

# N.Y. Party-Y.C.L. Group for Opposition

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cover that we were always inclined towards heretical deviations, and that we never were much good anyway. There will be much slander and dirt as there has always been towards those comrades who have embraced the Marxian opinions of the Left Opposition. For the phrasemongers, shallow-minded bureaucrats, and despicable opportunists we have only contempt. We address ourselves to those sincere rank and file comrades who are devotedly sacrificing for Communism, but have been misled by the Browders, Fosters and Lovestones. Let there be no surprise for our and other comrades "sudden" conversion to the support of the Platform of the Left Opposition.

## Bureaucratism Supreme

In a Party which no longer permits disagreements with the official line bureaucratically proclaimed—from above, in a Party in which there no longer exists the last vestige of centralized democracy, in a Party which demands only slavish obedience and mechanical execution of tasks, in a Party in which self-criticism means "Do not dare to criticize the leadership"—in such a Party where all honest opinion is driven underground, many unforeseen surprises are to be expected. When we read in the *Daily Worker* (June 3) such remarks as written by Herbert Benjamin, D.O. of the N. Y. District, as "No one in the Party now dares to deny the correctness of the basic analysis of the Comintern and Central Committee," when we hear such remarks during a pre-convention discussion period then indeed do we declare that Party democracy is an absolutely dead institution.

The whole course in the Party and the Y.C.L. has shocked and aroused us. The present ultra-Left adventurist line, which is discrediting Communism in the eyes of the workers, and which is destroying whatever Communist influence there has been in the past, led us to a complete re-examination of the course pursued by the Party and the Comintern for the last seven years. We studied such basic and fundamental questions as socialism in one country, the Chinese Revolution, and the course of Soviet economy. We found that in the past we had been deceived about these questions. We found that Lovestone and Foster had lied about the Left Opposition and about the leader of the Bolshevik-Leninist Opposition in the U.S.S.R. and the International, comrade Trotsky. They suppressed the real opinions of the Opposition and ascribed to them false and untrue viewpoints. When for the first time we read the truth about the Menshevik and disastrous Chiang Kai-Shek course pursued by Bucharin-Stalin in the Chinese Revolution, we were stunned and appalled. Then we saw who are the real opportunists, and who carries forward the traditions of Lenin.

## Fundamental Questions

From the beginning we avoided being provoked by the stupid blunders of the Party and falling precipitately into the opportunist arms of Lovestone. We avoided studying the problem superficially, that is, merely examine this or that tactical error, but went into the fundamental questions which we have mentioned. From Herberg of the Lovestone group we have heard such remarks as, "Who cares about socialism in one country? I don't care one way or the other. The American working class is not concerned about socialism in one country". We have known how to estimate such a crass opportunist and unprincipled approach to the international problems of the working class. Give the Lovestone faction a united front a la Kuomintang or pro-Purcell and they are happy. But for us the question cuts much deeper than that. For us the question is either the reactionary, utopian, anti-Marxian theory of socialism in one country—Lovestone's "exceptionalism" in a Russian dress—or a program of the international revolution.

## The Decline of Party Influence

Failure after failure stares the Party in the face. The most outstanding characteristic in the life of the Party today is its absolute inability to take advantage of the favorable objective conditions which confront it—the incessant lagging behind. In the old unions there is not to be found a trace of Party influence. Work there has been completely forsaken. The new unions have steadily dwindled, and whatever mass character they once had has disappeared. The membership drive has been a miserable

failure. In the New York district out of the total recruitment, 40% never appeared and 18% dropped out immediately. The unemployment campaign has collapsed like a house of cards. What has happened to the million and a quarter workers who were supposed to be ready to follow the call of the Party? Why is no mass campaign started to free Foster and the others? Why is nothing done about the workers facing the electric chair in Atlanta, Georgia? Why is not a broad united front movement launched in accordance with the big possibilities and necessities of this case? Why is there such paralysis in the Party? What explains that there were only 300,000 workers demonstrating on May 1 while there were a million and a quarter on March 6? Scolding and trying to place the blame on the membership for not doing enough work cannot explain it. The reason is to be sought in the anti-Leninist theory of the "third period" and the ultra-Left adventurist policies that follow from it. The empty shouting, the bombast, and sensationalism must be abandoned, the Party must return to the policies of Lenin, upheld by the Left Opposition.

## Ruinous Policies

In the Young Communist League we have indeed seen a most deplorable state of affairs. The Y.C.L. does not seem to be able to hold the members who come into its ranks. The membership turnover has assumed an alarmingly rapid pace. Young workers come and go. Members who have been a short while in the League become passive and discouraged. They drop out or are expelled. This is the reaction to the bureaucratic regime, to the elimination of

# A SQUEAK IN THE APPARATUS

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ultra-Right course the theoretician of which was Bucharin—deafened by the Stalinist apparatus, "flung" in the direction of complete collectivization. If for the peasantry the "flinging" is a historic misfortune, then for the Party as a conscious selection such a condition is not only a misfortune but a disgrace. It is the Stalinist regime, in which Yaroslavsky occupies a shameful but not the last place that brought the Party to this disgrace.

However, about which of my past views of the peasantry as an enemy force does Yaroslavsky write? Aren't they those views that I expressed, let us say, thirty years ago, during my first exile, and about which Yaroslavsky gave an immeasurably enthusiastic account in the Spring of 1923? "Around himself," Yaroslavsky tells us, "Trotsky saw only the village. He was pained by its needs. He was depressed by its isolation and lack of rights", etc. Yaroslavsky considered it necessary not only to glorify my exceptional attention to the peasantry and acquaintance with the entire peasant life but he also demanded that my youthful articles on the peasantry should be compiled into a textbook for the study of the young generation. Literally!

I mentioned this grossly flattering response in my Autobiography throwing into the face of Yaroslavsky and may others of my critics their own words of yesterday. In connection with this Yaroslavsky speaks now about "Trotsky's self-praises" in his auto-biography. He only forgets to add that these "self-praises" consist of quotations taken from those under whose leadership the campaign of poison and slander—the dimensions of which were unparalleled—went on for the past seven years. To stir all this refuse does not give us any pleasure. In this I will be believed, not only by a revolutionist, but by any thinking man, who is not poisoned by the degrading spirit of a Chinovnik (bureaucrat) careerist. I merely carried out what I considered my revolutionary duty. Stalin and his Yaroslavskies carry on against me precisely because I represent a system of views which they despise.

For the sake of this struggle they considered it necessary to stir up the whole history of the Party and Revolution, not leaving a single, living point untouched. To defeat then their whole slanderous front it was not so much a matter of personal self-defence, as a matter of political necessity. I fulfilled this in several works. In the book "The Revolution Disfigured", "The Autobiography" and finally in the book

democracy, to the fact that they can find no opportunity for revolutionary expression inside the League, to the opportunism and adventurism of the present leadership. The Young Communists can only find a solution by finding their way to the platform of the Left Opposition.

Hence we demand:

1. The liquidation of the regime of bureaucratic suppression in the Comintern and the opening of an untrammelled discussion of the balance sheet of the Stalin regime and the Platform of the Bolshevik-Leninist Opposition these past six years.

2. The re-establishment of Party democracy and the re-instatement in the Party, International and the Soviet Union of the exiled and persecuted members of the Left Opposition.

3. The re-examination of the Program adopted at the Sixth World Congress and the elimination of all the revisionist theories of "socialism in one country", and the rejection of the Menshevik colonial and national policies pursued by the bureaucratic leadership in China and India.

Long live the Leninist Unity of the Communist International!

Long live the World Proletarian Revolution!

HARRY MILTON—Y.C.L.—Long Island Unit

M.MORRIS—Y.C.L.—Bronx Unit, No. 4  
MORRIS SPECTOR—Y.C.L.—East New York Unit.

RAYMOND SPECTOR (George Ray)—Section 8, Unit 4

MAX STOVER—Section 1, Unit 3F

DAVE WEEER—Section 1, Unit 8F

on the "Permanent Revolution". In all these works, I expose on the basis of exact historic data, documents and quotations, the fraudulent web of the Stalinist school in which Yaroslavsky occupies a shameful but not the last place.

In regards to these books which have already been published in many languages and continue to be translated and republished, the Stalinists have adopted complete silence. Let them try and refute my exposition. Let them defend themselves against those slanderous contradictions, falsifications and slanders of which I accuse them on the basis of undeniable documents and more often on the basis of their own previous declarations. Let them deny at least one of the quotations or at least one iota of the evidence used by me. They cannot do it—they stand convicted by their own deeds. They are in the clamp of their own contradictions, they are compromised by their own denials, they are revealed ideologically impotent by the inconsistency of their own lies. Life is not stagnant. Life goes its way bearing out the criticism and prognosis of the Opposition.

## Why the New Polemic?

Why after all the preceding liquidations, crushings and funerals of the Opposition is Yaroslavsky compelled or more correctly why was Yaroslavsky commissioned to enter into such a highly principled polemic with the Opposition? Even though with the grossest distortions, the eavesdropper was nevertheless compelled to quote the Paris Bulletin of the Opposition (Bolshevik-Leninists) and to inform partly because of need, partly because of thoughtlessness something very inconvenient for the Stalinist faction.

If we look closer at Yaroslavsky's article we cannot but come to the conclusion that he wrote primarily in order to frighten the lower ranks of the Stalin apparatus. Bringing quotations from the Bulletin, clearly inconvenient for Stalin, Yaroslavsky speaks to some one: You hear what the Opposition says? Take care not to repeat these words! Under the pressure from the bottom the alarm in the apparatus is growing, the doubts in the leadership are growing and the voices condemning the latest zig-zag are growing. Precisely in view of this Yaroslavsky so unexpectedly speaks of Trotsky's hopes to be called upon to "save" the Revolution. Yaroslavsky was slightly over-conscientious—ran too far ahead and revealed an over-abundant alarm. A squeak in the apparatus is heard, and Yaroslavsky "frightens"—whom? His own people: sit straight,

be silent, whether you believe or do not believe in the genius of the leadership; be silent, do not arouse any doubts, i. not the apparatus is threatened by an "intervention" of Trotskyism! This is the sense of Yaroslavsky's article, this is what its political music consists of.

But this music can no longer drown the squeak in the apparatus. As a result of the most recent tests, which showed that the leadership plays around brainlessly, the differentiation inside the Party will greatly increase. The Rights will undoubtedly experience a new growth, will bring forth new leaders, perhaps with lesser names but more fundamental and more persistent. This danger must be foreseen. But also in the proletarian core of the Party a deep awakening will take place, undoubtedly is taking place already.

From day to day the urge to understand the latest Left jump in connection with the whole "general" line which alas, does not exist in nature, will grow. It is quite possible that the pre-Congress discussion will not be as quiet as the Bonapartist elements would like. The news that Stalin attempted once more to postpone the Congress until the Autumn, that is to complete another alternative "overturn", the one hundred and first by this time, and that his own Central Committee resisted is highly credible and at the same time very symptomatic. This signifies the beginning of the Party's awakening.

A new chapter opens before the Opposition—a very responsible one. Outside of the Opposition nobody will give the Party a clear picture of what is happening at present in unbreakable connection with the policy of the whole period after the death of Lenin. No one except the Opposition is able to secure for the Party a correct principled orientation.

The eavesdropper cites new declarations of repentance and skeptical voices of single Oppositionists. By the combined forces of the starvation diet, of G. P. U. measures, Yaroslavsky's admonitions, and the theoretical belaborings of the red-yellow professors, a new group of capitulators is being prepared for the Sixteenth Congress. But Yaroslavsky passes in silence the new hundreds of arrested Oppositionists in Moscow alone, the revival of the activities of the Opposition in the Party ranks and the growth and consolidation of the International Opposition.

Singly and by groups, Oppositionists who went dizzy over the complete collectivization are compelled by the logic of inertia to present their repentance to the Sixteenth Congress, at a moment when the difficult process of sobering up is beginning. Well, another group of crushed revolutionary reputations will be added. In their stead many hundreds more have already come out according to the statistics of the G.P.U. tomorrow thousands and tens of thousands will follow. It is not the Yaroslavskys who can break the Opposition away from the Party, no, now less than at any time before.

Prinkipo, April 13, 1930.

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