

Sellier is Right - Lovestone Wrong

Ca Ira, organ of the P. O. P. (Workers and Peasants Party) of France, the newly-formed party of the French Right wing, writes on March 1: "Analyzing our manifesto, our friends from Germany (the Brandler group), after some criticisms of details, conclude that outside of Alsace we are the group closest to their position and the one possessing the greatest influence. We are proud of this new approbation, sent to us by old militants. It is the commencement of our international contact."

Revolutionary Age, organ of the American Right wing, following the tip, changes the last line in its chorus of previously unstinted praise for the good French comrades, by submitting them to a timid "criticism of details." In its issue of March 1, it writes: "The Six (that is, the movement led by the six expelled municipal councilors) have taken the road of a new Party. On December 28, the conference called by the 'Six' decided upon the formation of a 'Workers and Farmers Party'... The apparent purpose of this move was to create an 'election Party', a parliamentary apparatus for the expelled. This step—which is directly contrary to the line (?) and experiences of the international Opposition movement—has set back the development of the French Opposition a great deal."

Thus the brave internationalism of the Right wing. The suspicious tardiness of the "criticism"—the P. O. P. was organized nine weeks ago and an analysis of it published a short while afterwards in the Militant—we will leave to more qualified parties to explain. But we must establish, if only on the interests of strict accuracy that Lovestone is wrong and Sellier the leading spirit of the new draft of French Mensheviks, is right, at least so far as the disputed point is concerned. And as between the stated view of Lovestone that Sellier and Co. should have constituted themselves only as a fraction for the "conquest of the Communist Party", and the action of Sellier himself in forming a new party, the more natural and proper path is the Frenchman's.

Internationalism Is Forgotten

Indeed, what have Sellier and his friends in common with revolutionary Marxism that they should form a faction to win even the shivering shadow of the once powerful Communist Party of France? Nothing, so far as we can perceive. The P. O. P. is a purely parliamentary apparatus to safeguard the municipal, and in general, the electoral bottoms of its leaders. In the trade union field (C. G. T. U.), it has allied itself with the syndicalist-reformist elements who are for the "independence of the trade unions"—that is, for their dependence upon the reformists and their masters. Its leaders' activities in the municipal councils are largely indistinguishable from those of a "Left" social democrat of, let us say, the more "solid" Austrian school. They do not even bother, as Lovestone and Brandler do out of politeness to the confused Communist workers still in their ranks, to call themselves a Communist movement; on the contrary, apparently taking Stalin's slogan as good revolutionary coin, they have labelled themselves a "workers and peasants" party. In their manifesto, which was posted upon the billboards and walls of Paris as I passed through that city two weeks ago, they addressed themselves to the good and honest French citizenry, and out of sheer oversight we presume... did not as much as mention the Bolshevik revolution or the Soviet republic. They did appeal, however, for a rally to the P.O.P. on the basis of the good old revolutionary French traditions of—1789.

After all, one can read the material of Brandler and Lovestone and find some vague mutterings about the Russian revolution and internationalism, like the incoherent babblings of a man waking out of a sleep and talking about something that happened long, long ago. But Messrs. Sellier and Co. are "sobered up", they are quite through with what they consider yesterday's bubbings of revolutionary beverages "artificially imported" from Moscow. What have they to do with internationalism and with a revolution in far-off Russia (or any other country, it might be added)? Let Stalin build up his socialism in Russia; that's his affair. And let Brandler build his "Communist" Opposition in Germany,

if he wants to. As for ourselves, say Sellier, Gelis, Chasselgne, Dunois and Co., let us build our modest little election machine in France. Everyone to his own taste! Live and let live! These are the fearless slogans emblazoned on the standards of the Right wing "international".

Travelling Toward Menshevism

At the conference to constitute the P. O. P., by the way, there was also on hand Maurice Paz, erstwhile Oppositionist of the Left. He too made his essential criticism of the Selliers the fact that they were forming a "second party". Paz has found bad company. Like him, Lovestone is little concerned with all these petty, bothersome questions of Communist principles. What is important is the question: Second party

Naval Parley Bound for «Davy Jones' Locker»

Officially the London Naval conference still exists. The issues of naval tonnage, and limitation of armament construction, minced with all the verblage that preceded the conference, remain, today after almost three months of negotiations. Not the slightest progress has been made between the imperialist robbers.

During the course of the conference every conceivable method was employed by the Powers to bludgeon each other into agreement. From the beginning it was clear that the conference meant to establish the "agreement" of the hegemony of the British and United States fleets over the seas. The conference was an attempt to get "official" sanction from Japan, France and Italy.

The assumption of the United States to leadership in world economy and the deposition of England from her former role gave the political basis to the conference. To do away with the old watchword—"Britannia Rules the Seas"—became the object of America. In this she was successful, insofar as it dictated to Britain the ratio of naval strength giving her (United States) a free hand to roam the seas, and maintain a naval fleet second to none. What became necessary following this agreement between the two leading world powers, was to establish a form of restraint on the other powers, to establish the relative strength of Japan, France and Italy in relation to themselves.

Conference Cannot Solve Its Problems

The demand of the Japanese for a naval strength of 70 percent of the United States and England became the first obstacle. The proposal for a reduction of this ratio met the stubborn resistance of the Japanese delegation. The French position calling for a tonnage of 725,000 tons, a great part to be built by 1936, remains, despite all attempts to force France into reducing this figure. Italy stands on her original proposal of parity with France. To allow France such a high tonnage, and a fleet that would in six years be the most modern afloat; and to allow Italy parity with France would present a direct threat to the British interests in the Mediterranean, and generally be a threat to both England and the United States.

With the growth of the intensity of contradictions between the capitalist powers, the possibility of their "agreements" become more and more slim. The prediction of the Communists that the conference would inevitably run into a blind alley has been sustained throughout the course of the deliberations. There is no solution to war under capitalism. All the problems facing imperialists prior to the organization of the conference that was to "solve" them, stand as before.

Recognizing that the probability of a five-power treaty was doubtful, attempts were made for a tripartite treaty between England, the United States, and Japan. With the hope that this would be successful, America and Britain threatened the conference that unless France and Italy would agree to the proposals for reduction of their fleets, they would proceed with a three-power agreement.

Japan threw the wrench into this wheel, by rejecting the proposals of the United States and Great Britain, that Japan accept a reduction below the Japanese figure of a 70 percent ration of the English and Amer-

ican fleets. And alas, it is precisely in this last question that Sellier is correct and Lovestone wrong.

It is necessary, again in the interests of strict accuracy, to conclude with one more aspect of the issue. Sellier would be wrong and Lovestone right if it were a matter of not organizing a new party but instead of that, a faction—in the socialist party, a faction allied—from the Left side, if you wish—with M. Zyromski and his friends. Indeed it is not so long ago that Lovestone, as secretary of the American Party, proposed to its Political Bureau that Party members be sent into the Socialist Party to build a "Left wing" there. Is there any reason to doubt that now, travelling with express speed away from Communism, Lovestone and Sellier will not soon realize the step that Lovestone advocated in an unguarded moment? In our opinion there is none.—M.S.

And additional attempts to revert to security pacts as a solution to the French problem at the conference met with failure. The powers evidently feel that the time is not yet ripe to enter into agreements of a political nature, at this stage of the game. They are content to play for time during this "peaceful" period of the war preparations. A political pact with either the United States or Great Britain, France claims, would enable her to lower her demand for a 725,000 tonnage ratio. But with Japan's refusal for a reduction in her demand, France's assumption of the same position, and Italy's refusal to agree to less than parity with France, the naval conference stands lifeless.

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Secrecy Prevails in Conference

E. L. James in the New York Times of April 5, sums up the present situation in London in the following manner:

"Thus the complications of the naval conference do not lessen, and while there have been many interesting proposals no one knows exactly what the situation is. There has been no meeting of the conference for six weeks. There have been only private talks in the greatest secrecy, of which no record was kept. If the whole official record of the decisions of this conference were compiled, it would not fill twenty typewritten pages.

"There probably never was another conference so secret in its work. This means that if it ever gets down to making a treaty an immense amount of work must be done in setting down what has been agreed. It probably will be found that no two delegations agree on any point."

The collapse of the conference was inevitable from the moment it began. The mask of its pretensions has been torn through its complete failures. Technically the conference is continued—actually it has been dead for weeks. The conference demonstrates that under capitalism the contradictions that exist cannot be solved through peaceful means. War and capitalism are identical. The solution to this problem is the overthrow of this system of exploitation and war. It is the duty of the proletariat to destroy this system and its lackeys, to establish a system without classes, exploitation and war—a Communist Society.



STREET RAILWAYMEN ASK RAISE

PITTSBURG—(FP)—Three thousand members of the Amalgamated Assn. of Street Railwaymen are asking an increase in wages from the Pittsburg Railways Co. when the present agreement expires in May.

The union seeks a raise of five cents an hour for motormen and conductors to 75 cents per hour and a raise of 15 cents per hour to 90 cents for operators of one man cars. Negotiations have been in progress for nearly a month. No settlement has been reached. The local has been given the approval of the national officers for strike action if it becomes necessary.

Police Kill Worker at Anti-Fascist Meet

NEW YORK—Benito Mussolini, using the U. S. immigration service, reached out in a Cooper Union anti-Fascist meeting in New York to nab Armando Borghi, an anti-Fascist leader. As a result one unknown worker is dead and another wounded.

Borghi, with Vincenzo Vacirca, a socialist and both opponents of Fascism, were speakers at a Cooper Union meeting called to discuss labor strategy after the fall of Il Duce's castor oil regime. The meeting was nonpartisan and a Republican party member was chairman. Just as Borghi finished his speech a federal agent stepped on the platform to arrest him. Borghi jumped off the stage into the audience, which rose in excitement.

A city detective was being ejected from the meeting when he drew his gun and fired wildly. The shot wounded one man, glanced off, and instantly killed an Italian worker. None knew his identity nor political affiliations.

Borghi was seized for deportation several years ago, on the advice of fascist agents in Washington. Liberals and radicals put up a fight to keep him from being returned to certain death in Italy. Stays of execution had been granted to him, but he had not been notified that federal agents were after him.



ROCHESTER TYPOS SHARE JOBS WITH UNEMPLOYED

ROCHESTER, N. Y. —(FP)—Married compositors on Rochester newspapers will go on a 4-day week, while single men will work only three days weekly, under a program voluntarily adopted by the three newspaper chapels of the Typographical Union to relieve unemployment among printers here. The action follows a reduction of working forces by the newspapers.

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