

On the Situation in Russia

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Whoever poses the question in that way, puts the slogan of the secret ballot not in relation to the existing situation, from which so far no way out has been found, but puts it in relation to an idealized situation where all workers vote courageously and firmly according to their convictions.

If one develops this view to its logical conclusion, one must abolish the slogan of the secret ballot even in a capitalist society, in order better to develop "activity" and "courage." In China one could of course summon the brave-hearted workers to open voting, but the next morning they would lose their heads for it. Therefore in China the slogan of secret ballot (in all elections) can have an extraordinary significance, since this slogan is dictated by the relation of class forces. Although the social regime has with us a different foundation, nevertheless this foundation is already in great part overgrown with weeds. It is not true that the character of our elections and ballots is determined today by the amount of courage and decisiveness of the workers. No, it is already to a great degree determined by the changed relations of the class forces. This change finds its objective expression in the governmental apparatus, in its whole mechanism. Stalin has truly said: "These cadres can only be destroyed by civil war." Naturally there is in these words also a certain bureaucratic boasting and intimidation. With a real wave from below the apparatus-man will duck; he will not let it come to a civil war. In any case this course—the course of a reform through powerful pressure of the masses—must be tried out to the end. At the present stage the slogan of the secret ballot drives the masses forward towards activity, and away from passivity. At any and every meeting where there is talk of self-criticism, of Party democracy, and so forth, the Bolshevik-Leninists must and can say: "In order to have self-criticism you must remove the pressure; make it possible for us to vote according to our convictions, without fear of loss of employment—that is, secretly. Then all the apparatus-men will be held in check."

We must begin with the Party, then go on to the unions. As to the Soviets, where different classes take part in the voting, the question must be subordinated until we have gathered the necessary experience.

PERSPECTIVES OF THE STRUGGLE

As regards the general perspectives of the struggle, both domestic and international, I must limit myself here to general remarks, reserving the right to come back to these questions in the near future, in order to treat them more concretely, and also with reference to the more important individual countries, as I have already done in part with reference to China ("The Chinese Question after the Eleventh Congress.") A considerable part of the documents we sent to the Congress was dedicated to an explanation of the relation of our inner struggle with the international struggle. The theoreticians of Democratic Centralism do not understand this relation—they have in general no line. In the international question there appear, not accidentally, certain purely adventurist blows with people who have broken altogether with Marxism, people like Korsch and Co. In his latest pronouncements, V. Smirnov is merely a Left caricature of Stalin.

Europe is now passing through a phase of a rather lively strike movement. This wave is to a certain extent economically "belated", since it coincides with a considerable lowering of the economic prosperity. The belatedness of the strike wave was caused by the previous heavy defeats, by the growing influence of the social democracy and the bureaucratic passivity in the policy of the Comintern. A further lowering of the economic prosperity must bring the economic struggle into the political field, and thereby favor the leftward movement of the workers. It will have a different tempo in different countries. But an extraordinary sharpening of the political situation in certain European countries is not impossible even in the near future. This depends to a large degree upon the death, the duration and the extent of the oncoming crisis, not only in Europe but also in the United States. America will overcome its crisis at the cost of Europe, and can, with its pressure on individual countries, Germany in the first place, bring them to immediately revolutionary situations. Here appears in our perspective the chief contradiction, that between the tasks of the epoch and the maturity of the Communist Party. The danger of missing new revolutionary situations is absolutely not removed,

and is also not diminished. The adventure with Thaelmann is of course no accident. The present regime is a hothouse for Smolensk affairs on an international scale. And these gentry, the people of Smolensk and Hamburg, condemn us and expel us. Their work consists of befouling the banner of Communism and destroying the Comintern.

HISTORIC MISSION OF THE OPPOSITION

The more they do this, the more they demonstrate the gigantic mission of the Opposition on an international scale. We must bend all our energies to form the genuine Bolshevik cadres in the struggle with bureaucratism, to revive and mature them. That is the chief difference between the third five years of the Comintern and the second. Six years were necessary in order to bring the weightiest questions and differences out of the bureaucratic underworld into the world arena. That point is now reached. No power can again suppress the problems and counter-problems now presented. The revolutionary cadres of the foreign Parties can only grow through their own experience. We are not demanding a commandeering of the International Opposition in the spirit of the Executive Committee of the Comintern. A broadly-extended and systematic exchange of theoretical experiences, a collaboration in the sphere of the Marxian analysis of events, and a working out of slogans for action—that is the beginning. The first serious steps to be

Trotsky's Deportation from Russia

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"Trotskyites Take to Armed Counter-Revolution; the Soviet Power Must Destroy Them." He writes:

"Trotskyism shows itself as genuine menshevik counter-revolution, holding the basic common platform of the international bourgeoisie: the overthrow of the Soviet power. It is absolutely certain that the C.P.S.U. and the workers' government under its Leninist guidance, will mercilessly crush this new counter-revolutionary conspiracy. It is their duty to the international working class to do so."

Minor can write these disgraceful lines even though it covers the Party with shame and dishonor. He is an old hand at this game. He writes now about Trotsky just as he wrote about Lenin in the Red-hating New York World of February, 1919. He said then:

"The main fact in the new situation is that the so-called nationalization of Russian industry has put insurgent industry back into the hands of the business class, who disguise their activities by giving orders under the magic title of 'People's Commissaries.'" (Our emphasis.)

At that time he was defending the genuinely counter-revolutionary anarchists against the Bolsheviks, about whom he substituted lies for understanding and sympathy. Today, he lies with the same ease about Trotsky, the authentic living leader of world Bolshevism, and calls for his head, and for the "merciless crushing" of Trotsky's comrades.

The 150 Oppositionists were arrested for printing and circulating a "counter-revolutionary" article by Trotsky. We print the article referred to on another page of this issue. Our readers can see that it is saturated with the unbreakable will of the Opposition to maintain the victory of the October Revolution, to defend it from all of its enemies, to guard it from the insidious attacks of the Kulak, the Nepman, the bureaucrat, the foreign bourgeoisie, and their instruments—from the conscious and unconscious agents of the Thermidor who stand behind the policies of Stalin, with a smug and satisfied leer at every new step he takes against the Leninist Opposition. There is not a breath of counter-revolution in this brilliant document for it is predicated on the only correct program of struggle, in the Bolshevik sense, against the increasing aggressiveness and impudence of the class enemies of the Russian proletariat.

Trotsky is again sounding the alarm. He is warning against the destructive role of Stalin, for Stalin is splitting the Party and the proletariat, the ranks of the revolution. When Lenin died, the remaining leaders of the Party gave repeated assurances that only a united Party and a united leadership could guarantee the continuation of Lenin's course. Stalin is following a consistently opposite path. He has drained the Party of its best blood.

He who now proposes to the world bourgeoisie "international disarmament" and gains the praise of the bourgeoisie pacifists by proposing to "disarm the Red Army", has driven into exile the Lion of Octo-

ber, the organizer and leader of the Red Army. He has exiled or imprisoned Radek, Preobrazhensky, Rakovsky, Smilga, Mratchkovsky, Smirnov, Fishlev, Schmidt and thousands of other heroes of October. He who in 1917 proposed a coalition with the Mensheviks—against Lenin—because "there is no Party life without disagreements," is virulently intolerant of the slightest disagreement within the Party today; every diversion or opinion from the ruling bureaucracy is slashed at with an axe. On the road to capitulation the splitting and disorganization of the Party is only an incident.

The renewed arrests and persecutions assail the class conscious workers everywhere with the insistent question: *Whose hand is here? What class is strengthened by these measures? Trotsky long ago warned Stalin:*

"We are familiar with repressions. We are accustomed to blows. We will not surrender the October Revolution to the policies of Stalin—the entire essence of which is contained in these few words: Repression of the proletariat nucleus, fraternization with the compromisers of all countries, capitulation before the world bourgeoisie."

Such is the meaning of the new arrests of the Bolsheviks in Russia. The arrested Bolsheviks are unrolling the banner of the October Revolution. The American Communists who defended the Russian Revolution since 1917 must understand this. They must understand that the defense of the Russian Opposition is the one and only means of continuing that fight.

Trotsky has been banished to Turkey, because none of the imperialist countries, these "allies of counter-revolutionary Trotskyism" would permit their arch-enemy to enter their borders. He has been sent to Turkey, whose capital swarms with counter-revolutionary, White Guard vermin, who never lost their hatred for the man who organized the Red Army that drove them out and deprived them of their estates and privileged positions. His deportation there means virtually to deliver him to the White Guards. Should any harm come to Trotsky at their hands, the revolutionary working class of the world will hold Stalin personally and politically responsible for the crime! Let this be said openly and let all workers know its meaning.—M.S.

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Miners Protest the Expulsions

We print herewith the protest of a group of the outstanding leaders of the National Miners Union against the expulsions of Communists from the Party and their demand for Party democracy and a real discussion of the questions in dispute.

Jan. 13, 1929.

To the C.E.C. and to the D.E.C. District 8.

Dear Comrades—

At our last meeting of Springfield mine nucleus by regular motion the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

We the undersigned, members of the Springfield, Illinois party unit, view with great alarm the policy of mass expulsion of proletarian members now carried on by our party leadership in what appears to us as being in pursuance of purely factional aims. A policy which we have faced to great detriment of the revolutionary cause as it appears to us in other fields of the class struggle in which we have been active for years. A policy which we maintain to be the most arrogant form of bureaucratism and to our mind has absolutely no place in a workers' proletarian Communist party when applied as in this case to members whose record proves themselves as Communist by their services to the movement performed during years of activities.

It is our opinion that the policy of expulsion for political views alone is a policy of splits, of wrecking the Party and should and must be most decisively condemned by the membership.

As it appears to us, the party leadership in an effort to cover up the series of right wing errors and its complete right wing line, has now resorted to the destructive expulsion policy as a last desperate act reaching a point at present of utilizing practically the same methods as that pursued by the corrupt bureaucratic leaders in control of the trade unions, the old miners union being an outstanding dastardly example. We as Communists, many of us belonging to this union, have fought with all our revolutionary devotion this expulsion policy of the union bureaucracy, receiving at all times the full and undivided support of the entire Communist Party and all its members only to see it now resorted to and applied in the same ruthless manner by a bureaucratic leadership in the Party itself. In constructing the National Miners Union, and in laying down laws to govern its officers and members we have taken particular care and made the most strenuous efforts that the establishment of such bureaucracy should not be repeated and these methods never again be used against the left section of the membership. This was also carried out with the full support and under the guidance of the Party.

In our Party it appears to us, it is now the left wing section, the opponents of the right wing line of the Party leadership who become the expulsion victims.

We fully recognize that our Communist Party can never be put in the same category as a trade union, that our Party must have a solid foundation of discipline, but we are just as decidedly opposed to any usurpation of power within our Party which substitutes expulsion for Communist education to perpetuate a bureaucratic, extremely factional control, to make permanent an incorrect right wing political line and completely destroys any real foundation of Communist discipline built on correct policies.

In addition to the many expulsions having taken place, just recently, one of the members of our Springfield unit, Comrade Joe Angelo, has been suspended for a period of three months by the Chicago D.E.C., without even the formality of a trial, and without having been given the opportunity of stating his views in any respect in regards to the present controversy within the Party, but merely having committed the "crime" of protesting the expulsion of proletarian members of the Party. Such methods are a reproduction of the corrupt officialdom of the old reactionary bureaucracy of the trade unions of this country, especially the John L. Lewis machine in the old U.M.W. of A. This method we have vigorously fought in the union and we consistently and most decisively denounce as ultra factional, bureaucratic and tending to establish clique control of the worst sort within the Party.

These expulsions and suspensions we notice, are all taking place as a result of what is known as "Trotskyism," we are of the firm opinion that this is purely a smoke screen used to eliminate certain opponents to the present leadership of the Party. We, like many others of the rank and file members of the Party, regret we have had practically no opportunity to even become familiar with any of the issues involved in the dispute of the question called "Tro-

tskyism." We have made an earnest effort to become steadily better Communists, steadily more effective in the class struggle, for the emancipation of the working class and in so doing to render the utmost service and loyalty to our Party. And regardless of what is said and done by others we shall continue to do so, but we consider it highly necessary and a real duty as Communists and Party members to demand that the issues of this controversy be put squarely before us without any attempts at intimidation; not by the method of expelling all these revolutionists who take the one side of the question,

but by having both sides of the question fully represented and all documents bearing on the subject made available to the membership.

We most vehemently protest the splitting bureaucratic policy of expulsions from the Party for political views. It must cease and all those expelled Communists again be reinstated to full membership in the Party with their rights and duties.

Signed by—

George Voyzey, Joseph Angelo, Roy Jones, Stanley Horbut, Leone Michelangeli, Domenico Domini, A. Shimkous.

The Minneapolis Meetings

One of the largest and most rousing Communist meetings in years here was held last night at I.W.W. Hall under the auspices of the Opposition Communists with James P. Cannon speaking on "The Truth about Trotsky and the Platform of the Opposition". Over 250 workers packed the hall to the doors and listened with the closest attention to Cannon's two-hour exposition of the Opposition cause. Thanks to the presence of a strong and well organized Workers' Guard the meeting was protected from all interference and the gangster tactics which brought the police to Thursday's meeting and resulted in it being broken up by them were not attempted.

At Wednesday's meeting held at A.O.U.W. Hall a gang of thirty or more hooligans organized by the Party leadership rushed the hall early in the evening before the crowd arrived. Comrades Skoglund and Coover who were alone, handling tickets at the door, were attacked by the entire gang and badly beaten by black-jacks and brass knuckles. The slugging of these two prominent militants was accomplished by a division of labor between the members of the Lovestone and Foster factions. The latter held the arms of Coover and Skoglund from behind while the former wielded the black-jacks over their heads.

The attempt of the hoodlums to prevent comrade Cannon from speaking resulted in a fight which brought the Police who broke up the meeting, pulling Cannon down from the platform and driving the crowd from the hall. This collaboration of the police and gangsters in the suppression of the workers' right of free speech aroused violent resentment among the radical workers throughout the city who have seen the Minneapolis Oppositionists in the vanguard of every struggle of the militant workers for years past.

The I.W.W. cancelled a forum program of their own and rented their hall to us for the Saturday meeting "as a demonstration against violation of the workers' right of free speech." They also offered to help in protecting the meeting from disruption by the gangsters. The latter however failed to show up. They were brave enough to fight with thirty against two but lacked the courage to show up at the Saturday meeting where a larger group of militants were on hand early and prepared to meet them.

Comrade Cannon's speech, his array of arguments, suppressed facts and documents, made a profound impression and won many completely over to our side. Thirty-five workers in the audience handed in their names and addresses for notification of other meetings and activities of the Opposition.

On the invitation of the I.W.W., comrade Cannon remained over for Sunday night and gave a lecture at their forum on "Free Speech in the Labor Movement" to the great satisfaction of another packed hall.

Extensive meetings of the Opposition group were held with the participation of comrade Cannon during his visit which resulted in the clearing up of a number of tactical questions and the unanimous agreement of the entire group on the line of action for the future. The group passed a resolution demanding the weekly publication of The Militant and pledged \$25 a week toward its maintenance.

Gangsterism has defeated and discredited itself completely in Minneapolis. The Opposition has won a great moral and political victory over fascist

TROTSKY'S CRITICISM OF THE DRAFT PROGRAM TO BE CONTINUED

Owing to the heavy demands made on the space of this issue of The Militant by comrade Trotsky's letter on the Situation in Russia, the installment of his Criticism of the Draft Program of the Comintern had to be omitted. These installments will be continued in subsequent issues until the entire document is run.

methods. It has won the support of the great majority of the sympathizing workers and has strengthened its own morale and conviction. Our work in the coming period will be animated by a move determined and militant spirit than before.

VINCENT R. DUNNE.

The Mink

"Hasn't he (Shadow the Weasel) any enemies?" asked Peter Rabbit.
"Oh, yes," replied Old Mother Nature. "Reddy Fox, Old Man Coyote, Hooty the Owl and various members of the Hawk family have to be watched for by him. But they do not worry him much. You see he moves so quickly, dodging out of sight in a flash, that whoever catches him must be quick indeed. Then, too, he is almost always close to good cover. He delights in old stone walls, stone piles, brush-grown fences, piles of rubbish and barns and old buildings, the places that mice delight in. In old places there is always a hole to dart into in time of danger. He hunts whenever he feels like it, be it day or night, and often covers considerable ground, though nothing to compare with his big, brown, water-loving cousin, Billy Mink. It is because of his wonderful ability to disappear in an instant that he is called Shadow."

—The Burgess Animal Book for Children.

Consider the curious case of George Mink, the secretary of the Seamen's Club in New York, who stepped forward in the Daily Worker of January 28, 1929, to "disavow" any and all connections with the "Cannon-Trotsky movement". When our home was raided our receipt book was stolen by the C.E.C. jimmy-artists along with other material. Among the receipts was one made out to George Mink for a one year subscription to The Militant for one dollar. Not satisfied with the results of their burglary, the Stalinist second-story artists added to their accomplishments that of forgery, and they faked a receipt to the unfortunate Mink to make it appear that he had contributed \$50.00 to The Militant. A few days after this crude forgery, and on the basis of it, Mink was declared by the Folcom to be suspended from the Party and removed from his work among the seamen.

Comes now George Mink in the Daily Worker with a statement that "I have never at any time subscribed to The Militant, or supported it in any way, nor have I ever at any time donated any money, not even one cent, to the Cannon-Trotsky movement, or to Cannon, or to the Trotsky movement in any way, shape or form." And he then proceeds to bow his head and beat his breast and renounce the Trotskyite devil and all his works and all his pomps. His terrified tremolo rises above the chant of the congregation and he calls the assembled brethren to witness: "I defy anyone, inside or outside of the Party, to prove that I have supported Trotskyism, or been lax in my duty to fight it. I intend to continue struggling against Trotskyism."

We understand Mink's predicament and we feel for him. He might have refrained from reciting the cheap, standard slanders of "counter-revolutionaries" and "anti-working class" against us, and denounced, instead, the genuine criminals in the Party who will not stop even at forgery and worse to insure the domination of opportunist-adventurism in the Party. But Mink must watch for Reddy Lovestone, Old Man Pepper, and Hooty the Gidlow. He must "move so quickly, dodging out of sight in a flash, that whoever catches him must be quick indeed. There is always a hole to dart into in time of danger. It is because of his wonderful ability to disappear in an instant that he is called Shadow." Thus speaks Burgess. And we add: It is by these traits, so peculiarly their own, that the Minks manage to eke out their precarious existence in these hectic days. Their life is a miserable and unhappy one, but they probably reason that, after all, a Mink in the hole is better than no Mink at all!

CURTIS ARRESTED IN ST. LOUIS

ST. LOUIS, Mo.—Sam Curtis was one of the seven men and women arrested here by the police for participation in a picketing demonstration in front of the British Consulate in the Federal Commerce Trust Company building as a protest against the arrest and imprisonment of comrade J. W. Johnstone in India. Comrade Johnstone, well-known worker in the labor and revolutionary movement in the United States, was arrested by the British imperialists while acting as a delegate from the League Against Imperialism to the trade union congress in India, at which he spoke.

Comrade Curtis, arrested in St. Louis, was Young Workers League sub-district organizer in that territory, until a little while ago when he was expelled for supporting the Russian and International Opposition. The opportunist fakers in the Party have been denouncing him as a "counter-revolutionary" and a "renegade" ever since.