

THE MILITANT

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The Plot Against the Soviets

Stalin Imprisoned the Opposition Bolsheviks and Allowed the Counter-Revolutionists to Get Into Positions of Power

Every worker conscious of his class interests must be profoundly alarmed at the exposure just made of the international conspiracy to overthrow the Soviet government. With a dramatic sharpness, it snatches out of the realm of abstraction the cold facts of the inexorable hostility of the capitalist world to the workers' republic. It makes real and living the fact of the permanent state of war—open or concealed—that exists between the power of the proletariat and the power of the bourgeoisie. Contrary to the soothing theories which have been expressed even in the ranks of the Communist movement, the Soviet state cannot live peacefully by the side of the imperialist states: either the one or the other must be overthrown.

The "Denials" of the Plotters

The statements made by the Soviets, charging the existence of an international plot that involves the imperialist masters of half a dozen countries and hundreds of counter-revolutionary elements in the Soviet Union, cannot be taken lightly, or considered as a passing sensation. Only those completely out of their senses would make such charges involving such "respectable" names as Poincaré, Briand, Churchill, Deterding, and the rulers of Poland, Finland and Roumania unless there were substantial evidence to prove them.

We do not, of course, give a fig for the "indignant denials" of these imperialist bandits. Have not a Churchill, Lloyd George, Poincaré, Pilsudski, and all the others, spent millions upon millions of dollars, and thousands of working class lives, in previous attempts to overthrow the workers' republic by armed force? Can anybody, except one without a memory, forget the military intervention in Russia of all the imperialist powers after the end of the world war, an intervention conducted on a dozen fronts? Can anybody forget the millions given to the Georgian Mensheviks, to Denikin, Wrangel, Yudenitch, Tchaikovsky, Koltchak, to the Social Revolutionists, to monarchists?

Why should any sane man put any credence in the "denials" of the conspirators? There is no reason at all. It may be that this or that individual named in the charges—based on the confessions of arrested Russian conspirators—cannot have his connection proved, but the fact remains that international capitalism is constantly seeking to overthrow the Soviet government and to support those elements within the Soviet Union who represent the interests of the capitalist class.

The conspiracy has no accidental or passing significance. It is a symptom of a deeply-rooted evolution in the relationship of forces in the Soviet Union. How does it happen that thirteen years after the establishment of the Soviet power, there should be uncovered a well-knit counter-revolutionary organization of some 2,000 people, many, if not most of them, of prominence? They are people who did not become counter-revolutionists yesterday. Many of them have been in the Soviet apparatus for years. Their origin was known, their past recorded: ex-tsarist officers, technicians, manufacturers, nobles, Mensheviks, Cadets, etc., etc. How were these types able to reach such high posts in the Soviet apparatus, and perfect a centralized organization which converted into an actuality the possibility of a counter-revolutionary overthrow of the workers' dictatorship? They could not have started yesterday—such an organization must have required a few years; where was the G. P. U. in the past, where was the proletariat's secret service to unearth these people and bring them to proletarian justice?

It was too busy framing up Left Oppositionists with the aid of provocateurs and "Wrangel officers"—as may yet be done in the present case—to pay attention

to the growing danger of counter-revolutionary gangs.

We must answer flatly and openly: The responsibility for this development lies principally upon the present Stalin regime in the Communist Party and upon the Stalin-Bucharin regime that preceded it! The credit for exposing these counter-revolutionary nests lies principally with the Left Opposition, the Bolshevik-Leninists!

The Opposition's Warning

For years past, the Opposition raised the cry of warning against the "Thermidorian danger," that is, the dangerous growth of those capitalist elements in the country, who were even pressing down upon the party, and whose aim was to undermine the proletarian dictatorship—in other words, the counter-revolutionary danger embodied in the kulaks, the Nepman, the bourgeois "specialists", the concessionary, and the Right wing inside the Communist Party. For this warning, the Stalinists and the Bucharinists slandered the Opposition. They denied the Thermidorian danger. They shouted down the Opposition as "alarmists" and people who "speculate on the overthrow of the dictatorship." The Fosters and Lovestones in this and every other country still attack the Opposition for its warning against the

Thermidorian threat to Russia. While these epigones centered their attack upon the Left flank of the movement, the Right flank, the counter-revolution took the opportunity to perfect its sinister plans.

The strategy of the counter-revolution was and is: First, we crush the Left Opposition, the proletarian heart of the dictatorship—then comes our day. The club with which to do the crushing was the usurpatory faction of Stalin-Bucharin. A thousand facts prove this.

Among the main leaders of the conspiracy is the chief of the so-called Peasants' Party, Kondratiev, now imprisoned. Almost three years to the day before his arrest by the G. P. U. comrade Trotsky spoke before the Party Central Committee (October 23, 1927) on the proposal by Stalin-Bucharin-and-Co. to exclude him from that body:

"... The thoroughly opportunist faction which has dragged behind it in recent years and still drags behind it the Chiang Kai-Sheks, the Feng Yuhsiangs, the Wang Chin Weis, the Purcells, the Hickses, the Ben Tillets, the Martinovs, the KONDRATIEVS and the Ustrialovs, this faction cannot tolerate us in the Central Committee, not even one month before the Congress. We know why."

For a Genuine United Front of the Millinery Workers

On Saturday, November 8, the Communist Party leaders gained another one of their customary "victories" in what was a horrible example of how a united front should be organized. The weeks of hard work by leading Left wing militants in the millinery industry in New York, who sought to find a common working basis in one of the most advantageous situations the Left wing has had for a long time, were nullified by the Party strategists with the mechanical, wrecking policies for which they have become notorious.

The Origin of the Movement

A few weeks ago, a group of operators, members of Local 24 of the A. F. of L. millinery union, who had found it impossible for the last few years to be part of the official Left wing in view of the prevailing Party policies, decided that the situation created by the threatened imposition of a "collective agreement" necessitated finding a working basis.

The millinery workers recall what the workings of a collective agreement mean to their standards. Up to a few years ago, such an agreement prevailed in the trade and all the workers remember its effects well. Now it is being proposed again. Zaritsky and the other Right wing union bureaucrats have been peddling about this proposal for a collective agreement as a means of "stabilizing the trade." They have pointed out to the manufacturers that it would put to a stop to the "hold-up tactics" of Local 42, the blockers, which has succeeded in raising working standards and wages to a fair extent. To accept the agreement would mean a general cutting of wages, a re-introduction and extension of piece work among the operators, the eventual increasing of working hours, and above all, the weakening of the safeguard of job control by "reorganization," which really means to furnish the bureaucrats and manufacturers with a weapon for discrimination.

Naturally, this situation aroused the spirit of the operators and blockers immediately. Resistance to the impending agreement was shown right away. It was expressed by the awakening of a movement among the operators, whose leading and most militant section organized as a Left wing group. This group approached and collaborated with the Left wing group

that had already been working and fighting in Blockers' Local 42 for some time in the past.

Then the group proceeded to negotiate with the official Left wing in the Industrial Union, which in essence means the Party. Endless discussion meetings were held, with the basis for discussion furnished by the need of working within the existing unions. After a number of deliberations, it was finally decided to call a joint meeting, consisting of all Left wing millinery workers, and the headgear department of the Needle Trades Workers I. U., to open up the question. The fact that the Stalinists consented to meet with militants in the old unions (who are theoretically "social fascists") is an indication of how the facts of the struggle compelled them to retreat from their untenable position.

The joint meeting, held three weeks ago, had a discussion of seven long hours during the Party's trade union position was riddled with holes. The "company union" theory and the rest of the stock in trade of the "third period" were conclusively revealed as false and unreal. The idea of coming before the 40 percent of the workers organized in the A. F. of L. union with the cry that the union they built up by struggle is a "company union", which must be left immediately—leaving the mass of the workers at the mercy of the bureaucracy—was shown to be quite untenable.

The Committee of Seven

After a series of maneuvers, a committee of seven was finally elected from the floor. It was shown that a really democratic committee selection was impossible at this meeting, composed of about 150 workers, 75-80 of whom were Party mem-

bers, representing only themselves, and bound in advance by decisions they had little part in making, while the others represented the overwhelming sentiment of the union under the stress of an impending collective agreement and a lockout.

The lockout threatened by the bosses for November 15, and the need of crystallizing the resistance of the workers, made it necessary for this committee to meet immediately to decide on a course of action. But there was a delay of almost two weeks, caused by the fact that the broad Left wing group had been meeting regularly and formulated the proposal to issue a program and call a meeting at a certain date regardless of the Party's stand. One day later, a meeting was called of the enlarged committee together with the trade committee of the Industrial Union, where, after another exhaustive discussion, the resolution submitted by the broad Left wing was accepted by the Party to be presented at an enlarged meeting on November 8.

The long-delayed meeting finally opened on that day. It appeared as if it were possible finally to create a unified basis for work in the reactionary unions, with the joint efforts of all Left wing militants, regardless of their political or factional affiliations. The resolution was presented, it having been understood that it was to be the only matter discussed. Suddenly Sonia Croll, organizer of the headgear department of the N. T. W. I. U., came forward, made a long, puerile analysis of the trade (an insult to a worker's intelligence), and re-stated the catechism: the existing unions are company unions; they must be smashed; the collective agreement will be put over anyway; that will convince the millinery workers of the futility of

The Stalin-Bucharin regime tortured
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