DISCUSSION ARTICLES

The Party and the Opposition's Tasks

The problem of stating definitely the signature to revolutionary principles parroad the Opposition must travel in the amount, gradually being weakened by a tasks of restating the basic proletarian combined onslaught of both economictrends of the Communist movement must ally powerful World Imperialism, and its be made the first question of all discussion. The total experience of two and one half years of cohesive political life, with its problems solved and unsolved the sharpening class struggle with its more exacting demands upon the proletarian vanguard, makes further delay inadmissable.

We started our organizational existence with certain definite experiences and traditions. It tok this whole past period to iron out a set of common departures.

Unity and Differenees

Some of the elements attracted to our banner during this period have found the soil strange (have not been able to orient themselves). Others never really belonged, and it took the organization some time to make this fact evident. On the whole, however our experience with divergent tendencies has been limited. The total political effects of them on the general life of the organization have been the means of enabling the general Lembership to recognize our test of criticism. It is far from overdrawn to state that "the American section of the Left Opposition is a unified ody on all basic principle questions" (Cannon). Whatever divergence may as differences of tactical application. The everlasting damnation. differences rising of the various estimations of the tempo of various aspects of the class struggle. The estimation of our organizational relations to the factions of the Communist movement or general working class struggles is basically similiar.

In the evaluation of our relations to the Right wing of the Communist movement, all are agreed that the question of a "united front of the Left and Right against the Center" (Weisbord) can in practise resolve itself into nothing but an unprincipled alliance with a petty bourgeois current against the basic revolutionary objectives of the Communist

Our approach to all political currents within the movement must be conditioned by a scrupulous application of the Marxian dialectic, which postulates that in the examination of any phenomena we must take into consideration the sum total of factors, both objective and subthree currents in the Communist movement are not merely the result of immediate objective application but of a thorough-going past. The definite orienworld events pointing to a temporary retrenchment of world capitalism became clear. The meeting of three currents within the frame-work of the Comintern, following upon the heels of the October revolution and the post-war revolutionary conditions of the world which tempetty bourgeoisie and their first cousins, the labor bureaucracy, who despite their past were forced to follow the trend of events, has a definite historical basis. The road of history for a time seemed to point definitely to the coming victory of the proletariat. Elements who by their whole past were prepared for the role of "windbreakers of capitalism" (Cannon) found the conscious evolutionary forces gaining definite headway in influening the proletarian as well as the elements that developing imperialism reduced to the role of declassed elements, whose social and economic base had been weakened, or completely uprooted. (The hegemony over the latter element had always been their sole domain in the past.) The roal left open narrowed down to following these released social forces to their new grounds, With the tremendous all-searching scrutiny, characteristic of the leadership of Communist movement to put on the or-Lenin and Trotsky in the first four congresses of the Comintern, life was not too pleasant for those gentlemen. With the death of Lenin coupled with the slowing down of the tempo of revolutionary development in the west the gradual ascendancy of revisionist influences upon the dictatorship, with the consequent toning down of revolutionary vigilance in the ranks of the Russian arty, the Right wing found a new lease f life in new surroundings where the

passive agent, vacillating Centrism.

Role of Centrism

Centrism had begun to play the tradi tional role of "philosophers of futility" (Lenin). "We have one-sixth of the world's surface, why risk it." The Uto pian philosophy of "socialism in one country" with its illegitimate American offspring "exceptionalism" (which by the way is only a new cloak for the old Kautskian theory of "ultra-imperialism" so much spouted about during the war as a crutch for social chauvinism). This theory in substance assumed that capitalism was entering a new era of development. New "vitality" (Pepper) would be injected into the decrepit body of decaying Capitalism, and as a consequence the question of the revolution must be substituted for a long range battle of nibbling. The orientation for political struggle must be a working alliance with the petty bourgeois farmer who still had have been beneficial in the main, as they a "progressive" role to perform within vital "capitalism". The proletarian was to follow humbly the chariot of principle departures in the face of the LaFollette, Chiang Kai-Shek, Raditch, etc. The victory of this famous theory ca nbe read in the lessons of the dead and mangled Chinese Communists whose neap of corpses should be placed as a monument to the gentlemen of the Right exist among us can truthfully be stated and their allies of the Center, to their

is the soil of the Comintern "all sufficient" (Trotsky) for the immediate future? Unquestionably. The Comintern still represents the center created by the October revolution. Its base is still the first worker's government, postulated as the first installment on the world revolu-

The complete victory of the restorationist elements is still remote. The basic cultural gains from the standpoint of creating a basis of proletarian ideology is still the outstanding factor of the dictatorship. The very fact of Centrism having to play the adventurist role of revolution in the west (Third Period) is conclusive indication of that.

We accept that the role of World Imperialism with America at its head, has reached the stage of progressive decline. Expansion, which is the life blood of the system, can only be carried on on the basis of further incursion into the standards of living of the working class, and jective. Formal classifications of cur. that on a constantly increasing sacle. rents in the movement on their purely The previous basis for the expansion of ef the camp by violence! It was only objective manifestations will lead us American imperialism following the into blind alleys. The alignment of the World War, which consisted of the export of finance capital to all parts of the globe at the expense of its exhausted European rivals, is constanty being nar rowed. World capitalism has truly tations of the Right, Center and Left had reached the stage where "the productive a beginning long before the logic of forces have burst the bonds of property relations" (Marx).

Prospects for Future

All further existence can continue at the expense of more systematic repression against the working class and other oppressed peoples. The prospect for the future is on the one hand systemaporarily shook the class basis of the tic reductions of labor costs (wages) imposed upon the large number of unskilled and semi-skilled workers in basic industries in order to compete successfully in the shrinking world market, and on the other the more deliberate and systematic raising of a labor ariatocracy, thereby helping the further maturing of the illusions of social reformism. The perspectives arising out of such a situation before us on the one hand the possibilities of bitter spontaneous resistance, which can be translated in the immediate into broad instruments of struggle (new unions) reflecting the mass nature of large scale industry. On the other, a systematic attack and exposure of the real role of social reform-

> The responsibility resting on the Left Opposition in the face of these developments is no less than that of assuming the task of once more forcing the der of the day, the world revolution. Can this wholy and exclusively be performed by accepting the role of a faction of the Communist Party under any and all conditions or does it not devolve upon us the responsibility of a close examination of the Comintern?

The relative strength of the Opposition forces to that of the party. The ripeness of the objective factors within the class struggle in a given country. Can we, in the face of the developubjective factors that had made intraning class struggle and the failure of the

Stalinist bureaucracy to apply the needed lesson, content ourselves with the passive role of abstract criticism? Is it not the Leninist conception of a faction that its role must at all times be that of winning the confidence of the toiling masses by examples of objective application of real leadership in the every day struggles? That real political contact is built up only in this fashion. Examples of real Communist leadership in the unfolding class struggle in America will do more to help shape the forces of Communism both in the formal party and those out of its ranks than a thousand abstract formulations. If the party still contained the best politically organized and oriented Communist workers here in America, then our task would be quite simple. The facts are however, that the party's base of strength as well as its composition has narrowed, and this in the face of a severe unemployed crisis. Systematic wage cuttings, rising indications of labor resistance (Lawrence Harlan, Kentucky, Pennsylvania West Virginia, the brewing situations in the railroad and steel industries) and those in the immediate present. (To Be Continued).

-S. M. ROSE.

Call the Troopers

A worker writes from the camp:

An incident characteristic of the relationships between the worker-Communlets and the Stalinist bureaucrats took place two weeks ago at Camp Wocolona which has created a scandal among the workers staying at the camp and in the ranks of the party as far off as New York. The camp manager, a party func tionary named Joe Newman, has ranged himself like a petty, arrogant shopkeeper against the workers employed in the camp. The dispute was concerned with grievances over working conditions prevailing in the camp, grievances advanced through the Food Workers Industrial Union and its members. One of the workers earned the particular displeasure of Newman by his refusal to submit meekly to the arbitrary anti-Communist commands of his "boss". This worker, himself a party member, is at this very moment involved in charges that may mean his deportation from the United States, because of his militant activities in Left wing strikes and in party demonstrations. Because he would not act as a toady of Newman's and silently swallow the latter's demandswhich conflicted with the interests of the camp workers-Newman demanded that he be taken off his job and run out of the camp. The worker defied him. after the promptest protest of the workers that Newman withdrew his threat. But the mere fact that this "Communist" could make such a threat is sufficient to reveal his caliber. Scandalous as this particular incident may be, it is not at all inexplicable. Newman, like his fellow functionaries is "loyal" to the "party line"-whatever it may be for the moment. With this "loyalty" he is able to rise to the ranks of the bureaucracy and to buy himself off from control of the ranks. Fortified by the feeling that the "cattle" he commands have nothing to say or do about his words or deeds, he can allow himself any arbitrary, and even reactionary measure. Every day brings new examples of the Preconcilable conflict between the needs and interests of the party and the interests of the party bureaucracy. The Newman case is one of

Weisbord --- No Comment!

From comrade Bernard Morgenstern, Philadelphia Oppositionist recently convicted with comrade Leon Goodman under the Anti-Sedition Act, we have received the following letter which we print in full without comment:

COMMUNIST LEAGUE OF STRUGGLE (Adhering to the International Left Opposition) 212 East 9th St., New York, N. Y.

Dear Comrade Morgenstern: I read in the last issue of the Militant that you have been convicted. I am writing to you alone but of course I include comrade Goodman also. The question is what is to be done?

From the very beginning we importuned Cannon and Co. to call a conference for your defense. They said that would be a united front with the Right against the Party! I am quite sure that if Cannon were involved such a conference would have been called long ago. But now the big thing is the principle involved: no united front against the Party even when the Party sends you

How can you stand that sort of stuff? You know that since I saw you last the weekly Militant has been issued and still not one word about the government at tack on our paper the Class Struggle We look upon any person holding such views to justify the Militant refusing to join us in resisting the government's at tack upon the Communist press as out and out agents of the bourgeoisie. We will deal with such elements with our fists and not with reason. The Cannons and the Shachtmans must be driven out of the entire Communist and labor movement when they can stoop to such ac tions as these. And it will be our job to do it too. Such people are not Communists. They are scum.

Please let us know how things are going on in Philadelphia, and what final of comrade Goodman.

Fraternally. (Sgd.) Albert Weisbord. In Spain

The Revolutionary Events Day by Day

(Continued from page 1) subject of the national congress for the unification of the Communist forces in

The "Batallists" of the C. B.-C. F. were the first to make our slogan their own. With unexampled impudence, the troops of Maurin and Arlandis wanted to have people believe that it came from them. They claimed it in order to pursue two different aims: to attribute to themselves the success obtained by the S. C. O. and to prevent being called "Trotskyists" because of accepting our slogan. The "Batallists" went so far as to pass over in silence our registered letters in which we expounded our point of view on the National Unity Congress at the same time that we gave it our adherence. Maurin and Co. did not act very correctly in this affair, even though they finally replied to us a few days ago, accepting our adherence to the congress. The S. C. O., of course, will send its delegates there.

But there is something that interests us a great deal more than the position and the attinde of the C.-B. C. F. It is the organization affiliated to the E. C. of the official C. P. which ask for the celebration of a unity congress. These are the affiliates of the Bunot (Valencia) district and the Federation of Communist Youth of the Levant region who address themselves to all the Communist groups and factions including the S. C. O. and Comunismo-the "Batallists" would not dare to do it-in order to have the unification congress take place within a maximum period of two months,

The desire for unity is latent in all the rank and file organizations of Spanish Communism. Only the bureaucrats stand opposed to the unification of the Spanish Communist forces.

That is how agreement has been reached on the basis of one of the slogans of the Left Opposition. Needless to say, the S. C. O. continues to orient the movement for unity.

PERSECUTIONS AGAINST US

The letters that reach us from our friends in Estremadura are truly alarming. In Esaremadura there does not exist a single affiliate to the Spanish C. P. All the Communists of Estremadura belong to the S. C. O. Our friends are brutally persecuted by the authorities N. C. of L. but led by the Communists; Newman thereupon threatened to call in and by the socialists. The correspond-State Troopers to pull the worker out ence which they receive comes to them our anarcho-syndicalists very little. opened. The newspapers and magazines rarely arrive in their wrappers. A postal or are announced: Cordova, Malaga, employee has been kind enough to warn our comrades so that they may find another way of sending their press mail. Our friends are threatened with being discharged from their work and being put into prison if they continue to propagate the ideas of the S. C. O. and to distribute Comunismo.

All this takes place right under the republic regime. It is certain that the Stalinist dunderheads will continue to call us allies of the bourgeoisie. But our Estremadura comrades will not cease because of that, to propagate and to defend our ideas.

IN THE MIDST OF THE ELECTIONS

We are right in the midst of the elec-

tions to the Constituent Cortes, and yet one does not observe the slightest agitaion of the political parties. We refer, of course, to external agitation, for within the political parties and inside of the Republican-Socialist coalition, the uneasiness is enormous. It serves no purpose for the leaders of the coalition parties to declare themselves firmly united and ready for the decisive battle against the defunct regime. The rank and file organizations take it upon themselves to show the contrary, sometimes out of ambition, and at others out of political disagreement. The socialists and the socialist-radidcals have dissolved the coalition in certain localities and are preparing to intervene in the struggle independently.

The Socialist-Radical party has been divided into two, because the Madrid organization the smallest in the party, differed from the point of view of the national leadership of the party which defends the unity of the coalition. Madrid, where the socialist-radical group embraces a large number of workers, has voted to break up the coalition and, since its opinion has been rejected, it has separated from the Socialist-Radical party and is preparing to enter into the struggle independently.

This circumstances substantially weakens the position of this party, which is the one that today counts the greatest sympathy among the electoral opinion. The Communists also come forward dividedly. The independent Communist grouping of Madrid, after having proposed the united front to the official Communist grouping, a united front which the latter rejected, has decided to present its own candidates against those of the official C. P. This confused position of the Autonomous Grouping places it openly against the Communist party. It is not a question any longer of a struggle against the Stalinist bureaucracy but of an open struggle against the C. P. We must combat those responsible for the division of the Communist forces, but never, still less in the present moment, must we defy the ranks of the party.

It is needless to say that the C.-B. C. F. is presenting its own candidates. disposition is made of your case and that Spanish Communism, absolutely disorganized, goes into the struggle divided and without any chance of success. The electoral struggle presents itself

Spanish Communism accepts our slogar triumph with an overwhelming majority, working class demands. issued more than a year ago on the The monarchists will get a not very important minority and that will be the case with the other independent political Madrid, June 18, 1931

. . . .

THE STRIKES

The strike movement for economic de mands of the working class was rendered profoundly acute last week and has had its political repercussions for the country and for the government.

The fishermen's strike in Pasaje: strangled in blood by the Civil Guard was echoed in the solidarity strike proclaimed by the building trades workers of Bilbao who, at the same time, are fighting against the compulsory strike in solidarity with the unemployed. And in this solidarity strike too there have been worker-victims, wounded by the revolvers and rifles of the forces.

In Andalusia, upon the announcement of the strike of the peasants, the state of seige was extended throughout the whole region. Although the constitution in force declares that in election periods the propaganda of all ideas will be permitted, the captain-general of the region has declared that the declaration of the strike will be considered as a crime of high treason; he denies the peasants the right under the republican regime, to ask for bread or for work.

be considered as lost. But the revolutionary morale of the coal mine workers ocmes out of the strike strengthened. The union of all the bourgeois forces and of their allies was realized against them in the region and in the province. The republican government dispatched the civil guard, in mass, to defend the interests of the capitalists. The social democrats organized their milita of Madrid, June 21, 1931 strike-breakers armed by the government itself, flung into the struggle against the strikes. The strike entered a period of regression; the workers were almost decided upon a strategic return. The only means of saving the fight was the congress now being held by the National Confederation of Labor. But the anarcho-syndicalists too are more interested in fighting against the Communists than in supporting the Asturian miners and their trade union, adhering to the whether the fight fails or not interests

Other strike conflicts have broken out Barcelona, etc. and the government is more and more determined, according to various declarations by its representatives, to proceed against the strike organizers with violence. Which is as much as saying that it proposes to deal

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very clearly. The government will with violence with every movement of

THE SECOND CONGRESS OF THE N. C. of L.

An extended article will be devoted to the congress now being held with an extraordinary character at Madrid, of the Spanish National Confederation of Labor. But here are some details now for the readers of the Militant. After the first moments, a current was manifested against Communism. On the order of the day there stood a proposal recommending the expulsion from the N. C. of L. of all the Communists who appeared as candidates on any list of any political party whatsoever. In reality, it was a question of expelling from the N. C. of L. the outstanding Communists. But this proposal was not discussed by the Congress, still less approved. It actually proved the degree of anti-Communist phobia that emanated from the congress. But in spite of all the voice of all the organizations had to make itself heard. This did not happen without difficulty. A few delegates, Communist candidates in the elections of April 12, were challenged by the congress on the pretext that on the order of the day stood a proposal demanding their expulsion. When a delegate from the Asturias, an anarchist moreover, proposed that this vexatious question of expulsions be left for the end and that they pass over immediately to the discussion of the question of aid to the The strike of the Asturian miners may! Asturian miners on strike, the delegates interrepted and insulted him without taking into account that he was an an-

> Thus, it is in this atmosphere, hostile to Communism with the most absolute lack of trade union democracy, that the second national congress of the N. C. of L. was opened.

archist, until he exclaimed: "Long live

-HENRI LACROIX

A Proposal to Gitlow

From the current number of Revoluhionary Age, we learn from an article by Ben Gitlow on the "Results of the July Plenum" of the Lovestone group that among the decisions adopted were the following two:

"2. To recommend to the National Bureau to change the name of the group. "4. To give full power to the Nation-Bureau to change the name of the

Revolutionary Age if it finds it necessary to do so." Our shop manager, Kent, was the first

one to welcome the decision. He is a steady reader of the Age, although he is somewhat timid and honest. In addition, he is always on the lookout for an odd piece of change in these hard times, and under the impression that some prize may be awarded for the best substitute names, he is proposing to secretary Gitlow the following arguments for the changes he offers:

 The name of an organization should really be a mirror of its political quality. His honesty is injured at the idea that the Right wing faction should call itself "Communist Party of the United States of America (Majority Group)". He proposes a change of name which has the double advantage of being a more accurate description of the Lovestone group and of not involving too much of a difference in the initials. Instead of "C. P. U S. A. (M. G.)", he proposes 10c the name "C. P. L. A. (M. G.)", that is, COMMUNISM AND SYNDICALISM | Conference for Progressive Labor Action (Minority Group). The name would enable the Lovestoneites to function more 15c formally as the Left wing of the Muste 2. In this proposal, the consequences

of Kent's timidity coincide with those of Lovestone's political conceptions, Lovestone believes our epoch to be a revolutionary age almost everywhere but in the United States. Besides, the name "Revolutionary Age" IS a bit radical for such conservative people. So he proposes to change the name of the paper to the Victorian Age.

We pass on these proposals to Gitlow for what they are worth. Ourselves, we 364 page book formerly \$2 now 1.00 think that if any prize is to be offered 5.00 for the most appropriate changes, it should go to Kent.

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