

*In the Party***The N. Y. District Is Re-organized**

It is not a matter of principle that I wish to take up here, nor is it a question of policy in the class struggle. It seems that even in the simplest matters, in the most practical question the Party "leadership" has developed blunders and incapacity to a science.

Tuesday morning, April 22, I found a letter in my mail saying: "In line with the plan and decision of the Section Committee and the District Committee, the readjustment of the Section has been finally completed." It goes on further to say what new unit I was assigned to, and that I should appear for a meeting that evening, in a new place. This is the manner in which the reorganization of one of the largest sections of the Party was "achieved." No previous discussion by the members, no explanation on the basis upon which this reorganization has taken place. Everything was decided upon and carried out by the Section and District committees. Naturally, the result was—confusion.

Out of over 30 comrades assigned to my unit, half a dozen showed up to the meeting. In one place the letter says: "A system of revolutionary competition will be immediately instituted between units in relation to the stabilization of the unit, election of proper functionaries and the concentration on shops and factories, etc." Try and stabilize when the comrades walk around like sheep that have been lost from the flock, wondering where they belong. To quote once more from the same letter: "If you meet a comrade who did not receive a letter and does not know where his unit meets, take him to your unit meeting (!) and the Section representative will check up."

Eventually the lost sheep will perhaps find their flock. But this stunt was pulled exactly two weeks before May Day when every nerve of the Party is to be strained for in mobilizing the maximum number of workers, and a section of about 500 workers remains virtually disorganized and impotent to effectively work for the demonstration.

One gets the impression that there are master minds at the head of the Party constantly planning confusion and blunders—in big matters as well as small ones. If this be true, they are succeeding marvelously. —B.T.

A Little Purification

PITTSBURGH—

Charges have been brought in the Communist Party here against John Kaspar and M. Garfigel, and it is said, against John Otis as well. The charges are that they all attended the unemployment convention in New York without the authority of the Party. But that charge only conceals the real reason. The main reason is that Kaspar, as an organizer for the T. U. U. L., criticized the bureaucrats Devine and Saltzman so sharply that they could stand it no longer. Kaspar organized the campaign for the food workers, but the Party officials never assisted him. Kaspar would organize street meetings, but the bureaucrats never went out to speak. Kaspar did as best he could for the cab strikers but the Party officers would say one day that they had ideological control of the strikers and the next day: If they won't accept our program, to hell with them. All these crimes brought about the suspension of Kaspar from the Party for a certain time and with him, Garfigel.

—JAMES SIFAKIS

Note: All Party members are invited to express their views on the Party situation in the columns of the *Militant*. Write us on the conditions in your units, etc. We want to make the *Militant* also a forum in which Party members will be able to discuss frankly and freely what is wrong with the Party and how it can be remedied—a discussion which is forbidden in the columns of the official Party press. Let the bureaucrats practise their contemp-

The Men's Clothing Union**In the Amalgamated: From Class Struggle to Class Collaboration**

Prior to the formation of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, the United Garment Workers, affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, claimed jurisdiction over the clothing workers in the United States and Canada. Nominally, the organization is still in existence, but is no longer a factor either in industry or in the labor movement for the simple reason that it has failed to organize the clothing workers in the United States and Canada.

The Betrayal of the U. G. W.

In 1913 the clothing workers in New York decided to strike against their intolerable conditions. Over fifty thousand tailors, mostly unorganized joined ranks with the handful of radicals who initiated the movement. The strikers stood solid in spite of terrorism by the police, hired gunmen and the sabotage on the part of the national officers. The storm came when the president of the U. G. W., Tom Rickert, without the knowledge of the strikers, made a settlement which the workers and local leaders refused to accept. They claimed he "sold them out". Influential people in the labor movement intervened and a compromise settlement was reached. The workers won some of their demands and went back to work. They built up strong local unions against the wishes of the reactionary U. G. W. officialdom.

In 1914 the U. G. W. held its convention in Nashville, Tennessee. This city was chosen although it was not a clothing center and was very remote from one. The General Officers did this purposely because they knew the tailors had no money to send a full delegation. Consequently, the officers figured to control a majority in the convention and re-elect themselves into office. But the local unions did send their full delegations—and they were not seated. The delegates who were allowed to take their seats were mostly women from overall locals—"paper locals"—which the general officers had then and still have at their mercy by means of the union label.

The delegates who were barred from the convention by the general officers, and also some of the insurgents who had been seated held their own convention in another hall in the same city. They elected their general officers and a general executive board with a complete machinery for the work of the organization. Their action was quickly ratified by the rank and file, who immediately began to pay dues to the new administration in order to supply "a fighting treasury".

First Victory of the A. C. W.

Immediately upon its assuming office the new administration with Hillman as President and Schlossberg as General Secretary, was confronted by a serious industrial conflict in Baltimore. Without a treasury, without effective machinery because of lack of time to establish it, and surrounded by odds, the General Executive Board took up the fight. The success or failure of this struggle was a test case for the new organization. In spite of the fact that the organization was penniless, in spite of treachery by the deposed officers, and in spite of the fact that one branch of the industry—the cutters—betrayed the tailors and went back to work—in spite of all this the 2,500 tailors fought bitterly until they won the strike gloriously. Thus, the first struggle led by the new organization was also its first victory.

This successful struggle was a deadly blow to the old administration, the U. G. W. of A.

The new administration had passed through its first line trenches, but it still went under the name of the U. G. W. of A. The following year the courts ruled that the old reactionary leadership was entitled to the name and treasury of the old, faded U. G. W. organization. The new organization therefore called a special convention in New York in December, 1914, and changed its name to the

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titled "self-criticism" (that is, criticism only of the rank and file and white-washes of those responsible for all the blunders.) Names of correspondents will be withheld whenever requested. For the workers in the Party, the *Militant* opens its columns freely.—Ed.

Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America.

The new organization was based upon the class struggle and militancy of a high order as the preamble of the adopted constitution vividly attests. It set forth its principles in the following revolutionary words:

"The economic organization of labor has been called into existence by the capitalist system of production, under which the division between the ruling and the ruled class is based upon the ownership of the means of production. The class owning those means is the one that is ruling, the class that possesses nothing but its labor power is the one that is being ruled.

"A constant and unceasing struggle is being waged between these two classes.

"It further states—

"The workers must accept the principle of industrial unionism or be doomed to impotence."

The 1914 convention was the most outstanding in the history of the clothing workers in the United States and Canada. Radicals, revolutionists of all shades of opinion united and supported the new Amalgamated union. A new spirit and idealism was brought into the organization. Every industrial center, large or small, asked for organizers and help from the new organization.

The Early Successes

With conditions favorable for organization among the clothing workers, the leaders started a campaign in every industrial center and made rapid headway. Thus we see in 1915 a big strike in New York which improved the conditions of the workers. The same year a strike of 30,000 workers was called in Chicago. This was one of the bitterest struggles waged by the new union and lasted from September 1915 to January 1916. Two workers were killed during this strike and 1,200 arrests were made. The demands of the strikers were a 48 hour week, a 25 percent wage increase, and recognition of the union. Although the strike was lost through the scabbing of the old reactionary U. G. W. with the aid of the police, yet it laid the foundation and maintained organization. As a result of this struggle the employers in Chicago signed an agreement in 1919 with the 'amalgamated' without a strike. This shows that strikes are a good weapon and not in vain when an organization is sincere and means business, instead of monkey business.

Here was the Amalgamated within a short period of five years—from 1914 to 1919—fighting battles, winning demands and establishing the first 44 hour week for the clothing workers. It was done not by miracles and appealing to the employers, but through struggle and sacrifices. This brought prestige and respect not only from the clothing workers, but from the employers, and even from enemies within the labor movement like the A. F. of L.

This shows again that reactionaries who say you can not organize workers through strikes do not know what they are talking about, or else they want to sit on their soft chairs comfortably and not do the job.

Because of its militancy and strength, the Amalgamated was the first union to be attacked by the open shop campaign in 1920 and 21. This lock-out involved about 60,000 workers in New York City and about 15,000 in Baltimore and Boston. It began on December 8, 1920 and ended on June 1, 1921. This lock-out was the most bitter fight of its kind ever waged by any organization in the history of the American labor movement. The employers failed to break the spirit of the workers even with the aid of the hired gangsters, and police brutality so they resorted to the courts and sued the organization for millions of dollars in damages. The A. F. of L. helped the employers in every way they could to destroy the Amalgamated but they failed.

This was the last heroic battle the Amalgamated waged, and since then Hillman and his general executive board have made peace with the employers.

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Others articles on the development of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, and the tasks of the Left wing, will appear in forthcoming issues of the *Militant*.

*In the Soviet Union***Stalin Assassinate Two More!**

MOSCOW—

I forward to you the information we received from N. "A new comrade arrived from Moscow. He was arrested among the '150' (in reality another hundred should be added to this figure). Two from his group were sent to the realm of Pluto. The names of these comrades are: Rabinovich and Silov. The mood of the workers, according to him, is that of waiting. In the city of Serpuchov there were 'disturbances' in a textile factory as a result of which the workers got a raise in the price list on some items, instead of a cut. Partyites also participated in the 'disturbances'."

It is clear that he is talking about the shooting of two Oppositionists. This is quite possible. At first there were expulsions from the Party, then exile follows, then jail, then the beating up in the Charkov and Ural jails then the murder of Butov through hunger, then the "accidental" murder (by beating up) of Haenrichson in Leningrad. Why should it be impossible that they are beginning to send Oppositionists into the other world? The shakier the ground under the Centrist feet becomes the more bestial they become. Autumn flies sting painfully...

Stalin's last speech on "Dizziness from Success" is undoubtedly symptomatic. It seems to me that turning to the Right (when this turn will begin) the Centrists will attempt to throw upon our shoulders all their ultra-Left crimes, as it happened in 1928 with the extraordinary measures. After all the press is in their hands. That is why it is necessary to give a timely warning to the working class about our relation to the Centrist inanities not only abroad (there it is much easier), but here too. For that it is necessary to hurry up with a declaration to the Party and to the working class. We must by no means hesitate.

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The murder of Blumkin was only a beginning. We are informed about the shooting of two more Oppositionists: the comrades Silov and Rabinovich. Evidently the idiotic invention about the participation of Oppositionists in railroad sabotage was made with the idea of explaining away the Thermidorian crimes against the Bolshevik-Leninists. But comrades Silov and Rabinovich, had no relation whatever, not only with "sabotage", but even with railroads.

The fact that Stalin still covers up the shooting of Blumkin, proves that he has nothing to say in explanation of the committed murder. Stalin's driving forces in these new crimes, are: personal revenge, and usurpationist alarm.

The murders will not not frighten the Opposition—about that there is no need of talking—but will not even shake it from its path. We have a strict count of the crimes of the Stalinist apparatus. But the Party and the apparatus are not one and the same thing. The Party as a whole must demand an answer from the Stalinist fraction for its murderous policy. And it will find us in its ranks.

Message to Siberia

Deep in the Siberian mine,
Keep your patience proud;
The bitter toll shall not be lost,
The rebel thought unbowed.

The sister of Misfortune, Hope,
In the under-darkness dumb,
Speaks joyful courage to your heart:
The day desired will come.

And love and friendship pour to you
Across the darkened doors,
Even as round your galley-beds
My free music pours.

The heavy-hanging chains will fall,
The walls will crumble at a word;
And Freedom greet you in the light,
And brothers give you back the sword

—PUSHKIN

Translated by
Max Eastman

*The authors of this letter in their remote corner did not yet know about the shooting of Blumkin.