

# Letters from the Militants

A LETTER FROM A MINERS' LEADER  
Springfield, Ill., Dec. 19, 1928.

Dear Comrade:

Your letter of the 15th received today. I am very glad to note your attitude in regards to the reactions of some comrades towards the Party as a Party. I pointed out this wrong point of view at our last unit meeting when two comrades attacked the Party because the Pol-com has expelled Cannon and others.

You remember that at the last unit meeting I made a motion that the unit protests against the expulsion of Comrade Cannon, etc., and demanded the reinstatement of all these comrades. The whole unit was in favor except Shimkus who spoke against, yet this motion never came to a vote, because Plott realizing the position he was in prolonged the discussion for so long and words flew back and forth so fast that nothing was done except to have another discussion meeting the following Sunday. But for some reason there was no Party meeting the following Sunday.

As you probably already know I have been suspended from the Party for three months for holding the Trotsky position at the last unit meeting. Now at the last unit meeting from which Plott gathered his so-called evidence, my position was solely a protest against expulsions, asking for more information, protesting that both sides be heard on this question. The expulsion doesn't bother me; I am used to them, but its effects on the new members is going to react very bad and not to the best interests of the Party.

George Maurer came down to see me last week and spent a whole day in Springfield. First proposal he made to me was that I vote for the minority resolution and appeal my case to the C. E. C. This I refused to do because I disagree with the resolution on the question of Trotsky. Second, that I should refrain from voting on all resolutions and make a speech on discipline, right of the C. E. C. to expel, etc. This too I refused to do because it means lulling the membership to sleep and not taking a Communist stand at all. I told him that I would fight for reinstatement of the expelled comrades.

But now after reading the Program of Trotsky from the book that you sent me I feel that I must take another step forward and fight for the Trotsky position and program. I had some doubts, because of lack of facts, now I am convinced after giving some time to the writings of not only Trotsky, but Lenin and Stalin and others.

At the meeting Sunday we will of course fight for the motion of protest and reinstatement but also I am going to take up the program of Trotsky and fight for it too. Best regards to Glotzer and Zalisko.

Fraternally

JOE ANGELO

## Our N. Y. Mass Meeting

An audience of five hundred workers filled the large hall of the Labor Temple on Tuesday night, January 8, and listened with absorbed attention to a more than two-hour speech delivered by comrade James P. Cannon, editor of The Militant and leader of the expelled Communist Opposition, on "The Truth About Trotsky and the Russian Opposition." This splendid turn-out, far exceeding the most optimistic expectations, was achieved in the face of an official boycott by the Party apparatus and with almost no advertising of the meeting.

The workers manifested the keenest interest during the course of the speech in the array of facts, documents and arguments presented by comrade Cannon, much of which they had heard for the first time. Strong applause greeted the name of comrade Trotsky, particularly when the speaker declared that a Leninist line would be carried through in the Soviet Union and the Comintern only if and when Trotsky and his colleagues would be reinstated as the legitimate leaders of world Bolshevism. When the speaker took up point by point the record of falsification, distortion and slander against Trotsky, bringing it down to recent day by pointing out how the official apparatus had even compelled the director of the Russian film "Ten Days that Shook the World" to omit the picture of Trotsky from every scene, the audience, many of whom had seen the film and the petty trick, again applauded vigorously.

After the lecture many questions were asked and all of them were answered by the speaker. To the great satisfaction of the audience, comrade Cannon tore to shreds the "big exposure" of the Daily Worker in response to questions on the matter.

As is reported elsewhere in this issue, comrade Maurice L. Malkin, now in Sing Sing prison, spoke before Comrade Cannon and was given a warm welcome and ovation. Numbers of his friends and comrades from the Furriers' and needle-trades workers were on hand throughout the meeting. Comrade Martin Abern acted as chairman for the meeting.

In New Haven, January 4, comrade Cannon spoke for the second time on the Russian Opposition at the Labor Temple. The first meeting had

## THE EXPELLED

The bureaucrats are continuing with their expulsion policy, and wherever a worker in the Party raises his voice in defense of the platform of the Russian Opposition, or against the expulsion course, he is forthwith expelled or suspended from the Party himself. The "ideological campaign" against the Opposition is more truly a campaign of ideological terrorization. Nevertheless, true to their convictions, we continue to hear of additional workers who have taken a stand for our position even though it involved the temporary loss of their membership card. The latest expulsions and suspensions include the following:

### CANADA

H. POPPER  
J. HURWITZ  
M. CLAREMONT  
C. STARKMAN

D. QUARTER  
C. KRAMER  
W. SHAINAK  
MAURICE QUARTER

In addition to these comrades suspended by the Party in Toronto, 20 others, members of the Young Communist League, have received the same fate. Their names will appear in future issues. Most of the suspended workers are active in the needle trades union.

### NEW YORK

PHILIP SHULMAN, member Left Wing I.L.G.W.U., Local 35.  
BERNARD LUECK, Organizer Unit 2 F, expelled August 1928.

### PHILADELPHIA

JOE LESACK, Y.W.L., member Carpenters Union.  
NATHAN SHANKER, Financial Secretary Sheet Metal Workers Union.

### ST. LOUIS

SAM CURTIS, Sub-D. O., Y. W. L.

### WHO ARE THE EXPELLED COMMUNISTS

MAURICE SPECTOR—Entered Toronto Young Socialist League in 1914. Removed as editor of student paper in 1916 for anti-war activity in University of Toronto. As national executive committee member of Social Democratic Party in 1918 he introduced resolution for affiliation to Third International. Helped liquidate Social Democratic Party and form underground groups. Delegate to the first underground convention of Communist Party and Workers Communist Party group in Canada which established Workers Party. Elected to C. E. C. and appointed editor of Canadian Worker, official organ, in 1921. Constantly a member of C. E. C. of Communist Party of Canada since then. Delegate to Fourth World Congress of Comintern in 1922-23. Elected chairman of Party following the Third and Fourth Conventions. Editor of Canadian Labor Monthly, Party theoretical monthly, from inception. Delegate to Sixth World Congress of C. I. and elected member of Executive Committee of Comintern.

MAX SHACHTMAN—Joined Workers Council in 1921 prior to its merger into Workers Party at December 1921 convention. Elected member of National Executive Committee of Young Workers League in 1923, member of National Bureau and Secretariat until 1927 when entire work transferred to the Party. Editor of official organs of League, Young Worker and Young Comrade, in 1923-4-5. Director League's anti-militarist work 1923-7. League delegate to Plenum of Young Communist International in 1925. Editor of Labor Defender, organ of International Labor Defense, 1926-1928. Member of National Executive Committee of I. L. D. since November 1927. Delegate to Second Congress of International Red Aid in 1927. Elected alternate to Central Committee at 1927 convention of Party.

been broken up by the police after the official party rowdies had tried to create a riot. This time more than sixty workers listened to comrade Cannon speak to the very end without much disturbance. When a dozen of the Party squad, who had announced a rival meeting, on the same night, which flopped, entered the hall they began to try to repeat their tactics of the previous meeting. They were led by Robert Kling, who, although he has recently returned from the U.S.S.R. evidently learned nothing about workers' democracy. Unfortunately for Kling, however, he and his rowdies were quickly put into their place along the wall where they remained for ten minutes and then left the meeting.

Comrade James P. Cannon, is now out on a short tour of the main cities. He will visit Cleveland, Chicago and Minneapolis. In Cleveland and Minneapolis public meetings have been arranged. In all cities, comrade Cannon will hold special meetings with the Opposition forces. A more extended tour is being planned following the national convention of the Party if our demand for reinstatement is rejected.

### OPPOSITION MEETING IN BOSTON

A mass meeting on the subject, "The Truth About Trotsky and the Platform of the Russian Opposition" will be held in Boston on Friday, February 15th, 1929, 8 P. M. at the Credit Union Hall, 62 Chambers St., Boston, Mass. Comrade James P. Cannon will be the speaker. Tickets in advance at 25 cents can be obtained at Shapiro's Book Store, 8 Leverett St.

### A REVOLUTIONIST AGAINST GANGSTERISM

(This letter was written to an expelled Opposition comrade by comrade Pippan, an active revolutionary worker in Italy where he was a Provincial Secretary of the miners' union, and was violently persecuted by the fascists. He is one of the leading Communists among the Italian workers in the United States, active in the anti-fascist movement, and is at present Paterson organizer of the National Textile Workers Union. Publication of the letter is authorized in its concluding paragraphs).

Paterson, N. J., Dec. 19, 1928.

Dear Refugee:

Only today did I hear the news of the serious fight which took place last Saturday in front of the New York Workers Party district headquarters, between the Trotskyist faction to which you belong, and several members of our Party, in which fight you had some disagreeable experiences.

In deploring profoundly the actions of my Party comrades, I feel it my duty to deny any part in the responsibility of those who cultivate the vain illusion that the triumph of a given tactical viewpoint in the Party can ever succeed through personal violence practiced on the dissenting elements.

It is my personal opinion that in the conflict of political principles and ideas, one must maintain oneself strictly within the sphere of personal respect, a respect which must coincide with a strict observance of liberty of opinion among comrades.

Sometime ago, during the Italian district meeting in which the Trotskyist question was discussed, and after, I openly expressed my disapproval of the unfortunate remark made by comrade Markoff to the effect that the Trotskyist faction is destined to outdo Mussolini.

This statement is, in my opinion, completely wrong, and it made a very bad impression when it was launched in the midst of many of us who suffered the consequences of fascist reaction in Italy. This general impression shows to what absurdities the factional struggle has been carried, and how the spirit of many comrades has become imbued with this poison; and all this is painful to see. I personally do not believe in the definition of Trotskyism given by comrade Markoff.

Returning to the deplorable actions of the Communist comrades last Saturday, I believe that they are really poor Communists, who, instead of honoring their party, discredit it before the very masses that we have won after many struggles and sacrifices.

In assuring you of my personal solidarity, I am fully conscious of the seriousness of writing a letter of this kind. I believe my conscience will have nothing to reproach me for, if, by authorizing you to make any use you may wish of it, we may bring to the factional struggle a spirit more worthy of the cause we are all fighting for.

GIOVANNI PIPPAN.

## 'Hotspur Harry' George

Prince: *That ever this fellow should have fewer words than a parrot, and yet the son of a woman! His industry is up-stairs and down-stairs; his eloquence the parcel of a reckoning. I am not yet of Percy's mind, the Hotspur of the North; he that kills me some six or seven dozen of Scots at a breakfast, washes his hands, and says to his wife, "Fie on this quiet life! I want work." "O my sweet Harry," says she, "how many hast thou killed today?" "Give my roan horse a drench," says he, and answers, "Some fourteen," an hour after, "a trifle, a trifle."*

—King Henry the Fourth, Part I, Act II, Sc. IV.

Comes now our bloodthirsty friend Harrison George, draws his sword for the fray and in one swift charge kills off the entire Trotsky movement in the United States, including the I. W. W., Cannon, Lore, Eastman, and Trotsky himself, as deluders of the American workers and their most insidious enemies. All this in one article ("The I. W. W. Moves Backward") in the current issue of Labor Unity. Then he sitteth down, picking his teeth with his lance, and murmurs deprecatingly: "A trifle, a trifle. Fie on this quiet life. I want work." Then our modern Hotspur Harry goes on to say:

"We must here insert a remark on another characteristic of the I. W. W. in which it approximates the character of the A. F. of L. The reactionary bureaucracy of the A. F. of L. expels Communist workers from its ranks, so does the supposed-to-be-revolutionary I. W. W. Both have openly carried out such expulsions without disguise when they judged it possible to do so. Both, when the backfire of the rank and file began against such expulsions, as harmful to working class unity, have continued such expulsions under subterfuge charges. The writer was 'suspended' without a hearing by the I. W. W. General Executive Board in 1926 on the charge of 'circulating literature outside the regular channels' or words to that effect."

May we timidly ask this stalwart warrior why it is that not only the I. W. W. and the A. F. of L. expel Communist workers; that others, "when the backfire of the rank and file began against such expulsions . . . have continued such expulsions under subterfuge charges"; that he has himself endorsed the expulsion of these Communist workers from his own organization, the Workers (Communist) Party of America? We say "timidly" because our teeth rattle with fear at the awful wrath of this mighty swordsman who can fight on two fronts, or three or three hundred with equal vigor. Mayhap we will be completely annihilated by him in the next issue of the non-Party Labor Unity, or mayhap, just because we have asked him he will reply like Falstaff:

*What, upon compulsion? 'Zounds! an I were at the strappado, or all the racks in the world, I would not tell you on compulsion. Give you a reason on compulsion! If reasons were as plenty as blackberries I would give no man a reason upon compulsion, I.*