against war and the role of the labor bureaucracy is shown in the capitulation of the Russian Trade Unions in the Anglo-Russian Committee. That it leads to the subordination of the Communist Party to the national

### Lovestone Gangsters Stage Riot at New York Meeting to Protest Against the Deportation of L. D. Trotsky

An audience of over 600 workers assembled at a mass meeting to protest the banishment of Trotsky from the Soviet Union were given a concrete illustration of Stalinist "arguments" against the organizer of the Red Army when a gang of hoodlums, who were armed with black-jacks and brass knuckles and other weapons of the "ideological campaign" started a riot in which a number of comrades were seriously injured and which finally culminated in the break-up of the meeting after the arrival of 100 policemen and dicks from the Industrial Squad, the Bomb Squad and various other detachments. The meeting was held at the Labor Temple on Tuesday, February 26, by the Communist Opposition.

The first riot occurred when a gang of 75 packed the lobby of the hall and tried to force entrance without paying admission, headed by Kalfides, a paid official of the Party demanded free admission on the ground that he was "an unemployed worker." A group of our comrades successfully prevented this mass invasion, during which sharp scuffling took place and our comrade Frank Basky was severely beaten by brass knuckles hidden under gloves and black-jacks wielded by the Stalinites. His face was a swollen, bleeding mass and he had to be given emergency treatment.

The second riot began when the hoodlums, who had come in by finally paying admission, commenced to howl and boo and to sing that "The International"—presumably as a result of the introduction of Fascist tactics in the labor movement—will finally "be the human race." This was continued for a period of nearly an hour, interspersed by numerous fights throughout the hall. Comrade B. Silva, a prominent militant in the Italian revolutionary movement and a stalwart fighter on the picket line in many labor battles, was slugged by a dozen who surrounded him and comrade Harry Stone was slashed in the face with a knife. Both comrades had to get physician's treatment. A number of the hoodlums also carried away souvenirs of the struggle.

These tactics, as was counted upon by the organizers of the riot, inevitably brought the police invasion and resulted in disruption of the meeting. Comrade Abern, the chairman, demanded that the police leave the hall, and when they refused, declared that we would not pro-

ceed under such conditions and declared the meeting adjourned.

The gangster methods of the Lovestone faction created strong resentment among the workers who do not grant these fakers the "right" of preventing them from attending labor meetings and listening to a working class viewpoint. A number of Party and League members who were at the meeting, declared their definite support of the Opposition in the future.

Another meeting will shortly be organized, and be held under the protection of a workers' guard sufficient to defend it from a repetition of the gangsterism that was displayed.

#### Other Meetings of the Opposition

The public activities of the Opposition in its struggle for the preservation of the Communist movement, have been developed in a number of public meetings this month. A successful meeting was held in Toronto on Feb. 12, with comrade Maurice Spector as the speaker, at which 500 were present. The Canadian Party, which is now in a free speech fight of its own, did not find it expedient to attempt to break up the meeting despite previous threats.

A rousing meeting was held in Boston on Feb. 15 with an audience of 300 workers, with comrade James P. Cannon as speaker. His lecture was received with great enthusiasm and resulted in strong consolidation of the Opposition Group and a number of new definite supporters among the Party members.

Another well-attended meeting was held in New Haven on February 22, with comrade Max Shachtman speaking. No interference was made by the Stalinites who had already experienced sad results previously with Fascist tactics.

Arne Swabek spoke at a meeting in St. Louis on February 23, at which comrade George Voyzey, president of the Illinois District of the National Miners Union, acted as chairman. A well-organized workers guard was on hand and there was no attempt to interfere.

Meetings are already being scheduled for the following month. Comrade Cannon is billed to speak in Philadelphia on March 17th, and comrade Swabek will speak before the Chicago Karl Marx Club on March 21st.

bourgeoisie and the abandonment of Leninism in the national and colonial questions is shown by the catastrophic course followed by the Comintern in the Chinese Revolution. That it leads to the conversion of the Communist Parties into pacifist instruments of defense, instead of instruments for organizing the armed insurrection in their own country primarily, is shown by the petty-bourgeois anti-cruiser petition campaign of the German Party.

All these lines of policy are consciously or unconsciously based on the need of preventing military intervention against the Soviet Union so that an isolated socialist construction can be completed there. The net result of this opportunist conception and course is the increasing danger of imperialist war against the Soviet Union, for revisionism here as everywhere brings neither revolution nor reform.

The growing war danger comes at a time when the crisis in Russia is reaching a sharp point. The departure from the proletarian revolutionary path, coincident with the beginning of the fight to cut the Leninist Opposition led by L. D. Trotsky from the Party, has reached a stage where the enemy classes have grown to an alarming extent and exert a tremendous pressure upon the Party and State apparatus. From Bucharin's: "Peasants, enrich yourselves" and the theory that the Kulak would grow into socialism, it has been a short step to the present situation where the exploiting elements in the village (the Kulaks) have stepped forth into the arena with confidence, boldness and arrogance to demand increased concessions and political rights. From the brutal campaign to suppress Party democracy in the fight against the Leninist Opposition it has been a short step to the consolidation of a bureaucratic apparatus through which the new bourgeoisie exerts its ever-increasing pressure. Never before have the Kulaks, the Nepmen, the bureaucrats been so strong, so imperious in their demands, so threatening in their progress. The policy of the Stalin regime, which is based less and less on a class foundation, and more and more on a bureaucratic agglomeration, is undermining the positions of the proletarian dictatorship and permitting the rapid advancement of the classes alien to the proletariat whose program is the break-down of the foreign trade monopoly, the recognition of the czarist debts, entrance into the League of Nations, unlimited concessions to international capital—particularly a rapprochement with American imperialism—the moderation of the pace of industrialization, penetration of the cooperatives and the Soviets, and the attainment of the suffrage hitherto reserved to the toiling masses. This is the program and the danger of Thermidor. It is the restoration of capitalism, in the beginning, probably, still under the present social forms.

The line of the present Stalin regime in this situation is a zig-zag between capitulation in deeds to the Right and temporary jumps to the Left, that is, one step forward and two steps backward.

The Leninist Opposition on the contrary has been fighting tooth and nail against this imminent danger to the Revolution. It has unfurled the banner of Leninism and stood by it in the face of an unprecedented campaign of slander and persecution. In the struggle against the Opposition and away from the line of Bolshevism, the present regime has by its very nature been compelled to resort to the bureaucratization of the Communist International, for under normal conditions of Party democracy and free discussion, such caricatures as are now offered the revolutionary workers in the name of Leninism, would be categorically rejected by the members of the International. To maintain its unprincipled domination, the present regime has therefore resorted to the suppression of discussion, the expulsion of Communists, to violence, to arrests, imprisonment, exile and deportation. In the name of Bolshevization, a campaign has been carried on particularly since the Fifth Congress of the Comintern, which has as its net result the elimination of all elements who questioned the opportunist course of the Comintern. It has abolished Party democracy and replaced it by control from above by irresponsible, appointed functionaries. Bureaucratic command and decree have been substituted for ideological discussion and leadership. The mechanical reorganization of Party leaderships solely on the basis of their unhesitating readiness to endorse whatever is done by the Stalinist regime and to condemn whatever is done by the Leninist Opposition is a daily occurrence. The influence and strength of the most important Communist Parties have been reduced to an alarming extent (Germany, Czecho-Slovakia, France, England, United States, etc., etc.); It has brought about the development in the leading Parties of the Comintern of Right wing or Centrist leadership and line and

the rending of these Parties by violent factional struggles that are reflections of the internal struggle in the C.P.S.U. The expulsion of the Leninist Opposition in all countries was achieved. The revisionist theories behind the opportunist line of Stalinism (socialism in one country, etc., etc.) flowered to full bloom.

## The Smoke-screen of "Trotskyism"

To conceal the essence of its Right wing deviations and bureaucratic misdeeds, the Stalin regime invented the myth of "Trotskyism" which it represents as the real danger to Leninism. Trotsky's differences of political line with Lenin were liquidated in 1917, on L. D. Trotsky's acceptance of the April Theses of Lenin and his entrance into the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party on the basis of his agreement with the tenets of Bolshevism. But even those pre-revolutionary differences were never as great as the differences of the Stalin-Bucharin regime now with the principles of Leninism. Differences between Lenin and Trotsky after 1917 rose out of the efforts of the two leaders of the Revolution to solve concrete problems on the basis of the same theoretical program, and were never so great as the differences between the present ruling faction and Lenin. The Opposition will fight against the falsification of the history of the Party and the Revolution for factional ends, which has assumed such monstrous proportions in the demagogic campaign against L. D. Trotsky in whom we recognize Lenin's chief collaborator in the leadership of the Russian Revolution and today the foremost representative of Leninism in the world.

The Opposition is not conducting a war for "Trotskyism"; such a political tendency does not exist. It is fighting for the principles of Leninism. In the Soviet Union, under the rain of calumny and repression, the Leninist Opposition led by its inspiring leader comrade Trotsky has fought persistently against all forms of revisionism and opportunism and for Bolshevism. The Opposition has sounded the alarm against the Thermidor danger and proposed a correct policy to combat it in favor of the further socialist development of the country—in the period of retarded world revolution—through a correct policy of the distribution of the national income, through taxation of the Nepman and the Kulak to accelerate the process of industrialization and to improve the conditions of the workers, through credits and other cooperative assistance to the poor peasantry, through a correct price policy, and so forth. The Leninist Opposition is organizing the workers for the defense of the Russian Revolution on two fronts of essentially the same enemy: against imperialist intervention from without and against the danger of Thermidor from within. Such a real defense, based on a correct class policy, can be accomplished only if the deep-going reforms proposed by the Opposition are adopted and an end is made to the splitting of the Communist Party and the imprisonment and exile of thousands of the best Bolsheviks. The leadership which organized the defense of the Soviet Union under the direction of Lenin is still best able to carry it out today.

## War Danger and the Defense of U.S.S.R.

The problem of the defense of the Soviet Union and the victory of October is inseparably bound up with the struggle against the danger of war. The inevitability of imperialist war inherent in the basic contradictions of capitalist society is not removed by the temporary and partial current stabilization. Indeed, the war danger proceeds from the innate contradictions of the stabilization process, that is, contradictions and antagonisms of capitalist imperialism which have again grown acute by reason of the world struggle for markets. What we are witnessing in the present period is an intensified, feverish armaments and militarization race preparatory to the actual outbreak of war. Combined with this is the customary accompaniment of imperialist jockeying for positions, formation of alliances and breaking of others, and diplomatic jugglery. In this pre-war period, the imperialists in their respective countries have the open or semi-concealed support of the social democrats and the labor bureaucracy (armaments program of the German S.D.P.; Boncour's militarization plan in France; Henderson, MacDonald and Co. in England; the American Federation of Labor's open pro-imperialist, pro-militarist position

and the endorsement by the Socialist Party of the Kellogg pact, etc., etc.) To complete the picture are the innumerable conferences that help delude the workers and develop pacifist illusions among them: Locarno and Kellogg pacts, "disarmament" proposals, and the like.

The existence of the Soviet Union with a proletarian dictatorship supported by the foreign trade monopoly, bars the way to a "free market" for capitalism of one-sixth of the globe. This intensifies the antagonisms of the whole of the imperialist powers against the U.S.S.R. and the tendencies towards the formation of an anti-Soviet bloc for intervention, which has so far been retarded by the mutual rivalries of the imperialist powers and their desire for a more "favorable" moment of internal difficulties of the Soviet Union, and through fear of the revolutionary action of the masses at home. The opportunist policies of the Stalin regime have weakened the international position of the Soviet Union. The by no means unavoidable defeats of the Chinese Revolution and the great British strikes have enhanced the confidence of the bourgeoisie and weakened the power of resistance of the workers. The best defense of the Soviet Union is the building of the revolutionary capacities of the Communist Parties. The fear of an insurrection at home, led by the Communist Party, is the greatest restraining influence upon the bourgeoisie against intervention.

The events of the past two years have made it necessary to restate the Leninist viewpoint on the revolutionary struggle against imperialist war. The policy of the Stalin regime has, in theory and practise, forsaken this line. It has set up a conception of some "super-historical" recipe to be used in fighting the war danger. The fight against the war danger and intervention in the U.S.S.R. has been "abstracted" from the general revolutionary struggle of the proletariat. Considerations of a "diplomatic nature," for "Soviet State reasons," "for special circumstances" have been advanced to replace the basic and permanent considerations of general revolutionary policy, instead of the one being an indivisible part of the other. This was true in the Stalin-Bucharin policy in the Anglo-Russian Committee, where they capitulated before Purcell-Hicks-Citrine and Co., because the latter would allegedly prevent Chamberlain and Baldwin from conducting their imperialist intervention policy. Reformist methods here also produced catastrophe results. It was true in the policy followed in the Chinese Revolution, where the revolutionary movement was sacrificed by the Stalin-Bucharin line for the sake of maintaining alliances with the "anti-imperialist" generals of the Chiang Kai-Shek, Feng Yu Hsiang stripe. It remains true today in the non-Leninist policy pursued in the so-called League Against Imperialism, where uncritical combinations are made from above with petty-bourgeois, reformist, and nationalist elements who are in many instances neither more nor less than the bell-wethers of imperialism. It is true in the case of the Soviet Union's signing of the Kellogg Pact without denouncing it as a cover behind which the imperialists are preparing the imperialist war and the anti-Soviet intervention. This opportunist line only adds to the illusions of the masses, and disarms them before their enemies.

The only road for the revolutionary struggle against war is that indicated by the teachings of Lenin on the question, in his writings during the last war so admirably summarized in his Theses of Instructions to Our Delegation to the Hague Conference. The Communists must relentlessly combat all pacifist illusions among the workers, point out to them the inevitability of imperialist war, teach and train them that it can only be overcome by the socialist revolution of the proletariat. We must show that there are no "exceptional circumstances" to justify an opportunist or capitulationist policy in which the interests of one section of the

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proletariat result in sacrificing those of the proletariat as a whole.

The impending war situation makes the American Communists particularly responsible and their tasks especially great and difficult. This is especially so since the present situation is characterized by a world struggle essentially between American and British imperialism. The antagonisms between these two powers become sharper and more intense every day, and may lead to the actual outbreak of military operations at a least expected moment.

## The Role of American Imperialism

Every estimate of the present situation must proceed from the fact that the world center of economic gravity has shifted to the United States. American imperialism now levies tribute from practically all the capitalist countries of the world. This development, which has risen to its height in the period after the world war, has bound up the fate of American imperialism with the economy of the whole world in an inextricable form. No analysis of its future economic course, internally as well as externally, can be made without a consideration of its international position.

The effect of America's direct intervention in European affairs after the war was the temporary, partial stabilization of European capitalism. This stabilization occurred in direct connection with the defeat of the German proletariat in 1923 and resulted in the consolidation of social democracy for the time. In turn it enabled the United States to avoid the convulsions that would have affected it inevitably in the event of the development of the revolutionary wave in Europe.

The United States has expanded its productive capacity which has brought about a further contraction of markets for European capitalism and consequently a contraction of the European market itself. The post-war chaos of Europe has made it impossible for the debtors of that continent to present a sufficiently consolidated united front to which they are inclined. The very strength and expansion of American imperialism has laid the foundation for the most violent struggles in Europe and in the colonial countries. The European powers must fight among themselves for a larger ration in world economy, and against the United States for the same reason. The pacifist effect which American intervention had upon the European situation in the beginning is now being transformed by the processes of development into a revolutionizing effect. American imperialism is now beginning to look for a solution of its own approaching internal convulsions at the expense of Europe, and primarily of Germany, and increased exploitation and imperialist raids on Latin America and China.

The present Experts' Conference on the Dawes Plan is becoming a focal point of this contradiction. The report of the Reparations Agent in Germany of 1928, which, contrary to the 1927 report, gave an optimistic analysis of the situation, was made with an eye to "solving" the conflict between reparations payments and the Allied debt to the United States by increased pressure on Germany. The proposal to issue bonds, protected by lien on the German railways, to cover the Dawes payments—and by payments of reparations to the Allies enable the latter to pay their debts to America—will only lead to the multiplication of difficulties. For the United States to carry even one-half of such a bond issue, involving something like two billion dollars for its share, would mean that the important banks of this country would add almost twenty per cent to their present holdings in investments and in government and other securities. An absorption of such an amount by the American banks which, according to the "Magazine of Wall Street," are "today water-logged with securities which they never ought to have bought at all" would result "at this critical moment of our financial history" in bank inflation.

The inability of the "Experts" to solve the reparations and debts problems in a satisfactory manner is an earnest of the developing position of the United States with regard to Europe.

At the same time, in the desperate struggle of the European powers to maintain their heads above the wave of American world domination they have even succeeded to a partial extent in regaining their position in world production. As between the periods of 1920-1924 and 1927, the share of Europe in world production of anthracite, iron, steel and the consumption of cotton has increased an average of 9.22 per cent, while the share of the United States has decreased an average of 7.55 per cent.

A most bitter competition for markets is becoming sharper in every corner of the world, primarily between the United States and Britain. There has even developed the movement to raise the already tremendously high tariff walls of the United States in the coming session of Congress.

It is not necessary nor is it correct to view the United States as "about to reach the apex of its growth" in order to see and understand the maturing crisis in the country. American imperialism, by the very fact that it is developing in a different period from that of the rise of Great Britain—the period of war and revolution, and national and colonial uprisings—is therefore doomed to a much more rapid tempo of the development of its internal and international contradictions than was England. And this is true precisely because of the phenomenally rapid expansion it has experienced in the past decade.

## The Present Economic Situation and the Working-class

The present economic situation in the United States is characterized by the following features:

The contraction of the world market by the stabilization of European capitalism and the decrease in the rate of the rise of American exports. The sharpening of the competition in the East and in Latin America between the United States and the European powers (England, Germany, etc.)

The tremendous concentration of industry and the intensification of rationalization, whereby technical progress has outstripped the expansion of the home market. There is a growing disproportion between the rate of expansion of productive capacity and the rate of growth of production and consumption. The opening up of the South to industrialization on a higher technical level, instead of creating a "New Ruhr" (Lovestone) only brings with it new contradictions. The newly-proletarianized population of the South will not develop an addition to the home market to absorb sufficiently the growth of production, and the hopes placed in the "new South" will further be partially offset by the intensification of the coal and textile crises in the North.

The home market has been further contracted by the creation of a standing army of unemployed workers numbering several millions. Although the index figure for production of big industry has risen from 146 in 1919 to 171 in 1927 (1914 equals 100), the index for workers employed in big industry has fallen from 129 in 1919 to 114 in 1927 (1914 equals 100); although population growth for the same years was from 106 to 120 respectively. In addition, there has been an influx into the ranks of the unemployed of declassed farmers. The agricultural production index figure for 1918-1919 was 132 (1900 equals 100) and rose to 148 in 1924. Active participants in agriculture fell in the same period from 106 to 100, although the agricultural population grew—also in the same period—from 112 to 115. These figures further indicate that although in certain specific and by no means general cases real wages have increased, the wages of the American working class, and therefore their purchasing power, has on the whole decreased. This tendency is being accelerated by the growing series of wage cuts.

American capitalism has been unable to overcome the serious depressions in agriculture and in the coal, oil, textile, lumber, shipping and other industries, nor will it be able to prevent the coming decline in iron and steel and automobile industries.

The rapid increase in brokerage loans, in face of an average trading volume of more than five million shares a day, presages the beginning of the end of the "bull" market, far more profound than the price fall of June 1928. The fact that rates for stock-market loans had to be doubled and quadrupled has caused the more realistic of the bourgeois economists to be very cautious in their predictions for the coming year.

The fate of American imperialism, we repeat, is now bound up with its dependence on world economy. Conversely, the situation in Europe is directly linked with the development of American national economy. The United States will seek to use Europe as a shield to take the blows of its own difficulties. This will in turn create such situations in Europe, above all in Germany, where, with proper revolutionary leadership, a new wave of proletarian revolt will be initiated, or the relations between England and America will come to the breaking point. This rapidly materializing

process will change the co-relation of forces in the United States in favor of the revolutionary proletariat, by undermining the base of the American labor aristocracy.

Meanwhile, the internal contradictions of American imperialism, bound up with its world economic interdependence, are maturing a severe crisis which is fore-shadowed by the current partial industrial depression. The present situation, which is only the harbinger of this coming crisis, has already brought to a high level the process of rationalization and attack upon the standards of the working class that is causing it to move progressively away from its previous inertia into a period of struggles. The realization of the crisis which will intensify the process of rationalization, unemployment, and lead to severer attacks on the living standards of the workers, will result in an even broader basis for the radicalization of the American workers and their entry into struggle. This process of radicalization is taking place now. It is a process which must be analyzed not only in comparison with the Leftward movement of the European workers, but chiefly in comparison with the historical backwardness of the American working class. Upon this development is conditioned the coming period of struggles of the American workers and the necessity for the revolutionary Party to understand it and prepare itself properly for it.

## Results of the Elections

The results of the recent presidential elections were nothing but a barometer, and a weak, inaccurate, distorted barometer, of the developments and perspective outlined above. The victory of the Republican Party and its candidate, Hoover, signified the still growing power—accompanied though it is by sharpening contradictions—of American capitalism, and the grip of the main Party of the bourgeoisie on the masses. This power was sufficient for the Republicans to break through the "solid South" for the first time since the Civil War, aided by those irresistible economic forces which have been undermining the social-political basis of the traditional Democratic Party for the past decades.

The election as a whole, however, makes it impossible for anyone to speak unconditionally of "a conservative landslide" or "a victory for reaction" or "a defeat for Smith." The vote for Smith by no means represented entirely a vote of satisfaction with the present state of affairs. The nature of the Smith vote disputes this. In the first place he received such a tremendous vote as has rarely before been received even by the winning candidate, which does not contribute at all to the theory of the "destruction" of the Democratic Party. His vote, furthermore, was composed largely of workers in the big industrial centers where he made tremendous gains, and of the hard-pressed petty-bourgeoisie and farmers.

Millions of workers saw in Smith, his record and his program, a possibility of change from the rule of finance capital, the eight-year orgy of corruption, reaction and imperialist policy of the Republican wing of capitalism. Votes which would otherwise have been cast for the socialist and even the Communist Parties went this time to Smith on the basis of the popular American belief that "he has a good chance to get in." It is entirely true that the workers who cast their votes for Smith were deluded and betrayed, that Smith in actuality is as much the instrument of imperialism as Hoover. But hundreds of thousands if not millions of workers did not vote for him as an instrument of reaction and an opponent of change. Smith, with his hypocritical "friendship for labor," his "pro-labor" record and program, succeeded in deceiving his working class support into voting for him as an "opponent" of the current reaction.

The vote against Hoover expressed to a certain extent the growing radicalization of the masses on an American scale, and with parliamentary limitations. Political developments have lagged historically behind economic developments. Proceeding from the fundamental viewpoint of the historical backwardness of the American workers it is apparent that the anti-Hoover vote was a political, that is, an insufficient, a distorted, an even reactionary, expression of the radicalizing processes taking place in the economic life of the American working class. In the present period, a Leftward drift of the workers in Europe will express itself, for example, in a desertion from the social democracy and a growth of the power and influence of the Communists. In the United States, such a drift assumes much more moderate and backward forms.

Neither does our analysis signify that the elections were the best available barometer of the

radicalization of the workers. On the contrary, it was one of the poorest. The indications of the radicalization process, which is bound to be accelerated in tempo in the coming period, are to be found chiefly in the daily economic life and struggles of the workers of this country. They are to be found in the movement for the formation of the new industrial unions, in the growing discontent of the workers even in the old A.F. of L. unions, and the growing mood for struggle that is partly exemplified by the increasing participation in strikes.

Relative to the possibilities, the Communist Party made a poor showing in the elections, which cannot be explained away solely on the basis of the disfranchisement of foreign-born workers and Negroes. In the 1924 elections the Party was on the ballot in 14 states and received 33,361 votes. The vote for the Party in the same 14 states in the 1928 elections was only 31,128, that is, a decline of 2,233 votes. For the same 14 states we received .001146 of the total votes cast in 1924; in 1928, we received only .000846 of the total vote cast in the country. Thus we lost in those states (the most important ones, too, like New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Illinois, Indiana, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Wisconsin, etc.) **absolutely**, in number of votes received, and **relatively** to the total vote cast. Our total vote in 1928 in all the 34 states where we were on the ballot was 45,710, an increase over 1924 not at all commensurate with the fact that in this election we were on the ballot in 20 additional states, that is, more than twice as many as in 1924.

This alarming showing cannot be explained, either, by the "Smith sweep" for there was a "La Follette sweep" in 1924. It cannot be explained by the terrorism of the bourgeoisie or vote-stealing; that condition also existed in 1924. In addition, it must be remembered that in the period between the two presidential elections, the Party had more opportunities for growth, popularity and influence than ever before. It led a number of the most significant strikes and mass movements: Passaic, the miners, New Bedford, the Sacco-Vanzetti agitation, and so forth and so on. The real explanation for our failure is in the fact that the Stalinization of the Party, here as elsewhere, has had terrific results. The Party has been corrupted and weakened by factionalism and opportunism, finding its chief source in the Lovestone-Pepper leadership supported by the Comintern. It has brought about a steady decrease in Party membership, factional distrust, irresponsibility and dilletantism, and has weakened the Party in the class struggle in every instance. It is the greatest obstacle in the crystallization and growth of the Communist movement in this country. There is no other basic explanation for our parliamentary decline and can be no other.

We deal here only with main lines, and omit the repetition of such points as the opportunist and corrupt parliamentary methods of the Lovestone-Pepper clique, the buying of signatures and electors, the false conception of the Labor Party and its role in the election, the failure to act with sureness and speed in selecting our candidates and putting our ticket into the field, the factionalism rampant throughout the campaign, and so forth. We have dealt extensively with these features of the election in other documents, notably "The Right Danger in the American Party" and articles in the press.

## Struggle for a Class Movement of the American Workers

Due to the strong position of American capitalism, which has enabled it to bribe large sections of the workers and to provide a higher general standard of living than that of the other capitalist countries, the American workers, from a class standpoint, are in a primitive stage of development. The American workers are not class conscious, they have not yet developed even the concepts of social reformism or independent political action and, on the whole, are permeated through and through with the ideology of capitalism. These incontestable facts are the starting point of the Communist approach and indicate our fundamental task: to struggle for the creation of a class movement of the American workers, for the development of class consciousness, and to lead them toward revolutionary concepts in struggle.

The fight for a class movement of the American workers is in the first place a fight against the capitalist ideology which dominates them. The

labor bureaucrats of the A.F. of L. and the unaffiliated unions of the same type are the direct bearers of this ideology in the working class and must be fought as such. The labor bureaucracy is a part of the capitalist rationalization and war machine—its "labor" wing. De Leon's classic definition of the reactionary labor leaders as "labor lieutenants of the capitalist class" holds doubly good today. The distinctive features of these labor leaders in comparison to the social-reformist leaders of Europe consists in the fact that they are **outspoken** defenders of the whole capitalist regime and all of its institutions, without "socialistic" pretense or class struggle phraseology. Their program is a program of stark reaction. They repudiate the class struggle in words as well as deeds. They oppose any kind of independent political action. They support the whole military program of American imperialism and will indubitably be a powerful ally of the capitalists in lining up the workers for the coming war and demoralizing the struggle against it. They decline affiliation with the reformist Amsterdam International. They oppose even the mildest proposal for social legislation and reform, and sharply differentiate themselves from all of its advocates. The condemnation of the Brookwood Labor College at the last convention illustrates this attitude.

This bureaucracy is the chief influence against the class movement within the workers' ranks—the strongest, the best organized and the representative of the most reactionary program. The specific nature of the American labor bureaucracy—its present source of strength—also makes it the more vulnerable in the period of growing radicalization. The very first steps of the workers towards a class movement can be taken only in direct struggle against them. The relentless and irreconcilable fight against the A.F. of L. leadership, based on a correct analysis of its specific role as the outspoken bearer of capitalist ideology, is a prerequisite for effective work in developing the struggle of the workers, increasing their class understanding and leading them to the fight for broader political aims.

The indiscriminate lumping together of all the various forms and methods of deluding the workers and holding back their class development, and the elements that represent them, (capitalist welfare schemes, A.F. of L. program, La Folletteism, liberal churchmen, liberals and progressives, Republican and Democratic Parties, bourgeois economists and efficiency experts, etc.) under one head, as is the current policy enunciated in the theses of the two factions, is profoundly erroneous. It glosses over the distinctive features and specific role of each and consequently makes impossible an estimate of their relative importance at the moment and the formulation of the most effective tactics of struggle against them.

The Socialist Party has progressively degenerated since the expulsion of the Communist Left Wing in 1919, and in great labor struggles of recent years, particularly in the needle trades, became the open ally of the employers and the A.F. of L. bureaucracy. It appealed for votes in the last election campaign on the basis of petty-bourgeois liberalism. The union struggles as well as the election campaign showed its influence to be in decline. In view of its tradition and its phraseology, however, its potentialities as an influence against the class movement of the workers are very great. The Communists must fight the Socialist Party on all fronts in the most direct and irreconcilable manner. A correct estimate of its position and function is necessary for this. The Socialist Party is not dead and its possibilities for a new growth in a period of growing radicalization of the workers will be greatly strengthened by false tactics of the Communists. The Socialist Party fights on the side of imperialism against the workers in its own way, but it is wrong to describe it as an organic and indistinguishable part of the A. F. of L. machine. It is true it will always form a united front with the latter against any serious movement of the workers but there is an important difference in function and division of labor between them.

The function of the A. F. of L. bureaucrats is to stifle all progressive tendencies in the working class and to defend capitalist institutions as they are. The function of the Socialist Party and of the related social-reformists is to exploit these progressive tendencies under more or less "radical" phraseology and to divert them into hamless reformist channels which avoid a real collision either with capitalism as such or the A. F. of L. bureaucrats. The new "campaign" of the Socialist "New Leader" against the Civic Federation policies of Woll and the "Progressive Manifesto" of the "Labor Age" group, are highly significant expressions of this specific role of these social-reformists. The

influence of these groups at present is weak, but the growth of discontent of the workers and their mood for struggle will give them the possibility of the expanding it on a wide scale. The Communists must **unmask** them and make their deception clear to the workers. Otherwise there is great danger of them gaining the leadership of workers movements and strangling them.

The main reservoir of labor militancy is the masses of unskilled and semi-skilled workers in the unorganized, basic industries. The full horror of the capitalist rationalization falls directly upon them, and the attacks of the capitalists in the present depression and coming crises strike them first and hardest. The Party must turn its face to these unorganized masses, put itself at the head of their struggles and lead in the work of organizing them into new industrial unions. This historic task must be accomplished in the fire of struggle against the capitalists and their state power as well as against their agents in the labor movement, the reactionary bureaucracy of the A. F. of L., the Socialist Party and allied groups of social-reformist elements. In this protracted struggle on all fronts extending over a period of years the decisive break of the workers with the ideology of capitalism will be effected and the genuine class movement of the workers will be built.

## Trade Union Policy

A correct policy on the trade union question and its consistent execution by a sound Communist leadership are decisive for the expansion of the Party as the leader of the struggling masses. Moreover, the tactics of the Left Wing, lead by the Party, a dynamic force of gigantic importance, will be one of the most vital determining factors in the future course and development of the trade union movement.

The narrowing base of the A. F. of L. and the increasingly reactionary conduct and policy of its leadership raise before the Party and the Left Wing the problem of organizing the unorganized workers in the basic industries, primarily the unskilled and half-skilled, who are becoming radicalized and ready for struggle. It is the task of the Party and the Left Wing to lead in the work of organizing these masses into new industrial unions. The **center of gravity** in our trades union work belongs in this sphere. This has been indicated by the whole situation for some time and the long delay of the Party in shaping its course in this direction, due to the resistance of the leadership, has already had extremely harmful consequences.

The history of the Party has been also the history of continuous struggles for the correct line in the trade union question. Isolation from the masses and their struggles was the price paid by the Party for its false trade union policy in its earlier years. The trade union program adopted in 1920 which called for a "boycott" of the A. F. of L. and support of the I.W.W. was only corrected after a stubborn and protracted struggle conducted by the main nucleus of the present Opposition. It was not until the Unity Convention of June 1921 that a realistic program, steering the Party into the trade unions and outlining the plan for the formation of a broad Left Wing was finally adopted. The entrance into the Party of a number of experienced trade unionists was facilitated by this decision and this in turn gave a great impetus to its practical execution. Isolation gave way to a speedy penetration of the Party into the trade union struggle, to the wide expansion of the Trade Union Educational League as a bona-fide movement of the Left Wing and to the appearance of the Party as an important factor in the Labor Party movement.

The rich results of this policy adopted at the 1921 convention were in themselves an irrefutable proof of its correctness. It was not executed, however, without one-sidedness and distortions. In reacting against the basically false policy of the 1920 convention which called for the "destruction" of the A. F. of L., the Party went to another extreme and developed an A. F. of L. fetishism. "Dual unionism" became a bogey—and practically all independent unions and movements were labeled as such. This very terminology graphically illustrates the great concessions to the labor reactionaries implicit in the one-sided policy, for it is their language. "Dual unionism" is their time-worn epithet for all revolting groups of militants. This fetishism blinded the Party to its tasks and duties in the unorganized fields and narrowed its base of operations too much to the organized, more or less skilled workers. It was a factor in the delay of the Party shaping its course towards the unorganized and shifting its center of gravity

there—a course made imperative by the changing circumstances.

This shift of emphasis to the formation of new unions of the unorganized has been accepted in words after a long and stubborn struggle of the Opposition for this line. But the work has not yet begun in earnest. The practice of the Party leadership in this field is marked more by sporadic spurts and spectacular stunts than by planful, systematic and deliberate work. Moreover, the turn of the emphasis to new unions of the unorganized, which ought to be indissolubly bound up in one comprehensive policy with the intensified work in the old unions is already being interpreted and applied one-sidedly.

The work in the old unions has been virtually abandoned. This fact is clearly revealed in the almost complete disappearance of the Party representatives from trade union gatherings. Still worse, the leaders of the factions are competing with each other in the elaboration of "theories" which preclude the idea of serious work in the old unions in the future.

The factions are outdoing each other in irresponsible striving to be "Left" in this burning question. These theories and practises are a menace to the Party and threaten to put it off the track again. It is time to sound a warning and begin a determined struggle against them. The building of the new unions and the work in the old unions must be carried on together and not the one set up against the other.

The role of the A. F. of L. leadership as the outspoken agents of American imperialism in peace, in war preparations and in war does not all obliterate the fact of three million members in its affiliated unions. The new "theories" are attempting to rationalize the A. F. of L. out of existence as a federation of unions and to arbitrarily preclude the possibility of its future expansion and growth in an organizational sense. The unrelenting struggle against the labor agents of imperialism in general and an unceasing exposure of their role as a bulwark against the working class resistance to war is an obvious necessity. The struggle against them for the organization and leadership of the unorganized workers is the main aspect of the fight. But the matter does not end there.

The workers organized in the A. F. of L. unions have an enormous strategic importance. We must fight the bureaucrats for influence over them from within, no matter how arduous the task, no matter how severe the persecution and discrimination against us. The abandonment of this struggle now taking place under cover of high-sounding "radicalism" will only prevent the crystallization of an insurgent movement within the old unions and free the hands of the bureaucrats for more effective sabotage of the organization of new unions, for these two processes are bound together. The net result will be to strengthen the effectiveness of the A. F. of L. bureaucracy as a part of the capitalist war machine.

The decline of the A. F. of L. in membership and influence during recent years is an incontestable fact. But it still represents a powerful force, both in an organizational and ideological sense, on the side of reaction. And its further expansion in a period of growing mass struggles and serious work by the Left Wing in the building of new unions, particularly in the event of war, is by no means excluded. The assertions to the contrary, conjured up to support the new "theories," are purely arbitrary.

The obvious fact that the big employers under "normal" conditions prefer their own company unions to the most conservative trade unions and fight militantly to destroy the latter is not of itself sufficient ground for such a contention. The whole rationalization process with its unbearable and increasing exploitation drives the workers to revolt and to the endeavor to form class organizations. The coming period will see such struggles on a large scale. Under such conditions it is not only possible but even probable that employers, who reject the conservative trade unions now, would accept them as an alternative to new unions under militant leadership and would even collaborate with the bureaucrats in their formation.

Such a possible perspective in no way "removes the base" for the building of new industrial unions of the unorganized workers as the main task of the Party. On the contrary it makes the energetic execution of this task all the more imperative. The greater the progress the Party makes with this work, combining it with increased activity in the old unions, the stronger will be the barriers against the betrayals of the coming revolts by the A. F. of L. machine.

The attempt to classify the entire membership of the A. F. of L. unions as aristocrats of labor, immune from class struggle agitation, which is implied, and even partly stated, in the new "theories," is likewise false. Deep currents of discontent, full of potentialities for future struggles, already exist in the old unions and they will increase in the coming period. The recent manifesto of the pseudo-progressive group of the "Labor Age" is primarily a reflection of this discontent in the ranks of the unions which the reformists seek to divert into harmless channels. The appearance of the new movement, even in a nebulous form, with pseudo-progressives at its head, is a sign of the abdication of the Communists and the Left Wing who in recent years have led these movements. It is a warning that continued neglect of the struggle in the old unions clears the road for the reformist stultification of potentially revolutionary movements within them.

The Party must clarify its tactics on the trade union question without delay. The organization of the unorganized, into new unions, the foremost and basic task, must go hand in hand with intensified work in the old unions, including those which exist alongside of new unions, and a revival of the discarded united front tactics. The Party must penetrate every movement of opposition and revolt against the bureaucracy, forming united fronts with all honest progressive workers, exposing the particularly deceptive and dangerous role of pseudo-"Left" and pseudo-progressive leaders, and struggling against them for the leadership of the opposition movements.

In 1925 the present Opposition conducted a struggle against the narrowing of the T.U.E.L. into a purely Communist body with a Communist program and for broadening it into a united front organization. This was one of the most progressive struggles in the history of the Party. The revival of the Left Wing in the Miners Union and the subsequent leadership of the Party in a great miners mass movement were the result of the change in course brought about by this struggle. That basically correct line must be restated and insisted on in view of the departures that have been made from it recently.

The T.U.E.L. which, thanks to false policies, has degenerated into a mere shadow of the Party existing on paper, with little or no organization or life of its own, must be revived as a bona-fide united front organization of the Party and non-Party militants in the unions, the organizing center of the new unions and the co-ordinating medium between the new unions and the Left Wing in the old. The actual participation of influential non-Party workers in the activities of the T.U.E.L. and in its leading committees is one of the absolute prerequisites for this proper functioning of the T.U.E.L. on a genuine basis of broad organization. And this holds good with a hundred fold emphasis in regard to the new unions which are being formed. The leading role of the Party in the new unions and in the Left Wing of the old unions is necessary for their development into higher forms of struggle. But the construction of the leading staff of these movements on a narrow Party basis with mechanical forms of Party control, above all mechanical faction control, which is the growing practice under the present Party regime, are fatal to the growth and development of these movements.

In the work of forming new unions of the unorganized workers, no less than in its work in the A. F. of L., the Party must revive and apply the united front tactic. Maintaining always its independence and freedom of criticism, the Party must form alliances with groups and organizations willing to co-operate with us on a minimum class-struggle program and win the non-Party militants over to the platform of Communism by degrees in the course of joint struggle. An approach to revolutionary syndicalist workers in the spirit of Lenin is especially necessary.

The Party must strive to establish its decisive influence and leadership in these united front struggles by its initiative, superior tactics and conscientious persevering work. These methods must replace the growing tendency toward exclusiveness and mechanical, monopolistic Party control which only result in the narrowing down of the base of the new movements and organizations, in their degeneration into impotent cliques, in their isolation and defeat. Under the present conditions and relation of forces, the Party cannot put forth the demand for arbitrary and mechanical control without endangering the developing movements and blocking its own approach to the awakening non-Party masses. The leadership of the Communists, which is alone able to steer the new movements on a correct course, must be won in struggle.

The chief danger to the progress of the Party in its trade union work is the opportunist leadership of the Party. Constantly oscillating between conservative passivity before the A. F. of L. and adventurous plunges in the formation of new unions without adequate preparations in advance, regarding the workers as objects for maneuvering rather than as class brothers in arms, dabbling with mass movements in dilettante fashion, and permeating all the trade union work with corrupt and poisonous factionalism, the Lovestone-Pepper leadership has already proved itself ten times over to be a positive barrier in the path of the Party and the Left Wing and a weight in the scale against the proletariat. Its potentialities for harm in the impending struggles, with all their vast difficulties and possibilities, are enormous.

The Lovestone-Pepper leadership rejected the proposal of the Opposition in May 1927 to begin preparations for the mobilization of the Left Wing in the United Mine Workers through a National Conference and followed a do-nothing policy month after month while the strike was being cut to pieces by the Operators and the Lewis machine. It was not until April 1928, after the strike was a year old and had already spent its force, that a National Conference was finally held. It resisted the course toward a new miners' union and did nothing to begin organization work in the unorganized fields. (Conservative passivity, fear of the labor fakers, lack of faith in the masses.) Then it plunged into the calling of the strike in the unorganized fields in April 1928 without the slightest preliminary organization. (Adventurism and irresponsibility.) It sabotaged and delayed the proper organization of relief work for months out of internal Party factional considerations. It excluded and discriminated against the most qualified and authoritative leaders of the miners' movement in the formation of the leading bodies of the new union. It pushed aside real organizers of the workers and flooded the coal fields with incompetent faction agents. It reduced the Party fraction at the convention of the new union to a fiction and decided all questions in advance through a small steering committee of the C.E.C. selected on a faction basis and comprising a majority without experience or authority in trade union work. (Criminal factionalism, callous disregard of the basic interests of the movement.) The Lovestone-Pepper leadership lost interest in and virtually withdrew support from the new union at the most critical time immediately after the convention. It made no serious attempt to provide the necessary financial help for the necessary organization work. Even funds which properly belonged to this work were diverted. The Lewis machine was thus given the opportunity to entrench itself again through lack of real competition from organizers of the new union. (Dilettantism and irresponsibility.)

The same methods have marked the course of the Party leadership in other trade union fields. The formation of the new union in the needle trades was unduly delayed while opportunities were lost and the Right Wing advanced. Here a bloc of crass opportunists is maintained in leadership while the Left Wing of genuine Communists is suppressed. In the textile industry a policy of passivity before the old unions was followed by the sudden formation of a national textile union prematurely, without sufficient preparation and without an adequate base in local organizations.

These evil methods, repeated systematically, are accumulating into a crushing weight upon the Party and the Left Wing, and leading to failure and collapse at the time when the possibilities are greatest and the demands heaviest. They directly threaten to discredit the idea of new unions, to demoralize the workers and destroy the prestige of the Party for years to come. The Bolshevik struggle to organize the workers cannot be separated from the struggle to reorganize the leadership of the Party on a proletarian Communist basis.

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## The Perspective of a Labor Party

The perspective of coming mass struggles involves the question of developing these struggles in a political direction and unifying them in a centralized form. The movement for a Labor Party is today at low ebb as a result primarily of the passivity of the workers and the decline in movements of struggle in the past period. The coming period of developing economic struggles will very probably be reflected in tendencies toward the revival of the Labor Party movement.

It is not reasonable to expect that the masses of the American workers, who are still tied ideologically and politically to the bourgeois Parties, will come over to the Communist Party politically at one step in a period not immediately revolutionary. All past experience, and particularly the recent experiences in the mining, textile and needle trades industries, where the workers who supported Communist leadership in strikes did not vote for the Communist ticket, do not sustain such expectations. The perspective of a Labor Party, as a primary step in the political development of the American workers, adopted by the Party in 1922 after a sharp struggle in the Party and at the Fourth Congress of the Communist International, holds good today, although the forms and methods of its realization will be somewhat different than those indicated at that time.

It is therefore necessary to keep this perspective of a Labor Party before the eyes of the Party and the working class. We speak here not for the immediate formation of such a Party and surely not for the adventurism and opportunism that has characterized this work in the past, particularly in the organization of fake Labor Parties that had no genuine mass basis. The Labor Party must have a mass basis and must arise out of struggle and be formed in the process of struggle. To this end, the propaganda slogan must be really revived, and as soon as it has found roots in the masses and their experiences in the struggle, it must become an agitational, and finally an action slogan.

The Labor Party must not be an enlarged shadow of the Communist Party. It must have a mass basis, else it will be a caricature. It must permit the freedom of action, independence and criticism of the revolutionary elements within it. It must not have an exaggerated importance attributed to it as the "leader" of the working class to liberation, and so on, for no illusions about its role can be permitted except at the expense of the revolutionary interests of the working class. It must not be based on individual membership.

The organization of two classes in one Party,—a Farmer-Labor Party—must be rejected in principle in favor of the separate organization of the workers, and the formation of a political alliance with the poor farmers under the leadership of the former. The opportunist errors of Party comrades in the Farmer-Labor Party of Minnesota and other states flowed inevitably from, and were secondary to the basically false policy of a two-class Party, pursued by the Party leadership, in which farmer and worker are ostensibly on an "equal basis," but where in reality the petty bourgeois ideology of the former actually dominates.

The struggle for a Labor Party, as part of the struggle for the development of a class movement of the American workers, requires an intransigent fight against the A. F. of L. leadership and the Socialist Party who represent obstacles to this development. The main base of the future Labor Party will be the new industrial unions formed in the coming struggles against the employers, the government and the labor fakers and reformists. The Left Wing, organized in the old unions, will also play a very important part. The radicalizing effect of these struggles and the circumstances which give rise to them will create the conditions for the formation of the Labor Party and for the effective participation of the Communists and their independent struggle for leadership of the masses.

## Work Among Negroes

The Party as a whole has always greatly underestimated the tremendous importance of revolutionary work among the Negro masses. The American Negroes are destined to play a great role in the coming revolution. The Negro proletariat of the North, and the great mass of Negro peasantry in the South form a tremendous reservoir of revolutionary force, which has hitherto remained un-

tapped. What is needed is a recognition of the importance of this work, a correct policy in it and serious attention to it.

It must be the main task of the Party in this field to mobilize the white workers to fight for the rights of the Negro masses to full social, economic and political equality and to unite with them in their struggles. Not an attitude of liberal paternalism, but an attitude of comradely support in a common battle, will give an impetus to the movement of struggle and resistance among the Negroes and will pave the way for the expansion of Party influence among them. The organization of the Negro masses for struggle goes hand in hand with the mobilization of the white workers for the defense of the Negroes against persecution and discrimination.

A prerequisite for this is the persistent struggle against race prejudice (white chauvinism) which is sedulously cultivated by the ruling class and dominates large sections of the white workers. It is even reflected in certain sections of the Party. This can be rooted out only by a broad ideological campaign explaining the reactionary, anti-working class origin, nature and result of the bourgeois "theories" of "white supremacy," and utilizing every concrete instance in this sense. Such a campaign has not yet even been begun in our Party press. The attempt to deal with the question by purely mechanical methods is false.

The Negro question is also a national question, and the Party must raise the slogan of the right of self-determination for the Negroes. The effectiveness of this slogan is enhanced by the fact that there are scores of contiguous counties in the South where the Negro population is in the majority, and it is there that they suffer the most violent persecution and discrimination. This slogan will be the means especially of penetrating these Negro masses in the South and of mobilizing them for revolutionary struggle. The Party must at the same time decisively reject the false slogan of a "Negro Soviet Republic in the South" at this time, raised by Pepper. This theory is still being propagated in the Party press and in official Party literature despite its rejection even at the Sixth Congress of the Comintern.

The work among the Negro masses must from the very beginning be based on leadership by the Negro proletariat and not by the Negro petty-bourgeoisie. The Party's orientation in the past has been based more on the latter than the former. Only through the domination by the Negro proletariat in the movement will the Party be able to advance the work of organizing the Negro peasants, tenant farmers, share croppers, etc., in the South in an effective and revolutionary sense.

## The Stalinization of the American Party

The departure of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union from the line of Lenin has been reflected in the Communist International and all of its sections. The Stalinization of the Comintern, which is the evil fruit of the demagogic and unscrupulous struggle of the Stalin-Bucharin revisionists against the Bolshevik Opposition led by Trotsky is represented by opportunist politics and a bureaucratic internal regime in the Comintern and in the Parties. Stalinization has brought about an enormous and absolutely unprecedented bureaucratization in the apparatus.

The weaknesses of the Communist International and its National sections and the faction struggles which undermine them flow directly from the faction struggle in the Russian Communist Party. Stalinization carries schism and disintegration into all the Parties. This is the main source of the evils in our Party. A recognition of this fact is the only key to the understanding of our Party problems and the organization of a Communist fight to solve them. The struggle for the regeneration of our Party, for the correction of its policies and the formation of a proletarian-Communist leadership, is an international fight. All attempts to wage this fight on purely national grounds, within the framework of Stalinist "legality," are unprincipled and futile.

The direct responsibility of the Stalinist faction for the Lovestone-Pepper regime in our Party and all its corrupting consequences is clearly demonstrated by the facts of Party history in recent years.

This leadership was established in the Party in 1925 by cable of the E.C.C.I. plus the jesuitical machinations of Gussey, the representative of the

E.C.C.I., after it had twice been decisively rejected by the Party membership. Again in 1927 a cable from the E.C.C.I. prohibited a majority in the Central Committee (the bloc of Cannon-Weinstone-Foster groups) from exercising their right to reorganize the Polcom and elect Party officers; thus safeguarding the Lovestone control. The "Supplementary Decision" cabled to the Party later in 1927 called upon the Party to support the Lovestone group after the E.C.C.I. had been compelled to reject its main line.

Further help in mobilizing the Party for the Lovestone faction was given a little later by cables hypocritically protesting against the "factionalism" of the Opposition while ignoring and condoning the most criminal and corrupt factional practices of the Lovestone group. Ewert, present leader of the "conciliators" group in the German Party, in his capacity as representative of the C.I. to our Party in 1927, helped the Lovestone faction to gerrymander and steal the Party Convention in Tammany fashion. The secretarial decision of the E.C.C.I. after the Sixth World Congress in 1928 ignored all the big political questions and simply declared the contentions that the Lovestone leadership follows a right wing line (which were proven to the hilt in the Opposition document on "The Right Danger in the American Party") to be unfounded and thus again indicated its political support of this faction.

By all these means, by political pressure, by direct organizational interference, by abusing the confidence of the Party members in the Communist International, by tricks and machinations, the Centrist leadership of the C.P.S.U. and the Comintern has strengthened and supported its American counterpart and entrenched its control in the American Party.

This Stalinization of the Party has reduced the dues-paying membership from 16,325 in 1925 (Convention report January-June) to 7,277 in 1928 (Financial reports January-August), in a three-year period which offered abundant possibilities for the Party to grow. It has brought about a particularly heavy loss of native American and trade union elements, reducing the proportion of such elements in the Party, always far too small, to insignificance. Party democracy does not exist. There is far less freedom of expression in the Party today, working under legal conditions and during a pre-convention discussion period, than there was normally in the underground, illegal Party. Bureaucratization has become a cancer eating out the Party life. The class composition of the Party has deteriorated and the main sections of the Party leadership, its decisive upper strata, are predominantly petty-bourgeois. Permanent factionalism rages in the Party year in and year out and absorbs its main energies. The whole course of disruption and disintegration is being crowned now by the wholesale expulsion of the Opposition—proletarian Communists, founders of the Party and its most loyal, reliable and tested militants.

## Self-Criticism

The "self-criticism" of the ruling faction consists in making tardy admissions of the least significant of the errors they committed, without indicating any connection between them, or the basis upon which they arose. The important and more dangerous mistakes committed by them are "admitted" only under the most severe pressure, and even then, in most cases, they are falsely ascribed to the opponents of the very errors. The nature of the errors, the reasons and responsibility for them, are never established. The result is that they are either repeated in the same form, or else they are repeated in an inverted form caused by irresponsible swings to the opposite extreme.

A genuine Leninist self-criticism is a primary prerequisite for the establishment of clarity, the raising of the ideological level of the Party and the elimination of the distrust and cynicism caused by its absence. Instead of self-criticism, the Party leadership has instituted a regime of diplomacy, concealment, distortion, and self-praise. Its own "achievements" are paraded and exaggerated in the most revolting shopkeeper's manner. A blank check of immunity from any error or crime is an automatic premium to any of its faction supporters.

In this poisonous atmosphere the disparity between words and deeds grows greater every day. Resolutions, theses and motions are made primarily for the record and not to be carried out. They remain on paper in the Party archives to be pointed to only to justify this or that action, after the

fact. They are carried out only insofar as they are in harmony with the temporary, opportunist interests of the leadership. The absolute impossibility of making the deed conform with the word in the present situation lies in the fact that any correction of Party line or improvement of its condition can be made only in the sharpest struggle against the present Party leadership. Since the present leadership is exclusively interested in its self-preservation at all costs, the word remains a hollow, farcical gesture.

## Party Democracy

The absence of any genuine self-criticism in the Party goes hand in hand with the growing bureaucratization of the leadership and functionary staff of the Party, its deproletarianization, and the increasing lack of workers' democracy in the ranks.

The wholesale expulsion of proletarian fighters goes hand in hand with the steady recruitment of all kinds of dubious petty-bourgeois careerist and half-baked intellectual elements. The class composition of the Party, particularly in the New York district where almost half of the Party membership is concentrated, has been seriously affected by this process in recent years and has had a direct expression in the opportunist policies of the Party and the strengthening of the opportunist elements generally.

In the upper circles of the Party, in the Party apparatus, this increased proportion of non-proletarians is enormously expanded. Under the Lovestone regime these elements are appearing more and more on all sides as Party representatives, officials, managers, directors, teachers, supervisors. Coming to these positions without sufficient prerequisites, they bring with them the detestable careerist attributes of insolence, arrogance and pride of office, antagonizing and alienating the worker elements and thrusting them aside.

Accompanying this is the alarming growth of the tendency to replace in various positions those comrades who have built and worked in the Party since its formation with those who have only recently joined the movement from the Socialist Party, the Zionist movement, liberals, etc., etc.

The Party must examine these questions in direct connection with the struggle against the Right danger and the opportunist leaders who are its bearer. It is necessary at once to take a complete registration of the Party membership with the object of precisely determining its class composition. A reorganization of the Party apparatus from top to bottom, up to and including the Central Executive Committee, placing the overwhelming majority of the positions in the hands of experienced and tested Party workers of proletarian origin, must be effected at once. In this connection, the Party must reject categorically the gross mockery of proletarianization which the Lovestone-Pepper group is carrying out. It consists of the formal addition to certain Party committees of unknown comrades who are never intended to function in the committees except to serve as proletarian window-dressing behind which the opportunists and petty-bourgeois careerists can work with greater security. For the next period, until a proletarian stabilization has been achieved in the Party and its apparatus, the Party membership must be closed entirely to non-proletarian elements. Even then their admittance into the Party must be strictly supervised.

An analysis of the number of comrades employed in the apparatus (in the Party national and district offices, in the Party press and their administration, in the large number of auxiliary organizations, in the numerous cooperative institutions, etc., etc.) will reveal the striking fact that the Party has a staff of paid functionaries and technical workers equal to **more than 10 per cent.** of the Party membership who are not employed in industry or in agriculture. This bureaucratic crust is smothering the Party.

The fight for the Party is a fight against the systematic opportunist policy of the leadership and the bureaucratic regime with which it fortifies itself against control and correction from below. This internal regime is tied up with the external opportunist line and is an expression of it. A serious struggle for a correction of the opportunist external policy which weakens the Party and consequently the class before their enemies is impossible without the most determined, stubborn and relentless fight for Party democracy. Party democracy is the means whereby the policy of the Party can be corrected and its leadership reorganized on a proletarian-Communist basis.

The raising of the issue of Party democracy and

the education of the Party membership on its meaning and significance are made all the more necessary by the confusion that prevails on the whole question of Party government, of forms of working class organization, of centralization and discipline. This confusion is fostered by the monstrous distortions of Lenin's teachings disseminated by the Party leadership and is the direct result of them.

The present leaders and "teachers" of the Party distort and misapply these conceptions. They totally neglect to take up this burning problem at all in their respective faction theses. They substitute the idea of discipline in the formal mechanical sense for the Leninist doctrine of democratic centralism. Our Party which ought to be the champion of Workers' Democracy throughout the entire labor movement is making the very word taboo. All democracy is indiscriminately labelled bourgeois democracy. Party democracy, of course, does not exclude but presupposes centralization and discipline. It is just the bureaucratic distortions and mechanical conceptions of discipline which give rise to syndicalist prejudices in this respect.

The Party must make an end of this situation by struggle against the leadership that fosters and expresses it. The first step is to break down the disruptive expulsion policy and to reinstate the expelled Communists with the right to express their views in the Party by normal means. The policy of administrative gagging, suppression and terrorism must be overthrown. The worker Communist must be able to feel at home in his own Party. He must have the right and feel the freedom to open his mouth and say what he thinks without being called into the office of some petty official or other, like a recalcitrant workingman in a factory, and threatened with discipline. All talk of Party democracy in the face of suppression on all sides and the wholesale expulsion of comrades for their views is a swindle.

## Americanization in the Bolshevik Sense

As a result primarily of historical conditions the American Communist movement was from the beginning predominantly a movement of foreign-born workers, whose revolutionary and socialist traditions had a European background. Their passage to Communism was fundamentally a reaction to events in Europe, above all the Russian proletarian revolution, and this reaction was not closely connected with the class struggle in the United States. In its formative years the Party stood aloof to a very large extent from the great mass struggles of that time—the steel strike, the general strike of the miners, and so on, and did not recruit its forces from them. The Left wing in the Socialist Party and the Communist Party into which it evolved were dominated by foreign language Federations. The "American" leaders, for the most part, were the "English expression" of this movement.

This anomalous situation imparted to the early movement an unrealistic and extremely sectarian character and caused deep internal contradictions and struggles. The long struggle against Federation domination and the Federation form of organization, although formally an organization question, was fundamentally a political struggle for the Americanization of the movement. It was closely bound up with the struggle against sectarianism: for a realistic trade union policy, for "legal" activities and a legal Party, for the Labor Party and for the predominance of American workers in the leadership.

This character of the Party and its leadership in the formative years militated against its effective participation in the class struggle and greatly weakened its recruiting power among the American revolutionary workers. The I.W.W. movement of that time which was a great reservoir for Communism and a large part of the natural base for an American Communist movement was not attracted, and the anti-Communist strategy of the reactionary anarcho-syndicalist leaders was greatly facilitated. The Party failed likewise, for these reasons, to recruit thousands of revolutionary-minded American Workers in the Socialist Party and in the Left Wing of the trade unions.

The violent internal struggles were called forth by the contradictions between the composition, tactics and leadership of the Party and the conditions for its existence and effective functioning in the class struggle. The struggle of a minority to overcome these contradictions, in which the

present Opposition was in the forefront from the very beginning, received powerful support from the Communist International, particularly in 1921 and 1922. The new course of the Party, its emergence from the underground, its adoption of a realistic trade union policy and its participation in the Labor Party movement, were the result of this struggle. The recruitment of native workers and active trade unionists began, and, particularly under the leadership established at the 1923 Convention, developed progressively.

The disruption of the leadership and the alteration of the course of the Party in 1925 halted this development, and the past three years has seen a retrogression. The proportion of native workers in the Party and its decisive leadership today is insignificant and the recruiting power of the Party among these elements has greatly declined. Even in great mass struggles like that of the miners', the Party is unable to gain, and still less to keep, any considerable number of new members of this type. It remains primarily a Party of foreign-born workers with its decisive working class membership narrowing more and more to the needle trades. This state of affairs, bound up with the problem of Party policy and leadership, is fatal for the growth of the Party as a factor in the class struggle in America.

It is necessary to state these facts openly and fearlessly and to insist on a change of course in the most resolute manner. The new course for the Americanization of the Party in the Communist sense must be adopted. Conscious, deliberate and systematic efforts must be made in all class struggle activities by every member of the Party to attract native workers into the Party and into its leadership in all of its spheres. The selection of Party representatives, the methods of approach, and so on, must be decisively influenced by this aim. There must be a simplification and popularization of propaganda and agitational work. Far greater attention to simple, modest tasks of a movement in its elementary stage of development. Greater responsibility and concentration on main struggles and activities, and less sensation-mongering, less pretentiousness, bombast, exaggeration, fake campaigns and "high politics." Use of language comprehensible to the American workers and more related to their traditions.

The problem is to unite the inspiration of the Russian revolution, which is and has been the strongest influence in the revolutionary wing of the American labor movement, with a realistic approach to the specific tasks of the American Communists. This now applies especially to the defenders of the Russian Opposition which is the representative of the victory of the Russian October. This unity will be the means of permeating the American workers with the spirit of Internationalism while strengthening and developing the Communist influence in the class struggle in America.

The efforts made in the past to pervert the revolutionary essence of this program to adapt the Party to its specific tasks have only served to justify the present composition of the Party and the laxness in improving it, but have in no sense invalidated the correctness of our proposals which are as vital today as ever, if not more so.

## The Party, the Groups and our Perspectives

The Party today is in the throes of a factional crisis which has raged continuously since 1923. This factional struggle, which the E.C.C.I. frequently declared "has no basis in principle" is the product of the Stalinization of the Party and the imposition upon it from above of an artificial and incompetent leadership. At bottom this struggle, which numerous "unanimous" resolutions could not stop and which broke out afresh after each proclamation of "unity," has been a conflict between the proletarian and the petty-bourgeois tendencies.

As a result of the failure to understand the struggle in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union which is the main source of the factional situation in our Party, the proletarian tendency has made numerous mistakes and has not always been able to formulate the issues clearly, since this could be done only with an international orientation and perspective.

The ruling faction in the Party on the other hand was strengthened by its international connection with the Stalin-Bucharin regime and received direct and continuous support from it. The Lovestone-Pepper faction is an American replica of

the international faction which is undermining the Comintern and weakening the position of the Soviet Union. This faction of Lovestone-Pepper is a combination of the old ultra-Left and "Goose caucus" elements of the underground Party (who fought the formation of the legal Party) and the Centrist leaders of the "Workers Council" group (who fought the underground Communist Party). The Lovestone-Pepper group of intellectuals balanced between them, "reconciled" their differences and shifted the leadership of the combination to the petty bourgeois, intellectual and careerist elements. This faction was patched together for the purpose of securing and holding "power" in the Party at all costs and under all circumstances. It has no roots or traditions in the working class and no firm or definite line of policy. Its course is an opportunist-adventurist shifting from day to day according to factional and inner-Party exigency to which its external policies are always subordinated. In the struggle against the Opposition Communists the Party leadership has already resorted to methods of a pronounced fascist character (gansterism, burglary).

The personal records of the leaders of this faction are so malodorous as to render them absolutely ineligible for leading positions in a Communist Party which must gain and hold the confidence of the workers to such a large extent through its leaders. Pepper, the Moscow representative of the faction, was a social patriot during the war, a war correspondent of the Austro-Hungarian empire. Prior to the Hungarian Soviet Republic he was a Minister in the bourgeois government who arrested Communists, denounced them as "Left counter-revolutionaries" and advocated mass terror against them. Lovestone, while a member of the Central Executive Committee of the Party in 1920, testified for the State of New York in the trial of Harry Winitzky, securing thereby the dismissal of two indictments against himself while comrade Winitzky went to prison. Wolfe ran away from the Party during the Palmer raids in 1919 and disappeared for two years. After the Bridgman raid in 1922 he again deserted the Party and went to Mexico against Party instructions, returning in 1925. Wicks made a renegade speech before a body of business men in Gary, Indiana, in the winter of 1920, during the height of the terror against the Communists, as a "reformed red" and "exposer" of the Communist movement and the steel strike. Olgin fought the Russian Revolution and the Communists in the columns of the yellow Jewish Daily Forward. Minor attacked Lenin and the Bolshevik Revolution in the capitalist press. Trachtenberg, Engdahl and Kruse fought on the side of Berger and Hillquit against the Communists during the split of 1919 and for two years afterward. At the Socialist Party convention in 1921 Kruse protested against and branded as a "lie" the accusation that he wanted to join the Communist International without reservations. Kruse expelled Communists from the Socialist Party and the Young People's Socialist League—and is expelling some of the same comrades from the Party in the Chicago District today.

Almost the entire editorial staff of the Freiheit was trained in the school of the Forward and the reactionary Zionist press and conducted there the same kind of a campaign against the Communist Party which they now conduct against the Opposition. An examination of the records of many of the lower and district functionaries of the present regime will reveal similar facts. The Lovestone-Pepper faction leaders are a distinct type of adventurers in the movement. These are the people who expel and calumniate us.

The Foster-Bittelman group represents a section of the forces organized in the beginning of the struggle in 1923 which signalized the crystallization of the proletarian tendency. It is now dividing itself into two parts—the Foster wing and the Bittelman wing—and this process will go deeper as a result of the contradictions in its position. Its attempt to struggle against the ruling faction on purely "national questions" while supporting the regime in the International which this faction represents, renders its whole position untenable.

Lack of principle, characterlessness, intellectual and political cowardice on the part of the Foster-Bittelman group of "leaders," so clearly and so disgustingly revealed in the whole pre-convention and "anti-Trotsky" campaign, are the manifestations and the result of their contradictory and impossible position.

The support these leaders have received in the pre-convention struggle represents in the main the effort of the proletarian tendency within the Party

to find a "legal" expression for its opposition to the Lovestone-Pepper regime. These proletarian elements who have not yet developed the full implications of the struggle and do not yet understand its international character have mobilized around the Foster-Bittelman faction. The leaders of this faction exploit these proletarian tendencies for picayune factional aims and the struggle for organizational positions. They thus play the part of a shield for the opportunist-adventurers who control the Party. Their role is to restrain and confuse the proletarian tendency; to muddle up the issues and hold back the struggle into channels prescribed by the international Stalin regime; to prevent an understanding of the great world questions which are bound up with the conflict between the proletarian and the petty bourgeois tendencies in our Party.

This faction of inner-Party opportunists, lacking firm principle, has a deep internal conflict between the impulse for struggle against the Party regime, which comes from below, and the mood for capitulation in the top circles, and is constantly staggering back and forth between them. Their frequent and contradictory "statements" and "declarations" reflect this antagonism from which the faction cannot escape and which it cannot reconcile. Their difficulties grow from day to day and a collapse of the faction, foreshadowed by the Foster-Bittelman split, is by no means improbable at the Party Convention.

An attempt to continue the faction struggle after the convention will bring new blows from the Communist International and organizational persecution. The leading circles of the faction, strongly bureaucratized, stand in deadly fear of this and they are preparing to capitulate and withdraw their thesis that the Lovestone-Pepper leadership constitutes the Right Wing and the main danger to the Party. On the other hand the proletarian supporters of the faction demand a continuation of the struggle and will revolt against a capitulation, and move closer to the Opposition which fights on a principle line.

The "politics" of the faction leaders consists of the search for an expedient formula to reconcile this conflict. But the whole situation excludes and prohibits such a reconciliation. In any case, further splits and disintegration of the faction which has based itself on temporary expediency are inevitable.

The Opposition is a nucleus of Communists who have participated in the founding of the Party and who have played a decisive and progressive part in all the work and struggles of the Party since its inception. Most of them were active in the revolutionary movement for years before the Party was organized. They constitute a group of comrades who have worked together on a common line for a longer time than any group that ever existed in the Party.

The present Opposition was in the forefront of the Party struggles against underground sectarianism. It formulated and fought in the front ranks for the correct trade union policy, for the legal Party and for the Labor Party. Four of the expelled Communists—Cannon, Swabeck, Abern and Edwards—were delegates to the Fourth Congress of the Communist International and lead the successful fight there on these questions after a protracted struggle in the Party. They were the first to take up the fight against the Federated Farmer-Labor Party and the adventurous politics connected with it in 1923. They were the organizers of the revolt against the Pepper regime and the movement which began then to form the proletarian tendency into a group. The present Opposition lead the fight in 1925 against the narrow base of our trade union work and thereby helped the Party to again break its isolation and get the miners' mass movement under way. The Opposition as at present constituted has worked together as a unit for a consistent line of policy which has been in the main correct and works today along the same line.

The decisive role of the present Opposition in the historic struggle against underground sectarianism and trade union "Leftism" is in no way contradictory to our present stand. We see no more virtue in "Left" radicalism now than we saw then and we offer no ultra-Left panaceas to the Party. Our main fight now is on another front because the circumstances have placed the danger of Centrism and Opportunism in the foreground (although sectarianism, particularly on the trade union and Labor Party questions, is by no means liquidated.)

The present struggle in our Party and in the entire International is before all a struggle against

opportunism and bureaucratic corruption which are undermining them. The struggle against these deadly perils takes precedence over all others. The struggle facing the Communist vanguard in all Parties today is the struggle to preserve the Communist movement. This is the historic mission of the Opposition on an international scale. The task of the Opposition is to fight with all its power against the opportunist and bureaucratic degeneration of the Party, without slipping onto the side-track of sectarian isolation. This requires first of all firmness of principle and a realistic line of tactics based on fundamental principles.

This, the actual line of the Opposition, is perfectly clear to the Social Democrats as well as to those elements within the Party who stand farthest to the right. The whole Centrist group of the Workers' Council which joined the Party as late as 1922, the opportunist trade union leaders in the needle trades, the entire bureaucracy of the Finnish section—all these have unanimously and enthusiastically denounced the Opposition. Those elements of the Finnish section in New York and Massachusetts who have come into conflict with the Party regime, on questions of the Finnish movement, have likewise rejected the platform of the Opposition. All these facts are known.

The attempt of the Party leadership in its statement in the Daily Worker of Feb. 15, to make the Opposition responsible for alleged combinations with reactionary and anti-Party elements against the Party ("The American Trotskyists, the renegade Cannon group, have now formed openly an alliance in the Finnish co-operatives with the fascists, with the white guardist followers of Mannerheim, the bloodhound of the Finnish proletariat, with the fakers of the salvation army and with the social democrats gathered around the Raavaaj against the Workers (Communist) Party of America") is a deliberate slander worthy only of the school which invented the infamous tale about the "Wrangel officer" and the Russian Opposition.

All tendencies to break away from the Party to the right, to moderate the struggle against the Socialist Party or to form an indiscriminate combination of opportunist and anti-Party elements against the Party have nothing in common with our views or aims. Our line is a principle line. We fight as a detachment of the International Leninist Opposition for the regeneration of the Communist movement in the struggle against opportunism from without as well as from within the Party. While excluded from the Party we carry on our revolutionary work in the class struggle on the basis of our platform.

The Stalin-Bucharin regime converts the faction struggle into a game of be-fuddling the Party membership and pulling wires in Moscow. The Opposition in the American Party, uniting with the line of the Russian Opposition, breaks through this disgraceful and corrupting game. It brings clarity into the Party struggle and gives the proletarian tendency a firm guiding line. It elevates the struggle to an international principle basis, gives it a revolutionary content and begins the education of the Party in struggle for Leninist fundamentals on the great world questions of the period.

Our fight as a part of the International Opposition for the Leninist line on a world scale is at the same time a fight to preserve the Communist movement in America and to build it into a working class power able to fulfill its great historic mission.

The present Opposition fought for the Russian Revolution since 1917 and for the Communist International since the first day its banner was raised. Our fight today is a continuation on the same line and for the same basic principles.

We raise before the Party convention the question of restoring the Party membership of the expelled comrades of the Opposition on the basis of the foregoing statement of aims and views. We also propose to the Convention that it take a stand for the re-establishment of the Unity of the Communist International by calling for the re-instatement of the Russian and International Opposition, and for the immediate cessation of those measures which especially undermine the Party and the Proletarian Dictatorship and strengthen the enemies of the working class—the arrests, exile and banishment of the Russian Opposition.

#### NOTE

The sections of our Platform dealing with the Party Organization, the Agrarian Questions and the Young Worker's League, which are not included here on account of lack of space, will appear in the next issue of The Militant.

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