

## Co-operatives Confer at Superior

The annual board meeting in Superior, Wisconsin, of the Cooperative Central Exchange has just registered a severe defeat for the official Communist Party and at the same time put squarely the problems of the immediate future of the Finnish revolutionary movement in the United States.

We have previously described the features of the crisis in the Northwest co-operatives, which are in many respects a pivot of the Finnish labor movement in the country. For virtually ten years, this powerful movement has been dominated by the Communists. For at least half that time conflicts of greater or lesser severity have gone on constantly between the leaders of the Finnish Communist (and co-operative) movement and the Communist Party to some extent because of the important role played by the Finnish Party members in the various Party factional fights, but essentially because of the increasing weight of conservatism, sluggishness and opportunism developing in the Finnish movement and restraining its revolutionary progress. Nevertheless, the Party managed to retain its influence and hold on to the movement for quite a time.

### Conflict Comes to a Head

The conflict came to a sharp point only in recent times. The victory of the Lovestone faction in the Party resulted in the violent imposition upon the large Finnish movement of discredited and incompetent hacks (Puro, Heikkinen, Suvanto and Co.) Then the impure chemical concoction recently foisted upon the Party as its Stalinist leadership (Browder, Bedacht, Foster, Minor, Amter, etc.) together with their irresponsible ultra-Leftist course, brought the mess to the boiling point. In a sudden, Leftist outburst, disfigured by adventurism and criminal unconcern about results, the Stalinist crew created such a state of affairs in the Finnish movement that they not only alienated the great bulk of the Finnish workers in the Northwest but enabled a group of opportunists (and Halonen in particular) to win these workers to their side against the Party. What is worse, the Stalinist freebooters succeeded in lining up on Halonen's side some of the best elements in the Finnish revolutionary movement—a fact of considerable significance for the future.

The struggle centered around the annual meeting of the Cooperative Exchange Board, with both sides mobilizing all forces. When the delegates assembled, the Party at best had 20% of the delegates, with the opposing forces holding the rest. The majority was not even swayed (such is the loss of C. I. prestige!) by the cable from the Cooperative Section of the Comintern, whose slogan was: "Wrest the leadership of your Central Exchange from the hands of Halonen and place it in the hands of a reliable fighter for a proletarian class policy." "Reliable fighter" is apparently the pseudonym of Matti Tenhunen leader of the Party forces at the meeting, and as unreliable an opportunist as ever led the Finnish movement.

### The "Reliable Fighters"

It is characteristic of the "reliable fighters" who were entrusted with fighting for the Bolshevik line that they were quite careful to do no such thing. Corgan spoke on policies only once, and that in connection with a motion to remove him. Tenhunen fought with the greatest violence on technical questions but he assiduously avoided the "Left wing program" as though it were poison ivy. Vainionpaa took the floor only once to make a defense not of the Party line, but... his ability as a functionary who has been trustworthy and efficient. Corgan, Tenhunen and Vainionpaa are waiting—waiting to see how the line-up will look when things settle a bit.

For all of that, the Halonen forces were a thousand times wrong, and set an even worse precedent, by removing the three named above from the Board, al-

though it was found possible to elect one I. W. W. and one socialist to it. That is the method used by the Stalinists, in reverse English, and indicates a profound weakness and fear in the Halonen group.

The meeting of the Board, with more than 250 representative delegates attending, was unmistakably a bitter defeat for the Party which a competent leadership and correct policy might have avoided. The manner in which the Party conducted its side of the fight was literally blockheaded. The Finnish Party press was simply filled with outrageous lies, misrepresentations, personal slander, scandals and the like, probably under the impression that this was the way to win workers from the other side. It accomplished just the opposite—as was easily predictable—particularly since the Party had only a weak leg to stand on to begin with and had compromised itself in the eyes of the workers by absolutely indefensible gangster methods against Halonen's group. It succeeded in pushing genuinely revolutionary elements over to Halonen; it is "making up" for this blunder by calling them all "a pack of social-fascists". All the worse for Stalinist confusionism.

### What Next?

But the fact that these fine workers are temporarily with Halonen and the group of officials around him—people primarily interested in substantial labor cooperatives, not in the revolutionary class struggle and its basic principle—is of the highest im-

portance. Some of these officials had a very platonic and fleeting interest at one moment for the Left Opposition, as a sort of cover for their essentially Right wing fight. That's gone, of course. And just as water finds its level in the end, so a section of these functionaries is already leaning towards Lovestone, who conducts a very democratic group, open to all stages and varieties of opportunism.

It is the younger elements, however, and the workers, who have a decisive word to say. Many of them have waited before speaking on the fundamental principle questions, on the basic disputes in the revolutionary movement (of which the co-operative situation is only a reflection) until "the crisis is over". The organizational victory over the Stalinists confronts them more than ever with the necessity of defining their perspective in clear words and firm deeds. Not even the cooperative movement, not even Halonen, can remain "neutral". The differentiation that must take place in the ranks of the confused, and so to speak, "all-embracing" Halonen group is of greatest consequence. A position must now be taken on the political questions of the hour. Right wingers will inevitably go with the organized Right wing. What is urgently needed is an organized, outspoken group of revolutionists, a Marxist core in the Northwest movement that knows how to fight and what to fight for. That is the guarantee for the movement's future. —M. S.

## Stalinist Adventurism

# «Red» Guerilla War in China

(Continued from page 1)

merous strike movements. In short, after the defeats of the demonstrations organized on the initiative of the C. P., many workers can be seen abandoning the Party and going over to the Left Kuo Min Tang and joining the yellow trade unions. This is what happened especially among the miners of Tang-Chan, near Tien-Tsin.

In the provinces, the strikes, acts of sabotage and other conflicts were often provoked in an entirely artificial manner in order to justify the schema of a revolutionary recrudescence. This sort of demonstration succeeded in embracing only a restricted part of the workers' forces and contributed more to weakening than strengthening the movement.

### Rich Peasant Elements in Party

The very small proportion of proletarian elements within the Party frequently leads to the decay of the movement in the villages. Also, the rich peasants often join the Party. Easily solidarizing with the struggle against taxes, the assessments on domainal land leases and other state impositions.

Conversely, these same rich peasants show themselves basically hostile to the directives of the Party on the leases between individuals and usurious loans. In those regions, the poor peasants break away from the revolution, become discouraged and go to sleep at meetings. The movement has no hold on the class of poor peasants because it does not constitute a struggle against the rich peasants.

In the villages of the Tung-Cheiu and Kwang-Si provinces, the Party organizations are peopled with lumpen-proletarian elements or bandits whose armed detachments often cover themselves with the name of Red Army. Further, in the same province of Tung-Cheiu the rich proprietors call themselves Communists in order to seek an alliance with these armed groups. Such proprietors often pay the "Red" chiefs so as to be authorized, under their protection, to levy rental rates on the poor peasant. When the peasants ask why these Communists levy rents, they are told that it is for various needs, including the provisionment of troops. Such troops of so-called Communists do not limit themselves to levying contributions on the rich, but also on the poor, and in general carry on numerous exactions and violence, arousing

the hatred of the peasants and compromising the names of Communism and the Red Army.

Everything shows that with such a weak development of the revolutionary spirit in the villages and such an oppression of the proletariat, the guerilla war in the country can lead to nothing but pure banditry. In any event, that is the situation in the province of Kiang Su.

Frequently, also, troops of partisans proceed to the temporary occupation of small localities only in order to give their chiefs the opportunity to enrich themselves at the expense of the population and the State treasury. This is what is happening especially in the Hupei province.

### Tchu-Deh's Forces

The detachment of the Communist Tchu-Deh, composed of the remnants of Ye-Tin's forces, has been reinforced by new groups of rebels. Pursued by the regular forces, this detachment goes from Right to Left, utilizing the lack of any contact between the governmental forces of the four provinces of Hunan, Kiang-Si, Kwantung and Fukien. This detachment, or at least its nucleus already exists since 1927. It wages war without cessation. It escapes all pursuit, taking refuge in the mountainous parts of the four provinces mentioned above. Tchu-Deh's detachment distinguishes itself advantageously from the groups of bandits in that it really pursues a revolutionary aim. As soon as it invades a new region, it proceeds to share the land among the peasants, proclaims the annulment of debts, constitutes village Soviets, furnishes the poor peasants with provisions as far as it is possible, so that as soon as the government troops arrive the detachment leaves nothing but regrets among the peasants.

Personally, Tchu-Deh is a former Chinese student in Germany, a Communist, formerly a divisional general under the Wang Chin Wei government. The operations of this detachment, however, produce only a weak impression here because in the present general circumstances, they lack perspective. What the Moscow Pravda says, cited by the Left Opposition press, is manifestly exaggerated in order the better to serve the needs of the "Third Period".

Our group has just issued its first appeal for the establishment of a Left Communist League. The work is only beginning. January 25, 1930. —NIEL-SIH

## Plan Two Toronto Dress Strikes

Two unions in Toronto have issued the call for a "general strike of the dress-makers". The corrupt International, led by the bureaucracy of the socialist party, and the Industrial Union under the leadership of the Communist Party are both preparing to bring out the workers.

### Trade Conditions Rotten

The conditions in the cloak industry are very bad but those in the dress industry, where the overwhelming majority of the workers are young girls, married and unmarried women, they are even worse. As in the cloak trade, the conditions continue to grow worse from year to year and this is reflected in the seasonal migration of workers from shop to shop, hoping in vain that maybe the next place will be a little better.

Preceding the organization of the Industrial Union two years ago, no attempt was ever made by the International to organize the trade. The answer the militants always received to their request for the International to organize a local was a typical expression of the successful self-satisfaction of all bureaucrats: "Too many 'shickses' (gentiles)," who were supposed to be impossible to organize.

When the Industrial Union was first organized, over 300 young dressmakers flocked to join the local, a striking answer to the lie of the International about the impossibility to organize them. Unfortunately, the golden opportunity was allowed to slip by, mainly because of the failure of the Left wing, dominated by the Party, to give the young leadership of the local the necessary lead and advice. The local afterwards went completely out of existence, to be reorganized later. Today it numbers about 75.

The International's dressmakers' local was organized following the success of the International in tying the cloakmakers to a typical Right wing agreement in the semi-company union. The loud bally-hoo that the bureaucracy raised during and after the strike succeeded for a while in pulling the wool over the eyes of the great majority of the cloakmakers and the mass of the dress makers, who believed that a great victory had been won.

The soap bubble, however, has burst on the rock of reality. The conditions of the cloakmakers are as sad as they were before the strike and even worse. Dissatisfaction in the shops is universal. The cloakmakers are chained to an agreement that binds them hand and foot, and on top of that they have to pay the self-satisfied bureaucracy \$5.00 in taxes.

### Why Left Wing Falls

The failure of the Industrial Union to make further headway is due mostly to lack of strategic approach and orientation to the dress makers, as well as to the loss of prestige they sustained from their previous mistakes. With a correct approach to the workers they should be able to win back the majority of their lost membership, who are now passive on-lookers. The extent to which the Right wing bureaucracy has compromised itself with the bosses should have definitely killed their chances of leading the dressmakers had the Industrial Union acted correctly.

The basis on which the bureaucracy stands is the I. L. G. W., against whom the Party has completely abandoned the fight. Not only do they absolutely refuse to organize a Left wing fraction in the I.L.G.W.—for which there are very good opportunities—but the Party members who were forced to join the International to hang on to their bread and butter were expelled from the Party and branded as traitors. The future of the Industrial Union lies in the hands of the clear-headed militants. They must know how to choose properly between deceptive phrase-mongering about winning the masses and realistic, fruitful work in every field of the class struggle. Thus far the Party bureaucrats have made the wrong choice. —YOUNG DRESSMAKER