

WORKERS
OF THE
WORLD.
UNITE

THE MILITANT



Weekly Organ of the Communist League of America [Opposition]

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Von Papen's Elections

Our Appeal for United Front Struggle of the German Workers

BERLIN.—Papen and Schleicher have once more proclaimed elections in accordance with the Weimar system. At first sight, this must arouse wonderment, since our new Bonapartes have made no secret of their contempt for this "new structure"—though they made good use of it in 1919. Why therefore? Because they too realize their own weakness. They also know that "the source of existence of the Papen government lies in the neutralization of the irreconcilable camps" as Trotsky writes in "The Only Road". And all its strivings must be directed towards getting out of this tight-rope walker's position and to find a firm meeting for itself. The development of the conjuncture on the basis of its economic program does not now give it any great hopes in this respect. Insupportable agriculture is rebelling. The foreign political ally has up to now produced only negative results. There remains, then, only the renewed attempt at combinations and maneuvers with the parties, especially the Nazis and the Center. That there have been concrete attempts made in this direction is shown by the visit of Kerl to Hindenburg, the conversations of Papen-Schaeffer, Papen-Bolz, the Nazi retreat in the Prussian parliament, as well as the reflections of the Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung on September 19, for example, on the negotiations of Papen with the Bavarian People's Party:

Reconciliation Proposals

"Is there really no longer any reconciliation, a reconciliation with the understanding that it is a question of political collaboration within the framework of the national tasks which are common to the government and the National Socialist?... Irreconcilable antagonisms of today may become political alliances of expediency tomorrow, the interior hostility between compatriots is nothing final. Perhaps the next few days will again offer opportunities of tying together some threads... Should it not be possible, since precisely in Bavaria there has developed a certain tactical approach between the National Socialists and the Bavarian People's Party, to utilize this practical stimulation to building a bridge?"

Papen-Schleicher hope to carry out this maneuver with all the greater success since they may after all succeed on the basis of their program in the new elections to strengthen the German Nationalists or similar to such an extent that the absolute majority of Center-Nazis is broken.

But should all these attempts nevertheless fail, then new elections offer an excellent measure for demonstrating anew the futility of the Weimar constitution, and for ripening the ground, by means of interminable elections, for changing the constitution, for carrying on a "strategy of exhaustion".

The Papen government can engage in all these hide-and-seek maneuvers so long as there is no serious extra-parliament-

ary mass resistance. The popular referendum slogan of the Social Democratic Party, which aims at crippling any attempt at an extra-parliamentary struggle, and to postpone it, is in this respect nothing but a prop to the Papen government. It also quite corresponds with the pious belief which the S. D. P. puts in the existence of the Papen government and the imminence of a favorable conjuncture.

For the Fighting United Front

It is clear that for a revolutionary worker, the elections have only one party for which to vote: the Communist party. All experiments with non-voting for little grouplets would only help the class enemy. It is certainly just as clear that this election, more than any that preceded it, has only the significance of one demonstration out of many. The central question today is the unfolding of the extra-parliamentary struggle; the premise for it is the establishment of the united front. Consequently, there can be no question for the C. P. G. of setting into motion the election machine in the good old socialist party manner, but of doing everything for the establishment of the united front, that is, to change its tactics fundamentally. Only successes on this front, and not election votes, will represent a real value and checkmate Papen's maneuver. This is the first and most important "electoral" work.

October 1932.

School Term Opens

The International Workers School was able to open the new headquarters on time due to the successful banquet held last Saturday night. Over one hundred dollars was obtained, from a good attendance of a hundred and thirty comrades and sympathizers. This brings the total fund collected on the Three Hundred Dollar Drive up to two hundred dollars. We must obtain the remainder of this fund. This amount has enabled us to obtain the lease, make the necessary alterations on the new hall and buy part of the new equipment. We must have the remainder for chairs and other necessary needs for the school and headquarters.

The School opened its courses Monday, with a few weeks delay of the series of Lectures to be delivered by Cannon on Monday and Shachtman on Wednesday. The study class and lecture are to be held at the same hour, but sufficient funds to obtain folding doors and other needs to have two meetings proceeding at once, are lacking. Just as soon as the funds are raised the series of lectures by Cannon and Shachtman will be held. Registration for these two classes is still open.

Next week we have the following classes:

Monday, October 24, Second Lesson, Genesis of the State.—J. Weber.

Wed., October 26, Second Lesson.—The Dialectic process of Nature—Hugo Oehler.

12th Plenum of E.C.C.I.

The Need of the Hour: a Democratically Convened Congress

We are reliably informed from abroad: The long since due Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International took place in September. As the first point on the order of the day stood a report on the situation in the USSR. Upon the proposal of the Czechs and the Poles, it was decided to have a report on the situation in Germany as the first point. This report was delivered by Thaelmann, whereupon these participating in the session left the hall in protest. The representative of the Communist Party of Poland then went to Stalin, who, as the "leader of the world revolution", did not even condescend to make a single appearance at the Plenum. The Polish comrade explained to him the insufferable situation presented by the fact that at the head of the second strongest party in the Comintern there should be so politically incompetent a comrade as Thaelmann. When it is reported that Stalin shifted the whole matter on to Zinoviev as the one who appointed Thaelmann to lead the German party, the characteristic irresponsibility of this "best disciple of Lenin" will stand out all the more clearly.

Why hasn't there been, to this day, a single report on this Plenum of the E. C. C. I.? Why do not the party members receive an accounting about what was said and done about the vital problems facing the international revolutionary movement today? Damningly characteristic of the present situation in the Comintern is the fact that the first intimation of the fact that the 12th Plenum of the E. C. C. I. had been held was given the American Communists last week in a passing observation made at the end of a cable report to the New York Times by our well-informed Walter Duranty, on the expulsion of Zinoviev, Kamenev and the others.

That the 12th Plenum had been called, was never known. What its agenda was to be, was never known. That it was

in session, was never known until Duranty was permitted to inform the readers of... the Times. The party members (as is customary in these days of Stalinist domination) had no opportunity to discuss the problems which face such a Plenum of the E. C. C. I. They will be given precious little opportunity to discuss them now, after the fact. Without yet knowing the exact nature of the decisions made in Moscow, it is unfortunately safe to say in advance that the party members will be made to swallow the latest revelation of bureaucratic ignorance and impotence.

The Daily Worker informs us now that a bombardment was started at the 12th Plenum, against the Right wing conciliator, Humbert-Droz, for the resolution he presented. We will have occasion to return to this phase of the question. But more important than these by-products of the bureaucratic jugglery which passes for political struggle in the top ranks, is the imperative necessity for a democratically prepared, democratically convened, broadly discussed Seventh Congress of the Comintern, which is now more than two years overdue. The burning need of the moment is not a machine-made Plenum of bureaucrats held in the dark of the moon, and guaranteed in advance to leave no serious trace on the movement, but a genuine Congress, prepared and held as was the custom in Lenin's days, with the fullest opportunities granted the membership, and the expelled Left Opposition, to discuss and participate in it.

Our Russian Revolution Celebration

An entertainment in celebration of the Fifteenth anniversary of the Russian Revolution, and the Fourth Year of the Militant, will be held on Saturday, November 5, at our new headquarters, 126 East 16 Street. We will begin promptly at 8 P. M.

OPEN FORUM

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 28th

8 P. M.

The New Miners' Revolt

Speaker:

ARNE SWABECK

126 East 16th St.

near Irving Place

ADMISSION 10 Cents

Aspirants:

N. Y. Br. Communist League of America

German Organ Suppressed

The weekly paper of the German Left Opposition, *Die Permanente Revolution*, has just been suppressed by the police. The von Papen government is sharpening its struggle against the revolutionary press in general. The party daily, *Die Rote Fahne*, is now almost permanently prohibited from appearing. The paper of the Urbahns group, *Volkswille*, has been suppressed for 13 weeks. The weekly organ of the Socialist Workers Party, *Kampfsignal*, has also felt the iron fist.

The latest victim of the Bonapartist clique in power is the organ of our German comrades. Significantly enough—and as a damning reply to the disgraceful slanders of the Stalinist calumniators—the reason given for its suppression was the article in No. 23 of *Die Permanente Revolution* which voices an energetic protest against the suppression of *Die Rote Fahne*, the central organ of the German Communist Party!

The official text of the police order, which is printed in the last issue of our German paper (one sheet upon which nothing else is permitted to appear except the decree), declares over the signature of Herr von Werder that the motive for the proscription is that:

"Number 23 of Volume 2 of the weekly paper *Die Permanente Revolution*, in the article 'Die Rote Fahne Prohibited', 'Workers, protest against this infamy' and which concludes with the words: 'Down with this regime which has recourse to such measures in order to veil its infamies', contains a serious insult and the intention to render contemptible the government of the Reich, according to Paragraph 6, figure 1, article 2 a a 0."

How little this arch-Bismarckian measure harmonizes with the clamorous of the Stalinists about the "Trotskyist united front with Hindenburg" is self-evident....

Whatever the official reasons given for the suppression, it is a fact that the increased activity of the Left Opposition in Germany, as well as the generally acknowledged growth of popularity of the views expressed on the German situation by the Opposition and by comrade Trotsky in particular, have not given the East Prussian barons who are in power any cause for remaining inactive.

Although the suppression of *Die Permanente Revolution* has been a severe blow to our German comrades, it has nevertheless just been found possible to issue the district paper of the Saxon organization, *Der Rote Kurier*, which formerly appeared in mimeographed form, in printed form, as the "Information Paper of the Left Opposition of the German Communist Party (Bolshevik-Leninists) and the Left Party Faction Within the G. O. P. (Saxon District)". This paper is being distributed on a national scale.

Indo-China Militants Held

L'Humanite, official organ of the French Communist Party, is once again hiding the truth from its readers. Once more it is trying to draw a veil over the Left Opposition's activities in the class struggle, to keep the workers from knowing the truth about the suppressions undergone by the International Left Opposition in the course of its revolutionary advances. This time the silence of the Stalinists is more damning than ever: Fifteen militant Oppositionists of Saigon, Indo-China have been thrown in jail for leading the fight against French imperialism, a fight in which the party's role is doubly and trebly opportunist—its sole slogan being "For general amnesty!" Several weeks ago comrade Chan van Giac, secretary of the Red Aid, was sentenced to two years in prison for distributing a leaflet. But because the comrade is a "Trotskyist", the International Red Aid, which is organized to help class war prisoners regardless of political tendency, lifts not a finger in his defense.

Needle Trades Convention Gets Left Opposition's Resolution.

Our Resolution

Presented to the Convention of the Needle Trades Workers Industrial Union by the Needle Trades Fraction of the Communist League of America (Left Opposition).

The convention of the Industrial Union and the necessity of making adequate preparations for the coming dress strike raise once again in the most pressing manner the problem of trade union unity among the needle trades workers in general, and the Ladies' garment workers in particular. The outstanding need of the hour is the consolidation of their forces into a single organization in which the militant program and leadership of the Left wing can be fused together with the mass strength of the workers and directed effectively at the class enemy. In this question, as in all others concerning the interests of the workers, the Left wing must take the initiative and lead the way. The slogan which corresponds most directly to the requirements of the present situation, and which can move the workers more than any other, is the slogan of unity. The Industrial Union must inscribe this slogan on its banner and begin a resolute struggle for its realization.

The present division of the workers into separate organizations, with great masses unorganized and standing aside from either, plays into the hands of the bosses and their labor agents, the Right wing bureaucrats. By the division the position of the working masses is weakened and undermined. They suffer heavy encroachments on their labor conditions, wages and standards. The workers who have been forced into the Right wing union are deprived of the vitalizing influence of the Left wing and are unable to organize an effective struggle against the systematic treachery of the bureaucrats and the oppression of the bosses. On the other hand the Industrial Union, containing the most experienced and advanced militants, has been unable to mobilize a sufficient mass support to enforce its program. For this state of affairs, with all the demoralization and hardship it has brought to the workers, the boss-serving bureaucrats of the Right wing are directly responsible. It must never be forgotten that the disruption and splitting of the unions was begun by their expulsion campaigns against the Left wing and their strike-breaking attacks on the workers in collaboration with the bosses, the police and the A. P. of L. oligarchy. The errors of the Left wing, however, contributed to the demoralization and facilitated the reactionary game. The sectarian policy imposed on the industrial union, and in particular the abandonment of the slogan of trade union unity, worked against the proper organization of the workers' struggle and defeated the purposes of the Left wing. It is high time now to correct these errors and to steer a new course.

One of the chief negative results of the division into rival organizations is the discouragement of wide masses of the workers in the industry and their loss of confidence in either union—the Right wing union because of its reactionary leadership and policies, and the Industrial Union because of its sectarian policy and lack of mass strength to reinforce its struggles. Under other conditions these same workers, who have demonstrated their fighting qualities before, can be rallied and organized for new struggles. What is needed to revive their morale, and after that to reorganize them on a mass scale, is a sincere and genuine move for unity. In this the Left wing alone can and must take the initiative. By such a move the convention of the Industrial Union will greatly increase its influence and regain much of the prestige that has been lost by the sectarian policies and practices of the past and pave the way for a revival of the fighting spirit and organization of the needle trades masses. But it must be a real move for unity! Not a maneuver—the workers are sick of maneuvers—but a real step for the unification of forces in a single organization that will bear the stamp of genuineness on its face.

The action to be taken by the convention of the Industrial Union must proceed from a realistic appraisal of the present situation and the relation of forces. The Industrial Union must demonstrate here that it is concerned solely with the life interests of the workers; that it has no separate interests of its own and does not impose on the workers an organization fetishism; that it is not afraid to look reality in the face. This reality is the following: the flower of the needle trade militants remain faithful to the banner of the Left wing and to the Industrial Union. Its moral force in the industry, although weakened by false tactics of the leadership, remains a great and decisive factor. But it must be recognized and acknowledged that the Industrial Union did not succeed in becoming a mass organization on a scale necessary to enable it to wage a successful struggle. As a result of a combination of circumstances—the combined pressure of the bosses, police and labor

fakers, and tactical errors of the Left wing—a large section of the workers have been again pressed into right union and thousands of others have remained organized. From this it is clear that the heroic struggle of the Left wing to unite the masses into the new union—a struggle which was forced upon it in the first place by the expulsions and splitting activities of the bureaucrats—has

(Continued on page 2)

Miners' Relief!

Within the span of a few brief weeks the major sections of the Illinois coal fields have become transformed into what Siberia was under the regime of the czars. In the southern part of the state the miners are compelled to go to work in the Peabody mines at the point of sheriffs' guns. Those fighting for the progressive union are ambushed. This regime has now also extended to the Taylorville region.

It is the desperate attempt of the Peabody coal company with the assistance of the Lewis machine and the state militia to break any strike against its pay cuts. But the miners of Illinois are just as militant, just as determined as at the beginning of this struggle. When pickets will stay on the picket lines without food for two days, as they have done in Taylorville, and still continue to fight, it is a battle that will not soon be over. The miners movement has been stirred to its very foundation.

There need be no doubt that they will know how to fight on. But they need the help of the whole working class. They need relief to carry on the strike. They are fighting the battle of the working class as a whole and therefore the question of what the workers in other industries will do to help them becomes a much more pressing one.

We are sure that the readers of *The Militant* will give their assistance. But it should be done in the most practical manner possible. The League has already decided to work as a unit for miners' relief, to help collect funds and clothing. We will endeavor to influence other organizations to do likewise. Our members will be active in this respect. That much we also expect from our sympathizers. We would suggest that you who read this immediately take upon yourself, in addition to what you can do directly, also to try to get others interested. Try to bring it before any workers' organization you belong to and ask your friends and comrades to do likewise. Finally we urge you to assist in this work of the organizations which have undertaken to collect funds for the Progressive Miners Relief.

All funds should be sent to the Progressive Miners of America, Gillespie, Ill.

The Bureaucrats Attack

We go to press too early to enable us to give our readers a full report and analysis of the national convention of the Needle Trades Workers Industrial Union which is taking place as we write in New York. But we print below the resolution presented to the convention in the name of the needle trades fraction of the Communist League of America (Opposition). As was easily to be foreseen, the whole convention is now revolving around this resolution, if only because it has no really firm axis of its own. But there is more to say for it than that: the analysis made of the situation in the industry and the relationships of forces between the Right wing and the Left wing, together with the concrete proposals we advance in the resolution to make it possible for the Left wing to emerge from the blind alley into which the Stalinist course has led it—these are matters which so vitally concern the next future of the movement in the needle trades that the bureaucratic managers of the convention can no longer ignore them.

The convention thus far has been silent, on the floor, and bombastic, on platform. As we go to press, not one of the rank and file delegates has yet spoken, even though the recently returned "president", Hyman, has attempted—in his own words—to provoke a discussion from the floor. One after another, the official union spokesmen have occupied the time of the convention with the customary absurdities on the "successes", plus the "self-criticism". Stachel, the representative of the T. U. U. L., centered his principal fire upon the "resolution of the Trotskyites", and thus set the tone for the rest of the irresponsible convention bosses. However, the slanders and misrepresentations of the Stalinists will not succeed in covering up the deep, open wounds inflicted upon the needle trades Left wing movement by the disastrous policies they have pursued, against which the Left Opposition has conducted a persistent and systematic struggle for a correct line which is summed up in our resolution. No objective consideration of our analysis and proposals can be looked for from the Hymans, Golds and Stachels. But we are confident that the thinking militants in the movement will seriously reflect upon the situation and draw the conclusions that flow inevitably from it.

ADDRESS:

FOR THE MILITANT AND THE
COMMUNIST LEAGUE,
126 East 16th Street
FOR PIONEER PUBLISHERS,
84 East 10th Street

Chen Du-Hsiu Arrested

Seven Bolshevik-Leninists Seized in Raid in Shanghai

A special cable to the New York Times of October 17 announces: "The most important Communist arrest ever made in Shanghai was carried out this morning when International Settlement police, acting on warrants issued by Chinese authorities, raided secret Communist headquarters and seized Chen Du-hsiu, secretary general of the Chinese Communist party, and six co-workers and confiscated a mass of documents and records."

The reference is obviously to our comrade Chen Du-hsiu, who was politically secretary of the party during the period of the revolutionary struggle of 1925-1927 and who subsequently came to the conclusion, which he expressed in an open letter to the Chinese Communists, that the whole Stalin-Bucharin course during the Chinese revolution had inexorably driven the movement to its catastrophe. In that letter, he voiced his agreement with the standpoint of comrade Trotsky and the Left Opposition. Founder of the Communist movement in China though he was, the Stalinists promptly expelled him from the party and sought to make him the scapegoat for the disastrous policy of the Comintern leaders. In the official literature he has since been denounced as a "counter-revolutionist."

At the last conference where the three Left Opposition groups in China were unified, comrade Chen was elected to a prominent post. The white terror of Chiang Kai-Shek was immediately unleashed upon the young Opposition movement in a raid at which several members of the Central Committee of the Chinese Bolshevik-Leninists were arrested. At that time it was reported that comrade Chen was among the victims, but the information proved to be unfounded. It now appears from the Times account that in alliance with the police of the foreign imperialists stationed in Shanghai, the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie has finally arrested Chen Du-hsiu together with six other comrades.

The meager reports which penetrate through to us from the illegality in which our Chinese comrades are compelled to operate, indicate that the activities of the Bolshevik-Leninists, in spite of the terror of the bourgeoisie and the violence of the Stalinists, are on the increase. The raid just carried out is objective testimony to the progress being made and the fear it arouses among the bourgeoisie.

We await with great anxiety a more detailed and authoritative report from our Chinese comrades about the fate of the arrested Bolsheviks.

In the meanwhile, we ask: "Will the International Labor Defense in this country, and the Red Aid movement internationally, continue to maintain the same disgraceful silence and indifference towards the arrest of our seven Chinese comrades as it has manifested in the cases of so many other Opposition fighters who have been arrested in the United States, Belgium, Spain, Greece, Indo-China and elsewhere?"

The Daily Worker, taking the Times report without realizing that the Stalinist bosses expelled comrade Chen two years ago as a "counter-revolutionist", first informed its readers on the front page about the arrest of the "general secretary of the party". The next day, on page 3, it made good its "mistake" by pointing out with triumphant relief that it was not the party's secretary who had been seized, but a "Trotskyist renegade". According to the Worker editors, apparently, this relieves them of all responsibility in the matter, and makes unnecessary the appeal they made on the first day that the workers of the entire world should protest vigorously against the new crime of the Chiang Kai-Shek terror. With the lives of seven revolutionists in danger—if they are still alive—the blind factional callousness of the Stalinists can be stigmatized only as a despicable crime. We do not believe that the class conscious fighters will condone such mendacious

Letters from Militants

Socialist Meetings In Youngstown

YOUNGSTOWN.—

Two members of the Opposition and two party members attended a recent lecture of the S. L. P. on "Historical Materialism." The lecture was used as a "take off" for election campaign propaganda. The S. L. P. was represented as the "only" revolutionary workers' party; the Communist party was criticized as "reformist" because it took a part in the daily struggle of the employed and unemployed workers and encouraged them to fight for "reforms" or partial demands.

When the chairman called for questions an Opposition comrade immediately arose and defended the Communist standpoint, pointing out the necessity of taking part in the daily struggle of the masses in order to prepare them organizationally and politically for smashing the capitalist state and setting up a dictatorship of the working class which will organize a socialist republic. The S. L. P. replied to the effect that the Communists were trying to apply the tactics which met the situation in backward Russia to "our advanced" America. "We ought to be thankful," he said, "for the ripened development of American industry and the freedom and democracy we enjoy here." The workers have only to elect the S. L. P. to the presidency and to congress and then everything will be hotsy-totsy and heaven-like in America!

A very odd thing happened then. For the first time in this city, so far as we know, a party member got up at a rival party's meeting and very successfully defended the Communist strategy and tactics as set forth by Lenin in "Left Communism." (This comrade is "new" in this town, probably a T. U. U. L. functionary). All that the S. L. P. had to say after that only revealed their complete sectarianism and bankruptcy. In fact, it was so apparent to them that the small number of workers present had been won over to the Communist viewpoint more than to the S. L. P.'s. that after the meeting many of their members said, "Since we're trying to get new members of our party we had better not allow the Communists to talk Communism at our meetings."

Y. P. S. L.

The following night the local Oppositionists attended a street meeting of the Y. P. S. L. which has recently organized a branch here. Four speakers exhausted the usual "socialist" twaddle, denouncing the capitalists, reciting a sweet poem about Jesus' return to earth and promising to abolish unemployment by practicing their "right of eminent domain" (?) if elected.

They were obviously afraid from the

very beginning that the Communists would begin to heckle them. A young Y. P. S. L. introduced a local member of the S. P. who immediately announced that there were three workers' parties but that he wasn't there to "throw mud." Referring to the S. P., S. L. P., and C. P., he asked, "Why can't we all get together?" And this certainly was one thing we as Communists wanted to explain to the workers present. But after the last speaker, who was the Y. P. S. L. organizer for Ohio, concluded, he announced that if those present had any questions to ask they were to write them down with their name and address on application cards. "Then we'll send you literature dealing with these questions," he cravenly announced as he stepped down, "QUESTIONS!" we and the party members and sympathizers called.

The Y. P. S. L. organizer got up again and with a lot of loud talk revealed very plainly to all the workers present that the "socialists" were afraid of the Communists and could not answer our questions. The crowd was with us and we explained to small groups of workers why we weren't "united" with the S. P., that the "socialists" are mere salesmen for the capitalists when really we should kick them out, and also what the Milwaukee "socialists" are doing to the workers with their sweet "right of eminent domain."

Both instances, the S. L. P. lecture and the Y. P. S. L. meeting, prove that if the Communists pursue the Leninist tactic they can win over the class-conscious proletarian elements, who are now blindly following the so-called "socialists", to the cause of Communism. We can and must combat it ("the unthinkable confidence of the masses" in the Socialist-Revolutionist and Social-Democratic parties—M. K.) ONLY ideologically, by comradely persuasion, by reference to life's experience." (Lenin, WORKS, Vol. XX, B. I page 135). "All party agitators, in factories, in regiments, in the streets, etc., must advocate these views and this proposition (regarding Bolshevik position on Soviets—M. K.) by means of peaceful discussions and peaceful demonstrations, as well as meetings everywhere . . . taking great care to preserve strict order and comradely discipline." (Ibid, pp. 245,246). It is the Leninist duty of every Communist, particularly of Oppositionists, to protest against the breakup of workers' meetings no matter by whom organized. In the eyes of the workers, to refuse to take part in a comradely discussion of different ideas and programs is to admit the bankruptcy of your own ideas.

The Youngstown members of the Opposition are few, but we intend to take a more and more active part in the labor movement, patiently propagandizing the revolutionary teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky.

—M. KOEHLER.

The Opposition at Work

The Opposition in Davenport

SITUATION IN DAVENPORT

On September 30, 1932, a debate took place over the question of "Socialism in One Country or World Revolution" between the section organizer, Jack Wilson of the C. P. and George Papcun of the Left Opposition. Immediately after the debate both of the speakers were taken to the Police Station, where Jack Wilson first was quizzed by the Chief of Police and detectives. He stayed in the room by himself with the Chief of Police for about one hour. Then he was let go and George Papcun was taken in under protest, demanding that the comrades be allowed to go with him. After about ten minutes of questions and answers about when Papcun was born and the like, he was told that he must leave town. Then comrade Peck was called in and asked to prevail on Papcun to leave town. Peck immediately objected. This request of the Chief of Police to leave town was made as the result of a demonstration of the unemployed which took place on the morning of September 30 before the Civic Planning Commission. The Chief then decided to let Papcun decide by ten o'clock Saturday morning, October 1, whether he would leave town or not. The comrades from the debate went over to the police station with the two comrades and demanded their release. Immediately on coming out of the police station, about midnight, Jack Wilson, who remained with the crowd of workers, immediately got hold of comrade Papcun and told him to leave town, for that was the best thing to do. Comrade Papcun immediately refused to carry out this advice of the party section organizer, and the workers and party members backed him up in this decision.

October 1 at ten o'clock in the morning Papcun with a large group of workers came back and told the chief of police that he was not leaving town. Then the Chief of Police, Ward, threatened that he would be prosecuted on the charge of disorderly conduct, but he still refused and under the pressure of the workers was released. Then the workers and the party members present adjourned to a hall to discuss the situation, and it was decided that the party should back up comrade Papcun. Jack Wilson also changed his mind as to him leaving town, and in fact extended an invitation to comrade Papcun to make a statement for re-entry into the party, and that Papcun should discuss it with the Section Committee. October 3, at the Unemployed Council meeting, it was also proposed that the Unemployed Council back comrade Papcun against police terror and it

was endorsed very enthusiastically by the Unemployed Council. And due to the fact that the newspapers have been raging continually about Papcun's refusal to leave town, a meeting was arranged where Papcun and Jack Wilson should speak to show that there was unity against the boss.

In the meantime the capitalist press carried on a vicious agitation against Reds and Communists generally, tried to stir up an agitation to ride Papcun out of town. Police haunted comrade Papcun's place of residence daily. On October 7, about an hour before the meeting, Papcun was arrested, thrown in jail, and held under \$200.00 cash bond, charged with vagrancy. Comrade Peck gave the bond for Papcun's release. Comrade Papcun immediately proceeded to the meeting and spoke with Peck and Wilson. The comrades received him very enthusiastically and passed a resolution of protest against the persecution of workers, pledging themselves to support Papcun. From the meeting rose a bureaucrat from Chicago by the name of Becker who was introduced by the chairman as a representative of the District 8 Executive Committee. It seemed that in his opinion it was terrible that such a meeting should be taking place where the Section Organizer of the party should speak with a Left Oppositionist, so he got up and in an underhanded way attacked the Left Opposition though not openly. He began by utilizing the same old arguments, stressing the so-called "outside interference" (meaning the Left Opposition).

His actual work of destruction and the Stalinization of the membership began the next day when he began to hold meetings with the Section Committee and the comrades generally, when he made statements to the effect that the party should never have allowed the debate to go on and they should never have supported Papcun in his fight against being deported by the police. Much of his inner-party instructions and discussion was devoted to the Left Opposition and how to get rid of them and their influence among the workers in the Tri-Cities, but despite this, on October 10, when the trial came up, the court room was packed full at the city hall—about three hundred workers packing in the small room and many more standing outside in spite of the rain and snow that was going on. Many of the workers came before eight o'clock though the trial was not to start until nine, and it didn't actually start until a quarter of ten.

The trial was made into a political trial in spite of the Chief of Police and the prosecuting attorney who tried to make it a vagrancy charge. Comrade Papcun explained from the witness stand

who were the Communists and the Unemployed Council. He further exposed the conditions of the unemployed workers in the city. The workers were very enthusiastic and interjected several times during the trial, and the judge threatened several times to clear the courtroom but evidently didn't have the nerve to try to do so because of the mood the workers were in. The case was dismissed after the American Civil Liberties Union lawyer made his appeal to the court.

That evening a meeting of the Unemployed Council took place where the party brought in a plan of reorganization which in itself is very good. They tried to cram it through without a discussion, but it was prevented by the workers and the comrades of the Left Opposition. A real discussion was had in the Unemployed Council for the first time, fifteen to twenty workers taking the floor. This surprised the party members, and many of them were enthusiastic over the fact that workers took the floor. One of our comrades of the Left Opposition was elected to the Committee to reorganize the Unemployed Council in spite of the fact that the party had a full slate of its own.

On October 11 a meeting took place at which Ford, the vice-presidential candidate, spoke. This meeting was held in Rock Island at the Workers' Hall, with about 200 in attendance. Ford made a very good agitational speech outside of the fact that he tried to make an attack on the Left Opposition and especially on our comrades in Illinois in the mining situation where he tried to leave an impression that they were working hand in hand with John L. Lewis, and in regards to the Five Year Plan in the Soviet Union which he tried to show that the Communist Left Opposition was trying to defeat.

It seemed that this did not satisfy the Chicago district bureaucrat or Jack Wilson, so they prepared a question period in which some of the comrades of the party were to ask questions concerning the Left Opposition and then he was forced to come out into the open with the usual tripe. Papcun then took the floor and in a very short statement exposed the real situation existing in the miners' fight. Then the crowning thing happened. A party member or sympathizer got up on the floor and tried to show that comrade Papcun deserted Council Bluffs about a year ago due to the attack of the police. This didn't go over so good because the workers knew differently, as Papcun did not leave Council Bluffs until ten months after the kidnapping and beating that took place, and that in the midst of the attack of the Fascist element he was deserted by the Party leadership who expelled him at that time because he was reading the literature of the Left Opposition. Then the meeting was in an uproar and Jack Wilson, from the platform made an attack and tried to incite to the idea that comrade Papcun should be taken for a ride from which he would not return to spread the views of the Left Opposition. Very little applause was given to these remarks of Jack Wilson. In fact many workers resented that such remarks should be made by a Communist party organizer, and some expressed themselves that if Papcun is taken for a ride Jack Wilson had better prepare himself to take the consequences.

—G. P.

Opposition Debates Socialists

YOUNGSTOWN.—

October 9, 1932
Last Thursday we held a debate with the Socialist party of New Castle, Pa., at their local headquarters. About thirty-five workers came to hear the debate and take part in the discussion, all of which was centered around the question of the different strategical and tactical programs of the social-democracy and Communism. Several rank and file members of the Communist party attended the meeting and took an active, comradely part in the open discussion.

It cannot be said that we disclosed conclusively the inability of the workers to succeed in overthrowing Capitalism and establishing Socialism under the leadership of the Socialists, and also the inevitable betrayal of these same leaders. The limited time and the inexperience of our comrade (this being his first attempt of this nature) made this impossible. His chief effort was made in explaining simply why Communists take part in elections, the capitalist nature of "our" democracy, what Soviets or workers' councils are, what is the dictatorship of the workers (proletariat), and other such fundamental Marxist-Leninist teachings. And this he did quite successfully.

In New Castle we are gradually but surely making progress after over six months' contact with rank and file members and sympathizers of both the Socialist and Communist parties. There is a good worker element in both groups; the members of the C. P. especially have shown their unwillingness to follow their so-called leaders blindly or to be bullied by them. We hold comradely discussions with them, and frequently they have demonstrated their agreement with our views and distributing our literature, such as *The Militant*, Trotsky's pamphlets and our leaflet on the German situation.

In Youngstown, however, it cannot be said that there is a good worker element among the Socialists; we have successfully made contact with the few workers they have in their ranks. On the situation. We are going to try hard to ers misled by the Socialists. We plan to increase our activities in New Castle during the coming winter; we feel confident that our efforts will meet with success.

It is very unfortunate that, on the other hand, in the Communist party and

its affiliated organizations all real ideological life has been criminally snuffed out by purely mechanical control—the puppets change continually but the strings are always pulled by essentially the same petty bureaucrats. In "Left Communism" Lenin wrote that there are "class representatives who neither think nor are capable of thinking"; we greatly regret that many of the local party functionaries fall under this classification. With our limited forces, we hope to salvage something from their wreckage and to prevent them from completely disgracing the theories of Communism and driving workers away from the movement.

—M. KOEHLER.

Needle Trades Convention

(Continued from page 1)

not met with success. The Industrial Union must have the courage to acknowledge this fact and to adapt its tactics to the situation. Only in this way can the lost ground be regained and a new stage of the struggle be unfolded.

The next step of the Industrial Union is to make an open proposal to the I. L. G. W. U. for the readmission of its membership in a body in the field of its jurisdiction. This proposal must demand the unity of the two organizations on the basis of no discrimination, no special conditions or restrictions imposed on the members of the Industrial Union, full rights for every member, union democracy, and rights of minority political expression. The proposal of the Lovestone group for the dissolution of the Industrial Union and the return to the I. L. G. W. U. as individuals is in no way justified by the situation and the relation of forces at the present moment. This capitulatory and false proposal must be rejected. The Industrial Union members must demand their readmission in a body without any discriminations. This correct and reasonable demand can gain the enthusiastic support of the masses of workers in the industry if it is put squarely and sincerely and reinforced with the proper campaign of agitation.

At the same time every encouragement must be given for the development of a genuine Left wing opposition within the I. L. G. W. U. which will work militantly and constructively for the program of unity with the Industrial Union and for a class program and leadership of the movement as a whole. All futile subterfuges and camouflage "united front" bodies, designed to nibble off little sections of the International must be done away with. The task of the hour is to penetrate deeply into the ranks of the workers in the International, to force a fusion of the two organizations by the pressure of the masses and to reunite the Left wing vanguard with the masses so artificially separated from it by the division of the organizations. The concentration of the Left wing militants on this campaign is the foremost task of the hour.

With the Greek Workers

NEW YORK.—

Last fall, as the readers of the *Militant* remember, a group of our comrades were expelled from the Greek Workers Club "Spartacus", because they insisted upon the application of the Constitution of the Club which plainly states that the nature of the Club is educational and as such aims to approach every Greek-speaking worker of N. Y. City. The official Greek Stalinists could not tolerate such criticism and therefore resorted to the same destructive tactics of expulsion toward every comrade that attempted to put an end to the many shortcomings of the Club. Last week thirty workers, through their committee, appealed to the E. C. and the membership of the Club for reinstatement in its ranks, because they are sincerely convinced that only the unification of the revolutionary forces among the Greek workers can bring about the fulfillment of the goal for which we are striving. They stated plainly that as revolutionary workers they must participate in the class struggle and that it is impossible for them to expect in a fatalist manner the spontaneous awakening of the Greek workers.

They pointed out that the responsibility for the continuation of the division of the revolutionary forces rests upon the shoulders of those who expelled them or those who will prevent their reinstatement in the ranks of the Club. Therefore the organization of another club could be prevented.

Last Monday, October 10 the regular membership meeting of the Club was held. Before the meeting was called to order some Stalinists began to attack comrade Brass with every kind of slander. Brass demanded an explanation of the conduct of the Stalinists but they flatly refused to give one. When the point of correspondence on the agenda was discussed, comrade Brass requested that the letter of the thirty workers be read to the membership in order that every worker acquaint himself with its content. Every epithet was hurled at him by some Stalinists and most of the members kept an icy silence. The comrade left the meeting protesting against the abuse of the elementary rights of the members, and was followed by other members who later returned to the meeting to fight out with the bureaucrats this shameful procedure. Next week we are going to print detailed reports of the proceedings of the meeting.

* * *

The Empros

As we pointed out many times in the past the Greek Stalinists, with their one-sidedness towards the *National Herald*, have clearly given the impression to the workers that they were under the control of the notorious lackey Vassardakis. The reasons of this suspicion were created

MILITANT BUILDERS

Our Club Plan

A QUESTION BY COMRADE COOVER

Last week comrade Coover, whom our readers may know as a star sub-getter from Minneapolis, sent in a couple of subs and raised a question about the club plan: "I collected \$2 from the business agent of the branch for a year's sub and then applied the two fifty cent pieces to two Left wing unemployed members' subs. Hope I can get by on this as a club of four."

We don't like to be too formal about the legal aspects of the club plan. So we have decided to let comrade Coover get away with it. But it's wrong. A club of four is a club of four half-year subs. That means just what it says—four half-year subs. It does not mean one one-year sub and two half-year subs. Nor does it mean one paid one-year sub and one free. No. It means only what it says. In the future we shall have to disallow any such doings. So beware.

ALL AROUND THE CIRCUIT

Since last week's report some additional club plan subs have come in. That was to be expected, of course. The encouraging feature about this growing response is the fact that the subs are coming in from cities, which, as a rule, have been behind the others in our sub drives. It is a long time since we have heard from Montreal, but last week they stepped up to the firing line and delivered the goods. Boston, too, sent in a club plan sub. And so did Minneapolis. We still have to hear from New York, Philadelphia, Newark, Cleveland, Youngstown and several other places. Let us complete the circuit, comrades.

SUBS FOR THE MINERS

Subs are still coming in for the miners. The latest is from comrade Nash of Montreal. We want more. Now more than ever it is important to reach the miners with the *Militant*. The Right wing victory at the Gillespie convention

places upon us the task of presenting the Left wing program for the miners. We cannot draw back now. We must continue to speak out for Communism and the Left Opposition. We must make the *Militant* the recognized spokesman for the views of the Communist Left. So get subs for the miners.

THE DOUBLE ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

Some greetings to the double anniversary issue have come in. Most of them have been gathered in by the New York branch. There is little time left, comrades. If we are to realize our plan of printing a back page of greetings a little speed is necessary in getting the greetings.

The eight pager will appear. The question is whether we can get a whole page of greetings. We think we can. And we want you comrades to get busy and prove that it can be done.

THE STAFF TO DATE

H. Nash	\$3
W. Konkow	2
O. Coover	2
H. A.	2
P. Vomvas	2
Chicago Friends of the Militant Club	2
J. Hamilton	1

The appearance of the name of Coover on this list means trouble for the others. If Coover broke into the list that means there will be local rivals in Minneapolis who make it a point never to let Coover go it alone. That means the whole murderers' row up there will swing into line. Let'er go.

The record by cities follows:

Chicago	\$5
Montreal	3
Pittsburgh	2
Boston	2
Minneapolis	2

Watch it grow!

MILITANT BUILDERS CLUB PLAN BLANK

A \$1 HALF YEAR SUB OF 26 ISSUES for 50c in CLUBS of FOUR or MORE. THE MILITANT, 84 E. 10th Street, New York City.

Enclosed find \$2 for which send the MILITANT for 26 weeks to the following:

NAMES	ADDRESSES	CITY	STATE

MILITANT BUILDER Address
City State

Help Circulate a Marxian Paper for Class Conscious Workers

Our Anniversary Number

We are only two issues away from our first eight-page issue—the double anniversary number, celebrating the fifteenth anniversary of the Bolshevik October, and the fourth year of the *Militant*. We are busily preparing the necessary material; the historic documents never before published in the English language, which we promised and other material dealing with the four years' fight of the *Militant* for the ideas of revolutionary internationalism.

We know that everyone is eagerly awaiting the appearance of this issue. They are expecting us to keep our promises. For our part we will do the very best we can. We will come through. The question we want to pose now is: Is every comrade and sympathizer discharging his obligation to this issue? We must say frankly that there is a noticeable lag in the response on the part of our comrades and friends to our appeals for greetings and special bundle orders. Everyone knows that the only way of meeting the added expenses of this issue is through the support of our comrades and sympathizers. Unless they send in greetings and special bundle orders we will be unable to meet the expense.

THE MILITANT
84 EAST 10th STREET, NEW YORK, N. Y.

Enclosed find.....for which please enter my greeting in the Jubilee Anniversary Issue, November 5, 1932.

Name Address
City State

on account of the total absence of any revolutionary news in the columns of the *Empros* and its entire preoccupation with the personal love affairs, religious rights of its editor and every other kind of news befitting a tabloid but not a Communist newspaper. The Greek party members protested to the high priests of Stalinism, and the scandal reached such proportions that they were forced to remove the famous editor Saccariellos whose despicable record in the labor movement we printed in the *Militant* last year. The new editorial board condemned the past course and promised to the Greek workers that in the future they will follow a correct policy which will not give any suspicions of favoring the monarchist organ *Atlantis*.

To dispel any suspicions of the workers they printed a statement which reads as follows: The collection thieves, in their attempt to color the revelations of *Empros* against them as a personal struggle, attempted to connect Mr. Vassardakis with the *Empros*. We considered this pretension of theirs as needing no repudiation, because every one knows that only members of Communist party participate in the direction of a Communist newspaper. And Mr. Vassardakis is not a Communist but belongs to the bourgeois class. (*Empros*, June 25, 1932.)..

For the last 3 months they discontinued their one-sidedness and began to attack both newspapers as equally responsible for the exploitation of the Greek workers. At that time we warned the Greek workers through *Communists* that they must always be alert in order to prevent the repetition of the old course because we were sure that the mere substitution of one bureaucrat by another will not change the evils. How the course of time justified our warnings is proved by the last three issues of the *Empros*. Serious issues of the class struggle are either eliminated from the columns of the *Empros* or are given an insignificant space, and the main issue is becoming again the publication of Vassardakis' affairs with his former master in the Greek and American courts. About the Greek elections they preferred to mention nothing before the elections to enlighten the Greek workers concerning the struggle of the Communists in Greece. Even the Scottsboro case is not considered of such an important nature to be given, prior to the demonstration, any space at all. Well, the Greek Stalinists can pride themselves on being more ideal representatives of Stalinism in America. This claim of theirs we granted to them and they really deserved it.

—A. C.

A National Revolution in the South?

Every important revolutionary question that Stalinism has attempted to solve and explain, to the party and to the class, has resulted in greater confusion and further revision of Marxism. Since the 1923 revolution in Germany, Stalinism has grown to a full size menace to the Bolshevik-Leninist position of the proletarian revolution. In every part of the world, where revolutionary situations have developed favorable to the extension of the October revolution, Stalinism has stayed the hand of the Communist vanguard, sowed confusion, by a combination of zig-zags, from opportunism to adventurism.

In the United States we have not yet had a revolutionary situation favorable for the proletarian seizure of power, notwithstanding the fact that the VII National Convention of the Communist Party of the United States adopted a thesis which said we were faced with a revolutionary upsurge in 1930—that is, in the first year of the present crisis. Because our "test" is still ahead Stalinism has not been able to repeat its criminal action in America.

The absence of a revolutionary situation in the United States up to the present has prevented the Stalinists from presenting us with their directives in action. However, there is sufficient material on hand to determine what road to power the Stalinists have charted out for the American workers.

The Stalinist "Chart for the U. S."

In the present decay stage of capitalism we are confronted with an era of proletarian revolutions which will be supported in the backward and underdeveloped capitalist countries by colonial uprisings and bourgeois-democratic revolutions, which have as their driving force, not the bourgeoisie, but the proletariat, with the support of the peasantry. In the developed capitalist countries, particularly in the United States, we are heading for a proletarian revolution.

The Centrists present their position in the "Resolution of the Communist International on the Negro Question in the United States," of October 1930. The C. I. resolution says, "The various forms of oppression of the Negro masses, who are concentrated mainly in the so-called 'Black Belt' provide the necessary conditions for a national revolutionary movement among the Negroes." We are thus informed by Stalinism that the road to power in parts of the United States leads through the "national revolution." Stalinism says the "national revolution" will come first or that an agrarian revolution in the South will lay the basis for self-determination for the Negro masses. Let us see what the C. I. resolution says, "Therefore, the overthrow of this class rule in the Black Belt is unconditionally necessary in the struggle for the Negroes' right to self-determination. This, however, means at the same time the overthrow of the yoke of American imperialism in the Black Belt on which the forces of the local white bourgeoisie depend. Only in this way, only if the Negro population of the Black Belt wins its freedom from American imperialism even to the point of deciding itself the relations between its country and other governments, especially the United States, will it win real and complete self-determination. One should demand from the

Discussion Article on the Negro Question

beginning that no armed forces of the American imperialists should remain on the territory of the Black Belt."

The Farce of the "Democratic Dictatorship" in the South

According to this quotation, Stalinism does not only believe in a national revolution in PART of the United States but considers this national revolution to be the prelude to the proletarian revolution. Or, that first we will have a national revolution in the South—which will overthrow American Imperialism—and then, sometime later, the proletariat will have its revolution. There are plenty of quotations in the history of the American Communist movement to prove that the party is aiming at a proletarian revolution—but the present Stalinist position on the Negro question, which speaks of an agrarian revolution, of a 'national revolution', shows that they are badly confused. They are now aiming, not only at a proletarian revolution but are also aiming to establish a power in the South by a national revolution. Stalinism will not be able to wipe this out of the Communist movement until it corrects its position on the Negro question.

The resolution says, "Moreover, the party cannot make its stand for this slogan depend upon any condition, even the condition that the proletariat has the hegemony in the national revolutionary Negro movement or that the majority of the Negro population in the Black Belt adopt the Soviet form (as Pepper demanded) etc." This is not an abstract sentence speaking of colonial movements where we will support revolutions against imperialism even though we do not have hegemony. It is a concrete statement for the southern part of the United States. In other words, they leave the door open for a revolution, a national revolution, in the southern part of the UNITED STATES which will not have a proletarian hegemony and will establish a power—other than a Soviet. What kind of a revolution have the Stalinists in store for us? What is their perspective? They can speak of a proletarian revolution all they want to but if they at the same time speak of a "national revolution" in the South, which will be the first or coming revolution—this in itself discounts what they say about the revolution to follow. To aim, first at a national revolution and then at a proletarian revolution in the United States is worse than the path of Stalinism in China, where they first aimed at the "democratic dictatorship" through the four class party—and then (?) later (?) at the dictatorship of the proletariat.

This false base in the United States is no accident—it flows from the false premise of the theory of socialism in one country. On this revisionist base no Marxian theory for revolution for developed or backward capitalist countries can be developed.

The resolution is a bundle of confusion. A couple of examples can be presented. The resolution says the Black Belt can-

not be "called a special colony of the United States", but at the same time the resolution says, "In the interest of the utmost clarity of ideas on this question, the Negro question in the United States must be reviewed from the standpoint of its peculiarity, namely, as a question of an oppressed nation, which in a peculiar and extraordinary distressing situation of national oppression not only in view of the prominent radical distinction (marked difference of color of skin, etc.), but above all, because of considerable social antagonism (remnants of slavery)."

After we are informed that remnants of slavery are a fact, the same resolution tells us that slavery is a fact. "It is only a Yankee bourgeois lie to say that the yoke of Negro slavery has been lifted in the United States. Formally it has been abolished but in practice the great majority of the Negro masses in the South are living in slavery in the literal sense of the word." Economic analysis has been replaced by "moral determinism." After we are told of remnants of slavery and then of slavery, the resolution continues, "More than three-fourths of all the Negro farmers have been bound in actual serfdom to farms and plantations of white exploiters by the feudal system of 'share cropping.'" The national question as well as the kind of labor: slaves, serfs or workers and farmers under capitalism depends, not upon moral conclusions of double exploitation, but upon economic relations.

One cannot come to a correct conclusion by approaching the problem of the coming revolution in the United States from the standpoint of the parts (south). Only by considering the part, the South, in relation to the whole, to the United States and world capitalism, can we find the Marxian road to power. The unresolved carry-overs in the South, the economic needs and democratic demands that capitalism thrives on can not be fulfilled by a national revolution. They can only be eliminated in the United States by the overthrow of American imperialism.

The only force capable of this task is the proletarian revolution under the leadership of the Communist Party led by Marxists and not muddle-headed Stalinists.

The C. I. resolution informs us that the agrarian problem is the basis of the national question. This is a return to an economic base. But this correct abstraction is used for false conclusions. The agrarian problem of the Russian, Chinese or Mexican peasants is not the same agrarian problem of the American Negroes. From the standpoint of exploitation or from the standpoint of moral consideration we can say the Negroes of the South are as bad off, if not worse off, than the others, but this does not solve the problem. The approach to the problem must be to ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIPS. Carryovers in developed America and feudal remnants of backward countries are two different problems. We do not conclude after we have analyzed the relation of the share-croppers to the landowners and local bankers. This must be extended to the WHOLE, which is within the framework of the capitalist mode of production of developed American imperialism. The question of the state and the ruling class cannot be ignored in the problem.

The condition of the Negro farmers is a remnant, a carryover which no one can deny, but the uneven development within countries as well as between countries which express the law of uneven development, not only skips stages but also bundles into knots different problems, which can only be untangled if the key is found. The keys for colonial countries and for the United States are different. For colonial countries, the solution of the agrarian problem, under the dictatorship of the proletariat expresses itself through giving land to the peasants, as a transition measure, essential, because a machine base for proper collectivization is lacking.

The solution of the agrarian problem in the United States, and this includes the Negro farmers, is not through TRANSITION STEPS (national revolution, agrarian revolution, etc.) but through the transformation of these antiquated methods of agricultural production into modern machine production. The collectivization of the farms, upon a machine base, and the transformation of oppressed farmers, black and white, not into free farmers with a plot of land, but into agrarian wage workers of the collectivized projects. This will be the product of the proletarian revolution.

We ask you readers to read the C. I. resolution yourself. It is printed by the party as, "The Communist Position on the Negro Question." The sections of the book by Browder and others present the case in an even more confused manner.

A Loophole for a Retreat

In the same resolution, they quote the Colonial Theories of the Sixth World Congress. "But it is also clear that only a victorious proletarian revolution will finally decide the agrarian question and the national question in the South of the United States, in the interest of the predominating mass of Negro population of the country." The sentence says, "finally decide", meaning that the first revolution will be a "national revolution" and later we will have a proletarian revolution.

The socialists tell us they are aiming at a socialist mode of production. But what road do they follow to get it? The Stalinists tell us that they are aiming at the proletarian revolution too. But what road do they follow in the United States to get it? They tell us—first, a national revolution in the South, and then a proletarian revolution. The road to power cannot be separated from power itself, nor can the road to power be corrected if we tack on for the distant future the goal of the proletarian revolution, or the socialist mode of production. So many good words and intentions, and that's all.

The rejection of the Marxian theory of the permanent revolution by Stalinism and the adoption of the non-Marxian theory of socialism in one country is the base of these blunders, not only in America but wherever the Stalinists participated in a revolution or where they present directives for the coming revolution. The coming revolution in America will be a proletarian revolution. It will not only complete the unfinished carryovers but it will primarily solve the problems of the working class.

—HUGO OEHLER.

VOTE COMMUNIST!

Highlights at Gillespie

Observations at the Convention of the Illinois Miners

GILLESPIE.—

The National Miners Union had presented a credential for a fraternal delegation for Nelson, Meyerscough, Minerich and Borich. The Right wing showed itself, amid much demagoguery, much flaunting of the red herring, one delegate from Auburn, proclaiming loudly his Americanism, threatened to withdraw if the N. M. U. were permitted to remain in the hall. The Right wing was victorious and the N. M. U. was not seated while the West Virginia Miners Union was. The N. M. U. was not even allowed the floor when the motion was made and carried to proceed to the next order of business. The fight of the Left wing was unavailing against the double factor of the red phobic reactionaries and the disrepute of Communism because of the record of the Stalinists. The second factor prepared the miners to be easy prey for the reactionary demagogues.

The resolutions and constitutional committees were then elected by one representative of each from each sub-district. There was a Left Oppositionist on each of these committees, comrade Noel Bernard on the former and comrade Gerry Allard on the latter. The key constitutional committee had a good proportion of progressives, although it is significant to note that two members or supporters of the I. W. W., by the very force of their logic or illogic—often found themselves closer to the reaction than to the progressives centered around Allard. The resolutions committee seemed much more reactionary than the constitutional committee.

The sessions that heard the report of the scale committee and all ensuing sessions were closed to all non-delegates.

A survey of the situation had convinced the Left Oppositionists of the urgent necessity for united Left wing action. We proposed to Minerich a joint meeting of both groups to talk over possibilities of united work. Minerich stated that he would have to consult with his comrades and he would give us their answer later that evening.

We went to keep our appointment with Minerich. We found Meyerscough and Minerich waiting for us and we went into a side street and began our talk. This meeting, I think, is of great interest and importance. It is the first time, I believe, that the representatives of the party and the Left Opposition met, even informally, to discuss the possibility of common work for the common aim. After a long discussion in which we placed forward our ideas and they theirs, they left us stating that they would have to take counsel from a comrade still higher. Jack Stachel, who was in town, is the one they meant. The following is the program we proposed for joint labor:

1. Win the strike. Against the wage-cut to the bitter end. For a referendum in case the convention decided to retreat (this possibility had been hinted by Pearcey in his opening speech).
2. Strike Franklin County. Make the strike effective.
3. A union based on the class struggle.
4. A democratic union, with rank and file control and right of minority opinion.
5. National unity of all miners' groups that had risen against Lewis, including the N. M. U.
6. The N. M. U. to be seated as fraternal delegates with voice and the N. M. U. to be given a chance to speak.
7. Reinstatement of all expelled for their views from U. M. W. A. into the P. M. A.
8. For a united Left wing slate in the coming elections.
9. No horse-trading with reactionary elements and cliques—a straight-forward fight.
10. Cooperation with all relief and defense organizations.
11. A fight, if the point is raised, for Foster and Ford, and the C. P. in the elections.

This, I believe, was a key moment of the convention. Our proposal for a joint meeting of all Left wingers about this program would mean an aggressive fight that if not immediately victorious, would at least jolt the Right wing. In this positive platform would be found a rallying unifying center for the scattered Left wingers who stood hopeless before the Right machine. Their later refusal places upon Stalinism a terrible onus. **Tues. Oct. 4, 1932**

The next noon we met Borich and Minerich. They were evasive about the joint meeting. In order not to give them any excuse whatsoever we told them we were having a meeting at 6 that evening and we suggested that they turn this into a joint meeting. A hazy "We'll see" was their reply.

The Belleville-St. Clair Operators Association employing about 1000 men had proposed to the P. M. A. negotiations to settle the strike. The day set was Wednesday the 5th, so the convention spent that day in arriving at agreement on what to instruct their representative at the conference with the operators. By a

vote of 137 to 27 the convention recommended to its committee to secure the best terms above \$5—in other words to compromise. The 27 represented that group of Left wingers who stood for a fight to the finish.

As the delegates came to the relief headquarters for their supper the N. M. U. distributed a mimeographed copy of the speech Borich would have made had the floor been allowed him. I have sent you a copy of it. You will agree with me that it is a document much superior to anything issued on the miners in the last four years by Stalinism. The third period had died an unlamented death. The method of argument by epithet was abandoned here.

A much better appraisal of the united front replaces the old formula of "united front from below" versus "united front from above." The N. M. U. offers the united front to the organization as a whole. Our pride—for in great part this is the result of the consistent Leninist hammering of the Left Opposition—is only followed by the fear of the Right "zag" that will replace the ultra-Left "zig." We can see a foreshadowing of this when the statement of the N. M. U. does not mention a word about political action in this presidential year. The miners are not, either as a group or individually, asked to vote Communist, in this statement.

While the statements were being distributed we asked if our invitation was going to be accepted. Our answer was a surly, "No." This "No" meant the granting of right of way to the reactionary steam roller!

We now come to another factor in the situation, the Socialist party. Four years ago, Socialists were conspicuous solely by their absence. Today the Socialist party has replaced the Communist party as dominant working class group throughout southern Illinois. Miners, young miners, are jamming socialist meetings, are wearing "vote for Thomas and Maurer" buttons on their lapels. The C. P. has become a bitter memory. The fact that the Socialists can stage a comeback after 20 years of betrayal speaks eloquently for the results of Stalinist policy.

Five hundred miners filled the hall that night to hear Roy Burt expound the benefits of voting Socialist. This typical reformist address was followed by a clownish, shallow demagogue, by trade—a Socialist organizer—by name, John Taylor. Upon the completion of Taylor's speech the floor was thrown open for questions.

The Left Oppositionists present felt it incumbent upon themselves to ally themselves definitely with the party, but none of its moronic errors, to place itself sharply in opposition to the reformist Socialists and to give the Stalinists a needed lesson in how to carry on such activity. So comrade Clarke asked whether it was true that the S. P. by a vote of 6-5 had decided not to intervene in the battle between Lewis and the P. M. A. to remain "neutral", which meant essentially helping Lewis.

Taylor, answering, stated that the S. P. did not interfere in the internal quarrels of the miners. He boorishly jested about the danger of mixing into the quarrels of a man and wife.

Later Clarke arose and read from the "Class Struggle" the organization of a group of extreme left wingers in the Socialist Party, edited by Sol Larks of Chicago, where the stand of the National Executive Committee of that organization in refusing to support the Progressives is sharply condemned. Upon the demand of Taylor, Clarke handed him the paper. After the adjournment of the meeting when Taylor was asked for the return of the journal he belowed like an infuriated bull and snarlingly refused, stating that the editor of the "filthy rag" would be expelled from the S. P.

Our attack upon the S. P. was slashing and telling, while the arch-stupidity of the Centrists was exactly to the liking of those on the platform, and antagonized, not as Zip Kachinski, a Communist youth organizer, tried lamely to tell us, the Socialist party members but all the workers present. Comrade Minerich told Kachinski not to "kid himself" and much more realistically recognized that opposed to us were the practically unanimous miners. Yet the Left Opposition questions were not shouted down, but listened to quietly and with interest and attention and even with some sympathy as we brought the lessons of socialist betrayal close to them. Yet, we must recognize that the Left Opposition often suffers because of Stalinism.

We discussed in comradely fashion with the miners after the meeting and showed the difference between Communism and Socialism—a privilege not granted the Stalinists.

CURTIS.

JAPAN

Its Rise from Feudalism to Capitalist Imperialism and the Development of the Proletariat

By Jack Weber

(Continued from last issue)

China at that period was completely self-sustaining. The Chinese were skilled handicraftsmen whose labor was so cheap that it was impossible to undersell her goods in her own market. China practiced both silk and cotton weaving so that no cotton goods could be sold in the Far East by Europeans. The English tried to sell their most important manufacture, woolen goods, but this was a drug on the market.

The Smuggling of Opium

There was only one commodity that the English found they could sell in China—opium! Opium was grown extensively in India where it was used as a drink, but was little known in China. The English mixed the opium with tobacco brought from America and planted in Formosa. The Chinese learned to smoke this mixture, and then opium alone. As soon as its effects became known in China, its importation was strictly prohibited under penalty of death. But the Europeans, particularly the British, started to smuggle it in using even the British Navy for this purpose. The traffic assumed such tremendous proportions that it literally drained the gold and silver out of China, gold and silver that the British traders used to pay for Indian cotton of which they imported one million lbs. a year by 1700 and 50 million by 1800.

So appallingly great became the illicit opium traffic—in time—that in sheer desperation the corrupt Chinese officials were driven to action. Around 1840 they seized a large number of chests of opium brought in by the English, and destroyed them. This was quickly seized upon by imperialist England as a good pretext for declaring war on China (the Opium Wars of the 1840's). China was forced to permit opium in and at the same time England was given a foothold in the Yangtze Valley at Hongkong.

Queerly enough, however, the British need for opium in China had ceased at the very time China was being coerced into its acceptance. The reason for this change must be sought in the industrial revolution. The cotton industry had given

en a great impetus to factory development and this in turn stimulated English mechanical inventions. In 1785 for the first time steam engines were used in factories. The spinning-mule and the power loom had come into existence. England was transformed from a country that imported cotton goods in 1700 to one that exported to the extent of over one million pounds sterling by 1800. Her exports went mostly to her colonies—but now she could even undersell cheap Chinese labor due to the superior productivity of the machines. Hence opium was no longer needed to finance the purchase of raw materials.

Under the driving-force of profits, however, the opium traffic could not be stopped. It had now invaded China in the form of poppy-growing, the mercenary Chinese officials encouraging this under the pretext that it would help keep Chinese money at home.

Japan and Opium

History has repeated itself after a fashion. Today Japan seeks to finance her purchases of raw cotton from abroad. One of the means used to accomplish this, is the sale of opium and of manufactured narcotics to China. Manchuria has always been a base for this traffic. The Japanese, in ousting Chang-Hsiang, have taken over his control of opium. But it is no longer merely raw opium but the cheaper manufactured narcotics, morphine and heroin. These are supplied by the "advanced" capitalist countries, the U. S., England, Germany, Switzerland to China via Japan. The privileged consular pouches and parcels post system of Japan in Manchuria, are freely used for this purpose.

The League of Nations in typical fashion, has convened bodies of "experts" to help "solve" the opium problem. Soviet Russia, invited to these fake conferences, replied: "The government of the U. S. S. R. has come to the conclusion that in connection with the task of fighting the spread of opium and other drugs, the various states are striving to satisfy their own commercial interests and gain material benefits. Under such circum-

stances, Soviet Russia considers that its participation would be useless." Making a market for opium means "repeats" and how lucrative the business is, may be judged from the estimate that it amounts to some \$600,000,000 per year in China! What chance is there that so vast a business will be abolished under capitalism? In 1917 Japan's imports of morphine from England—intended for China—amounted to 600,000 ounces. The exact revenue derived from opium in India is unknown, a dark secret in the archives of a special revenue department. But it is known to supply 45% of the revenue in Straits Settlement, 21% in French Indo-China, 11% in the Dutch East Indies, 23% in Siam, 12 to 50% in Persia. The British government grants loans to farmers without interest to raise poppy, the government buying the entire crop. The price of poppy is regulated to spread the poppy acreage as against the competing crop—wheat! It is a foregone conclusion that capitalism will not solve this problem which will be liquidated only after the proletarian revolution and the elimination of the profit motive.

Cotton and the Swadeshi Movement

The industrial revolution not only permitted the English to undersell the Chinese but also the Hindus whose handicraft industry practically disappeared as a result. Gandhi, put forth by the Swadeshi movement to win over and mislead the Hindu masses, interprets the modern Swadeshi movement in terms of reestablishing this vanished art. Only the most gullible individual could swallow this pretense. The Swadeshi movement is the bid of the Indian national bourgeoisie for an alliance with the British imperialists in the exploitation of the Hindu workers—particularly in the newly rising cotton mills. All that the In-

dian bourgeoisie desire is a protective tariff to keep out competition until their "infant" industry is strong enough to stand on its own lousy feet (on the backs of the Hindu workers, of course). Back in 1907 Dr. R. B. Gosh, president of the first National Indian Congress, stated: "What reasonable man can doubt that the real strength of the Swadeshi movement is to be found in our national desire to nurse our own industries, which the Government of India, with their free trade principles, are unable to protect by building up a tariff wall?" On the British side at this same time Sir R. Lethbridge ("India and Imperial Preference") advocated such a tariff for India—proposed it was made to fit into a scheme of Imperial Preference. Under the stress of Japanese and U. S. competition, England has been forced to adopt exactly this policy advocated for 25 years.

The Indian trade is the mainstay of the British cotton industry. To hold this trade and shut the door to all others has been the consistent policy of British capitalism. In their present desperation, Lancashire capitalists are trying to reduce costs by lowering the standards of living of English textile workers, so as to compete with Japan and America. Great Britain's monopoly of the piece goods trade in India is under threat. Both U. S. and English capitalism are suffering from Japanese competition. The latter's cotton textile industry has grown faster than any other country's during the past 15 years. Measured by the amount of raw cotton consumed the industry grew slowly in Great Britain till 1913, then declined. The industry has grown steadily in the U. S. since 1870. In Japan it began during the war and has risen rapidly since.

(To be continued)

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What They Say in Prague About the United Front

From the Series of Articles in the Forthcoming Book 'The Only Road' : - by Leon Trotsky

WHEN THE Communist International made a united front with the social democratic leaders in 1926," wrote the central organ of the Czechoslovakia Communist party, *RUDE PRAVO*, on February 27 of this year, allegedly in the name of a worker-correspondent "from the bench," "it did this in order to *expose* them before the masses of supporters, and at that time Trotsky was terribly opposed to it. Now, when the social democracy has so discredited itself by its countless betrayals of the workers' struggles, Trotsky proposes the united front with its leaders . . . Trotsky is today against the Anglo-Russian Committee of 1926, but for any sort of Anglo-Russian Committee of 1932."

These lines lead us right to the heart of the question. In 1926, the Comintern sought to "expose" the reformist leaders with the aid of the united front policy, and that was right. But since then the social democracy has "discredited" itself. Before whom? There are still more workers following it than the Communist party. This is sad but true. The task of exposing the reformist leaders thus remain unsolved. If the method of the united front was good in 1926, why should it be bad in 1932?

"Trotsky is for an Anglo-Russian Committee of 1932, against the Anglo-Russian Committee of 1926." In 1926, the united front was concluded only at the top, between the leaders of the Soviet trade unions and the British trade unionists, not in the name of definite practical actions of the masses separated from each other by state frontiers and social conditions, but upon the basis of a friendly-diplomatic, pacifist-evasive "platform". During the miners' strike—and later the general strike—the Anglo-Russian Committee could not even come together, for the "allies" pulled in two opposite directions: the Soviet trade unions strove to assist the strikers, the British trade unionists sought to break the strike. The substantial contributions collected by the Russian workers were rejected by the General Council as "damned gold". Only after the strike had been finally betrayed and broken did the Anglo-Russian Committee come together again to the scheduled banquet to exchange small talk. Thus did the policy of the Anglo-Russian Committee serve to cover up the reformist strike-breakers before the working masses.

At the present time we are speaking of something quite different. In Germany the social democratic and the Communist workers stand on the same ground, before the same danger. They mingle with each other in factories, in trade unions, at the unemployment registries, etc. It is not a question here of a word—"platform" of the leaders, but of thoroughly concrete tasks which are calculated to draw the mass organizations directly into the struggle.

The united front policy on a national scale is ten times harder than on a local scale. The united front policy on an international scale is a hundred times harder than on a national scale. To unite with the British reformists around so general a slogan as "defense of the U. S. S. R." or "defense of the Chinese revolution," is to talk the blue out of the clouds. In Germany, on the contrary, there is the immediate danger of the destruction of the workers' organizations, the social democratic included. To expect the social democracy to fight for the defense of the Soviet Union against the German bourgeoisie would be an illusion. But we certainly can expect that the social democracy will fight for the defense of its mandates, its meetings, periodicals, treasuries and finally, for its own head.

Only, even in Germany we in no way advocate lapsing into a united front fetishism. An agreement is an agreement. It remains in effect so long as it serves the practical goal for which it was concluded. If the reformists begin to curb or to sabotage the movement, the Communists must always put themselves the question: is it not time to tear up the agreement and to lead the masses further under our own banner? Such a policy is not an easy one. But who has ever argued that to lead the proletariat to victory is a simple task? By counterposing the year 1926 to the year 1932, *RUDE PRAVO* has demonstrated only its lack of comprehension of what occurred six years ago as well as what is happening today.

The "worker-correspondent" from the imaginary bench also turns his attention to the example adduced by me of the agreement of the Bolsheviks with the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionists. "At that time," he writes, "Kerensky really fought for a certain time against Kornilov and at the same time helped the proletariat smash Kerensky. That the German social democracy today does not fight against Fascism is evident to any little child."

The Thälmann who so closely resembles a "little child" contends that an agreement of the Russian Bolsheviks with the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionists never even existed. *RUDE PRAVO*, as we see, pursues a different course. The agreement it does not deny. But according to its conception, the agreement was justified by this, that Kerensky really fought against Kornilov, in distinction to the social democracy which is preparing the road to power for Fascism. The

idealization of Kerensky here is quite astounding. When did Kerensky begin to fight against Kornilov? At the very moment when Kornilov swung the Cossack's saber over Kerensky's own head, that is, on the eve of August 26, 1917. On the previous day, Kerensky was still in a direct conspiracy with Kornilov with the aim of jointly crushing the Petrograd workers and soldiers. If Kerensky began to "fight" against Kornilov or more correctly, to offer no resistance, for a time, to the fight against Kornilov, then it was only because the Bolsheviks left him no other alternative. That Kornilov and Kerensky, both of them conspirators, broe with each other and came into open conflict, was to a certain extent a surprise. That it would have to come to a collision between German Fascism and the social democracy, could and should have been foreseen, were it only on the basis of the Italian and Polish experiences. Why should an agreement with Kerensky against Kornilov have been concluded, and why is it forbidden to preach, to fight for, to advocate and to prepare an agreement with the social democratic mass organizations? Why must such agreements be destroyed wherever they have come into being? That, however, is just how Thälmann and Company proceed.

RUDE PRAVO naturally pounced ravenously upon my words that an agreement on fighting actions may be made with the devil, with his grandmother and even with Noske and Grzesinski. "Look, Communist workers," writes the paper, "you've got to come to terms with Grzesinski who has already shot so many of your comrades-in-arms. Come to an agreement with him for he is to fight together with you against the Fascists, with whom he hobnobs at banquets and in the boards of management of factories and banks." The whole question is shifted here onto the plane of spurious sentimentality. Such an objection is worthy of an anarchist, an old Russian Left wing Social Revolutionist, a "revolutionary pacifist" or of Münzenberg himself. There isn't a glimmer of Marxism in it.

First of all: is it correct that Grzesinski is a worker's hangman? Absolutely correct. But wasn't Kerensky a hangman of the workers and peasants in far greater measure than Grzesinski? Nevertheless, *RUDE PRAVO* approves after the fact the practical agreement with Kerensky.

To support the hangman in every action directed against the workers, is a crime, if not treachery: that is just what the alliance of Stalin with Chiang Kai-Shek consisted of. But if this same Chinese hangman were to find himself engaged tomorrow in a war with the Japanese imperialists, then practical fighting agreements of the Chinese workers with the hangman Chiang Kai-Shek would be quite permissible and even—a duty.

Did Grzesinski hobnob with the Fascists at banquets? I do not know, but I'm quite prepared to grant it. Only, Grzesinski was subsequently obliged to sit in the Berlin prison, not in the name of socialism, it is true, but only because he was loath to give up his warm seat to the Bonapartists and the Fascists. Had the Communist party openly declared at least a year ago: against the Fascist assassins we are prepared to fight jointly even with Grzesinski: had it invested this formula with a fighting character, developed it in speeches and articles, brought it into the depths of the masses—Grzesinski would have been unable to defend his capitulation before the masses in July with references to the sabotage of the Communist party. He would either have had to go along with this or that active step or else expose himself hopelessly in the eyes of his own workers. Isn't this clear?

To be sure, even if Grzesinski were drawn into the struggle by the logic of his situation and the pressure of the masses, he would be an extremely unreliable, a thoroughly perfidious ally. His principal thought would be to pass over as quickly as possible from struggle or half-struggle to an agreement with the capitalists. But the masses set into motion, even the social democratic masses, do not come to a halt as easily as do outraged police chiefs. The approach between the social democratic and the Communist workers in the process of the struggle would offer the Communist party leaders a far broader possibility for influencing the social democratic workers, especially in face of the common danger. And that is precisely what the final aim of the united front consists in.

To reduce the whole policy of the proletariat to agreements with the reformist organizations or, still worse, to the abstract slogan of "unity," is something that only spineless Centrists of the stripe of the Socialist Workers Party can do. For the Marxists, the united front policy is merely one of the methods in the course of the class struggle. Under certain conditions this method becomes completely useless; it would be absurd to want to conclude an agreement with the reformists on the socialist upheaval. But there are conditions under which the rejection of the united front may ruin the revolutionary party for many decades to come. That is the situation in Germany at the present time. (Continued in the Next Issue)

PRINKIPO, September 2, 1932. L. TROTSKY.

LEON TROTSKY

Proletariat and Peasant War in China

(Continued from last issue)

Thus, in China, the causes and grounds for the conflicts between the army, which is peasant in composition and petty bourgeois in leadership, and the workers, not only are not eliminated but also all the circumstances are such as to make these conflicts extremely possible and even inevitable; and in addition thereto the chances of the proletariat are incomparably less favorable than was the case in Russia.

From the theoretical and political side the danger is increased manifold as a consequence of the fact that the Stalinist bureaucracy hides the contradictory situation under a blanket by its slogan of "democratic dictatorship" of workers and peasants. Is it possible to conceive of a more attractive in appearance and more perfidious in essence? The epigones go through their processes of thinking not by medium of social concepts, but by means of pigeon-holed phrases; formalism is the basic trait of bureaucracy.

A REACTIONARY ACCUSATION

The Russian Narodniki ("Populists") betimes accused the Russian Marxists of "ignoring" the peasantry, of not carrying on work in the villages, etc. To this the Marxists replied, "We will arouse and organize the advanced workers and through the workers we shall arouse the peasants." Such in general is the only conceivable road for the proletarian party.

The Chinese Stalinists have acted otherwise. During the revolution of 1925-27 they subordinated directly and immediately the interests of the workers and the peasants to the interests of the national bourgeoisie. In the years of the counter-revolution they passed over from the proletariat to the peasantry; i. e., they undertook that role which was fulfilled in our country by the S. R.'s when they were still a revolutionary party. Had the Chinese Communist Party concentrated its efforts for the last few years in the cities, in industry, in the railroads; had it sustained the trade unions, the educational clubs and circles; had it, without breaking off from the workers, taught them to understand what was occurring in the villages—the share of the proletariat in the general correlation of forces would have been today incomparably more favorable. The party as a matter of fact tore itself away from its class. Thereby in the last analysis it can cause injury to the peasantry as well. For should the proletariat continue still to remain on the sidelines, without organization, without leadership, then the peasant war even if fully victorious will inevitably drive into a blind alley.

In old China every victorious peasant revolution was concluded by the creation of a new dynasty, and subsequently of a new group of large proprietors; the movement was confined within a vicious circle. Under the present conditions the peasant war by itself without the direct leadership of the proletarian vanguard can only pass on the power to a new bourgeois clique, some "Left" Kuo Min Tang or other, "a third party," etc., etc., which in practice will differ very little from the Kuo Min Tang of Chiang Kai-Shek. And this would signify in turn a new onslaught on the workers with the weapons of "democratic dictatorship".

What then are the conclusions that follow from all this? The first conclusion is that one must boldly and openly face the facts as they are. The peasant movement is a mighty revolutionary factor, insofar as it is directed against the large farm owners, militarists, serfdom and usurers. But in the peasant movement itself are very powerful proprietary and reactionary tendencies, and on a given stage it can become hostile to the workers, and sustain that hostility already equipped with arms. He who forgets about the dual nature of the peasantry is not a Marxist. The advanced workers must be taught to distinguish from among "Communist" signs and banners the actual social processes.

The operation of the "Red Armies" must be attentively followed, and the workers must be explained systematically the direction, the significance and the perspectives of the peasant war; and the current demands and the tasks of the proletariat must be tied up with the slogans for the liberation of the peasantry.

STUDY THE CLASS TENDENCIES

On the bases of our own observations, reports and other documents we must painstakingly study the inner life processes of the peasant armies and the order established in the regions occupied by them; we must discover in living facts the contradictory class tendencies and clearly point out to the workers which tendencies we support and against which we are fighting.

With especial care must we follow the inter-relationships between the Red Armies and the local workers, without leaving out of sight even the minor misunderstandings between them. Within the framework of particular cities and regions, conflicts, even if acute, might appear to be insignificant local episodes. But with the further development of events the class conflicts may take on a national sweep and lead the revolution to a catastrophe, i. e., to a new devastation of the workers by the peasants, hoodwinked by the bourgeoisie. History of revolutions is full of such examples. The more clearly the advanced workers will understand the living dialectic of the class inter-relationships of the proletariat, the peasantry and the bourgeoisie the more confidently will they seek unity with the strata of the peasantry closest to them, the more successfully will they counteract the counter-revolutionary provocateurs, within the body of

A Letter to the Chinese Bolshevik-Leninists

the peasant armies themselves as well as within the cities.

The trade union must be built up and the party nuclei; the advanced workers must be educated, the proletarian vanguard must be fused together and must be drawn into the battle.

We must turn to all the members of the official Communist party with words of explanation and challenge. It is quite probable that the rank and file Communists who have been led astray by the Stalinist faction will not understand us at once. The bureaucrats will set up a howl about our "revolution" of the peasantry, perhaps even about our "hostility" to the peasantry (Chernov always accused Lenin of being hostile to the peasantry). Naturally, such howling will not confuse the Bolshevik-Leninists. When prior to April 1927 we warned against the inevitable coup d'Etat of Chiang Kai-Shek, the Stalinists accused us of hostility to the national Chinese revolution. The events have demonstrated who was right. The events will provide a check this time as well. The Left Opposition may turn out too weak to give the events the direction in the interests of the proletariat at the present stage. But it is sufficiently strong even now in order to point out to the workers the correct way, and by depending upon the further development of the class struggle to demonstrate to the workers its correctness and its political insight. Only in this manner can a revolutionary party gain confidence for itself, only thus will it grow, become strong and take its place at the head of the national masses.

—L. TROTSKY.

Prinkipo, September 22, 1932

P. S. In order to express my ideas with the greatest possible lucidity, I shall sketch the following variant which is theoretically quite possible.

Let us presume that the Chinese Left Opposition carries on within the nearest future—widespread and successful work among the industrial proletariat and attains the preponderant influence in its midst. The official party, in the meantime, continues to concentrate all its forces on the "Red armies" and in the peasant regions. The moment arrives when the peasant armies take occupation of the industrial centers and are brought face to face with the workers. In such a situation, in what manner will the Chinese Stalinists act? It is not difficult to foresee that they will counterpose in a hostile manner the peasant army against "the counter-revolutionary Trotskyists". In other words, they will sic the armed peasants on the advanced workers. This is what the Russian S. R.'s and the Mensheviks did in 1917: having lost the workers, they fought might and main for their support among the soldiery, inciting the barracks against the factory, the armed peasant against the worker Bolshevik. Kerensky, Tsereteli and Dan, if they did not label the Bolsheviks outright as counter-revolutionists, called them either "unconscious aids" or "involuntary agents" of counter-revolution. The Stalinists are less choice in their application of political terminology. But the tendency is the same, malicious baiting of the peasant—and generally

petty-bourgeois elements against the vanguard of the working class.

CENTRISM SEEKS SUPPORT FROM THE RIGHT

Bureaucratic Centrism, as Centrism, cannot have an independent class support. But in its struggle against the Bolshevik-Leninists it is compelled to seek support from the Right, i. e., from the peasantry and the petty bourgeoisie, counterposing them to the proletariat. The struggle between the two Communist factions, the Stalinists and the Bolshevik-Leninists bears in itself, in this manner, an inner tendency toward transformation into a class struggle. The revolutionary development of events in China may draw this tendency to its conclusion, i. e., to a civil war between the peasant army led by the Stalinists and the proletarian vanguard led by the Leninists.

Were such a tragic conflict to arise, due entirely to the Chinese Stalinists, it would signify that the Left Opposition and the Stalinists ceased to be Communist fractions and had become hostile political parties, having a different class foundation.

However, is such a perspective inevitable? No, I do not think so at all. Within the Stalinist fraction (the official Chinese Communist Party) there are not only peasant, i. e., petty bourgeois tendencies but also proletarian tendencies. It is important in the highest degree for the Left Opposition to seek to establish connections with the proletarian wing of the Stalinists, by developing for them the Marxist evaluation of "Red armies" and the inter-relationships between the proletariat and the peasantry in general.

While maintaining its political independence, the proletarian vanguard must be invariably ready to assure the united action with revolutionary democracy. While we refuse to identify the armed peasant detachments with the Red Army; and while we have no inclination to shut our eyes to the fact that the Communist banner hides the petty-bourgeois content within the peasant movement; we, on the other hand, take an absolutely clear account of the tremendous revolutionary-democratic significance of the peasant war, we teach the workers to comprehend this significance and we are ready to do all in our power in order to achieve the necessary military alliance with the peasant organizations.

Consequently our task consists not only in not permitting the political and military command over the proletariat on the part of the petty-bourgeois democracy that leans upon the armed peasants but also in preparing and assuring the proletarian leadership of the peasant movement, its "Red armies", in particular.

The more clearly the Chinese Bolshevik-Leninists comprehend the political environment and the tasks that spring from it, the more successfully they extend their bases within the proletariat and the more persistently they put through the policy of the united front in relation to the official party and the peasant movement that is led by it, all the more surely will they succeed not only in shielding the revolution from the frightfully dangerous conflict between the proletariat and the peasantry, and in assuring the necessary united action between the two revolutionary classes, but also in transforming their united front into the historical step toward the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Prinkipo, September 26, 1932 —J. T.

Archives of the Opposition

Marx and the Peace Conference

In the year 1867 there was held at Geneva a congress of the League of Peace and Freedom. The Peace Congress attempted to secure the backing and support of the First International, and did actually secure support from the *Lausanne Congress of the International*. Writing to Engels under date September 4, 1867 Marx has the following to say about the League of Peace and Freedom.

"You know that in the General Council I opposed our having anything to do with these peace windbags. I spoke on the subject for about half an hour. Eocarius who was minute secretary, prepared a report for *The Beehive*, but he reproduced only one or two sentences of my speech . . . Nevertheless what I said at the General Council meeting attracted a good deal of attention. The jackasses of the Peace Congress . . . have completely modified their original program, smuggling into the new one (which is far more democratic) the words 'the harmonizing of economic interests with liberty'—a vague phrase which may mean nothing more than free trade. They bombarded me with correspondence, and had the impudence to send me the enclosed specimen of eye-wash. You see they have the cheek to address me on the envelope as 'a member of the Geneva, etc., Congress'."

Stekloff who reports the incident in his "History of the First International" continues with the following remarks. "Thus, the mere allusion of the bourgeois pacifists to Marx as a member of their contemplated congress, seriously annoyed him." We can readily understand, therefore, how profoundly disturbed he must have been by the resolution of the *Lausanne Congress of the International*, which not merely accepted at its face value the bourgeois mouthings of the League of Peace and Freedom, but actually promised 'full support' to the League—thus giving it an endorsement in the name of the international proletariat. Unfortunately, Marx was not able to convince his colleagues on the General Council, and some time was to

elapse before they would appraise the democratic-pacifist League at its true worth."

The balance sheet can thus easily be drawn. In 1867 Marx opposed the First International's having anything to do with the Peace Congress; in 1932 Stalin becomes the prime mover in the calling together of a "Peace Congress." In 1867 Marx was seriously annoyed because the Peace Congress attempted to use his name. Today, the Stalinists seem to be falling all over themselves in order to have their names appear at the head of the list. In 1932 the Communists are made to vote with both hands for pacifist dribblings and resolutions; in 1867 Marx referred to them with contempt as "eye-wash."

But the parallel does not end here. In 1867 Marx had to oppose the entire General Council in presenting his point of view, and some time had to elapse before the other members of the Council were convinced of the correctness of Marx's position. Today, comrade Trotsky and the Left Opposition stand practically alone in opposing the opportunism of the Stalin leadership. How long will it take before the correctness of the stand taken by the Left Opposition will have been proven correct? Yes, history does repeat itself.

—H. S.

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