

A Policy for the Amalgamated Left Wing

The crisis in which the Left wing in the Amalgamated finds itself at present is a result of a series of errors committed by the Party leadership in their misconduct of the T. U. E. L. and T. U. U. L. in general, and the A. C. W. in particular. They are errors of a fundamental character, and are a reflection of the inconsistency of the Communist movement in the whole period since 1924. During this period, adventurism and opportunism alternated with each other in rhythmic succession, causing the movement to pass through periodic crises.

The Left wing in the Amalgamated has also gone through this period and suffered the results. The united front with Hillman and his lieutenants in the period of the Left wing's ascendancy in the A. C. W., its consequent defeat due to Hillman's betrayal, followed by a period of adventurist defiance of the Hillman machine and another repetition of the same game which culminated in the organization of the Men's Clothing Section under the Needle Trades Workers Industrial Union.

To issue successfully out of this crisis it is necessary for the Left wing workers in the men's clothing industry to take up a serious analysis of past mistakes and adopt a correct Leninist course of working within the existing union which embraces the bulk of the workers in the industry, i. e., the A. C. W. A correct Leninist course implies a correct united front with those members willing to take up sincerely the struggle for the concrete needs of the membership.

The Present Line and its Main Features

The new line underlying the organization of the Needle Trades Workers Industrial Union, as well as all the other unions of the T. U. U. L., as formulated by the fourth congress of the R. I. L. U., is "to build independent revolutionary unions, and combine these into a New National Center. The old T. U. E. L., based on minorities in the general organization of the revolutionary unions. We no longer urge the unorganized workers to join the A. F. of L. but to affiliate themselves to the T. U. U. L. unions. The work of our organized groups in the reformist unions based upon the tactics of the united front from below is subordinated to the building of the revolutionary unions. It is orientated upon drawing these trade union workers under the ideological leadership of the T. U. U. L. and, as speedily as practicable, into mass affiliation with it." (The Communist, October, 1930, article by Foster.)

What are the reasons for the change in line? The reasons for the adoption of the new line are outlined in the same article as follows:

1. The pressure of the masses on the T. U. U. L. leadership for the organization of new independent unions as exemplified by the independent movement of the Passaic workers, the miners and the needle trades workers, in which cases the leadership lagged behind the masses. The Pepper-Lovetone leadership was consciously opposed to the organization of independent unions.

2. The onrush of the "third period" with its accompanying radicalization of the workers and the sharpening of the class struggle which necessitates independent revolutionary organization and leadership.

Basic Mistakes of "Third Period" Ideology
These reasons, given in justification of the ultra-Left policy of which the first is aimed to prove the soundness of the second, i. e., the theory of the "third period" which is held sacred by the Party bureaucrats and on the altar of which no sacrifice is too big to be brought, are not only false as justification of the new policy but, in their connection, are artificial and historically untrue.

If we are to draw the proper lessons from the experience of the Left wing, particularly in the needle trades unions, we must analyze the struggles in connection with the objective conditions which they were conducted and not upon the basis of the abstract theory of the "third period", which was manifestly invented to cover up the mistakes of the past. That the leadership of the Left wing in the needle trades union committed a terrible mistake by surrendering the masses to the Sigmans and the McMahonons, we agree completely. But that is no earthly reason why new "revolutionary unions" should be built in such industries where the main bulk of the workers are already organized and could be drawn into this new union only individually or in small groups.

Certainly in general the objective conditions are ripening for the application of a correct policy of building new mass unions in the unorganized industries. In the men's clothing industry specifically the task is not to apply the split policy of withdrawing members piecemeal from the existing union, but, on the contrary to win

By ALBERT ORLAND

this membership for militant unionism which presupposes a complete separation from and elimination of the existing reactionary union leadership. This must be recognized decisively before any "new turn" can become a correct turn.

The theory of the "third period" and the ultra-Left policy based upon it, have no connection with reality. The theory is a mere phantom evoked by the Comintern leadership to bring them salvation from their sins, and the ultra-Left line is the price they must pay for that salvation.

The new line was an unavoidable reaction to the opportunistic policies which caused terrible defeats to the movement. It was bound in its turn to bring fresh defeats and disappointments—the signs of which are already noticeable.

The "New" Change of Tactics

The latest indications of a change in tactics by the Needle Trades Workers Industrial Union have given rise to various conjectures as to its character, some of which have been entertained by the writer. In a previous issue of the *Militant*, I ventured the opinion that the change in tactics, which is undoubtedly attempted, and which points in the opposite direction, is not, however, fundamental. For a fundamental change in tactics must be preceded by an analysis of the mistakes of the past and a clear statement of the new tactics, neither of which has been attempted and brought out into the open. What then can we expect from the change except disappointment?

What does the change consist of? The slogan jutting the new union has been replaced by the slogan of "rank and file committees". The workers are no longer urged to join the new union individually, but the orientation is made on shops. This is a step in the right direction. But has the basis of activity been changed? The orientation is still on the new union, which is basically a wrong orientation. The N. T. W. I. U. is an abstraction today as far as the clothing workers are concerned. There is not a single shop under its control and the membership from the ranks of the clothing workers is negligible. Before a foundation is to be laid for a new union in the clothing industry, the influence over the masses must be won and that can only be done in a struggle against the A. C. W. officialdom through a series of preparatory stages. Such a struggle can only develop by participation in the daily struggle of the masses for which all channels, legal and extra-legal must be utilized. But for that, a radical change in the organizational and ideological outlook of the leadership is necessary. The leadership, however, has its roots in the "third period" ideologically, and is orientated on the N. T. W. I. U. All their practical activities must necessarily collide with their theoretical outlook. The winning of the masses in the A. C. W. requires patient and systematic activity, coupled with confidence in the masses. It requires a broad united front with workers of various political beliefs or affiliations on the basis of their common interests.

The leadership, however, regards the A. C. W. as a recruiting ground for members into the N. T. W. I. U., true, not for individual members but for groups, but that difference is not basic. As to united fronts from below, the leadership has never been sincere about it. They have always adhered to mechanical control, and the atmosphere created around their close range of followers has been poisoned so systematically as to make any real united front physically impossible.

All these considerations lead us to the conclusion that the latest change in tactics will not produce any change in the situation. For a real change in the situation, a change in the fundamental policy is necessary and the party leadership has not yet committed itself.

What Is to Be Done?

The Left Communist Opposition should initiate the work of rebuilding the Left wing in the A. C. W. A clear statement defining the aims, policies and activities should be made and distributed among the rank and file militants in the union, this statement to contain a review and analysis of the policies, past and present, of the T. U. U. L. The following points must be emphatically stated:

1. An open and unequivocal rejection of the slogan of a "new union" and the attempts to withdraw the membership individually or in small groups from the A. C. W. now embracing the bulk of the workers in the industry. The substitution of the slogan of "militant industrial unionism" and the building of a left wing organization to attain this object.

2. A fight against the Lovestone opportunism which leads direct to unity with fake progressives and hence with the re-

actionaries themselves completely sacrificing the Left wing ideologically and organizationally. A fight against "third period" adventurism which proceeds from a condemnation of all existing unions as company unions and thus to liquidation of correct Left wing activities within them.

3. United fronts based on the Left wing's program with sincere rank and file elements.

4. Participation in all forms of legal expression of the rank and file of the union membership, such as elections, referendums, conventions, the struggle for democratic control, etc.

The activities should be based on existing divisions in the industry and the union, such as trade branches, local units and

Stalin-Bucharin and the Chinese Revolution

A LETTER BY TCHEN DU HSIU

(Continued from last issue)

The Communist International and the Central Committee have for a long time opposed any review of the record of failure of the Chinese revolution. And now, because I have constantly criticized them, they have suddenly invented the following declaration: "He (i. e., I) is not sincere in recognizing his own error of opportunist leadership in the period of the great revolution and has not decided to recognize where his real past errors lay; therefore, he must inevitably pursue his past erroneous line." These words are a self-revelation. In reality, if I were to stultify my mind, and care nothing about the interests of the proletariat; if I had not decided to recognize my real past errors, and had been willing to do their dirty work and have them continue with their past false line, they would nevertheless, as before, depend upon the old opportunist's (i. e., my) pen and mouth to attack social Trotskyism in order to cover up their errors. How could they expel me from the party? Am I, who have struggled against evil social forces for the greater part of my life, willing to do such a base work—to confuse right and wrong? Lee Li San said: "The Chinese opportunists are unwilling to absorb accurately the lessons of the failure of the past great revolution, but try to hide behind the banner of Trotskyism in order to cover up their own mistakes." In reality, the documents of comrade Trotsky accuse me much more severely than do those of Stalin and Bucharin; and I could not but recognize that the lessons of the past revolution pointed out by him are one hundred percent correct, and I could never reject his words because he criticizes me. I am willing to accept the severest criticism of my comrades, but unwilling to bury the lessons and experiences of the revolution. I would rather be expelled now by Lee Li San and a few others than to see the party crisis without attempting to save the party and be blamed in the future by the masses of the party members.

Comrades! I know that my expulsion from the party by the Central Committee is the act of a few men for the purpose of covering up their errors. They not only want to save themselves the "trouble" of hearing my opinions expressed within the party and advocating an open discussion on political problems, but also to demonstrate by my expulsion that all the comrades must keep their mouths closed. I know that the masses of the party members never entertained the idea of expelling me. Though I have been expelled by a few leaders at the top of the party, yet there has never been any hostility or bad feeling between the masses in the ranks and myself. I shall continue to serve the proletariat hand in hand with all those comrades who are not following the opportunist policy of Stalin's clique both in the International and in China.

Comrades! The present errors of the party are not partial or accidental problems: like in the past, they are the manifestation of the whole opportunist policy conducted by Stalin in China. The responsible heads of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, who are willing to be the phonograph of Stalin, have never shown any political consciousness and are growing worse and worse: they can never be saved. At the Tenth Conference of the Russian party, Lenin said: "It is better to have a small organization if there are fundamentally different political opinions and there is no way of solving the problem." Based on this theory, he led the faction of the Bolshevik movement. Now, in our party, there is no other way permitted (legal or open discussion in the party) to overcome the party crisis. Every party member has the obligation of saving the party. We must return to the spirit and

shops, so as to provide outlets for direct and immediate expression of the demands and grievances of the workers. These activities, however, should be carried on under the direction of a centralized body, representing all branches, to be elected by a democratic vote.

A program should be worked out embodying all the immediate and ultimate aims of the Left wing opposition, to possess enough flexibility to be applicable to varying situations but to be clear and consistent so as not to allow a distortion of principles.

The activities should be based on current issues concerning the workers, with a view to developing them to embrace the broad masses and creating a basis for mass action for the realization of the ultimate aims of the Left wing movement.

The above propositions, not being a complete program, can, however, serve as a basis for the beginning of the work of the Left wing in the A. C. W. A

political line of Bolshevism, unite together solidly, and stand straightforward on the side of the International Opposition led by comrade Trotsky, that is, under the banner of real Marxism and Leninism, and decisively, persistently and thoroughly fight against the opportunism of the Comintern and the Central Committee of the Chinese party. We are opposed not only to the opportunism of Stalin and his like, but also to the compromising attitude of Zinoviev. We are not afraid of the so-called "jumping out of the ranks of the party" and do not hesitate to sacrifice everything in order to save the party and the Chinese revolution!

TCHEN DU-HSIU.

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Norwegian Fascists and Comrade Trotsky

Comrade Trotsky, as already reported by the capitalist press, has been invited by the Norwegian Student's Alliance to come to Oslo to lecture before this body, and has been granted permission by the Norwegian government to enter the country for an eight days' visit to be strictly confined to the purpose stated and on condition that Comrade Trotsky does not interfere in Norwegian "politics". So far the other capitalist powers have hastened their rejection of a visa for passage through their territories, and whether Comrade Trotsky can actually reach Norway remains to be seen. Meanwhile, however, this question has created some interesting developments in Norway.

The bourgeois press of the country unanimously raised a terrific howl of protest against the visa. "Nationen", the official fascist organ, takes the lead calling upon the "sons of Norway" to use physical force to prevent Trotsky's entry. To this provocation the organ of the labor party of Oslo remarks: "It is hardly to be assumed that the government could afford to compromise itself to the extent of withdrawing its permission for entry, as that would make of the Norwegian bourgeois society a laughing stock of the world. . . . To the fascist press we will just calmly reply that if they should undertake such insane action as using force against the entry of Trotsky they will become convinced that there are several thousand sons of Norway—and of a better sort—who will feel proud of the visit to their country of a man like Trotsky. That he has been victorious in a war with superior enemies, with the bourgeoisie of England, France and the United States, as well as with the Russian white guards; has secured for him a place of honor in the history of the international labor movement—regardless of internal faction struggles."

"Mass-murderer is the title the bourgeois press bestows upon Trotsky. It cannot forgive him for supplying the red army with guns and cannons which became dangerous to the enemy. He was sufficiently inhuman and brutal to fight the counter-revolutionists with their own weapons. And he founded a powerful means of defense which makes it ever more dangerous for world imperialism to carry out its foul designs of an armed crusade against the workers' Soviet state, upon which the Russian white guard emigrants still pin their hopes."

So long as our Soviet republic will remain the only border land surrounded by the whole capitalist world, so long will it be an absolutely ridiculous fantasy and Utopia to think of our complete economic independence and of the disappearance of our dangers

—LENIN.