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A Counter-Revolutionist in the Making.

American workers who have often wondered how a certain class of so-called "revolutionist" in Russia became counter-revolutionists at the time of the establishment of the Soviet Government, may find an illuminating analogy in this country by observing the editorial antics of John Sandgren, editor of the *One Big Union Monthly*, official organ of the I. W. W. His writings, ever since the Bolshevik ascendancy to power in Russia may properly be called "A STUDY IN COUNTER-REVOLUTION".

His reaction to the Bolshevik November Revolution has been noted in these columns more than once and is quite familiar to our readers. From a bovine stubbornness to see facts and appraise them in the light of Marxian economics and historical development he quickly descended to the most vituperative abuse and ignorant calumnies that reached its climax with the growth of the Left Wing movement in the Socialist Party and the creation of the Communist movement in this country.

Some months ago his venom reached such a stage as to shock even members of his own organization, who, though they perhaps agreed with him in principle, still had sufficient self-respect to call a halt to such outrageous slander. For several months Sandgren contented himself with mild innuendo and insinuation against the Communist movement here and abroad, while openly disavowing the slightest agreement with any of the principles or tactics laid down by the Third International. In fact it was humorous to watch his contriteness express itself in a "SPECIAL BOLSHEVIK NUMBER" immediately after the Philadelphia "incident". That this was but an attempt to draw a red herring across his trail, in order to divert attention from his official organ as one of the factors in the Philadelphia "incident", is the only conclusion we can come to after noting the contents of the October number of his magazine.

In this issue Sandgren comes back to wallow in his own filth in the approved style of the Mensheviks attacking the Bolsheviks and Lenin in Russia during the Kerensky regime. A signed article, bearing his name, carries the caption "THE INSIDE STORY OF AMERICAN BOLSHEVISM". It would be impossible to recount here the charges and lies and foul insinuations contained in his article. No capitalist prostitute sheet has ever gone to such lengths—no "yellow" Socialist has descended to such depths—as Sandgren does in his article. And to cap this filthy diatribe, he publishes a cartoon lampooning the Communist Party of America as the made-to-order product of Attorney General Palmer and his Department of Justice.

The reasons for Sandgren's reversal of policy at this time can be found in the publication of the referendums for affiliation to the Third International, which he seeks to defeat by these foul means. For Sandgren and his colleagues have been compelled to issue such a referendum is better enough in itself. The fear of its passing rouses them to a fury of invective, vituperation and slander unsurpassed in all the annals of controversy between working class organizations anywhere in the world.

The material for this article are two quotations—one a translation from the French paper "La Vie Ouvrière", purporting to carry charges against Comrade Louis C. Fraina, accredited delegate to the Congress of the Third International from the Communist Party of America—and the other, an excerpt from the preface to the pamphlet issued by the Third International to the I. W. W., and published by the Communist Party of America.

Sandgren has reached the stage where every stupid repetition of suspicion against Comrade Fraina is proof positive of his guilt. He no longer takes the trouble even to hide his conviction. It must be so because John Sandgren in the innermost recesses of his corrupt nature wants it so. It furnishes a convenient cue with which to slander the whole Communist movement in

America and saves him from the necessity of discussing principles and tactics.

Sandgren who is so avid in seeking out every bit of scandal-mongering repeated in organs of opponents of the Communist Party is evidently loath to discover official party documents dealing with Fraina's case. We have no doubt that members of the Communist Party who are also members of the I. W. W., have apprised him of such documents, but there has never been an attempt to print or quote from such documents, which would have had the effect of showing the obverse side of the card against Fraina. SANDGREN DOES NOT DARE PRINT THEM, NOT BECAUSE OF HIS PERSONAL ANIMOSITY TOWARDS COMRADE FRAINA, BUT BECAUSE IT WOULD HAVE PLACED THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF AMERICA IN A DIFFERENT LIGHT TOWARDS THE GROPING MEMBERSHIP OF THE I. W. W.

The charges contained in the quotation from the French paper are the basest and most palpable sort of lies. They are for the most part a rehash of the charges contained in Nuorteva's charges as printed in the *N. Y. Call*. The *Call* has never seen fit to print the official answer of the Executive Committee of the Communist Party to these charges although it has since reprinted the quotation which Sandgren uses.

The insinuations that Comrade Fraina was responsible for the prosecution of Comrade Loriot and the French General Confederation of Labor by the French authorities are so flimsy, so far-fetched as to merit only contempt. Anyone familiar with those incidents knows how ridiculous such a charge is. As a matter of fact, Comrade Fraina has been also exonerated of all these charges by the Third International itself, where French delegates were present. Comrade Fraina is at present one of the most active and trusted delegates of the Third International in Moscow. His character and ability can best be attested by the fact that Comrade Fraina was a member of two of the most important committees at the Second Congress of the Third International recently held at Moscow. He was a member of the Committee on "Problems of the Third International", and a member of the Committee on "Admission to the Third International". Comrade Fraina was one of the members of the delegation of Communists who attended the Baku Congress along with Radek, Zinoviev and others. IT IS NOT LIKELY THAT THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL WOULD HAVE CHOSEN A COMRADE FOR SUCH IMPORTANT WORK AGAINST WHOM RESTED THE SLIGHTEST TAIN OF SUSPICION.

The last charge contained in that quotation deserves reprinting for its barefaced, brazen character:

"The suspicions were later verified when a letter delivered to Fraina from the Dutch Communist leader, Rutgers, landed in the hands of the federal police in America".

The French paper is so convinced that it leaves the implication that Comrade Rutgers himself has verified this statement. Certainly it takes less time to communicate with Comrade Rutgers in Holland from France than from America. Yet this French paper did not even take the trouble and has the effrontery to publish the charge as a matter of unquestionable fact.

FORTUNATELY WE ARE JUST IN RECEIPT OF A LETTER FROM COMRADE RUTGERS IN WHICH, IN ANSWER TO OUR QUESTION, HE STATES THAT FRAINA DID NOT RECEIVE A COPY OF THE LETTER IN QUESTION.

From our own knowledge we also know that not Comrade Fraina had this letter but Santele Nuorteva had this letter in his possession. And it reached the hands of Palmer's agents AFTER IT PASSED INTO THE LATTERS HANDS. Comrade Rutgers' statement completely exonerates Comrade Fraina. As for Nuorteva, we believe that since his arrival in Russia, he has found cause to regret his entrance into the counter-revolutionary plot against the Communist Party of America through an attempt to besmirch the character of Comrade Fraina.

As for John Sandgren, his days as editor for the I. W. W. are numbered. He sees the handwriting on the wall and is fighting like a rat to hide and delay the inevitable. Whether or not the present referendum turns out in favor of affiliation of the Third International, we are quite certain that the next convention will see him effaced as a moulder of counter-

revolutionary tendencies as evidenced in the "Philadelphia betrayal". He has fast writing him self down as a worthy successor to Harold Lord Varney of evil memory.

As for the second quotation as extract from our preface to the pamphlet aforementioned, there is little to say. Sandgren makes no attempt to take up the challenge except to hurl more of his infamous invective against the Communist Party.

The statement that the Communist Party cannot co-operate with the I. W. W. as at present constituted, holding and preaching the reactionary theories they do, is as true to day as the day it was written. As well expect the Communist Party to co-operate with the Socialist Party and the Socialist Labor Party with the principles and policies they advocate and the reactionary leaders they harbor!

The Executive Committee of the Third International, at the time it wrote the appeal, did not know of the decisions of its last convention. It assumed that the I. W. W. was at least revolutionary in spirit even if they did not understand or accept the Communist position. Had they known of it, they would surely have changed their tone, as we have no doubt they will, when they get at the facts.

A thorough housecleaning is necessary in the I. W. W. The decision to affiliate with the Third International, if carried, does not admit of mere lip-service affiliation. Its policy must become a Communist policy in keeping with the principles and tactics enunciated by the Third International. Its syndicalist leaders will have to be replaced by convinced Communists.

This is bound to happen in the near future, referendum or no referendum. The rank and file of the I. W. W. cannot be fooled much longer. It remains to be seen whether the I. W. W. reactionary leaders will yet resort to the tactics of the National Executive Committee of the Socialist Party last year when it expelled the revolutionary proletarian membership who showed themselves strong enough to take over the reigns of the party from their trembling hands. If they do, as seems likely, this act will spell the doom of the I. W. W. as an organization pretending to revolutionary aspirations. If they do not the I. W. W. will inevitably come into the fold of the Third International.

Footnote: The pamphlet containing the evidence against Fraina, at the "secret" trial, where he was charged with being a police agent, and an introduction analyzing the evidence, was unavoidably delayed due to the technical difficulties in printing same. Comrades realize what handicaps we are under as an outlawed party, and will make due allowance. This Pamphlet is now ready and can be obtained through the regular channels. Price 25 cents.

ANOTHER I. C. P. LIE SCOTCHED.

As we go to press the information comes to us from a very reliable source to the following effect: That the C. E. C. of the U. C. P. has notified its branches that they had elected a committee of two to enter into unity negotiations with the C. E. C. of the Communist Party but that the latter refused to have anything to do with this committee.

Our Central Executive Committee has not received any communication from such a committee or any other committee of the U. C. P. The Central Executive Committee never had any such offer under consideration for the very good reason that no such offer was received. Why they are spreading this brazen lie we do not know. We only know they LIE.

The C. E. C. has already stated that it will await the return of our delegate before taking any steps in the matter. Judging from the conditions for affiliation to the Third International, and the recent printed utterances of Sylvia Pankhurst and McLaine, English delegates who have just returned from the Congress, every delegate will return with certain specific instructions relative to the Communist movement in each country, based upon the general conditions already referred to.

Necessarily then we must await the return of our delegates. If the U. C. P. had elected such a committee to get in touch with ours on this question our answer would have been along the aforementioned lines.

WE CHALLENGE THE U. C. P. TO PRODUCE ANY DOCUMENTARY OR OTHER EVIDENCE TO SUBSTANTIATE THE BRAZEN LIE IT IS SPREADING AMONG ITS MEMBERSHIP.