

Communist Opposition Proposes United Front to Socialist Party

The following statement of the National Committee of the Communist Party (Opposition), incorporating its proposals to the Socialist Party for a united front, was placed before the National Executive Committee of the Socialist Party, meeting in Boston, Mass. on December 1 and 2.

The delegation of the Communist Party (Opposition) consisted of Jay Lovestone and Charles S. Zimmerman.

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TO THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF AMERICA:

Dear Comrades:

We appear before you as a delegation of the National Committee of the Communist Party (Opposition) to make certain proposals for Joint action on a number of issues of vital significance to the American Workers.

The attitude of our organization to the Socialist Party is well known to you. Between us there are many serious differences in program and policy, those differences of principle that have traditionally divided the Socialist and Communist movements and have gained added weight from the recent developments in Europe. At the same time, however, we have always emphasized that, on a wide variety of questions and precisely on those of the most immediate concern to the workers, effective cooperation between Communist and Socialist organizations is not only possible but is absolutely essential if the working class is to be in a position to meet and cope with the grave problems facing us today. Such cooperation between our two movements would in all probability have changed the whole tragic course of events in Germany and might have prevented the menacing advance recently made by Fascism and reaction in so many parts of the world. Never was the need for united action in this country as great as it is today; never was the demand for it among the class conscious workers as pressing as it is at the present time.

It is well known that one of the issues leading to our separation from the official Communist Party was our outright rejection of the false and vicious theory of "social fascism" with all that it implies. We have always strived to establish comradely relations of cooperation between our organizations, such as should properly exist between two working class organizations both opposed to capitalism, tho differing on ultimate political objectives and on the most effective policies to be pursued. We have never slackened our agitation in favor of the united labor front, and especially in favor of the closest possible collaboration between the Communist and Socialist movements in the class struggle. Today, we are convinced that conditions make possible and urgently demand such collaboration between our respective organizations in a number of important fields.

We, therefore, propose that you choose a sub-committee to confer with our committee for the purpose of working out an agreement for cooperation with the following objectives:

1. To develop an effective movement against war and fascism on a broad and non-partisan basis. At a time when the danger of war is so acute and Fascism and reaction are making such headway, it is hardly necessary to emphasize the need for such a movement while its possibilities are indicated by the attention given to this question at the recent convention of the American Federation of Labor. The utterly narrow and sectarian way in which the American League Against War and Fascism was conceived and organized has naturally turned it into a virtual puppet of the official Communist Party and has rendered it utterly incapable of ever serving as the organizational vehicle of a real movement against war. If we agree as to the necessity and possibility of a broad, non-partisan movement against war and Fascism, based on the trade unions and

embracing all tendencies in the labor movement, then it should be possible for us to get together to work out ways and means of stimulating its development among those sections of organized labor where we have influence.

2. To effect the cooperation of our members and supporters in the trade unions for the furtherance of progressive unionism. We propose specifically that agreements for joint action should be worked out in the following fields: textile, needle trades, shoe, teachers, mining and automobile. Such cooperation already exists in more or less systematical form in a number of fields but we feel it would be of great advantage all around if it could be extended and officially encouraged. As a program in this direction we would suggest: militant class struggle tactics as against class collaboration; industrial unionism; trade union unity inside of the A.F. of L.; against dual unionism; democracy within the unions; against racketeering; independent political action and against the so-called "non-partisan" policy of the A.F. of L. Of course, a more specific and concrete program would have to be worked out in each field but we believe that it should certainly be possible to bring about the cooperation of our forces along these lines.

3. To help build up a genuinely non-partisan labor defense organization. Beyond question some organization to come to the aid of workers suffering legal persecution because of their participation in the class struggle, is badly needed today. But if such an organization is to be effective it must be genuinely non-partisan, always loyal to the labor movement but neither dominated by nor discriminating against any working class tendency. No such organization exists today, altho there are some, such as the International Labor Defense, which, tho parading as "non-partisan," are really auxiliaries or agencies of some particular party or group. It should be possible for us to get together to work out plans for building up such a labor defense organization, at first perhaps locally and later on a national scale.

4. To stimulate the movement for independent working class political action in the form of a Labor party. We surely agree that the big job ahead of us is to break the political hold of the capitalists over the workers, to unite the workers as a class on the political field under the banner of their own party. A Labor party, organized as a federation of trade unions and other workers organizations, is the great need of the hour. Many important international unions, locals, and city and state federations, numbering hundreds of thousands of members, have already gone on record in favor of a labor party and there is considerable sentiment for it in the ranks of the workers everywhere. What is lacking is mainly a driving force in the labor movement, consistently fighting the delusive "non-partisan" policy of the A.F. of L. and systematically pushing to the fore the idea of independent working class politics in the form of a Labor party. It is for the purpose of creating such a force that we propose the collaboration of our respective organizations on this field.

We make this offer of cooperation to you because we are convinced that it would be of great benefit to the workers movement, to the furtherance of which both of our organizations are dedicated. Experience in the unemployed movement and in a number of trade unions has demonstrated the great possibilities of such cooperation. We hope that, putting to one side all factional prejudices and narrow partisan considerations, you will see your way clear to acting favorably upon our proposals, thus greatly advancing the consolidation of the forces of the class conscious proletariat in this country.

NATIONAL COMMITTEE
COMMUNIST PARTY U. S. (OPPOSITION)
JAY LOVESTONE, Secretary