

WORKERS
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UNITE

THE MILITANT



Weekly Organ of the Communist League of America [Opposition]

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With the Embattled Miners

Massacre Striking Miners in Franklin County, Illinois

The Coal Diggers Regather Their Forces After the Slaughter

SPRINGFIELD, Ill., August 25:

Forty thousand miners and families, in six thousand cars and trucks, forming an army eighty miles long, were ambushed and brutally attacked at the Franklin County border. The trek-worn miners were about to arrive at their destination, when hired killers of the coal operators opened are about 8 P. M. Wednesday, August 24, 1932. From their ambush of brushes and weeds, the murderers permitted some five hundred cars to enter the county and without warning opened fire with machine guns, rifles, shot guns and pistols.

As the miners scattered, caught off guard, terror-stricken women and children wounded by their men sprawled on the hard roads and ditches amidst splattered glass off from automobiles. The killers, provided with torches, ignited gasoline, burning up cars, truck-loads of food and First Aid ambulances. The killers singled out lost miners, they pounced on them and never stopped beating them with pistol and rifle butts until the miners fell completely unconscious.

About one hundred and fifty men, women and children were shot down. The number of slain is undetermined as yet. The miners came peacefully and unarmed. They marched right into the jaws of death, only being able to resist with bare hands.

The caravan leading the huge army was stopped all along the road. The strategy of the state forces was to time the armies' arrival in Southern Illinois by night-fall so they could lead them to slaughter.

At Pickneyville we were stopped for three hours, finally we were permitted to pass through. We were then seventeen miles from Darnell where all preparations were made for camp. Our board of strategy stopped at Du Quoin for a conference. This was five miles from our destination. Our army proceeded as per instructions to pitch camp at designated place. Arriving two miles from Darnell, our vanguard was forced by several hundred deputies, at the point of machine guns, to move on to Franklin County. Our vanguard hesitated, but a few slugs and cocked triggers forced our vanguard to move Eastward and there lay the killers in weeds and brush—only eight miles off. The state patrolmen and deputy sheriffs of Perry County brazenly forced our peaceful army into the slaughter.

We gave definite instructions to camp at Darnell in Jackson County for the night, then to walk in a body across the border to Franklin County. Two of the vanguard members who got away with minor injuries reported they were forced to traverse Franklin County at the point of machine guns and were even escorted almost to the nest of the murderers.

The army retreated to Coulterville and Pickneyville, twenty miles Northwest. To what extent the army has held its forces is unknown as yet. There are three camps, twenty thousand miners are camped in one woods.

We used airplanes this morning. The Hunter Brothers of Sparta, endurance flyer flew their planes for our cause. Our planes were spied immediately by Scott Field Scouts but all the damage they did was to give dirty looks and circle us. We dropped thousands of leaflets on Franklin County miners early in the morning. The miners greeted our leaders with waving of haddiechiefs and caps. The leaflets called on the Franklin miners to meet their brothers at the County line.

Several miners in this territory went down today. No reports from Franklin County today yet. Martial rule by deputies. Miners' meetings barred by statement of Sheriff and Lewis headquarters.

Status of Strike

Sub District No. 1.....100% out (Pekin—La Salle)
Sub District No. 2.....100% out (Peoria)
Sub District No. 3..... 75% out (Danville)
Sub District No. 4.....100% out

N.Y. PICNIC

Sunday, September 11th

at

Tibbets Brook Park, Plot 8
Take I. R. T. Woodlawn-Jerome train to last stop. Street cars or bus to park.

SPECIAL:

OPEN AIR BANQUET

(In case of rain we will hold banquet at 84 East 10th St.)

The Stalinist Bureaucrats Back Out On Murder Frame-Up Hearing

To date, the Stalinist leadership of the official party has not yet replied to our challenge for an open hearing on the framed up murder charges they directed against us in the *Daily Worker* last week. They have contented themselves with exploiting the tragic deaths of the workers Semen and Krasluk in a mouth to mouth campaign of incitement against the Left Opposition.

Bureaucrats Retreat

In their public press, the bureaucrats have been forced to retreat all along the line. The *Daily Worker* and the *Freiheit*, which on August 23 and 24 were filled with venomous lynch propaganda against the Communist League, have since hushed up the affair entirely. Not a single statement has issued forth from the responsible organs of the official party, not one editorial comment stating publicly what the attitude of the central leadership itself is on the subject. The cowardly Stalinist henchmen have deemed it safer to hide behind surreptitious insinuations in the guise of "news articles".

Faced with the wide-spread disapproval of the Communist rank and file, the Central apparatus of the party is swallowing its words, covering up the traces of its disgraceful pogrom tactics against the Bolshevik-Leninists. In leaflets published since the provocative articles in the *Daily*, the Stalinists no longer refer to the "Trotskyists" as those responsible

for the deaths of the two workers, but more vaguely and—more safely, to "disruptive elements expelled from the Communist party". Replying to a press release issued by Gitlow for the Lovestone group on the affair in question, the *Freiheit* restricts its editorial remarks exclusively to an attack against the "right wingers and does not even once make reference to the Left Opposition!" The pressure of the outraged party ranks has made itself felt. The dastardly scheme of the bureaucrats has suffered shipwreck.

Must Be Brought to Account

But the spokesmen of Stalinism must not be allowed to retreat in silence. They have got to be made to face the working class openly for an accounting. Their wretched policy of disrupting working class meetings of employing violence in the dispute with the Leninist Opposition has already by their own admissions (see the *Daily Worker* of Saturday, August 27) led to a general attack by the city authorities upon all Communist meetings. The rude tactics of Stalinism play into the hands of the enemy.

Communist workers, demand that the leadership of the official party bring its shameful accusations against the Left Opposition before a public hearing! Demand that they face a working class tribunal.

(See Page Four for party members' reactions to the Frame-Up)

The Political Programs of the Petty Bourgeoisie

by LEON TROTSKY

Any serious analysis of the political situation must take as its point of departure the relationship between the three classes: the bourgeoisie, the petty bourgeoisie (including the peasantry) and the proletariat.

The economically powerful big bourgeoisie, in itself, represents an infinitesimal minority of the nation. To enforce its domination, it must ensure a definite mutual relationship with the petty bourgeoisie and through its mediation, with the proletariat.

To understand the dialectic of the relationship between the three classes, we must differentiate three historical stages: at the dawn of capitalist development, when the bourgeoisie required revolutionary methods to resolve its tasks; in the period of bloom and maturation of the capitalist régime, when the bourgeoisie endowed its domination with orderly, pacific, conservative, democratic forms; finally, at the decline of capitalism, when the bourgeoisie is forced to resort to methods of civil war against the proletariat to protect its right of exploitation.

THE POLITICAL PROGRAMS OF THE PETTY BOURGEOISIE

The political programs characteristic of these three stages: *Jacobinism*, reformist *democracy* (social democracy included) and *Fascism* are basically programs of petty bourgeois currents. This fact alone, more than anything else, shows of what tremendous—rather, of what decisive, importance the self-determination of the petty bourgeois masses of the people is for the whole fate of bourgeois society.

Nevertheless, the relationship between the bourgeoisie and its basic social support, the petty bourgeoisie, does not at all rest upon reciprocal confidence

and pacific collaboration. In its mass, the petty bourgeoisie is an exploited and disfranchised class. It regards the bourgeoisie with envy and often with hatred. The bourgeoisie, on the other hand, while utilizing the support of the petty bourgeoisie, distrusts the latter, for it very correctly fears its tendency to break down the barriers set up for it from above.

While they were laying out and clearing the road for bourgeois development, the Jacobins engaged, at every step, in sharp clashes with the bourgeoisie. They served it in intransigent struggle against it. After they had culminated their limited historical rôle, the Jacobins fell, for the domination of capital was predestined.

For a whole series of stages, the bourgeoisie entrenched its power under the form of parliamentary democracy. Even then, not peacefully and not voluntarily. The bourgeoisie was mortally afraid of universal suffrage. But in the last instance, it succeeded, with the aid of a combination of violent measures and concessions, of privations and reforms, to subordinate within the framework of formal democracy, not only the petty bourgeoisie, but in considerable measure also the proletariat, by means of the new petty bourgeoisie—the labor aristocracy. In August 1914 the imperialist bourgeoisie was able, with the means of parliamentary democracy, to lead millions of workers and peasants into the war.

(Continued on page 4)

Fascists Waiting, Ready to Strike

Clara Zetkin Calls For International Solidarity Against Fascism

Calls for International Solidarity

The bourgeois and the socialist press, in commenting upon the breaking-up of the negotiations between the Hindenburg-Papen regime and Hitler, has generally spoken of a set-back for the latter. Nothing is further from the truth. What is actually evident from the turn events have taken in German politics of recent days, is the fact that a part of the big bourgeoisie, which generally fears the expenses and disturbances and instability of a Fascist regime, is content for the time being to play another card. It is their aim to see if it is not possible to exploit the deadlock between Fascism and the working class on the arena of popular sentiment for the purpose of entrenching a less expensive and more efficient dictatorship—the Junker government of Schleicher-Papen.

That the Nazis have not been defeated is evident from the extreme caution and cowardice with which the Reich's government is treating the Fascist assassins of the Communist worker Pletczuck, a case which has rocked the whole nation with its repercussions. In spite of its emergency decree covering "political excesses" with special "Schnellgerichte"—courts of extraordinary, speedy action—the murderers of the Communist worker still remain without a trial, government action is being delayed notwithstanding the popular indignation aroused by the incident.

Attitude of Hitlerism

Nor are the Hitlerites themselves unconscious of their position. Immediately after the rupture in the negotiations, the Fascist Goebbels wrote in the Berlin organ of National-Socialism, *Der Angriff*: "A dictatorship against the whole country is impossible in the long run, no matter how many bayonets one has at his disposal. We have no intention of blurring out our plans. At any rate, we National Socialists would be least of all inclined to shed tears over the shipwreck of the negotiations. What has been denied us last Saturday, will perhaps in the very near future be laid before us pleadingly. Then it will be up to us to pose conditions."

The Fascists are quite conscious that they are the indispensable arm of big capital, that they control its only base of operations in the broad masses of the people for the purpose of the capitalist solution of the sharp economic and political crisis. They know that sooner or later, the big financiers will have to resort to their petty bourgeois battalions to stem the tide of working class resistance against their attempts to "solve" the crisis by the drastic reduction of the standards of living of the workers, by the strangulation of the proletarian vanguard. They know and they are aware that their masters know, that the regular army of 100,000 alone will not suffice for this purpose. The policy of the Fascist is—the policy of watchful waiting. The danger of the Fascist coup d'Etat has not been decreased by one iota.

Youth Hold Anti-War Meeting

September marks the eighteenth anniversary of the celebration of the first International Youth Day as the day of struggle against capitalist war and militarism. When the Berne conference of the International Union of Socialist Youth organizations held in 1915, sent out the call to demonstrate on this day under the slogan of "war against war", it set aside, an international holiday of the working youth that has grown larger and stronger every year.

The year 1932 is no exception. The danger of war exists in reality. The world is an armed camp, while the burden of this huge militarization falls upon the shoulders of the working class, especially upon the broad mass of young workers. The demonstration this year must be larger than ever before.

As part of the general participation in International Youth Day, the Young Spartacus Club of New York is holding an open meeting. This meeting will discuss the various phases of the history of the International Youth Day and the struggles of the youth of the entire world. Comrades Joe Carter and Albert Grotzer will be the speakers, and Manny Garrett, the chairman. The meeting will be held at the Stuyvesant Casino, 2nd Ave., and 9th Street, on Sunday, September 4th, at 8 P. M. Admission is free.

«Farmers Holiday» in Iowa

A New and Militant Type of Middle Class Revolt

The strike of the farmers in Sioux City has spread to other parts of the state, of Iowa and Indiana, and into nearby states. Truck gardeners and dairy farmers have joined the movement and threaten the law and order of the authorities. Minneapolis reports show the strike has reached the Northwest. This new strike action of this section of the petty bourgeois indicates the deep changes the agriculture of the United States is undergoing.

The reduction of wholesale food prices, the bosses' hold on the farms and the reduction of the purchasing power of the workers has upset the standards of the rich farm regions which were able to survive the constant agrarian crisis up to the present. In Sioux City and Council Bluffs, Iowa a higher plane of the struggle has been reached. Mass picketing, fights, and clashes with scabs and authorities are reported daily. In Council Bluffs the striking farmers marched upon the jail and forced the authorities to release 80 striking farmers. All reports indicate the strike is spreading.

Press reports from western papers show that in spite of minor ebbs and flows, the farmers revolt against conditions is growing. The farmers can no longer argue against the striking workers because now the striking farmers have joined them as allies in the struggle against the financiers and their henchmen.

August 22, the striking farmers stopped two trains enroute to Sioux City with livestock and milk. 400 farmers

of the Missouri valley agree to begin a blockade of highways leading to Omaha. On August 26, the press reports reinforced picket lines on all roads leading to Council Bluffs from the Iowa side. At Sioux City the 88 arrested strikers were released on habeas corpus proceedings, Iowa national guards are in readiness to be sent in any part of the state.

The Nebraska farmers started picketing roads in and around Omaha. In Iowa, the state power of the capitalists has been used against the striking farmers, arresting strikers, routing them with tear gas and general intimidation that striking workers are well trained in.

The farmers of Iowa, Nebraska, North and South Dakota and Minnesota are following up the strike movement in one form or the other. In other farm regions preliminary steps in this direction are being taken. The middle class state farm organizations are endeavoring to give leadership to the movements and link them up in a general struggle against the monopolists. Reports from Lewiston, Idaho inform us that 400 farmers in this rich wheat district are bound by agreement to sell none of their wheat for 60 days unless a profit can be made. They control 5 million bushels of wheat.

Significance of Farm Strike

What significance has the farmers strike? What is the relation the farmers strike has to the workers' struggles? A survey of this struggle is essential to prevent the vanguard from being shifted into opportunist channels by Stalinism

(Continued on page 2)

APPEAL FOR FUNDS!

Last week we informed you of the financial emergency. We told you how the Stalinists concocted the frame-up against us in an attempt to rebuild the crumbling walls between our comrades and the Communist workers in the party. Now the capitalist and socialist press have picked up the Stalinist frame-up against us and are using it against the whole Communist movement and particularly against the Left Opposition.

The emergency for the Militant is not over. The financial condition calls for renewed effort on the part of the Militant supporters.

In spite of the increase in members and sympathizers, the mass unemployed and the low wages reduce considerably the financial returns from our expanding activity.

The Militant is the main organ in America that upholds the banner of the Bolshevik-Leninists in theory and action. The suspension of *The Militant*, its delay, like last week, when the press broke down, or the retreat to a semi-monthly would be a blow to the whole international Communist movement. Unless we are able to meet the present difficult situation our press and movement will suffer. Collect funds for the Militant from your fellow workers! Readers of *The Militant*, arrange affairs for *The Militant*, picnics, house parties, etc. Rush all funds to *THE MILITANT*, 84 East 10th Street, New York City.

Strike in Lancashire Mills

Big Wave of Struggle of British Workers Rising

The cotton and textile mills in Lancashire district, have come to a virtual standstill. More than 135,000 workingmen and women engaged in the British Textile industry have downed tools in response to a strike call and practically paralyzed one of the mainstays of the economic life of Great Britain. The capitalist press states that the scope of the strike will extend so far as to effect the existence of more than 10,000,000 people whose life depends upon the purchasing power of the textile operatives. British capitalism, astounded at the force of this general strike is moving all its power and influence to corral "public opinion", to discredit the strike and is prepared to move in with more decisive measures if necessary.

The purpose of the strike is ostensibly the re-instatement of 3,000 union members who struck while the misleaders of the British textile workers were conducting negotiations with the manufacturers who had abrogated the general agreement, concerning wages, hours and conditions. The parleys came to a standstill but nothing was done about the re-employment of these three thousand workers who placed no trust in their perfidious leaders. We learn, however, although it is but vaguely stated, that there is also the question of a 10% wage cut. The sick British labor fakers would never permit an official strike in sympathy with members that have flaunted their treacherous decisions.

In the recent period there has been more than one wage cut imposed upon the textile operatives, bringing their living conditions to the rock bottom level.

The British capitalists are desperately trying to rationalize their industry—at the expense of the workers—and they have brought all their trustees into action, the "labor government", the labor skates of the Hicks, Cline strike, in order to prime themselves for an attack on the world market.

We can rest assured that if the fate of the strike is to depend upon the trade union "leaders" the sell-out is a foregone conclusion. The labor fakers who work in collusion with the bosses and their government lackeys will drive the workers back into as great a slough of misery as the bosses desire. Already they are rushing to "His Majesty" begging him to assert his "royal impartiality" and to "arbitrate" the strike. To the only ones that can really arbitrate the strike—the workers, who by their unflinching solidarity can force the bosses to yield—the British Labor fakers have no thought of appealing. That means class struggle. The fakers still having nightmares of the great general strike of 1926, are exceedingly aware of the militancy of the working class. What will the footstool of the British bourgeoisie, the king who is fed from crumbs off their table, arbitrate? In whose interest? The answer is self-evident—he who pays the piper picks the tune.

Only by dumping these fakers will the strike make any progress whatsoever. The British textile strike is one of the big battles that is shaking the capitalist world today. The opportunities for Communism are mounting by leaps and bounds. More power to the Lancashire strikers!

JOE COLBERT - LABOR'S MARTYR

It was back in 1927, during the great national strike, when the coal miners of the United States were making a gallant fight for the preservation of their union, that I first met Joe Colbert. That was an early September morning when 1500 strikers had gathered at Old Ben number 15 near West Frankfort, and persuaded the miners of that mine not to return to work under the separate agreement policy that would desert the heroic miners of Pennsylvania and Ohio and inevitably wreck our union. Joe was there for the first time actively participating in the affairs of his union. From then on he became a constant fighter for a more militant union until the morning he was assassinated by a guard from the mine where he was employed.

Colbert had been a trip rider in the mines and his missing right hand was the credential to prove that he had gone through the mill. The injury left a stub above the wrist but still his youth and robust health permitted him to work on the conveyors of the Chicago, Wilmington Franklin Coal Company.

In 1926 we elected Joe the president of our local union, for his courage and his constant struggle against the operators' abuse of conditions, endeavored him in the heart of his fellow men. Later he served in the capacity of Financial Secretary, then served three years as recording secretary and Pit Committee-man of our local in which capacity he served until his death. He was also Auditor of Sub-District number 9. United Mine Workers of America.

I had occasion to serve with Colbert on several committees. Acting on our local union's resolution committee for the International Convention held last January Colbert stood by a militant program and led the fight for the recognition of the Soviet Union and against the Criminal Syndicalism law. Some of the most constructive resolutions, numbering 36 in all, were presented to the International Convention by our delegation. Colbert collaborated with me in the presentation of these resolutions. During the district scale committee negotiations we were delegates and side by side we fought for an energetic program of struggle against the fakers within our union and the coal operators.

During my expulsion from the United Mine Workers of America for my activities in the National Miners Union Colbert almost single handed struck Orient number 1 in solidarity with Mine 2, over an equal division of work. The strike took place during the rank and file movement in which Colbert played a constructive part. Colbert and Ansbury held the strike intact for weeks. And not until the operators had brought into play the Federal government, which arrested every active foreign-born miner were they able to break the strike for which seven Communists are now facing long prison sentences on the charges of violating the Criminal Syndicalist laws.

Colbert had become known throughout the mining regions. His courage, tenacity and leadership had developed thousands of friends throughout the coal fields of the state. At the same time he had aroused the enmity of the coal operators and their agents—the fakers within the United Mine Workers of America.

A Fateful Conversation

Returning home from the Benid conference of a week ago, where Colbert and I had again acted as delegates from our local union, we stopped at a filling station on the outskirts of West Frankfort. There we observed James Sutton Company guards with shot-gun in hand. The following interesting conversation took place between Joe and the mine guard.

"Where are you going with that?" Joe queried.

"Goin' to look for rabbits", was the cynical reply.

"I assume that there will be plenty around here pretty soon", Joe asserted.

"What are you fellows going to do?", the killer asked.

"We are going to strike every mine in Illinois until they give us an honest count," Joe countered.

"Well, you fellows better not come out there," was the threatening rejoinder of the gunman.

"We will be out there in spite of all your army, there is nobody going to tell the Illinois miners to work under conditions that they never had an opportunity to decide upon", were Joe's last remarks as we went on.

The following morning deputy sheriffs arrested me and threw me into the county jail along with a student body that I was accompanying. That night I was released and the following conversation took place between myself and the states attorney:

"You had better not stay at home tonight", stated the S. A.

"Who is to tell me where I am to go and where to stay?"

"Well, I am merely telling you what I know, they are going to kill you and some other leaders of this movement if you do not watch yourself", said the S. A.

"This industrial war could not be any worse than a military war; if war was declared I would not be consulted as to whether I would go or not, therefore I refuse to be told what I shall do in a fight that determines the very life of thousands of my men", I answered.

"At any rate, I am telling you what I know," was the answer.

"Very well, since you, as the leading authority in this county tell me that my life is in danger I demand a permit to carry a gun for my protection," he replied.

"Can't do that, I am disarming people," was the last response of the state's attorney.

Threats Fulfilled

The next morning I learn that the threats were not bluffs. Joe was murdered with a full shot-gun lead right through his heart. Joe had gotten up early and was busily engaged picking mushrooms in the pasture near his home. He was accompanied by his father who had gone out to stake a cow. At 15 minutes of six, an open touring car appeared, the driver got out and called for Joe. Joe turned and started toward them. He no doubt recognized the three men in the car. When he arrived ten feet from the car, the gunman opened fire shattering his manly chest piercing his heart. Joe died almost instantly with a faint smile.

Joe's wife, Frankie ran out on her porch and the killers laughed openly in her face as her husband lay crumpled to earth.

The murder of Colbert by the gunman of the coal operators is part of the program of the Lewis-Walker-Edmundson combine in the attempt to force a wage cut down the throat of the Illinois coal miners. They feared Colbert because of his bravery and influence. It was necessary in their desperation to stop the rank and file movement from taking hold of the union for the movement threatens to engulf them forever for the miners—therefore desperate men use desperate tactics.

The death of Joe Colbert will be avenged. We, the militant miners of Illinois, pledged in mass funeral of 15,000 strong that we will carry the fight to the bitter end. Joe Colbert is dead but the things that he fought for will be realized as long as there is a breath of life left in the militant working class movement.

—GERRY ALLARD.

The «Farmers Holiday»

(Continued from page 1)

today as was the case in the past when Pepper, as a representative of the Right-Center bloc, lost the Communist movement into opportunism with his two-class party idea.

The crisis is throwing upon the surface new layers of rebels. These new layers crystallize around issues of immediate demands at hand. The Bonus March was a typical example of this. The Bonus Army with the exception of the minority Left wing, was a force made up of patriotic Americans, "Loyal Americans", who wanted relief from mass hunger and starvation. The Government answer to their cry for bread with bullets shifted the "army" and many of its sympathizers to the Left, and away from their patriotism.

The farmers' strike follows this new trail, but throws to the surface an entirely different layer of "enemies" of capitalism. The reorganization of agriculture—to coordinate it with industry—by the American imperialists pushed the farmers forward into struggle. Their outlook on property relations warps this movement, restricts it to a struggle attempting to hold in check the concentration and centralization of wealth. They want to turn the wheels of industry backward.

Workers' Strike and Farmers' Strike

When the workers strike it is a blow against capitalism, at the basic contradictions of the system, a blow at the relation of the exploiting machine owner and the exploited producing wage slaves. But the farmers' strike turns on a different axis. The farmers strike does not unearth the same relationship to the basic contradictions of capitalism. The farmers' strike reveals the relationship of a section of the petty-bourgeoisie, the farmers, fighting another section of the capitalists who have monopolized the avenues between production and distribution. The workers' solution is forward to the social revolution. The "solution" of the farmers is an attempt to check the march of industry, to turn the wheels backward. This does not mean that we reject the farmers' struggles as reactionary. It means that it is doomed at the start to certain limitations and must be supported in this light, as an auxiliary struggle in the class struggle against the capitalists. Not a struggle on an equal basis with the workers' struggle, as indicated by the slogan of "Workers and Farmers Government", but as a struggle of allies in the fight of the workers to overthrow capitalism.

The Middle Class in the Crisis

Large sections of the middle class have already been ruined by the crisis and the attempted reorganization of American industry by the financiers. The farmer, as a section of this class, has been in a permanent crisis. The financiers have already won a section of the "new" middle class as flunkies. Not so with the farmer, who will fight to the end. It is not correct to contend that the imperialists have won the middle class as a whole to their side, nor is it correct to say the middle class will not survive this crisis. The problem is many-sided and not so simple. The whole middle class is divided and moving in many directions and no solution of their problems can be expected under capitalism and particularly from the leaders of the middle class. As allies of the proletariat, they are of value to the further development of society.

This new farmers struggle is on an entirely different plane when compared to the struggles of the former centuries.

The struggle against capitalism in America is the struggle of the workers, industrial and agrarian, black and white, etc. The farmers must be used as allies. The Communist workers must guard against the Stalinist attempt to elevate the farmers' strike above its proper level in the class struggle. The Stalinists attempt to elevate the farmers' struggle against capitalism must be rejected, if we are to approach the problems of the farmers with a correct Marxian policy.

—H. O.

REVOLUTIONARY LESSONS

By N. Lenin

Containing Lenin's famous **APIUL**, **THESES** with which, in comrade Trotsky's phrase, the Bolshevik party was rearmed; the Thesis submitted by Lenin to the First Congress of the Comintern at Moscow, March 2-26, 1919, under the title, **BOURGEOIS DEMOCRACY AND THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT; A LESSON ON TACTICS**; and other short pieces. Paper cover—82 pages; Limited number on hand.

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This is a notice to all and sundry that we are willing to open negotiations with the lucky holders of those works of comrade Trotsky that are out of print, or rare, etc., on the basis of an exchange of our current stocks for these rare works. We are particularly anxious to get copies of **Democracy versus Dictatorship**; **Lessons of October**; **Our Revolutionary Lessons**; Comrades who have spare copies—name your price and let us bargain. Or if you know where we can get these works please let us know at once.

•• The Left Opposition at Work ••

Recent advances have been registered by the League in several directions. This is first of all due to our campaign for a Bolshevik policy in the present fateful situation of the German proletariat and our fight against the pacifist anti-war masquerade. Support in the party and Communist sympathetic ranks has come forward. Comrade Pappas issued his open letter, which has already been printed in these columns, and aroused considerable discussion. His arbitrary expulsion has resulted in protest by several New York party units. Our members have distributed a total of 30,000 leaflets on the German situation.

How Regime Reacts

The attitude of the party regime, culminating in the dastardly frame-up against us, intended to squelch this wave of support, has already proven to have the contrary effect. Quite a few new sympathizers to the Left Opposition have come forward. We do not mention names in this connection for very good reasons but some of these new sympathizers have influential positions in the party and its auxiliary organizations.

Some of this sympathy is expressed in letters sent to the office directly or to individual members. We quote a part of one such typical letter sent to a New York comrade: "The minute I read that story of the street meeting in the **Daily Worker**, I, of course, knew that it really was not so. I spoke that same day to two other party members who work in my shop and they also agreed that it could not be so. We do not know you so well but anyway we would not believe this, it has just so much sorer to us that we must study this question of the Trotsky program. This we will do and we wish you success for your ideas."

During the recent few weeks we have received ample proof that the Left Opposition views on the present vital working class issues have penetrated deeper into the party and its sympathizers' ranks considerable sections having registered a response, wanting to know, wanting to discuss. Secondly due to this the party leadership has become compelled to engage in somewhat of a discussion as, for example, in its recent New Year meeting on Germany and the discussion on "Trotskyism" now to be taken up in the Y. C. L. Thirdly, that the bureaucratic regime has become alarmed and become frantic is well illustrated in its attempts at physical retaliation, and base frame-up method.

PROSPECTS FOR DULUTH

The results of the successful mass meetings and anti-war demonstration in Duluth are excellent for further organization work for the Communist League. After the meeting previously reported in the **Militant**, the Party held an anti-war meeting at Court House Square recently in which we publicly advertised that we would participate. For this reason, all the speakers turned their guns on the Left Opposition, the meeting turned into an anti-Trotsky revival. We refused to be provoked, expect when one emboldened bureaucrat said, "I challenge comrade Bloomberg to come up here and deny this!" Bloomberg immediately accepted the challenge and moved to the platform. "No, no," shouted the speaker in regret, "we don't want to hear what you got to say!" "Why did you invite me?" asked Bloomberg simply and the crowd roared.

We issued a challenge to the Party, the following day to a debate on the question of their base slander that Trotsky is an enemy of the working class. 1200 workers came down to the square. This was one of the biggest mass meetings held on the streets of Duluth in recent times. This turnout decisively proves that the workers and especially the Left wing do want to know the truth about the struggle of Trotsky and the Left Opposition. What they want to know especially is how this relates with the day to day struggle of the working class. And this we were prepared to tell them.

The party bureaucrats had organized a squad of hecklers and even hoped to be able to capture the platform. But we hit every attempt squarely on the nose by exposing their tactics before the workers present. The workers understood the reactionary role the Party plays in organizing to break up meetings, and create disturbances and in mass threatened the individual party hoodlums to be quiet or go home. When a vote was put whether to go on with the meeting or not, a forest of hands voted yes, and a solitary hand voted no. The hoodlums feared to vote lest it would be construed as "participation" in our meeting. From that time on the din lessened. "What is your program?" shouted a YCLer. "That is exactly what we are here to explain, we answered, and proceeded to our program of unity of the working class as a whole on the basis of the united front,

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and of the Communist party on the basis of Marxism-Leninism.

The party was decisively defeated in their attempt at disruption, but we were not able on this night to complete our speaking program. We therefore announced our third and concluding mass meeting for the following night, where about 800 workers assembled and listened attentively to our message. Comrade Avrin spoke on the Washington massacre. Comrade Bloomberg related the history and problems of the Left Opposition. Comrade Cowl gave the united front policy of the League in the organization of the Unemployed. The Party members this time listened without making a peep. Only once Gardner shouted: "Look what a jackass Bloomberg is making of himself!" The speaker snarled right back: "After your performance last night, there is no doubt in anybody's mind who is the jackass!" The crowd laughed their appreciation. A number of new party members and sympathizers asked serious questions after the program and discussed before the crowd until after eleven which is a late hour in this town.

The methods we used in handling the Party members were completely vindicated by the results we obtained. What remains to be done however is some intensive organization work in Duluth with the view of organizing a branch, a youth group and possibly an auxiliary. The Minneapolis comrades who have been organizing the work in Duluth will endeavor to follow up in an effort to establish a firm foundation for the Left Opposition in Duluth.

—CARL COWL.

MINNEAPOLIS.—

Some time ago the Minneapolis "Farmer-Labor" Mayor appointed an unemployment relief committee composed of city politicians, businessmen and a sprinkling of "workers' representatives." Among the latter were our comrade C. R. Hedlund, of course given this "honor" without the least effort to obtain his consent or even to inform him before the appointment became public. The fact that the Farmer-Labor mayor should hit upon the idea of including Hedlund among his appointed committee is in itself an enormous tribute to our comrade. In inverted

form it is a recognition of the fact that his loyal and devoted efforts at the head of numerous rank and file revolts against corrupt union officials, against opportunist Farmer-Labor Party politicians as well as in strike movements, has earned for him the deep respect and confidence of the Minneapolis workers.

The question of comrade Hedlund's acting on such a committee, however, was an entirely different matter and he did not delay in completely dissociating himself from it in conformity with our League policy. The Farmer-Labor Party administration in the first place attained to its position largely due its promises for unemployment relief. After being elected it did exactly the same as its capitalist predecessors, a few miserable charity crumbs, even sponsoring a new innovation in the form of forced labor of the unemployed. The sprinkling of workers' representatives on the committee was designated only to give the working class stamp of approval to their disgusting schemes. Comrade Hedlund in his statement of dissociation from the committee made this clear, declared his complete lack of confidence in such a committee of city politicians and businessmen and demanded serious action for unemployment relief.

Comrade Hedlund stated that there must be immediate governmental relief—a system of unemployment insurance—the six hour workday without reduction of pay for those employed. Comrade Hedlund also pointed to the necessity of large scale credits to be extended to the Soviet Union, together with demands corresponding to the local situation in the city.

This our comrade declared that he would continue to fight for as a member of the Left Opposition but he added the one question which is assuming growing importance with every day passing by. He reiterated the imperative need of a united working class front in the struggle for unemployment relief, including with the revolutionary forces also the trade unions and workers' political organizations. This is the way to put the Farmer-Labor Party politicians to the test before the eyes of those workers who may still retain confidence in them.

Unemployed Activity in Retrospect

Three milestones mark the party's course in its unemployment work since Browder, a little more than a year ago, turned the helm away from the fight for unemployment insurance and set the course for immediate relief, to the exclusion of every revolutionary demand. These are: Browder's pronouncements in the **Daily Worker** of March 6 and 12, 1931, the T U U L - N E C resolution adopted in Pittsburgh on October 3 and 4, 1931, and now the Proposed Draft Program of Fighting Methods and Organization Forms of the Unemployed Councils. These are the theoretical fruits of the course which has led into the opportunist swamp.

It will be remembered that February 25, 1931 marked the close of a year's nation-wide, fighting demonstrations for unemployment insurance under the leadership of the Communist party. February 25 marked a tremendous decline in the influence of the Communist party over the masses, insofar as its unemployment work was concerned. In the March 6th, 1930 demonstrations the party claimed a million and a quarter workers. In the February 25th, 1931 demonstrations it claimed only four hundred thousand. That both figures were grossly exaggerated goes without saying. But that the decline was great is equally true.

The great loss in influence, at a time when the crisis was deepening and the struggle against it should have been rising to greater heights and embracing broader masses of workers, presented the Stalinists with the necessity of making a turn. Marxists would have begun with an examination of their past policies to find in them the cause of their failure. Not so the Stalinists. The cornerstone of their faith is the dogma that the line is correct. To doubt it is heresy.

To Browder was entrusted the ideological ledger of pronouncing a turn, yet absolving the previous line of any suspicion of error. (This he sought to accomplish in a series of two articles in the **Daily Worker** (March 6 and 12, 1931), under the title: On the organization of Relief Work by Unemployed Councils.

The Turn

Browder called for the creation of food collection committees "to get food from the larger capitalists and corporations of the locality, particularly in those institutions where the unemployed were formerly at work." Anticipating failure for this idiotic nonsense, Browder provided: "When the committee is unable to get food from the corporations and large capitalists, they shall then begin to solicit small merchants and petty bourgeoisie generally, calling upon these elements at the same time to join the Unemployed Council in demanding relief from the government treasuries and in demanding unemployment insurance nationally."

Under the leadership of Browder and Co. the movement was plunged into systematic, organized beggary. It became a fish-wife haggling with the charities over pennies. The revolutionary link between the day-to-day, reform demands and the revolutionary goal was cast off like so much unnecessary ballast.

On the key questions of policy: of uniting the employed and unemployed workers, and working out broad organizational forms to include workers of all shades of opinion, regardless of their political affiliations; the success or failure to attain which is the measure of every unemployment program, Browder was silent. He let his readers infer that as with the line, so with its results in these essential questions.

"Two steps backward in order to make one step forward," said a worker, misquoting Lenin. Browder's directives were the first step backward on the road which has led inexorably to the opportunist swamp where the movement is bogged.

The T U U L - N E C Resolution

Contrary to the Stalinists' expectations the pursuit of this policy, the orientation of the movement on relief, the relegation of unemployment insurance to the background, the failure to organize a fighting movement of a shorter working day, for credits to the Soviet Union, did not see the unemployed councils "grow and stabilize themselves as powerful organizations." They continued to be weak and ineffectual instruments embracing only unemployed workers, and only workers sympathetic to Communism. With the exception of Chicago and several other cities they took no deep root in the masses.

By October the failure of the new turn was apparent to all. Time had demonstrated its bankruptcy. Yet the T. U. U. L. - N. E. C. resolution of October 3rd and 4th affirmed the correctness of the line: "The present developments do not require a change in policy of the T U U L."

That this whitewash was meant to apply to the unemployment policy as well as the trade union policy is evident from the text of the resolution. Our readers can find this monument of confusion and distortion in the files of the **Daily Worker**. It was published as a supplement to the issue of November 11, 1931.

The unemployed and "red union" movements are conceived in this document as separate movements. This marks a retreat from the previous policy of the party which confined the unemployed councils to the organizational control of the T U U L. This is a necessary step toward establishing the correct base for a broad movement for unemployment relief.

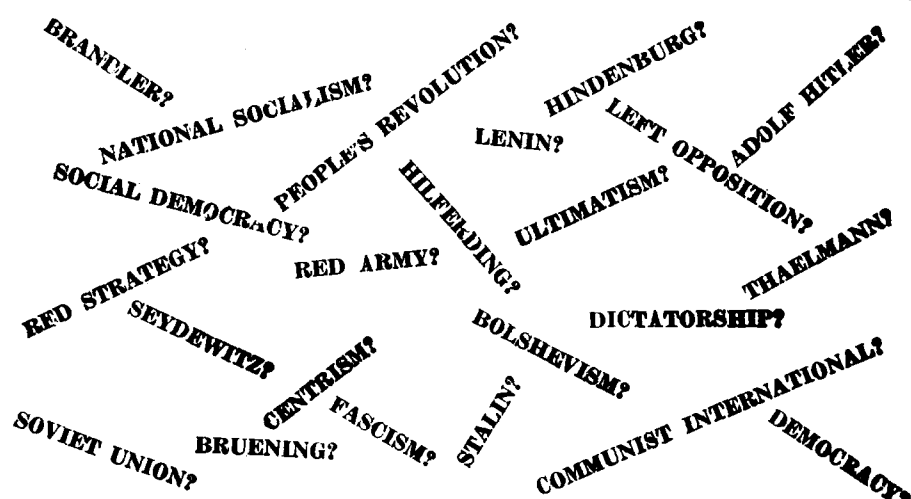
But the party has made the division a formal one. In its resolution it posed the question of uniting the unemployed movement with the "red union" movement. This is fundamentally incorrect. It is not at all a question of uniting the two movements but of building one united movement of employed and unemployed workers. This must be a broad movement, much broader than the as yet weak "red union" movement. It must embrace, in the first place, the organized labor movement. This means the A. F. of L. unions.

In the question of the organizational forms the resolution made no advance over the party's previous narrow conception of the united front as applied to the unemployed councils. The united front projected in the resolution is essentially a united front of unorganized, unemployed workers.

LEON TROTSKY

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WITH THE INTERNATIONAL LEFT OPPOSITION

Greece

The economic crisis has been sharply aggravated in Greece, drawing in its wake the depreciation of the drachma, raising the prices of commodities and consequently the weakening of the consumers' power.

Since most of the public works in Greece are controlled by foreign enterprises and due to the difficulties the Greek government has had in paying its foreign debts, the work has ceased and the workers have been thrown into the army of the unemployed. The consequences of the crisis strike directly or indirectly at the workers, the poor peasant and sections of the petty bourgeoisie as well, who can no longer accept the impossible living conditions which have surpassed all extremes.

Great Social and Revolutionary Struggles Ahead

Already in the months of May and June Greece has seen in the principle centers the upsurge and the rising of masses of workers. Unfortunately they are far from being organized and led by the Communist Party.

During the strike of the letter carriers, the railroad workers of Macedonia, the tobacco workers of Patras and the workers of Cavalla, they have shown that the proletariat is not only disposed not to tolerate the bourgeoisie repression but also that it does not fear to fight to stay the worsening of its situation and obtain better living conditions.

The workers have also shown that if they remained outside of the movement for the counter offensive to the bourgeois offensive, it was because they lacked a powerful vanguard, the forces of the working class being divided and having no guarantee of a unified force for success.

The Greek Bolshevik-Leninists believe it impossible that this movement will not have gigantic repercussions in other branches of industry and agriculture and that this agitation will not become more energetic and more general. They are issuing the slogan of transforming this movement into a general strike of a political character.

The Greek comrades of the Left Opposition are preparing for struggle. But what is the Communist party doing? What are its perspectives, its slogans and its preparations? What is it doing to apply the methods of struggle which correspond to reality?

The organization of Bolshevik-Leninists (Archio-Marxists) consequent upon its Marxist positions, after having examined the organizational situation of the workers has come to the conclusion that the working class needs firm organs of struggle, applying the slogan of the **united front**. This is explained in the following document, an appeal to the Greek workers.

"AN APPEAL TO THE COMMUNISTS AND TO THE WORKING CLASS"

"The workers can neither be mobilized nor can they struggle when their ranks are divided. The need for unified struggle and for unity is making itself more and more felt in the conscience of the workers and becomes more and more imperative. The application of the tactic of the united front is the only guarantee for the success of the mass struggle of the workers. Our organization has advanced the slogan that the united front must embrace all workers' organizations independently of their political concepts, and the largest possible masses. Because of this, we consider that the only organ which will assume the leadership of the struggle must arise from the heart of the working class. With the present trade union which has so few workers and with the manifold political influences which predominate in the organization; the one excluding or restricting the existence of the other in the same union, we cannot guarantee that they will lead the present struggle successfully.

"Only in the small number of unions led by the Archio-Marxists does proletarian democracy exist. Our organization proposes the convocation of a Workers' Congress in every city where representatives elected by the factories and industries will participate. In the branches where no industries exist, representatives of each trade can be elected.

"The unemployed workers, organized into districts, are to delegate their own representatives. This Congress will

MILITANT BUILDERS

The Home Stretch

Do our **Militant Builders** remember that the comrade who stands highest in the staff at the end of the month receives a copy of Max Eastman's biography of comrade Trotsky, *Portrait of a Youth*? Very little time is left. A last spurt, comrades, to go over the top with a bang as they say in the sporting columns of the capitalist press.

NEW BUNDLE ORDERS

For some time now we have been watching the Chicago branch send in new bundle orders. New York occasionally adds one or two. But in Chicago they go at it hammer and tongs. We have an idea that it is principally due to the driving force of that unparalleled literature agent out there that bears the name, Sacharow. Readers of this column will see her name near the top or at the top of every drive or contest we conduct.

A number of new orders are coming in of their own accord, so to speak. This is a good sign. But it indicates that we are not realizing all that can be done in this direction. From which we draw the conclusion: to work. All those in favor get busy and send in new bundle orders; or go around to the stand that already carry the **Militant** and increase their orders.

elect a council of representatives which will undertake the leadership of the workers' struggles, strikes, the fight against unemployment, for political and trade union freedom and will lead the working class in the counter-offensive against the bourgeoisie.

These representative councils of all Greece will have to elect a central organization for the leadership of the whole struggle. The councils are to constitute the highest form of the united front, in which each political fraction of the working class movement will have the right to express its viewpoint on the basis of proletarian democracy and will at the same time be submitted to the discipline and resolutions of the council adopted by the majority.

"The councils are to be renewed at each Congress, which will be called as often as possible.

"To prepare for this Congress, our organization proposes the creation of a committee from the existing trade unions, which will concern itself with the organization of the Congress and other details of the election of representatives. This committee will convocate the Congress on the following platform:

1. "Adaptation of wages to the high cost of living.
2. Abolition of arbitrary dismissals and rehiring of all licensed workers.
3. Unemployment subsidies equal to wages—abolition of armaments.
4. Social insurance at the expense of the bosses and the government.
5. Protection of women and children workers.
6. 7 hour day without wage cuts.
7. "Adoption of working class legislation.
8. Equal salary for workers of both sexes.
9. Abolition of indirect taxation—Increase of tax on capital.
10. Annulment of the public debt.
11. Abolition of debts of refugees and poor peasants.
12. General amnesty—Abolition of special laws of counter-revolutionary suppression.
13. Political liberty (of press, speech, organizations and meetings.)
14. Trade union freedom.
15. Abolition of laws for the use of the army against strikers, against Communists—abolition of resolutions for the dissolution of unions.

No organization which considers itself proletarian can refuse to collaborate on this platform.

These problems are faced by the workers: they realize the necessity of fighting for their solution because they stand at the basis of their existence; they are questions which preoccupy them independently of their political opinions.

These councils, higher than parties, higher than factions, than dissenting groups and groupings, will be capable of uniting masses of workers for common action.

"Comrades and fellow-workers: Each day the situation grows more and more serious. Life is growing in-

tolerable for us. Every day we are plunged deeper into poverty.

"The bourgeois causes and will continue to cause all the weight of the crisis to fall upon us; the needs of the struggle demand the creation of a united front of city and farm workers having as its organ the council of delegates elected by the Congress.

"In loyalty to its principles and obligations, the Bolshevik-Leninist organization will work on this basis with all its powers for the realization of a workers' united front and for the success of the Congress which will elect the council of delegates. Long live the workers' united front!

"For the expulsion of the bourgeois offensive!

"For political and trade union rights! "For the struggle against dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and for the installation of the proletarian dictatorship!"

The Greek Opposition is advancing the slogan of workers' and peasants' Councils, while silence and inertia prevail in the C. P. which continues to practice its tactic of disintegration. Our comrades have been working for the establishment of a committee of temporary councils and are moving toward this goal through the trade unions.

This temporary committee of councils on June 22 called an enlarged meeting at which 1700 workers participated; they voted for its resolution to undertake action for general amnesty, etc.

It was decided to maintain the temporary committee, which stands under the leadership of the Left Oppositionists.

Belgium

The splendid miners' strike is continuing. The reformist leaders are continuing their maneuvers to destroy it. Our comrades, particularly in the Charleroi region, continue to lead the struggle in the front line. Five comrades, among them Lessol, are still imprisoned at Mons. Nevertheless, **La Voix Communiste**, the Opposition's paper, now appears every week and sells five thousand copies, in spite of the police persecutions.

The influence of our comrades is growing. The workers place more and more confidence in them and in the leadership they give in the struggle. The infamous slanders of the Stalinists are shattered in the face of this reality, on which every proletarian in Belgium can lay his hands. Immediately below is the latest bulletin on the situation, which appeared August 12 in **La Voix Communiste**:

Wednesday, August 12—Since a considerable section of the Limbourg miners, who have regathered their forces and gone back into the struggle side by side with the miners from the other basins, has gone out on strike again, the strike has become general throughout the country. The new important development of the week is the fact that the leaders of the Belgian Labor Party, of the Trade Union Commission and of the Trade Union Federation have openly pronounced themselves against the general strike and also against expressing

solidarity with the miners.

This threat of a general strike, which the bosses and government dread, has been dispelled for the moment. Consequently the ministry has been able to reply to the journalists that it considers the convocation of the mixed commission useless; in addition, the coal bosses failed to reply to the summons.

The bosses' attitude is significant: they have at their disposal the police, militia, the army, the tribunals—to defeat the strikers; and in addition, the leaders of the Belgian Labor Party and the syndicalists to keep the workers of other industries from solidarity with the miners, they count in this way, on putting an end to the miners' resistance.

But the miners are firm, in spite of the difficult conditions under which they are struggling; they are alone against the bloc of bosses, the government and the reformist leaders, united in the common will not to let the miner carry off the victory; but the miners are resolved to continue the strike, which they do not regard as useless and aimless, because they want to prove their determination to end the regime of famine which was imposed on them before strike.

Harder than ever must the miners expend all their efforts, in order to spread their movement to other industries, despite the trade union leaders.

This is the condition that must be realized to win a speedy and decisive victory over the bosses and government which, terrified by the general strike, retreated; but they are only awaiting the miners' defeat to begin their attacks against the whole mass of workers once more.

Spain

Not only was the Azana government not ignorant of the plans for a military coup d'Etat but underhandedly tolerated them. The abortive "revolution" of the Spanish bourgeoisie really is supported by the landlords and the cadres of the old regime; it is massacring and imprisoning the workers. The reaction of the popular masses to the hated militarists has been growing powerfully. It has even reached their accomplices in the Azana government.

At Barcelona our comrades of the Opposition immediately issued a leaflet which they distributed in thousands of copies, and held very successful open air meetings. As soon as the authorities got word of this comrades Fersen and Robles were arrested.

Our comrades' leaflet declares: "The government has made use of the rebels (Monarchists) as agents of repression against the proletariat, strengthening the former and weakening the latter. Faithful to its conduct, the government, which is not in the least embarrassed by legal considerations when it is a question of imprisoning and deporting workers, involves the law to leave the generals unpunished. But the working class will not allow this, and, forming its united front, will demand the firing squad for the generals and the arming of the people to struggle against reaction."

The New York Marine Workers in Revolt Against the Stalinist Bureaucrats

The revolt against the Stalinist bureaucracy and their wrong policies is throwing up layer after layer of Communist workers who no longer intend to keep silent while the party and the industrial unions flounder in opportunism and adventurism. The following statement issued by J. Johannessen, member of the National Bureau of the M. W. I. U., shows how deep the fight against the corrupt Stalinist regime has penetrated. In all sections of the party and its auxiliary organizations these struggles against the opportunist policies and bureaucratic methods are springing up. Many of these struggles are in the beginning process.

Unless these comrades are able to trace these surface sores to the cause, the Communist movement and the Marxian wing will not gain by the first steps against the Stalinist revisionist. An increased number of these workers are tracing these errors to the source and are moving toward the Left Opposition, realizing that the policy of the Bolshevik-Leninist faction is the only policy that has gone to the root of the matter and stands on the Marxian principles.

Entirely too many of these Communist workers drop by the wayside. Some take a back seat in the party and keep silent, others drop out in disgust, others who have not assimilated the fundamentals of Marxism move either to the camp of the socialists or the syndicalists.

The methods of Stalinism in the Industrial Unions play in the hands of the Syndicalist, while their general political strategy has rearmend the Social-Democrats.

For the past period the policies and action of the Stalinist in the Marine Workers have played into the hands of the syndicalists. Many of the most active syndicalists on the waterfront are former members of the M. W. I. U. who left or were driven out by the Stalinist policies which the workers have confused with Communism, with Marxism.

The main danger that the present struggle against the Stalinists in the Marine Workers Industrial Union must guard against is the relapse into the camp of syndicalism. That is not the solution to Stalinism. The policies of the Left Opposition, the Marxian policy, is the only remedy.

FELLOW SEAMEN:

The ship owners shifted the burden of the present crisis on to the shoulders of

the marine workers. Wages of the seamen have been cut down gradually to as low as thirty dollars per month for A. B.'s. The two-watch system has been reestablished on many ships. Crews have been cut about thirty percent. Work-days are the order of the day. Longshoremen and all other categories of marine have received similar treatment. Complete lay-offs and part-time work is wide spread in the industry. In New York harbor alone there are twenty thousand seamen "on the beach".

What has our union the M. W. I. U., done to fight these attacks of the bosses on our standard of living? Has the union ever made any serious efforts to give honest efficient leadership to the marine workers? The answer must be no. It has not. Therefore we must examine the history of the American marine industry of the last three years and also the history of the union. Thus we will be able to find the reason why the union failed to carry its self-appointed task of leading the marine workers in struggle.

The union was launched in April 1930 at a time when shipping was already on a great decline. Great enthusiasm prevailed among the seamen and especially among the delegates attending the convention. The convention, attended by bona fide rank and file delegates from ships and docks, through the steam roller methods employed, killed the union at its birth. The steam roller methods was used to foist upon the marine workers the bureaucratic regime of Mink and Co., who, through various grand stand plays, constantly covered up their political bankruptcy. No real program of work was laid down but the union launched out on an adventurous policy led by adventurers.

In 1930 the union had a membership of 5,000, today there is less than 400 nationally. Practically all those that there were ever active were driven out or expelled, for the simple reason that they opposed the putschist tactics of Mink and Co. Philadelphia, Houston, New Orleans and Boston speak for themselves. Several times the union came dangerously near the point of playing the role of strike-breakers (Boston longshoremen's strike, Grace line) due to the utter misunderstanding of the united front tactic and the inexperience of the leadership plus their irresponsibility. No attempt what ever was made to fight the wage cuts of the seamen. Instead of or-

ganizing on board the ships, propaganda was carried on only on South Street, on shore. There are not ten functioning ships' delegates to-day. The struggle of the unemployed seamen has been waged solely for the purpose of making political capital in the form of headlines for the party but no organizational nor beneficial results have been gained for the marine workers. Prior to the hunger march, the seamen were rallied around demands peculiar to the industry. They were not allowed to present them in Washington. They were solely used for defense corps and for nothing else, the same as at other demonstrations.

International struggles have not been utilized to get the American seamen into motion. The German seamen's strike was sabotaged by Mink and Co. He tactical strife within the I. S. H. The struggle against imperialist war was taken up by staging burlesque demonstrations instead of organizing on the job.

The inner life of the union is at the lowest level possible. No trade union democracy, the right of discussion and constructive criticism is abolished, secretaries are removed against the wishes of the membership, no convention has been called although it is a year and half over-due.

The present national bureau elected itself. When the flames of revolt grew I was removed to Duluth and a campaign was launched against all those who tried to lead the union toward a course in accordance with the most fundamental principles of the class struggle. The national committee of the T. U. U. L. and the party press was bombarded by us with articles and protests. Mink and Co. grew desperate and for the purpose of establishing an adventurous and opportunist campaign ostensibly for immediate relief of the unemployed, nationalistic unemployed councils were launched claiming preposterously that every nationality has different demands. They did not organize as yet a Jim-Crow local in New York as was done when a Jim-Crow local was organized in Galveston—but that is only being inconsistent. Then when they set the whole-sale expulsions—to counteract the resentment of the class conscious rank and file—a raid was staged on the Seamen's Institute. The man that was supposed to have baggage there actually had none. One man was shot, others wounded and what did it get the seamen? Nothing. To force the Institute to come across we must launch

Some Experiences of the Illinois Miner's Struggle and the Policy of the Communists

In the present crucial battle of the Illinois miners one question stands out of decisive importance for the future of the American labor movement. It is the question of life or death to the last solidly organized section of the miners union in the soft coal territory. But it is so especially by virtue of the fact that we are here concerned with a basic industry, once well organized, and a union, once attaining to a high degree of militancy, composed entirely of basic proletarians as separate and distinct from the skilled strata of which most of the at present remaining unions are composed. In view of the enormous retreats made by the existing trade unions on every field, both in regard to loss of wages and working conditions as well as in loss of organized strength, this Illinois miners battle becomes decisive for the future.

It becomes decisive in more respects than one; but particularly by what is already clearly indicated, that a victory in this strike must necessarily open up a new chapter laying the basis for an entirely new method and practice of unionism. It must be a final and complete separation from corrupt, treacherous practices of the past and from corrupt officialdom.

A mere victory on the wage proposition with union conditions and leadership remaining as before would at best be only a short truce to be utilized for preparation of new betrayals.

Union Future Hangs in Balance

This strike has gone beyond the bounds of a mere ordinary shut down. There are virtual armies arrayed with mass picketing on a scale never witnessed before. There is additional importance in the miners being the very spearhead of workers resistance against the wage cut onslaughts, and in the double objective of their fight—to also decisively defeat the wreckers from within. It is a struggle of gigantic proportions.

The future of the Illinois miners union now hangs in the balance. To estimate its prospect it will be well to note some of the experience of the past, and particularly the all important question of policy pursued by the revolutionists. In this respect a comparison of the views advanced by the Left Opposition and the policy and practice of the official Communist party will prove illuminating.

The Illinois miners do not stand alone. There are sections in rebellion against the U. M. W. of A. administration in every field, some having already definitely split away. The question of future unity of these sections, as a temporary measure, at least a united front on minimum objectives, is still a crucial one. It was therefore completely in accord with the fundamental principles of working class interest and proceeding from a basis of revolutionary policy that we, at the time of the Pennsylvania-Ohio miners strike of last year urged a united front of these various sections to fight for their common immediate objective. The Pennsylvania-Ohio miners struck under the banner of the party controlled National Miners Union. The West Virginia miners were

simultaneously on strike under the banner of their independent union, and the Illinois miners were in revolt against the U. M. W. of A. officials. Our united front proposal to be organized through a conference of these sections was rejected by the official party. Now such a step is becoming an ever more pressing duty.

We can go back further into the history of developments. At the time of the Illinois miners break with the Lewis administration, cleverly utilized by the Fishwick-Walker-Hovatt combination, we warned against any false illusions toward this combination but at the same time emphasizing the need of the Left wing continuing the struggle within this mass movement. The official party pursued the opposite course and isolated its forces from the movement and from the union.

There was a repetition in the revolt following shortly after headed by the Edmonson forces. Once again a mass movement, though practically leaderless, a new opportunity. The course pursued by the Left Oppositionists in participating in that movement and to point toward the right direction for the future is now bearing its fruits. The Left Opposition Communists has now all the prospects for, and is taking shape as a force in reality, fighting for a correct direction to the present gigantic movement. The official party policy of boycott of mass revolts not entirely controlled by it has led it to its present fatal isolation from the Illinois miners.

This can be repaired still; but only by the official party leadership rectifying its mistakes and changing its attitude and policy. The course, which it must adopt has been very clearly indicated by the position we have taken. The correctness of this position has been fully vindicated by the event. The logic of the party position adds only one additional sad commentary further reinforcing this lesson.

The present Illinois miners struggle must start a new chapter in the history of their organization. Only a complete break with the past, with the corrupt union bureaucracy, can secure the victory they have set out to win against the operators, against the armed state forces and against the official traitors. The Left Opposition is developing a force in this struggle capable of constantly more serious intervention, and it will show the way.

—A. S.

A Letter From China

We have received the following brief message from our Chinese comrades: Shanghai, August 2, 1932—

Several of our comrades (all Lenin students returned from Moscow) have been missing for eleven days. One of them is the chairman of the Organization Committee of the Chinese Left Opposed at Jesfield Park (west of Shanghai). We lost trace of them immediately after our last secret meeting. We believe that they have been captured by the "Blue Coat Society".

The Blue Coat Society is a new secret party. Its full name is the Blue Coat Society of the Kuo Min Tang of China. It is of about the same type as the Nazis in Germany. Its Hitler is Chiang Kai-Shek. Its basic nucleus consists of students recently returned from the Moscow Sun-Yat-Sen University, renegades from the party and students of the Wampoa Military Academy faithful to the Chinese Hitler. One of its mediums of activity is assassination. All the intellectuals of General Chiang's troop and many notorious politicians are flocking to this group. In short, it is the rising Fascist movement of China. . . .

The **History of the Russian Revolution** is being published in Chinese. . . . By the end of August or September, we hope to reestablish our legal Shanghai weekly. . . .

Fraternally yours,
CH.

Pioneer Publishers Notes

LITERATURE SALES

A new wave of interest in the publications of the League is sweeping over us. Our campaign on the German situation, on the Anti-War Congress, on the expulsion of comrade Pappas, and now on the frame-up charge of murder by the Stalinists has aroused new interest in our point of view. Orders are coming in. Our stocks are dropping. Some numbers are out. **Germany—the Key** is completely out of print. The **Revolution in Spain** is pretty nearly out. There are only some twenty copies of the **Real Situation in Russia** left. And so it goes. Now is the time to order.

TROTSKY'S COMPLETE WRITINGS

A number of sympathizers have sent in orders for bound volumes of Trotsky's "complete writings". We did not announce the **Bound Volumes** as his complete writings. We could not. It is our understanding that comrade Trotsky's complete writings which have not yet been collected would fill some sixty or seventy volumes. Some day we will bring them out in a uniform edition.

In the meantime we continue to advertise the **Bound Volumes** as a collection of nine of his recent writings; all of them dealing with the current struggle in the Communist movement in relation to the problems of the international proletarian revolution. And may we remind our readers once more that these **Bound Volumes** contain four pamphlets that are out of print and unobtainable otherwise; and that the **Bound Volumes** are going—?

—J. JOHANNESSEN.

Leading Functionary Exposes Stalinism in Greece

Wherever the Left Opposition raises its head, the Stalinist bureaucracy puts its machinery of slander, calumny and falsehood in motion against it. The stronger the Opposition movement, the fiercer the bureaucratic methods of the Centrists against them. As the readers of *The Militant* already know, the Greek Bolshevik-Leninists (Archio-Marxists) are the strongest Communist organization of that country.

Counting a few thousand members in every part of Greece, organized firmly under the tested Bolshevik plan (legal and illegal), enjoying a broad and powerful influence in the trade unions and in the mass organizations of the Greek proletariat, the Archio-Marxists have been a particularly uncomfortable thorn in the side of Stalinism. All the despicable methods of the international bureaucracy have been applied against them and still they continue to grow and take root.

The methods of open violence and physical destruction—these are the most recent methods of the Centrists against the Left Opposition. They are the methods of utter despair, they indicate the complete state of bankruptcy of the Stalinists. Of late, the successes achieved by the American Left Opposition (anti-war congress, Germany, etc.) have called forth especially sharp manifestations of those self-same flowers of Centrism bankruptcy and despair. The American Stalinists incite to pogroms against the Left Opposition, provoke police action against it—for the same reasons as the Greek Stalinists, because they are alarmed at the growth of its influence and sympathy in the ranks of the Communist workers.

Below we publish an account of the Stalinist methods of fighting the Left Opposition by a former member of the Greek C. P., who has since joined the Archio-Marxists. It is interesting and instructive because it paints a picture of Stalinist corruption that is universally applicable. The experience of comrade Bambakas, the author of this account, is undoubtedly the experience of numerous Communist militants all over the International and in the American party as well. Sooner or later, they too will draw their conclusions—just as this comrade did. The regime of Stalinist impotence, the regime of degenerated, disorganizing Centrism, the regime of physical violence against the Bolshevik-Leninists is doomed in advance. The organizers of defeat have seen their best days. The victory of the international Leninist Opposition is assured by history, nothing can prevent it.

THE STATEMENT OF COMRADE BAMBAKAS

What forced me to realize the dishonesty and corruption of those who do not follow the Communist line but rather the tactics of Stalin was the policy of the party toward the Archio-Marxists. In the policy of the party any means

Statement of Comrade J. Bambakas

whatever is justified provided it leads to the extermination of the Opposition.

In 1928, when for the first time the Archio-Marxists appeared in our district, the party decided to use methods of sabotage to prevent them from getting employment so that they would be compelled to leave the city. While, on the one hand, we were telling workers the Archio-Marxists were stool-pigeons, on the other hand, we told the bosses the Archio-Marxists were Anarchists and disrupters.

When it was reported to the district committee that these means of sabotage were not sufficient, that in spite of it the Archio-Marxists were making progress, the party decided to turn to murderous attacks. Arming them with knives and iron bars the party organized groups and sent them out on their attacks. These attacks still continue.

In the district of Gyffica, they attacked a shoe worker who was later brought to the hospital unconscious. While the leaders were celebrating their "heroic" victory, this comrade refused to reveal the murderers to anyone although he knew them.

ADMIT CONSTANT ATTACKS ON LEFT OPPOSITION

Another instance: at Suguglou another Archio-Marxist was attacked at the time he was speaking to a meeting of workers. Also, two Archio-Marxists were beaten up in Chatica. Comrade Str—, fanatized by the leadership, fired a gun at a carpenter, member of the Opposition, but luckily the gun jammed. This comrade Str—, who later realized the corruption of the party bureaucrats, confessed this to the Archio-Marxists and to me.

Further: we attacked comrade Alfudi, a tobacco worker, at the time he was leaving his work, and beat him up badly. Comrade Alfudi is a well known member of the Y. C. L., with a splendid revolutionary record. He is now serving a two year term in the medieval dungeon of Itzedin and will be exiled for one year after the jail term is ended. This comrade was refused admittance to the jail collectives—(comrades in jails organize collectives which are supported by the I. L. D.—Ed.) because he was a member of the Archio-Marxists since 1928.

All the Archio-Marxists were under a continual vicious attack from our part, and had they not taken protective measures, there would have resulted many more victims. This was veiled, as you know, in the district committee.

These are not accidents nor isolated cases, but a part of the international policy of the Stalinist bureaucrats. When Stalin assassinates Blumkin and Zin-zadze and acquits Ramsin & Co., it is not at all surprising that the Greek Stalinists do not hesitate to soak their hands in the blood of two militant com-

rades, Lada and Georgopadatos.—(The above comrades were murdered on the way home from a meeting by a group of Stalinists who were hidden in a hallway.—Ed.)

Time and again the party sycophants accused the Archio-Marxists of being stool pigeons. Today, when hundreds of facts speak for themselves and the workers see in the face of the Archio-Marxists the true Bolsheviks, the party bureaucrats are forced to shift these accusations to only a few of the Archio-Marxist leaders. This is a miserable disgrace to the party bureaucrats, for not a single fact can prove the above accusations against the Left Opposition, while on the contrary a pile of facts prove that there are many stool-pigeons within the Communist party. Because of the corrupt conditions within the party, it is difficult to discover and expose them.

ARCHIO MARXIST EXCLUDED FROM PRISON-COLLECTIVES

I categorically declare I was not betrayed by Archio-Marxists, but by members of the district committee Y. C. L., Stambulis and Kokino. The former in a semi-covert form confessed to me when I was released from jail. The latter was caught in our trap which we had set for him and was proven to be a stool-pigeon.

Any betrayal that leaks out of the party is ascribed to the Archio-Marxists. The party bureaucrats poison the minds of the members against the Archio-Marxists to such an extent that even in their dreams they see the Archio-Marxists conspiring with the police. For this we can not blame the party members.

The attitude of the party against the Archio-Marxists in jail is absolutely shameful and disgusting. Comrades who courageously faced the courts and raised high the banner of Communism before the capitalist judges, for which they were sentenced to long prison terms, are not permitted to enter the jail collectives in spite of the decisions of the central committee of the I. L. D.—(brought about by the mass-pressure of party workers) not to exclude them.

PARTY MEMBERS RESENT EX- CLUSION OF ARCHIO-MARXISTS

Why is this happening? The corruption is so great that the bureaucrats fear the whip of criticism from the Opposition. This attitude of the party against the Archio-Marxists is strongly condemned by every honest, thinking party member. Comrade Floros, who was jailed with five other Archio-Marxists but later released while his comrades still had to serve two year jail sentences and one year exile, speaks with great enthusiasm about the Archio-Marxists.

"The brave heroic attitude of Archio-Marxists before the courts and their comradely attitude in jail, left a profound impression on me," he said. And still the five Archio-Marxists are refused admittance in jail-collectives of Komotini.

In the Kavalla jail we instigated some soldiers, who were sympathizers of the movement, to attack the Archio-Marxists

in their cells. This dirty tactic must be fully stigmatized and condemned. How contemptible were the words spoken to the soldiers when the latter were informed that the Archio-Marxists were not jailed for revolutionary activities but were deliberately sent by the police in order to spy on the prisoners.

When the party and Y. C. L. members will fraternize with the Archio-Marxists, when they will break down the barriers that have been mechanically built up by the adventurist and corrupt leaders of the party then, and only then will they realize that the Archio-Marxists are the genuine and militant revolutionists, and they will understand the true meaning of the party's policy towards the Bolshevik-Leninists.

PARTY MUST CHANGE TACTICS

Under the present crisis great sections of the exploited masses are turning to the left, toward Communism. Will the party be able, even if its influence is strengthened, to utilize these conditions for the final victory? The strength of the party is measured not only by its influence but primarily from its internal ideological base and its organizational ability. No victory can be expected from an organization whose foundations are decayed and rotten. History has proven this and especially in the history of the Greek movement.

—J. BAMBAKAS.

Sec'y of Section Committee
of Dramas, Sec'y of Y. C. L.
of Kaballas, Member of Dist.
Committee of Eastern
Macedonia and Western Thrace.

Unemployed Activity in Retrospect

(Continued from page 2)

In one respect the resolution marked an advance over Browder's directives. The resolution restored the fight for relief to a more nearly correct basis. It placed on the agenda again the fight for unemployment insurance. It made it the central slogan. It reaffirmed the seven hour day without motivating the demand by any reason or figures. And it added at the end of its program, the demand for "the development of trade relations with the Soviet Union, in order that the idle factories may work, fill the constantly growing demands of the successful construction of the workers' government and its Five Year Plan."

Around the slogans of the resolution the National Hunger March to Washington was organized. With this march and its repercussions the party resurrected the fight for unemployment insurance. In this sense the resolution marked a limping, half-step forward.

The Draft Program

With the termination of the Hunger March of last December the fight for unemployment insurance was again relegated to the background. And the fight for "more not less relief" as one placard in a demonstration announced, was more oriented on the road which led to the opportunist swamp.

Party Voices on the Frame-Up

Condemn Disgraceful Action of Stalinist Leaders

We have received a number of letters from party members and sympathizers, expressing their indignation and resentment against the latest Stalinist frame-up against the Left Opposition. Voices are coming up from the ranks, speaking out clearly, denouncing the shameful, provocative actions of the party bureaucrats. We have no doubt that these voices will grow even more powerful in the future. The impotence of Centrism is revealing itself more and more every day. The eyes of the Communist rank and file are being opened. Below we give excerpts from a few of the letters we have received:

"August 27, 1932

"The moment I read the first article on the question in the *Daily Worker*, I was indignant like hell. I understand from the very beginning that some 'party hooligans' busted up your meeting. This action of the party will not add an iota of prestige to its name, but instead will antagonize workers towards the movement. . . .

"I have spoken to some of the comrades in my shop and they also condemn the party for its provocative tactics. . . .

"I also want to state that nobody in the shop believes the statements in the *Daily Worker* and those that are in the movement or are acquainted with it know very well that the party is to blame more

than anybody else. . . .
"I have read the leaflet (The leaflet issued by the N. C. of the Communist League with regard to the frame-up—Ed.) and I fully agree with what is written there. . . .

"I sincerely hope that ideas of your organization will grow in the hearts and minds of all the workers. . . ."

—PARTY MEMBER.

* * * * *

"August 25, 1932.

"The accounts given in the *Daily Worker* of August 23 and 24 of what took place on Avenue A and 7th Street at your meeting last Saturday night and the little hints and insinuations that go with it are outrageous. The editors of the *Daily Worker* seem to be intent on whipping up a lynch spirit against the comrades of the Left Opposition. . . .

"No matter what disagreements we may have with the Opposition, such tactics are impermissible. I didn't believe that Stalinism is so corrupt. I never really grasped what you meant by Stalinism before. Such disgraceful methods could never issue forth from a healthy Communist movement. . . .

"The method employed by the *Daily Worker* shows that there is something wrong that goes deeper into the policy of the party. It is setting a good many of us thinking. . . .

"As Communists we cannot allow this shameful action to go on unchallenged."

Comradely yours,
—A. Y. C. L. R.

* * * * *

"August 27, 1932

"The accusations of the party against the Left Opposition are a plain frame-up. Nobody in the movement can take them seriously. . . .

"You must come before the Left wing workers and explain to them what happened and what the action of the party leaders means. They will listen to you and I am sure will support you."

—NEEDLE TRADES WORKER.

"August 28, 1932

"I wish to let you know that many of us, members of the I. L. D. and of the F. S. U. protest against the attitude of the *Daily Worker* and the C. P. in connection with your meeting on August 20 and the deaths of Semen and Krasnik. . . .

"The leadership of the party is capitalizing the tragic deaths of these two workers to arouse hostile sentiment against your Opposition. The workers in the movement we are sure will disapprove of this, just as they have in general disapproved of the party's methods of breaking up open air meetings of other organizations. . . .
"A leadership is bankrupt which has to resort to such methods."

—MEMBER OF THE I. L. D.

WORLD UNEMPLOYMENT AND THE FIVE YEAR PLAN is out of print and is available only in the BOUND VOLUMES of comrade TROTSKY'S pamphlets.

Bourgeoisie, Petty Bourgeoisie and Proletariat - - - By LEON TROTSKY

(Continued from page 1)

THE DECLINE OF THE DEMOCRATIC FORMS

But precisely with the war there begins the distinct decline of capitalism and above all, of its democratic form of domination. It is now no longer a matter of new reforms and aims, but of cutting down and abolishing the old ones. Therewith the bourgeoisie comes into conflict not only with the institutions of proletarian democracy (trade unions and political parties) but also with parliamentary democracy, within the framework of which arose the labor organizations. Therefore, the campaign against "Marxism" on the one hand and against democratic parliamentarism, on the other.

But just as the summits of the liberal bourgeoisie in its time were unable, by their own force alone, to get rid of feudalism, monarchy and the church, so the magnates of finance capital are unable, by their force alone, to cope with the proletariat. They need the support of the petty bourgeoisie. For this purpose, it must be whipped up, put on its feet, mobilized, armed. But this method has its dangers. While it makes use of Fascism, the bourgeoisie nevertheless fears it. Pilsudski was forced, in May 1926, to save bourgeois society by a coup d'Etat directed against the traditional parties of the Polish bourgeoisie. The matter went so far that the official leader of the Polish Communist Party, Warski, who came over from Rosa Luxemburg not to Lenin, but to Stalin, took the coup d'Etat of Pilsudski to be the road of the "revolutionary democratic dictatorship" and called upon the workers to support Pilsudski.

At the session of the Polish Commission of the Executive Committee of the C. I. on July 2, 1926, the author of these lines said on the subject of the events in Poland:

A FEW LESSONS OF THE PILSUDSKI "COUP"

"Taken as a whole, the Pilsudski overthrow is the petty bourgeois, 'plebeian' manner of solving the burning problems of bourgeois society in its state of decomposition and decline. We have here already a direct resemblance to Italian Fascism.

"These two currents indubitably possess common features: they recruit their shock troops first of all from the petty bourgeoisie; Pilsudski as well as Mussolini worked with extra-parliamentary means, with open violence, with the methods of civil war; both were concerned, not with the destruction, but with the preservation of bourgeois society. While they raised the petty bourgeoisie on its feet, they openly aligned themselves after the seizure of power, with the big bourgeoisie. Involuntarily, an historical generalization props up here, recalling the evaluation given by Marx of Jacobinism as the plebeian method of settling accounts with the feudal enemies of the bourgeoisie. . . .

Jacobinism, Social Democracy and Fascism - - The Political Programs of the Petty Bourgeoisie

That was in the period of the rise of the bourgeoisie. Now we must say, in the period of the decline of bourgeois society, the bourgeoisie again needs the "plebeian" method of resolving its no longer progressive, but entirely reactionary tasks. In this sense, *Fascism is a caricature of Jacobinism*.

"The bourgeoisie is incapable of maintaining itself in power by the means and methods of the parliamentary state created by itself, it needs Fascism as a weapon of self-defense, at least in critical instances. Nevertheless, the bourgeoisie does not like the 'plebeian' method of resolving its tasks. It was always hostile to Jacobinism, which cleared the road for the development of bourgeois society with its blood. The Fascists are immeasurably closer to the decadent bourgeoisie than the Jacobins were to the rising bourgeoisie. Nevertheless, the sober bourgeoisie does not look very favorably even upon the Fascist mode of resolving its tasks, for the concussions, although they are brought forth in the interests of bourgeois society, are linked up with dangers to it. Therefore, the opposition between Fascism and the bourgeois parties.

"The big bourgeoisie likes Fascism as little as a man with aching molars likes to have his teeth pulled. The sober circles of bourgeois society have followed with misgivings the work of the dentist Pilsudski, but in the last analysis they have become reconciled to the inevitable, though with threats, with horse-deals and all sorts of trading. Thus the petty bourgeoisie's idol of yesterday becomes transformed into the gendarme of capital."

To this attempt at marking out the historical place of Fascism as the political reliever of the social democracy, there was counterposed the theory of social Fascism. At first it could appear as a pretentious, blustering but harmless stupidity. Subsequent events have showed what a pernicious influence the Stalinist theory actually exercised on the entire development of the Communist International.*

* * * * *

IS THE ALLIANCE BETWEEN THE BIG AND THE PETTY BOURGEOISIE INDISSOLUBLE?

Does it follow from the historical rôle of Jacobinism, of democracy and of Fascism that the petty bourgeoisie is condemned to remain a tool in the hands of capital to the end of its days? If things were so, then the dictatorship of the proletariat would be impossible in a number of countries in which the petty bourgeoisie constitutes the majority of the nation

and more than that, it would be rendered extremely difficult in other countries in which the petty bourgeoisie represents an important minority. Fortunately, things are not so. The experience of the Paris Commune first showed, at least within the limits of one city, just as the experience of the October revolution has showed after it on a much larger scale and over an incomparably longer period, that the alliance of the petty bourgeoisie and the big bourgeoisie is not indissoluble. Since the petty bourgeoisie is incapable of an independent policy (that is also why the petty bourgeois "democratic dictatorship" is unrealizable) no other choice is left for it than that between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

In the epoch of the rise, the growth and the bloom of capitalism the petty bourgeoisie, despite acute outbreaks of discontent, generally marched obediently in the capitalist harness. Nor could it do anything else. But under the conditions of capitalist disintegration and of the impasse in the economic situation, the petty bourgeoisie tends, seeks, attempts to tear itself loose from the fetters of the old masters and rulers of society. It is quite capable of linking up its fate with that of the proletariat. For that, only one thing is needed: the petty bourgeoisie must acquire faith in the ability of the proletariat to lead society onto a new road. The proletariat can inspire this faith only by its strength, by the firmness of its actions, by a skillful offensive against the enemy, by the success of its revolutionary policy.

But, woe if the revolutionary party does not measure up to the height of the situation! The daily struggle of the proletariat sharpens the instability of bourgeois society. The strikes and the political disturbances aggravate the economic situation of the country. The petty bourgeoisie could reconcile itself temporarily to the growing privations, if it arrived by experience to the conviction that the proletariat is in a position to lead it onto a new road. But if the revolutionary party, in spite of a class struggle becoming incessantly more accentuated, proves time and again to be incapable of uniting the working class about it, if it vacillates, becomes confused, contradicts itself, then the petty bourgeoisie loses patience and begins to look upon the revolutionary workers as those responsible for its own misery. All the bourgeois parties, including the social democracy, turn its thoughts in this very direction. When the social crisis takes on an intolerable acuteness, a particular party appears on the scene with the direct aim of agitating the petty bourgeoisie to

a white heat and of directing its hatred and its despair against the proletariat. In Germany, this historical function is fulfilled by National-Socialism, a broad current whose ideology is composed of all the putrid vapors of disintegrating bourgeois society.

THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE GROWTH OF FASCISM

The principal political responsibility for the growth of Fascism rests, of course, on the shoulders of the social democracy. Ever since the imperialist war, the labors of this party have been reduced to uprooting from the consciousness of the proletariat the idea of independent politics, to implanting within it the belief in the eternity of capitalism and to forcing it to its knees time and again before the decadent bourgeoisie. The petty bourgeoisie can only follow the worker when it sees in him the new master. The social democracy will not follow a lackey. The politics of reform teaches the worker to be a lackey. The petty bourgeoisie deprive the proletariat of the possibility of leading the plebeian masses of the petty bourgeoisie and thereby alone convert the latter into cannon fodder for Fascism.

Politically, however, the question is not settled for us with the responsibility of the social democracy. Ever since the beginning of the war we have denounced this party as the agency of the imperialist bourgeoisie within the ranks of the proletariat. Out of this new orientation of the revolutionary Marxists arose the Third International. Its task consisted in uniting the proletariat under the banner of the revolution and thereby to secure for it the directing influence over the oppressed masses of the petty bourgeoisie in the towns and on the countryside.

The post-war period, in Germany more than anywhere else, was an epoch of economic impasse and of civil war. The international conditions as well as the domestic ones pushed the country imperiously on the road to socialism. Every step of the social democracy revealed its decadence and its impotence, the reactionary import of its politics, the venality of its leaders. What other conditions are needed for the development of the Communist party? And yet, after the first few years of significant successes, German Communism entered into an era of vacillations, zigzags, alternating turns to opportunism and adventurism. The centrism bureaucracy has systematically weakened the proletarian vanguard and prevented it from bringing the class under its leadership. Therewith, it has robbed the proletariat as a whole of the possibility of drawing under its direction the oppressed masses of the petty bourgeoisie. The Stalinist bureaucracy bears the direct and immediate responsibility for the growth of Fascism before the proletarian vanguard.

PRINKIPO, August 4, 1932. L. TROTSKY.