

The ILP and the Comintern

(Continued from previous issue)

Fusion Of Interests Inside And Outside Of U.S.S.R.

The basic interests of the Soviet proletariat and of the working class in capitalist countries are fused and indivisible. If the proletariat in the capitalist countries did not support the Soviet Union, intervention would come rapidly enough and the Soviet Union would be in danger of being overthrown. If a failure or disaster were to befall the Soviet Union, it would spell the blackest defeat and darkest reaction for the workers and oppressed colonial masses throughout the world for many years. Should the international proletarian sympathy and support for the U.S.S.R. grow, then, the growth of Socialist construction in the Soviet Union the Socialist victory, would be speeded up tremendously. If the Soviet Union moves forward rapidly in its drive for Socialist construction, the socialist victories achieved go a long way towards strengthening the proletarian positions of battle against international capitalism.

No one will deny that Stalin's factional methods, both in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and in the Comintern especially, that the factional regime, its clique-boasting and bureaucratic perversion of correct tactical policies with the consequent weakening of the Communist International, have given to bourgeois critics and to the Trotskyites plenty of talking points for such inventions and crudities such as the idea that the Soviet Union is no longer interested in the world revolution and is concerned only with the problems of Soviet economic construction. Whatever be the criticism we may level against Stalin, yet we never can stoop to deny that it was none other than Stalin himself who clearly said in reply to Trotsky at the Seventh Enlarged Plenum of the ECCI in December, 1926 that:

"The interests and tasks of the proletariat of the U.S.S.R. are interwoven and integrally connected with the interests and the tasks of the revolutionary movement in all countries and vice versa, the tasks of the revolutionary proletariat of all countries are inseparably connected with the tasks and achievements of the proletariat of the U.S.S.R. on the front of socialist construction."

For the C.P.S.U. Lenin's remarks to the Thirteenth Party Congress hold good. Lenin then said:

"We live not only in a state but in a system of states and the existence of the Soviet republic side by side with imperialist states for any length of time is inconceivable. Finally, one or the other must conquer."

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C. I. Ultra-Left Tactics Bring Paralysis

The fact that Stalin's ultra-left sectarian tactics in the Communist International have brought paralysis to the Comintern, particularly in the present moment of splendid opportunities for the development of the revolutionary movement against capitalism, does not mean that his intentions are bad or that his plans are to sacrifice the world revolution. It does mean that his present policies in the Comintern are wrong, are bad.

If your evaluation of the motives animating the C.P.S.U.'s attitude toward the world revolution were correct, then, the Comintern should be considered a counter-revolutionary organization, a betrayer of the principles of Marx and Lenin. If this were true, then, the I.L.P. should under no circumstances seek to affiliate sympathetically or fully with the Communist International. That is why we, of the International Communist Opposition, have placed so much stress on the following: the communists of all countries must guard against ultra-left sectarian adventurism with special vigilance in these days of dying capitalism as a world system. Leftist sectarianism is the most deadly enemy of the international communist movement in its present decisive combat with social reformism and fascism—the two guardians at the death-bed of the dying, but still far from dead, order of capitalist ex-

ploitation. At this point we will remind Comrade Stalin of his own very effective answer to the Trotskyites when they first proposed tactics for the Comintern very much akin to, if not identical with, the present tactics of the C. I. The comrades of the I.L.P. will be interested in knowing that at the Seventh Enlarged Plenum of the E.C.C.I. Stalin said:

" . . . and that therefore it is possible to leap over these facts and by clamorous slogans demonstrate the revision of the tactics of the united front, disruption of the trade union movement in the West, etc. But what does it mean to ignore facts, to ignore the objective progress of affairs? It means to abandon science and to resort to witchcraft. This gives rise to adventurism in the policy of the Opposition (Trotskyite) Bloc."

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Our Indictment Of Comintern's Tactical Course

It is precisely along these lines that we indict the present tactics of the C.I. We have not forgotten that when Lenin worked in the Communist International he repeatedly warned those of us who were working there with him that "we should on no account lose sight of the originality in development, that we should not look at things in a stereotyped manner, that we should be able to distinguish and to perceive simultaneously both what is most general and also the minor peculiarities which sometimes play a decisive role in the subsequent transition on the road to communism."

For us of the International Communist Opposition the following advice of Lenin to the Third World Congress of the Comintern, held at a time similar to our present days, is still very much in force:

"The fundamental tasks of the Communist Party in the current crisis is to conduct, extend, widen and unite the present defensive fight of the proletariat and sharpen it towards the final political struggle in accordance with the course of evolution. Should, however, the pace of development slacken and the present economic crisis be followed by a period of prosperity in a greater or less number of countries, this would by no means be an indication of the beginning of the organic epoch. So long as capitalism exists, periodic vacillations are inevitable. These vacillations are going to accompany capitalism in its death agony as was the case during its youth and maturity."

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Soviet Foreign Policy And World Revolution

We further deny that there is any conflict between the interests of Soviet foreign policy and the interests of the world revolution. We maintain that the present foreign policy of the Soviet Union is correct, is in the interests of world peace which the proletariat so sorely needs, and is a continuation of the basic fundamentals of Soviet foreign policy as laid down by Lenin in the instructions to the delegation of the Soviet Union to the Genoa Conference in 1922. Carrying out this line of Lenin, Chicherin then declared in behalf of the Soviet Union:

"The Russian delegation recognizes that, in the present historical period, which permits a parallel coexistence of the old social order and the new one being born, economic collaboration between the powers representing the two systems of property is urgently necessary for general economic reconstruction. . . . The Russian delegation has come here not to make propaganda for its theoretical views but to set up practical relations with the governments."

Let us also draw your attention to an interview between the British journalist, W. T. Goode, with Lenin in 1919 in reference to Soviet foreign policy. When Mr. Goode asked Lenin what guarantees could be offered against official propaganda among the Western peoples, if by any chance relations with the Soviet Republics were opened, Lenin replied that the Bolsheviks had declared to Bullitt (now American ambassador to the U.S.S.R.) that they were ready to sign an agreement not to make official propaganda. It was Lenin himself who emphasized to Bullitt that as a government the Soviets were ready to "undertake that no official propaganda should take place. If private persons undertook propaganda they could do it at their own risk and be amenable to the laws

of the country in which they acted."

We cannot emphasize to you too strongly that you are laying yourself wide open to justifiable attacks by the Comintern bureaucratic leadership when you make so unjustifiable a criticism of the Soviet Union as when you speak of its promising "to repudiate the essential activities of its own sections" in other countries. Apparently you have in mind articles 3 and 4 of the Litvinoff-Roosevelt agreement leading to American recognition of the U.S.S.R. There is no cause for excitement over these paragraphs. Litvinoff was right when he declared that these articles are "the fixed policy of the government of the U.S.S.R." When Lenin was at the head of the C.P.S.U. and the C.I., the Soviet government signed a treaty of peace with Esthonia at Tartu on February 2, 1920 in which is found the following paragraph, article 7, section 5:

" . . . to forbid the formation, and the presence in their territory, of any organizations or groups whatsoever claiming to govern all or part of the territory of the other contracting party, and the presence of representatives or officials of organizations or groups whose object is to overthrow the government of the other party to the Treaty."

And Article 4, section 2, of the peace treaty between Latvia and the Soviet Union signed on August 11, 1920 is identical with the one quoted above. In Article 5 of the final peace of Riga, March 18, 1921, between Poland and the R.S.F.S.R. and the Ukraine not only did the governments pledge themselves to refrain from interference in each other's internal affairs but the following is also agreed to:

"Each of the contracting Parties undertakes not to create or protect organizations which are formed with the object of encouraging armed conflict against the other Contracting Party or of undermining its territorial integrity, or of subverting by force its political or social institutions, nor yet such organizations as claim to be the Government of the other Party or of a part of the territories of the other party. The Contracting Parties, therefore, undertake to prevent such organizations, their official representatives and other persons connected therewith, from establishing themselves on their territory, and to prohibit military recruiting, etc. . . ."

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Greetings to I. L. P. National Conference

Comrades, we have perhaps imposed entirely too much on you in our lengthy statement. However, we feel so keenly the importance of the problems which you have raised and which we are facing in common, that we found it necessary to present our viewpoint in a rather detailed manner. We hope that the I.L.P. at its forthcoming National Conference, will take steps towards adopting a position which will insure its becoming a powerful factor not only in the achievement of the unification of the Communist forces of Great Britain, but of the world Communist movement as well. The Communist party of the United States (Opposition) is prepared to cooperate with you in a truly comradely fashion towards the achievement of this end which we consider as the most vital need of the world proletariat.

We extend to you fraternal greetings and express our sincerest hopes that your forthcoming National Conference will be successful and will prove of real service in the struggle for the reconstruction and reunification of the World Communist Movement, for the restoration of the Communist International to the tactical path of Leninism and organizational principles laid down in the basic Theses and Statutes of the C.I.

For the achievement of these objectives, we of the I.C.O., invite your comradely cooperation.

Forward to World Communist Unity!

Forward to the victory of the International Proletariat!

NATIONAL COMMITTEE
COMMUNIST PARTY U.S.A. (OPPOSITION)

Jay Lovestone, Sec'y.