

THE MILITANT

Weekly Organ of the Communist League of America [Opposition]

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Electric Chair Threat to Left Organizers

Six workers face death in the electric chair in Atlanta, Ga. because they addressed meetings of Negro and white workers and urged them to fight against lynching and unemployment. They include two white women and two Negroes.

The six workers are held under a state law passed in 1861 which calls for the death penalty for those convicted on the charge of "inciting to insurrection". Up until the present time no one has ever been convicted under that law.

The prosecuting attorney has stated that when the six workers are brought to trial he will demand that they be sent to the chair. Only if the jury that convicts them urges clemency, can they be given a prison sentence instead of being burned to death. The Southern capitalist class wants to quickly stamp out any efforts to organize the Negro and white workers for a united struggle. There is no doubt that a maximum effort will be made to secure a conviction, hoping in that way to terrorize the workers.

Those facing the electric chair are M.H. Powers, Communist Party organizer; Joseph Carr, Young Communist League organizer; Mary Dalton, National Textile Workers Union organizer; Anna Burlak, International Labor Defense organizer; Gilmer Brady, national organizer, American Negro Labor Congress and Henry Storey, a member of the Atlanta branch of the A. N. L. C.

The International Labor Defense is conducting the campaign for the defense of these six workers. So far it has failed to arouse the masses to action. Only a few isolated meetings have been held which have hardly received any publicity in either the capitalist or Party press.

A broad united front movement must be started all over the country on behalf of the six workers. The International Labor Defense together with all labor organizations that can be brought into action must arrange mighty protest demonstrations demanding freedom for the jailed

Indian Ferment and Chinese Lessons

Reports from subsidized sources minimize it but British imperialism is nevertheless unable to suppress the fact that the Indian ferment is still gaining in breadth and in depth. The insurgents have begun to pass over from breaking the government salt monopoly to the refusal to pay taxes. Simultaneously the civil disobedience campaign which the petty bourgeoisie, in fear of real mass action strives to hold within the limits of pacifist non-resistance—is overflowing the barriers erected for it by the Nationalist Congress.

After generations of oppression and exploitation, the Indian masses moving in tidal waves of revolt are presenting the world with one of the grandiose spectacles of history. The uprising of the colonial Orient, precipitating the solution of the agrarian and national problems of the democratic revolution in conjunction with the international and socialist revolutionary whose class bearer is the proletariat—this is one of the outstanding features of the final stage of capitalism.

MacDonald—Bourgeois Agent

It is no less characteristic that the torch-carriers of the imperialist suppression of the Indian revolt, should be the "socialist" Labor government of the canting MacDonald.

How can any worker still cling to his last remnant of faith in the social democracy? The Indian situation fully confirms the justice of Lenin's contention that the "socialists" are agents of the bourgeoisie. Mac Donald is prepared to repeat a hundred times over that he is not a bourgeois organizer.

Powers and Carr are scheduled to go on trial on June 7. The date for the trial of the others has not as yet been set. The time is short. Action must be swift. Let the campaign to free the six workers be started on a basis than can bring success.

dred Amritsar massacres to maintain the Empire. No revolutionary Marxist expected anything else from the Labor government but the continuation of the long chain of crimes and betrayals committed by the Second International since 1914. Socialist reformism inevitably becomes socialist imperialism.

But it would be a profound mistake and delusion to conceive of the present crisis in India as the decisive struggle for freedom from British imperialism. The movement of the masses still has no other leadership than the bourgeoisie and all historical experience bears out that the bourgeoisie will betray the struggle at the first opportunity agreement that they reach with the foreign imperialists and at the first sign that the masses are turning not only against the foreign but no less against the native exploiter. The bourgeoisie in the epoch of imperialism is incapable of carrying on a consistent struggle for the democratic revolution, and has no intention of peacefully allowing the proletariat to assume the leadership. Here the lessons of the Chinese Revolution are an invaluable source of instruction and guidance for the proletarian vanguard in India.

India and the Proletariat

The Indian Revolution will triumph under the leadership of the Indian proletariat or not at all. It will triumph as the dictatorship of the proletariat or not at all.

This means that there are certain indispensable pre-requisites for the revolution. That the Communist International, the world organization of the revolutionary working class, should have to enact the role practically of a passive onlooker in the present crisis, is one of the most damning indictments of the Stalin regime. That there is no Communist Party in India today worth its salt is the direct outcome of the

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Build Mass Movement for Mar. 6 Jailed

Growing out of the campaign on behalf of the millions of unemployed workers in the United States, and directly from the March 6th Unemployment Demonstration in Union Square, New York City, Wm. Z. Foster, I. Amter, Robert Minor and Raymond have been serving sentences of six months to three years upon trumped up charges and conviction for "inciting to riot". In unparalleled star-chamber proceedings denied bail and jury trial and an opportunity to have defense witnesses heard, the defendants, Communists, were railroaded to long, harsh prison sentences.

New York capitalism has demonstrated graphically the viciousness and hatred of capitalist class justice against workingmen and their leaders. In other parts of the country, the bourgeoisie follow the lead of New York in the extension on a national scale of the persecution of the Communists and other workers.

The passivity and apathy with which the New York convictions have been met is appalling, and symptomatic of the impasse which the official Communist Party has reached. Hardly any agitation is carried on by the Party press or Daily Worker to effect the release of the four Communists and to expose the machinery which brought about their conviction. Why has the Party made virtually no efforts to rally on behalf of the four convicted leaders those workers who it declared followed its banner at the height of the unemployment crisis? Why are there no steps taken for a wide united front to arouse the working class to demand these comrades be released forthright from their incarceration? It can and must be done. Various elements in the labor movement can unquestionably be brought into action in this case.

Rumors are widely current in Party circles that behind the scenes a game is being played to obtain the release of the framed-up men. This is wrong and will get the movement nowhere, and least of all

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Maintain the Weekly Militant!

Shall the WEEKLY MILITANT continue? Our readers, the sympathizers, supporters and members of the Left Opposition have to decide this question now—and decisively.

On November 15, 1928 the first number of the semi-monthly Militant appeared, and first publicly broke the conspiracy of silence and the reign of ideological and physical terror of the Stalins and Bucharins, the Fosters and the Lovestones, carried on for years against the true standard-bearers of Bolshevism, the Russian Opposition-Bolshevik-Leninists, led by Leon Trotsky. For over a year and a half now, the actual views of the International Left Opposition have been regularly brought before the American Communists and the working class. The Militant, official organ of the Communist League of America (Opposition), has been all this time a flaming torch, burning away the poisonous roots of the Centrist and Right wings in the Communist International and the United States, and guiding the bewildered Communist movement again onto the path of Lenin's teachings.

The incomparable writings of Leon Trotsky, Christian Rakovsky and other outstanding Bolsheviks have appeared regularly in the Militant, and only in its columns.

The truth about the conditions in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the causes of the divisions and splits in it, the ramifications of the Russian struggle in the Communist movements of all countries, the program of the Russian Opposition to save the Bolshevik Revolution from the danger of Thermidorian developments, has been unfolded in the Militant.

Now more than ever the Militant must remain a weekly. The present adventurist course of the Communist Parties internationally follows upon the heels of the brazen Right opportunism of the previous period. We are now paying the price for all these years of accumulated blunders, in the prevailing apathy among Party members, in hundreds of good fighters quitting the struggle for lack of perspective. We are losing one position after another in the unions. The Left wing Industrial Unions have been reduced to impotence. Only the Militant presenting a clear line of Leninist tactics, combatting the irresponsible regime of Browder-Foster as well as the Lovestone Right wing can turn the wave of apathy into one of struggle, can prevent the Syndicalists and "Socialists" from turning the crisis in the Cominteru to their profit.

The Communist movement and the working class can ill afford to lose the Militant, or to have it retreat to an existence again as a semi-monthly publication.

With confidence and faith in the integrity of the rank and file of the American Communists and the working class, the National Conference of the Communist League of America (Opposition) held in Chicago in May 1929, decided to launch the Weekly Militant, and to rely for its continuance upon the support of the honest worker-Communists in and outside the official Communist Party.

A period of six months trial for the Weekly Militant was projected. By might and main, by heroic efforts by the members and sympathizers of the Opposition, the WEEKLY Militant has been maintained now for almost seven months.

NOW WE ARE FINANCIALLY AT A CRUCIAL POINT, and we put the question squarely and frankly: SHALL THE WEEKLY MILITANT BE MAINTAINED?

The Plenum of the National Committee of the Communist League, after thorough discussion and analysis, came to the viewpoint that the WEEKLY MILITANT CAN AND MUST BE MAINTAINED for the cause of revolutionary Communism. Again, we declare our belief, based upon the experiences of the past year and a half, that the genuine adherents of Communism will make this historic task possible. We began the Militant on a shoe-string. We maintained it as a semi-monthly. We started the WEEKLY without substantial resources, but the militant fighters of the Opposition dug deep and made it live.

We turn again to our supporters and readers and ask them to rally to the WEEKLY MILITANT. For lack of funds, we have already skipped one issue of the Weekly. We do not want to miss another. For the next period, in addition to the normal income of the Militant, we call upon our readers and supporters to donate \$2,000.

Much as has been done, new ground yet remains to be broken. We have been pioneering with ideas. The ideas of the Opposition, the aspirations and needs of the working class—must triumph. By helping to MAINTAIN THE WEEKLY MILITANT, you can do your share.

Send your contributions at once to the MILITANT, 25 THIRD AVENUE, NEW YORK, N. Y.

NATIONAL COMMITTEE
COMMUNIST LEAGUE OF AMERICA (OPPOSITION)

DENY AID TO MEERUT VICTIMS

Comrade Maurice Spector, member of the national committee of the Communist League (Opposition), is one of the eight witnesses for whom leaders of Indian trade union and revolutionary movements on trial in Meerut, have applied to the British viceroy—hitherto without success. The Daily Worker, organ of the British Communist Party reports in its issue of May 7, 1930:

"Over five weeks ago some of the Meerut prisoners, whose trial still drags on, although the censorship allows no word of it to come direct to Britain, made an application direct to the Viceroy.

"Their application was for permission to call as witnesses eight workers in the revolutionary movement in England, Canada or Australia, the list being: Harry Pollitt, J. E. Potter-Wilson, of the Indian Workers' Welfare League. C. P. Dutt, S. Saklatvala, J. Ryan, director of the Sydney Labour Research Department, Australia, J. Tanner, A. E. U., Maurice Spector, Communist Party of Canada, J.R. Campbell.

"Out of the prosecutions 320 witnesses, 8 from England have already been examined, and one from France. They have given 'evidence' as to the actions of 'co-conspirators' such as Harry Pollitt. But Pollitt is not allowed to go to India to answer this 'evidence' and to give evidence for the defense.

"These police spies, who have brazenly admitted in court their system of opening letters in the post, photographing them, sticking them up again and sending them on, have 'produced' volumes of printed 'evidences' to prove the conspiracy. The workers who wrote or published many of these 'documents' in England, Australia or Canada are not allowed to enter India to explain, defend or justify them."

Readers of the Militant should bear in mind that this procedure, characteristic of the most brutal persecutions of the capitalist class, is being followed by His Majesty's Most Servile Government, the Labour Party cabinet of Ramsay MacDonald.

Comrade Spector was the leader of the Canadian Communist movement and chairman of the Political Bureau of the C. P. there, as well as member of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, until his expulsion from the Party some 18 months ago for "Trotskyism". He is now actively engaged in the work of the Opposition.

BULLETIN OF THE RUSSIAN OPPOSITION

Published in the Russian Language

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25 cents each 18c in bundles

Send orders and funds to THE MILITANT

25 Third Avenue New York, N. Y.

Our National Tour Shachtman Tours for Opposition

The national tour by comrade Max Shachtman, arranged by the Communist League of America (Opposition) is meeting with marked success wherever comrade Shachtman reports on his lengthy visit to Leon Trotsky at Constantinople, the conference of the German Left Opposition held and the preliminary International Conference of the Left Opposition at Paris, France. Comrade Shachtman was the delegate of the Communist League of America to both of these conferences.

Meetings have already been held in New York City, New Haven, Conn., Philadelphia, Pa. Boston, Mass., Montreal, Canada and Toronto, Canada. In Boston in addition to the mass meeting, comrade Shachtman also spoke before Independent Workmen's Circle No. 18.

Additional Cities Added

Requests to hear comrade Shachtman came in from additional cities, with the result that Youngstown, O., Duluth, Minn.,

and Superior, Wisconsin have been added to the schedule. It was not possible, because of the crowded schedule, to fill a last minute request from Winnipeg, Canada at this time.

In connection with the mass meetings, comrade Shachtman is also holding special sessions with the Branches of the Communist League of America (Opposition). At these meetings comrade Shachtman is giving detailed reports of the recently concluded Plenum of the National Committee of the Communist League, and is taking up with each Branch the expansion of activities of the organization in the next period.

The tour of comrade Shachtman which commenced in New York on May 15th will cover approximately 25 cities, extending as far west as Kansas City. It will conclude with meetings in Pittsburg, Pa.

As the Militant goes to press, the following cities are yet to be visited.

Watch This Schedule for Your City

HAMILTON, CANADA

Tuesday, June 6th.

DETROIT, MICH.

Saturday-Sunday, June 7-8.

CHICAGO, ILL.

Monday to Thursday, inc., June 9, 10, 11, 12.

MINNEAPOLIS, MINN.

Friday, June 13, Mass Meeting at COOKS & WAITERS UNION HALL, 520 Hennepin Avenue (above Unique Theatre).

MINNEAPOLIS, MINN.

Saturday, June 14. Twin City Membership Meeting.

ST. PAUL, MINN.

Sunday, June 15. Mass Meeting at LABOR TEMPLE, 8 p.m.

DULUTH, MINN.

Monday, June 16, Mass Meeting at CAMEL HALL, 12 E. Superior St.

SUPERIOR, WISCONSIN

Tuesday, June 17, Mass Meeting at

WORKERS HALL, Tower Avenue.

KANSAS CITY, Mo.

Friday, June 20. Mass Meeting at —HALL, 914 Grand Avenue, 2nd Floor.

KANSAS CITY, MO.

Thursday & Saturday, June 19 and 21—Branch Meetings.

ST. LOUIS, MO.

Sunday-Monday, June 22-23. (Place to be announced.)

SPRINGFIELD, ILL.

Tuesday, June 24. (Place to be announced.)

CLEVELAND, OHIO

Wednesday-Thursday, June 25-26. (Place to be announced.)

YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO

Friday, June 27. (Place to be announced.)

PITTSBURG, PA.

Saturday-Sunday, June 28-29. (Place to be announced.)

Rank and File Unrest in the Amalgamated

The convention of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers which met in Toronto received the usual tribute of liberal plaudits. The liberals whose miserable task it is in our times to try to soften the sharp edge of the class struggle, feel a deep affinity for Hillman and his associates. They have been thoroughly captivated by the whole pseudo-scientific apparatus of "production standards" unionism.

The convention in Toronto was organized to present the most plausible front to the world of labor! The Left wing which has been craftily outmanoeuvred by the "honest" Hillman machine, realizes fully how false this front is. Perhaps it will impress some "impartial" workers more if instead of merely repeating our own root and branch indictment of Hillmanism, we can cite the testimony of one so remote from Communism as H. Schneid in the "socialist" Wecker (May 31). In all the fine speeches of the officialdom any reference to that which is the heart of the matter—the consideration of living and working conditions of the workers—was studiously avoided. For a considerable time, he goes on to admit, conditions in Baltimore, Boston, Montreal, Toronto and Chicago, not to speak of New York have been developing from bad to worse. "All you need have done at the convention was to put the question to a delegate. 'How much do you earn' and it would have opened the wound." Here is another most significant fact. Of the two hundred delegates with 80 resolutions before them, only one delegate took the floor, apart from the official machine.

Such is the balance sheet of the Hillman-Beckerman regime in the men's cloth-

ing industry. Growing misery, economic insecurity, the delivery of workers to speed-up and more grinding exploitation; and simultaneously the intimidation of the workers by expulsion and similar threats to the point when rank and file democracy has been replaced by the rule of the officialdom, and its staff of hired experts, both of the gangster and the research variety.

It is high time for the militants in the Amalgamated to renew their struggle. The apathy of the workers will quickly disappear once they sense that the Left has again thrown down the gage of battle to the bureaucrats. But for this it is necessary that the Left wing should base its policy and leadership on the tried and tested revolutionary strategy of Marx and Lenin. It is folly of the most dangerous kind to set up old prejudices of American syndicalism and De Leonism as the latest evangel. The Left wing has practically surrendered the workers to Hillman and his well-oiled machine. Schneid's sidelights on the convention make clear that even at this convention organized without the participation of the Left there was considerable rank and file discontent and unrest, although it has been driven by the absence of the Left and the suppression of workers' democracy, to seek expression in the lobby corridors and not on the floor itself. What is the policy of the Communist Party under these circumstances? It is expressed in the statement issued by the G. E. B. of the Needle Trades Workers Industrial Union (Daily Worker May 22nd). That statement is a direct appeal, which if followed would have the immediate effect of isolating an insignificant group of Left wingers from the main body of the masses in the union.

THE BLUMKIN ASSASSINATION

In Moscow, only the narrow Party circles know about Stalin's assassination of Blumkin. By these circles rumors are systematically spread that Blumkin committed suicide. Stalin still does not dare to admit openly that he shot the "counter-revolutionary" Blumkin.

It is highly remarkable that the world capitalist press did not at all hurry to utilize the case of Blumkin. It calculates, and quite correctly, that the defense of the Left Communists from the Stalin atrocities is not in its interests. All the more persistently and uncompromisingly must therefore the Left Opposition carry on the campaign of exposing the Stalinist crimes.

We informed the comrades previously that besides Blumkin, two more oppositionists, the comrades Silov and Rabinovitch, have been shot. This question, therefore, takes on exceptional political acuteness: only the echo of Stalin's crimes among the advanced workers of the world will stop his bloody atrocities against the Bolshevik-revolutionaries.

The former Communist Souvarine has hastened to come to Stalin's aid, declaring that Blumkin was carrying out the directives of the Opposition inside the G.P.U., and that so long as the G. P. U. exists, it must assassinate agents that break faith, Souvarine draws the conclusion that "on the thirteenth year of the revolution" (?) the G. P. U. must be destroyed.

We have no basis whatever for entering into a political discussion with Souvarine. We consider it sufficient to make the following declaration:

Comrade Blumkin never carried out, and because of the very nature of his work never could carry out the directives of the Opposition either inside the G. P. U., or through the G. P. U. Suffice it to say that Blumkin spent a considerable part of the last period in the Far East, primarily Mongolia.

To prohibit workers of the G. P. U. as well as workers of the military institutions from holding views differing from those of the Central Committee, means to deprive Communists working in the above named institutions of their elementary Party rights. Only Stalinist bureaucrats can defend such an outrage.

The G. P. U. is the organ of self-defense for the proletarian dictatorship. In so far as the October Revolution on its thirteenth year is still surrounded by a world of enemies it cannot give up such organs—the dictatorship cannot cease being a dictatorship.

Only liberals and liberalizing social democrats can pose this question on a formal plane. We raise it on a class plane: In the name of what are repressions applied? Against whom are they applied? Whom and what do they serve? It is a matter of revolutionary expediency, and not super-class justice.

The assassination of Blumkin, as well as the repressions against the Leninist Opposition in general, weaken the proletarian vanguard, undermine the Party and strengthen the class enemies. The struggle against this treacherously-cowardly murder of Blumkin by Stalin, we carry on in the name of the proletarian dictatorship.

Let this be known to our friends and enemies!

"MY LIFE"

All readers of the Militant and their friends, who desire to get their copy of Leon Trotsky, "My Life", should make it a point to order the book directly through the Militant. Shipment will be made the day the order is received, and the cost of the book, five dollars, (\$5.00), covers the postage charge. Send your order, together with money order or cash to

THE MILITANT
25 Third Avenue, New York, N. Y.

In Germany

The «New Turn» in the C.I.

BERLIN—

conformity with the new course decreed by the Stalinist leadership after the 15th of March the presidium of the Executive Committee has ordered a general turn in all sections of the Communist International.

The new turn cast its shadow before it a while ago. It was announced in the speech of Manuilsky last November during the sessions of the Young Communist International. During the course of his speech Manuilsky attacked with extreme violence the Central Committee of the Austrian Communist Party which he reproached with having "sectarian conceptions" for having spoken of an imminent revolutionary situation at the time of the aggravation of the Austrian crisis, and for having played with insurrection. He thus exposed the thoroughly opportunist character of the new turn.

For it was the leading bodies of the Comintern, with the German C. P. Central at its head which had simply thrown the leadership of the Austrian C. P. into the "river of insurrection". The Constance conference of September 18, 1929, declared that "today the question of the seizure of power presents itself in Austria" and Remmele declared at a meeting of the Central Committee of the German Communist Party at which were present members of the Austrian Central Committee, that it was not sufficient to propagate the idea of Soviets but it was now necessary to set about realizing them.

The Real Responsibility

The Left Opposition rose up against this playing with insurrection and showed that the Party had already let slip a decisive occasion when it neglected to mobilize the masses against the repressive regime of Schober; nevertheless it was denounced as "defeatist" and its slogan—the creation of defense committees in all factories against the threatening fascism—was not even given a hearing.

The hopeless bankruptcy of the "Left" Stalinist course was revealed in all its tragico-comic aspects last fall in Austria.

The cowardly and pitiful retreat of the theoreticians of adventurism, of the Third Period inventors, before the political conclusions of their slogans and their theories in the Austrian crises clearly portrays the character or rather lack of character of the new turn.

Without appearing to do so, Manuilsky in his report set out to outline a new interpretation of the "Third Period". Until quite recently it was the period of "violent revolutionary upsurge", of the imminent collapse of stabilization; now, however, the maturing of a world economic crisis is very modestly announced and the phenomena of the crisis coming to light in the various countries are examined. "It is not yet the finish of stabilization that approaches, but only the beginning of the decomposition, for the collapse of capitalist stabilization would mean the collapse of the capitalist system, that is, the birth of an objectively revolutionary situation in the capitalist countries"; that is what Manuilsky announced while the Berlin Rote Fahne spoke, since February 1st of the capitalist collapse that is developing at a "breath-taking pace".

But isn't such a "re-interpretation" made to reveal the whole stupidity of the theory of the Third Period? Does not the whole strategy outlined by the Sixth Congress threaten to give way under this weak attempt made at revision behind the back of the Party? And does not the collapse of the theoretical and strategical basis of the "Left" Stalinist course threaten to shake the authority of the all-powerful apparatus of the C. I.? The fear of seeing these questions posed openly absolutely dominates the exemplary bureaucrat in the first and timid attempt at revision. And that is why Manuilsky swiftly throws a morsel to the astonished members of the Communist Party; he declares that the "growing revolutionary upsurge has already mounted a degree".

These contradictions in Manuilsky's

speech are only the reflection of the contradictions of Centrist policy in general. Each attempt to correct itself must be paid for by the "deepening" of its past errors; in this manner, Centrist more and more prepares the ground for avowed opportunism and favors the development of adventurism and openly Right wing tendencies.

The Turn a la Thaelmann and Co.

The most perfect picture of internal contradictions, of half-measures and of the most dangerous opportunism is furnished us by the turn affected in Germany at this moment by Thaelmann, Neumann and Remmele. The resolution adopted at the meeting of the C. C. of the C. P. G. on March 20 and 21, declares that "all the recent events prove that the revolutionary upsurge, in spite of its unequal developments is rising upwards as before..."

And in the name of the revolutionary upsurge, the resolution of the C. C. demands "a strong consolidation of the struggle against social-fascism".

Now, the "strong consolidation" consists in the fact that the C. C. suddenly discovers the difference between the social democratic workers and their counter-revolutionary chiefs. At the same time, the resolution attacks the "Leftist sectarianism" and declares that the "fraction work has considerably diminished lately in the reformist and Christian unions."

And still at the same time, the C. C. declares that "the existing revolutionary unions must be strengthened in the most energetic manner".

Rarely has a leadership tried in a more cowardly and disgusting manner to wash its hands of its mistakes behind the backs of its adherents. It is at last discovered that "the theory of the little Zoergel (according to which the simple social democratic worker is a "class enemy") belongs to the realm of absolute cretinism. This discovery is masked by the slogan of the "consolidation of the

struggle against social-fascism".

The need for working within the free trade unions (social democratic), to which more than 5,000,000 workers belong, can no longer be evaded. But to conceal the recognition of this necessity, the work is made equivalent to that done in the Christian trade unions and at the same time "the most energetic strengthening of the revolutionary trade unions" is demanded.

Effects of the Turn

This cowardly right-about-face of the Party bureaucracy which, within 24 hours, tramples underfoot what it still proclaimed to be patented Bolshevism yesterday, has had various effects in the Party. A part of the apparatus, specialists sworn to the struggle against social fascism, has responded to the turn by an apparatus rebellion. At the head of this "apparatus rebellion" is the trade union strategist, Paul Merker, member of the Political Bureau and the Central Committee. Among the members of the C. P. there is above all, an extreme agitation. The rebellion of Merker has found substantial support in the Central Region (Berlin). The Party functionaries, by 70 votes against 7, have rejected the new "turn", and demanded the exclusion of Remmele and Heinz Neumann from the C. C. It is a typical trait of the hypocrisy of the leadership that it now tries to convince the militants that the manifestation of the ultra-Leftist Merker group is... "a resurrection of vanquished Trotskyism". And this after having declared for years that the Trotskyists and the Right wing were identical! The leadership of the Party will not succeed in unloading its faults, and the responsibility for the line it defended up to now, upon the Merker group. It will succeed still less in putting into the same bag the real Left of the Party and the ultra-Leftist Merker group.

The Left Opposition which has been fighting for years the erroneous course of Stalin and Thaelmann, now fortified by the unification of the Left Opposition that took place on March 31, will fight more vigorously than ever in the Party in order to win to the ideas of the International Opposition the most advanced elements of the Party.

In France

The Impending Crisis in the Party

The Communist Party of France and the French revolutionary trade unions have had, ever since their foundation, a considerable handicap in the struggle for influence among the workers. The powerful wave of post-war revolution carried an enthusiastic majority of the old Socialist Party over into the ranks of communism, at the scission of Tours. The splitting, bureaucratic policy of the Jouhaux-led C. G. T. drove still more workers toward the revolutionary trade union center, the C. G. T. U., born under the United Front slogan. Thus, organizationally, the original post-war conditions favored the revolutionary movement, gave the Communists a considerable advantage over the yellow reformists.

The Stalinist Course in France

However the vacillating, equivocal, adventurist character of the Comintern "line" after Lenin's death, initiated, as elsewhere, in France too, a serious disintegration of the revolutionary ranks particularly as far as the political side of the movement is concerned. The membership of the Party has been almost decimated. (From well over 120,000 members after Tours, there remain now from 15 to 30,000.) The influence of the press has immensely fallen. The socialists have been able to recover and strengthen their positions—at the expense of the Communists.

An example of passive reaction among the rank and file, was offered to view on the First of May. The Party and the C. G. T. U. issued a manifesto, calling for a "Day of Struggle" appealing to their adherents to come "All into the Streets". What actually happened, was this:

In Paris and in the suburbs several hundreds of thousands of workers struck, obeying the call, not only of the C. G. T. U. and the Communists, but also that of the C. G. T. and the S. P. There were, however, no demonstrations, no meetings, whatsoever.

At the Grange-Aux-Folles, the C. G. T. U. headquarters, only the flies (cops) were to be seen in appreciable numbers. Rue Lafayette (the Party office) was likewise deserted. At the Sante prison, where the Party called for a demonstration in the evening, there was instead, a veritable demonstration—of flies...

Rise of Left Opposition

Why this inactivity, why this apathy among workers organized in hundreds of thousands in mass revolutionary organizations? The apparatchiki, the greater and the lesser bureaucrat explain this away with "self-criticism". They didn't make a "bon boulot" (good job) of the preparation! They are in general imbued with an entirely non-Communist, non-Marxist spirit of subjectivism. Revolution to them is merely an administrative affair, a matter of stereotyped routine. As a result: Among the youth a positive abhorrence for theory, a strong inclination for "revolutionary gymnastics", for the many times over discredited and unmasked "Herveism". Among the adults, slavish execution of "instructions".

The more serious, the more sincere elements in the Party and the League have, however, lately begun to be affected by the meager results of their work. They are beginning to think things over. In the C. G. T. U. these elements are rapidly developing into a principled, pro-Party, anti-bureaucratic opposition, grouping themselves about our comrades of the Verite and the Ligue Communiste. Among the youth, a similar process is taking place.

The Stalinist apparatus-men have, in fact, become alarmed already. They are now groping about for a suitable label to tag on to these new oppositionists, before proceeding with the customary suspensions and expulsion measures. And this groping about displays a pitiful intellectual confusion, a true reflection of chained intelligence.

The editorial of the May number of the Cahiers du Bolchevisme sets itself the task of "analyzing" the new opposition. The objectives that guide the "analysis" are clear. One, to discover a scape-goat upon which to cast the guilt for the errors committed by the bureaucrats themselves since the inauguration of the "third period"—and lately condemned by the infallible Manuilsky-Stalin. The other, to discredit the real opposition as much as possible in the eyes of the workers.

The second objective produces only a barrage of abuse and slander, which the workers will hardly tolerate. The new oppositionists are called "centrists", allies of the "Popists", "hidden opportunists", agents of the reformist minoritaires" and similar epithets. But, it is well known that the militants of the new C. G. T. U. opposition have always fought the syndicalists and opportunist tendencies of the Monatte group as well as of the Rights. Comrades like Aulas, Douemanget, Villatte possess a prestige among the workers for that. After "analyzing" the opposition "currents" into "pessimists" and "left phrase mongers" (the discovery, then, of some ephemeral "Merker" group in France?) the editorial writer proceeds with illuminations.

Finding a Scape-Goat

"As to the latter," he writes, "they displace the practical work by bombast and by mechanical procedure (!) and surrender themselves to Leftist demagoguery (exaggeration of the crisis (!) slogan of the conquest of power as a practical task (so!) etc.). A perusal of the Humanite of the "third period" in any arrangement of days whatsoever would enable anyone to call these mysterious "latter" by their real given names. But—it seems—the "texts" were, nevertheless correct; the question here deals, with such "latter" phrase-mongers, who "...interpreted the texts, falsely denatured our estimations" etc. It is clear that this to date non-existent ultra-Left "group" is to be picked in the main from the conscientious lower layers of functionaries who simply took the slogans issued by the directing organs on good faith. To these are to be attributed all the sins of the "Left turn" in the first section of the third period just finished.

However, it is extremely difficult to find an "important" personage who has gained the disfavor of the "council of the All-High, to attach to this group as a sort of a loadstone. Even Vassart, among the leading until recently in the Party and the C. G. T. U. can only merit the label "pessimist" (despite his well-known attack against Chambelland of the "forty years of social peace"). This is a real dilemma for the analyst. Yet, the new opposition has been "proven" an ally of the Right wing; Vassart as "skeptical" and "pessimist" has been created a confederate of Chambelland, in the Party ranks and even those ephemeral Leftists are some sort of opportunists anyway. And so, our writer trembling for his own hide (as Lovestone, for instance, did for his, in the days of our own Trotskyist Right danger) concludes:

"In our Party we cannot speak of two battle fronts (this is already sacrilege) as among the youth (reference to Manuilsky). The few Left errors, which might have been committed by good revolutionary workers ought to be eliminated, but they should not be confused with the "Left" bombast of several braggarts (!) who by that means attempt to disguise their opportunism. There is only one opportunist front with different shadings which we have underlined above."

The Perspectives

This confusion, this uneasiness in the ranks of the bureaucracy, marks an impending crisis. Couple this bureaucratic uneasiness with the growing dissatisfaction among the better rank and file elements, who watch in pain and despair, the fluctuation and the diminution of the Party influence, who begin to recognize the disrespect, the neglect of revolutionary theory, as the source of the evil, and we perceive the dawn of a fierce inner struggle in the French Party, an important opportunity to lead to the rehabilitation of the Party as the party of the proletariat. The French section of the International Left Opposition under the leadership of L. D. Trotsky and the Russian Leninist-Bolsheviks, will be at its post in the days to come. Under the banner of Leninism, it will fight to lead the French Party on to the correct Communist path, as part of the struggle for the renovation of the Comintern.

Paris, May 10

—S. G.

An Open Letter to the Members of the C. P. S. U. (b)

(Continued from Last Issue)

The Position of the Left Wing

The break between the epigones of the leadership and the Leninist tradition presents itself under a well-defined form of organization: all the cadres which participated in the building of the Comintern and presided over its leadership in the period of the first four Congresses are not only thrown out of the leadership, but in their overwhelming majority excluded from the ranks of official Communism. This fact alone suffices to denounce the whole abyss that has been created between today and the revolutionary past. The new "theory", the new policy and the new regime have acquired new people. It must be said openly to the workers: at the hour of danger, at the moment of decisive combat, the revolutionary inconsistency of the apparatus of the C. I. will become strikingly obvious to all. Irresponsible subalterns, always ready to accommodate themselves to each new leadership, have never been capable of leading the assault against the ruling classes.

The Left wing (Bolshevik-Leninists) whose spirit of clear-sighted criticism and slogans have been entirely confirmed from the point of view of the internal development of the U. S. S. R. as well as the situation on the international arena, is submitted to the vilest offensive. Nevertheless, and in spite of all the lies of the official press, the Left Opposition grows in numbers and is being fortified ideologically in the whole world.

The progress has been great especially this last year. The press of the Left Opposition in Europe, in America and in Asia constitutes at the present time the only serious Bolshevik-Marxist press, analyzing events, drawing the conclusions, proceeding to the formation of new cadres and preparing the regeneration of the Communist International.

In every country, the Left Opposition has put out of its ranks all those who, under cover of its banner, endeavored to dissimulate their spirit of opportunism, their petty bourgeois diletantism or their half-anarchist hostility to the country of the proletarian dictatorship.

In spite of all the calumnies of the official press, the international Left Opposition remains unshakably faithful to the October revolution and the Soviet State.

The false friends whom the Soviet bureaucracy draws to itself by means of concessions or alms—these Purcells, Fimzens and Barbusses of all countries—are all very good for anniversary "festivals" but not for the revolutionary struggle. The Opposition is an ideological selection which the persecutions and the fury to which it has been exposed has hardened. At the serious moment it will be found in the front lines.

The Role of the Social Democracy

The Russian Mensheviks, the Social-Revolutionaries and other groupings reduced to nothing at the same time as the bourgeoisie, anxiously scent the crisis, hoping to rise again out of the void. The "democratic" scoundrels of the exploiting classes think to find their rebirth in the fall of the Soviet power which they await impatiently. In reality, the fall of the dictatorship of the proletariat would signify the opening of a long period of civil wars for many years, with sporadic attempts at impotent Bonapartist dictatorship in various corners of the country, in the Chinese or Deniken manner, with the inevitable consequence of the arrest of economic and cultural development for many years. The way out of all this chaos could not be in the sense of a democracy—this political form being least likely in Russia, given the structure and historical past of the land—but much rather under the form of colonial subjugation or of a new October revolution.

The international social democracy does not want to and cannot take into account the economic and cultural expansion of the October revolution, whose creative force in every field is without equal in any known historical regime. All the dangers of the present moment whose source lies in the great betrayal by the social democracy which submits deliberately to capitalism, all the mistakes of the Stalinist leadership, cannot for a single instant obscure the fact that thanks to the proletarian char-

acter of the State, we have been able to attain a tempo of economic development that capitalism has never known. The very possibility of experiences in the form of plans and of collectivization, with all their contradictions and errors, constitutes a gigantic acquisition for all of humanity. Can they be compared for an instant with such "errors" as the patriotic participation of the social democracy in the imperialist slaughter or the present disgusting game of Mueller and MacDonald who crawl about in search of a recipe for the rejuvenation of capitalism?

The conquests of the October revolution show the incalculable possibilities that could be attained by Europe and humanity as a whole if the social democracy of Germany, England and other countries where it can formally become a majority (if it should "want" it, that is, if it should formulate a proletarian program) were to inscribe on the order of the day a socialist reconstruction of relations with the Soviet Union on the basis of an indissoluble collaboration.

Against "Socialist" Treachery

But that is out of the question, for the social democracy constitutes the "democratic" basis of capitalist conservatism and is the penultimate resource of a society based upon exploitation. The ultimate resource will be fascism.

The social democratic "criticism" of the Soviet regime is like the cry of the night-watchman: it is destined to maintain the tranquility of the propertied and to guarantee them peaceful slumber. To fight against the dictatorship of the proletariat, the social democracy utilizes the difficulties that it has itself created for the Soviet Union, augmented by those the leadership has caused. If, in relation to the capitalist world, the social democracy plays a role of protection towards the U.S.S.R., its aim bears a character of restoration. The struggle for "democracy" and "liberties" in the very sphere of world imperialism, one of whose guardians the social democracy has made itself, really signifies the struggle for the re-establishment of capitalism. Only thus the question is important. It indicates that to the extent that the crisis becomes graver, the more implacable will become our struggle against all the democratic agents of the restoration no matter who they are. At the same time, the further we go the more clearly we see that Communism cannot fight victoriously against the social democracy except on the road marked out by the Opposition.

* * *

The Party is the supreme political weapon. It is in the Party that the possibilities of the revolution and its future are embodied. But it is from this very source that the dangers proceed today. The adventurism of the bureaucracy does not halt with the destiny of the Party. Parallel to the generalized collectivization there takes place the generalized registry of factories and trades in the Party. This means nothing less than the dissolution of the Party into the class, that is, in reality the suppression of the Party. In this way, the bureaucratic apparatus acquires more extended power of oppression.

Its follies do not encounter the resistance of any criticism, neither correctives nor reactions, so long as life does not set itself to reply to them violently. The first warning of this kind has just been given. Everything leads to the belief that the subsequent one will be much more peremptory than all the preceding ones.

The country, even though not very distinctly, is taking this into account very profoundly. Naturally, each class in its own way. A dull uneasiness reigns in the Party. But the order that prevails in the Party is such that nobody would dare to express his fear aloud, nor even to put a question. The regime of "self-criticism" in its new stage consists of the obligation for each and every one to subscribe not only to the precision but also to the "genius" of the leadership and to hound those whom the leadership orders to hound.

Stalin's Victory over the Party

It is evident from this that the "victory" of the Stalinist bureaucracy over the Opposition was at the same time a victory over the Party. This process coincides with the withering away of a whole section of revolutionists, with the growth of bureaucracy and of the petty bourgeoisie in

the U. S. S. R., with the strengthening of the capitalist reaction and the social democracy in the whole world, with the defeat of the revolutionary movements, with the weakening of the positions of Communism and the strengthening of opportunist tendencies in its ranks.

The crisis in grain provisioning of 1927-28 having led it to a blind alley the Stalinist apparatus abruptly reversed its positions and entered into struggle against a part of the petty bourgeois forces with whose aid it has set upon the Left wing. Without the slightest hesitation, the Opposition subscribed to this turn about face and declared itself ready to support in full the leadership in any of its move orientated in the sense of a revolutionary policy and a cleansing of the regime within the Party.

But it is now incontestable that the swing to the Left in 1928, constituting a particularly brutal zig-zag, did not result in a new course. It could not result in one, since it was not accompanied by an ideological regeneration of the Party. Nothing has changed: there is still the same miserable and eclectic porridge instead of a living theory; still the same bureaucratic-functionary selection of the personnel, only much narrower; still the same methods of mechanization pushed to the highest degree.

The program of the administrative liquidation of a class is in actuality no less disastrous in the political field than was the scandalous report of Stalin to the conference of Marxist-Agronomists in the field of theory. It is not conceivable that there are not in Lenin's Party thousands upon thousands of people in whose mind the politics and the theory of Stalin does not sow uneasiness and indignation. Nevertheless there was no protest at all. Nobody dared to reply, while in the press the latest brood of reptiles set about to develop the ideas of this illiterate report as being the latest revelation of historical thought.

The leading Stalinist group has arrogated the power in its most cynical form. That is precisely why its supreme point of victory—the moment when the "leaders" of the Right wing capitulated—was at the same time the point of departure for a decrease of its domination over the Party. The coronation of the infallible leadership was judged necessary at the moment when this same leadership felt itself on the eve of bankruptcy.

The Party leads an ever more, ghostly existence. Stalin is much more revoltingly impudent with the Congresses than was the Czar towards the Duma.

Furthermore, on the very inside of the schematic cadres of the Russian Communist Party there are tens of thousands of revolutionary proletarians who can and will become the creative forces in the rebirth of the Party. It is to this nucleus that we attach the destinies of our group.

Conditions of the Opposition Cadres

The circumstances under which the cadres of the Opposition find themselves placed are without example in the history of the revolutionary movement. The harsh material conditions of deportation are aggravated by the application of complete political isolation. The complicated system of State and private measures of order is especially intended to sap the health of the deportees. At the same time the official press brings the Oppositionist relegated to a forsaken spot, triumphant information on the progress of the collectivization, of the industrialization, and on the uninterrupted victories of the Communist Parties throughout the world.

Certain of the isolated and weaker elements do not resist this pressure. But the majority of the capitulations are obviously simulated: broken and exhausted, they sign what they have no belief in. A new series of capitulations is being prepared for the Sixteenth Congress, proceeding from furtive negotiations followed by secret agreements behind the scenes. This sort of stage-play is one of the most disgusting manifestations of revolutionary exhaustion and moral decay. The pathetic invocation of the so-called need of "returning" to the Party betokens only cynicism toward that same Party. For can the Party be served by deception and falsehood? That is why the most "eminent" capitulators are immediately transformed into political cadavers left unburied, while the expelled and

hunted Opposition remains an active factor in the life of the Soviet republic and the Communist International.

After all there is nothing very astonishing in this. The innumerable books and pamphlets against the Opposition published since 1923, the special collections of quotations intended for Congresses and Conferences, the collections against "Trotskyism", etc... are today the most convincing proof in favor of the Opposition. We keep our Platform in reserve. They fear it mortally, while seeking to assail it by means of provocative polemics. Yet today as yesterday, the whole ideological life of the Party turns around the Oppositionist Platform as around a pivot.

The declaration of comrade Rakovsky, supported by the fundamental cadres of the Opposition, was an application of the united front towards the Party.

The Centrist leadership replied to it by sharpening the rigors of repression. The Opposition having sincerely proposed to attenuate the rigidity of organization of its struggle for a purely Marxist line, the apparatus replied by having Blumkin shot. We must say it openly to the Party and to the working class. We must explain the import of our proposal, name those responsible for its defeat, and proclaim our indelible determination to fight for our opinion and to increase two-fold, five-fold, ten-fold our efforts towards consolidating the Bolshevik Leninist fraction. In that alone can loyalty to the October revolution be manifested today.

* * *

A French proverb says that one must know how to fall back sometimes in order the better to leap. That is the condition in which the leadership of the Soviet state, as well as the leadership of the Communist International finds itself at present.

Both are driven by their own adventurism to the depths of an impasse. Placing its "prestige" above the interests of the world revolution, the Centrist bureaucracy draws ever more the noose around the neck of the Party. In matters of tactics, the first task is the following: to beat a retreat by abandoning the positions of adventurism. The retreat is inevitable in any case. It must therefore be carried out as soon as possible and in the best possible order.

(To Be Continued)

A Tribute From a So. African Militant

Cape Town, South Africa

Dear Comrades:

It was with great joy that I received from comrade Glass of Johannesburg the first few copies of the Militant followed a while later by a complete file which you sent him and which I have eagerly read.

As a theorist of Marxist-Leninism as a proletarian strategist, as the embodiment of proletarian sagacity and courage and honesty, as a master of lucid exposition and vivid prose Trotsky is unequalled in the workers' movement. And if the American comrades of the Opposition had done nothing in the past for the movement (and they have—their records are great), and if they should do little in the future (which is extremely unlikely), they yet will deserve and obtain the deep gratitude of all honest Communists for making available in English the writing of the leader of the world Opposition.

Comrade Glass and myself were amongst the small band of comrades in South Africa who from the very first, gave adherence to the teachings of Lenin and Trotsky and took an active part in the publication of the Bolshevik, a monthly journal at the Cape. Comrade Glass, I believe, has given you an account of the position in the South African Union and I will not dwell on it here save to state that under the leadership of a Stalinized Comintern, the gospel of Marcus Garvey is written large in the platform of the South African Communist Party.

I enclose a donation of ten shillings towards the sustaining fund of the Militant and will endeavour to make it a monthly donation. Wishing you the very best of luck in your splendid work for the cause, I remain

Yours for Communism,
—MANUEL LOPES

In Italy

Italian Fascism and the Economic Crisis

One can best explain the evolution of the fascist movement by following the transformations of Italian capitalism, its difficulties, and its vicissitudes in the course of the economic crisis provoked by the war.

Italian economy, despite its "victory" in the war, has retained its inferior position as compared with the great capitalist powers. The reasons for this economic inferiority lie principally in the lack of raw materials and capital, in the dependence on the importation of machinery from abroad, in the disproportion between the increase of population and the increase of wealth, a disproportion aggravated nowadays by the closing of the frontiers to emigration. All this lends justification to the definition of Italian capitalism as "a capitalism organically feeble" but it is not enough to recall this definition. We must at the same time analyze the changes which have taken place in the economic situation of Italy.

After the War

The war brought with it an extension of the basis of production and under the impulsion of finance capital, even a re-organization of the forms of production. Italian economy came out of the war profoundly transformed. The movement of the concentration and centralization of business enterprise had received a powerful impetus. During the war Italy was compelled to depend on its own resources in industry no less than in agriculture and commerce to provide the materials which it has been accustomed to receive from abroad and especially from Germany. Particularly active in the course of the war and consequently afterwards, were the mining, the machine, chemical and textile industries. Shipbuilding also experienced a big expansion.

As a whole Italian economy came out of the war considerably transformed and developed. But agriculture on the other hand had suffered enormously. The character of the soil was unfavorable to the change in the forms of cultivation required by the situation. In addition there was a scarcity of agricultural workers (the rural male population had been reduced by successive mobilizations from 4 to 2 millions). There was a lack of fertilizer. There was a dearth of cattle. Consequently there was a reduction in the area sown. But despite all these negative features, for the peasantry the war was a source of enrichment thanks to the rise in prices.

With the ending of hostilities, Italy entered on the period of economic crisis in which she still finds herself. In the official organs of the Italian Communist Party, this crisis is habitually characterized as an "organic and progressive crisis". In reality this feature of the crisis is not peculiar to Italy alone; it is what distinguishes in this period the quality of the world economic crisis of capitalism as a whole. It is not enough to say that we are in the midst of an "organic and progressive crisis"; one must study the origins of the crisis and the rhythm of its development.

If it is true that for capitalism to postpone its difficulties does not mean to surmount them, it is no less true that so long as these difficulties can be evaded, they can be momentarily overcome.

A country economically feeble, Italy thus experienced in the most direct and profound fashion the effects of the war crisis. As for other countries so for Italy also it was a crisis of raw materials, of lack of equipment, of capital markets, transport, etc. This raised the following problem: what class would be compelled to shoulder the expenses of the war? In other words, would it be at the expense of wages or of capitalist profits that the problems of prices (the very crux of the present economic crisis) would be resolved? The significance of the violent struggles waged in the post-war period, before and after the advent of Fascism is rendered clear by this sharp contrast between the level of wages and capitalist profits.

In industry as well as in agriculture the cost of production is very high, a fact which does not facilitate sales. Given the specific character of Italian capitalism, it must solve the problem of net costs by operating principally on wages, by increasing the length of the working day, intensifying production, by raising tariffs reducing the cost of maritime and domestic transportation, settling the problem of monetary circulation, balancing the budget, etc.

and all at the expense of the working class.

It was from the necessity of giving a solution to all these problems that fascism was conceived and developed; to gag the workers, to establish the absolute despotism of the employers in the factories, ruthlessly to defend the interests of the bourgeoisie and to give it a single-willed leadership—in a word, as a special attempt of Italian capitalism to assure its own stabilization.

The "Crisis of 1921"

Having overcome the crisis of "demobilization" (1919), the period of factitious prosperity (1920) was followed in Italy as in other countries by a serious economic depression which reached its lowest point in the years 1921-22.

1921 was for Italian economy the most serious of all the afterwar crises. The crisis was industrial, commercial and financial. By comparison with 1920 foreign trade was reduced almost by half. Every phase of economic activity reflected this depression. The value of government bonds fell disastrously. Not only the smaller but even the more gigantic businesses were hard hit. The number of failures reached enormous proportions. The most resounding failure of this period is that of the Iliac at the beginning of 1921 bringing in its wake the crash of the Banque d'Escompte and the ruin of several thousand small depositors. The army of unemployed reached the figure of 463,000 in July 1921. The one profiteer from the crisis was finance which extended its work of conquest.

We have already said that Italian capitalism came out of the war completely transformed and that the organizing activity of the banks assumed at this time a role of great importance. After the war, finance capital, its power reinforced by the war, developed its plan of conquest and domination of Italian economy at an accelerated pace and parallel with it the plan of subjecting to its control the whole state machine. This plan which went on the rocks during the "democratic" government of Nitti (against which both the proletarian masses, on the one hand, rose and the ruined petty bourgeoisie on the other) was completely realized by the government of Mussolini.

The big bourgeoisie (bankers, industrialists, landed proprietors) utilized the fascist movement to destroy the proletarian organizations (trade unions, cooperatives, etc.) but once in power, Mussolini could find no other solution for the demands of the petty bourgeoisie who had been mobilized against the workers—than that ordered by Big Business. From the

Rationalization and Capitalist Monopoly

Rationalization is the current term for a three-fold process (a) the introduction of newer industrial methods and more scientific organization to which no one but Gandhi can take objection in themselves, (b) the speeding up and intenser exploitation of the workers which they must resist furiously. This phase of the process is accompanied on occasion by a nominally higher wage, an illusion since it leads to greater output by fewer workers, to more frequent intervals of unemployment and to premature exhaustion. The American engineer, Taylor, formulated the underlying theory of the speed-up some 15 years ago in his "Principles of Scientific Management", and Ford proved their most successful practical exponent. A third phase of rationalization is the weeding out of the smaller and less "efficient" enterprises through the medium of the merger movement in the direction of more complete monopoly.

Before the war bourgeois economists tried to minimize the possible extent of trustification, arguing for example, its alleged failure to make headway in retail distribution. The chain store came to give these economists (always a few laps behind facts of social evolution) something to explain anew. The "marginal utility" theory of value scarcely proved less unreal than their hopes for the "individual entrepreneur", the individual business organizer who was supposed to represent the spirit of competition. The merger movement proved to be more powerful than the cobwebs of the "pleasure and pain" psychology

very first day Fascism exposed its role as the body guard of capitalism. A whole series of measures were adopted that were anything but what the petty bourgeoisie had hoped from "their" government.

The program of financial and economic reconstruction unfolded in accordance with the necessities of the defence of the bourgeoisie. Instead of the "return to a regime of full economic liberty", instead of a "renunciation on the part of the State of those of its functions bearing a monopolist character", etc. from the day of the arrival of the fascist government in power the victory of monopolist capital spread itself over the whole of Italian economy. From this there followed the necessity of a transformation: in the mechanism of production and in that of the state by means of which the bourgeois class exercises its own political domination.

The Revival of 1923 and the New Crisis

At the end of 1922 with a general revival of international economy there was a certain expansion of production. Unemployment decreased substantially. From December 1922 capital investments in joint stock companies acquired an intense tempo. Before the war stock companies numbered 48 with a capital of 2,212,000,000 lire and in 1914, 8,138 with a capital of about 5,000,000,000 lire; in 1923, the number of companies reached the figure of 9,078 with a capital of 28,500,000,000 lire. (At the end of January 1930 existing companies number 16,278 with a total capital of 49,842,500,000 lire.)

All the figures of economic activity during 1923 show the same revival. Money is cheap and its abundance engendered by the inflation still pushes to the development of enterprise and the increase of productive capacity, especially in specific industrial groups (hydro-electric, shipbuilding, chemical industry, artificial silk, etc.). But already towards the end of 1923 there are many signs of weakness. A great discontent prevails among the working classes as a result of the constant wage reductions and the continuous rise in the cost of living. In 1924 unemployment again begins to rise; the situation sharpens. In the meantime, the working class has regained vigor and wants to fight. In this year there are 163,000 unemployed in comparison with the 66,000 of the year before. The petty-bourgeois masses, thwarted by Fascism, crushed under the weight of the cost of living and taxation are in their turn in an agitated state.

That is the situation in which the Matteotti crime supervenes with its enormous repercussions throughout the country.

—AKROS

may also be achieved through standardization, better equipment, all sorts of economies and worsening of labor conditions.

The aim of the international monopolies is either to raise or maintain prices, since there is no scope here for the reduction of the costs of production by more efficient management and organization of production. The rise of the monopoly is reflected in the changed attitude of the capitalist state which is no longer moved by the interests of the small businessman. Even in the United States which went through a Rooseveltian spell of "trust-busting" legislation, all kinds of loop-holes are now available to get round the Sherman, Clayton and other acts against "combinations in restraint of trade".

Socialist "Ultra-Imperialism"

As to the significance of the monopolies, there are two basically opposed interpretations. The social-democratic theorist Kautsky wrote some years ago: "From a purely economic point of view it is not impossible that capitalism will yet go through a new phase, that of the extension of the policy of cartels to foreign policy, or of ultra-imperialism". And Hilferding writes: "We have taken a step towards a stable economic society for the first time since the end of the war... capitalism has surrendered the principle bulwark it erected against socialism, the capitalist principle of free competition, for the socialist principle of production according to plan" and from this he sees but a short step towards organized production under state control. In the monopolies, he sees an "economy of conscious organization by the capitalist class".

Sharpened Contradictions

In contradistinction to this view is the revolutionary conclusion of Lenin that "there can be no doubt that development is tending towards the formation of a single all-embracing world-trust which will include all undertakings and all states without exception. This development, however is proceeding at such a rate, in such circumstances, with such contradictions, conflicts and upheavals—not only economic but also political, national, etc.—that even before we arrive at an ultra-imperialist alliance of national-finance capital, imperialism will inevitably collapse and capitalism will turn into its opposite".

The "New Industrial Revolution" cannot strengthen the profit system but increases its difficulties and sharpens its contradictions. The application of the newer industrial technique and the speeding up of labor, both raising the level of human productivity to unheard of levels will further aggravate the market problem of capitalist production, and the general crisis of the whole system. The growing productivity of labor results in lessening the opportunities for employment. This can only mean a contraction of the home market, and in view of the greater industrial competition in the world, a more desperate struggle for the foreign market with the certain perspective of the appeal to arms as the final argument.

The solution of the social crisis lies in the hands of the working class. Its revolutionary political and industrial organization to take power into its own hands as the force most necessary for production, would cut the Gordian knot. The way out lies in the abolition of production for private profit, and in the rational socialist organization and distribution of the world's resources. The New Chemistry and Giant Power must be harnessed to the service of a society of producers. The horde of parasitical coupon-clippers must be abolished, and no less the standing army of the unemployed.

Free March 6th Jailed

(Continued from Page 1)

will educate the workers on the kind of "justice" that capitalism dispenses to the workers. Maneuvres, dickers with politicians behind the scenes, failure to rally and to count upon a mass movement of the workers to free the class war prisoners, are methods wrong both from a practical and working class policy. Such ways smack of the methods of "petty-bourgeois politicalism" so vigorously condemned by the official Communist Party in theory and, apparently, so easily adopted in its practices.

Revive the campaign to free the unemployed victims. Build a broad united front movement on behalf of Foster, Amter, Minor and Raymond. Rank and file Communists! Demand that the Party leadership

The Plenum of the American Communist Opposition

By JAMES P. CANNON

Another important step in the development of the Communist Opposition was marked by the full meeting of the National Committee of the Communist League of America—the first full meeting since our National Conference—which has just concluded its sessions in New York City, May 24-27, 1930.

Since our Committee contains representatives of most of the important districts of our organization the committee meeting had the significance of a small conference. Such gatherings are rare with us, and not because we see a virtue in this rarity.

The great difficulties under which we conduct our fight—our numerical weakness, our poverty and the great distances which separate us—preclude for the time being that frequency of representative gatherings toward which we aspire. This makes us value all the more those meetings which are possible under the circumstances and imparts to them an exceptional importance in the life of our organization. We have to expect that such meetings will yield the political maximum and not be merely formal and decorative affairs.

Our National Conference held last year at Chicago bore such a character; and the meeting of the National Committee just held in New York—a meeting, like all our activities, made possible by Spartan sacrifice—will no doubt bring fruitful results in our work for the near future.

Political Unity of Plenum

The National Committee is a unit on all important political questions. We are at one with the leadership of the Opposition on the International field. Exhaustive discussion over a period of several days demonstrated that the fundamental unity of our conceptions on the basic principles which lie at the bottom of our fight as a regiment of the International Marxist Opposition is joined with a complete solidarity on tactical questions and perspectives. This applies to our approach to the general problems of the class struggle as well as to the narrower issues of the struggle against the Centrist bureaucracy in the Communist movement. All these questions are bound together.

The platform adopted at our National Conference a year ago gave a correct Marxist answer to them.

All the intervening experience has served to confirm the platform and it retains its validity today. It forms the basis of the decisions arrived at by the National Committee for the further extension of our fight.

Opposition Platform Confirmed

The economic situation in the country has developed in the main along the line of our analysis and forecast a year ago. There are no important signs yet of a speedy recovery from the industrial crisis and there are many indications of tendencies which will prolong and aggravate it; driving the financial overlords of America irresistibly to seek for a solution at the expense of Europe. A still heavier pressure upon the American proletariat and a sharpening of the international rivalries and conflicts are the inescapable implications of the situation.

Even if the subjective reactions of the American workers proceed slowly—and that is so far the case—the soil is being prepared for a profound change in their attitude toward the capitalist system. There are many reasons to calculate upon an accelerated process of working class radicalization and a vastly expanded field for the development of a proletarian Communist movement. To prevent the reformist canalization of the oncoming movement and to develop its revolutionary implications is the Communist task in the period that lies ahead. The bungling, the corruption, the eclectic zig-zags and Leftist adventurism of the Centrist bureaucracy is the greatest obstacle to the execution of this task and an objective aid to social reformism. The Lovestone Right wing is an ideological bridge to social reformism which will become an increasing danger to the Communist movement in a period of intensifying class struggle. The fight for Marxist methods and Marxist policies falls to the Communist Opposition and is carried on by it alone. Such, in brief, was the general estimate of our Plenum which shaped its decisions regarding our future activities.

The question of perspectives in the crisis in the Communist movement occupied a prominent place in the discussions of the Plenum. On this point clear and definite answers were given. We will not relent in our revolutionary fight against the Centrist bureaucrats for a single moment on a single issue. On the contrary, sharper, more intransigent, more irreconcilable struggle for a Lenin Party was the watchword of our Plenum.

Perspectives of Party Crisis

The opposition, despite all obstacles, all perversions of our standpoint, all suppression all terror, all slander, is growing and will continue to grow in the proletarian ranks of the Party. The internal crisis from which the Opposition is just emerging in a number of European countries has passed us by. We had no capitulators worth mentioning; no elements poisoned by Zinoviev-Maslow cynicism. We unfurled the banner of the International Opposition at the time of its lowest ebb when there could be no perspective but that of a long and stubborn struggle as an expelled minority. Our tradition is the tradition of years of struggle for a proletarian movement against the petty-bourgeois current of Lovestone-Pepper-Wolfe and the trade union eclecticism of Foster-Johnstone-Browder. Thus we were "prepared by the past", as Trotsky said, and the intensity of the struggle does not pull us apart but binds us more firmly together.

Preparing New Forces

We will continue, as before, to base ourselves primarily on the Party and the Left wing workers immediately under its influence. The great bulk of the revolutionary workers are there, and this fact determines our position as a faction of the Party, not as another Party. We do not identify the proletarian revolutionaries in the Party and the Left wing with its corrupted upper stratum. The Plenum, while confirming our general policy on this question made a just criticism of the inadequate organization of our fight within the Party. Measures were adopted providing for more energetic and systematic work in this respect. The near future, thanks to these decisions, will see our unflinching criticism "from without" supplemented by a determined struggle "from within". The recruiting power of the Opposition in the Party ranks is by no means exhausted. It is only beginning as events already maturing will demonstrate. The second layer of Oppositionists will soon confront the Centrist phrase-mongers as an organized faction.

The Needle Trades Situation

An especially interesting and significant phase of the National Committee meeting was a discussion of the situation in the Needle Trades, based on the report of a prominent comrade in the Union who has recently found the way to the Platform of the Opposition. This discussion laid the ground for the preparation of a comprehensive statement of policy in the needle trades crisis, similar to our statement on the Miners' Union, which is soon to be issued in the name of our League. The trade union section of our Platform is borne out by the experiences in the needle trades in all respects and it will provide the guiding line of our concrete statement of policy. The Party leadership has brought the needle trades Left wing to a blind alley. The workers must be told the truth and shown the way out of this blind alley.

This means to give a Marxist analysis which ignores none of the realities and to draw inferences based on the fundamental resolutions of the Comintern under Lenin on the trade union question. The Party bureaucrats have attempted to deal with the crisis by the most shameful scandal-mongering against the Right wing factional opponents of today—their factional brothers of yesterday and brothers yet under the skin. The sole beneficiaries of this monstrous example of "self criticism" up to date are the Black Hunderd gang of Schlesinger, Wolf and Co., and in the final analysis the employers. What is needed now is an objective Communist statement of policy that will show the Left wing workers how to regain their lost ground. The discussion of this question at our

Plenum indicated the line for such a statement.

Maintain the Weekly Militant

Is it possible to continue the publication of the Weekly Militant? This question, startling in its implications to every supporter of the Opposition who knows its incomparable value, was faced and discussed by the National Committee in the most thoroughgoing and realistic manner. We have no money. The Plenum met without enough on hand to pay for the current issue and it had to be skipped. The regular income of the paper covers only half of the expense. How has the Weekly been maintained up till now? No scientific auditor or accountant would undertake to answer that question. For all the known rules of financial management have been broken and miracles have been performed. Our main resource was the fund established before the Weekly was launched. But that was used up long ago. For months now it has been nip and tuck for every issue. Special donations, loans here and there, last minute collections, voluntary labor, unpaid wages and the devil knows what other expedients tell the story. But now we are flat broke and in debt and the question posed itself categorically: shall we continue? Can we continue? And the answer of the Plenum with one voice was: We can and we will!

Weighing the matter soberly and practically we decided that, great as the sacrifices have been, we have not yet exhausted our resources. Various practical measures for raising new funds and effecting still further economies were decided on. Plans to develop the support from branches through methods employed by the Minneapolis Branch were worked out. A systematic program of meetings, affairs and money-raising devices was projected. Most important of all, perhaps was the decision to carry the appeal to the wide circle of sympathizers through a public campaign in the Militant. Up till now the members of our League—and not all of them—have shouldered the main burden. Now we must broaden out and go to every supporter and sympathizer of our historic movement with the appeal for financial support to maintain the paper.

Trotsky on the Militant

Comrade Trotsky called the Militant an inspiring force for the entire International movement of Communism. He said we should make "heroic efforts" to keep it going as a Weekly. It was with this faith that our movement is capable of even heroic efforts that the Plenum decided to launch a new campaign for the Weekly Militant.

Along with this was the working out of systematic organization and propaganda work to follow the tour of comrade Shachtman. The tour of comrade Shachtman, reporting on his work as our international delegate, cannot fail to strengthen the solidarity of our members with the embattled oppositionists of other lands and to effect a corresponding stimulus in their activity on the national field. An organization tour is to be arranged for early fall, with another meeting of the National Committee and one or more additional lecture tours in preparation for our Second National Conference in the Spring. The program of book and pamphlet publication long deferred for financial reasons, will also soon begin. The necessary organization of the Left wing workers who sympathize with our policy will soon begin to take shape in at least a few unions, according to the decision of the Plenum. All together, it can be said without exaggeration that the meeting of the National Committee will bear fruit in the development of our organization work as well as in political and ideological consolidation.

Strengthening the Center

The final important action of the Plenum was the decision to strengthen the Central administration by the addition of other qualified comrades. By this decision comrade Spector is to remain in New York and comrade Swabeck is to come in the near future.

With these additions to the center it will begin to take more definite shape as the nucleus of a political committee of the Communist movement reacting to all issues of the class struggle, which is the

true and proper function of the leading body of the Opposition. The progressive development of such a leading political group is unquestionably one of the great historic tasks which the Opposition must accomplish in preparation for the future. Our struggle against the stream, under a machine-gun fire of calumny, is not without its positive sides. It is a testing and sifting process in which the capacities of revolutionaries to solve problems by their own resources and to remain steadfast in the struggle for principle is determined. Without such qualities a genuine proletarian leadership is impossible. The history of the International labor movement teaches no lesson more clearly than this one.

The ruling bureaucrats have no need to bring a Marxist objectivity and moral prerequisites to their offices. They secure appointment by an infinite capacity for obedience to those "above them" and they rule by arbitrary command over those "below". The inevitable outcome of such a perverted system is not only a political, but also a moral stultification. It would be the greatest folly to imagine that such people, on the whole, can constitute the leading force of the proletarian movement on a Leninist path. Exceptions are possible in the case of individuals, but the decisive nucleus of the future leadership will not and cannot come from that corrupted circle which is today befouling the banner of Communism and undermining its influence. Our task is to develop the leadership of the future in the struggle against them. The Plenary meeting of our National Committee, by all of its work and decisions, as well as by its maturely political approach to them, was a striking demonstration that our fight has already yielded positive results along this line.

Consolidation

If the Plenum registered a political and ideological consolidation within our organization, the mass meeting which followed its adjournment showed an expansion and an increased confidence and enthusiasm of the sympathizing forces around us. Suppression, terrorism, hooliganism—after a temporary "victory"—are bringing the unavoidable reaction. The Communist workers, more and more, want to hear our message. And when they hear it, it becomes their own. There was a warmth and friendliness in this audience, made up in large part of new people, which offered a sharp contrast to the partly hostile, partly curious, crowds we faced in the earlier days of our open struggle.

The successful mass meeting was a fitting culmination to the Plenum. Both events said clearly to all who want to hear: the Opposition is on the march, its road is forward.

Mexico Stalinists Continue Splitting

The Stalinist leadership of the Communist Party of Mexico continues its splitting policy, the latest victim of the present "line" being comrade David Alfaro Siqueiros, General Secretary, until his recent removal by Party orders, of the Unitarian Sindicalist Confederation. One of the principal charges against comrade Siqueiros is that he supports the Left Opposition, about which we have no exact information as yet, but which indicates the narrow sectarian policies of the official Party leadership. Siqueiros was a member of the Central Committee of the Mexican Party until recently, and was also head of the Mexican delegation at the Latin American Trade Union Congress held at Montevideo, Uruguay in 1929. Comrade Siqueiros is at present under arrest for participation in the May Day demonstration.

We are also aware of the fact that two of the five members of the Central Committee of the Young Communist Federation of Mexico have been barred from activity, an act equivalent to their suspension. These comrades, Eduardo Calero and Jorge Pino are also accused vaguely by the Stalinist bureaucrats of "sympathy with the Opposition" and causes.

Social Democratic Betrayal**Answer to a Socialist Worker**

We are in receipt of a letter from H. Engelman, a socialist worker in which he takes issue with our bitterness of attack on socialists in general and Norman Thomas, American S.P. leader in particular. The glittering theory of "social fascism" conjured up by the present Comintern regime lumps together the social-democratic officialdom and rank and file in the same fascist pot. It is a theory we decidedly repudiate. We are in a period not of direct revolutionary crisis when arguments must mount the barricades but of preparing the forces of a revolutionary class movement. Accordingly we do not believe that the best way of convincing our correspondent is by cracking his skull open, say with a blackjack. We recall a speech of Zinoviev's when still an authority in which he sharply condemned the tactics of raising a physical barrier between Communist and social democratic workers. That speech published in the theoretical organ of the International retains all its validity.

"I am a socialist," the letter runs, "because I do not believe in acquiring anything through violence and blood-shed. I am a true follower of Debs. Of course our Party is infected by opportunists and traitors. Every party has them. Even the Communist Party..." And further on he adds, "while I agree with your denunciations, I fail to comprehend your conclusions. You predict that if Norman Thomas was in MacDonald's position he would do the same in regards to our colonial policy. You know this is a very dangerous argument, because the same thing can be said of you or anyone else. What is there to assure us that if Trotsky replaces Stalin the former will adhere to Leninist principles... Suppose I grant the indictment of European socialists. Are they the only workers' movement that is misleading the workers? According to yourself, Stalin is doing the same. Does that mean the Communists are unworthy of workers' support? No, you will have betrayals in any movement, no matter what color it is... You cannot indict a whole movement..."

Indictment of Social Democracy

But of course you can indict a whole movement in the sense that we indict the "social democracy", and the author of the letter would have no difficulty in understanding us if his philosophical point of departure were historical materialism instead of a vague idealism and his argumentation grounded in the realities of the class struggle instead of the sterility of social pacifism. There are well-intentioned, honest, "sincere" and "cultured" people on all sides. But the essence of the matter is the class struggle which rages throughout the capitalist world between those who live by the extraction of rent, interest and profit, determined to maintain their privileges and perquisites either by "democratic" or fascist means and the class subjected to exploitation. Leaders, parties and movements in the social struggle, their program, and their deeds are motivated by class interests.

When we indict the Social Democracy we indict the petty-bourgeois bureaucracy which is in control of the masses, and history has made it possible to predict the course of that bureaucracy with tolerable accuracy. The program of the social democracy is a program of class collaboration, of constitutionalism, of parliamentarism, of legislative reformism in accordance with the interests of the petty-bourgeoisie. It follows inevitably that the socialist leaders will oppose the developing mass action of the workers at every turn in the struggle against Capital, from choking off strikes in the interests of "conciliatory methods" to forcefully resisting the proletarian revolution. In logical accordance with their class interests the socialists practise coalition government with the bourgeoisie and reject the idea of the proletarian dictatorship. It follows inevitably that social reformism and opportunism (class collaboration on the basis of "democracy" in time of peace) will be translated into social imperialism and patriotism ("National Defense") in time of war.

A Record of Betrayals

The records of the past few decades bear this out in full. You cannot serve both the bourgeoisie and the proletariat with-

out committing social treachery. The historic function of the social democracy, ever since its break with Marxism, has been that of an agency of the bourgeoisie inside the working class movement, and the conscious recognition of this fact by the individual social democratic leaders is not necessary to make it true. The march of events speaks for itself. For years before the world war, the Left inside the Second International warned against the ominous consequences of socialist opportunism, of ministerialism, of parliamentary cretinism. The collapse of the International on the declaration of war like a pack of cards was a complete vindication of the Left struggle against both the Right wing and the centrists.

Can it be gainsaid that the German Social Democracy ruined the prospects of the Revolution of 1918 for the working class? With every nerve they consciously worked for the restoration of German capitalism. They deluded the workers with paper plans of socialization. They called in the white guard generals to help crush the revolutionary Spartacist movement with fire and sword. They liquidated the Soviet movement in favor of the bourgeois Assembly in Weimar. They came to the rescue of the capitalists in every subsequent crisis, and notably in 1923. They

The Suicide of Vladimir Mayakovsky

The most celebrated of the contemporary Russian poets, the futurist Mayakovsky shot himself in the heart on April 14th in Moscow. He was for years at the height of renown and in the limelight. Indefatigably he spread in the gazettes a socialist optimism of the most orthodox kind. His evolution was still more marked in this direction lately. Only a few weeks ago he gave his resounding adherence to the Society of Proletarian Writers of Moscow. His unexpected end is almost inexplicable.

This audacious spirit, this enemy of romanticism and sentimentality wrote in a final note addressed "to all" that suicide was certainly not a solution, but there was no other way out for him.

He made some reference to affairs of the heart that were thwarted by the conditions of life. After which the publicist Koltsov who knows how to make fun of a reader compares in the *Literary Gazette* the "accident" that happened to Mayakovsky with the accident to Shelley who was drowned while canoeing, and Verhaeren who was run over by a train. One can obviously not make these comparisons without a cultivated sense of humor. At the same time there was a good deal of talk of illness. But neither affairs of the heart, nor even serious illness can entirely explain the end of such a man.

This death supervened after eighteen months of heavy literary confusion (not a production, not a single one during this whole lapse of time) but frenzied campaigns against Tom, Dick and Harry, major and minor excommunications, incessant recognition of mistakes! It is certain that we did not know how to hold this artist. The great official fame and publicity he received, the money success, were not sufficient for him, perhaps because of the element of falseness involved and the emptiness that he experienced from it. He was a magnificent "fellow traveler" of the revolution useful and courageous; he squandered the best part of himself in futile and harassing search for some correct ideological line that he could never find for many reasons, and that a handful of petty pedants and petty censors demanded from him because that was their job, their way of earning their bread and butter (not in the sweat of their brow). Having become a brilliant rhymster, the most sought after by the newspapers he suffered from this daily demand which was bound to be ruinous to his art and the richest part of his personality. He made the best of a bad job up to a certain point. His work of the last years remained very unequal and full of weaknesses. He was aware of this. He felt himself diminishing. He did not cease to justify himself and to plead superior force.

What lesson can be drawn from the finish of this career of a great poet attached

delivered the German workers over to the tender mercies of the Dawes and Young Plans. And has the course of the "Labor Government" in Great Britain differed in any essential respect? What plans and election promises of socialism have they carried out even on an "installment" plan? They have not had the power? Then what are they doing in office. They are serving the class that has the power—the capitalist class.

We have adduced the classic experience of the German and the British social democrats. We could with equal truth, space permitting, have dealt with the like "socialist" evidence from Sweden, Belgium, Denmark, France or any other party in the Second International. Consider the Russian Mensheviks who strove obstinately to divert the Russian revolution into the channels of a conventional bourgeois republic for expansion of private capital; and now continually hope for a crisis which will compel the Soviet Union to retrace its path to a "democratic revolution" (denationalization of the factories, a stop to collectivization of the country-side, cessation of support of revolutionary movement abroad, entrance into League of Nations, etc.).

The Role of the Maxtons

The writer of the letter refers to the Independent Labor Party (Maxton group) as the "real" socialist party. Once more he argues from the present pseudo-oppositionist of the Maxton group as if we had no political experience of the role of the "Independent" socialists in the working

with every fiber to the present—to this present which Yessenin could never completely grasp. The better part of wisdom is to leave these "fellow travelers" to find their own road, and to find their own work without pretending to baptize them, catechize them, regiment them, without imposing on them too minute requirements, without imagining that one can by the combined method of copyright, suppression, criticism and lashings in the press "bolshelize" them to the marrow.

A Stalinized «Ten Days That Shook the World»

No proper appraisal of the Bolshevik Revolution of November, 1917, can be made without giving due consideration to all the leaders of the Russian people who played leading roles and made the Revolution possible.

That is why we of the Opposition so insistently and always expose the attempted falsifications of history of Yaroslavsky and other Stalinist historians. Comrade Trotsky's great part in the revolution cannot be explained away permanently. Future history we know must give him the credit due him.

I have just seen the picture "Ten Days That Shook the World". The great mass events of the "Ten Days" are faithfully given. The photography, direction and scenery are all wonderful and as we know from other Russian pictures, it is a refreshing change from the usual American pictures. But the point any serious student of events will notice very quickly in "Ten Days" is the entire omission of L.D. Trotsky anywhere in the acting of the picture. The impression an uninformed observer gets is that he must have played a very minor role when we all know that the names of Lenin and Trotsky were inseparably connected with the whole Revolution as well as all of the first years following it.

I could not help but ask myself, "What would Lenin say?" about the entire omission of the man who was President of the Petrograd Soviet in the crisis and of whom Stalin himself has written, "All the work of practical organization was conducted under the immediate leadership of the President of the Petrograd Soviet, comrade Trotsky. It is possible to declare with certainty that the swift passing of the garrison to the side of the Soviet, and the bold execution of the work of the Military Revolutionary Committee, the Party owes principally and above all to comrade Trotsky." (*Pravda*, No. 241—"Role of the Most Eminent Party Leaders".)

John Reed is given no credit for the title, as he should be, especially before American audiences.

—W. P. S.

class movement. But we have, and it is more than melancholy experience. These "Left Oppositions" in the social democracy are always the reflection of rank and file unrest, dissatisfaction and radicalization. The function of the Maxtons is to canalize this movement, avowedly to prevent it from flowing into the currents of Communism. Their "independence" is a sham. In the course of the developing class struggle in Germany, the Independent Socialists split, the Right going to the majority socialists, the Left to the Communists. The Austrian social democracy presents one of the most shameful spectacles of verbal radicalism as a cover for a petty bourgeois policy of surrender to the pressure of big bourgeois reaction. A municipal program of bigger and better apartment houses and swimming pools cannot conceal the fact that in every crisis Otto Bauer and his associates have held the proletariat back from revolutionary action to the point where the forces of the bourgeoisie, of clericalism and fascism have never been so powerful since the war.

The Way of Thomas

In the light of all this we see no reason for inventing some unique exception to the internationally tested principles and experiences of the class struggle so as to exempt Norman Thomas.

Just now it costs him nothing gently to remind the British labor imperialists of the necessity of a modicum of internationalism in their relations with India. It would not be difficult to find an equivalent sentiment among certain sections of the petty bourgeoisie outside the socialist leadership. After all this is England's funeral. It was not hard in the past, nor in the war to whip up petty bourgeois enthusiasm for the right of self-determination of the other fellow's subject nationalities and more than once the world rocked with accusations of Belgium's mismanagement of the Congo, of Germany's brutalities in her African colonies, of Austrian repressions in Bosnia. During the Brest Litovsk negotiations even the German militarists suddenly manifested an ardent desire for the self-determination—of the Ukraine... But this Norman Thomas is the man who shortly after the New York civic elections proposed to change the name of his party from "socialist" in order to make it more palatable to and indistinguishable from, the liberals, and was only prevented by the opposition of the more cautious Hillquit.

The Line of Bolshevism

We are quite ready to have the record of Bolshevism stand comparison. The achievements of the socialist dictatorship speak for themselves. Under the Communists the Russian workers conquered political power and have held it. They are building the foundations of a socialist society. If they have encountered formidable difficulties the principal reason is not far to seek. The isolation of the Soviet Union, the retardation of the international revolution is the basic objective factor in the difficulties of socialist construction and for this isolation, the successive betrayals of the social democracy and its cooperation with the bourgeoisie, is in turn chiefly responsible. The Communists made mistakes but these mistakes were of an entirely different character from the "mistakes" of the social democrats which were sheer counter-revolution.

Certainly there is no absolute guarantee against the manifestation of conciliatory and social democratic tendencies inside the Communist movement. The present struggle of the factions in the Comintern testifies to that. Under conditions of capitalist stabilization and encirclement of the Soviet Union, of the slowing up in the pace of the world revolution, the petty bourgeoisie begins to exert a pressure on the Soviet and Comintern apparatus that is dangerous. The consequences of such pressure have in some major instances already been tragic. It has been the requirements of the resistance to this petty bourgeois pressure on the Party that has given rise to the fight of the Left Opposition for the continuity of the line of Marx and Lenin against both the Right and Centrist factions in the Comintern. With a keen memory of the reasons for the degeneration of the social democratic leadership, the Left Opposition is determined to fight to the end against every revision of the program of the proletarian revolution, against every deviation from the base of internationalism.

—M. SP.

Towards the XVI Congress of the C.P.S.U.

Dissolving the Communist Party into the Class

At the end of January 1930, a new recruitment of workers into the Communist Party of the Soviet Union was proclaimed. The February issues of the *Pravda* are full of information about the "great upsurge", about "the mass flocking of workers into the Party" etc. The Central Committee has already given the directives: "To get not less than half the Party membership from workers in industry until the Sixteenth Party Congress" (*Pravda*, Feb. 11). Translating this into the language of figures it means that in approximately two months the Party has to admit a minimum of about 150,000 new members*. Up till now there are already about 200,000 applicants. In a few weeks the number of members and candidates in the Party will exceed 2 million.

Collective Admission

All the newspaper statements underline the collective character of submitting applications for admission to the Party. They enter in brigades, shifts, crafts, and even whole factories. Factory crafts, that "is several hundred men, with the foremen at the head, and often even with the technicians and engineers, are poured into the Party. The nuclei grow, 100, 200 and more percent. Formally, the procedure for admission is as always, individual, but in reality the admission is collective. The newspapers and the Party leaders insist that the commissions for recruitment rush with the formalities. The Central Recruiting Commission decided to "simplify the admission into the Party" (*Pravda*, March 4). This is why, in view of the purely formal character of the procedure, the percentage of rejected applicants is extremely insignificant. The lack of the least serious judgement of candidates, in a word, all this really anti-Party method of the campaign is already alarming the less short-sighted Communists.

The pursuit of high percentages (almost always fictitious) result in the fact that a recruiting agent, grabbing by the sleeve one who refuses to join the Party begins to persuade, advise, etc. As a result—a worker correspondent remarks in the *Pravda*—"political illiterates having insignificant industrial experience go into the Party". What this policy leads to can be seen from the partial cleansing of the Party. For example, in one of the Donbas districts (*Usova*) one third of the members in the industrial nuclei were expelled (*Pravda*, February 1). The results of the cleansing in Sumara speak still more eloquently that the apparatus has wiped out the boundary line between the Party and the class, taken into the Party a raw mass, which is not only not transformed in the Party melting pot but in view of the terrible condition of the inner-Party regime, is pushed away, either by expulsion, or by falling away. In place of those falling out, new raw material is poured in. The Party entrance and exit gates are wide open.

A Premium on Political Illiteracy

Almost the only, at any rate, the decisive criterion for admission into the Party is the question of the productive work and the "model discipline" of the applicant. "The most important proof of fitness for admission into the Party, is the degree of the active participation of the workers in the shock brigades, in socialist competition, and their actually advanced role in industry"—these are the instructions of the C. C. of the C. P. S. U. (*Pravda*, Feb. 11). Did you participate in socialist competition? How many days were you absent from work? How much did you subscribe for the loan, and did you sell it? In what way do you help collectivization? These, and some more in the same spirit, are the questions that are asked of an applicant. There are no Party and political questions. (Even "classic" Trotskyism is absent.) One may think it is a matter of one's admission into the cooperative or the trade union, this is the extent to which Party spirit is lacking. But what does the Stalinist apparatus need that for? It looks upon the new additions to the Party only as a "shock" support to the industrial organs. Lacking any kind of political outlook the adventurist leaders consider this—sometimes semi-compulsory (the chairman asks: "Who is against?") naturally, there

During the year 1929, 200,000 workers entered the Party.

aren't any. All voet ("for") inclusion of crafts and factories into the Party as a means of raising the productivity of labor, as a more successful realization of intensification and higher tempos. They are not concerned as to what becomes of the Party, or whether the Party exists as such.

The Gap Between Leaders and Masses

In December 1929 the influx of workers into the Party was still very low. But now, the *Pravda* states, "there is an unexpected great change". The Party organizations are caught "unawares". "At the factory something unexpected and unforeseen occurred: columns of workers sign up for the Party. The nucleus could in no way expect it" (*Pravda*). The writers and editors do not even notice what a fatal verdict this is for the Party regime, what a terrifying statement on the deterioration of all the Party tissues. If we assume, according to the apparatus — that there really is a mighty rise in the working class, and the apparatus sitting there does not know anything, "does not expect" anything, "does not foresee" anything, then it must be recognized that it is separated from the mass with an impenetrable partition. The fact in itself shows even to the blind, the depth of the abyss the apparatus has dug between itself and the mass.

The Kolomensk factory entered the Party almost in a collective body. Eight thousand workers from this factory already entered the Party. "The Kolomensk workers should be an example to the others"—appeals *Pravda*. It is therefore interesting to consider this factory in a few words.* The Kolomensk factory produces machinery (tractors, locomotives, Diesels etc.), it is something over a hun-

* The figures on the age of those in the factory entering the Party are very interesting. Most of them are 30-40 years old—this holds true for other places. Fifty percent of them have more than ten years of industrial experience. "The change that occurred among the older workers, those working in the factory for the last 20-30-40 years, is particularly gratifying," *Pravda* writes. It is doubtful whether this fact is "particularly gratifying". An old worker who was not shaken by the October, or the civil war—is advanced. The youth, the Comsomols, that is the most advanced and active part of the mass is lagging behind. This symptom is more alarming than "gratifying".

Indian Ferment and Chinese Lessons

(Continued from Page 1)

tragic collaboration of the Stalin-Bucharin faction with the bourgeois Kuomintang in China and the connected theory of Workers and Peasants Parties as substitutes for the Communist Party in the colonial countries.

But instead of soberly recognizing their mistakes, the Stalin faction desperately clings to office by the sowing of illusions inside the official Communist parties. On May 30th, the *Daily Worker* dedicated almost its entire issue to heralding the convocation of the "First Soviet Congress of China". There are no words strong enough to condemn the criminal and fantastic light-mindedness with which the *Daily Worker* misrepresents the actual situation in China. An eighth of the whole territory of the country, it is claimed, is under the sway of Soviet authority. Yet the fact is that there is not a single Communist daily in the country. Thanks to the consequences of the Stalin-Chiang Kai-Shek alliance in the Kuomintang the Communist Party first subordinated to bourgeois discipline for years, was then decimated by the executions of Hankow and Shanghai. The Red Trade Union movement was devastated by the White Terror. The Canton insurrection was drowned in blood.

Nevertheless, with that the adventurism which is the reverse side of Stalinist opportunism, the Sixth Congress refused to work out a series of transitional demands about which to rally the masses anew. As a substitute for the Communist Party and the requirements of mass action, recourse was now had to armed bands who roamed the country waging sporadic guer-

ried kilometres from Moscow. The proletarian staff of the factory was always considered in the Moscow Party organization as a backward one, and it really was. Over 70% of the workers are not only "bound" to the village, but they have their own cabin, cow, garden, etc. The brother, the father of a Kolomensk worker is a peasant, he works in the factory and helps them—they own their holdings together. The psychology of an average Kolomensk worker is that of a peasant. He often considers his work in the factory as a support for his peasant holding. A Kolomensk worker resembles very little the Leningrad proletarian. It is this factory that became now the vanguard of the workers army, and Leningrad its rearguard. (Up to March 14 the Moscow district had over 90,000 applicants and the Leningrad about 30,000). And it is no accident. An explanation for this fact will be found not in the city, but in the village, and particularly in the "collective" policy. The collective pushed the Kolomensk, Podolsk and Mytishchensk worker into the Party. His peasant status decided. Without penetrating into the complicated problems of collectivization we nevertheless will point out that the element of insurance played no small role. "I will have to enter the collective anyway, then I may as well enter it as a Communist—there will be more privileges." This way he hopes to get easier credits, inventory, etc. On the other hand—and this is the most important—the non-Party worker in the factory does not see any big difference between himself and the Party worker. Why shouldn't I get into the Party, perhaps it will be easier—he asks himself. Depriving the Partyite, as well as the non-Party of all rights, pressing them in the bureaucratic clamps, the usurpationist apparatus has made of both of them speechless executors.

Neither the non-Party nor the Party worker dares to decide, criticize, or deliberate. Opening wide the Party doors wipes out the distinction between the Party and the class. The Party ceases to be the vanguard, it ceases to be a Party. But this is precisely what the apparatus is striving for. Simultaneously with the dissolution of the Party in the class, the apparatus rises above it all the more. Both these processes are parallel, one supplementing the other. On the top the apparatus became a supra-Party institution, it is without control, it is infallible, it commands—the Party below ceases to exist. The further development of this process is the decay, the death of the Party as a Party—we must be frank about this, stating it with all determination. March 30, 1930

—N. MARKIN

Trifling with the Textile Workers Union

The decline of the Left wing National Textile Workers Union goes on. While the United Textile Workers Union, with its policy of class collaboration continues to gain recruits among the textile workers, especially in the South, the N. T. W. U. is steadily losing ground.

When one studies the activities, or rather lack of activities of the N. T. W. U. during the last period it is amazing that even the shell of the union continues to function, for there is no doubt whatsoever that only a mere skeleton of the organization is left.

At the center the notoriously incompetent Clarence Miller has been replaced by William Murdoch who is now in charge of the national office. Murdoch has had his eye on the secretaryship for many months and at last is rewarded for his patience and subservency. Previous to Eli Keller's election to that post almost a year ago, he was an active candidate for the post, but due to the opposition of Jim Reid, the president of the union and others, he was not given the position.

Murdoch is the fourth secretary of the union in about a year's time. First there was Albert Weisbord, who was removed for not following out the third period program as desired by the Stalinists. He was succeeded by Eli Keller who became a Lovestoneite. The next was Miller who has likewise disappeared from the scene. How long will Murdoch be at his post?

The appointment of a new national secretary of the union is accompanied by a new district organizer in New Bedford, which was and still is the only city where the union has any members. At one time it numbered about 3,000. At present about 300 are left. The previous organizer, Martin Russak, from Newark, has been removed for some sort of a deviation. His successor, Joe Rappaport from New York, is the fifth within a year. He follows Keller and Ellen Dawson now in the camp of the Right wing Lovestoneites and John Nahorsky, a fourth rate functionary who asked to be relieved when he found that the job was too big for him.

As we stated in several previous articles and now repeat: unless the Stalinist stranglehold is removed from the N.T.W.U. and all militant and left wing workers who belong to the organization are allowed to freely participate in its work, there will be no organization left, except in the minds of the Party "leaders" and in the reports of the *Daily Worker* and other Party papers.

The textile workers, especially in the South, are ripe for organization but the irresponsible policy of the Party alienates them. Many workers who join drop out in disgust, others never join due to the typical methods used by the Stalinists who head the organizations.

Members of the organization must demand the end of this policy at once and the opening of a campaign to organize the textile workers into the N. T. W. U. on a basis which will allow all militant workers to participate in its activities. Any other policy will mean that before the year is out, the union will exist only in name and all the gains achieved by several years of struggle in Passaic, New Bedford and Gastonia will be lost. What will the Party choose?

Φ

PARTY MEMBERS! NOTICE! IN THE NEXT ISSUE

The next issue of the *Militant* will contain an important declaration of the National Committee of the Communist League of America to the Members and the Convention of the Communist Party. Watch for it!

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—MAURICE SPECTOR