

EDITORIAL NOTES

NOW FOR THE WEEKLY MILITANT!

The decision of last Monday's meeting of the National Committee to bring the **Militant** out again as a weekly when the Expansion Program Fund reaches the thousand dollar mark, and setting July 1st as the definite date of publication, represents another real advance. The New York branch has already endorsed the decision, and there is no doubt that it will be hailed with enthusiasm by the entire organization and the circle of sympathetic workers who surround it and support it. There is likewise no doubt that the decision will be realized in life on the day set, for the task has been carefully weighed and the ground has been prepared.

The first four months of this year have witnessed an improvement and strengthening of the Communist League all along the line. All this work has gone forward under the sign of political consolidation and a planned program of expansion for the year. One-third of the two thousand dollar fund has already been contributed, and the execution of the program, in sections, has kept an even pace. Two numbers of the English edition of the *International Bulletin* have appeared; field organization work has been started in the Illinois mine fields; preparations for the National Conference are nearing completion; and the publishing company has its first book on the press. Now we are ready for the next step—the **Weekly Militant**. Another push along the whole front and the task will be accomplished.

Our **Militant** is the flag of Communism in America. When its first issue appeared, they looked at the mere handful gathered around it and said the first issue would be the last. But they miscalculated. They did not know the power of the idea behind it. They did not know the resources, in endurance and sacrifice, of stiff-necked conviction. Sixty-eight numbers of our paper bear testimony to their error. The triumphant re-emergence of the **Militant** as a weekly will underscore it once again. The concentration of our forces for this event is the order of the day.

FIGHTING FOR FREE SPEECH.

Minneapolis, where the Communist League branch comprises a majority of the experienced Communist workers—and thereby has the possibility of applying our policy independently in the class struggle—is the present scene of a very interesting demonstration of revolutionary tactics. The City Government there has been seized by a fit of Red hysteria and for some time has been prohibiting and breaking up all kinds of radical meetings. The gatherings of the official party fell under this ban and several meetings of the Communist League shared the same fate, since the chief of police is an ignorant man and does not know that the real purpose of Dunne and Skoglund is to support the war against the Soviet Union. Both wings of the Communist movement were thus reduced to a virtual state of illegality, at least in regard to the right of public assemblage. Their contrasting reactions to the situation can afford a fruitful subject of discussion. The same state of affairs prevails in other places and, as the class struggle grows more acute, there will be many more.

The tactics of the Stalinists—led by the peerless Karl Reeye, who was sent to Minneapolis by his factional opponents to fight the Trotskyites and be destroyed by them—are characteristic. Imbued with the ideology of the Third Period, which is only one step removed from undergroundism in principle, they have virtually accepted the situation as a proof that the capitalists are against the workers and that the city officials are tools of the capitalists. Thus they prove that there is no free speech, which they consider a point in their favor. The chief of police, at the same time, thinks it is a point in his favor. So both are satisfied—and there are no public meetings of the Party.

The Left Oppositionists have a different idea. They think free speech—and democratic rights in general—have a real value for the workers' movement and should not be surrendered lightly. In view of the fact that the capitalist government professes to guarantee these rights, and that masses of workers and other citizens who are in no way connected with the Communists ardently believe in them, they decided to test the issue in a fight for free speech. To that unique idea they added another: That a wide movement should be set into motion on this issue. Their appeal to the

Stalinists for joint action to initiate the fight failing, they are proceeding to the organization of a broad Free Speech Conference which will draw the trade unions and other organizations into the fight. By this means they aim to shift the position from a fight of the city administration against the Communists to a fight of the labor movement, or a large section of it—including the Communists—against the illegal usurpations of the police.

For our part, we are in complete agreement with the course adopted by the Minneapolis branch of the Communist League. It has a double importance: For the restoration of civil rights in Minneapolis and contact with a wider circle of workers in the struggle for it; and as an example—and a badly needed one—to the whole American movement of Communism. The Communists—a small minority—must fight to be heard. Democratic rights are of the utmost importance to the workers in their struggle for organization. We ought to inscribe them on our banner and call the workers to a joint struggle with us to defend them. The fight itself has an importance hardly less than the object, so long as it is conducted without illusions.

Stalinism has brought devastation into every phase of revolutionary ideas, methods and practices. Not the least of this has resulted from its false approach to the question of free speech and the discredit it has brought to the idea by its own hooligan practices. It is high time to turn the helm. The Minneapolis example is a good beginning.

WHAT ABOUT MORGENSTERN AND GOODMAN?

What are the officials of the party and the I. L. D. going to do about the defense of Morgenstern and Goodman, the two members of the Communist League who are facing trial on charges of sedition in Philadelphia? Are they going to support them in the spirit of class solidarity and arouse the workers about the case, or are they going to continue to sabotage and betray these militants out of factional spite, as they have been doing up till now? We intend to have an answer to these questions, and every honest class conscious worker will want an answer too.

Our readers already know about the case. It is a part of a general attack against the radical labor movement in Pennsylvania. The two comrades were arrested for distributing the unemployment leaflet of the Communist League, and the statement in the leaflet that "the solution of the unemployment problem can be found only in the proletarian revolution" was held to be seditious by the Grand Jury which brought in the indictment. A number of Communists have already been convicted under this law. Only a few weeks ago comrade Lawrence, a party member, was convicted and sentenced. Indictments are pending against several others.

The problem is a very serious one. It involves the legality of the revolutionary labor movement in Pennsylvania and the liberty of the most active militants. A real move to arouse the workers and form a united front of class defense is needed. The I. L. D. has the duty of organizing this fight, but it is not being done. On the contrary, the bureaucrats are playing a game of the most treacherous sabotage.

At first they refused to do anything for Morgenstern and Goodman and the latter were compelled to get their own lawyers in the first proceedings and to raise

their own bail. Up to the present date the Party press has suppressed all news of their case. The I. L. D. publicity ignores them. On top of that the united front conference of the I. L. D., with Engdahl present, refused to seat the delegates of the Communist League a few days after their indictment. Retreating from this shameful position under a storm of protest from workers in the ranks of the I. L. D., they are now trying to cover themselves up with a promise of "legal defense" at the trial.

This is not enough! Morgenstern and Goodman are revolutionists, and they do not rely on lawyers to get them "justice" in the courts of the class enemy. We want a mass movement of working class protest to defend them! We want a public mass meeting to inform the workers what is going on and what it means! We want a broad united front conference of workers' organizations to launch a militant campaign against the sedition law and for the defense of all its victims! We want publicity about the case, not a conspiracy of silence worthy only of agents of the prosecution!

You are playing with fire, bureaucrats! The revolutionary workers have never yet turned their backs on class war prisoners because of their political views. If you continue to do it they will turn their backs on you. If the class defense of Morgenstern and Goodman cannot be organized with your help it will be organized without you and against you!

THE RIGHT WING CAPITULATORS

The increasing number of capitulators from the Right wing is one of the most interesting and significant aspects of the development of the inner-party struggle. The announcements of these capitulations is becoming somewhat of a regular feature of the *Daily Worker*. Taken together with the recent outright desertion of a whole group to the Musteites, they add a fresh confirmation to the idea that the position of a faction attempting to stand halfway between Communism and social democracy is not a strong one. It cannot be maintained that the capitulations represent merely the falterings of individuals, which occur in every fight. There are too many of them. Nor is the fact that a number of the former supporters of the Right wing, recently readmitted to the party, had previously been inactive in the faction of any great importance. It means only that Lovestone has been losing them by a gradual process; that sympathizers as well as members are falling away from the faction. This is the actual trend revealed by the recent events.

In this respect also the position of the Right wing contrasts sharply with that of the Left. Our capitulators were an insignificant handful, and were confined almost exclusively to the first months of the struggle. And lately, even among those who turned back at first, signs of a new approach to the Opposition is to be observed. The same contrast appears in an opposite direction. From all indications the movement of party members toward the Right wing has ceased, while the Left Opposition continues, steadily if slowly, to recruit members and gain sympathizers in the party ranks. Such declarations as that recently issued by Clem Forsen, head of the T. U. C. L. in the Twin Cities, occur frequently enough to show the way the wind is blowing. But open declarations of adherence are not the real measure of our strength and growth in the party. Many more are fighting for our slogans, in whole or in part. A still wider circle has been neutralized.

For these developments there is a principle explanation. The Lovestones are driven by the logic of their position to turn more openly toward the Socialist

party, through the door of Muste and the counterfeit "militants", and thus to close the avenue of approach to the Communist workers. The Communist League, on the other hand, endeavors to bring a Communist criterion to every question of the class struggle. Its mission is to educate the party. To the extent that it succeeds with this task it draws closer to the Communist workers and becomes a guide for them in every field. The real issues involved in the party crisis were buried at first under a mountain of misrepresentation and confusion. Time and the test of events are making them clearer. This is the explanation of the trend of development noted above.

THE WHITE COLLAR UNEMPLOYED.

While the prolonged unemployment of millions of workers and the drastic reduction of standards for the entire class, are rapidly maturing the conditions for an enormous development of the proletarian class movement, the process is being assisted and supplemented from another quarter. The evil days which have fallen upon the professions, the small business people and the "white-collar" stratum of employees will undoubtedly have a considerable influence, even if it is primarily a negative one, in narrowing the gap between the working class movement of America and its industrial development.

Like every crisis, but on a far wider scale, the present one has the effect of hurling vast sections of these intermediary classes down into the proletariat. In the further entrenchment of big capital, and the more economical organization which ensues, the great bulk of the victims will be permanently displaced. Even more important: The chances for workers to climb into these preferred positions are correspondingly restricted.

In the *American Mercury* for April there is a graphic account of the ruthless swath which rationalization, spurred on by the crisis, has cut through the white-collar division of industry, from clerks to high-powered salesmen and junior executives. Many of them are dispensed with permanently as part of the waste that scientific management has learned to avoid. A whole army of people whose incomes ran into five figures are on the industrial scrapheap. Brooks Shepard, the author of the article, speaks of "former top-sergeants, lieutenants, and captains of industry" who have come to the end of their tether and face the stark problem of existence which but yesterday seemed pleasant and secure.

There are no statistics on the curtailment of professional incomes, but we know in a general way that it has been severe. Occasional news items and reports throw a revealing light on the situation. "I know lawyers with first class training and experience who are starving" said Justice Jacob S. Strahl at a meeting of the Brooklyn Women's Bar Association in Brooklyn. "One of them is reduced to peddling razor blades . . . Another was arrested recently for selling tomatoes without a license." So reports the *Times* for May 6.

In the hey-day of imperialist prosperity the class movement of the workers was undermined, among other things, by the opportunities for individual escape from wage labor created by the exceptional circumstances. The workers' movement was systematically robbed of its natural leaders and almost the whole class was poisoned with the psychology of individualism, fatal to class solidarity. The lesson to be read in the present plight of the white-collar elements is the closing of these avenues of escape from the proletariat, and the increasing insecurity of those who have already attained such positions.

A prolongation of this state of affairs will redound to the advantage of the labor movement. The more futile the hope of individual emancipation appears, the stronger will grow the determination of the ambitious workers to rise with the class. Individualism will be replaced by the class psychology of the proletariat. This development will be an important factor in liberating the unbounded energies of the American workers for the revolutionary struggle. J. P. C.

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