

# Letters from the Militants

A LETTER FROM A COMMUNIST FARMER  
Williston, North Dakota  
February 4, 1929

Dear Comrades:

You wanted our views on the agrarian situation. The way we see it, the small farmer is being put out of business much faster than was expected by the economist. In the out-lying townships in 1912 nearly every quarter of land (160 acres) had a family or head of household living on it, with three to four school houses in the township; today in many of the same townships, there is no school, the houses are empty, and every township that has no consolidated school has most of the schools closed. Hundreds of farm houses are empty and falling down. The banker, after closing out the horse farmer or the badly in debt one-tractor farmer, rents the land to the more successful machine farmer who usually has no children and hires all his help from the town. He is equipped with two tractors and more, a combined harvester, and thresher. He is not concerned about politics or in any way interested about the wage slave. A year or so ago he would have taken stock in a cooperative grocery store, but last fall a big retail store, the Red Owl, came into Williston. This gives them their groceries at a lower cost so they seem to be satisfied. In short, the prairie country is fast developing to a small number of farmers on large tracts of land, and a few business houses in the town.

The big cities will not let any new industries develop in the agrarian districts as a few of today's big railroad engines can haul supplies for the machine farmer who is middle class. But, we can see his finish because of the Industrialization of farming by big capital that will continue competition for a while longer on wheat and farm products,—hence the reason for the veto of the McNary-Haugen bill. The renter and the small mortgaged land holder do not know how they are going to live, they tell me this daily. These make a great field for the left wing Communist to work. The trouble is that they have been deceived by the Nonpartisan League and have hardly the money to contribute to their own movement.

Many of these farmers, when off the land, are for the most part competing for jobs, and in fact those with the old scab wage laborer are running all of the industries in the plains and farming country towns. They work eight hours in the shop then build a house or dig a ditch up town; on economics they are as dumb as the lower animal, and are not concerned about their fellow men at all. If they have any money left after paying their bills, they buy moonshine, whisky, or play poker after they have worked the sixteen hours.

We all are for the Trotsky program. I suggest that all party members of the world, like-wise non-party workers and farmers, should read the book "Ten Days That Shook The World" by John Reed, who was in the midst of this Russian revolution. In this book, you will see that Trotsky was always on the side with Lenin. If Trotsky ever was a traitor or if there ever was a drop of traitorous blood in his veins, as the lying Daily Worker would have you believe, surely he would have used his power when a word from him would have turned the whole tide of the revolution against the workers and peasants of Russia. Later, when he was Commander in Chief of the whole Russian Army that crushed the five imperialist invasions, could he not have directed the army into the hands of the enemy? Read this book, and you will find that a man with the iron and steel of Trotsky never could change and fight the class he once defended.

Comrade Minor in the Daily Worker of January 28 tries to make the readers of that paper believe that Lenin for fifteen years before the revolution fought Trotsky because of his Menshevik ideas. We of the opposition are not surprised to see such falsehood come from the managing editor who before and until a year after the Russian revolution, opposed the tactics used by Lenin and Trotsky to win the revolution. Well do we remember his article in the "Liberator" entitled "I Changed My Mind a Little," which was written long after the revolution started. In this article, he did not whole-heartedly agree with the program put over by the two great leaders of the revolution.

Fraternally yours

A. C. MILLER.

## ACTIVITY IN KANSAS CITY

Kansas City, Mo.

Dear Comrade Abern:

Received the call for the national conference of the Communist Opposition in Chicago, May 17th. Kansas City will have at least one delegate present. Kansas

City comrades have pledged \$100 to the weekly Militant and enclosed is a check for \$20 as a starter on the pledge. (We have confidence in our three generals.) Keep up the good fight.

That last issue of the Militant is a good one. Each new issue seems to be better than the previous one. It won't take us very long here in Kansas City to have more subs for the Militant than they have for the Daily Worker. Enclosed you will find four new subs with \$4 check. We have mailed out many samples and we are going after the subs from now on. We also mailed out the issue with the Opposition Platform so that should give everybody a pretty good idea of our Program if they can read at all. Now if they are interested at all I think we can at least get \$1 out of them for a 12 months' sub. The Militant is sure doing the work here in K. C. It is bringing rebels back to life again.

K. C. welcomes the new Weekly Militant.

A. A. BUEHLER

## KRUSE CRUSHES TROTSKY IN CHICAGO

Chicago, Ill.

Dear Comrades:

I have received your letter asking for help in making the Militant a Weekly and want to say I heartily approve of such a step if enough funds can be secured to insure success. I have had so many causes to help lately that I am continually in a tough situation but just the same I feel I must help as much as I'm able to.

Here is a news item you may or may not already know about.

Sunday, March 17th, the Paris Commune celebration here took place in Temple Hall. I was elated to see several comrades selling the Militant at the door as I went in. They sold a lot, too. It was the poorest Commune meeting I ever saw, only about 300 being present. It was started an hour and 15 minutes late. I. Feingold, I. L. D. secretary here, in the collection talk, called for \$10 and \$5 bills from us sucked-dry class fighters, but got none, and not many dollars either. I thought it a bad blunder. Wm. F. Kruse, district organizer of the Communist Party, gave the final talk on I. L. D. He broke into such a fit of rage in speaking of "Trotskyism" that he actually gnashed his teeth. "Down with Trotsky! Down with all the American Trotskyists!" he shouted.

(Good way to build the I. L. D.—Ed.)

The entire left wing movement in Chicago seems in spite of all efforts to be going back fast. I am, Yours for true Communism,

WALTER P. SUKUT.

## THE WORK IN ST. LOUIS

St. Louis, Mo.

Dear Comrades:

Received your letter regarding the proposed conference in Chicago for May 17th and other information.

We are presenting our program to all Party and League members in St. Louis and expect to see things change after the convention. The local comrades are proud of the leadership as expressed by you comrades who are working around the Militant and wish to express our fullest agreement with the platform of the Opposition and further urge you comrades to carry on this fight to an ideological conclusion covering our entire platform and not to make a fake unity with the bureaucratic leadership.

At our next meeting we will take up the question in regard to the form of organization and also for a detailed discussion on our program. We will then send you some suggestions on these questions. We are planning to liquidate our debt to you and also plan to hold an affair within the next two weeks and send in a donation.

I remain,

Comradely yours

ELMER McMILLAN

## WHO ARE THE EXPELLED COMMUNISTS

JOSEPH KELLER—Joined Proletarian Party in 1921, then left this pseudo-Communist party to work among the Slovakian workers in Slovak Socialist Federation. Helped swing it into Workers Party in 1924 and was one of the leading Communist workers among the Slovakian workers in the country, particularly in the Cleveland District. During a recent visit of the Hungarian Horthy reactionaries, he was clubbed by the police during the demonstration for carrying a placard denouncing Horthy's blood regime. A short while later, he was clubbed by a Stalinite at a mass meeting called by the Opposition in Cleveland to discuss the viewpoint of Trotsky!

ANTHONY REFUGEE—Joined the Socialist Party of Italy in 1910 and the Communist Party in 1921. Communist member of the municipal council of Trieste. Instructed by the Party to leave Italy in 1923. Joined Workers Party of America in 1924. Member of the Italian Bureau since 1925. Foundation member of the Anti-Fascist Alliance and member of its executive committee. One of the most active leaders in the Anti-Fascist movement and on the picket line during strikes in New York.

B. MORGENSTERN—Joined Young Workers League in 1925 and Party in 1926. Became section organizer of League, then Negro Work Director of Philadelphia District and head of Agit-Prop department. Member of District Committee and Bureau and at one time of Secretariat. Worked for Joint Action Committee in I. L. G. W. U., participating in strike where he was arrested. Arrested also in pocket-book makers strike, in Sacco-Vanzetti campaign, for distributing leaflets, for Hands-Off-China demonstration in Washington, Hands-Off-Nicaragua demonstration in Washington, served 30 days in jail for Porter demonstration in Washington, and arrested in Chester, Pa., during textile union campaign.

HE WRITES WHAT MANY THINK

New York City, Feb. 15, 1929

Editor, The Militant,

Dear Comrade:

With revolutionary workers all over the world interested in learning the latest developments of the deportation of Trotsky, they are compelled to read the capitalist press for their information. Especially is this true in the United States. Members of the Workers (Communist) Party must read the New York Times and other capitalist newspapers to learn what is going on in relation to this disgraceful act of the Soviet government. The Daily Worker makes no mention whatsoever of this question in its news columns, in spite of the fact that it is usually very eager to publish as much news as possible with a Moscow date line. Does Robert Minor think that by ignoring the story he will make the Communist workers forget about this act, which should make all Party members blush with shame. While the news columns are silent, Minor raves against Trotsky in the editorial columns of the Daily Worker. But of course, nobody takes Bob, of "I Change My Mind a Little" fame seriously. He is nothing more or less than a flunkey of the Mussolini minded C.E.C.

The writer of these lines has been a supporter of the Ruthenberg group of the Party since the 1925 national convention. I supported the Lovestone group of the party until several months ago, when Comrades Cannon, Abern and Shachtman were expelled. Since then I have studied the Trotsky platform and find myself in agreement with it on the questions of Socialism in one country and the Chinese revolution. On the other questions I have not as yet reached any conclusion. Nor have I decided whether or not I agree with Trotsky organizationally or with his international allies. After further studying the question I will make my decision. On one point I am convinced. Even if Trotsky is wrong, he is a sincere man, and all talk of his being a counter-revolutionist is nonsense.

I will not sign my name to this letter, as I do not want to be expelled from the party.

"PARTY MEMBER SINCE 1919."

## TO ALL ESTHONIAN COMMUNISTS!

The struggle in the world Communist movement between the Militant Opposition and the followers of the Bureaucratic Stalin machine now controlling the Russian Communist Party is getting sharper everywhere. The Opposition is fighting to bring its revolutionary viewpoint to the misled Party members in every country—including Russia.

In order to hasten the fulfillment of our revolutionary task, every language group should assist in the movement, discuss the burning questions raised by the Opposition in group meetings and take their stand on the side of the teachings of Marx and Lenin represented by the Leninist Opposition.

The members of the Esthonian language group will do their share in the struggle. It is necessary that all Esthonian comrades in the country, who have the Russian Revolution at heart, communicate with the New York group of Esthonian supporters of the Russian Opposition which has just been organized.

We must consolidate the efforts of all Esthonian Communists in this country for the purpose of countering weekly, who systematically misrepresent the views and activities of the Opposition. They follow blindly in the footsteps of the Daily Worker, except where they try to outdo the latter for and the provoking actual violence and gangsterism against the militant Opposition.

To work, comrades! Address all mail concerning the Opposition work among the Esthonian Communists to Esthonian Group, P. O. Box 120, Madison Square Station, New York, N. Y.

P. SCWAHLBE, Secretary, Esthonian Group.

## ANOTHER BOSTON MEETING

Boston, March 25.

The second public meeting of the Opposition Communists was held here Saturday night at the Chelsea Labor Lyceum. Comrade James P. Cannon spoke on "The Platform of the Opposition" to an audience which filled the hall—one of the largest Communist meetings held in Chelsea for a long time.

Comrade Cannon spoke for nearly two hours without a single interruption. After the lecture questions and discussion followed, all of which was conducted in an intelligent and constructive manner. The workers present who attach great importance to the world problems involved in the struggle in the Communist International, had to come in hear the Opposition point of view and to put some questions on their own account. They were in no mood to tolerate hooliganism and none was tried.

The party bureaucrats established a "picket" on the sidewalk outside the hall—a trick copied from the Right Wing fakers in the Needle Trades—who kept shouting, like bally-hoo spiliers at a fair, that "a notorious counter-revolutionist is speaking inside." This brought quite a number of curious people who paid twenty-five cents apiece to see the new attraction which they had not even heard of before.