

Towards the XVI Congress of the C.P.S.U.

Dissolving the Communist Party into the Class

At the end of January 1930, a new recruitment of workers into the Communist Party of the Soviet Union was proclaimed. The February issues of the *Pravda* are full of information about the "great upsurge", about "the mass flocking of workers into the Party" etc. The Central Committee has already given the directives: "To get not less than half the Party membership from workers in industry until the Sixteenth Party Congress" (*Pravda*, Feb. 11). Translating this into the language of figures it means that in approximately two months the Party has to admit a minimum of about 150,000 new members*. Up till now there are already about 200,000 applicants. In a few weeks the number of members and candidates in the Party will exceed 2 million.

Collective Admission

All the newspaper statements underline the collective character of submitting applications for admission to the Party. They enter in brigades, shifts, crafts, and even whole factories. Factory crafts, that "is several hundred men, with the foremen at the head, and often even with the technicians and engineers, are poured into the Party. The nuclei grow, 100, 200 and more percent. Formally, the procedure for admission is as always, individual, but in reality the admission is collective. The newspapers and the Party leaders insist that the commissions for recruitment rush with the formalities. The Central Recruiting Commission decided to "simplify the admission into the Party" (*Pravda*, March 4). This is why, in view of the purely formal character of the procedure, the percentage of rejected applicants is extremely insignificant. The lack of the least serious judgement of candidates, in a word, all this really anti-Party method of the campaign is already alarming the less short-sighted Communists.

The pursuit of high percentages (almost always fictitious) result in the fact that a recruiting agent, grabbing by the sleeve one who refuses to join the Party begins to persuade, advise, etc. As a result—a worker correspondent remarks in the *Pravda*—"political illiterates having insignificant industrial experience go into the Party". What this policy leads to can be seen from the partial cleansing of the Party. For example, in one of the Donbas districts (*Usova*) one third of the members in the industrial nuclei were expelled (*Pravda*, February 1). The results of the cleansing in Sumara speak still more eloquently that the apparatus has wiped out the boundary line between the Party and the class, taken into the Party a raw mass, which is not only not transformed in the Party melting pot but in view of the terrible condition of the inner-Party regime, is pushed away, either by expulsion, or by falling away. In place of those falling out, new raw material is poured in. The Party entrance and exit gates are wide open.

A Premium on Political Illiteracy

Almost the only, at any rate, the decisive criterion for admission into the Party is the question of the productive work and the "model discipline" of the applicant. "The most important proof of fitness for admission into the Party, is the degree of the active participation of the workers in the shock brigades, in socialist competition, and their actually advanced role in industry"—these are the instructions of the C. C. of the C. P. S. U. (*Pravda*, Feb. 11). Did you participate in socialist competition? How many days were you absent from work? How much did you subscribe for the loan, and did you sell it? In what way do you help collectivization? These, and some more in the same spirit, are the questions that are asked of an applicant. There are no Party and political questions. (Even "classic" Trotskyism is absent.) One may think it is a matter of one's admission into the cooperative or the trade union, this is the extent to which Party spirit is lacking. But what does the Stalinist apparatus need that for? It looks upon the new additions to the Party only as a "shock" support to the industrial organs. Lacking any kind of political outlook the adventurist leaders consider this—sometimes semi-compulsory (the chairman asks: "Who is against?") naturally, there

During the year 1929, 200,000 workers entered the Party.

aren't any. All voet ("for") inclusion of crafts and factories into the Party as a means of raising the productivity of labor, as a more successful realization of intensification and higher tempos. They are not concerned as to what becomes of the Party, or whether the Party exists as such.

The Gap Between Leaders and Masses

In December 1929 the influx of workers into the Party was still very low. But now, the *Pravda* states, "there is an unexpected great change". The Party organizations are caught "unawares". "At the factory something unexpected and unforeseen occurred: columns of workers sign up for the Party. The nucleus could in no way expect it" (*Pravda*). The writers and editors do not even notice what a fatal verdict this is for the Party regime, what a terrifying statement on the deterioration of all the Party tissues. If we assume, according to the apparatus — that there really is a mighty rise in the working class, and the apparatus sitting there does not know anything, "does not expect" anything, "does not foresee" anything, then it must be recognized that it is separated from the mass with an impenetrable partition. The fact in itself shows even to the blind, the depth of the abyss the apparatus has dug between itself and the mass.

The Kolomensk factory entered the Party almost in a collective body. Eight thousand workers from this factory already entered the Party. "The Kolomensk workers should be an example to the others"—appeals *Pravda*. It is therefore interesting to consider this factory in a few words.* The Kolomensk factory produces machinery (tractors, locomotives, Diesels etc.), it is something over a hun-

* The figures on the age of those in the factory entering the Party are very interesting. Most of them are 30-40 years old—this holds true for other places. Fifty percent of them have more than ten years of industrial experience. "The change that occurred among the older workers, those working in the factory for the last 20-30-40 years, is particularly gratifying," *Pravda* writes. It is doubtful whether this fact is "particularly gratifying". An old worker who was not shaken by the October, or the civil war—is advanced. The youth, the Comsomols, that is the most advanced and active part of the mass is lagging behind. This symptom is more alarming than "gratifying".

Indian Ferment and Chinese Lessons

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tragic collaboration of the Stalin-Bucharin faction with the bourgeois Kuomintang in China and the connected theory of Workers and Peasants Parties as substitutes for the Communist Party in the colonial countries.

But instead of soberly recognizing their mistakes, the Stalin faction desperately clings to office by the sowing of illusions inside the official Communist parties. On May 30th, the *Daily Worker* dedicated almost its entire issue to heralding the convocation of the "First Soviet Congress of China". There are no words strong enough to condemn the criminal and fantastic light-mindedness with which the *Daily Worker* misrepresents the actual situation in China. An eighth of the whole territory of the country, it is claimed, is under the sway of Soviet authority. Yet the fact is that there is not a single Communist daily in the country. Thanks to the consequences of the Stalin-Chiang Kai-Shek alliance in the Kuomintang the Communist Party first subordinated to bourgeois discipline for years, was then decimated by the executions of Hankow and Shanghai. The Red Trade Union movement was devastated by the White Terror. The Canton insurrection was drowned in blood.

Nevertheless, with that the adventurism which is the reverse side of Stalinist opportunism, the Sixth Congress refused to work out a series of transitional demands about which to rally the masses anew. As a substitute for the Communist Party and the requirements of mass action, recourse was now had to armed bands who roamed the country waging sporadic guer-

ried kilometres from Moscow. The proletarian staff of the factory was always considered in the Moscow Party organization as a backward one, and it really was. Over 70% of the workers are not only "bound" to the village, but they have their own cabin, cow, garden, etc. The brother, the father of a Kolomensk worker is a peasant, he works in the factory and helps them—they own their holdings together. The psychology of an average Kolomensk worker is that of a peasant. He often considers his work in the factory as a support for his peasant holding. A Kolomensk worker resembles very little the Leningrad proletariat. It is this factory that became now the vanguard of the workers army, and Leningrad its rearguard. (Up to March 14 the Moscow district had over 90,000 applicants and the Leningrad about 30,000). And it is no accident. An explanation for this fact will be found not in the city, but in the village, and particularly in the "collective" policy. The collective pushed the Kolomensk, Podolsk and Mytishchensk worker into the Party. His peasant status decided. Without penetrating into the complicated problems of collectivization we nevertheless will point out that the element of insurance played no small role. "I will have to enter the collective anyway, then I may as well enter it as a Communist—there will be more privileges." This way he hopes to get easier credits, inventory, etc. On the other hand—and this is the most important—the non-Party worker in the factory does not see any big difference between himself and the Party worker. Why shouldn't I get into the Party, perhaps it will be easier—he asks himself. Depriving the Partyite, as well as the non-Party of all rights, pressing them in the bureaucratic clamps, the usurpationist apparatus has made of both of them speechless executors.

Neither the non-Party nor the Party worker dares to decide, criticize, or deliberate. Opening wide the Party doors wipes out the distinction between the Party and the class. The Party ceases to be the vanguard, it ceases to be a Party. But this is precisely what the apparatus is striving for. Simultaneously with the dissolution of the Party in the class, the apparatus rises above it all the more. Both these processes are parallel, one supplementing the other. On the top the apparatus became a supra-Party institution, it is without control, it is infallible, it commands—the Party below ceases to exist. The further development of this process is the decay, the death of the Party as a Party—we must be frank about this, stating it with all determination. March 30, 1930

—N. MARKIN

Trifling with the Textile Workers Union

The decline of the Left wing National Textile Workers Union goes on. While the United Textile Workers Union, with its policy of class collaboration continues to gain recruits among the textile workers, especially in the South, the N. T. W. U. is steadily losing ground.

When one studies the activities, or rather lack of activities of the N. T. W. U. during the last period it is amazing that even the shell of the union continues to function, for there is no doubt whatsoever that only a mere skeleton of the organization is left.

At the center the notoriously incompetent Clarence Miller has been replaced by William Murdoch who is now in charge of the national office. Murdoch has had his eye on the secretaryship for many months and at last is rewarded for his patience and subservency. Previous to Eli Keller's election to that post almost a year ago he was an active candidate for the post, but due to the opposition of Jim Reid, the president of the union and others, he was not given the position.

Murdoch is the fourth secretary of the union in about a year's time. First there was Albert Weisbord, who was removed for not following out the third period program as desired by the Stalinists. He was succeeded by Eli Keller who became a Lovestoneite. The next was Miller who has likewise disappeared from the scene. How long will Murdoch be at his post?

The appointment of a new national secretary of the union is accompanied by a new district organizer in New Bedford, which was and still is the only city where the union has any members. At one time it numbered about 3,000. At present about 300 are left. The previous organizer, Martin Russak, from Newark, has been removed for some sort of a deviation. His successor, Joe Rappaport from New York, is the fifth within a year. He follows Keller and Ellen Dawson now in the camp of the Right wing Lovestoneites and John Nahorsky, a fourth rate functionary who asked to be relieved when he found that the job was too big for him.

As we stated in several previous articles and now repeat: unless the Stalinist stranglehold is removed from the N.T.W.U. and all militant and left wing workers who belong to the organization are allowed to freely participate in its work, there will be no organization left, except in the minds of the Party "leaders" and in the reports of the *Daily Worker* and other Party papers.

The textile workers, especially in the South, are ripe for organization but the irresponsible policy of the Party alienates them. Many workers who join drop out in disgust, others never join due to the typical methods used by the Stalinists who head the organizations.

Members of the organization must demand the end of this policy at once and the opening of a campaign to organize the textile workers into the N. T. W. U. on a basis which will allow all militant workers to participate in its activities. Any other policy will mean that before the year is out, the union will exist only in name and all the gains achieved by several years of struggle in Passaic, New Bedford and Gastonia will be lost. What will the Party choose? —FRANK BROMLEY

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PARTY MEMBERS! NOTICE! IN THE NEXT ISSUE

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—MAURICE SPECTOR