

the Communist movement has lost nearly two-thirds of its membership. Instead of gaining recruits we have been steadily losing. Which is quite natural, considering the number of confused radicals we had in our midst. These have been leaving us as fast as they discovered they were linked up with an illegal party or began to realize they were opposed to Communist principles and tactics.

There is no possibility of rapprochement for united action with any of the industrial organizations which are more advanced than the reactionary trade-unions, for the present. The I. W. W. has retrogressed so far that it completely rejects all the principles and tactics of the Third International. The W. I. I. U. is just where it stood all the time—the tail-end of the opportunist S. I. P. The Independent unions, or semi-industrial unions are still unadmitted or opportunist in character. They do not as yet recognize the necessity of political action or political parties.

Under such circumstances all talk of "mass organization or narrow closed circle" is beside the mark. The problem is one of intensive Communist propaganda and agitation among the mass of the workers.

Point 3 of your appeal is based on another misconception of the conditions in this country as they really exist and not as some "enthusiast" has tried to paint for you.

You say that we have done a lot of propaganda within our ranks but have to a large degree stood aside from the immediate class struggle of the proletarian masses. We have not played a leading part in the biggest collisions between capital and labor.

The trouble lies deeper than what you conceive to be a lack of initiative on our part. In America we are living in a period of reaction and working class inertia unequalled anywhere else. Perhaps to you, thousands of miles away, who hear only the resounding echoes of strike movements and the general awakening of labor these rumblings may give you an idea that the working class in this country are much more advanced than they really are. But in fact they are the same as the British workers are today.

The American workers have to still to realize the awakening is much slower than you taking politically. The political and the economic movements in this country are traditionally detached from each other. We are still faced with solving the problem of organizing Communist Party units (Communist Party Shop Committees) within the shops and unions which will gradually break down this Chinese Wall which the American Federation of Labor has built up and which the I. W. W. through its syndicalist tendencies serves to perpetuate among the more radical and revolutionary element of the working class.

Heretofore it was impossible to take the lead in any of the labor wars for additional reasons. The Communist Party had to meet the full force of Government persecution, raids, indictments and deportations and from a strong powerful organization with thousands of members we were driven underground and beset with internal problems of re-organization upon an underground, illegal basis. Immediately thereafter we were faced with an internal upheaval because of our Centrists attempt to split or smash the party which again required our undivided attention to save the Communist movement from chaos and disintegration.

It is apparent that the Communist Party could not have taken the lead in the "collisions between capital and labor" within the last year. Nor is the prospect likely for the immediate present and until we have built up our shop committees and perfected our methods of illegal and legal propaganda and agitation.

However this does not mean that we have been inactive in the labor struggles of the workers. Through the language federations we have managed to get our agitation and propaganda in a wider area than would have been possible otherwise. This work is continuing and is highly important feature of party work.

Under the circumstances it is to soon to expect any material results from this intensive agitation work.

5.

As regards points 3 and 4 in your appeal we wish to state that the Communist Party is attempting to build a strong, effective, centralized political party of the working class and is also building up its subsidiary Communist Party shop committees in the shops and industries through which we shall make close contact with the workers and participate more directly in their everyday struggles against their employers and against their reactionary union leaders. We are more than willing to work in close contact with the industrial unions but for the present we cannot effect such a policy aside from the technical difficulties which stand in the way. The industrial union bureaucracy in the I. W. W. are opposed to the principles of Communism and preach industrial unionism as a substitute for proletarian revolution—a fact you are familiar with by this time. The W. I. I. U. is still aping the S. I. P. politically and industrially is no different than the I. W. W. It too preaches the same peaceful panacea.

We are forced to carry on a campaign again, at the principle of industrial unionism as a substitute for proletarian revolution—though pointing out and helping the workers to form new or better, economic organizations to wage their struggles for higher wages or better conditions. The problem is also one of tearing away the veil of misunderstanding or this point which prevails among the class-conscious but

confused workers.

Our policy is to enter the "Yellow" trade-unions as well and carry our agitation and propaganda to the workers in these organizations.

Our program states that "The American Federation of Labor is reactionary and a bulwark of capitalism that the Communist Party rejects the idea, as advocated by the I. W. W. of 'amalgamating' the A. F. of L. in order to reconstruct the trade-unions. At the present time this revolutionary epoch such a policy would necessitate the concentration of an enormous amount of the energy of the revolutionary movement to the purely reformistic policy of changing the form of the economic organizations, thus ignoring the most pressing and important task of the Communist movement, namely, the propagation of Communism to the masses. That is the supreme task of the Communist Party, and all other work, such as waging the struggles against their employers for higher wages or better conditions, etc. is secondary. The Communist Party will encourage any movement of the workers seeking to construct new or better economic organizations for the workers in the shops, but it will constantly point out the limitations of such organizations and keep before the workers the idea of proletarian revolution by means of mass action with its logical resultant, open armed conflict with the capitalist state, and the dictatorship of the proletariat as the only means of destroying the bourgeois state, abolishing capitalism and introducing the Communist society."

Our struggle against the A. F. of L. is primarily a struggle against the leaders and policies and the awakening of the rank and file. As Comrade Zinoviev says our policy is not to leave the "yellow" unions, as certain ultra-left Wing Communists suggest. One must admit that these unions comprise millions of workers. In Germany they include seven million members, while the Arbeiter Union of the German Communists only has about 100,000 members. We must fight inside these unions and organize Communist centres in them. The Communists must be everywhere where there are organized workers.

As in Germany, the A. F. of L. in this country comprises almost six million members. The I. W. W. and the other industrial unions do not include over 100,000 members.

Your policy as stated in the thesis on political parties also accords with our own position on unionism. We quote:

Consequently, the propaganda of the revolutionary syndicalist and of the supporters of the Industrial Workers of the World against the necessity of an independent working class party, collectively speaking, has helped, and helps, only the capitalist class and counter-revolutionary Social Democrats. In their propaganda against the Communist Party, which the syndicalists and the industrialists wish to replace by Trade Unions alone, or of formless "General" Labor Unions, they come into common ground with acknowledged opportunists. Revolutionary syndicalism and industrialism present a step forward only in comparison with the old, worn-out, counter-revolutionary ideology of the Second International, but in comparison with revolutionary Marxism, i. e. with Communism, syndicalism and industrialism wholeheartedly support the formation side by side with the Communist Party, of the widest possible NON-PARTY Labor organizations. The Communists consider as their most important task a systematic work of organization and education within these wider labor organizations. The Communists do not avoid the mass non-party working class organizations even when they bear an openly reactionary "Black Hundred" character (the yellow Unions, the Christian Unions and so on). But the Communist Party ceaselessly carries on its own work within these organizations and untiringly demonstrates to the workers that the non-party idea, as a principle, is consciously fostered amongst the workers by the capitalist class and its lackeys, in order to divert the proletariat from the organized struggle for Socialism."

It seems to us if your appeal on this question does not accord with your position as expressed in your thesis or in articles by Lenin, Zinoviev etc. on this question.

However, we have quoted sufficiently to prove that the Communist Party position on the question of unionism is thoroughly in accord with your own, in spite of the discrepancies which have crept into your appeal.

6.

As regards point 6 in your appeal dealing with language federations, we are heartily in agreement with it.

Language federations in the Communist Party have never been, and are not now, autonomous political organizations, but subsidiary propaganda organizations for carrying on Communist agitation to the workers in their respective languages. If you have been told otherwise you have been lied to.

During the transition period dating from their expulsion from the S. P. and the formation of the Communist Party the language federations were independent organizations but this independence manifested itself only in taking the initiative and compelling the organization of a Communist Party against the confused protest of a small element of the Left Wing which latter formed the Communist Labor Party. But with the advance of the Communist Party the language federations subjected themselves to the rigid discipline of the party which they created.

We have never been among those who believed that the form of the language federations are immutable. We clearly recognize

their temporary but highly necessary role in the Communist movement in this country. Therefore our policy has been to integrate them more closely into the party and not abolish them "at one stroke".

The U. C. P., on the other hand, has abolished altogether the language federations in their new party. Whatever they may say to your committee, the fact remains that they are opposed utterly to any sort of language propaganda conducted by the language branches themselves through some centralized organization.

Since the question of language federations always loomed large in all the controversies between our opponents in the U. C. P. and the U. C. P. we shall quote verbatim from the recent decisions of their C. E. C. on this question when their own Russian membership decided to hold a national conference and organize their propaganda in their own language:

"A report was heard regarding the Russian Conference. The delegates need money for homeward trip; the Russian comrades want an organizer steadily in the field since there is still much organization work to be done, and there are not enough competent local organizers to do it; they elected Dubner as organizer, they also elected a National Propaganda Committee, but no editor; they recommend publication of bi-weekly Official Organ and Monthly Theoretical Magazine."

The C. E. C. voted to pay \$4,000.00 to help meet the expenses of the delegates to the Russian Conference, with recommendation to the Russian groups to raise the balance through the sale of organizational stamps in their districts.

Stojan carried that Comfades elected on the Russian Propaganda Committee by the Conference be notified immediately to disband as a national propaganda committee and not to establish any communication with the Russian affiliations of the party. That Russian groups be notified not to recognize the Propaganda Committee. That violation of this decision of the C. E. C. will result in expulsion.

When a Committee of the U. C. P. presented its case to the C. E. C. after a full discussion the C. E. C. voted 2-1 against the creation of national propaganda committees for language groups, and unanimously for discipline in case this decision is violated.

This occurred about 2 months after their convention and illustrates the internal conditions of the U. C. P. the language branches defying the decision of the convention because of necessity, and the C. E. C. blindly opposing any form of language federation.

With such a policy we are absolutely opposed and since this question has always been the bone of contention between our opponents in the U. C. P. and the U. C. P. and ourselves, we will find it impossible to unite with them even were all other obstacles eliminated.

7.

As far as illegal work is concerned the Communist Party recognized the necessity at the time of the organization of the party, but found the idea so unpopular and foreign to the American comrades that we decided to let conditions themselves prove its value and necessity rather than cram it down their throats. It happened sooner than any of us thought and nearly smashed the organization into fragments. We were compelled to go completely underground against the opposition of our former Centrist "minority", and today we are an illegal party with little chance of becoming legal again for some time.

The task at present is not only to discover and perfect illegal methods of propaganda and organization (we are doing this right along) but to develop legal subsidiary ones without laying ourselves open to a similar attack as that of last January.

This problem is therefore reversed from what you conceive it to be and much more difficult of solution at the present time.

The question of unity with the U. C. P. is rather complicated because of the new factors involved and explained herein. For the present we cannot act on this question until our last representative will have laid the case before you.

We disagree with U. C. P. on the question of Mass Action, Unionism and Language Federations. The U. C. P. persist in spite of the self-evident disagreement with your own position on these questions,—in confusing these issues and pretending that their position is endorsed by the Communist International. It is also impossible to unite with their Centrist leadership (Damon, Y. F. & Co.).

Until these questions are settled—that is, until the U. C. P. is ready to lay its program and constitution aside and scrap these leaders we shall be compelled to continue our Communist propaganda and separate organization.

We enclose the programs and constitutions of both parties for your consideration and judgement.

The Central Executive Committee, in the name of the Communist Party of America, sends its greetings to the Communist International and to the Executive Committee, and pledges itself to continue our efforts for the proletarian revolution and the establishment of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat in America.

Yours for world proletarian revolution,
THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
Communist Party of America.