

THE MINORITY HAS BEEN SMOKE OUT

(Continued from last issue)

Federations.

The question of the federation issue is a puzzling one to the membership because the "minority" still camouflages its objective—the abolition of federations. To prove this we will have to analyse what they aim at—not what they say. First, the "minority" believes that dues—stamps should be sold to the federation branches only through the District Organizations and not through the Central Executive Committees of the Federations. Second, the "minority" holds that the future development of the party lies in the direction of "shop units."

The first plan the "minority" claims would make for more efficiency in the administrative work of the party. Let us see. What strikes us first is that this method is THE ONE ACCEPTED BY THE C. L. P. the most rabid anti-federationists we have come across. What strikes us next, is that this plan is now being advocated by the very ones who have been opposed to federations for years. The former Executive Secretary has never made a secret of his opposition to federations and at every opportunity he has attempted to limit or circumscribe their authority and autonomy. At the C. E. C. meeting he made the motion to change the method of paying dues with the explanation that "this was the first step in the process of the abolition of federations." So, if we take all these factors into consideration, we find that this is not simply an administrative detail BUT BEHIND IT LURKS A DEEPER AND DEADLIER PURPOSE.

When this fact is recognized, the next question that arises is, can the process of abolishing the federations be begun at this time? Especially when this step is undertaken by Centrists and opportunists who do not really belong in the Communist Party and who are taking a short cut out by "splitting" away themselves. Admitting as the "majority" has always maintained, that the future organization of the federations and their relation to the party must be built on a more centralized basis, it is undeniably true, that the time has not yet arrived when this process can be effected. The federations, as at present constituted, are the carriers and promulgators of Communism in this country and they have not yet completed their function in the American Communist Party in this regard. In the process of fulfilling this function the Federations will gradually "die out" thus making it unnecessary to destroy them artificially.

The language federations—especially the Russian Federations—are the foundation stones of the Communist Party. Without them there would be no Communist Party in this country at the present time.

In this pre-revolutionary epoch, while the American working class is as yet hostile or indifferent to Communism, while the economic and political conditions have not yet awakened the revolutionary spirit in the masses, the only elements who are making supreme sacrifices to keep the party functioning and spread its propaganda are the "foreign comrades" of the language federations. It is the "foreign comrades," who, working through their federations, bear the brunt of the struggle and strife. They give of their time, energy and money unstintingly. This no one can deny.

The "foreign comrades" cannot, most of them, speak or understand English. Abolish the federations and their machinery for keeping their units functioning, and these "foreign comrades" are cut off from their only expression and articulation; they become easy prey for any English elements who wish to carry on their own kind of propaganda without hindrance from any organized "foreign elements" who know what Communism really means and can exercise control over those who attempt to work contrary to their conception of Communist principles and tactics.

Now as to the "shop units" which the "minority" only hint at, but for some reason or another, best known to themselves, are afraid to elaborate. Perhaps when we expose this second proposition the readers will understand the reason too.

The innocent term "shop units" carries with it an idea which aims at the complete transformation of the Communist Party as at present constituted into "shop branches" only as the future form of the Communist Party.

This would destroy, not only the Federations,

but the very political composition and character of the Communist Party itself. What the future of the party would be, organized on this industrial basis, we can leave to the imagination of the rank and file. Those comrades who know of the shop branches in the Bolshevik movement in Russia, and their function and their utility in the Bolshevik organization, know the great danger of the purely trade-union psychology predominating over the larger political perspectives in their shop-branches. Rather were they elementary branches, so to speak, whose contact with the political organization was similar to the idea of Communist Party shop branches as advocated in the program of the Communist Party and adopted at the last convention. Such shop committees, composed of members of the Communist Party, to carry on Communist propaganda and agitation in the shops and industries directly, must be under the control of the party. But, to transform the entire party into shop branches, destroying completely the political organization, is a Centrist conception that could only have been born in the minds of Centrists, casting about for a way of getting "contact with the masses" at any cost, even at the expense of destroying the conserver of Communism itself—the political organization of the Communist Party.

Naturally, with such an object before them, the necessity of beginning the process of destroying the federations can be understood when emanating from the "minority."

This proposition is the clue to the "minority's" attitude toward federations, even were all other signs ignored. And all their smooth phrases to the contrary notwithstanding; they DO INTEND TO FORCIBLY ABOLISH THE FEDERATIONS.

As for their statement that they are content to let the federations decide for themselves at the convention what the future form of federations shall be, that is so much poppy-cock. The Federations did decide at the last convention and the "minority" later raised the charge of "packing" the convention. Should the federations again decide at the next convention—and their decision run counter to the "minority's,"—they will again raise the cry of "packing" the convention.

But the Federations will not be so foolish as to entrust their future into the hands of its enemies, particularly, when those enemies are Centrists at the same time, who have no clear, consistent conception of Communism or its application.

The examples of the Hungarian and Jewish Federations do not speak well for the "minority's" position. Any federation membership that permits itself to be led out of the Communist Party by its Executive Committee is not a Communist membership AND DOES NOT BELONG IN THE COMMUNIST PARTY IN THE FIRST PLACE. (This holds true for that part of the membership which is following the "minority" out of the Communist Party.) The Jewish comrades, on the contrary, are not following the lead of their Executive Committee in remaining "neutral" (suspended in the air) but are taking their places according to their composition—Communists lining up with the C. E. C. and the Centrists with the "minority."

Summary

To sum up. The "minority" have been smoked out into the open and forced to expose their conception of Communist principles and tactics upon which we disagree so fundamentally. Having done this, they have revealed themselves to be opportunists and Centrists with a bourgeois-Socialist ideology.

On the question of Unity with the C. L. P. we have proved—and the facts as printed in the previous issues of the Communist have borne us out—that the "minority" are mere whining sentimentalists who, Centrist-like, always seek unity with Centrist elements, but cannot tolerate or work together with real Communist elements as represented by the C. E. C. They sought to effect immediate amalgamation with the C. L. P. disregarding the differences between the two organizations—and disregarding the elemental consideration in Communist unity—ACCEPTANCE AND PRACTICE OF COMMUNIST PRINCIPLES. They never looked beyond the mere technical advantages of gaining more organizers, writers and speakers and ignored all else.

On the question of International Delegates and Relations with the Third International we have proved conclusively that their conception of international relations is on a par with that of

Morris Hilquit and the conceptions of the Second International. We have also proved that they disobeyed the decisions of the convention on this question.

On the question of Mass Action, they have a confused Centrist conception which in nowise differs from that of the C. L. P. or the I. W. W. or even the S. L. P. and S. P. insofar as propagating the idea of the inevitability of a violent revolution to the workers is concerned.

As for the charge that the "majority" have carried on a campaign against Lenin as a compromiser, that is such a low, contemptible lie, that we do not even deign to answer it. There is a limit to which even Communists can descend to answer the slanders of an opponent!

On the question of federations, we have proved that their object is the complete abolition of them despite their smooth evasions and indirect insinuations to the contrary.

On the question of Shop Units or Shop Branches we have further proved their desire for the elimination of federations as well as pointing out the Centrist, opportunist character of such a project.

On the question of legality, as they call it, we have proved that they lack the very first element of Communist understanding of revolutionary centralization and discipline.

On the question of splitting the party we have developed the facts sufficiently in the last statement and the present article to disprove their evasions and lies as well as their mechanical conception of splits in general and this one in particular.

The "minority" stands convicted on every count.

They have proven themselves to be a set of revolutionary charlatans, cowardly compromisers and ignorant Centrists. They have merely taken advantage of a temporary and unusual situation where the former Executive Secretary, having all the funds and property of the party in his possession, have carefully prepared a coup d'état on a flimsy pretext hoping to crush the C. E. P. whom they hated bitterly, and drive them from the party before the convention, or to force such terms upon them as would make the next convention a farce insofar as settling the real fundamental issues between the "majority" and "minority" were concerned.

This also explains their hasty call for their convention, set for a ridiculously early date, in order to make it impossible for the membership to discuss and understand the issues and elect delegates on the basis of such intelligent understanding.

But their coup failed. Without funds and party machinery the C. E. C. immediately set to work and has built up a strong organization that will be able to withstand the splitting away of some Centrist elements that never really belonged in the party at all; at best, they should have been in the C. L. P.

The Communist Party is gaining and will gain immeasurably from the lessons taught it by this split.

News From Europe

R U S S I A

More "Missions" to Russia.

The Czecho-Slovak Government, according to "L'Humanité" of April 15th, has replied to Chicherin's last note, assuring the Soviet Government of its sincere friendship towards the Russian people. It has decided to send a special mission to Russia to study the question of economic relations "as well as many other problems."

The "Imparcial" announces that a commission, composed of three delegates—one on behalf of the Government, one for the employers, one for the workers (a Socialist M. P., Fernandez Rios)—will shortly leave Spain for Russia to study the "social, political, and economic situation" of the Soviets.

White Guards Negotiating?

According to the Stockholm paper, "Folks Dagbladet," says "L'Humanité" of April 15th, the White General Wrangel has opened negotiations with the Soviet Government.

I T A L Y

The General Strike in Turin.

The Turin correspondent of "L'Humanité" stated, on April 16th, that the general strike had just begun, and attributed its origin to the following causes. The workers, in agreement with the Unions and the Party, have organized factory councils (commissari Interni) everywhere; the employers have consequently begun a struggle against the new organizations with the object of divesting them of all economic authority—as the strength of the Turin workers is so great that in many factories they have actually been able to control production.

To bring about the limitation of the powers of the Works Councils, the employers proposed a system of labor contracts, which would set a basis to their future development. This actually brought about the conflict, in which the railwaymen have spontaneously joined. The workers have published in "Avanti!" a conciliatory statement of the conditions under which they wish the principle of factory councils to be applied.