

WORKERS  
OF THE  
WORLD.  
UNITE

# THE MILITANT

Weekly Organ of the Communist League of America [Opposition]

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## The «Socialists» and their Line of Action

Within its shell of moribund reformist ideology considerable divergences have been for some time developing in the Socialist party. At its just concluded convention these difference, came to stand out quite clearly. It was not a matter of revolutionary views struggling against reformist encumbrances. No, if it had been, their proponents would be obliged to find new fields of expression in some form of common action with the Communist movement, not within the polluted waters of the Socialist party. Yet these divergences reflect the pressure of a working class moving toward the Left.

Essentially the differences were expressed in the groupings which have quite clearly crystallized. There are, on the one hand, the «militants» who appear to have hopes that the S. P. can be made to play a progressive role as a social democratic party. They speak of achieving a «social and economic system for the benefit of the workers», which would justifiably put down counter-revolution within a Socialist state through the use of violence, but strictly dissociated from class rule through the Proletarian Dictatorship. Hillquit characterized them as young, sincere and impatient—that is sincere to Hillquit's «ideals»—people who will soon settle down to more «sane» views. That evidently, is not far from the truth. Secondly there is the group of futile petty bourgeois liberals whose outstanding representative is Norman Thomas. It sees ever greater opportunities for its particular brand of «salvation» and conceives of the S. P. as a good instrument to further petty bourgeois liberation on a grand scale expecting it to be reinforced by the workers. Thirdly there are the so-called practical socialists, whom Hillquit also quite truthfully characterized as to their «noble» goal of building new sewers. Lastly, there is the old guard led by Hillquit and O'Neal. This is the most conscious group with a consistent program, deeply saturated with hostility to revolution. A group which cleverly manipulates reformist demands, clothed, when necessary, in Marxian phraseology, but as treacherously reactionary as its European brethren and as conscious in preparing the social reformist instrument to serve capitalism. With its deep seated hostility to the proletarian revolution it can pursue no other course. This group prevailed at the convention.

The S. P. claims a gain in membership of 8,000 in four years to a total of 25,000. In that is reflected in a sense the fact that some sections of the workers have taken the step away from the traditional bourgeois parties to social democracy. It shows also that what is at the basis of such growth reflects a pressure from which even the S. P. is not immune. This found its expression in the two extreme wings. In the «militants» striving for a new, a better reformist dressing for a decrepit body—all in an unblushing alliance with the petty bourgeois liberalism of Thomas and the «practical» new sewer socialists. Next it found its expression in the old guard sitting tighter on the lid but manipulating a few extra safety valves of concessions in phraseology. But above all, a large share of this growth must be laid at the doors of the Centrist zig-zag blunder policy of the official Communist party leadership and its failure to give proper direction to workers moving away from bourgeois ideology and allegiance.

The adopted S. P. declaration of principles, for example, again contains lip service to a recognition of the class struggle. It declares: «Freedom, equality and plenty for the workers can therefore be obtained only by socializing the ownership and control of the productive wealth which is now held as capital.» What is meant by such a declaration became clear when a credulous California delegate, who took it at face value, moved that the S. P. declares for confiscation of property. His proposal went down to defeat under the combined thunderclap of horror stricken «respectability» and the weight of the reactionary bureaucracy.

A survey of the S. P. convention, however, cannot leave out of account the new use to which the old guard of Hillquit and O'Neal put their ability of craft maneuvering. Their new plan of organization contains two «united front» proposals. There is one for international «unity» professing to attempt to «bring together the Socialist and Communist Internationals (1) on the basis of democracy and civil liberties in Russia (?); (2) in Fascist countries, a union of both parties to overthrow Fascism by any means possible; (3) in countries where there still is democracy (sic!), a union of both parties in an attempt to change the present system by peaceful means and by other means, if necessary.» The «unity» proposals for the home sector reads: «In cities where Socialists, Communists, the L. I. D., the Friends of the Soviets, the Civil Liberties Union and other similar organizations exist, a permanent committee be organized to bring them together in in-

formal conferences to consider practical steps to be taken on matters of concern to all.»

The recent years of experience have amply proved that the social reformists, now a distinct anti-revolutionary force, do not at all intend to unite the working class, not even for reformist objectives. But pursuing their cunning design they do intend to utilize the popular unity slogan to deceive the workers into support of their instrument deliberately destined to serve and preserve capitalism. This cannot be defeated by mere denunciation. It must be exposed in the open. This can be done effectively only by counterposing the policy of a genuine united front to attain the immediate working class aims as steps to the necessarily revolutionary objective. This is one of the particular tasks of the Communist party.

The future working class perspectives demand imperatively that the Communist party take up this task in earnest. The

## Rush Funds to Save Weekly!

OUR CRITICAL SITUATION STILL PREVAILS. NOT ONLY DO BILLS CONTINUE TO PRESS ON US UNREMITTINGLY BUT THEY ARE ACCUMULATING JUST A LITTLE FASTER THAN WE CAN MEET THEM. WE HAVE MADE ALL POSSIBLE RETRENCHMENTS AND NOW EXPECT OUR SUPPORTERS TO DO THEIR PART.

EVERY ONE WHO SEES THIS APPEAL FOR HELP SHOULD UNDERSTAND IT TO READ—THIS MEANS YOU! NO ONE SHOULD DELAY, THE SITUATION IS TOO PRESSING FOR THAT. WE MUST HAVE MONEY AT ONCE. NO AMOUNT IS TOO LARGE; NO AMOUNT IS TOO SMALL.

revolutionary objectives first of all demand that social reformist ideology be defeated.

UNTIL WE HAVE WEATHERED THIS STORM EVERY COMRADE AND SYMPATHIZER MUST MAKE THE MOST SERIOUS EFFORTS TO RAISE MONEY. FIRST OF ALL HE MUST TAX HIMSELF TO THE LIMIT. WE CALL UPON OUR SUPPORTERS TO MAKE THIS SACRIFICE TO SAVE THE WEEKLY MILITANT. AND EVERYONE, WHO HAS EVER PROFESSED ANY SYMPATHY FOR THE LEFT OPPOSITION MUST BE APPROACHED FOR HELP.

WE ARE NOT ALARMISTS. WE DO NOT EXAGGERATE. WE PUT THE SITUATION EXACTLY AS IT IS. WE HAVE STRAINED EVERY NERVE TO RAISE MONEY. THIS IS OUR LAST HOPE. EVERY COMRADE AND SYMPATHIZER MUST RESPOND NOW. OUR WEEKLY MILITANT DEPENDS DIRECTLY ON THEIR RESPONSE.

## Jack Macdonald Joins the Left Opposition

Statement of the Former National Secretary of the Communist Party of Canada

We are publishing herewith a statement by comrade Jack Macdonald of Toronto, Canada. The statement speaks for itself. It is an unequivocal declaration for the political views represented by the Left Opposition. Comrade Macdonald has arrived at this position as a result of his experiences over a period of years in the labor and revolutionary movement as well as the serious study which he has made of the views presented by the various factions of the Communist movement.

Comrade Macdonald has a long and favorable record of struggle and achievements within the labor movement and within the Communist movement. Beginning with his joining the Social Democratic Party in Scotland at the age of 17, his activities and efforts have shown consistent continuity in many leading positions. He became one of the founders of the Communist Party of Canada, its national secretary, and one of its outstanding leaders, participating in several Congresses of the Communist International up until the point of the expulsion, when he was arbitrarily put outside the party organization charged with «conciliation» and other technical charges. We are citing these brief points of comrade Macdonald's record of activities because of our conviction that his position, herewith clearly

and decisively expressed, should count seriously with thinking revolutionists—Ed.

After a careful and extensive study not only in retrospect of the pre-October polemics and activities of Bolshevism and the literature and general ideological activity of the Communist International, particularly up to the death of its founder and leader—Lenin and the opening of the struggle against «Trotskyism», but also of the more immediate and pressing situations and struggles of today, viz., Germany, China, Spain, etc., and the official C. I. programs, strategy and tactics therein, I have become convinced that the position program and general criticism of the «Left Opposition» under the brilliant, untiring and courageous leadership of comrade Trotsky are fundamentally correct; and that the Left Opposition is the historical bearer and custodian of true Marxist-Leninism.

In this necessarily brief statement I have no intention of reviewing at length the attitude of the Canadian Party during my association with its leadership or my personal attitude during the «discussion» and subsequent fight against «Trotskyism».

Suffice it to say, that the ideological campaign against Trotskyism—charged with the attempt to revise Leninism—

consisted of the scant distribution among the membership of occasional official bulletins from the C. I. containing alleged excerpts from the writings and speeches of Trotsky, counter-posed with the official «true Leninist» rebuttal from the leading scribes of the International.

Honest comrades, with their faith in the revolutionary integrity of the central leadership unimpaired and who therefore resist and reject any suggestion of bureaucratic intrigue, falsification or degeneration, accept these official communications at their face value and act accordingly; search with the official microscope, slaying and uprooting in the name of Communist discipline and democratic centralism any tendencies deviations, or suspects that would weaken or dilute the revolutionary movement in the face of its class enemies. In this so-called ideological campaign (if self-criticism is still in vogue) I accept my full share of responsibility and error and admit its travesty. What organizational and ideological crimes have been committed in the name of discipline!

For some time I have had occasion to compare these «excerpts» as published in official bulletins, with the actual writings of Trotsky. Many are completely false; others torn from their context are deliberately misinterpreted; while others correct in text are presumably demolished with the dud bombs of anti-Leninist theory.

I recall the first appeal which came to the C. E. C. of the Canadian Party to record itself against the Russian Party Opposition. This was during a session of the Enlarged Executive of the C. I.—a Canadian delegate being in attendance. The delegate had recorded himself against. Why not? There are few exceptions. A cable was dispatched to Canada requesting the C. E. C. to solidarily itself with the majority. Little if anything was known by the Canadian Party of the theoretical substance of the questions at issue. No liaison was in existence in these days where one could imbibe the latest on tap through «Lenin» students, etc. This honest unschooled proletarian center dispatched a return cable withholding decision until adequate information pro and con was received by them. The Canadian center fell into very bad grace over this incident. They might at least have adopted the course of one C. E. C. member, who, being unable to be present wired the C. E. C. to record his vote against Trotsky, but protested lack of information.

In brief the so-called question of Trotskyism was approached in a purely superficial and bureaucratic manner. This was in the days prior to deportations, exiles, etc. How far the regime has developed bureaucratically since these days must be obvious to all sincere comrades.

It is positively criminal in the best revolutionary sense to close one's mind against the Left Opposition's trenchant criticism and charges of the growth of a bureaucratic regime in the C. I. The autocratic and mechanical removal and superimposition of leadership on sections of the Comintern; the bounding of old and tested bolsheviks on the pretext of some discovered heresy in writing or speech, but in reality to make way for a substantial prop for the present regime; the stifling of initiative and discussion; the parody of workers' universities where «leaders» are molded and manufactured to standard current pattern, etc., are evidences, if only in an organizational and limited sense, of the truth of this criticism.

One had only to attend the Sixth Congress of the C. I. and that was several years ago, to have proof of the opposition's contention in its broad international sense, not to mention the alarming bureaucratic growth since in virtually every section nor the tragedy of the internal party situation in the Soviet Union.

(Continued on page 4)

## For the Communist Unity of Our Party!

To the C. E. C. of the C. P. U. S. A.  
To the Members of the Communist Party:

The developments in the international situation and the tasks they place before the Soviet Union and the Communist International—and more specifically before its American section—once more bring sharply to the fore the acute problem of the Communist unity in our party and the class struggle. These developments may be summed up briefly as follows:

1. The growth of the Fascist menace in Germany which, if it ends in the seizure of power by Hitlerism, would mean not only the bloody crushing of the Communist movement in Germany and elsewhere and a setback for the proletarian revolution for a long time to come, but would also render imminent a direct assault upon the fortress of the world revolution, the Soviet republic.

2. The events in the Far East, where the already established Japanese intervention in Shanghai, the establishment of a Japanese puppet government in Manchuria right on the border-line of the Soviet Union and the danger of an ultra-reactionary military coup d'Etat in Japan itself, all serve to indicate how the lines of imperialist policy are approaching the breaking-point. The danger of a direct intervention against the Soviet Union is running a mad race with the danger of the workers being flung into a new imperialist war for the repatriation of subjugated China.

3. The deepening of the crisis in the United States, out of which the bourgeoisie has not yet succeeded in emerging, but which continues to offer to the Communists hitherto non-existing opportunities for crystallizing the extensive sympathy prevailing among broad sections of the workers for the most resolute section of the proletariat.

In considering these developments, our party can ill afford to ignore certain of their aspects which directly concern the immediate future of the movement.

1. The Communist Party of Germany has not yet succeeded in mobilizing the masses of the German workers for effective resistance to the advances of Fascism. The latter has not only leaped ahead at a far greater speed than has German Communism, but the staunchest bulwark of capitalist «democracy», the party of Wels-Scheidemann-Hilferding-Grzesinskiy, continues to exercise an unshaken influence over decisive sections of the proletariat.

2. In spite of the increasingly manifest threat of imperialist war upon the Soviet Union, and the undoubted popu-

larity which the latter's policy of peace must arouse among the world's workers, it remains a fact that the broad masses of the workers have not yet been made to realize the acuteness of the danger and, what is more, the Communist movement has not succeeded in mobilizing them for action to counter the plans of imperialism.

3. Although thousands of workers have joined our party in the recent period, particularly since the unfolding of the crisis, they have not only represented a small percentage of the gains made possible by the whole situation, but in addition, the inner life of the party has been of such a nature that it has caused, according to the official reports of the Central Committee, a 100 per cent turnover in the membership, that is, an annulment of the organizational gains made throughout this period. This situation becomes ever more serious when it is contrasted with the growth which the Socialist party has been able to register in the same period.

The Left Opposition an inseparable part of the Communist movement, cannot permit itself to pass over these facts without candidly expressing its views to the party. We consider this all the more necessary in face of the fact that negotiations have just been undertaken between party representatives and representatives of the Lovestone Right wing looking towards the reintegration of the latter into the party. The antagonism which these negotiations have aroused among the party members is an additional indication that the burning problem of the unity of the Communist party cannot be solved in this manner. It is in the interest of a genuine solution of this problem, rendered more urgent by the events to which we refer, that we address ourselves once more to the Central Committee and the membership of our party.

The unity of the party can be achieved only in the open. Any attempt to realize it by secret negotiations behind the scenes not only brings confusion and uneasiness into the ranks of the party, but creates the danger of dealings of an unprincipled nature which wipe out the lines of demarcation and make harder the achievement of that clarification which must be a part of any movement for unity. The object of any negotiations must be made plain and visible from the very outset. They must be conducted before the eyes of the whole party. This method is the main guarantee against painful surprises, demoralization and unprincipled solutions.

It is this method we support in our present proposal that the party immediately take up the question of readmitting into its ranks the members of the Left Opposition.

We, of the Left Opposition have no desire to conceal the fact that we do not share the views upon which the present line of the party is based. We could declare that we abandon our standpoint only by deceiving the party and ourselves. Our views relate to fundamental questions of Communist principle, of Communist strategy and tactics, and we stand now as before on the basis of the teachings of Marx and Lenin. In spite of the differences of opinion existing between us and the present course of the party, we are convinced that the best, most profitable way of settling these differences and re-establishing Bolshevik discipline on the basis of the prevailing opinion, is not outside the ranks of the party, but inside of them, as loyal members of our Communist International.

In all the attempts we have made since our expulsion to work by the side and in support of the party, in all our public agitation and activity, we have never attached any conditions to our collaboration and support. In the struggle, in the trade unions, in strikes, in the united front conferences of the party, in the International Labor Defense, etc., etc., we have merely asked for the opportunity to work as Communists side by side with the other Communist workers, posing no conditions and asking for no special consideration or privileges. In putting before the party now our request for its unification by the re-admission of the members of the Left Opposition, we again put no conditions whatsoever. We stand for the unconditional defense of the Soviet Union, the workers' fatherland, the test for every revolutionist, especially now when the danger of intervention and counter-revolution is becoming more acute. We stand for the unconditional support of our party, which we built and defended in the past and are ready to build and defend in the future. These paramount questions take precedence with us and determine our

(Continued on page 4)

**DON'T FORGET THE PICNIC**  
The Place: Tibbetts Brook Park—Take Lexington Ave. Subway I. R. T.—Woodlawn-Jerome to last stop, Woodlawn. From there one can take a trolley to the Park. Comrades will meet at the Woodlawn station at 10:00 A. M. Plot 8. Time: Sunday, May 29th from 10:00 A. M. till dusk.



## LETTERS FROM THE MILITANTS

## NEW YORK, N. Y.

Have you ever witnessed an election conference of a labor political organization consisting of 655 delegates representing 300 organizations, that endorses unanimously every proposition and a political platform put before them without even a semblance of discussion? This is precisely what happened at the New York Communist Election Conference held last Sunday at Manhattan Lyceum. Whether the magic personality of the great Amter and his wonderful oratorical talent held them spellbound, or whether the present leadership of the Stalinist school has found the secret of writing a political platform with such precision and crystal clarity that it is enough to hear it read to become convinced, I do not know. Still there are some sceptics in this sinful world who don't believe it possible and who venture to say that this fact only demonstrates what Stalinism has done to the movement. It either paralyzed the minds of the delegates and made them incapable of thinking or else terrorized some of them to such an extent that they did not dare to question anything.

The above occurrence would have been impossible under Leninist leadership. A whole day, perhaps, would have been wasted and paper, ink, labor, spent just to discuss, write and correct resolutions and propositions that would have come from the delegates. But not under the efficient and impeccable leadership of the Stalin school.

The conference started with the usual steam roller mode of procedure carried out so that it would have made a Hillman, a Schlesinger or even a Kaufman bluish. And it was made in such a cross manner that even a nitwit could see through all the machinations.

The *Daily Worker* informs us that the comrade who opened the meeting was Stevens, District Election Campaign Manager. After delivering a brief oration, he turned the chair over to comrade Steuben, read off the names of a committee and of the presidium. Before he was even through reading off the names, they already appeared on the platform (*The Daily Worker* writes that the presidium was elected—well, that is the strange way it was elected). The appointed chairman announced that the presidium would retire to work out an order of business. And here we realized what wonders the Stalinist bureaucracy is capable of. (Houdini had nothing on them). Not more than five minutes expired after the presidium had retired when they reappeared on the platform with an order of business and more than that, with full slates for a credentials and for a resolution committee. One of the delegates, representing the Workers' Circle, objected to this mode of procedure and moved to proceed with nominations and elections from the floor. The steering committee soon got busy and everything was well again. The chairman explained that all this was done to expedite matters.

Now a treat was given the delegates. In short talk of about an hour and a half, the recently celebrated Amter explained the C. P. platform for the com-

## MILITANT BUILDERS

Our Militant builders are still hot foot after the prizes we offered for the highest standing for the final month of the drive and for the period of the entire campaign. No one has qualified yet for the prizes offered for the final month of the drive. But several comrades are moving up on these prizes and we feel sure that by next week when the drive closes several will have gone by the board. This is as it should be. We will be happy to see more of them go, too. Comrade Hedlund has been displaced from his leading position by comrade Sacharow of Chicago. Will comrade Hedlund fight back? Will the other comrades permit them to make it a personal contest or will they have something to say?

In the list below we put the figures for the final month of the drive in parentheses and they are quoted in dollars. The other figures are subs for the entire campaign which began in March.

R. Sacharow (11 1-2)—10; L. Nagy (7 1-4)—8; C. R. Hedlund (6)—11; V. R. Dunne (6)—9; J. Weber (5)—2; G. Duell (5)—M. Lilly (5)—L. Roseland (4 1-2)—6; J. Sifakis (4)—2; L. Gleisser (4)—2; M. Koehler (3-4)—5; M. Dunne (3)—8; C. Forsen (2 1-2)—3; A. Buehler (2)—2; M. Rosen (2)—2; O. Coover (2)—3; A. Ehrlich (2)—1; S. Frank (1 1-2)—2; L. Basky (1 1-2)—5; T. Vaszily (1)—1; R. Ruskin (1)—2; W. Curran (1)—2; S. Zalmanoff (1)—1; P. Carlson (1)—1; C. Cowl (1)—5; P. Schulman (1)—1; F. Barach (1)—4; C. Johnson (1)—2; S. Lessin (1)—2; B. Houman (1); S. Gendelman (1); N. Berman (1); G. R. Herman (1); H. Ross (1); H. Milton (1-2)—1; T. Drobny (1-2)—1; J. Carr (1-4)—3; C. Skoglund—3; F. Cheloff—2; G. Ray—2; M. Gottlieb—1; M. Koehler—1; W. Wynne—1; J. Carter—1; H. Capelis—1; W. Herman—1; A. Swaback—1; A. Glotzer—1; L. Logan—1; A. Kaldis—1; M. Sterling—1.

**NEW YORK, ATTENTION!** All Comrades Out to the Picnic Sunday! Come and bring your friends to celebrate the release of our class war prisoners, comrades Morgenstern and Goodman of Philadelphia. The two comrades will be on hand and tell of their prison experiences. Refreshments will be served, a good time is assured to all.

Look for directions, how to get to the Picnic grounds at Tibbetts Brook Park, elsewhere in *The Militant*.

ing election campaign, which will, according to him, be epochmaking for the Communist movement in the U. S. The speaker wound up with the very "revolutionary" slogan of a Workers' and Peasants'—pardon—Farmers' Government for the U. S. A.

The resolutions committee followed with its report. It read a resolution in imperialist war and did not forget to warn everybody to be on guard against the internal enemies—the Trotskyites and the Lovestonites (a violation in the orthodox Stalinist liturgy was noticeable—the Trotskyites were not dubbed this time: the "vanguard of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie").

The chairman then opened the floor for discussion, but none of the delegates seemed to care to speak. The chairman had to appeal to someone to break the ice. One of the functionaries of the United Front Committee in the needle trades took the floor finally and delivered a harangue against capitalism and the social fascists. Then the stampeede of the parrots began. Not a single delegate had any criticism whatsoever to make on the platform while the present writer remained there.

After I left, I met some of the delegates, members of the party, and they boasted that only one delegate, representing the Communist League of America (Opposition) was not seated. When asked how they explain the fact that the same credentials committee seated delegates from such manifestly Fascist and social Fascist organizations as the A. F. of L. and the Workers' Circle and refused to seat a representative of a Communist organization, some of them admitted that they cannot understand that and that if somebody from among the delegates had objected to the recommendation of the credentials committee, they surely would have supported him. In reply to the question why he doesn't take the floor, one of the delegates said "A person has got to be crazy or a martyr. Besides I don't want to serve as a target for the bureaucrats. I was also like to see how far this 'self-criticism' will lead".

The bureaucrats must have heaved a sigh of relief at the end of the conference. But their worries are not over. Lacking confidence in themselves, already preparing to repudiate what they so ardently preach today in the avalanche of "self-criticism" that will surely follow after the election campaign, feeling the ground shaky under their feet, they are ever obsessed with fifth fear of somebody or something. But they dread no one more than the Left Opposition. Despite the dam of slander and calumny built up by the Stalinites, the stream of the ideas of the Opposition appears to be leaking through and influencing the minds of the revolu-

## Situation in Pocketbook Makers' Union

The present situation in the New York Pocketbook Workers Union is deplorable. The Socialist party fakers of last year's administration forced an agreement on the workers which up to date has resulted in wage-cuts, and the reorganization of the workers, despite the fact the workers voted against it. As a result the union remains today, a few days before the expiration of the agreement, in a most desperate condition, due to the fact that our administration allowed the employers not to live up to the rotten agreement made last year.

About two weeks ago our manager announced in the press that a conference was held with the manufacturers in order to review the agreement which expires June 1st. At this conference the manufacturers demanded the following of the union: (1) a reduction in the wage scale of 30 and 35 per cent; (2) the introduction of the piece work system; (3) to do away with the unemployment insurance fund; (4) readjustments a la Hillman on the top of reorganization and what not. The writer of this article pointed out in *The Militant* of March 26 that the employers rejected an offer of the union of ten per cent wage cuts because they knew they could get from our "Fraternal Club" administration a 30 per cent wage cut a few months later.

On Thursday, May 12, a membership meeting took place at Stuyvesant High School. Our manager outlined the demands of the employers to the union. The meeting was a very stormy one. The workers not only rejected the demand of the employers, but it was decided that the union should demand: (1) a 40 hour, five day week, which is necessary in order to relieve somewhat the unemployment situation in the industry; (2) no reorganization clause in the new agreement; (3) that the bosses contribute to the unemployment insurance fund. The union should also mobilize the workers for a strike if the employers do not grant our just demands.

At the same meeting the "Fraternal Club" administration introduced a resolution to express full confidence in the conference committee. When the resolution was taken to a vote the administration received 273 votes, 261 voted against. The administration won by a small majority of twelve votes. Our manager Lubliner then made a speech and said that with a small majority of twelve votes he and the conference committee cannot negotiate a new agreement with the employers. He challenged the rank and file of the union to elect a new conference committee. One of the Left wingers, made a motion that a committee of 15 rank and file workers should be elected as a conference committee. This motion was passed by the members. Nominations took place for such a committee and not one of the other groups accepted for

tionary workers. That is why they were so afraid to seat the delegate of the Left Opposition.

—A DELEGATE FROM THE WORKMEN'S CIRCLE.

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## The Bosses' Tax Problem and the Workers

The bosses have tried every imaginable remedy for the crisis. To no avail. Now they hope to find a lever to raise their profits by lowering taxes. The campaign to lower taxes has swept the bourgeois world like wildfire. Through every avenue at their command the capitalists and the landlords are clamoring for economy in government. They want "cheap government" and the support of the working class to force a curtailment of expenses.

Chicago and the other leading cities are bankrupt, the national government is running in red at the rate of seven million a day. Congress is struggling to make a two and a half billion income meet a four and two-thirds billion expense for 1932. The capitalists say the government bureaucracy is excessive and the increase of the cost of government has kept far ahead of the increase of wealth. However a comparison of value produced in America with other industrial countries and the taxes paid will show that the British, German and other capitalists pay far in excess the taxes the American capitalists pay.

The cost of the American government, city, state and national, amounts to twelve billion a year and the total indebtedness of the government is thirty billion with the Federal government holding sixteen billion of this debt. All sections of the capitalists are hit by the deepening crisis and each section is trying to shift the burden to the other sections and all are trying to shift the burden to the workers. As far as the crisis is concerned, the capitalists are constantly shifting the burden (unemployment, wage-cuts) to the workers but their attempt to shift the tax burden to the workers will not succeed. Each section of capitalist robbers in attempting to shift the tax burden to the other sections of their class is endeavoring to line up the workers on their side.

The recent attempt to put through the sales tax in the form presented to the House of Representatives was an attempt to shift the tax burden to the petty bourgeoisie. The small capitalist was able to rally sufficient forces to throw the bill back and now they are fighting to see who will pay the increased taxes. The different sections of capitalism are well represented in the lobby and behind the politicians' closed doors. The curtailment of production and the falling off of the capitalist incomes has reduced the income tax, forcing the bosses' office boys in Washington to find another way out.

The first year of the crisis showed a fair return from income tax but the present year tells another story. In 1930 the forty-five million gainfully employed (workers and capitalists, etc.) lighted 2,411,000 million liable to income tax. This small number paid two-thirds of the 1930 Federal government expenses. When the profits were rolling in the capitalists paying the tax bill did not object so loudly, but now we hear a different tale. In this struggle to hold up profits each section of the capitalists wants the other section to pay the tax, yet each section wants to dictate to the political office boys, what to do. The financiers desire to push the burden on the shoulders of the industrialists and the industrialists would like to place the tax on the landlords, who all hope to shift it to the small capitalist.

All the capitalists would like to shift it to the workers but are unsuccessful in this task, at least they desire to rally the workers behind them in an attempt to correct their office boys' "excess spending". When the capitalist robbers fight each other they want us to help them. We workers would be more than foolish to help one section of the capitalist robbers against another section on the question of war, taxes or any other struggle. The capitalist robbers as a whole rob the workers and the robbers' division of the spoils is not our problem. Rather, our problem is to expropriate the expropriators.

Many workers will say, "I do pay tax-

es and will enter the campaign to reduce the cost these political crooks are piling upon our shoulders." We did not say that workers do not pay taxes. We say the workers have no interest in helping the bosses cheapen their government. What the workers pay as taxes is only a small part of the funds collected for taxes. It is not the task of the workers and our party to fight for "cheaper government". The tax question enters in our problems, in the class struggle, as an auxiliary problem on which we will speak later. For the sake of argument, suppose all the taxes were shifted to the workers, on our cost of living. The capitalist economists tell us that taxes amount to ten per cent of the cost of living? What if we would help the bosses reduce this to five per cent of the cost of living. The fall of the cost of living by five per cent would be a signal for the bosses to reduce wages from ten per cent upwards. Wages always fall faster than the cost of living and always rise slower than the cost of living and wages only rise, no matter how the cost of living goes up, providing our class fights for more real wages.

It is futile to point out our main class guns at the point of consumption, at the cost of living, etc. Our main struggle must be at the point of production. The tax question enters into the struggle as an auxiliary problem. However, no enemy is defeated by concentrating forces in auxiliary struggles. We participate in elections but do not advocate parliamentary action like the Second International. It is only an auxiliary for our class struggle. The tax question under special consideration must also be on our agenda depending upon conditions. Inflation, price rise and taxes are used by the bosses at certain times to reduce the standard of living by indirect wage cuts.

We must be prepared for such moves, but the present campaign to reduce expenses of government is aimed at something far more important for the capitalist class. Even when we have inflation, rise in prices or tax shifting in sections we do not aim our class guns at the point of consumption to remedy this problem. We strike at the more vital points in the capitalist defense.

We workers are robbed as producers, robbed of the surplus labor, of the surplus value which the capitalist divide among themselves as; profits, rent, interest and to pay their office boys' (government) and for the gangster racketeers who rob the robbers.

One aim of the present tax campaign is to reduce the bureaucracy. The imperialists need a more "efficient apparatus". There are too many small office boys repeating like parrots the fable that "we" must keep out of Asia and Europe and stay in our own back yard. American imperialism has no choice. It must move out into deeper waters or go under.

The crisis has forced the American im-

## Statement of Greek Comrades on «Empros»

To the Greek Party members

and sympathizers:

Last August the editor and business manager of the *Empros* were arrested and charged with spreading false rumors against the Athens Trust Co. of New York City.

The hearings at the Magistrate's Court lasted for whole weeks and the minutes of the court were printed in the *Empros*. The Magistrate's court ended the hearing last fall and ordered the transfer of the trial to the Special Sessions Court where a few weeks ago the trial began. We learn now that the charges were dismissed.

The *Empros* of April 30th mentioned in an obscure corner that the trial was ended without any appreciable explanations.

This case represents a great victory for the *Empros* and for the entire Com-

munist movement of America against the capitalists who always try to frame up working class organs, organizations and individual comrades. And we believe the Greek Stalinist bureaucrats agree with us in this point: If so why the silence about this matter.

The comrades ought to demand from the bureaucrats to announce to the Greek workers and to the working class of America at large this great victory of our organ the *Empros* against the Athens Trust Co.

This victory of ours should be hailed in heavy type and the case should be reviewed in every detail in order to educate the workers on the role that the banks play in this rotten capitalist system. This is a duty that must be performed immediately.

After a half-hearted retreat by the bureaucrats on the question of the Greek newspapers, we see in the *Empros* of May 7th that the *Atlantis* is leading all the other lackeys of capitalism in their role of exploiting the Greek workers, in full accord with the *National Herald*. This very thing we expressed in the columns of *Communists* and we were accused of supporting the *National Herald* because we attacked the one sidedness of the bureaucrats. The correctness of our views in this specific question is proven to every comrade who has heard both views calmly.

In Greece, the party members demand a united front with the *Archio-Marxists*, the Greek Left Oppositionists, in order to fight effectively against the attacks of the Greek bourgeois government, but the bureaucrats still obstruct the application of this united front with all the means at their disposal. The Greek party members observe the militant revolutionary activities of the *Archio-Marxists* in their every day life and are convinced that their differences with the oppositionists are only ideological and therefore demand from the bureaucrats to consider them as ideological opponents and not as enemies.

The same procedure, we are sure, will take place here once you will force the Stalinist bureaucrats to give you an account of their irresponsible activities and force them to undertake a discussion of theoretical questions.

Slanders and calumnies against ideological opponents serve only our enemies. Every sincere worker revolutionist will demand a free discussion of the disputes between the Left Opposition and the Stalinists. That is the only way to clear the ground for united Communist action.

—EDITORIAL BOARD OF COMMUNISTS

## Finish the Press Drive with Donations!

As this issue reaches our readers the press drive is over. Newark likewise increased its total. But the point is that we are still a long way from our goal. As we see it the only way to reach it now is to get donations. Subs will help. But that alone will be insufficient. As his final contribution to the press drive let every comrade and sympathizer send in a donation. Let the amount be whatever he can afford.

On this last week-end, let us give a concrete expression of our support of our press, which is striving so determinedly against such heavy odds to fulfill its historic mission. Let us make a collective pledge that the press of the American section of the International Left Opposition, the voice, in this country, of the revolutionary internationalism of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky will continue to appear regularly.

**THE MILITANT**

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# IN THE INTERNATIONAL OF LABOR

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

### The Half-Turn in the German Party

Although the special edition of the *Rote Fahne* of Monday, April 25, 1932 confined itself merely to publishing Sunday's election results, and similarly the Tuesday number of the R. F. also recorded in a leading article only the bare results without commenting on their meaning, the official Communist press has received the task of setting down the unpleasant, the defeats and their scope. This has been done in the "Welt am Abend" of April 15 which we cite in the following:

"If we compare yesterday's Landtag elections in Prussia with the last Landtag elections in 1928, it appears that the Communists have won nearly 600,000 votes. The Social Democrats have lost approximately 800,000 votes while the Socialist Labor Party (the S. A. P.) could scrape painfully together about 80,000 votes (and not one mandate). The bourgeois parties from the State Party to the German Peoples' Party are nearly wiped out. The German Nationalists have suffered the loss of more than half their votes, over 1 1/2 millions; yet it is clear that they have emerged from their retrograde movement. The Centrists won around half a million votes. The National Socialists have gathered practically their entire mass following in the period since 1928 as the comparison indicates. They have become by far the strongest party.

"If we compare yesterday's Landtag elections with the last parliamentary elections (of Sept. 1930) the picture appears even more unfavorable for the workers' movement. The Communists lost more than 300,000 votes. So also did the Social Democrats. These more than 600,000 Communist and social democratic votes must have gone principally to the Nazis. Let this be clearly stated not to discourage but to spur on to sharpest struggle against the visible danger. Since the parliamentary elections the Centrists have won more than 300,000 votes, mainly from bourgeois-liberal circles. The so-called bourgeois parties of the middle as well as those of the right are in a dying state as developments since Sept. 1930 indicate even more strikingly than before. The German Nationalists have lost a total of 400,000 votes while they had previously already lost more than one million votes. Finally the National Socialists have doubled their vote since the last parliamentary elections.

"If, finally, we compare the results of the Prussian Landtag elections with those of the presidential election—a comparison which must be made with caution since the presidential election is of a different character—it immediately becomes clear for the proletarian movement that the Communists have partially regained the great losses suffered in the second presidential election, although they did not reach the first presidential vote, let alone surpass it.

"What the heart of the political and industrial life of Germany, Greater Berlin, decided in yesterday's elections, is of decisive importance. In this connection it must be set down that in Berlin also the Communists lost 90,000 votes since the parliamentary elections while the Social Democrats gained nearly 60,000."

Even the most malevolent bureaucrat would not suspect the "Welt am Abend" of "Trotskyist slanders". The facts revealed by the Prussian Landtag elections are really staggering. For instance, the Social Democrats have won back 60,000 in Berlin since 1930, which means since the time of the sharpest emergency decrees for which they are also fully responsible, while the K. P. D. has lost 90,000 votes. In Hamburg the Party lost nearly 50,000 votes as compared with 1931, the S. P. D. gained 12,000 votes. From first place in Berlin the Communist Party slid down to third. In the most important industrial centers we see a similar backsliding of Communist voters. Only in the South of Germany and especially in agrarian Bavaria, did the Party show gains. The Nazis emerged from the elections as the most powerful party and their vote indicates that the Fascist tide is far from being stemmed.

It should be clear now to every party comrade to what a pass the Party has been brought by the leadership of Thaelmann-Remmele-Neumann. Through the events of the recent weeks and months the criticism of the Left Opposition has received vindication and confirmation such as could not possibly have been looked for so quickly and so extensively. The critical, decisive phase of the struggle is reached as we predicted in the last issue of the P. R. Within the Party the dissatisfaction of its members has assumed such an extent and character that the leadership is forced to a more or less radical turn. This turn stands on the order of the day. That this is clear to the C. C. is indicated by the appeal of the C. C. and the R. G. O. "to all German workers" published on the first page of the R. F. of April 26th.

The turn stands on the order of the day, yes, it is already in process. The most important thing is however, what changes is the Party capable of bringing about! Never before has a political action of such significance to the Party as well as to the Comintern, been taken without a clear statement by the E. C. C. I. as to its position. Such a statement has not appeared although the R. F. of April 27th published a leading editorial from the Pravda which must be

taken as reflecting the official views of decisive Comintern circles.

"The results of the Prussian Landtag election permit clear recognition of the peculiar situation in which Germany now finds itself, and how in the face of the extremely sharp industrial crisis the Social Democrats have succeeded in drawing away the attention of the masses from direct open struggle against capitalism and directing it to the peace of Versailles, the national yoke weighing down Germany and using this for the strengthening of their dictatorship. Herein is the peculiarity of present political developments in Germany as clearly indicated in the last elections." (From Pravda—the Editor).

The portrayal of the situation is correct. Only we permit ourselves to point out that the diverting action of the German bourgeoisie was assisted by the "national and social liberation program" of the K. P. D. for which the E. C. C. I. is also answerable. It would be correct now, since the consequences are ready to one's hand to grasp, to finally wind up this "liberation-program" Wide of the mark! After Pravda records further on what the K. P. D. did not altogether "understand" how to carry out, it recommends:

"The Communist Party will draw the conclusion from this election that with all its power it must improve its work for mass struggle against the capitalist offensive, against the fascist assaults, for the unfolding of its program of social and national liberation of the German people."

One need not be surprised if the catastrophic policy become even more coarse, as in the following paragraph which the R. F. actually underscores heavily shows! "There is no occasion to believe that the present retardation of the growth of the revolutionary forces of the German proletariat will last very long. The whole situation shows that a new turn of the broad masses to the Communist Party is possible very quickly. The Communists must summon forth all their power to hasten this turn." (From Pravda).

So: not the Party but rather the masses must make a turn!!! The sole logic that comes forth from such comprehension, since accordingly the K. P. D. should hold fast to its previous "line". But the height of confusion is reached by the Pravda in the following lines:

"Further the danger becomes stronger that the German fascists will seek to fortify their election success by force in order to throw aside the obstacles to a quick, open dictatorship. In the struggle against the carrying through of Fascist dictatorship the Communist Party of Germany does not identify itself with the National Socialists with the Social Democrats, although the latter as well as the former, even if with different methods, bring about Fascist dictatorship. The Communist Party makes use of these differences that exist between these two organizations of the bourgeoisie, even if their differences of opinion are small and do not spring from decisive differences in nature."

The line of the E. C. C. I.—a divergence of opinion with that of the Pravda is unthinkable—is therefore, the "national and social liberation program" is to stand fast and wait for a turn of the masses And, as the last citation informs us, the "Theory of social-Fascism" is right, but in the struggle against the carrying through of the Fascist dictatorship one cannot consider as identical social democrats and Nazis, although both bring about the Fascist dictatorship. Higher than this they cannot go! That a correct change is to be made by the E. C. C. I. need not be awaited going by the lead of the Pravda.

The complete change that the situation demands will be undertaken only under the pressure of the masses of party members. Under the pressure of events and party moods, the C. C. of the K. P. D. has already taken some steps, they, however, are only the initial ones, others must follow.

In its appeal of April 26th the C. C. makes the statement: "We are ready to join for a common struggle with every organization of the workers that is actually willing to fight against reductions in wages and the dole. Well said: ready to join with every organization for a common struggle, so it goes today. Only a few weeks previously Muenzenberg reviled this idea of comrade Trotsky and the Left Opposition as being counter-revolutionary-fascistic. Today the R. F.

is forced (editorial of April 26th) to write:

"The main thing now is to assemble all the class forces of the proletariat and the working masses in the red united front and again go into an offensive against the capitalist dictatorship and defeat Fascism."

"We publish today at the head of our newspaper the appeal of the C. C. and the R. G. O. Committee in which the party and the R. G. O. express their willingness to join with all lower union functionaries and shop-committee-members, with all organizations which wish to fight honestly against reduction in wages, to carry through common measures for the struggle for workers' demands in the shops.

"While we are in sharpest struggle against the government of Braun-Severing, against the policy of emergency measures dictatorship and their clearing

### Trotsky and Brandler; or Lovestone and Principles

Under the heading "That Gibraltar of Principle!", the current number of the *Workers Age* drops another stink-bomb in its recently revived campaign against "Trotskyism" in general and comrade Trotsky in particular. After a lengthy period of silence about the Opposition, the last half a dozen numbers of the Lovestone sheet have devoted not a few columns to an abrupt renewal of the campaign in which they must be acknowledged as specialists, as people trained for just that kind of activity. The reason for this "turn", which puzzled so many people for a while, has of course now become quite clear. The campaign coincided with the negotiations they were conducting for a return to the bosom of Stalinism, and was manifestly calculated to impress upon the party leaders the fact that, at least when it comes to calculating the Left Opposition and pegging mud at it, the Lovestoneites take second place behind nobody. With the zeal of a Lodovico before the doubting Borgia—"Have I not stabbed men from behind? And poisoned water in the fountains? And mixed fatal drugs in wine-horns? Let me but try, excellent lord!"—our Lovestoneites have been engaged in proving their skill at the game of "anti-Trotskyism" to their prospective Comintern bosses.

An Expert on "Principle"

The latest Right wing effusion deals with comrade Trotsky, the Brandlerites and principle. Lovestone is expert on all three matters, especially on the last-named, for few people in the Comintern have juggled more successfully with the word than he. In his latest piece, he sets about, in the interests of truth, to reveal that "nothing is more threadbare, nothing is more fraudulent than the mantle of stern principle with which L. D. Trotsky loves to clothe himself! . . . What has happened to this unbending pillar of political rectitude? Even Stachel can learn from him in political trickery, unprincipledness and intrigue."

The basis for this delicate piece of vilification is a number of "facts" which Lovestone presents in defense of Brandler and Co. to "prove" that Trotsky created a "legend" about them and attacked them only after he had failed to win them for his faction by offering them various bribes—promises to whitewash the Brandlerites for their conduct in the German October (1923). Since the creation of myths has played such a prominent part in the struggle to discredit and crush the Left Opposition, it is worth our while to expose this new myth.

Lovestone, who knows better, now pretends that only "after the rejection of these overtures by Brandler, Trotsky made a right-about-face and began a venomous attack upon him and his political associates. It was at this time that he originated the notorious 'October legend'."

In other words, Lovestone, who is simply trying to present Trotsky as he, Lovestone, would have acted under the circumstances, accuses him of having invented his criticism of Brandler not on the basis of Brandler's actual position during the German events but only after Trotsky had failed to make a factionally ally of him. Unfortunately for this legend, incontrovertible evidence exists as to what comrade Trotsky's position actually was before the catastrophic results of Brandler's policy (that is, of Zinoviev's and Stalin's policy as well) were fully clear. In the "Material on the Conference of the Russian Communist Party, January 1924," it says:

the road for Hitler, we Communists stand as mortal enemies of Hitler fascism. We will do everything with the help of proletarian class forces in order to block its way to government power, in order to break its terror and through a new red advance of the working class to give it a decisive blow."

These are only the first steps on the way which the Left Opposition advocated for a long time. Until now we have only words, only appeals. Real actions must follow. The K. P. D. must have a revolutionary perspective. It was defeated only because it had none. The problems of the day must be posed concretely. "We must force on the social-democracy the bloc against fascism". This is the lesson from the Prussian election.

We greet every step on the road to a Leninist united front policy and urge all party members to turn the half-measures of the C. C. into complete ones. Party members demand that words and appeals be followed by real actions.

—PERMANENTE REVOLUTION.

### The Conference of the Spanish Opposition

The National Conference of the Spanish Left Opposition was recently held at Madrid. Comrades from all parts of the country were represented, reporting organizational and ideological progress in every locality. Theses for future work were adopted and preparations made to expand the activities of the Spanish section of the Left Opposition. Among these, the renewed publication of *El Soviet*, the weekly organ, is being planned at Barcelona. A detailed report of the conference is forthcoming. The article below is a message from comrade Andres Nin, one of the leaders of the Spanish Left Opposition.

When, in June of last year, we came together as the followers of the International Left Opposition in Spain, we constituted not more than a small group of militants ready to fight enthusiastically for the creation of a real Communist

movement in our country. The political stupidity of the official party, the irresponsibility of its leaders—typical products of Stalinism—which has caused so much ruin in the international revolutionary movement, had discredited even the idea itself of Communism in the eyes of the working masses. The Workers' and Peasants' Bloc, the birth of which is due principally to the profound mistakes of the party and the International, had transformed itself into an opportunist organization, typically petty bourgeois which constitutes a big obstacle, with its innate confusionism, to the development of a strong Communist movement in Catalonia. Finally, anarcho-syndicalism, thanks to the impotence and incapability of the Communist organization, had been able to exercise an enormous influence over the broad masses of the proletariat.

The Opposition had to start an extremely difficult fight on these three fronts. For this fight it was not equipped with more than a monthly theoretical magazine of a very small circulation and the ardent enthusiasm of the handful of Spanish Oppositionists. The organized group could be counted on the fingers of one hand. The material resources were very limited. The point of view of the Left Opposition was unknown to the big majority of the workers.

In spite of all this, the results obtained in the ten months of struggle have surpassed all our hopes. The National Conference, recently held in Madrid has showed the really surprising progress achieved in less than a year. The balance of the work achieved is highly encouraging. The Communist Left Opposition is no longer a nucleus of isolated militants as it was a year ago, but a real Communist movement, with branches in every part of the country, alive, active, combative, intimately attached to the working class and to its struggles. The danger of the Opposition becoming transformed into a circle of critics, into a sterile sect, into a ready refuge for the lazy, the cowards and the disillusioned has been victoriously overcome. The best, the most conscious, the most self-sacrificing fighting militants have joined our ranks. Today the Communist Left Opposition is really the vanguard of the vanguard of the Spanish proletariat.

The National Conference has given a program, a tactic and a structure to our movement. The Communist Left Opposition has clearly showed the way for the Spanish working class to follow and has constructed the basis upon which a big Communist movement will develop in our country.

The Communist Left Opposition has made a big step forward. Now more than ever before, we are firmly convinced that the road taken by us has been confirmed as correct and that only the Opposition is the heir to the traditions of revolutionary Marxism, the faithful executor of the work of the International of Lenin and Trotsky, capable of forging the weapon which the Spanish proletariat needs in order to obtain victory over the bourgeoisie: a big Communist party. The progress achieved in the last ten months, in spite of our meagre material resources and with the enormous difficulties under which we have been fighting, is the surest guarantee of the success which the future has in store for us.

But we do not know how much time is left to us by history in the exceptional circumstances in which we live today. We have not a moment to lose. We must redouble our efforts, intensify our propaganda and our organizational work, consecrate all our energy to the immense task we have started to solve in order to equip the proletariat with the weapons necessary for its triumph.

—ANDRES NIN.

When did Lovestone change his mind about the need of combatting Brandler as a Right winger? Why did Lovestone change his mind? Just when and why did he "establish connections with Brandler"? What explanation has he ever given for the change? We do not know and we confess to being little concerned. Lovestone, who worships principle and recoils from intrigue and trickery (as is well known), is the sort of politician who denounces "Trotskyism" as the "crassest expression of the Right wing" one day, as "ultra-Leftism" the next day, and as anything else you please the day after. Yesterday, Brandler was one of his favorite targets for the same vile slanders he now hurls at Trotsky; today, he has really given Brandler that white-washing which he dishonestly alleges that Trotsky was ready to give him; tomorrow, if he is called upon to do so, he will rediscovers that Brandler, after all, always was an agent of the bourgeoisie.

Just think of it; for years this man was the leader of the American party, and one of the leaders of the Comintern!

—SHACHTMAN.

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## Welcome Back, H. M. Wicks!

### Expert on Renegacy Returns from Long Absence

One of the big events of the month in American Party circles is the triumphant return of H. M. Wicks after a long sojourn in foreign parts. This return of a hero has been fittingly celebrated by the publication of an article from his pen in the *Daily Worker* of May 18th, in the course of which he exonerates the "renegades" in his own characteristic and inimitable style.

There is one thing to be said for Wicks: when he writes on the subject of renegacy he knows what he is writing about. In contrast to those bungling amateurs who denounce the "renegades" in routine fashion, without any real knowledge or conviction, Wicks brings to the task the ease and assurance and the cunning touch that derives from a practical experience in the business. Wicks knows the game from the inside; on the subject of renegacy, he is an expert.

In the article referred to above Wicks returns once again to the battle against us which he first began in the early days of the American Communist movement. Twelve years ago, when some of the present leaders of the Left Opposition were in jail as a result of the Palmer terror and others were organizing the underground groups of the future party on the outside, Wicks distinguished himself in the red-baiting campaign of that time. Originally a prominent leader of the Left wing of the Socialist party, and later of the C. P., he passed over to the other side under pressure of the terror and attacked his former comrades with no less venom than he has shown in the anti-Trotsky campaign of recent times. The dates and some of the names are different, but the essential content is the same.

In the *Militant* for September 15th, 1929 we printed the record of Wicks' renegacy. Shortly thereafter he disappeared from the country and nothing was heard from him for a long time. Now he is back again, and back to the old job of denouncing the "renegades". What better way to greet his return can there be than to print that record again? Here it is; a verbatim reproduction of the report of his speech from the Gary, Indiana, *Post* (now the *Post-Tribune*) of Thursday, March 25, 1920, pages 1 and 9:

#### BARES UNDERHAND 'RED' PLOT TO USE UNIONS TO RUIN UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

"H. M. Wicks of Chicago, a reformed Socialist, spoke on the revolutionary tendencies of the times to some forty Gary men last evening. Mr. Wicks established a Socialist local in Gary several years ago; he said he helped select Oscar Anderson as the leader of the Gary strike; therefore he did not appear to be an entire stranger.

"He charged that the steel strike was wholly the work of the syndicalist movement. Violent minorities in the steel unions forced the strike against the wishes of the majority, he said. The majorities did not want to strike but were howled down by the leather-lunged minorities whose only argument was that the opponents of the strike were agents of Judge Gary.

#### BREAKS WITH PARTY

"Mr. Wicks has been a socialist in good standing until last fall when he openly broke with the Socialist Party. Previous to that time he had served as a member of the National Executive Committee of the Party. He said he was familiar with the work and attitude of the Socialists, I. W. W., Communists and all revolutionists.

"With very few exceptions, he said, the radicals are not Americans. Most of the Socialists are people of foreign birth and citizenship and many of them do not even speak the English language. **WORK FOR AMERICAN LEGION**

"Bill Haywood and his satellites should not be tolerated in this country, Mr. Wicks said, he had been advising American Legion members not to permit these vermin to talk to them, but to knock them down. That, he said, is the only language they understand.

"The speaker charged that the Socialist Party was thoroughly pro-German during the war and is today controlled by the pro-German Victor Berger. He said Berger richly deserved the 20 year sentence meted out some time ago and he hoped the Milwaukee man would be forced to serve his time. He said if there ever was a traitor to his country Berger was it.

#### NO USE FOR 'REDS'

Mr. Wicks has no respect for Socialists or radicals of any sort. Having associated with them intimately for years he claims to know them exactly as they are and he says that they are all selfish opportunists who are simply after something for themselves.

"He commended the deportation proceedings that have rid the country of many agitators and urged that other foreign trouble makers be given the same treatment. He urged an Americanization program for the foreign speaking workers and he said the American Legion is the one organization in the country which is doing good Americanization work.

#### EXPELLED FOR DEFEAT

"Mr. Wicks was especially severe of the brand of democracy that the various organizations subscribe to. He said when Victor Berger and Morris Hillquit were defeated by the Party vote they simply expelled many of the Socialists who voted against them and retained control.

"He told of attending the congress of the Communist Party in Chicago where by use of a caucus about one-fourth of the delegates controlled the meeting.

"Lenin is a dictator, and Emma Gold-

man and Ben Reitzman would not dare to carry on the propaganda in Russia which they did carry on here. If they did it would be a firing squad for them.

"The purpose of the revolutionists today is not democracy. They want the rule of the militant minority. Mr. Wicks charged that Syndicalism had been taken up in many instances by unions. He said there is no question about the syndicalism of Foster, who was secretary of the Steel Strike organization. He said he knew Foster personally and was positive that the late strike leader had not abandoned any of his syndicalist beliefs. He also stated that the radicals were simply biding their time to call another strike.

"The speaker could not find words to describe his disgust for the I. W. W. He charged them with being cowards and the scum of the earth.

"Mr. Wicks is preparing to tour the country on the Chautauqua platform this summer in order to let the American people understand the true situation. He has given several years study to Sociology and is preparing to write two books on the problems of the hour.

"He has broken away from the Socialists so recently that this may be the first notice some of them will have of his apostasy."

## For Communist Unity

(Continued from page 1)  
appeal for re-admission. The differences which we have with the present party policy can, we repeat, and should be settled within the framework of one single organization, the Communist party. We aspire only to defend our point of view inside the party, to seek for it in the proper manner and at the proper time, in accordance with the provisions made for such discussion by the statutes of the party and the International, and in accordance with the principle of democratic centralism.

Our inability to agree with the methods pursued in the negotiations conducted with the Lovestone group does not in any way eliminate our conviction that the unification of the party is now more imperative than ever. We are quite prepared to go all the way towards making this unity a reality, a reality which we are sure will give our party a new impetus and added effectiveness in the class struggle. We make this appeal to the party at a moment when the gravity of the situation obliges every revolutionary worker to weigh his decisions and actions, for what is involved is the whole future of our cause.

In presenting our appeal to the party, we urge it to make a prompt reply so that we may be able to act quickly upon it.

With Communist greetings,  
National Committee,  
Communist League of America (Opp.)

## Statement of Jack Macdonald

(Continued from page 1)  
I have a vivid recollection of this "corridor" congress. I recall the session of the Standing Committee where the Pol-Bureau of the C. P. S. U. made its declaration, drawn from it, in its own words because the delegations were "speculating" on the rumored differences within the Bureau. No such principal differences existed, ran the declaration signed by all members of the bureau and implemented by remarks from Stalin and Bukharin. Hardly had the delegations reached home before news broke out that not only were there principal differences, but that actual factions existed. And this after the lie had been given to delegates who had probed beneath the surface of official declarations and reported the existence of groupings and factions.

The creation of the "third period" at the Sixth Congress, as justification for the left about-face, unquestionably under the blows of the opposition, a period that has apparently passed into history or been conveniently forgotten to avoid the creation of a "fourth" period; the rejection of the united front tactic with the non-party workers organizations in the slogan of the "united front from below", as an apology for the unprincipled maneuvering with the leaders of the Social Democratic and reformist trade union organizations; the tragic and catastrophic caricature of a bolshevik-Leninist policy in China, with its complete subordination of the Communist Party to Chiang Kai-Shek and its corollary of subsequent adventurist and putschist insurrection; the eclectic and mechanical creation of the "war danger", which led the parties to orientate their activities solely on the imminence of war from which the proletarian revolution would be born; the swing back to the "right" with its glaring legalistic and parliamentary activity, just as the world economic crisis broke, only to find the parties isolated from the consequences to a great extent of the third period tactics; the acrobatics on trade union policy, etc., etc.—all this is at least ample proof of the zig-zag centrist policy of the present regime.

The appalling debacle of the Communist forces in the recent German presidential election with the enormous growth of the Fascist forces; the almost complete isolation of the party from the trade unions; its insignificant influence over the social-democratic workers, despite the deep internal crisis in Germany; the theory of "social Fascism"; the flirting, to put it mildly, with certain Fascist leaders; the apparent developing theory that a Fascist victory with its demagogic program and slogans means rapid disillusionment of the workers, which will be followed by a flocking to the Communist standard, Italy, Poland, etc., notwithstanding; all this in the German situation if nothing else must impel a general stocktaking and inner searching in the ranks of Communism.

One looks in vain for any keen analysis of these phenomena in the official Communist Press. In the Canadian "Worker" after the first presidential vote in Germany, there appeared a leading editorial that for trifling, irresponsible, poltroonish approach is, I believe without parallel. Two main points were made. Firstly, the opposition was "disarmed" with the assertion many times repeated that the "renegades" would possibly find cause to rejoice. Just why, wasn't stated. Secondly, finally and primarily, the most outstanding and significant result of the election was the gain of half a million Communist votes over last election. What humbug! The second vote with its loss of over a million Communist votes, still remains to be "explained", so far as I am aware.

The wealth of literature issued by the Left Opposition from the pen of Trotsky is something that no worker or student of Marxism or Leninism can afford to ignore or neglect. One listens in vain for the voice of Stalin on the outstanding events of today. Here in the opposition press and literature every question is approached and analyzed, clearly, fearlessly and dialectically. I recollect how

in certain so-called discussions we used to blast and damn the theory of Trotsky's *Permanent Revolution* with an arsenal of quotations given to us by Bukharin. How the polemical differences between Lenin and Trotsky were magnified. How Trotsky underestimated or denied the role of the peasantry. How he would leap across historical stages. "Down with the Czar!" Up with the Labor Government! How during Lenin's leadership he was held in check and did great service for the revolution. But since Lenin died his old false theories had cropped up again, his old *Permanent Revolution* which was the source of all evil.

Every worker today can read Trotsky's *Permanent Revolution* for himself. Let us understand what the "differences" between Lenin and Trotsky were on the role of the peasantry, the "democratic dictatorship", etc. Acquire a knowledge of the re-arming of the Party on the return of Lenin to Russia before October—in short have done with fabrication and misrepresentation and read history.

The theory of the *Permanent Revolution* is not an attempt at a leap of the proletariat over definite historical stages, but the transformation of the nation under the leadership of the proletariat. Here I may quote section two of the fundamental thesis of the *Permanent Revolution*: "With regard to the countries with a belated bourgeois development, especially the colonial and semi-colonial countries, the theory of the permanent revolution signifies that the complete and genuine solution of their tasks, democratic and national emancipation, is conceivable only through the dictatorship of the proletariat as the leader of the subjugated nation, above all of the peasant masses". The tasks of the "democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry" were completely realized not before October, not in the "dual power", but by October—through the dictatorship of the proletariat supported by the poor peasants.

It will be instructive at some other time to retrace the directives to the Canadian Party, given by the opponents of the permanent revolution in their desire to find historical stakes that might not be "skipped over". These run the whole gamut, from the fight against the British monarchy, demand for constituent assembly, farmer-labor government, farmers political parties, national independence, etc., etc.

I reject the theory of national socialism—of socialism in one country—evolved in the struggle against Trotsky in 1925, as contrary to all the teachings of Marx and Lenin. The inevitable social patriotic errors that the Left Opposition warned against are strikingly evident today. The appeal to the international proletariat against Japanese Imperialism, in its general formulation is a recent indication of this. A still more recent example is the advancement by the *Daily Worker* of the justification (based on an article in *Izvestia* of an alliance between the Soviet Union and American Imperialism against Japanese Imperialism. The propaganda and agitation surrounding the slogan of "Defend the Soviet Union" is saturated with pacifism. All this is the logical outcome of the false theory of "socialism in one country".

This statement is made in support of the Left Opposition after thoroughly probing all doubts and reservations, slowly, calmly and deliberately. I make it with the sincere hope that any influence I may have with the workers, through my association with and work in the working class movement in this country, may lead the advanced workers to a critical examination of the Communist movement today, in all its ramifications, theoretical, organizational, strategic and otherwise; and to an examination of the literature and theoretical position of the Left Opposition and particularly to the works of Trotsky.

From this I am convinced there will inevitably come again another "re-arming" of the movement—a reestablishment of the advance guard of the international working class movement, on the solid bed-rock of the theories of Marx and Lenin.

—J. MACDONALD.

# Centrism «in General» and the Centrism of the Stalinist Bureaucracy

by LEON TROTSKY

The errors of the leadership of the Comintern and consequently, the errors of the German Communist Party pertain, in the familiar terminology of Lenin, to the category of "ultra-Left stupidities." Even wise men are capable of stupidities, especially when young. But, as Heine counselled, this privilege should not be abused. When, however, political stupidities of a given type are repeated systematically in the course of a lengthy period, and moreover in the sphere of the most important questions, then they cease being simply stupidities and become *tendencies*. What sort of a tendency is this? What historical necessities does it meet? What are its social roots?

Ultra-Leftism has a different social foundation in different countries and at different periods. The most thoroughgoing expressions of ultra-Leftism were to be found in anarchism and Blanquism, and in their different combinations, among them the latest one: anarcho-syndicalism.

The social soil for these trends which have spread primarily through Latin countries was to be found in the old and classic small industries of Paris. Their stability added an indubitable significance to the French varieties of ultra-radicalism and allowed them to a certain degree to influence ideologically the workers' movements in other countries. The development of large scale industries in France, the war and the Russian revolution broke the spine of anarcho-syndicalism. Having been thrown back, it has become transformed into a debased opportunism. On both of its stages French syndicalism is headed by one and the same Jouhaux: the times change and we change with them.

Spanish anarcho-syndicalism preserved its seeming revolutionary character only in the environment of political stagnation. By posing all the questions point-blank the revolution has compelled the anarcho-syndicalist leaders to cast off their ultra-radicalism and to reveal their opportunist nature. We can rest definitely assured that the Spanish revolution will drive out the prejudice of syndicalism from its last Latin hide-out.

The anarchist and Blanquist elements join all kinds of other types of ultra-Left trends and groups. On the periphery of a great revolutionary movement there are always to be observed the manifestations of putschism and adventurism, the standard bearers of which are recruited either from backward and quite often semi-artisan strata of the workers, or from the intellectual fellow way-farers. But such a type of ultra-Leftism does not ordinarily attain to independent historical significance, retaining, in most instances, its episodic character.

In historically backward countries, which are compelled to go through their bourgeois revolutions within the environment of a full-fledged and world-wide workers' movement, the left intelligentsia often introduces the most extreme slogans and methods into the semi-elementary movements of the predominantly petty-bourgeois masses. Such is the nature of petty-bourgeois parties of the type of the Russian "Social-Revolutionaries", with their tendencies toward putschism, individual terrorism, etc. Thanks to the effectiveness of the Communist parties in the West, the independent adventurist groups will hardly attain there to the importance of the Russian Social-Revolutionaries. But on this account the young Communist parties of the West may include within themselves the elements of adventurism. As regards the Russian S. R.'s, under the influence of the evolution of bourgeois society, they have become transformed into the party of the imperialist petty bourgeoisie and have taken a counter-revolutionary position in relation to the October revolution.

It is entirely self-evident that the ultra-Leftism of the present Comintern does not fall under any one of the above specified historic types. The chief party of the Comintern, the C. P. S. U., wittingly leans upon the industrial proletariat, and operates for better or for worse from the revolutionary traditions of Bolshevism. The majority of other sections of the Comintern are proletarian organizations. Are not the very differences of conditions in various countries, in which the ultra-Left policies of official Communism are raging simultaneously and in the same degree, tokens of the fact that there are no common social roots underlying this trend? Indeed, the ultra-Left course, which is also one and the same "in principle", is being put through in China and in Great Britain. But if so, where are we then to seek for the key to the new ultra-Leftism?

The question is complicated, but at the same time is also clarified by one other, extremely important circumstance: Ultra-Leftism is not at all an unvarying or fundamental trait of the present leadership of the Comintern. The same apparatus, in its basic composition, held to an openly opportunistic policy until 1928, and in many of the most important questions switched over completely onto the tracks of menshevism. During 1924-1927 agreements with reformists were not only considered obligatory but were permitted if thereby the party renounced its independence, its freedom of criticism, and even its proletarian foundation. Therefore the discussion concerns not at all a particular ultra-Left trend, but a prolonged ultra-Left zig-zag of such a trend that has demonstrated in the past its capacity for launching into profound ultra-Right zig-zags. Even these outward symptoms suggest that what we are dealing with is centrism.

Speaking formally and descriptively, centrism is composed of all those trends within the proletariat and on its periphery which are distributed between re-

formism and Marxism, and which most often represent various stages of evolution from reformism to Marxism—and vice-versa. Both Marxism and reformism have a solid social support underlying them. Marxism expresses the historical interests of the proletariat. Reformism speaks for the privileged position of proletarian bureaucracy and aristocracy within the capitalist state. Centrism, as we have known it in the past, did not have and could not have an independent social foundation. Different layers of the proletariat develop in the revolutionary direction in different ways and at different times. In periods of prolonged industrial uplift or in the periods of political ebb-tide, after defeats, different layers of the proletariat shift politically from left to right, clashing with other layers who are just beginning to evolve to the Left. Different groups are delayed on separate stages of their evolution, they find their temporary leaders and create their programs and organizations. Small wonder then that such a diversity of trends is embraced in the comprehension of "centrism"! Depending upon their origin, their social composition and the direction of their evolution, different groupings may be engaged in the most savage warfare with one another, without losing thereby their character of being a variety of centrism.

While centrism in general fulfills ordinarily the function of serving as a left cover for reformism, the question as to which of the basic camps, reformist or Marxist, a given centrism may belong, cannot be solved once for all with a ready made formula. Here, more than anywhere else, it is necessary to analyze each time the concrete composition of the process and the inner tendencies of its development. Thus, some of Rosa Luxemburg's political mistakes may be with sufficient theoretical justification characterized as left-centrism. One could go still further and say that the majority of divergences between Rosa Luxemburg and Lenin represented a stronger or weaker leaning toward centrism. But only the bullies and ignoramuses and charlatans of the Comintern bureaucracy are capable of assigning Luxemburgism as an historical tendency toward centrism. It goes without saying that the present "leaders" of the Comintern, from Stalin down, politically, theoretically and morally do not come up to the knees of the great woman and revolutionist.

Critics, who have not pondered the gist of the matter, have recently accused me more than once of abusing the word "centrism", by including under this name too great a variety of tendencies and groups within the workers' movement. In reality, the diversity of the types of centrism originates, as has been already said, in the essence of the phenomenon itself and not at all in an abuse of terminology. We need only recall how often the Marxists have been accused of assigning to the petty bourgeoisie the most diverse and contradictory phenomena. And actually, under the category "petty bourgeois", one is obliged to include fact, ideas and tendencies which at first glance appear entirely incompatible. The petty bourgeois character pertains to the peasant movement and to the radical tendencies of urban reformism; both French Jacobins and Russian Narodniki are petty bourgeois; Prudhonists are petty-bourgeois but so are Blanquists; petty-bourgeois are: the French anarcho-syndicalists, the "Salvation Army", Gandhi's movement in India, etc., etc. If we turn to the sphere of philosophy and art, even a much more polychromatic picture obtains. Does this mean that Marxism indulges in playing with terminology? Not at all, this only means that the petty-bourgeoisie is characterized by the extreme heterogeneity of its social nature. At bottom it fuses with the proletariat and extends into the lumpen-proletariat, on top it passes over into the capitalist bourgeoisie. It may lean upon old forms of production but it may rapidly develop on the bases of most modern industry (the new "middle estate"). No wonder that ideologically it scintillates with all the colors of the rainbow.

Centrism within the workers' movement plays in a certain sense the same rôle as does the petty-bourgeois ideology of all types in relation to the bourgeois society as a whole. Centrism reflects the processes of the evolution of the proletariat; its political growth as well as its revolutionary set-back conjointly with the pressure of all other classes of society upon the proletariat. No wonder that the palette of centrism is distinguished by such iridescence! From this it follows, however, not that one must give up trying to comprehend centrism but simply that one must needs discover the true nature of a given variety of centrism by means of a concrete and an historical analysis in every individual instance.

The ruling faction of the Comintern does not represent in itself centrism "in general" but quite a definite historical form, which has social roots, rather recent but powerful. First of all, the matter concerns the *Soviet bureaucracy*. In the writings of the Stalinist theoreticians this social stratum does not exist at all. We are only told of "Leninism", of incorporeal leadership, of the ideological tradition, of the spirit of Bolshevism, of the imponderable "general line"; but you will not hear a word about a functional, breathing and living, in flesh and bone, who manipulates this general line like a fireman his hose.

—L. TROTSKY.

(To Be Continued)

\* A detailed analysis of this opportunistic chapter of the Comintern that lasted a few years is given in our books, *The Draft Program of the Comintern—A Criticism of Fundamentals! The Permanent Revolution; Who Is Leading the Comintern Today*, etc.

(From WHAT NEXT—Vital Questions for the German proletariat)