



LETTERS FROM THE MILITANTS



THE LEWIS-FARRINGTON FIGHT

Springfield, Ill.

The Militant:

The crisis of the Illinois miners has deepened twofold since my letter to you. The reason for this is that many mines have opened up in the last month but since the conveyor system is being introduced into the mines only less than 40% of the miners are being employed—the rest must starve and those that are working under the conveyor system are beginning to show signs of revolt. Take for instance the mine at Cora, near Springfield, where formerly over 500 miners were employed; today, under the conveyor system, only 183 miners are employed and more coal is being produced and this in turn is having a social effect upon the miners. And what is being done at Cora is being done generally in every mine that is opening up this year.

Another reason for the deepening of the crisis is the continuation of the squabble of the Fishwick vs. the Lewis machine over the spoils of what is left of the U.M.W.A. in Illinois. At the Rock Island convention of the Illinois Federation of Labor, Frank Farrington was one of the principal speakers and from there we first heard that Farrington had again entered the U.M.W.A. through the back door, so Farrington says, "to save the Illinois miners from destruction by Lewis." The important thing about Farrington's comeback into the U.M.W.A. is that Fishwick in an editorial in the *Illinois Miner* says:

"After the resignation, or rather the assassination, of Former President Frank Farrington through one of the blackest conspiracies ever entered into by a so-called labor leader (i.e., Lewis) and an employer of labor." Lewis has caused the removal of the international board member Madden from Illinois, the Franklin County district board member Fox and is also demanding the removal of the Peoria district board member and the head of the district legal department. Many articles are being published by Lewis against the Fishwick machine showing corruption in Illinois and Fishwick is publishing many articles against Lewis showing that Lewis is a Leonardo Blowhardo Machiavelli.

This week, Fishwick did away with the provisional sub-district that Lewis appointed for the Franklin County. Fishwick added the local unions that formerly belonged to the Franklin County sub-district to other sub-districts that are under his control—thus taking the first organizational move against Lewis since the fight began. Then Lewis wrote to the coal operators telling them that he is the boss in Illinois; and Fishwick has done the same. The head of Fishwick's legal department starts court action against Lewis for \$250,000 damage suit for slander. Lewis demands that Fishwick call upon the head of the legal department to withdraw the suit and remove the attorney involved or else Lewis would oust the whole district machine. Fishwick says, go ahead and shoot, and has the removed international board member bring another \$250,000 slander and damage suit against Lewis. The final break between these arch-fakers is near at hand.

I suppose that by this time you have heard the reason why John J. Watt, the national president of the National Miners Union was kept away from the T.U.U.L. convention at Cleveland. In my last letter, I believe I wrote that Watt had resigned from the Party. Presto! Watt is not a member of the C.P. and therefore . . .

Since Watt became president of the National Miners Union, he has been continually fighting the Party bureaucracy. Watt's contention has been that the miners should have something to say with regards to what the program for the miners should be—that is, when the miners' problems are discussed and a program is to be outlined, the miners' fraction of the Party should be called in; that the Party give its general political line and together with the help of the miners' fraction a program for the miners be made. And Foster, while fighting to get control of the Party from Lovestone, supported Watt, who was fighting the Lovestone agents in the National Miners Union: the Tooheys, the Myerscoughs, etc. But now, since a different situation exists in the Party, Watt must go—even be removed from the presidency of the N.M.U. because he is no longer a member of the Party. Watt's reason for resigning from the Party was because he could no longer carry out bureaucratically made policies. And I believe Watt is sincere in trying to build the N.M.U. He is working night and day at present in Illinois trying to build the new miners' union. While Watt is trying to do this, the official paid agents of the Party are running around every corner and howling that Watt is that kind of a crook and that he is to be removed and that Freeman Thompson will be made president of the N.M.U.

I have been active in the miners' struggle during the last month. Several weeks ago I went to Benld to attend the Illinois N.M.U. Conference—mostly Party members present. I had just received my bundle of *Militants* and I distributed them there. A Chicago comrade reported on the T.U.U.L. convention and I had to take issue with him because he said that the miners must now make the center of their fight in Illinois against the I.W.W., the S.L.P., S.P., etc. In reply, I said that the center of our fight should be against the operators and the Lewis-Fishwick machines and that regardless of one's color or political affiliations he must have a right to join the N.M.U. In the afternoon a mass meeting was held at which about two thousand miners attended to hear Watt, Slinger and Thompson.

Last Sunday in Springfield we held a large mass meeting at which about two thousand miners attended. Watt

and myself were the speakers. The Stalinites tried every way possible to prevent me from acting as chairman of the mass meeting, but this time they failed utterly. We had miners from many surrounding mining towns attending our mass meeting. Now Watt and I are arranging for mass meetings in Taylorville and Nokomis. I have written to both Toohey and Corbishley demanding that they send me some dues-books and dues-stamps to sign up new members into the National Miners Union. Not even a word have I received from either of them in reply. Miners are coming into my home and wanting to sign up into the new miners' union and all I can do is to take their names and address and tell them to come to our next meeting and that I will sign them up as soon as I can get cards and dues-stamps.

In conclusion, the introduction of the conveyor system, the intensified exploitation of those that are working, and unemployment are forcing the miners to fight. The miners, whether they want to or not, are being dressed up for a fight. The Lewis-Fishwick squabble over the remains of the U.M.W.A. is adding fuel to the struggle. Of course the rank and file to the Lewis or Fishwick fakers means nothing. They will first try to settle their differences in the capitalist courts or through the coal operators. Being dressed up with a National Miners Union card is not enough. The N.M.U. must get on the job with a program and immediate demands for the present situation in Illinois. The Communist Party must wake up and show the miners how to fight. Just imagine: here is a struggle that has been raging for the last year—involving over 65,000 miners—yet the first news that the *Daily Worker* carries about the struggle is a column in the issue of October 8th, and the *Coal Digger* in its last issue of September 15th does not say a word about the situation in Illinois.

The Fishwick machine in Illinois no longer recognizes John L. Lewis as the international president, already refers to Lewis as the ex-president of the U.M.W.A. There is a split in Illinois. There is Fishwick's union and the Lewis union and the rank and file union of the N.M.U. The Communist Party must snap out of its narrow, myopic policy and give real leadership to the coming struggle.

The Party unit in Springfield is dead, not even holding any meetings since my expulsion. I feel confident that in the near future we will be able to organize a unit of the Communist League here.

JOSEPH ANGELO.

PURGING THE CANADIAN SPORTSMEN

Toronto, Canada.

The Militant,

I enclose a letter sent some time ago to all Y.C.L.

COMMUNIST LEAGUE ACTIVITIES

The Communist League of America (Opposition) is steadily and systematically broadening its work into the general field of class struggle. Recognizing as a major task, an organized theoretical struggle against the revisionism of Marx and Lenin's teachings by the false disciple, Stalin, in the Comintern and the respective Communist Parties, the Communist League knows that mass work directed by correct Communist policy must supplement to the other in order to bring the Communist movement again to a correct line in theory and practice.

The branches of the Communist League are active among the coal miners (Southern Illinois, under the leadership of Joe Angelo); the clothing workers in Minneapolis where a Left wing in the A. C. W. is being built through the Communist League, here also the League is active in all fields; the building trades (in Minneapolis, Chicago, New York, St. Louis); railroad men (in Minnesota); and in numerous other trades and industries. The Communist League is recruiting members regularly from trade unions and unorganized workers in numerous trades and industries, such as machinists, steel workers, building trades, auto industry, upholsterers, needle trades and others. The Communist League has a few hundred members, but they are active, thinking, determined fighters, prepared to fight over a long period for a regenerated revolutionary Communist movement, now being systematically destroyed by Stalin and his clique throughout the world. Clarity of principles and tactics and mass work are the rock upon which the Communist League endeavors to build.

The League, despite the sabotage of the official Communist party and the I. L. D. of a broad united front movement for the framed-up Gastonia defendants, leads in a demand for a genuine united front and works for the Gastonia victims (Minneapolis, Chicago, St. Louis, New York, New Haven, etc. The League (Boston, Minneapolis) is resisting the narrow policy of the Communist party in the Independent Workmen's Circle. Despite the usual tactic of expulsion by the party bureaucrats, the Toronto comrades are working for a broad workers' sport movement.

November 7th, Soviet Anniversary, meeting are already arranged in Minneapolis, St. Louis and other points. Mass meetings have been held recently in New York and Boston on the crisis in the Communist movement and on the recent uprising in Palestine. Entertainments for the benefits of the MILITANT were held the past month in Chicago and New York. Other cities are organizing similar affairs.

All the branches are active to raise their quotas for

and C.P. units in Canada by the former's national sport director, George Andrew, which I just received from a Finnish comrade. It says in part: "At present two Trotskyist renegades, Joe Silver and Maurice Quarter, hold important executive positions in the N. E.C. of the Workers Sports Alliance . . . We are faced with two immediate tasks, first to prepare to exterminate the influence of Trotskyism in the W.S.A. and build the W.S.A. as a militant, class-conscious, sports movement. Secondly, to further (?) unify the loose and weak Workers Sports Movement in Canada."

Today, after the Workers Sports was purged of the Trotskyist "renegades" and a complete C.P. and Y.C.L. fraction appointed in the National Executive, this body has gone entirely out of existence and the secretary has quit the city. Fine unity they achieved, very fine.

About the charge that we tried to destroy the organization: In 1927, comrade Silver and I took the leading role in the organization of the conference which followed with the formation of three branches in Toronto. In the same year, as secretary and chairman of the national sports department of the Young Communist League, we advised the Y.C.L. units in the organization of branches in Montreal and other places. We were responsible for the organization of factory leagues and both of us drew up the reports to the Red Sports International and Y.C.I. on the sports questions.

In 1928, we organized the national conference which was successful in setting up a provisional national executive. In spite of the efforts of the Y.C.L. to remove us, we remained as the national heads of the organization till the last convention. The proof of the position we held in the organization was that all the non-Party members supported us till the end, and at first even the Party and Y.C.L. members refused to vote against us until threatened with disciplinary measures.

In July, the Stalinist faction took over complete control of the organization. Today, not even the shadow of the national executive remains. Not a bad job, what?

MAURICE QUARTER.

FROM AN AMERICAN IN BERLIN

Berlin, Germany.

The Militant,

I've received the parcel of *Militants* you sent in good order. Thank you very much. As ever, the *Militant* is full of life, full of vigor, the one positive pole in the sad state of affairs into which the American Communist movement has fallen. Good luck to the Opposition in rallying the confused ranks of the Party membership under the Leninist banner. The mutual unmasking of the Right and the Center leadership certainly offers favorable ground.

S. GORDON.

Suspension of O. Carlson from the Communist League

The National Committee of the Communist League of America (Opposition) has suspended O. Carlson from the Communist League for a period of three months. His suspension as an alternate member of the National Committee of the Communist League is also in effect.

O. Carlson is suspended for failure to accept the discipline and carry out the decisions of the Communist League in the strike of the clothing workers in Minneapolis. He is an organizer for the Amalgamated Clothing Workers Union. The possibilities exist for the development of a left wing movement against the reactionary Hillman machine. The Communist League, at the moment of the outbreak of a strike among the unorganized clothing workers, in the Excell shops and others, laid out a policy and program of activity for the strike in agreement with Carlson. This policy, if fully carried out, would have aided in the broadening of the strike among other clothing workers, for winning greater gains for the workers on strike, and laid the basis for the development of a strong Left Wing in the A. C. W. against the class-collaboration policy of the Hillman machine, under the leadership of Genis and Kaminsky in Minneapolis. Carlson failed to carry out the decisions of the Communist League.

National Committee

Communist League of America (Opposition)

ST. LOUIS MEETING

The local branch of the Communist League of America (Opposition) will celebrate the 12th Anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution at a mass meeting in Druid's Hall, 9th & Market, St. Louis, Mo. Elmer MacMillan and other well-known militants will speak. AM workers are invited to attend.

The Communist League branch in St. Louis has just sent in 11 subs to the MILITANT with an earnest pledge that this is only a small beginning which they intend to increase steadily in the future.