

# The MILITANT

Semi-Monthly Organ of the Opposition Group in the Workers (Communist) Party of America

"It is necessary that every member of the Party should study calmly and with the greatest objectivity, first the substance of the differences of opinion, and then the development of the struggles within the Party. Neither the one nor the other can be done unless the documents of both sides are published. He who takes somebody's word for it is a hopeless idiot, who can be disposed of with a simple gesture of the hand."—Lenin

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## Platform of the Communist Opposition

Addressed to the Sixth National Convention of the Workers (Communist) Party  
By JAMES P. CANNON, ARNE SWABECK, MARTIN ABERN and MAX SHACHTMAN

### The Position of the Russian Revolution

The present position of the Russian Revolution and its Marxist-Leninist foundation is the dominating factor in the world movement that must determine the course of every Communist and revolutionary worker. It overshadows all other questions. An examination of its present status and an analysis of the conditions of its development are prerequisites to the solution of all other main problems of the strategy and tactics of the revolutionary movement. Just as the revolutionary Communist movement all over the world was moulded and hardened in estimating the significance of the events of 1914-1917, marked by the collapse of the Second International and the rise of the Bolshevik Revolution, so world Bolshevism, its maintenance and growth, is conditioned upon the estimation of the course of events in the Soviet Union and the Communist International in the period of the last four to five years. All other questions are subordinated to this and flow from it.

The collapse of the Russian Revolution as the dictatorship of the proletariat would signify the retardation for decades of the revolutionary movement in Europe and America and the uprisings of the colonial peoples, whose main point of support today is the victory of the Russian October. A collapse would be followed by an unequalled reign of reaction throughout the world and would entail a restoration of world imperialist rule without precedent in the last two or three decades. Our primary concern is therefore with the fate of the Russian Revolution which directly affects the fate of all the Communist Parties. The defense of the Russian Revolution against external attacks and internal dangers is therefore the first and foremost task of all Communists and every conscious worker. We are defenders of the Russian Revolution since 1917. There is no break in the continuity of our position for our present fight is directly connected with and follows from our whole previous line.

The attitude of official optimism and light-minded equanimity which finds that all is as it should be, without inquiry as to the actual facts and the basic trends of development,—and seeks to prohibit such inquiry—is the worst kind of "support" that can be given the revolution. This attitude is actually one of criminal neglect and results in disarming the proletariat before its enemies and deluding it before difficulties. To base oneself only on faith and precedent is to drug oneself into impotence. Communists must give conscious and understanding help.

The origin of the present crisis in the Soviet Union lies in the contradiction between the existence of a Soviet regime in a country with a predominantly peasant economy, and the pressure of the capitalist encirclement. This crisis has been sharpened and aggravated by the false policies of the leadership. These policies are rooted, further, in the overestimation by the present leadership of the duration and depth of the temporary stabilization of capitalism which began after the defeat of the German and Bulgarian proletariat in 1923.

Our entire epoch is one of capitalism in dissolution, of imperialist wars and of the socialist revolution of the proletariat. Imperialism is the final stage of capitalism, of the domination of finance-capital, monopolies and international trusts, of the division and revision of the world among the imperialist powers, wherein the only method of "remedying" the disproportion between productive development and capital accumulation on the one hand and the division of markets, colonies and

spheres of influence on the other, is the resort to imperialist war. In sharpening the contradictions between the productive forces of world economy and national state barriers, imperialism evoked the last war and is preparing the next. This does not exclude, within the period of the decline of capitalism, the possibility of a partial economic revival or even the development of productive forces. Lenin at the Second Congress of the Communist International rightly pointed out that there was "no absolutely hopeless situation." The state of preparedness of the proletariat to wage a revolutionary struggle for power is a determining factor in the destruction of capitalism. Thanks to the treachery of the reformist social democracy, to the strategic though temporary post-war concessions of the bourgeoisie, and to the weakness or bad leadership of the Communist Parties, the bourgeoisie has been able to achieve the present relative stabilization of capitalism.

But this estimate of the current stabilization differs radically from that implied in the Stalinist, revisionist "theory" of socialism in one country, that is, a stabilization for decades, for a whole epoch. This conception, which is an approach to the social democratic view of capitalism as organically stabilized, found expression in the resolution of the 14th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union on Stalin's political report, which declared that "in the domain of international relations, it is quite clear the period of 'respite' is transforming itself into a veritable epoch." Later, the resolution of the Enlarged Executive of the C. I. of July 1927, spoke without restrictions of the technical, economic and political stabilization of capitalism. History's answer to this estimate was

the Chinese Revolution, the British General Strike, the Indonesian uprising and the Vienna events, not to mention the millions of unemployed. The estimate of stabilization given at the Sixth World Congress is so eclectic that it permits of varying interpretations.

### Revision of Leninism and the Crisis in the Comintern

Upon this essentially erroneous estimate was based the theory of the possibility of the complete construction of a socialist society in one country, (Russia), a theory entirely alien to the teachings of Marx, Engels and Lenin, and directly contrary to every principle of revolutionary internationalism. Integrally combined with this reactionary "theory" is the idea that a self-sufficing national economy can be maintained if only the danger of imperialist military intervention is warded off. That this inevitably leads to opportunism before the world bourgeoisie, (particularly before the United States which is the basic counter-revolutionary force in the world today), is shown in the signing of the Kellogg Pact by the Soviet Union and the notorious Litvinov proposals. That it leads to abandonment of all that Lenin taught on the revolutionary struggle against war and the role of the labor bureaucracy is shown in the capitulation of the Russian Trade Unions in the Anglo-Russian Committee. That it leads to the subordination of the Communist Party to the national

### Lovestone Gangsters Stage Riot at New York Meeting to Protest Against the Deportation of L. D. Trotsky

An audience of over 600 workers assembled at a mass meeting to protest the banishment of Trotsky from the Soviet Union were given a concrete illustration of Stalinist "arguments" against the organizer of the Red Army when a gang of hoodlums, who were armed with black-jacks and brass knuckles and other weapons of the "ideological campaign" started a riot in which a number of comrades were seriously injured and which finally culminated in the break-up of the meeting after the arrival of 100 policemen and dicks from the Industrial Squad, the Bomb Squad and various other detachments. The meeting was held at the Labor Temple on Tuesday, February 26, by the Communist Opposition.

The first riot occurred when a gang of 75 packed the lobby of the hall and tried to force entrance without paying admission, headed by Kalfides, a paid official of the Party demanded free admission on the ground that he was "an unemployed worker." A group of our comrades successfully prevented this mass invasion, during which sharp scuffling took place and our comrade Frank Bosky was severely beaten by brass knuckles hidden under gloves and black-jacks wielded by the Stalinists. His face was a swollen, bleeding mass and he had to be given emergency treatment.

The second riot began when the hoodlums, who had come in by finally paying admission, commenced to howl and boo and to sing that "The Interpational"—presumably as a result of the introduction of Fascist tactics in the labor movement—will finally "be the human race." This was continued for a period of nearly an hour, interspersed by numerous fights throughout the hall. Comrade B. Silva, a prominent militant in the Italian revolutionary movement and a stalwart fighter on the picket line in many labor battles, was slugged by a dozen who surrounded him and comrade Harry Stone was slashed in the face with a knife. Both comrades had to get physician's treatment. A number of the hoodlums also carried away souvenirs of the struggle.

These tactics, as was counted upon by the organizers of the riot, inevitably brought the police invasion and resulted in disruption of the meeting. Comrade Abern, the chairman, demanded that the police leave the hall, and when they refused, declared that we would not pro-

ceed under such conditions and declared the meeting adjourned.

The gangster methods of the Lovestone faction created strong resentment among the workers who do not grant these fakery the "right" of preventing them from attending labor meetings and listening to a working class viewpoint. A number of Party and League members who were at the meeting, declared their definite support of the Opposition in the future.

Another meeting will shortly be organized, and he held under the protection of a workers' guard sufficient to defend it from a repetition of the gangsterism that was displayed.

#### Other Meetings of the Opposition

The public activities of the Opposition in its struggle for the preservation of the Communist movement, have been developed in a number of public meetings this month. A successful meeting was held in Toronto on Feb. 12, with comrade Maurice Spector as the speaker, at which 500 were present. The Canadian Party, which is now in a free speech fight of its own, did not find it expedient to attempt to break up the meeting despite previous threats.

A rousing meeting was held in Boston on Feb. 15 with an audience of 300 workers, with comrade James P. Cannon as speaker. His lecture was received with great enthusiasm and resulted in strong consolidation of the Opposition Group and a number of new definite supporters among the Party members.

Another well-attended meeting was held in New Haven on February 22, with comrade Max Shachtman speaking. No interference was made by the Stalinists who had already experienced sad results previously with Fascist tactics.

Arne Swabek spoke at a meeting in St. Louis on February 23, at which comrade George Voyzey, president of the Illinois District of the National Miners Union, acted as chairman. A well-organized workers guard was on hand and there was no attempt to interfere.

Meetings are already being scheduled for the following month. Comrade Cannon is billed to speak in Philadelphia on March 17th, and comrade Swabek will speak before the Chicago Karl Marx Club on March 21st.