

## STALINIST DECAY IN ENGLAND

LONDON.—

I suppose the situation over here must seem rather perplexing to one abroad, and it would be very different to explain in a letter. At the present time dissatisfaction exists everywhere. It doesn't matter with whom one comes in contact: members of the C. P., I. L. D., Labor Party, Minority Movement, trade unionists, and so on, discontent is everywhere. The question is of course how to harness this discontent.

In every big dispute of late, and we have had a few—miners, textile workers, etc.—our crowd have been absolutely out of the picture. I could give quite a few instances here in London of just local strikes in which the workers were solid and prepared to fight, but the offer of assistance and help from the Minority Movement or the Communist party was point blank refused. Two good comrades whom I know quite well were met only a couple of weeks ago with "the only assistance we want is: keep away". The last desperate effort of the party here to make a splash is the "Workers' Charter" campaign they're running, but from reports I am of the opinion that the big conference will be a wash-out. That is, as far as being a representative conference is concerned. Instructions have been sent out that delegates must be got, no matter what they represent. So we are going to have the usual mass meeting of a thousand people called delegates, and every group of ten or more will be allowed to send their number as delegates.

According to the latest data, the party membership is now below 1,000. It started ten years ago with 5,000, during the General Strike it reached nearly the 10,000 mark. The *Daily Worker* circulation has dropped from 10,000 when it started to less than 5,000. When one thinks that at one time the *Workers' Weekly* reached the 70,000 mark, and the *Sunday Worker* at one period reached 110,000, it makes one want to vomit.

—BLACK DIAMOND.

## THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE REVOLUTION

CHICAGO.—

Of late my only source of real Communist information seems to be the *Militant*, and so I decided to ask you to be kind enough to clear up the following question for me.

One of the comrades made a statement that "if not for Lenin and Trotsky the Russian revolution would have been a failure", meaning that it would not have worked out to be a proletarian revolution.

Now, with all the respect that I have for these two people—in fact, I feel that if something serious should happen to Trotsky I don't know who there is to look to as an authority from the Marxist point of view—I still don't think the above statement is correct. If it were correct that would mean that leaders are responsible for historic events and not conditions. Please tell me what I can read on the subject and also express your opinion.

—H. MASHOW.

(It is in no sense a violation of the Marxist conception of historical development—on the contrary, it is its living essence—to say that objective conditions alone are inadequate for the accomplishment of the proletarian revolution. Just as one chemical reagent is required to act upon another to make a precipitate, so man, socially organized, is required to intervene at given stages of historical progress, is enabled to influence the course of history to an enormous degree. Man makes his own history, said Marx, although not out of the whole cloth; to make it, he must use the materials at hand at the given moment. This is especially true at the moment of the proletarian uprising. Given the objective conditions, without which not even the most superhuman efforts of men can "make" a revolution, it is possible for the most clear-headed, far-sighted, boldest elements of the working class—the revolutionary party—to place itself at the head of the proletariat and establish it as the ruling class by the overthrow of bourgeois class domination. This is what happened in Russia, but the ground for it was laid mainly by Lenin after his arrival from Swiss exile. The fact is that prior to his arrival, practically every single one of the Bolshevik party leaders did not see an inch further than the bourgeois revolution. To put on the order of the day the seizure of power by the proletariat was as far from the minds of Stalin, Rykov, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Molotov, Nogin, and the others as the sun from the moon. To read Lenin's polemical writings at that time (particularly against Kamenev, one of the leaders of the Right wing

who accused Lenin of . . . Trotskyism) is to understand the enormous obstacles Lenin found in the way of swinging the party chiefs to his point of view which was, of course, identical with Trotsky's. Had it not been for Lenin's historic struggle inside the party, which culminated in the final adoption of the famous April theses, it is open to considerable doubt if the Bolshevik party would have accomplished in time that "ideological re-arming" of which Trotsky speaks. And without this re-arming. The Bolshevik party would have missed the revolutionary opportunity created by objective conditions as surely as it was missed by the Brandler-Thalheimer leadership in Germany in 1923.

We are not partisans of the petty bourgeois theory of "great men" and their all-determining rôle in history. But there is no virtue, and no Marxism, in the theory that men, grouped together and even singly at times, have no particular bearing on the shaping of history. A vivid picture of the contrary, relating especially to the point raised by comrade Mashow, is given by comrade Trotsky in various sections of his book "My Life".—Ed.)

## THE NEW YORK OPEN FORUM

The Open Forum of the New York branch of the Communist League, on February 28 and March 7, at the Labor Temple, 14th Street near 2nd Avenue, where Max Shachtman and James P. Cannon respectively led the discussions were most interesting. The respective subjects were closely related, Max having spoken on the third division in the Socialist party (the "Militant" group) and Cannon having explained and exposed the so-called "progressives". Present at both meetings were party members and Lovestonites. Animated discussion took place each time.

The Leninist principle of the united front, rather than the zig-zags of the Centrists and in contrast to the liquidationist tendency of the Right wingers, was ably championed as the only means of ending the influence of the Stanleys and Mustes and bring their worker-supporters closer to Communism.

The more there are of such meetings as these, the clearer it will become to all honest and intelligent workers that the political position of the Left Opposition is revolutionary to the core.

—GEO. J. SAUL.

## THE ANTI-RED DRIVE IN GREECE

(Continued from page 3)

mentary propaganda and educational nuclei of the same organization.

The tribunal has condemned the following Archio-Marxists under the anti-Communist law: Panaghiotidos, to 8 months in prison and two in deportation; Moustakos, to the same sentence; Tsigotis, to six months in prison and two in deportation; Pappicolaou, to four months imprisonment and two in deportation; the others, to 75 days.

The correspondent of the newspaper *Acropolis* writes from Salonica:

"For two years the Communists have been divided into two camps, fighting each other bitterly. From this struggle have issued forth the Archio-Marxists whose new theory is based on a firmer and more scientific organization of the followers of revolution. The Archio-Marxists are working on the basis of precise instructions and a complete program. They are filled with faith and fanaticism and are ready to die upon command. They are a sort of Cheka [?]."

"In the house of Panaghiotides there were arrested the day before yesterday, young men and women who have been initiated into Communism. The students arrested have for the most part confessed: "Yes, we have come to learn lessons in Communism in order to teach others. The working class is being heavily oppressed. The present régime must be overthrown."

Against the terror and the attacks of the capitalist class in Greece and everywhere, the Communists of the entire world, no matter what faction they belong to, must present a united front of revolutionary struggle. In Greece, in Spain, in France and in the United States the members of the Opposition have suffered under the lash of ruthless capitalist justice, together with all real Communist militants. The members of the Left Opposition have been and always will be found in the ranks of the class struggle. In our fight side by side with the militants of the party we shall yet have occasion to propose concrete lines of workers' defense. In the meantime, we call upon all workers to protest energetically against the white terror in the Balkans.

Protest against the reprisals of the Venizelos dictatorship!

Free all class war prisoners!

**BOSTON**—Our branch here is now on a better working basis. For some months difficulties existed, arising out of disagreements on how to proceed with practical activities, with the result that the branch work suffered and opportunities available were not fully taken advantage of. These difficulties are now eliminated.

At the public meeting arranged Feb. 28th, comrade Swabeck spoke, substituting for Cannon who was unable to be present. About 75 workers attended the meeting and several took part in a very lively discussion on the subject "Prospects for the New Unions." This became the beginning toward overcoming difficulties. At a branch meeting which followed, the existing problems came up for exhaustive discussion. Complete agreement on all fundamental principles very soon ironed out all past differences and plans for future work could go ahead.

Our members in Boston are very active in the trade unions, in other workers' organizations as well as in the unemployment movement. A record of years of devoted work in the front ranks of the workers' struggles has gained for them considerable influence, so much so that petty factional attempts by local Stalin bureaucrats could not in the least impair their standing. This is one very good promise for even better success in future activities.

**CHICAGO**—Beginning with March first our Chicago branch has conducted a series of lectures every Sunday, 2:30 P. M., at 30 N. Wells St. with local comrades speaking on subjects vital to the working class movement. The first meeting held March 1st, was a success. Hugo Oehler spoke on the subject of "Trotsky, Stalin and the Theory of Socialism in One Country." A little better than 75 workers attended, several of them representing their views in the discussion following the lecture.

These meetings are being continued through the month of March. By the time this issue goes to press the second and third lecture of the series will have been held. For the second lecture the subject was "Trotsky, the Left Opposition and the Five Year Plan" and for the third "Unemployment, the Six Hour Day and the Communist Party". The final lecture for the month will be by Hugo Oehler on March 22, on the subject "The Three Currents of the Communist Movement and Revolutionary Perspectives".

**ST. LOUIS, MO.**—From a point of intense activities, leading a substantial unemployment demonstration and conducting lectures during the early part of the present crisis, our small branch in St. Louis witnessed somewhat of a relapse. Activities decreased up until almost the present moment when the comrades are again pulling themselves together and taking steps to re-establish the branch as a functioning unit. Arrangements are now made for a speaking date in the city for comrade Oehler for which further definite announcements will appear in the next issue. His visit will also be utilized for a special branch meeting to take up concrete plans for practical activities for the future.

**THE PACIFIC COAST**—Scattered contacts in the San Francisco and Los Angeles territories are beginning to spread our literature more effectively. It is speeded on by the general increase of working class activities on the Pacific Coast. Comrade Curtis, who is traveling there, has utilized the opportunity to help along getting a better distribution for the *Militant* and for our general literature. That there is something in the offing is very definitely indicated by the increasing orders for the Trotsky pamphlets. One agency in Los Angeles, the Belmont News Company is distributing a large supply, one order alone running to 200 pamphlets.

**FROM THE NATIONAL OFFICE**—Our Second National Conference is now definitely scheduled to be held in New York City the first week in July. Within a few weeks we will begin publication of draft theses and resolutions and prepare for a discussion based upon this material.

Our first supply of 25,000 unemployment leaflets is now just about exhausted. Practically all of the branches have taken part in the distribution. Our publishing activities now include six different pamphlets by comrade Trotsky all of which are off the press and in circulation. Full description with price, etc., appears elsewhere. We now have in preparation "The Permanent Revolution" also by L. D. Trotsky,—a book of about 200 pages.

## THE PROGRAM OF EXPANSION CAMPAIGN

Recent information from England shows the definite development of two organized groups adhering to the international Com-

munist Left Opposition. One, a group of Indian comrades now in London and the other a group of members of the British Communist Party. With that, there has been a rapid increase of our literature sales. Militant bundle sales have trebled within the past few weeks, pamphlet sales have witnessed an almost similar increase. Both of these developments urge more speed toward the completion of our Program of Expansion.

We are, however, only just beginning. In addition to progress formerly reported, we now have word from our small New Haven branch, each member of which will take one certificate. The Kansas City branch secretary states: "we endorse the program and will do all we can to put it over 100 percent with cash also. The program is sound and you will soon receive a check from us as a starter". When the Kansas City branch members speak this way we know they mean it. It is attested by their regular remittance each month, on the dot, of \$20.00 for the sustaining fund.

The New York branch has proceeded to complete its part of the program in a systematic manner. Each member making pledges for a cash contribution has a definite time limit set when payments are to be completed. A committee has charge of organization. When a member misses a meeting he is communicated with on his payment, in a similar manner sympathetic workers are being approached, first by a letter and followed up by a personal visit.

The first steps have been taken to launch the publishing company and print the certificates for the \$10.00 contributions. This is the first part of the program becoming a reality. The *International Bulletin of the Left Opposition* is now appearing. The first issue is out, price 15 cents, the second issue will be out in less than a week. Thus step by step as the branches, members and sympathetic workers give the necessary support, the plan is being realized.

Contributions received since last report are as follows:

### Roll Call on the Program of Expansion

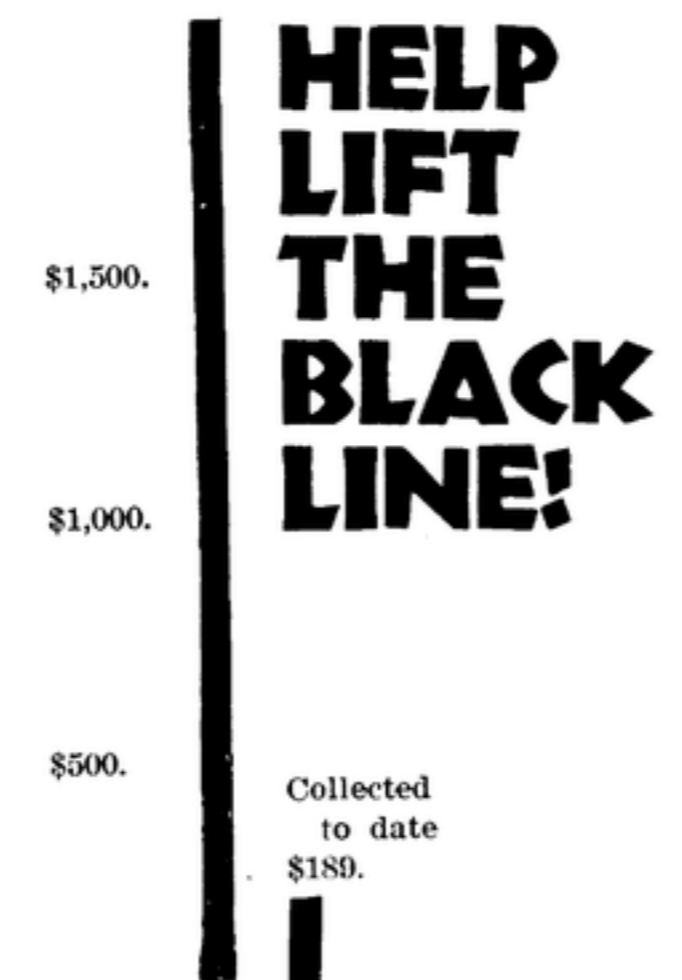
M. Lewitt .....	\$ 10.00
H. Capelis .....	15.00
M. Sterling .....	10.00
M. Engel .....	15.00
M. Rose .....	2.00
J. P. Cannon .....	5.00
L. Basky .....	10.00

Total \$ 67.00

Previously reported 122.00

Total to date \$ 189.00

## Expansion Program Record



## PARIS COMMUNE AFFAIR

The New York branch of the Communist League of America (Opposition) is holding a celebration of the sixtieth anniversary of the Paris Commune on Saturday, March 21, 1931, at the Hungarian Hall, 323 East 79th Street. The arrangements committee has made every effort to assure an enjoyable evening for all the rebels of New York who come down to the affair. There will be music by a capable orchestra, dancing and other entertainment. Brief remarks will be made by one of the active comrades on the significance of the working class and revolutionary movements of the Paris Commune of 1871. Tickets for the affair are fifty cents in advance and sixty cents at the door (hat check included in the ticket). All friends and sympathizers of the movement are very cordially invited.