

Karl Radek's Appeal for Trotsky

To the Central Committee, C.P.S.U., Comrades!

Upon receiving the news of the illness of comrade Leon Trotsky I wrote to the Political Bureau of the Central Committee with the request that comrade Trotsky be transferred to a place where conditions will make his recovery possible. Up to this time the Central Committee has done nothing towards this end despite the fact that the reports of the constant aggravation of comrade Trotsky's illness proved to be true, and that ever-growing sections of the working class, who learned about these facts, raised the demand that an end be made to this unheard of situation.

You have expelled us from the Party and sent us away as counter-revolutionaries without reckoning that the older ones among us fought for Communism for a quarter of a century and that the younger ones were in the ranks of the October revolution from the first moment of their conscious life. This fact does not give me the right to appeal to your sentiments, but since the time when you decided on the incredible step of expelling us from the Party with an accusation which dishonors not us but those who have made it, and exiling us,—from that moment it is time that you draw the balance and render an accounting on the whole matter.

Eight months have passed since then. Eight months of the grain crisis, eight months in which the Kulak mobilized the village against the Soviet power, eight months during which the Schachty nest of the bourgeois vermin—trading under cover of the Soviet power—was disclosed. Only a blind man can fail to recognize where the danger comes from. To keep in exile those who demanded the struggle against the Kulaks is either insanity or it is conscious, guaranteed aid to the Kulak and the Schachty system.

Eight months have passed since the time of our exile. During these eight months you were forced to expel, and bring before the courts, for debauchery, for squandering, for direct connections with the class enemy, the very same ones who "saved the proletarian dictatorship from the intrigues of Trotsky, I. N. Smirnov, Muralov, Serebriakov, Smilga, Probrashchensky, Mratchkovsky." Since you knew that the masters of the Smolensk, Artemovsk, Riasan and Odessa cases were still present in droves in the Party, you were forced to call the Party, the working masses to aid in the struggle against these parasites who undermine the C. P. S. U. and the Soviet power. *Is it not madness, is it not support of these elements to keep in exile those who fought for Party democracy as the only means of clearing the Party of the disintegrating forces?* Despite your knowledge of all of this you silently tolerate the literal annihilation in exile of the Bolshevik-Leninists.

Sibirakov, exiled to *katorga* (hard labor) under the czar, was brought back to Moscow by the G.P. U. in a hopeless condition. Comrade Alski, who contracted a severe disease during his revolutionary work in China, was close to death in Narym without medical aid. Right now they are trying to transfer him from the clinic in Tomsk to Rubzovsk, where there is no skilled medical aid at hand. A loyal friend of the Party, comrade Taras Chortcheko, lay unconscious with severe typhoid in Narym, in a region so encircled by swamps that no doctor was able to get through them to him. When our protests finally obliged you to transfer him to Kamen, he left—hardly able to stand on his feet—without a single cent! It took a struggle on our part to make available the few rubles with which to send his baggage after him. A revolutionist-Bolshevik, whose past can stand any comparison with yours, he must seek to recover his strength with thirty rubles (fifteen dollars) a month. We were ashamed to make these things known to the working masses, and approached only you.

The illness of Trotsky, however, has brought our patience to overflow. We cannot be silent and look on while malaria devours the strength of a warrior who served the working class for a lifetime, who was the Sword of the October Revolution. If factional interests have extinguished in you all memories of the common revolutionary struggle, then at least let simple intelligence and the facts themselves speak out. The dangers against which the Soviet republic is fighting are growing. The entire information apparatus is in your hands; you therefore know even better than we how to estimate the situation. Only those people who do not understand the struggle against the daily growing dangers can be indifferent towards the slow death of the fighting heart that is comrade L. Trotsky. But

those among you—and I am personally convinced that they are not few—who think with dread of what the morrow will bring; those who bear in mind the fight against the growing dangers, must say to themselves:

Enough of this inhuman playing with the health and the life of comrade Trotsky!

They must raise the question of how to put an end to the banishment of the Bolshevik-Leninists with Trotsky at the head. They must demand in the first place that comrade Trotsky be transferred in the shortest possible time to other climatic conditions; that capable medical assistance be afforded him; that he be freed from the tormenting worry over his daily bread.

Comrades, act as swiftly as possible! Let us not suffer the shame of hundreds of thousands, who saw Trotsky on the front in the civil war, raising their voices to save him. Act, comrades, for, much as the

Vindicating the Trotsky Platform

By Martin Abern

The correctness of the policies of Trotsky and the Russian Opposition are now becoming clearer in the light of recent developments in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Trotsky cautioned the Party to beware of the encroachments of the Kulaks and Nepmen who would take heart from the Party policy which tended toward a self-sufficient, an isolated Soviet economy. He stressed a more rapid industrialization and collective and Soviet farming policy. Some of those who expelled and exiled him are today compelled to give lip service to his proposals.

"If a certain tendency becomes apparent, it is useless to raise a hue and cry when it is already too late; the alarm must be given when the tendency begins to appear and when there is still time to guard against its consequences," says comrade Kuibyshev in reporting on the Economic Situation in the Soviet Union before the Leningrad Party functionaries on September 19, 1928. (See Kuibyshev report in *Inprecorr* No. 71, 73, 75, October 12, 19, and 26, 1928).

Trotsky and the Russian Opposition long before and at the right time "raised the hue and cry" and gave the alarm on the very questions raised in this report of Kuibyshev. Trotsky's industrial and agrarian program was labeled "super-industrialism," and in practice the "turtle's pace" (Bukharin) toward socialism was adopted. The Opposition pointed out the tendencies to tamper with the foreign-trade monopoly. The elaborate program submitted by Trotsky and the Russian Opposition over a year ago to the XVth Congress of the C.P.S.U. and which today retains its validity was not given to the Party Congress and was in fact suppressed.

The warnings uttered by the Russian Opposition in its platform should be read in the light of the recent declaration of Stalin, General Secretary of the C.P.S.U. In his speech before the Plenum of the Moscow Committee and Moscow Control Commission of the C.P.S.U., on October 19th, 1928, He says:

"If certain circles among the Communists desire to keep the Party back from realizing the resolutions of the XVth Party Congress by denying the necessity of an assault on the Kulak elements in the rural districts, or else demand an arrest of our industrial development because they consider the present rate of advance fatal to the country, or if again they consider the Government's subsidies for Soviet farms and collective farms to be impracticable and are of the opinion that the money in question is being wasted in this way, . . . or if they demand the loosening of our foreign-trade monopoly and so on, this means that in the ranks of our Party there are such as are anxious to adapt the cause of our Socialist construction to the tastes and requirements of the Soviet bourgeoisie. A victory of the Right deviations within our Party would entail an enormous consolidation of the capitalists in our country. And what would such a consolidation mean? It would mean a strengthening of the chances of a restoration of capitalism. Consequently a victory of the Right deviations in our Party would lead to the development of conditions which are requisite for the restoration of capitalism in this country." (*Imprecorr* No. 77, Nov. 9th, 1928, P. 1439. Our emphasis.)

Thus they paraphrase the statements made by Trotsky and which they denounced as "Social Democratic" and even "Counter-revolutionary."

In the Program submitted to the XVth Party Congress, Trotsky stated that only a powerful socialized industry can help the peasants transform agriculture along collectivist lines. He called for a cessation of basing hopes upon the so-called

Party worker can endure, it is beyond him to tolerate the certainty that the Party of the working class is consciously ruining in Central Asia a comrade who fought in the front ranks of the October.

I do not write this letter in order to intensify the factional struggle. I write to you so that you may be moved to put an end to a situation which has every likelihood of broadening the cleavage that you yourselves have made; of separating you still further from us; of completely alienating you from us, whose Party books have been taken, who have been stamped as counter-revolutionaries by the G.P.U. according to Article 58, but who as before still feel ourselves to be Party members and as always and despite everything will fight for the interests of the working class.

KARL RADEK.

Tomsk, Siberia. October 1928.

"strong" peasant, the Kulak. The Stalin-Bukharin group was ignoring or openly denying the petty-bourgeois character of peasant property and peasant industry. Trotsky said:

"Only a suitable attention to the hired hand, only a course based on the poor peasant and his union with the middle peasant, only a decisive struggle against the Kulak, only a course towards industrialization, only a course towards class cooperatives and a class-credit system in the country, will make it possible to draw the middle peasant into the work toward socialist reconstruction of agriculture." (*The Platform of the Opposition, "The Real Situation in Russia"*, P. 67, Harcourt, Brace and Co.

He proposed:

"A sharply progressive tax system; state legislative measures for the defense of hired labor and the regulation of wages of agricultural workers; a correct class policy in the matter of land-division and land-utilization; the same thing in the matter of supplying the country with tractors and other implements of production." (*Ibid*, p. 69).

A complete program for State industry and industrial construction and electrification for the Soviet Union is presented in the chapter that follows, but in this article emphasis is laid on the agrarian and peasant policy because of the slanders and misrepresentation particularly on this point. It is only necessary to compare these quotations from the Russian Opposition program presented to the Party over a year ago with the quotations from Stalin, Kuibyshev and others to note how extreme has been the falsification of the Opposition program.

To those who, like Bukharin, labeled Trotsky's industrial program "super-industrialization", Trotsky said:

"It is not true that the slow pace of industrialization is immediately due to the absence of resources. The means are scanty, but they exist. What is wanted is the right policy." (*Ibid*, pp. 91-92. Our emphasis.)

Today Kuibyshev in his report, says in reply to the Right Wing which hollers "over-industrialization":

"The requirements of our economy in the immediate future will call for great investments, if our native construction of turbines is to be raised to the desired level. This task must be realized not only from the standpoint of industrialization and of socialist development. It must be realized in view of the demands of our economy in the future. . . . History. . . will not permit us to proceed more slowly, otherwise the very next year may lead to a series of even more serious anomalies than are apparent today."

(Report of Kuibyshev to Leningrad Party Functionaries, September 19th, 1928. *Inprecorr* No. 73, p. 1339, October 19th, 1928, Our emphasis.)

The ring of capitalist wolves still surrounds the Soviet Union. They are ready as always to devour the hope and inspiration of the toilers of the world, the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics. Our duty always is in defense of the first Workers and Peasants Republic. The perspective of every worker toward the Soviet Union must be international, even as the strength of the Soviet Union must lie not in a perspective of an independent isolated development, but in a firm faith and reliance in the international proletarian revolution.

The adoption of the platform of the Russian Opposition and the reinstatement of its leaders will hasten the economic development of the Soviet Republic, will strengthen its resistance to the economic, political and military pressure of the imperialist countries, and at the same time will encourage and aid the development of the revolutionary movement on an international scale. It is the highest duty of Communists in all parties of the Comintern to fight for this.

The Right Danger in the American Party

CONTINUED FROM LAST ISSUE

VIII OPPORTUNIST MISTAKES IN THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN

In line with its general right wing tendencies the Lovestone group has made several serious opportunist errors, in the national election campaign of which the three following are the most outstanding:

1. In the national election program of our Party occurs the following demand: "Abolition of the Senate, of the Supreme Court, and of the veto power of the President."

This opportunist proposal creates illusions regarding the reform of the capitalist state. It cultivates the false notion much of which is exerted through the Senate, the Supreme Court and the President's veto power, by liquidating these institutions within the frame-work of capitalist society.

2. Illustrative of their right wing tendencies of the Lovestone group is the letter officially sent to the Party units to direct the securing of signatures to put our Party candidates on the election ballot. The following quotations indicate the corrupting methods used in this work:

"Remember that you are out to get signatures and not converts. This means no argument of any kind."

"Don't ask for signatures in the name of Communism" . . .

"If necessary you can explain that the signature is not an obligation to vote for this Party."

"Never state your mission to anyone but the person whose signature you wish to get, because if you give them time to think you will get too many questions."

"See how many more tricks you can work out for yourself and write your experiences to the National Office." (Our emphasis).

3. The general use of professional signature gatherers, and the buying of signatures, and the failure to mobilize the Party comrades for these campaigns.

This grossly opportunist letter was condemned by the Comintern.

IX. OPPORTUNIST MISTAKES IN LABOR PARTY WORK

The Party needs a fresh and clear formulation of policy on the labor party question based upon the changed conditions and new perspectives. The following is proposed as a main outline for our perspective and policy on the labor party question.

1. The developing depression and coming crisis will create favorable conditions for mass break-away movements from the capitalist parties which our Party must anticipate and utilize "to mobilize and to organize the workers under its banner against the capitalist offensive and against the reformist supporters of capitalism, namely, the American Federation of Labor and the Socialist Party of America" (C.I. April Letter).

2. It is not the task of our Party in the present period to carry on agitation campaigns and struggles for the organization of a labor party.

In view of the changed conditions (Integration of Labor bureaucracy and aristocracy into capitalist machine, narrowing base of A. F. of L. and restriction to skilled workers, the organization of new unions as main task of our Party, leftward drift of masses, etc.) and the above opportunist errors, the labor party slogan in this period has only a general propaganda value.

3. Our Party must fight resolutely against the tendencies for a third capitalist party (Norris, LaFollette, Berger, Thomas, etc.), and strive to establish itself as the political party of the American masses.

4. The Party must carry on active campaigns for the organization of united front action with the masses from below on concrete and immediate issues of struggle against the capitalist offensive, on the political as well as economic fields. More than ever must the united front policy from below be applied by our Party in the fight against the reformists and to win the masses for the class struggle.

5. In the present period, the Party's chief means of furthering the political awakening of the American masses, is the vigorous participation and leadership in the everyday struggles, deepening the content of these struggles, carrying out energetically the program for the organization of new

The following is the fourth installment of the document submitted by the delegation of the Opposition in the American Party to the Sixth World Congress of the Communist International, in July 1928 and signed by James P. Cannon, William Z. Foster, William F. Dunne, Alex Bittelman, J. W. Johnstone, Manuel Gomez and George Siskind.

unions. In the process of these struggles the Party will establish united fronts with the masses on the political field.

6. The theory that the C.P. of the U.S.A. can make little or no gains in election campaigns until a labor party appears must be combated vigorously.

The grave opportunist errors of the Lovestone group in the labor party work, places squarely before our Party the need of discontinuing the old labor party policy. The following are the main errors:

1. Abandoning the industrial base by failure to carry on political campaigns among the working masses in the industrial centers.

2. Orientating the struggle for independent working class political action largely on the farmers and farmer-labor movements of the Northwest.

3. Persistence in advocating the organization of workers and farmers in one Party (Farmer-Labor Party) contrary to C.I. decision.

4. Proposal to send Party members into the Socialist Party to fight for a Labor Party.

5. Reliance upon the trade union and socialist bureaucracy for the building of the labor party, criticized in the April letter of the C.I., a mistake shared in also by the minority of the Polcom.

6. Wrong conception of the role of the labor party in the class struggle ("emancipator of the working class"), noted and criticized in the Comintern letter of April.

7. Wrong conception of the relation between the Communist Party and a labor party. Reducing the Communist Party to a left wing in the labor party and farmer-labor movement (Minnesota, Alleghany county labor party.) Reducing the Party to an instrument for the organization of a labor party.

8. The Panken and Bearak maneuvers criticized by the C. I.

X. FAILURE TO BUILD THE T.U.E.L.

In numerous letters and resolutions the Comintern and Profintern have repeatedly stressed the necessity of building the Trade Union Educational League. With our Party orientating itself towards the organization of new unions the T.U.E.L. acquires added importance. It must through its general organization and industrial committees, actively proceed with the organization of the new unions. It must continue and extend its activities in building the left wing in the old unions and coordinate these with its major task of organizing the new unions.

Notwithstanding the importance of the T.U.E.L. as a factor in the trade union work, little is being done by the Party to build it up. Party support of the T.U.E.L. is mostly mere lip service. It still remains largely a skeleton organization in most localities and industries. No efforts were made by the C.E.C. to follow up the recent national conference of the T.U.E.L. by an active campaign to establish local groups. The return of the Profintern and trade union delegations have not been utilized to build the T.U.E.L.

The T.U.E.L. nationally and its respective National Industrial Committees must be brought more prominently to the front in a leading role in industrial struggles. There is a strong tendency to push them aside and liquidate them by conducting all industrial activities directly through Party fractions. The official organ of the T.U.E.L. "Labor Unity", now neglected by the Party, must be strengthened and developed into a weekly mass organ.

XI. PACIFIST AND PETTY-BOURGEOIS LIBERAL TENDENCIES IN THE ANTI-WAR AND ANTI-IMPERIALIST WORK.

The Party manifested many pacifist and liberal deviations in its anti-war and anti-imperialist work. The following illustrates this point:

1. Calling upon the workers to protest against the death of American Marines in Nicaragua, and treating the death of these marines as of greater con-

sequence to the American workers than the murder of hundreds of Nicaraguan rebels by American marines (Central Committee Nicaraguan Manifesto, July, 1927, never repudiated by the C.E.C. nor repudiated by the Lovestone group).

2. Tendency to obscure the independent and aggressive role of American imperialism (Lovestone group theory of American imperialism being the "catpaw" of British imperialism and its newest theory of American imperialism "supporting Japan in China").

3. Failure of the Polcom to prevent the issuance and stop immediately the use of pacifist slogans in the Nicaraguan campaign ("Enlist with Sandino", "Stop the Flow of Nicaraguan Blood") a mistake corrected lately by the Polcom.

4. Pacifist and liberal appeals to the marines (leaflets in California, Boston and elsewhere, corrected by the Polcom).

5. The tendency to build the united front in the All-America Anti-Imperialist work chiefly upon petty-bourgeois liberal elements and failure to draw labor elements into this movement. (Also corrected by the Polcom in formal decision).

6. Failure to carry on active anti-militarist work among the American forces in Nicaragua and China.

7. Pacifist ideology in work among women. "We can even stop that terrible scourge of humanity—war". (First issue New York "Working Women").

The above deviations flow from the general right wing orientation and main line of the Lovestone group.

XII. UNDERESTIMATION AND FALSE CONCEPTION OF WORK AMONG NEGRO MASSES

The problem of Communist work among the 12,000,000 Negroes in the United States, the overwhelming majority of whom are workers and working farmers and their families, must be approached from the Leninist viewpoint that this most exploited and oppressed section of the population forms an immense reserve for the proletarian revolution. The main tasks are:

1. The development of a revolutionary Negro race movement led by the Negro proletariat.

2. Systematic work among Negro masses in industry.

3. Campaigns to mobilize the white workers for struggle in behalf of the negroes against all forms of imperialist oppression and discrimination, linking up race questions with economic questions.

4. Systematic work among the Negro masses in masses of the South, their organization for struggle against white oppression.

5. Struggle against white chauvinism in the ranks of our Party.

6. The training of a cadre of Negro Communist leaders.

7. The drawing of Negro workers into all organization campaigns.

8. The intensification of the struggle inside the existing unions.

9. The development of the influence of our Party as the leader of the struggles of the Negro masses. These are the immediate tasks of our Party.

The Lovestone majority has systematically and continuously neglected work among the Negro masses. This error is based on an underestimation of the revolutionary role of this most exploited and oppressed section of the population. This is expressed by Comrade Lovestone in his speech at the February plenum as published in the Daily Worker where he refers to the Negro farmers in the South as a "Broad social reserve of capitalist reaction." It is further shown by the complete absence of any reference to work among the Negro peasantry in the South in the program introduced by Comrade Pepper in the Polburo, April 30, 1928.

For two and a half years the Negro work of our Party has been bankrupt. 1) The Negro organ was liquidated; 2) the organization of the Pullman porters into a Negro union was carried out by social reformists without our Party making any serious effort to establish its influence; 3) no struggle against white chauvinism in the ranks of the Party has been carried on, (such incidents as Gary, Harlem, Detroit, are proof of this) and continuous re-treating of the Party leadership before the chauvinism of the whites; 4) the last Negro program of the party written by Comrade Pepper, makes no reference to the necessity for such a campaign; 5) the Lovestone majority entirely underestimates the necessity for struggle for the mobilization of the white workers in behalf of the Negro masses; 6) systematic factional corruption to conceal bankruptcy of Negro work; 7) no systematic attempt to build real communist cadre of Negro comrades; 8) orientation towards Negro petty bourgeoisie rather than towards workers and farmers; 9) failure to connect Negro work with general trade union work of the Party; 10) failure to draw Negro comrades into general Party work.

CONTINUED IN NEXT ISSUE