

Who Supports Trotsky?

THE liars who got their training in the five years campaign of falsifying and misrepresenting the viewpoint of the Russian Opposition are now excelling themselves. The paid scribblers of the Stalinist press are seeking to cover up the shame of the regime that illegally exiled (in cahoots with Kemal Basha, the Turkish Mussolini) the Sword of October, L. D. Trotsky, with a barrage of the most revolting lies that ever disgraced a working class press. In the United States, the leadership in the campaign is being taken by the *Daily Worker* and the *Daily Freiheit*. The editors of both of these papers, Miner and Olgin, are old hands at slandering and defaming Bolsheviks. They did it for years after the Russian Revolution of 1917 before they found a comfortable place in the Central Committee of the Communist Party.

The *Daily Worker* of February 27, 1929, writes these shameless words:

"Trotsky has openly espoused the same slogans of struggle and the same methods of counter-revolutionary struggle against the Soviet power that are characteristic of the entire school of agents of capitalist reaction—the mensheviks."

Minor, like Olgin, is very careful not to quote a single sentence of Trotsky's writings or the authoritative viewpoint of the bourgeois and social-democratic press on Trotsky. To do either would be to shatter the whole edifice of lies of the Stalinites. Since Minor will not quote, we will, and it will very easily be demonstrated that every genuinely reactionary element in the world is imbued with an ineradicable hatred of Trotsky and all he stands for.

Says Duranty, the Stalinized Moscow correspondent of the big bourgeois New York Times:

"Before going further it must be understood that the Right Opposition differs greatly from the opposition of the Trotskyists in being conducted upon 'legal' party lines; that is, it represents criticism of current policies of the Kremlin by a majority group which remains willing to accept the majority ruling even should that be adverse. Trotsky, who was never a real Bolshevik, made the fatal error of continuing his opposition, despite majority decisions, by 'underground' and 'illegal' methods." (February 27, 1929.)

Duranty-Stalin-Minor-Olgin sing in chorus that "Trotsky was never a real Bolshevik." The Times writes editorially on the series of articles by Trotsky which it printed:

"He makes no attack upon the Soviet system, which he believes will endure in some form or another, but he is bitter enough and explicit enough in condemning the men now at the head of affairs in Russia, who are, to his mind, betrayers of the pure doctrine preached by Lenin, and really at heart enemies of the true cause of the Soviets." (February 24, 1929.)

Says the organ of Al Smith "liberalism," the *New York World*:

"Trotsky belongs at the farthest extremity of the left wing; he stands for the most radical interpretation of Marxian principles. . . . At any rate, there is no 'Thermidor' now in sight. All Russian reports agree upon the strength of Stalin and his policy." (February 27, 1929.)

And Brisbane, the arch-jingo, writes in *Hearst's New York American*:

"Trotsky's statement that Stalin and other Russian leaders that exiled him and his friends are leaning 'to the right,' that is toward conservatism and capitalism, will interest America's conservative government. Stalin, intelligent Russian, knows that power without money is a shadow, so he leans in the direction of money." (February 27, 1929.)

The yellow socialist Jewish *Daily Forward* writes in the same manner as Olgin does in the *Freiheit*:

"We are the last ones to regret Trotsky's fate. We know very well that he is, perhaps more than anyone else except Lenin, responsible for Russia's calamities and for the seas of innocent blood that were shed there. We also know that if Trotsky should get the opportunity to carry out his present program it would be a new calamity for Russia as well as for the entire world." (February 15, 1929.)

THE MILITANT

Published twice a month by the Opposition Group in the Workers (Communist) Party of America

Address all mail to: P. O. Box 120, Madison Square Station, New York, N. Y.

Publishers address at 340 East 19th Street, New York, N. Y. — Telephone: Gramercy 3411.

Subscription rate: \$1.00 per year. Foreign, \$1.50 per copy. Bundle rates, 3c per copy.

Editor

James P. Cannon

Associate Editors

Martin Abern
Max Shachtman
Maurice Spector

VOL. II MARCH 1, 1929 No. 3

Entered as second-class mail matter November 28, 1928, at the post office at New York, N. Y., under the act of March 3, 1879.

And here is what the *Forward* reports on the lecture Chernov, the counter-revolutionary Social Revolutionary, gave in New York on Trotsky:

"So far as Trotsky is concerned the lecturer believes that he also has finished his role. He has no chance of again becoming a part of the Russian power." (February 10, 1929.)

Here is what Alexander Berkman, the petty-bourgeois anarchist, writes in the paper, *The Road to Freedom*:

"In reality the Trotsky element is more reactionary than the present regime and therefore less dangerous to Stalin than the Rights." (February 1929.)

Let the *Daily Worker* and the *Freiheit*, and all the other little Stalinites explain why it is that the "counter-revolutionary Trotsky" has been refused admission into the centers of reaction and counter-revolution throughout the world. Why he has been rejected in Berlin, in Rome, in Vienna, in Paris, in London, in Washington or New York. Why have not the counter-revolutionary statesmen of the world, Chamberlain, Briand, Mussolini and Hoover extended an urgent invitation to Trotsky to stay and work with them? Why does Stresemann threaten to resign if Trotsky is invited to Germany? The bourgeoisie fear and hate Trotsky who is the symbol of the proletarian revolution.

The *Berliner Boersenzzeitung*, which is the German *Wall Street Journal*, writes as follows:

"Germany has enough to do in these difficult times with the maintenance of its own internal equilibrium, and we consider it superfluous to create new burdens artificially by a hospitality that will give the strongest propagandist of Bolshevism (Trotsky) the opportunity of exercising his propaganda powers in a country which in his opinion can be most swiftly ripened for a Bolshevik harvest." (February 1, 1929.)

Its colleagues in the reactionary *Preussische Zeitung* write:

"We need hardly emphasize that we would consider a lengthy stay of Trotsky, alias Bronstein, on German soil as highly undesirable and disagreeable."

The *Neukoellner Tageblatt* writes:

"In political circles in Berlin the opinion prevails that the presence of Trotsky would create a highly unpleasant incident. The possibility must be reckoned with that Trotsky might undertake something against the government in Russia while in Germany. Such a fact would bring extremely bad consequences for German-Russian relations. Germany would finally be forced into the unpleasant position of exiling Trotsky again!"

The *Hamburger Nachrichten*, an arch-reactionary sheet with Bismarckian tendencies, demands that Stalin assassinate Trotsky, even as Minor urges that the Opposition be executed by the government:

"It is possible that this element still sticking to the Trotsky cause is not numerically powerful when compared with others. Nevertheless the venom it steadily ejects against Stalin and his crowd has its stinging effect. Stalin is getting the consequence of his blunder in not having sent Trotsky and the Trotsky crowd into the Great Beyond by methods as usual as they are familiar. The crowd now in power did not feel strong enough to venture so far." (January 25, 1929.)

But if Stalin was not sure enough of himself to do away with Trotsky entirely, perhaps the fascists will help him out. *Illustrierte Beobachter*, the organ of Adolph Hitler, the German anti-semitic and fascist, prints a picture of Trotsky with the following comment:

"Trotsky, the Soviet-Jewish bloodhound, wants to reside in Berlin during his exile. We will have to keep a vigilant eye on this Jewish assassin and criminal." (February 9, 1929.)

Hitler is not entirely alone. If you pick up a copy of the official "comic" paper of the Finnish section of the Workers Party, *Punikki*, you will find its cover decorated with an anti-Trotsky cartoon drawn by A. K. Suvanto, one of the leaders of the Finnish Stalinites here, which is permeated with vicious anti-semitism. Anything goes in the "ideological struggle" against the Opposition.

Indeed, everything goes. Lies, distortion, inventions. The official Party press tries to whip up a hysteria over the appearance of Trotsky's articles in the *New York Times*. Trotsky has very correctly taken advantage of the extraordinary "news value" of his exile—the greatest political sensation of the year—to explain its political meaning to millions of workers who read the bourgeois press, just as Lenin and Trotsky made use of the bourgeois press to broadcast the secret treaties, which were first published in the reactionary *New York Evening Post* and the yellow *New York Call*. Scores of Bolshevik documents first saw light of day outside of Soviet Russia in the bourgeois press. Lenin even made use of the German monarchist government in 1917 to travel in a sealed train through Germany in order to participate actively in the Russian revolution. In those days, Olgin, writing in the *Forward* hailed the forged Sisson documents that "proved" that Lenin and Trotsky were agents

of the Kaiser's imperialism; in the *New York World*, Minor called Lenin and Trotsky "counter-revolutionaries" because they put a few petty-bourgeois anarchists in jail. Today Minor and Olgin combine to call Trotsky a "counter-revolutionary" once more. They know that Stalin is writing against Trotsky for the bourgeois press in Europe (in *London Daily News*, for instance). They know that their own Party constantly employs publicity agents in important campaigns whose sole duty is to get the Party's viewpoint into the bourgeois press. But they remain silent about this. They are earning the right to the Brass Check.

Many years have passed, and there has been a change, but not in Trotsky, not in Minor, not in Olgin. In 1917, Trotsky was writing and fighting for Bolshevism. Minor and Olgin were writing and fighting against the Bolsheviks in the bourgeois and yellow socialist press. In 1929, Trotsky is still writing and fighting for Bolshevism. Minor and Olgin are still fighting against Bolsheviks. The difference is that they speak in the name of Stalin now, and write in the Stalinite press. "It is the march of events . . ."

Hail to the New Chief?

Great travail marks the Party convention now in session. The mountain is groaning in labor, and may give forth a mouse at any moment.

As we predicted months ago, the minority is seeking a convenient formula for capitulation and Stalin has offered them one by which they may gracefully retire from the fight with feeble shouts of victory. The caucuses are now feverishly discussing the demand of Stalin that Wm. Z. Foster, the leader without followers, be made secretary of the Party. Picture to yourself the touching scene that may ensue: The "Right danger" which each faction claimed the other personified will be completely liquidated and the hitherto estranged factions will fall on each other's neck in a blubber of unity as they look upon the new born, while its fond parents, Lovestone and Bittelman, make preparations for the Long Journey to Moscow or the Caucasus to rest for a year from their labors.

The fact that, only yesterday during the Party discussion the Lovestoneites have strongly implied that Foster is a social democrat, labor-faker and was a social patriot during the war, and that the Bittelmanites have formally read him out of the barten "vineyard" because "he liquidates everything connected with Communism," surely makes him the logical compromise candidate for these apostles of Stalinism.

The meaning of this ten-cent maneuver is obvious. The shuffling of offices is the Stalinist method of "solving" political difficulties. The appointment from above of Foster as secretary of the Party, although ninety-nine percent of the Party membership has repudiated him, is entirely devoid of principle and settles NOT ONE of the principle questions raised by the Opposition or any one else in the Party. This maneuver is designed to "kill two birds with one stone": to "establish" unity in the Party and to head off the Opposition's steady growth. It will accomplish neither. Foster is to be surrounded by the old gang of opportunists and bureaucrats, and be absorbed by them, while the minority is made to subordinate itself. Anyone who wants such "unity" is welcome to it. As to the Opposition we are told that a "big drive" is to be made after the convention to "win back" the Oppositionists. Foster is to be the decoy for the Communist workers who have revolted. The Lovestoneites will crusade up and down the land, with the image of St. William pasted on their foremost banner, flanked by the few remaining Bittelmanites hoarsely echoing their shibboleths and urging the errand to follow the new "leader."

The crusaders will fail. The workers who have rallied to the banner of the Opposition on the basis of a principle fight that involves the entire course and fate of the revolutionary movement will not be deceived by this cheap stratagem so characteristic of the Stalin regime. Fake unity, unprincipled combinations arrived at behind the backs of the membership and a corrupt Lovestone regime covered with a new plaster will not be accepted as a substitute for the settlement of principle disputes on a Leninist basis. This maneuver will fizzle like a penny firecracker; the fight for principle will go on.

It is a matter of little concern whether Foster or Lovestone is the new secretary of the Party. The regime and its line remain the same, and we won't buy any bonds from either of them.

The Communists and the "Progressives"

By James P. Cannon

ON the heels of the recent convention of the American Federation of Labor which outdid all others in reaction there have appeared a number of manifestations of a new "progressive" movement which call for the most serious consideration of the Communist and Left Wing workers.

The most important of these manifestations is the Manifesto printed in the February number of the *Labor Age*. This manifesto outlines a platform of 16 points which is only a slightly modified re-statement of the practical platform of the Left Wing militants in the labor movement. It includes the organization of the workers in the basic industries into industrial unions, trade union democracy, the 5-day week, independent political action, social insurance and most of the other standard demands of the Left wing. Action of a certain sort has accompanied this attempt to formulate the platform of the new "progressives." The conflict between the Brookwood Labor College and the A. F. of L. Executive Council, which has opened fire on it, is one phase. On March 2nd, these apostles of trade union reform unfurled their banner at a polite luncheon in New York City under the auspices of the League for Industrial Democracy, an auxiliary of the Socialist Party headed by Norman Thomas. Also should be mentioned the "crusade" which the Socialist *New Leader* has been conducting against the Civic Federation policies of Matthew Woll. In all these developments the trend toward a crystallization of a respectable body of "progressive opinion" within the labor movement can be plainly seen.

The sponsors of this movement are the group around the *Labor Age* and the Brookwood Labor College—Muste, Budenz, and others, including quite a few such as Brophy and Haggood who have had relations with the Communists in United Front movements in the past; a considerable number of trade union officials around the country; and the Socialists who have fought side by side with the A. F. of L. bureaucrats against us. Hillquist, Thomas, Oneal and Co. are devoting much attention to the movement and are aiming for the hegemony of it. It would be erroneous, however, to regard the movement as simply the creation of the Socialist Party. Its basis appears to be much broader and, if it continues to develop, will very probably include a much wider circle.

These events are not accidental. They reflect in the first place the unmistakable growth of discontent of wide sections of the workers and their impulse to struggle against the present state of affairs. They are a reaction to the position of the ruling officialdom which grows ever more brazenly reactionary, smothering these sentiments of the workers and giving them no expression. The virtual abandonment of the old unions by the Communists, who have stood at the head of most of the opposition movements in the past five years, facilitates the emergence of the reformist group and affords the Socialists an opportunity to regain some of their lost positions. The new movement is a challenge to the Communists for the leadership of the coming fights.

These "progressives" are weather-cocks who reflect certain winds blowing in the labor movement. Their emergence now with demands which connote militancy is an indicator of the radicalization of the workers growing within the old unions as well as in the ranks of the unorganized masses. Their role, objectively speaking, is to express this radicalization in words, to harness it in action and to head it off from any real collision with the capitalists and the A. F. of L. machine. And their field for this function is by no means confined to the old unions. A strongly organized block of these elements in the A. F. of L. can also exercise a great influence on the struggles of the unorganized.

The question whether they will succeed in stultifying the promising movements of the proximate future or whether the very movements of the workers they express and, to a certain extent, help to create are developed in the direction of real class battles, depends very much upon the activities and tactics of the Communists. Communist tactics will have a tremendous bearing on the outcome of the impending struggles of the workers. And one of the most decisive aspects of these tactics is the question of our attitude toward the progressives and the movement which they indubitably express.

International experience will be useful to us in this question but it cannot provide us with a ready-made formula. Nothing approximating an analogy to the situation and stage of development

of the American labor movement exists in any of the European countries. The fight there is between the Communists and the Social Democrats for the leadership of the masses. This is so in America only in the needle trades, a small sector not representative of the whole labor movement. The struggle here is for the creation of a class movement of the workers and the expansion of Communist influence within it. And this, of course, is also a struggle against reformism of all kinds. The events of the past few years have not altered this basic perspective. Our fundamental tactical line, modified in the light of experience, with the errors and distortions corrected, still holds good. Contrary opinions only substitute wishes for realities. We are not done with the progressives. On the contrary the question of our attitude towards them and relations with them will take on a ten-fold greater significance in the coming period of mass struggles than in the period behind us.

Let us look back at our established tactics on this question. Numerous resolutions, unanimously adopted by the Party, as well as resolutions of the C.I. on the American question, could be quoted. All of these resolutions emphasized the tactic of the united front with progressive elements and in practice we followed this line.

Such tactics, fundamentally correct, were the key to much of our progress in the trade unions. There were attempts to liquidate them, but these attempts were defeated by a sharp Party struggle in 1925 and by the intervention of the Comintern.

In applying this tactic of the united front the Party made many errors. The block with Brennan in the anthracite, for example, was formed under conditions which actually rehabilitated this discredited faker and failed to build the Communist influence. The non-critical attitude toward Brophy, Haggood, etc., worked against the militancy of the fight in the miners' union and the firmness and cohesion of the Left wing. Some of the maneuvers in the needle trades were more disgraceful back-room bargains with fakers than Communist actions to mobilize the masses. But to react against such distortions, with the abandonment of the united front tactic is like cutting of one's head to cure a toothache. This, it seems, is what is now being proposed, if we are to judge by the Party comment on the new "progressive" manifestations.

The old tactic of united front with criticism and an independent policy is to be replaced by the tactic of straight-out denunciation and completely independent struggle, according to the comment on the "new progressives" which has appeared in the *Labor Unity* and the *Daily Worker*. This looks simpler and easier, but how will it work out? It is not without significance that the same comrades who wanted to pull the Party onto this track in 1925, come forward now as the spokesmen of the new revelation. Now, as then, they see the "progressive" leaders only as individuals and roundly denounce them as fakers. They fail now, as before, to see the movement of workers they express and, to a certain extent, represent. And that is the most important and decisive thing for the Communists.

Earl Browder, back from the Far East in a very revolutionary mood, makes short shrift of these new "progressives" in the *Daily Worker* of February 25, 26 and 27, 1929. He recites their past treacheries, vacillations and cowardice with such indignation as to make one wonder what he expected of them. Such conduct is the inevitable result of reformist policy. That is why the revolutionary Marxists formed the Communist Party. The question is not what the reformists will do when the fight grows hot—that should be known in advance—but how can the Communists best develop the struggles of the workers and expand their influence? It is from this standpoint that we must evaluate our past experience with the "progressives" and draw conclusions for the future.

Proceeding in this way we have to take issue with Browder's deductions. He says: "We will no longer waste our energies and time in disastrous attempts to work with these fake progressives . . . We will never again put forward such a 'progressive' as leader for the tens of thousands of revolutionary miners who have nothing but contempt for such spineless quitters." (Our emphasis.)

What pompous nonsense! What disregard of the facts of the protracted struggle to build the Left wing among the miners! What a ridiculous attempt to punish the Party for his own illusions and disappointments about the "progressives."

Did we get our influence among the miners and eventually gain the leadership of a great mass movement in 1928 by having nothing to do with "progressives"? Quite the contrary. At the beginning of 1926 the Left wing in the Miners' Union was demoralized and the Party was isolated. It was the block with Brophy and other "progressives" which gave us access to the masses of miners who at that time were not "revolutionary miners who have nothing but contempt for such spineless quitters," but admirers of these same Brophys. It was the prestige of Brophy and others, and the confidence the miners had in them primarily, that gave the movement its wide basis at the start. It was only later, as the struggle grew sharper, that our direct influence grew and the true character of the Brophys was revealed to the miners and they became alienated from them. Our mistakes, particularly our failure to criticize Brophy and others, hampered this process, but in spite of that, the united front yielded rich results and proved its validity by them. And that is precisely the value of the united front tactic: it mobilizes the workers for struggle and strengthens the Communists as against the reformists. However, to say that the "tens of thousands of miners" even now are "revolutionary" is somewhat of an exaggeration.

The Communists must learn from the experiences in the miners' struggle and draw the conclusions, not to reject the tactic of the united front, but to correct the errors in its application and employ it widely in the future in all fields.

Another stronghold of the new sectarianism remains. It is the theory that the shifting of the center of gravity in our trade union work to the formation of new unions—an absolutely necessary shift—does away with the troublesome problems of the "progressives."

"We are entering upon a new course . . ." says Browder, "the course of independent struggle, independent leadership, independent organization, inside and outside the existing trade unions." But are all the influential leaders we encounter in this new field to be pure Communists and Left wingers who will not "disappoint" us? Anybody who thinks so is working to build another Socialist Trades and Labor Alliance and not a mass labor movement reflecting the stage of radicalization and class development of the progressive sections of the workers. And it is just this theory that is beginning to confront the new union movement as a real menace. The current practice of monopolizing the control of the new unions in a mechanical way, of regarding every worker who is not a Party member as a faker, of arbitrarily excluding relations and compromises with influential leaders who reflect the hazy development of masses of workers—this practice will be fatal for the movement. It disregards the stage of development, the relation of forces, and all the realities of the situation.

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