

Who Supports Trotsky?

More on Counter-revolution's United Front with Trotsky

In the previous issue of The Militant we printed a series of comments by the bourgeois, the fascist, the social-democratic and the anarchist press on the exile of Trotsky from the Soviet Union. We proved conclusively that the reactionary and anti-labor press of all shades is AGAINST Trotsky and the Russian Opposition. The quotations we printed gave the lie complete to the declarations in the Stalinite press that the bourgeoisie and the yellow social democracy is "in alliance" with Trotsky or supports him in any way. The Stalinite press, the Daily Worker, Freiheit, etc., still fail to print excerpts from the judgment of the bourgeoisie on the controversy in the Russian Party and the International. Below we publish a few additional comments which add further proof to our contention that Trotsky and the Opposition are fighting for Bolshevism, and that the enemies of the Communist movement oppose him and lean upon Stalin and the opportunists.

The New York Daily News, owned by the arch-reactionary Chicago Tribune the voice of the open-shop International Harvester and the most rabid imperialist jingo, published an editorial entitled "That Squawk from Trotsky."

"Stalin worked along with Lenin and Trotsky in the first wild years following the Russian Revolution. Gradually he acquired power. Lenin died. Stalin formed his own ideas of government, and they disagreed with Trotsky's ideas in several important respects. Stalin is moderate, a bit of a compromiser; Trotsky is the wing-tip feather on the left wing of Communism."

"Stalin is master in a Russia which begins to realize that even that monster, capitalism, has something to teach a proletarian dictatorship. In January of last year he and his political machine felt that the time was ripe for the bouncing of the extremists. Numerous extremists were accordingly bounced, landing in secluded spots in Siberia and Central Asia. Trotsky was among them."

"He has finally won to the neutral city of Constantinople, and it is from there that he sends up these squawks."

"It is hard to take Trotsky seriously. He was and is the leading Communist preacher of the doctrine of force to the uttermost, the ruthless stamping out of any one or anything hostile to the political and economic tenets of Marxism. Now Stalin has turned Trotsky's doctrines on Trotsky."

"But instead of resigning himself to the 'march of events,' which is one of his favorite expressions, Trotsky moans and groans. It is rather as if a pickpocket should run into a police station and demand the arrest of an intended victim who had bruised his business arm."

"Trotsky will never know it, but the true explanation of his fate is that the old religion of Leninism simply will not work. The Russians must get back to bourgeois trading in order to give the average Russian an incentive to work. (March 2, 1929. Our emphasis.)"

The Daily News is joined in the united front of the Stalinite and bourgeois press by the yellow gutter weekly of the Jewish Federation of the Socialist Party, Der Wecker. Its editor writes as follows:

"Nevertheless the Communist press is not entirely wrong when it assures us that Trotskyism is dead. Insofar as Trotskyism is orthodox, pure Communism it is certainly dead. Insofar as the tiny handful of true Trotskyists dream about returning to true Communism, about con-

tinuing the Communist tactics of the years of bloom of the Comintern, about preparing themselves to make the world revolution, about maintaining the revolutionary purity and proletarian character of Communism, Trotskyism is certainly dead. Trotskyism is dead because 'true Communism' about which Trotsky and his comrades dream, is dead. This 'true Communism' was nothing more than a passing phenomenon which had to disappear, a result of the post-war despair and chaos, which could not last very long. Inasmuch as Trotskyism is the yearning to return to true Communism it is nothing more than the dream of a handful of hopeless romanticists who look upon the world through blind eyes and can in no way understand that the 'treason of the Stalinists' was forced upon the Communist movement by objective reality." (February 9, 1929.)

These words have a familiar ring. Apparently we have heard them on a similar occasion and in a different place. To be sure. Practically the same thoughts, dressed up in a bit of Stalinite war-paint, appear regularly in the editorial and news columns of the Freiheit. A peculiar united front, indeed, and it is not the only form that the new united front tactic of the Stalinites—from below and above!—assumes.

In Germany, the Stalinites are in a close united front with the fascists, monarchists, nationalists and anti-semites to prevent Trotsky from coming to Germany at all costs. The Party fraction in the Reichstag has introduced an amendment to the government's proposed law on the right of asylum for political refugees. The amendment calls for refusal to grant the right of asylum to anyone whose objective is the overthrow of the regime in the Soviet Union. Who is to decide what persons come under that category? The Stalin faction and its German agents. Upon whose head is this decision always certain to fall? Upon the head of Trotsky and any other supporter of the Leninist Opposition who is exiled from Russia and requests asylum in Germany.

It must be remembered that Berlin is filled with White Guards, Russian monarchists, Mensheviks, Social Revolutionaries, anarchists and other counter-revolutionary elements. They maintain organizations and publish papers there, unmolested. The Stalinites do not raise any hue and cry against them. They do not demand that these genuine counter-revolutionaries be expelled from the country. Of course not. They are too busy demanding the head of the Russian Opposition. Their whole activity of defending the Soviet Union is centered around their shameful campaign against comrade Trotsky and his friends.

It is an old axiom that when a group begins to fight against the revolutionary elements, it soon finds itself being supported by the worst enemies of the working class. The fight of the Stalinites against the Russian Opposition has led them closer and closer to the camp of capitulation and compromise. There is nothing surprising in the fact that a common fear of Trotsky's presence in Germany unites the fascist and nationalists with the Stalinites in a mad campaign against his entry.

YOUNGSTOWN MEETING

A meeting to protest against the deportation of L. D. Trotsky from the U.S.S.R. will be held in Youngstown, Ohio, on Sunday, March 31st, 1929 at 2 P. M. in the afternoon at the Labor Lyceum, 307 No. Walnut St. Among the speakers are Leo Glazer and John Brahtin of Cleveland. Admission is 25 cents and the meeting is under the auspices of the Militant Workers Club.

CABARET AND DANCE

Arranged by the Proletarian Dramatic Club for the benefit of

The Militant & Proletar

Organs of the Communist Opposition

SATURDAY EVENING, MARCH 23, 1929.

At 323 East 79th Street, New York

Tickets in advance: 50c

At the door: 60c

Minneapolis is Leading in the Weekly Drive

The Minneapolis group of the Opposition Communists took the lead in the campaign for a \$2,000 fund to establish The Militant as a weekly with a contribution of \$206 collected from the members and sympathizers of the Opposition in the Twin Cities.

Vincent Dunne, who is in charge of the Minneapolis Campaign Committee, writes as follows:

"We are sending you with this letter a check for \$206, and we wish to assure you that this is but the first installment of the amount for which we feel responsible as the pioneers of the Opposition in Dist. 9."

"We are proceeding in an organized manner to the collection of funds and with the help of the truly magnificent lists which have been provided by the comrades at the Center, we feel that the amount which has been set as the first objective should be in the hands of the comrades in a very short time."

"The developments at the Party Convention, as well as the developments Internationally, indicate that our tasks are of tremendous proportions. The Weekly Militant MUST be established with the least possible delay."

Maurice Spector sends \$30 collected by the Toronto group as the first installment on their quota of the \$2,000 fund for the Weekly.

Chicago, which has pledged a quota of \$500, sends \$20.50, making a total of \$120 for the fund up to date.

The New York group at its last meeting voted to accept a quota of \$500 and to concentrate on the work for the Weekly until this sum is raised. \$10.75 was collected by the Hungarian group at a small dinner on March 9th. All comrades are now working with the lists.

The Cleveland and Detroit groups have also reported the beginning of activities for the Weekly Fund, and responses from the lists mailed out to individuals are coming in.

Reports on the campaign are still awaited from Boston, Kansas City, New Haven, Philadelphia and other active groups of the Vanguard.

The above reports show that the Campaign for the Weekly Militant—our most important action at the moment and the basis for our future work—is now getting under way in full swing.

Its results will be a test of the seriousness of the Opposition Communists in their fight for the preservation of the Communist movement; it will be a gauge of their fighting capacity for the great battles that lie ahead.

A victory in this campaign will have the greatest bearing on the consolidation and strengthening of the Communist Opposition.

The action of the Party Convention in ignoring our Appeal, in disregarding all the principle questions before the movement and in occupying itself the whole time with the squabble over offices, only demonstrates the necessity of sharpening the fight.

The Opposition Communists must equip themselves to deal heavier blows against the bureaucrats of both factions. The Weekly Militant will be our weapon for this fight.

United, determined and energetic work to establish the Weekly Militant! Let this be the slogan of the hour. Amount necessary to establish the

Weekly	\$2,000.00
Total received to date	382.00
Balance needed	\$1,618.00

Send Contributions to
THE MILITANT
Box 120, Madison Square Station
New York City.

The Civil War in Mexico

CIVIL war, the bitter-
e.t one since the in-
By Max Shachtman

at the tail of the Mexican bourgeoisie, continues
surrection of De la Huerta in 1923, is sweeping over Mexico. On the part of the "rebels" it is an attempt to revive the rule of the military cliques and generals, allied with the reactionary feudal and clerical interests, dominating the country and extorting tribute at the pistol point from the bulk of the people. The militarists hope to anticipate the presidential elections in November with a successful uprising that will install them in the position of dictators.

The Calles-Gil regime is just as determined to suppress the uprising of the reaction in the interests of bourgeois "Order." They stand for the regular processes of capitalist democracy under which the native bourgeoisie will have the opportunity to develop "peacefully" as a stepchild of their American imperialist masters.

United States imperialism is for "peace" in Mexico. That is why Hoover and Kellogg are giving the undisguised support of the American government to the Federals. They want no elements that will upset the halcyon equilibrium in which the United States has enrolled Mexico into its imperialist domain—whether these elements are represented by reactionary militarist cliques or a rebellious working class and peasantry. Those who elected Hoover had the enforced peace under which the workers and peasants of Mexico can be exploited to the maximum with the least possibility of resistance on their part.

The Mexican government will undoubtedly succeed in suppressing the uprising. The reaction, which does not possess any progressive social basis, is opposed by a fairly well centralized government which has, in addition, the powerful support of the American imperialists. Further, the Catholic reaction is by no means as firmly behind the uprising as it was in previous attempts. It is known, for instance, that General Roberto Cruz, one of the "rebels," was most active in suppressing the Catholics as chief of police in Mexico City under Calles; and that General J. G. Escobar was similarly occupied only a short time ago. It may be that the clericals will take advantage of the tumult to gain ground, but the religious element is less of a factor in the present struggle than at almost any other previous time.

At the same time, however, the disorganization and shift of forces attendant upon every war, gives the proletariat and the peasantry added possibilities to advance their own interests and weaken the position of their class enemy. The relation of forces in Mexico at the present time offers the Communist Party and the revolutionary proletariat unusual opportunities.

What shall be the attitude and activity of the Communist Party, which is the only force that can lead the proletariat and peasantry on the correct class road?

Up to now, unfortunately, the Mexican Communist Party—not to speak of the Party in the United States—has followed a confused and incorrect policy. The Party is still affected with the wrong policies followed for the past few years. In 1927, the Communist Party put up no presidential candidate but supported Obregon without conditions as against the reactionaries Gomez and Serrano, despite the fact that Obregon's program was "based on the desire to build a strong native bourgeoisie" having the "support of the petty bourgeoisie and a part of the larger bourgeoisie." (The Communist, August-September 1927). In all critical moments, the Communist Party continued to give practically unconditional support to the bourgeois government of Calles and later Gil. It seems that all Calles had to do to insure himself against any attacks from the Communists was to send a meaningless, phrase-filled telegram to the headquarters of the Anti-Imperialist League which immediately advertised him as a militant warrior against American imperialism. As late as February of this year, the representatives of the Trade Union Educational League to the Congress that organized the Left Wing Mexican trade union center, Albert Weisbord, presented a program of 11 point in which no mention is made of the foremost necessity of a relentless struggle against the Calles-Gil regime as a strike-breaking agency functioning in the interests of American imperialism.

The Mexican Party, it is true, forsook the present civil war. But the line it proposed in its thesis of a few months ago, and the line contained in its appeal to the workers and peasants on March 5, one day after the militarist uprising, while liberated to a certain extent from the policy of following

to be dominated by uncertainty and lack of independence or knowledge of goal. The aim of the Mexican Party in the present situation was presented and apparently adopted by the Mexico City trade union Congress. "The goal of this conference," writes Weisbord in his reports, "was the democratic dictatorship of the workers and peasants, and they practically said so in so many words." (Daily Worker, February 19, 1929.)

The democratic dictatorship of workers and peasants is bourgeois democracy in revolt against feudalism and the slogan of the bourgeois revolution. The bourgeois revolution, however, has already triumphed in Mexico. Its representatives now control the Mexican government. The "democratic" Calles-Gil regime has already demonstrated its anti-labor character by suppressing strikes and seeking to regiment the workers into semi-governmental, semi-fascist unions. It has failed to carry out agrarian reforms in the interests of the peasantry. It has followed a policy of abject servility to the American imperialists.

The perspective of a proletarian struggle for power in Mexico which alone can "complete" the democratic revolution under workers rule is therefore postponed for an indefinite period by the advancement of the slogan of a democratic dictatorship. It means to transform the Calles-Gil regime into the rallying center of the "democratic revolution" with a sort of moderate pressure from the Left (the workers and peasants) that labors under the illusion that the Mexican bourgeoisie has still a great progressive role to play in the struggle against reaction and foreign imperialist oppression.

Therein also lies the weakness of the Mexican Party's manifesto on the civil war. When it urges that the workers and peasants be armed, it addresses this appeal to Gil and Calles as the leaders of the struggle against reaction. The appeal reads literally:

"This is the situation today, and the working class and peasants, therefore, must act forthwith as follows:
1. It must demand from the Executive federal power, and all the local power, that all available arms and military equipment be turned over immediately to the workers and peasant organizations which, together with the federal forces who remained loyal to the government, shall insure protection to the territories and cities attacked by the reactionary troops."
(Our emphasis.)

To arm the workers and peasants for the purpose of fighting "together with the federal forces who remained loyal to the government" is to create a "popular defense corps" for the bourgeoisie of Mexico and nothing more. It means at best that the Communists must wait until the so-called victory over reaction, i.e., the insurrectionary militarists, is assured before proceeding against the bourgeoisie. It means the resurrection in Mexico of the infamous "united national front" of the C. P. of China subordinated to Chiang Kai-Shek & Co., which led inevitably to the victory of the counter-revolution. For when the Mexican bourgeoisie, supported by American imperialism, has accomplished its victory over militarist reaction they will at the same time have so strengthened their own position that they will be able to establish "Order," to "deal with" the "menace from the Left," that is, the workers and peasants. To postpone the struggle against the Calles regime, as has been the time-worn policy of the Mexican Party, until it has fortified itself with even greater security than it now possesses is to abandon the very idea of a struggle for power for an indefinite period. Naturally, it is not a question here of the Communist Party of Mexico calling the proletariat and peasantry to rise in revolution for the immediate establishment of workers' power. This depends entirely on the development of the situation, the relation of forces, and the circumstances. The question here is one of line, perspective and action.

It is necessary that the Communist Party of Mexico should point out to the masses of workers and peasants that the Calles-Gil regime, whose progressive role is ended, can not solve the problems of the exploited people of the country. It must be repeated daily that the present government is the agent of American imperialism and the native bourgeoisie who have joined hands to oppress the workers and peasants of Mexico. The Party should emphasize that the proletariat leading the alliance with the peasantry must aim to seize power and that the chief obstacle in this path is the American-dominated, bourgeois, Calles-Gil regime. Instead of fostering illusions among the masses as to the

"progressive role" the Calles regime is to play, (when it is certain that its role will be an even more reactionary one in the future), the Communists should root out these illusions. Otherwise it will never rise higher than playing the role of a "loyal opposition" from the Left to the Mexican bourgeois democracy.

The Mexican Party is—if reports in the Party press are to be relied upon—by no means an isolated sect. Weisbord reports that

"the Party has taken the initiative and actually leads all mass movements which I have described in my several articles, published before, movements which have a minimum of 500,000 actual adherents. [The population of Mexico is only a little more than 14,000,000. M. S.] The Party not only leads the Workers and Agrarian Toilers Permanent Political Bloc, it not only leads the new trade union movements in Mexico, but when matters come to more direct and open clashes with the governmental and imperialist forces, when the matter takes the form of a civil war, the Mexican C. P. without a doubt will be in the leadership as well." (Daily Worker, February 27, 1929.)

In addition, according to Weisbord, El Machete, the Party organ, has a circulation "closer to 175,000 than 15,000." But now that matters have taken the form of a civil war, the Mexican C. P. is not "in the leadership as well." And the Party will never be in the leadership of the struggle if it continues to follow its present line. All of its agitation for a "workers and peasants government" will be meaningless if it continues to be understood as a fight for the "democratic dictatorship," that is, for "real" bourgeois democracy.

The work of the Communist Party of Mexico and the interests of the proletarian revolution will further be retarded if the Party continues to play with the dangerous, reactionary idea of a Workers and Peasants Party, the first steps toward which have already been taken. The "Workers and Agrarian Toilers Permanent Political Bloc" which the Party has formed is another name for a Workers and Peasants Party. A Workers and Peasants Party in Mexico, with the slogan of a "democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry," will surely lead to a repetition on a smaller scale of the debacle of the Comintern with the Kuo-Min-Tang in China.

No progress will be made by the Mexican Communist Party toward the proletarian revolutionary goal unless it proceeds from the premise of unyielding antagonism to the idea—so prevalent in the Comintern of recent years—of a single Party in which two classes, the proletariat and the petty-bourgeoisie (peasantry) are merged. Such a course does not lead to the establishment of the leadership of the proletariat over the peasantry. It leads inevitably to the domination of the petty-bourgeois class interests of the peasantry who already outnumber the proletariat three or four times in the above-mentioned "Permanent (?) Bloc." Only if the proletariat, organized separately and independently on a class basis, leads the peasantry will it be able to prevent the latter from becoming the instrument of the bourgeoisie against the revolution.

The line followed by the Mexican Party has hampered its development but it is of course far from fatal. The present civil war, despite its relatively short duration offered the Party splendid opportunities for setting the masses into motion along the revolutionary road. There will still be numerous opportunities in the future, if the Party succeeds in correcting its policy. The Calles-Gil regime can establish "Order" not merely by defeating the militarist and clerical reaction but by the violent suppression of the workers' and peasants' movements. The manner in which even the yellow reformist C.R.O.M. was scuttled is an indication of the lengths to which the Mexican bourgeoisie will go to insure themselves—and their American imperialist masters—of a smooth, undisturbed course in the exploitation of the masses. The coming struggles in Mexico will advance the interests of the masses to the extent that the Communist Party is able to make the existence of the bourgeois regime precarious, and, finally, impossible.

The class conscious workers of the United States will follow events in Mexico with the keenest interest. Upon the revolutionaries here devolves the task of sabotaging and undermining all attempts that the United States will make to intervene against a genuinely revolutionary Mexico. Our warmest support goes to the Mexican fighters who are the pioneers of the final victory, feeling their way to the correct path, fighting with courage, and assured of the triumphant future of the toiling masses.

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