

Centrists in Words Opportunist in Deeds.

The term "Centrist" is often applied to the faction in the U. C. P. and the former "minority" of our own ranks who finally joined into the present U. C. P. always under a certain amount of compulsion from some of the clear elements who were inclined to liberate these Centrist leaders in our party. The recent split, however, convinced these Bourgeois Thomases that our criticism was more than justified by the self-revelations of our opponents. The advent of the U. C. P. with its confused convention and still more confused program has not changed the character of these Centrist leaders in the least. A mere lip-service recognition of the necessity of "systematically and persistently FAMILIARIZING" the workers with the inevitability of the use of force and armed insurrection against the capitalist state, placed mechanically into an otherwise non-Communist program (an inserted, bitterly fought by these Centrist leaders and carried over their violent opposition under threat of a split at the "unity convention"), cannot make Communists out of these Centrists, all their ranting and protestation to the contrary notwithstanding.

The No. 7 issue of the U. C. P. "Communist" contains an article entitled "The United Communist Party and the I. W. W.", which should thoroughly disillusion every class-conscious worker in America, and the Communist International abroad, to the hollow pretensions of this group of leaders who dominate the U. C. P. In this article, they have succeeded in unconsciously betraying, even to the most shortsighted or prejudiced, their complete lack of Communist understanding, and proving out of their own mouths their Centrist and opportunist qualities and tactics.

This article attempts to answer the hypocritical cry for help issued by the General Executive Board of the I. W. W., on the occasion of its expulsion of the Philadelphia Local of the I. W. W., for refusing to stop loading ammunition for General Wrangel destined for use against Soviet Russia.

The I. W. W. appeal for help winds up as follows: "We appeal to the working class in general and the United Communist Party in particular to take a stand in industry and help build up a revolutionary organization that will make forever impossible repetition of the dastardly action of the Philadelphia longshoremen."

This bombastic appeal, couched in the most approved syndicalist style, containing the gross fallacy that by "taking a stand in industry and building up a revolutionary organization" (meaning the I. W. W.), such dastardly action will never recur, requires hardly any comment. Its syndicalist character is patent to any Communist worthy of the name. The only answer of a real Communist Party to such an equivocal and hypocritical appeal would be to call upon the I. W. W. to take such a stand of Communist principles and tactics, by renouncing their syndicalism and endorsing the Third International without reservations, as would not only make forever impossible a return to the syndicalist fallacies which at present dominate the I. W. W. (which, in the best analysis, is to a great extent responsible for the Philadelphia "incident"), but also to the policy of opportunism and obscurantism which may lead to similar "incidents" in the future.

This, the only answer possible, the U. C. P. did not make. Instead, it attempts to show that there has been a "change of front" by the I. W. W. on the question of armed insurrection with which it acknowledges to be in full agreement. We quote:

"THE EDITOR OF THE ONE BIG UNION MONTHLY ADMITS IN AN EDITORIAL IN THE 'SPECIAL BOLSHEVIK NUMBER', THAT ARMED INSURRECTION IS A LIKELIHOOD, AND GOES ON, 'BUT WE DO NOT WISH TO BRING ABOUT THAT CALAMITY AND TRY TO CAUSE A PREMATURE COLLISION BY 'ARTIFICIAL STIMULATION'. NEITHER DO THE COMMUNISTS TRY TO BRING ABOUT ARMED INSURRECTION BY 'ARTIFICIAL STIMULATION', EXCEPT POSSIBLY THOSE COMMUNISTS WHO SUFFER FROM WHAT LENIN HAS APTLY TERMED 'THE INFANTILE SICKNESS OF LEFT COMMUNISM', SUCH AS THE FEDERATION GROUP IN THIS COUNTRY. ARMED IN-

SURRECTION GROWS OUT OF THE SOCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL CONDITIONS HAVE RIPEEN SUFFICIENT TO MAKE THE WORKERS READY FOR IT, IS TO LEAD THE WORKING CLASS INTO THE SHAMBLES, THE ITALIAN SOCIALIST PARTY, WHICH ENDORSES THE TACTICS OF COMMUNISM ALTHOUGH IT DECLARES OPENLY FOR ARMED INSURRECTION IN ITS PROGRAM HAS NOT PROVOKED ARMED INSURRECTION THROUGH 'ARTIFICIAL STIMULATION' EVEN THOUGH IT VERY LIKELY HAS THE POWER TO DO SO, BUT IS WAITING FOR THE MOMENT WHEN THE MASSES WILL BE READY TO MOVE' (italics ours, editor).

If the above paragraph means anything it means that JOHN SANDGREN AND DAMON, CANTON & CO. AGREE IN THEIR POSITION ON THE WHOLE QUESTION OF MASS ACTION AND ARMED INSURRECTION. The recently inserted anti-Bolshevik editor of the I. W. W., who has outdone even the Right Wingers in his assaults on the Communists and their tactics—and who even now, as we shall prove later on, is syndicalist and violently anti-Communist in his position—and the theoreticians and leaders of the U. C. P., who have branded the Communist Party as "anarchists" and "agent-provocateurs" for advocating the necessity of the use of force and the inevitability of a violent revolution to overthrow the capitalist state, are thus shown to be birds of a feather.

Damon, Canton & Co. accept a statement of Sandgren's to the effect that armed insurrection is a "likelihood" and a "calamity" as a change of front towards the Communist position, and quote it approvingly. They repeat Sandgren's bourgeois phrase "artificial stimulation" as being a disease which Lenin calls "The Infantile Sickness of Left Communism". And to clinch their argument, they even go so far as to cite the present revolutionary crisis in Italy, in which the Italian Socialist Party has failed to act as a Communist Party should act, by calling upon the workers of Italy for an armed uprising against the capitalist state, as a case in point.

Every reactionary, even liberal, every social-patriot, with an ounce of foresight in his make-up, recognizes that armed insurrection is a "likelihood", and considers it a "calamity".

They condemn every attempt of the parties of the Third International to rouse the workers in countries such as Italy, where the conditions both objective and subjective are rotten ripe for a violent revolution, in the same language that Sandgren, Damon, Canton & Co. use—"a premature collision by artificial stimulation".

But these opportunists and traitors go even further. They presume to endorse and condone the inexplicable inactivity (at this writing), of the Italian Socialist Party in this revolutionary crisis as the correct Communist tactic! Were the Italian Socialist Party to issue the call for armed uprising of the Italian workers, who have shown by their intrepid defiance of the Italian Government and their syndicalist and social-opportunist leaders, that they are ready for a real political revolution, SUCH REAL COMMUNIST TACTICS ARE CONDEMNED A PRIORI BY THE U. C. P. LEADERS AS "A PREMATURE COLLISION BY ARTIFICIAL STIMULATION".

On the contrary, the Communist Party holds that just at this moment the Italian Socialist Party should act. The syndicalist farcial attempt at peaceful revolution "by seizing the industries" and ignoring the capitalist state, has been exposed as the most dangerous utopia and doomed to complete and humiliating failure; even where the capitalist government makes no armed reprisals, as in Italy. The syndicalists of Italy (blood-brothers to the Sandgrens in the I. W. W.), have led the workers not only into a shambles but into a blind alley. They have betrayed the Italian workers even as Kerensky betrayed the Russian workers, as Ebert and Scheidemann betrayed the German workers. The Italian workers stand dazed and beaten and know not where to turn. The factories are in their hands. They have arms in their possession. They have workers' councils in the industries. They are starving and disillusioned. The government is incapable of ruling. The army is widely infected with Bolshevism. The economic structure

is hopelessly broken down, never to be rehabilitated under the old order. Instead of procrastinating and waiting to be pushed on by the masses the Italian Socialist Party should take the lead and guide the masses into the proletarian revolution. IT IS THE HIGHEST DUTY OF THE ITALIAN SOCIALIST PARTY AT THIS MOMENT—AND COMPLETELY IN ACCORD WITH THE POLICY OF THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL—CALL FOR ARMED INSURRECTION AGAINST THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT AND CIVIL WAR!

The Third International has already issued an appeal to the Italian proletariat and to the Italian Socialist Party calling upon the party to act:

"The warnings of some Italian leaders, which point to the reactionary danger from the side of the Entente, have no ground. For the Entente never will be able to send an army against the rebellious Italian workingmen. The victory of the working class is impossible without suffering and want of the proletariat. It is possible that the Italian workers will have to go through the same hard road that the Russian proletariat has been traveling for the last three years. The Italian workers are a unit in their desire for revolution—as are the farm laborers and the overwhelming majority of the peasants. NOW THE ITALIAN SOCIALIST PARTY MUST SAY ITS LAST WORD. The Italian bourgeoisie sees the danger and is feverishly preparing the White Guard. The civil war is spreading like wildfire. The next problem of the Italian Socialist Party consists in insuring the victory of the proletariat.

"Looking at the situation from this standpoint we must admit that the Italian Socialist Party acted with indecision. Instead of giving the movement a definite character, the masses are pushing the party to the side of the anarchists, minimizing the authority of the party. Not the party leads the struggle but the masses are pushing the party."

Is the Third International also suffering from what the U. C. P. so fatuously quote from Lenin as "The Infantile Sickness of Left Communism"? Or rather, does it not look as if the U. C. P. leaders have exposed themselves as a cowardly bunch of charlatans and compromisers who condone the treachery and betrayal of the Turatis, Modiglianis and Darragonas and endorse the inactivity and indecision of the Italian Socialist Party in a revolutionary crisis? Does it not prove moreover, THAT THE U. C. P. LEADERS WOULD DO THE SAME THING IN THIS COUNTRY WHEN THE TIME COMES?

"Artificial stimulation" is the term with which the social-opportunists and social traitors of the whole world have STIGMATIZED the Bolshevik November Revolution in Russia! "Artificial stimulation" is the way the Kautskys, the Eberts, the Scheidemanns, the Bernsteinsteins have STIGMATIZED the Liebknecht-Luxemburg Spartacan revolt in Germany! Who does not remember how the Hendersons, the MacDonalds, the Snowdens, the Thomases, the Hillquits, the Bergers and the Comperses thundered against the Bolsheviks and the Spartacans?

DAMON, CANTON & CO. HAVE SHOWN THEMSELVES TO BE PART AND PARCEL OF THE SAME PETTY-BOURGEOIS INTELLECTUAL SCUM AS THESE OTHERS WHO ARE RIDING THE BACKS OF THE WORKING CLASS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD!

Severe as this indictment of the Centrist leaders of the U. C. P. is—as proven out of their own mouth—the same article contains another betrayal of Communist principles even worse. It will possibly have the immediate effect of keeping the I. W. W. in the hands of the syndicalist faction for some time. We refer to the offer of "undersanding and co-operation" made by the U. C. P. to the I. W. W. We quote:

"OFFICIAL ENDORSEMENT OF THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL IS NOT, HOWEVER, THE CONDITION WITHOUT WHICH THERE CAN BE NO CO-OPERATION BETWEEN THE I. W. W. AND THE U. C. P." (italics ours, editor).

At a time when resolutions for and against endorsement to the Third International are being sent out to the I. W. W. membership to be voted upon—in order to determine the future policy of the I. W. W.—such a statement coming from a so-called Communist Party can mean nothing less than that the U. C. P. is not anxious that THE I. W. W.