

Unifying the Left Opposition

The *Militant*, in the issue of February 15th raised the question of the unification of the Left Opposition. In an article by Martin Abern entitled, "For an International Conference of the Left—the Need for Organizing the World Opposition", a number of concrete proposals were set forth to make possible such an international conference and unification. Simultaneously, *La Verite*, organ of the French Opposition, brought forward a number of proposals with a similar objective. The *Russian Bulletin of the Opposition*, official organ of the Russian Opposition (Bolshevik-Leninists) responded to the initiative of *La Verite*. The *Militant* is in accord with these propositions which sets the Left Opposition on the path of international organization and unification on a common principle basis. We reprint below the reply of the *Russian Bulletin of the Opposition* to *La Verite*.

The French Left Opposition which is grouped around *La Verite* has at the insistence of a number of organizations in other countries, taken the first step towards the international unification of the Left Communist Opposition.

The proposals stated in issue 24 can be summarized as follows:

1. It is necessary seriously to begin to prepare an international conference of the Left Opposition.
2. With that end in view, it is primarily necessary to create an international information bulletin.
3. The editorship of this bulletin must rest in a secretariat especially created for this purpose.

Such a program may appear as too modest and prudent. We can certainly start by the creation of an international liaison bureau, to which would be joined the secretariat which edits the bulletin. We do not believe this question to be decisive. Of primary importance is—to start.

An International Organ

We can start with the secretariat and the bulletin for the purpose of creating, in conformity with the reactions of the different national organizations, a regular bureau for preparing for the conference. For this reason we support the proposal of *La Verite*, inasmuch as there can be no difference of opinion on the first step.

The editorial board of the *Russian Bulletin*, which is in permanent connection with the comrades in struggle in the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics, do not doubt for an instant that the more energetic and decisive is the initiative of the French comrades in this question, the warmer will be the support of the Russian Opposition.

The preparation of the conference is not purely an organizational step: it is primarily a political and theoretical task which may require several months.

It is not a question of a mechanical gathering of groups, even of small divergent groups, but of the unification of the international fraction whose inner homogeneity is verified in theory as well as in practice.

La Verite is right in stating that the pages of the Bulletin must be, within the frame of material and technical possibilities, open to all groups who adhere to the Left Communist Opposition. The Bulletin is an instrument (one of the instruments) in preparing for the conference. For its unification, the Opposition must proceed on a democratic course. This means that every Oppositionist must have the opportunity to be informed and to learn, with the aid of the Bulletin, about the ideas and actions of the other Left Opposition groups in order conscientiously and firmly to decide to whom he can rally. In other words, the Bulletin must serve as an instrument for unification on a clearcut principal basis.

Unity upon Principle Agreement

The German experiences of the last year are of exceptional importance to us in determining the course and perspective for the international unification of the Opposition. The policies of the Urbahn fractions have led to a split with the comrades who solidarize with the views of the Russian Opposition, *La Verite*, The *Militant*

etc. This split took place before the eyes of the International Opposition as an outgrowth of a close ideological struggle which assumed, to a certain extent, an international character. The magnitude of the differences was confirmed by experience, and the two parties have drawn the necessary consequences for themselves. It is clear that an international conference which wishes to slight similar matters in the name of "unity" will be still-born.

The political Marxist "in one country" is as impossible as the construction of a socialist society "in one country". Any group which attempts to develop a political line confined to national questions is inevitably doomed to sectarian degeneracy. That is why we do not doubt that none of the truly revolutionary groups will remain aloof, but will adopt a clearcut position on all the controversial questions and will sustain the initiative of *La Verite* in the preparations of an International Conference.

It is extremely desirable that the first number of the Bulletin, whose publication can perhaps be assigned to *La Verite*, until the secretariat is formed, appear as soon as possible and that it contain the opinions of all the European Opposition groups, at least on the question of the conference. The replies from America, Asia, etc., can be published in the following number of the international Bulletin. That would be an important beginning.

—The Editorial Board of the *Russian Bulletin of the Opposition* (Bolshevik-Leninists)

CUBANS STRIKE

(Continued from page 1)

vail among the sugar plantation workers. Formerly assured six months' work, they are now lucky to get in three or four months. During the busy season, however, there is plenty of hard work—12 hours a day worked six hours on and six hours off. For this Cuban sugar plantation workers now get 40 cents a day, contrasted with 60 cents in 1928 and a figure of \$4.00 in 1919. Sixty percent of the American capital of \$1,250,000,000 invested is in sugar. American sugar companies intensify the chronic unemployment on the island by importing Negro laborers—under slave terms—from Haiti and San Domingo. These are kept in semi-slavery compounds, guarded by troops and denied every civil liberty. The sugar workers' union was broken by Machado through force of arms in 1925. The president of the union, Enrique Varona was assassinated, as well as other union officials. The union has since functioned underground, and there have been several spontaneous strikes.

Wall Street Continues Cuban Penetration

In addition to the National City Bank of New York which has dominated Machado, the Chase National Bank of New York and the Cuban government has been negotiating for a loan of \$30,000,000 to the latter at interest for a term of years. \$40,000,000 of the amount would be used by the bank to liquidate bonds which it already has on hand from contractors, Warren Brothers of Boston and the Cuban Construction company for work already completed on the central highway. The other \$40,000,000 was expected to be used to increase activities in a program of public works. It is not yet reported whether this contract which gives American capitalism another stranglehold on Cuba, has been signed, though it was expected to be done sometime in February.

The Government at Washington has not yet directly entered into the situation arising out of the severe economic depression in Cuba and now culminating in the one day general strike. Naturally, it is satisfied with Machado who carries out their policy of economic and political enslavement of the Cuban masses. The workers and peasants of Cuba, however, evidence that they are ready to struggle militantly against the oppression of Wall Street and their Cuban puppets.

INJUNCTION JUDGE HALTS UNION TAXI SERVICE

PITTSBURG—(FP)—Union taxi service has been halted on Pittsburg streets by Judge Josiah Cohn, defender of judicial tyranny during the 1919 steel strike. Although the service, initiated by the striking cab drivers, was on a voluntary contribution basis, the judge ruled it contravened state public service commission rules and granted a temporary injunction.

Back of the court order is Parmalee Transportation Co., which according to the state public service commission, has monopoly privileges for operating Pittsburg taxi service. The firm is making another effort to operate a small fleet of cabs on downtown streets. Loud prophecies by the scab firm that its old drivers would return in flocks to operate the scab cabs have been given the lie. Not a single unionist has been discovered operating Parmalee taxis.

Φ

PITTSBURG—Forty percent of Pittsburg's building trades workers are unemployed according to Chairman E. G. Rust of the Building Trades Council.

Φ

Attention, Boston!

THE STRUGGLE IN THE I. W. C.

A mass meeting on the subject, "The Struggle in the I. W. C.", will be held on Tuesday, April 1st, 1930, 7:30 P. M. at the Hebrew Institute Center, 140 Shirley Ave., Revere, Mass. Among the speakers are: Antoinette F. Konikow, L. Schlosberg, J. Dubin. Admission is free. The meeting is arranged by the Boston Branch, Communist League of America (Opposition).

Φ

BUILDING TRADES DROP IN MASS.

BOSTON—Employment of Massachusetts building trades workers dropped 8% between January and February, according to the state labor department. Employment is 85 of the 1928 level.

Φ

BUFFALO CHARITY OUTLAY CLIMBS STEADILY

BUFFALO, N. Y.—(FP)—The Department of Social Welfare in presenting its annual report to the city council, states that "a scrutiny of comparative statements contained in this report will show that that department has been called on to provide the necessities of life to a much greater number of families than in previous years." The report continues: "One of the principal causes for unemployment of both skilled and unskilled workers, is due to the increased use of machinery in place of hand labor.

"In 1927, in 28 cities of the United States representing a population of 22,000,000, 100,000 families or approximately 500,000 people applied to private charitable organizations for relief, i. e., food, payment of rent, clothing, etc. And conditions are much worse in Buffalo now than in 1927."

Φ

SHOPMEN WORK FIVE DAYS TO AVERT LAYOFFS

CLINTON, Ia.—(FP)—To prevent partial layoffs the shopmen at the Northwestern's Comanche Ave. Clinton shops have voted to take a 5-day week for everybody. The railroad is mum on the reason for the present slackness, evidently fearing to put a pin in Hoover's prosperity balloon.

Φ

Due to technical mishaps, an article on the coal mining situation does not appear in this issue, but will appear in a subsequent number.

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SPORTWEAR WORKERS WIN STRIKE

NEW YORK—(FP)—Workers of the Vanity Sportwear knitting mill in New York have won a strike against the discharge of three leading unionists, members of the Natl. Textile Workers Union. After one day's picketing, the strikers won the reinstatement of their fellow workers and a wage increase for two crafts. Previously a Negro porter had his hours reduced from 54 to 44 a week, due to N.T.W. efforts.