

Independent Workmen's Circle Confronted by a Split

About 23 years ago the Independent Workmen's Circle was organized as a fraternal organization in opposition to the Workmen's Circle. The Forward and the W. C. are controlled by the same machine. Naturally the Forward all the time bitterly attacked or ignored the I. W. C. Their action made the rank and file of the I.W.C. condemn the Forward and the W. C.

When the Left wing split away from the Socialist party in 1919, the branches of the Independent Workmen's Circle began to sympathize with the Left wing. The branches supported the Communist party morally and financially.

Practically at every convention of the I. W. C., Left wing resolutions were accepted. At the Philadelphia convention held in 1927 the Left wing resolutions were accepted. At that convention a resolution was also accepted to raise \$18,000 to colonize 50 Jewish families in Soviet Russia. The membership of the I. W. C. is not at all as Zaltsman and Olgin describe them in the *Freiheit*.

From the Philadelphia convention till the Chicago convention which was held at the end of May, 1929, \$23,000 was raised for the Left wing movement. This money went through the general office, except that branches sent their donations directly to the Left wing movement.

At the Chicago Convention

With the above mentioned facts you can see that it was not necessary for the Party to come to the Chicago convention and make a pogrom there. What happened in Chicago? The Party forced the delegates to accept resolutions which would be suitable only to a Party convention. The leaders forgot that the I. W. C. is not the Communist Party.

This impractical action brought an absolute defeat for the Party. The resolution that the industrial unions organized by the Party were the only bona-fide unions could surely not be accepted. The Party should know that members of the I. W. C. also belong to the A. F. of L. and declined therefore to be stamped as scabs, etc. Also the resolution to recognize the *Freiheit* and *Daily Worker* as the only revolutionary press is likewise incorrect.

After the Party's defeat they started with their old method of slander and discrimination against every one who does not agree with them. Zaltsman is trying to tell us that this a Right wingers' fight against the Left wingers, but there is as much truth in it as their yellow slander that comrade Trotsky is for a Tsar (!) in the Soviet Union. The *Freiheit* daily attacks the leaders of the I. W. C. and tries to discredit them where only yesterday they were praised by the *Freiheit*. The membership has learned better than to believe the *Freiheit*. After the *Freiheit* mobilized all its champions, they went all over the country and brought chaos in the I. W. C.

The "Left Wing" Branches

With slanders every day in the *Freiheit*, the Party could not succeed to bring more than 45 delegates to the Boston convention and the most of these were fake delegates. The "impartial" delegates or "loyal" branches were represented with fifty two delegates. Zaltsman tries to call his delegates "class conscious". Let us look over his "class conscious" delegates. Branch 50 as a Communist branch (?) passed a resolution that was printed in October, 1929 in *Das Naye Wort* (official organ of the I. W. C.). Here is the resolution: "At our meeting which was held September 12, 1929, it has been decided to condemn the *Freiheit* for her anti-semitic acts that it used toward the Palestine program; it was also unanimously decided to tax every member a dollar for the Jews in Palestine." And this is a Communist branch according to Zaltsman's interpretation.

Branch 3 of Brockton is also a real Bolshevik branch. Branch 3 bought a building for an I. W. C. lyceum. A banquet was arranged and among the honorable guests

there were the capitalist city mayor, the police marshal, and the alderman of that ward. Also the delegate of Branch 29, Berg, elected as a Right winger and who had instructions to vote with the "impartial" delegates voted with the Left, to Zaltsman's jubilation. Berg apologizes now for his action and also condemns the Left wing.

At the Chicago convention the resolution on the industrial unions was the main one. Looking over the referendum results which were printed in the January issue of *Das Naye Wort*, one can see Zaltsman's artificial "45 delegates". Here is the result of the referendum vote in a few of Zaltsman's branches:

No. of Branch	For industrial union resolution	Against
3	15	20
19	13	14
50	20	47
103	10	14
124	14	16
131	0	43

After the Boston convention, held January 12, 1930, a new national executive was

An Open Letter to Leninbund Members

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ment with any of the existing Russian groups, is by this very fact obligated to create a new Russian group which will lay down a correct political line in the Soviet Union. Otherwise, there would remain nothing for this group except to declare its neutrality towards the October Revolution. The same can be said in connection with any country. Communism must be international or it is not Communism.

But the bureau of the Leninbund? What is its stand on this question? Is it in agreement with any Russian group? Of course it is not a question here of mechanical homogeneity but of agreement on fundamental questions. Of this we know nothing. Obviously, as far as Urbahns is concerned, this is a secondary question, as are all questions relating to the international movement.

The Urbahns faction, in expelling from its ranks the adherents of the International Opposition, is prepared at the same time to ally itself on the international arena with any "left" group on condition that it is not prevented from pursuing its national policy.

Foreseeing their "national" bankruptcy in their struggle against *La Verite*, the allies of Urbahns—Treint and Paz—dream of creating a united international which will be open to everybody:—those who are for Chiang Kai-Shek; those who are for the Soviet Republic; those who are endeavoring to save the autonomy of the industrial unions; those who struggle for the influence of Communism in the trade unions; those who are for a united front with the Right against the official party, and those who call for a united front with the official party against the Right wing groups. The program of this motley crew is put forward under the slogan of "party democracy". Of all things, can one imagine a more bitter irony directed against party democracy?

We must say openly that, under the guise of struggling against the bureaucracy of the Third International, strenuous efforts are made to slip in tendencies and actions suited to the Second International. And yet, the bureau of the Communist International did not fall from the sky: it arose from certain definite class causes. It is the fact that the Communist International finds itself completely dependent on a state power which in turn depends on the international class struggle. Theoretically, this finds expression in the contradiction which exists between the theory of socialism in one country and the elementary bases for the existence of the Communist International.

There are some national Communists who believe themselves to be Left Communists, who attribute to the Russian Opposi-

tion the characteristic traits of governmental centrism, at the same time appearing to say, "We want nothing from these, or those".

Again A Split Policy

But the Party could not get control of the I. W. C., so something had to be done. Suddenly a new order was given to the Stalinist supporters to take the new executive committee into court. So Zaltsman & Co., believe in the injunction! The order was obeyed and the *Freiheit* started a new publicity, attacking the I. W. C. from one side, and from the other side it called for a conference for March 30, with the aim to split and organize a new fraternal organization.

It seems that the united front is a mere phrase of the Party.

It is comical that the *Freiheit* is trying to make one believe that the conference is called to discuss the methods of the I.W.C. At the same time they have already decided to split the I. W. C. Let it be known that the Party gave an order to the few small branches which are under their control, not to pay dues to the national office of the I. W. C. So some of the branches are suspended.

Did the Party tell the members the consequences of such a policy? It seems that the new order will not work, because the membership of the I. W. C. and also the new members will not follow any more their splitting policy. The Party's action breaks again the Left wing movement in the I. W. C. and it also reacts badly on the movement in general.

—J. SCHLOSBERG

NAVAL PARLEY SINKING

"The life of the Naval conference has not yet been pronounced officially extinct, but it is already beyond the power of human aid. Only a miracle can save it. All that optimists confidently predicted for it has come to nothing, and even more reasonable hopes of those who had weighed carefully the difficulties against the opportunities are vanishing into thin air." In this manner the *London Times* bemoans the collapse of the conference. It is only a question of time now, when the closing chapters on this peace farce will be written.

The delegates spend the week-ends in jaunts to the countryside, playing golf, attending tea parties, and making merry of their trip. All of them await officially the announcement of the close. Attempts at a five-power treaty are already abandoned. Now the direction is toward the signing of a three-power agreement between the United States, Great Britain and Japan. The impossibility to arrive at an agreement between France and Italy, the refusal of Britain, Japan and the United States to agree to the French demand of a 725,000 tonnage ration, and their insistence upon a reduction of the proposals of Italy and France, spelled the death of the negotiations some weeks ago.

Possibilities for Continuation Slim

As matters stand now France will neither agree to reduction nor parity with Italy. Italy insists on parity with France. The other three continue to demand a decrease in the ratios of France and Italy. The official French delegates have returned to France, and only representatives remain so that it cannot be said that "France remained absent from the conference."

A three-power arrangement, too, will meet the same difficulties as the conference proper. This is already indicated in the position of Japan, who states that in the event of a three-power treaty the question of parity ratios would have to be reopened, since their temporary discussions with England and the United States were on the basis of a five-power treaty. Such a reconsideration means that Japan will stand by her original position of a 70 percent ration of the United States and England. But a three-power treaty will result in only increasing the unsolvable contradictions of the imperialists. It will only intensify the differences.

McDonald finds himself in a sorry mess. It must be recalled that one of the main planks of his administration was precisely on the question of disarmament. With his cabinet already in a bad way over their complete failure to solve any of the problems of the British working class, and his further difficulties with the opposition parties, the failure of the conference will have a disastrous effect on him politically. He is making desperate gestures to save the conference and all of them have fallen to the ground.

Pre-Conference Situation Remains

The conference has brought into the open the tremendous contradictions of the powers. The complete failure of the negotiations while disappointing the pacifists, is illuminating in that it gives an excellent picture to the mass of workers as to the real intent of such conferences. Behind the mask of "peaceful intentions" the wolves howl and snarl at one another. They threaten and demand. The situation however remains as before. The burden of armaments continues on the shoulder of the working masses of the entire world. It is increasing every day. Its solution is in the hands of the proletariat.

A Choice Must Be Made

We do not defend the idea of democracy in general, but that of centralized democracy; that is just the reason why we rank national leadership above local leadership, international leadership above national leadership. The revolutionary party has nothing in common with discussion clubs, where everyone comes as though to a cafe (this is Souvarine's big idea). The Party is an organization for action. The unity of Party ideas is assured through democratic channels; however, the line of demarcation defining the limits, enclosing the frameworks of the Party concepts, should be traced quite distinctly. All the more so since it is a fractional question only. It must not be forgotten that we are not a Party, but a fraction—that is to say, that we are the elite of adherents animated by the same idea which binds us together strongly, and which causes us always to keep our ranks unbroken in order to be able to influence the Party and other working class organizations. It would be monstrous and quite foolish to demand from the Opposition that it become a melting pot for the ensemble of national groups and small groups composed of all sorts of the dissatisfied, the offended and the kickers who do not know their own desires.

No, we represent a current of ideas, we raise our structures on ground made of certain principles and certain well-established traditions. If, under these conditions, the adherents of the International Opposition cannot find a place in the Leninbund, it is akin to the Leninbund's declaration that it itself does not desire a place in the ranks of the international opposition. A clear-cut accounting must be made.

You see, comrades, that these questions are incomparably more important than the trifles and nonsense on which Urbahns is at the moment basing his prosecutions. The question involves the fate of your or-

ganization. Each member of the Leninbund should understand that as soon as the split of the Leninbund becomes a fact, the Leninbund will immediately be transformed into an Urbahnsbund, i. e., will immediately be transformed into a small national sect, of no importance, without a future, without any prospects.

This means: a choice must be made. But for a true revolutionary, it is not difficult to choose.

With Communist Greetings,
L. D. TROTSKY
Constantinople, February 6th, 1930.