

Letters from the Militants

KANSAS CITY

Kansas City, Missouri, Nov. 9, 1928.

Dear Comrade:

Your letter of the 7th reached me about 10 hours after I had been expelled from the Party.

November 8th, 10 P. M. the District Polcom met with most of the D. E. C. members present. Comrade Kassen was not present but had sent in a signed statement as follows:

"I consider the action of the National Polcom in removing Cannon, Abern and Shachtman from the positions and their expulsion from the Party as unjustified. Therefore I disapprove of the action of the National Polcom. Signed,—Sam Kassen."

He was expelled from the Party for being a Trotskyite. Kassen was a member of the D. E. C.

I was also a member of the D. E. C. of the Party. Both of us, as you know, have belonged to the Party since it was first organized and to the Left Wing before that.

Well, Jim, I hold no hard feelings against my comrades who expelled Kassen and myself. I am sure they were sincere, but they had become fanatical from the poisonous propaganda the regime had spread in the last four years. I shall avoid all personalities in our differences at this time. The night I was expelled an amusing but tragical incident occurred. The meeting was adjourned, we got our hats and coats and all the comrades left in a body and went one way and I went another way. No time wasted in even bidding each other good by.

I look back now and ponder over the hard task I had to convince myself that Trotsky and the Russian Comrades of the Opposition were traitors to the Revolution. It reminds me of being a good Catholic and believing all and not asking any questions.

The rank and file of the Communists are honest and when they once get the facts they will soon act. Persecution will only make us better Communists.

With greetings to all the comrades in New York from Kassen and myself, I remain,

A. A. BUEHLER

VINCENT DUNNE

Minneapolis, Minn., Nov. 8, 1928.

Dear Comrades:

We were taken completely by surprise as we had no information before your statement came to the different comrades in the mail last week. This was quickly followed by a letter from the "cleansed" minority boasting of their part in the shameful expose.

Almost all of OUR comrades feel that here at last is the key to the riddle that we have been trying to understand for so many years. That is, we too have come to realize during the time of the Congress that international politics were being played with us while we were still attempting to outsmart these bureaucrats within the confines of our own little Party.

We have EVERY important comrade of the old opposition with us. They have accepted the slogan, "Against the Bureaucrats", as a slogan of action.

The comrades realize that this is not the ordinary Party fight and that all comrades who take a position now of Opposition will in all probability find themselves confronted with a campaign of the most unjust slander and vilification. Most of us understand that there will be those who cannot understand the pressure and who will desert. We also know that with the correct line we will be able to strengthen our forces by bringing over to us those elements that are honest and politically alert, those with that old fighting heart.

VINCENT R. DUNNE.

FROM A YOUNG COAL MINER

Frederick, Colorado, Nov. 4, 1928.

Dear Comrades:

I got a copy of the document that you sent to a comrade here in Frederick and at the beginning I was tremendously surprised.

The entire matter hits me so hard that I don't know whether I have come back to earth or not. It is very difficult to form at an instant an opinion on matters that you briefly touch upon. I mean the Trotsky question. I totally agree with your charges against the Lovestone groups "incapability, unscrupulousness, bureaucracy, etc." As a vivid example we have your expulsion as a verification of the functions of this outfit. It is a tragedy to a revolutionary organization to tolerate such hideous actions as this "Lewis machine" of our Party has perpetrated and they will again endeavor to force your expulsion down our throats. But as I look over the whole matter now, I see that the Lovestone group has bitten off more than they can chew, when they begin to expel the best leaders of our Party merely for their views on political questions.

It is the membership of our Party, the masses of workers throughout the country that will suffer because of this despicable act of the bureaucracy in our Party. It shows once more the necessity of rank and file rule instead of a few leaders who can utilize their position for personal advantages and machine rule.

The slogans must be:

"Save the Party!"

"Lovestoneism Must Go!"

"For a Communist Party of the Workers!"

GERRY ALLARD

FROM THE FIRST COMMUNIST LEGISLATOR

Williston, N. Dakota, Nov. 24, 1928.

Dear Comrades:

I had just started to write a letter to the Daily Worker when the Militant was laid on the table before me. In this letter to the Daily Worker I intended to ask the editors of that paper why they did not publish the program of the Opposition (Trotsky, Zinoviev) since they had devoted two pages to the Cannon-Lovestone Party differences?

To accuse each other of being "right wing" with-

out showing the program that is in contention, leaves the Party members, likewise the rank and file masses in the dark. As to the writer, he has seen nothing in the Party press, other than that the Oppositionists were working with the counter-revolutionary forces, and that they were rejected by the whole Party membership, not only this, but were expelled from the Party by a vote of more than 99 percent of the membership. Never a peep in our Party press about the Opposition leaders being expelled and put behind the bars. What little has leaked out from our Party press about the Opposition and their program was so twisted that many of the Party members here thought the platform of Trotsky, Zinoviev and Kamenev and others was that which was adopted by the Russian Party headed by Stalin.

I wish to state that the Militant gave me the first inkling of what had taken place in the C. P. of Russia and the American Party. Likewise the Opposition program, yet I have read everything I could get since the

THE EXPELLED

The following is a partial list of the comrades expelled in the present campaign of the Lovestone leaders to split the Party by the expulsion of all who fight them on principle grounds. The expelled comrades have taken an open stand for the platform of the Russian Opposition and opposed the expulsion of Cannon, Abern and Shachtman. Most of the comrades expelled in Cleveland were expelled on trumped-up charges, but the real reason was their unyielding opposition to the opportunist bureaucrats of the Party, and particularly for their refusal to give up their fight against the corrupt misleaders of the Party in the South Slavic Section and in the Cleveland district.

While the opportunists expel the revolutionary Communist workers and the active fighters who have founded the Party and helped to build it up, they continue to draw into the ranks of the Party—and into its leading circles and responsible positions—petty-bourgeois dilettantes, careerists and second-hand intellectuals. The fight against this disruptive campaign is the foremost duty of the proletarian Communists.

In the forthcoming issues of The Militant we shall print the Party and revolutionary records of the expelled Communists, which, for lack of space, we are compelled to omit in this number. They bear proud records of service to the cause of the revolution which are in themselves a crushing reply to those dubious individuals who so expertly slander them with the infamous terms of "renegades", "counter-revolutionaries", and the like.

CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

JAMES P. CANNON, member Polcom of the C.E.C.
ARNE SWABECK, member of the C.E.C.
MARTIN ABERN, member of the C.E.C.
MAX SHACHTMAN, alternate to the C.E.C.

CANADA

MAURICE SPECTOR, member of Polcom, and E.C.C.I.

NEW YORK

MAURICE L. MALKIN, member of Furriers Union.
JOSEPH FRIEDMAN, member of Y. W. L.

PHILADELPHIA

M. MORGENTHAU, member of Y.W.L. Dist. Bureau.
LEON GOODMAN, member of Y.W.L. Dist. Bureau.
SOL LANKIN, member Y.W.L. District Committee.

CLEVELAND

JAMES ANTOLOVICH, member of Machinists Union.

PETER MARGETICH, Ohio District Organizer of South Slavs.

MATT GRZINCICH, nucleus financial secretary.

D. GURMAN, stockyard worker.

G. MALJEVAC, member of Section Exec. Committee.

P. MATAKANOVICH, secretary South Slavic Workers Club.

V. UJCICH, cement worker.

P. SVETINA, factory worker.

G. MILLER, member of Section Executive Committee.

ELMER BOICH, member of District Bureau and Secretariat.

JOHN FOLEY, member of agit-prop depart of D.E.C.

DETROIT

BARNEY MASS, member Auto Workers Union.

RUTH REYNOLDS, editor of Dodge Worker (Nucleus No. 5).

CHICAGO

ALBERT M. GLOTZER, member of League N.E.C.

HELEN JUDD, member of District Control Commission.

MIKE ZALISKO, League and Party organizer in coal fields.

ROGER COMPTON, agit-prop director of nucleus.

TWIN CITIES (Minneapolis and St. Paul)

VINCENT R. DUNNE, member of D.E.C. and District Bureau.

KARL SKOGLUND, member of D.E.C. and District Bureau.

OSCAR COOVER, member of D.E.C. and District Bureau.

O. R. VOTAW, member of D.E.C. and Dist. Bureau.

C. R. HEDLUND. P. G. HEDLUND.

MARTIN SODERBERG. SAM LESSIN.

LOUIS ROSELAND. A. T. HEDLUND.

SAM ZALMANOFF. ALVA HEDLUND.

MAX KAUFMAN. JOE ROSS.

MRS. SCHWARTZ. A. SHROGOWITZ.

HELEN HEDLUND.

CARL COWL, member of the Y.W.L.

SARA AVRIN, member of the Y.W.L.

FANNIE BARACH, member of the Y.W.L.

SIMON BARACH, member of the Y.W.L.

KANSAS CITY

A. A. BUEHLER, member of D.E.C.

SAM KASSEN, member of D.E.C.

NEW HAVEN

S. GENDELMAN, member of D.E.C.

October revolution.

In conclusion, I for one, unequivocally denounce any act of giving concessions to the Kulaks and Nepmen, when the withholding of concessions cannot cause any violent eruption to the Party in power. Any Party member acting otherwise is not a true Bolshevik.

A. C. MILLER

P. S. You are at liberty to publish this letter or any part of it. They say that I was the first Communist that climbed into legislature in the U. S.—1925 North Dakota Session.

A. C. M.

THE CLEVELAND EXPULSIONS

Cleveland, Ohio, Nov. 29, 1928.

Dear Comrade:

I am in receipt of your statement relative to your expulsion from the Party. It may interest you to know that I was expelled several weeks ago because I dared to prefer charges against the District Polcom majority! I charged them with corruption, material and political, embezzlement of Party funds, and a dozen other charges which they knew were true. I demanded a thorough investigation or I would expose them before the membership meeting. This they feared and without the formality of charges they railroaded me out of the Party by a 5 to 4 vote. Beside myself the following comrades were expelled: Margetich, South Slavic District Organizer and alternate to the D.E.C., Matakovich, Maljevac, Juich, Grzincich, Gasparac, Svetina, Miller, Slabak. Comrade Lesko was expelled a couple of months ago. He was a member of the D.E.C. and the Polcom charge against him was never proved. He was expelled for no other reason but his sympathy with Trotsky.

All above mentioned comrades are proletarians, factory workers. I was a member of the District Polcom and the secretariat prior to my expulsion. Appeal was sent to Lovestone, two weeks ago against the Polcom decision, but no reply was received. The attempt to tyrannize over the Opposition in the Party has no limit. Bureaucracy is increasing daily in the Party. Self-criticism is only an empty gesture on the part of our bureaucrats. To fight for democracy in the Party today requires courage and determination. This can be supplied by the development of the revolutionary spirit within oneself. These are times when we must oppose the crowd of fanatics even in the face of ridicule and intimidation. We would like to have you come here and speak at a meeting which we will arrange for you. Please inform me if you could come and when.

ELMER BOICH.

"YOU ARE WORSE THAN FASCISTS"

Under the supervision of the Lovestone commissar, Dr. Markoff, the membership meeting of the Italian fraction in New York took place on Wednesday, November 28, with about 50 comrades present. The secretary of the Bureau, Candela, was given unlimited time for his report against "Trotskyism". The meeting had decided that each member be given 10 minutes, twice. But after the first series of speakers, Markoff arbitrarily cut off the discussion and demanded that the vote be taken. A motion was introduced to endorse the position of the C.E.C. and the Foster comrades introduced their resolution; but when our comrade attempted to read our resolution in support of the Russian Opposition of comrade Trotsky, and the American Opposition, Markoff said that it could neither be introduced nor read at the meeting.

"All those who support the Opposition," said Markoff, "are not only counter-revolutionists, but Fascists and worse than Mussolini." To our comrade who demanded the right to speak in answer to the stupidities of Candela and the villainy of Markoff, the latter said, "As a member of the C.E.C., I remove Refugee from the Italian Bureau, with no right to speak any more, even at the meeting." Markoff made the most slanderous attacks upon our comrades, shouting that we had been in the Party for only a few months, denying that we had ever fought in the movement or struggle in Italy. But the comrades who supported us have long records of membership in the Socialist Party, then the Communist Party of Italy, of persecution by and bitter struggle against Fascism in Italy; of being the heart and nerve of the anti-Fascist struggle in this country; of service on the strike picket line, arrests, police sluggings, imprisonment. Only one that has completely lost his honor and integrity, and lacks all contact with the ranks, can flaunt his shameless slanders against revolutionary workers with such brazenness as did Markoff.

A good number of the comrades, sickened by the proceedings, left before the vote was taken. Eight voted for our position; 3 abstained, saying that not all that was necessary had been said at the meeting; 3 abstained, saying that they did not know enough of the situation; 10 voted for the resolution of the Foster comrades; 1 voted against everything, including Trotsky; 1 voted for the C.E.C. (Zucca), saying that he believed Trotsky was correct on some questions. The rest, a minority of the membership, voted with the C.E.C. majority resolution.

Markoff then declared to the eight who had voted for the Opposition: "Consider yourselves expelled, and get out of the hall." We did not, of course, leave at the command of this cheap bureaucrat. Our comrades are not new fighters. Under Bordiga and Maffei and other heroes of the Italian revolution they have fought against Fascism and for our cause. Under the banner of Trotsky and the Opposition we continue our fight for the victory of Bolshevism.—JOHN MENELLA.

"SINGING JAILBIRDS"

"Singing Jailbirds" is by far the best production yet offered by the New Playwrights and marks a significant step forward to the development of a Worker's Theatre. We regret that unusual urgencies of space prevent The Militant from printing the extended review which it deserves. Friends of The Militant should make it a point to attend the performance on Tuesday, Dec. 18 which is for the benefit of our paper.