

# EDITORIAL NOTES

## WHERE IS THE BRITISH COMMUNIST PARTY?

The catastrophic collapse of the British Labor government is an example of reformist bankruptcy that rings around the entire world. Since the world war there has been no more striking illustration of the truth that social democracy is the shield behind which capitalism marches in its assaults upon the working class. In the dramatic events of the past week the whole game stands revealed. MacDonald and Company led the British masses up to the edge of the precipice and then pushed them over it. A reduction in the miserable unemployment dole and a cut in wages for the civil employees, the signal for a furious attack on wage standards in industry; these are the concrete results of the workers' experiment with a reformist Labor government. What will the laboring masses of Great Britain learn from this terrible experience and how will they prevent a repetition of it on a still greater scale? These are the most important questions arising out of the present situation.

And here it must be acknowledged that, as far as can be seen now, there is nothing to warrant optimistic expectations on this score in the immediate future. It is true that the masses learn only in the course of their own experience. But even this is not an automatic process. It is the historic function of the Communist party to assist the masses to assimilate the experience and raise their struggle to higher ground. And it is precisely this indispensable factor that is lacking, thanks to the devastating regime which ravages and disrupts the Communist movement from within. The heavy blow which reformism has dealt to the workers ought to be transformed into a still heavier if not a mortal blow against itself and its future usefulness to the masses. But the arm which could deal the blow—the party of the vanguard—is palsied.

The stabilization of British capitalism rested in the first place on the reformist labor bureaucracy, and particularly on its "Left wing". The policy of Stalin in the general strike covered its advance and disarmed the revolutionary workers. Only this enabled the labor bureaucracy to escape unpunished for the betrayal of the general strike and to prepare the way for the new debacle. The pseudo-Left wingers are now organizing another division of labor to head off the furious resentment of the masses and divert it again into the same channel of reformism. And again their maneuver is facilitated by the helpless regime in the Comintern.

The Stalinists content themselves with routine denunciations of the strategy of the Left reformists, in all of which can be read a fatalistic acceptance of their victory. The question of what could be done to defeat this strategy and open the way for the Communist party to bound forward at the head of the insurgent masses has not yet occurred to them.

They will not press the counterfeit Left wingers to the wall, split their ranks and take the workers away from them with a fighting policy of the united front on concrete issues of the day. God forbid! Only a few years ago they could make a bloc with these same people—social imperialists to the core—"against imperialist war"! They could sit at the same table with the betrayers of the general strike at the moment of their betrayal and even after it! But they have become very radical since then. Having burned their fingers on the "united front" with the strike-breakers—after expelling the Left Opposition for opposing it—they will not think of a united front with reformists any more under any circumstances. And with this pseudo-radicalism, the British Communist Party—already enfeebled, disrupted and beaten down by the international leadership—is still further handicapped and prevented from taking a single step forward in the face of this tremendous opportunity.

With an air of wisdom, pathetic in its emptiness and impotence, the Daily Worker "exposes" the aims of the "Left" laborites. In the issue of August 27 they say the Labor "Opposition" to MacDonald is "trying to prevent the workers from turning to the Communists". This is the last sentence in the leading editorial. It represents their conclusion on the subject of the Laborite "opposition", the only conclusion they have offered up to date. But the matter does not end with this inference, which is a fairly obvious one. That is rather the premise from which we should begin. What is the Communist party going to do about it?—that is the question. On this crucial point the Daily Worker has not yet reported any program of the British Communist Party. Neither has it offered one of its own as it is in duty bound to do if internationalism means anything to them. Let the American Stalinists ruminate over this question and tell us what they think about it. And while they are at it, perhaps they can give some information on another question of pri-

mary importance to every internationalist: Where is the British Communist Party? Did it expire completely in the embraces of Purcell and Stalin? Up to the present writing, we have heard nothing of its activities or its proposals in these events which are so fateful for the proletariat of the entire world. Could there be a more devastating commentary on the present regime in the Comintern than the recital of this single fact?

## THE RETURN OF GERRY ALLARD

The return of comrade Gerry Allard to the ranks of the Left Opposition is of itself a matter of interest to those who are fighting under the flag of Marxism. In a time of reaction against the basic principles of International Communism, when those who remain faithful to the banner are numbered by tens, and not by hundreds or thousands, every man is important. And when one of the most outstanding militants of the younger generation of revolutionary miners—as comrade Allard is without a doubt—finds his way for a second time to the platform of the Opposition, after a long period of study and conflict, it can be regarded only as a victory for our cause and a significant sign of hidden developments taking place deep within the ranks of the conscientious and uncorrupted Communist workers.

Comrade Allard, who supported the Opposition at the time of its exclusion from the party three years ago and then a few months later capitulated to the Stalinists, accompanied his application for readmission into the Communist League with a manly and straightforward acknowledgment of his mistake and a declaration of solidarity on all the important principle questions. The National Committee readmitted him to membership with a six months probationary period. This action is to be regarded as an extraordinary one which is not designed to set a precedent. The reference, of course, is not to the question of probation—that goes without saying—but to the readmission of a capitulator. Only an exceptional set of circumstances could justify such a decision. As a general rule it cannot even be thought of.

There were a number of extenuating circumstances in this particular case. Comrade Allard came to us in the first wave of protest in the party against the outrageous violations of party democracy committed by the combined forces of Lovestone and Foster against the Opposition. He did not remain with us long enough to assimilate the more profound principle conclusions at the bottom of the dispute—another illustration of the truth that party democracy alone is not and cannot be the basis of the party.

Comrade Allard was caught by the argument, which was Foster's contribution to the education of the miners, that "mass work" in the mine fields, unobstructed by disputes with the party leadership, was the most important and decisive question—proof again that the daily hoo about "mass work", without regard to the principle basis upon which it is conducted, is a capitulatory tendency. Lacking at the time of the great questions in their world-wide scope, comrade Gerry allowed himself to be swayed by personal attachments and the immediate issue of agitation among the miners—a further confirmation of the necessity of a principled and an international orientation.

A closer examination of the fundamental issues of the struggle, during the course of which he also had the opportunity of testing the practical policy of the Opposition as against that of the Centrists in concrete action, enabled comrade Allard to clarify his views and take his stand. In view of all these conditions the National Committee, having confidence in his seriousness and good faith, could not do otherwise than welcome him back into the ranks of the Communist League. We believe that we will justify that confidence and that the organization as a whole will approve the action taken.

—J. P. C.

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# The Anonymous Factional Struggle in the Party

A new factional struggle, a new type of factional struggle, is brewing in the party. It is a new type because it corresponds so perfectly with the bureaucratic, artificial "monolithism" of the "third period" in the Comintern.

In the early years of the Comintern, groups and factions took shape on the basis of clearly defined standpoints in principle, and the discussion between contending groups took place openly on questions of principle. That is how the doctrine of Marx and Lenin was clarified and strengthened in the Communist International. After Lenin's death factional struggles began to degenerate into unprincipled combinations, mechanically concocted to serve the momentary interests of similar combinations in the Political Bureau of the Russian party—Zinoviev's, Bucharin's or Stalin's. With the final triumph of the Stalin faction, with the organizational crushing of all opposition in the parties, "factionalism" was eliminated. The destruction of a virile internal ideological life in the parties—falsely labeled "monolithism" or "anti-factionalism"—was made possible by the canalization of the system under which leaders exist only thanks to an unquestioning obedience to the infallible Stalin faction. Nobody in the leadership of any Comintern section dares to develop a "different" point of view without knowing what Stalin (or Kustinen, or Manuilsky) has to say about the issue. And once either of the latter has spoken, then there is surely nobody in the national leadership who dares to develop this "different" viewpoint. This is the way factional struggles are "eliminated" in the "third period" of the Comintern.

Unfortunately for this consummately bureaucratic "solution", political struggle has a logic which is more powerful. The effects of it are being partly disclosed in the present struggle of the cliques in the American party.

### An Anonymous Struggle

For the reasons already mentioned, the struggle has two additional characteristics to justify its designation as a "new type". First it is carried on anonymously. Policies are mentioned, viewpoints are referred to, but the outer world is not informed as to who represents them. Second, the ranks of the party are kept in abysmal ignorance of what is going on or what is involved. For, to submit the dispute to the membership of the party is to submit the bureaucracy as a whole to the decision of the ranks—which would be the beginning of the end for the Browners of all stripes. But in spite of all the disguises and camouflage and anonymity, the principal actors in the tragic-comedy can already be discerned. The first hint as to who is who and what is what was given to us by the present leader of the party, Earl Browder, in his speech to the sixth convention of the Y. C. L.:

"It is necessary that our comrades, especially the youth should have more definite understanding of the terms 'defensive', 'offensive' and 'counter-offensive'." (Daily Worker, July 14, 1931.)

A commendable idea. How does Browder illuminate the problem?  
"The capitalist class is conducting a vicious economic and political offensive against the working class. Within the working class there is wide-spread radicalization and upsurge of activity and beginning of struggle. The main body of the working class is, however, as yet

only beginning to overcome the hindrances and to resist wage cuts, speed-up, the starvation of unemployment. The beginning of the mass actions has primarily a defensive character. Wherever this defensive movement begins to involve broad masses and sharpen the struggle, it simultaneously begins to develop the elements of a counter-offensive against the offensive of the capitalists. The general character of the small strikes that sprang up during the past period all over the country is, in the main, that of the defensive. In the miners' strike we already see this defensive in the process of passing over into a counter-offensive." (Ibid.)

A truckload of mud could scarcely be clearer. But what—that is who—is Browder really aiming at? Let us read further:

"It is therefore clear that it is absolutely wrong to speak of the 'offensive' of the working class and the counter-offensive of the capitalists'. An example of this wrong use of these terms, which can create an entirely erroneous political atmosphere around our struggles, may be found in a recent issue of the Daily Worker, which says: 'Increased mass picketing at Piney Fork and other mines Saturday morning checked the counter-offensive of the coal operators.'" (Ibid.)

### Browder vs. Dunne and Foster

As we see, the comrade who "is absolutely wrong" remains anonymous. But he has a name which is far from unknown. We look through our files of the Daily Worker, and find that the quotation made by Browder refers to a dispatch to the Worker from Bridgeport, Ohio, signed by William F. Dunne, a colleague of Browder's on the omnipotent Political Bureau. Having revealed the man who has created "an entirely erroneous political atmosphere around our struggles" we find that the unrelenting Browder resumes the thread of his struggle a month later, more sharply and more anonymously. In the August issue of the Communist, Browder writes:

"At the miners' convention, there occurred unprecedentedly bureaucratic distortions of the correct revolutionary line. This was typified by the method used in making a change in the name of the old Union. The miners were all for the old name, National Miners Union; the Party had never made any decisions instructing its members to try to change the name. And yet, one comrade holding a strategic position proceeded upon his personal whim and by use of personal prestige to propose and to have adopted without discussion the change of name to Mine, Oil and Smelter Workers Union (without even a discussion with the Communist fraction!) . . . It was an extreme example of bureaucratism [hear! hear! This from Browder], of going over the heads of the workers—and even of the party. Further demoralization was thrown into the work of the Union at this convention by another irresponsible action, the postponement of the election of the official leadership and the installing of a 'provisional' committee instead. This again was an individual action . . ."

Once more, our anonymous, high-handed, bureaucratic, irresponsible, etc., etc. criminal proves to be Dunne, who represented the T. U. U. L. at the N. M. U. convention, making the main report and—as Browder so delicately informs us—running affairs in general. But Dunne appears to be not the only

one for whose throat the rapacious Browder is itching. In the same article, we read a condemnation of . . . the idea that, because we have a splendid fighting spirit among the masses therefore we are already developing an offensive of the working class. Sometimes this is theorized . . . In its least harmful form, this is no better than phrase-mongering. It is a substitution of the wish for the deed."

Again, who is the phrase-monger in question? He appears to be no less a one than Foster himself! In the very same issue of the Communist, he writes, using the same "anonymous language" as Browder, about the mine strike: "It would be to completely misunderstand this strike to consider it merely a defensive struggle . . . While this began as a defensive fight against a local wage cut at the Avella mines, the strike is taking on a counter-offensive character," etc., etc.

Thus, according to Browder: Dunne is absolutely wrong and what is more, is irresponsible and bureaucratic.

According to Foster: Browder completely misunderstands the mine strike. According to Browder again: Foster,

in his least harmful form, is a phrase-monger.

To those who know the three men involved, as well as the Bittelmanns, Weinstein, Johnstones, Stachels and other shadows who lurk even more dimly in the vicinity of the factional stage, what has been quoted above is enough to indicate the "line-up". For that matter, to have imagined that Foster or the others, who have about as much respect for Browder as he has for them, would stand by silently under Browder's management would mean to display a callow ignorance of the party situation. If there are no issues, they will be found. Right now, they all juggle with "defensive" and "offensive" and "counter-offensive" as if the terms were so many colored balls without meaning or importance. But underneath all this word-play the cliques are busy undermining each other—anonymous, for the rank and file must not find out about it "prematurely" and the fighters must take no chances in burning their fingers in open combat. Thus it is that they serve themselves well who serve Stalin best!

—MAX SHACHTMAN.

## Maurin and the Anarcho-Syndicalists

We must pitilessly criticize Maurin without reserve; the events will completely confirm our criticism. In a short time Maurin will only be a comical figure with his provincial reflections, his corroded doctrines and his primitive slogans. Everything lies in knowing who will succeed him. The Left Opposition will be unable to become a leading force in Spain without being one in Catalonia.

The second urgent question is that of the anarcho-syndicalists. It is indispensable to publish a pamphlet against anarcho-syndicalism and to distribute it widely not only in Spain, but also in other countries. Have you read the articles by Monatte [leading French syndicalist.—Ed.] in which he expresses his hope to see the Spanish anarcho-syndicalists oppose to the Bolshevik state a genuinely "anarchist" state? The whole fate of world anarchism, or rather of the fragments saved from the Russian revolution, is intimately bound up today with the fate of Spanish anarcho-syndicalism. And since anarcho-syndicalism in Spain is moving inevitably to the most pitiful and ridiculous bankruptcy, there is no doubt that the Spanish revolution will be the tombstone of anarchism. But attention must be paid so that the tombstone of anarcho-syndicalism does not at the same time become the one of the revolution. If Maurin is the temporary cover for the Stalinists, anarcho-syndicalism is a temporary cover for the socialists and the republicans, that is, for the bourgeoisie. Just as Maurin can turn over the advanced Catalonian workers into the hands of the Centrist bureaucracy, so the anarcho-syndicalists can turn over the whole revolution into the hands of the bourgeoisie. The theoretical and practical struggle against anarcho-syndicalism now stands on the order of the day. It is manifest that this struggle must be conducted on the basis of the policy of the united front, of the unity of the trade union organization, etc. But we must unmask the leaders of anarcho-syndicalism and, above all, ex-

pose that pitiful lay priest of a Pestagna who will undoubtedly play the most infamous and cowardly role in the coming developments of the revolution . . . The samples of Maurin's speeches produce a painful impression. Contrary to us, he considers, you see, the Five Year Plan as an acquisition of the revolution! Can it be that he has read nothing?

By the way, the Hunter Press Agency and other agencies with it, are spreading false telegrams concerning alleged articles and interviews with me on the Five Year Plan (complete failure, falsehood, etc. . . ). It is extremely important to unmask and to deny these infamies. In the present case, the bourgeoisie uses against the Stalinists the latter's own falsehoods and calumnies. . . Kadikoy, June 29, 1931

—L. TROTSKY.

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# Lovestone 10 Years Ago

It is not customary or seemly to write anniversary articles about the living but we feel that under the circumstances our readers will understand; and to understand, says de Stael, is to forgive. It is September 1931 and in these lines we shall engage to commemorate the tenth anniversary of Jay Lovestone's conversion from counter-revolutionary Trotskyism to Stalinism. The fact that Lovestone, ten years ago, was a "Trotskyist"—we hasten to explain to the wondering reader—is adequate justification for a memorial notice today.

The last few issues of Lovestone's paper, the Revolutionary Age, have been publishing a series of articles on "The Soviet Union and Its Bourgeois Critics: Building Socialism in U. S. S. R.", in which Lovestone makes a moving attempt to appear as the defender of Stalin . . . against Walter Duranty. The occasion for this ardent and touching defense was a series of articles by Duranty in the New York Times, in which he argued that Leninism had been replaced in the Soviet Union by Stalinism, which has subordinated or cast aside the perspective of international revolution in favor of the "practical reality" of national socialism. The Lovestone defense consists of an argument that Stalinism does not exist; if it does it is merely a legitimate repetition and continuation of Leninism itself. It is not Stalin, you are given to understand, who invented the theory and practise of "socialism in one country", but Lenin himself. The only opponent of this theory is Trotsky.

"The Russian workers have seized political power," Lovestone announces "What shall they do with their power within the Soviet Union? This is no abstract question. To play with the state power is to play with fire. The question of constructing socialism in the Soviet Union should never be treated abstractly. What shall the Soviet proletariat do in the Soviet Union except build socialism?"

[Is this not a positively annihilating question? They might build a system of barbarism. And they might build up a feudal society. But they do neither. In spite of the Trotskyists, the Russian workers have decided to build socialism!] "For what other purpose shall they use their state power in the Soviet Union except for constructing socialism there? Let the critics of the Soviet Union—bourgeois and otherwise ["otherwise" means . . . Trotskyists]—tell us what should the Soviet workers build in the Soviet Union except socialism." (Rev. Age, 8-22-1931.)

We assume this means that the Opposition is in favor of the Russian workers building capitalism, or feudalism, or nothing at all. If such unrefined idiocy were so, Lovestone has already won the first victory. But let us pass this by out of kindness, and read further:

"It was at the Fifteenth Party Congress in December 1927, that Bucharin speaking for the Congress, administered the most crushing ideological defeat to Trotskyism on this viewpoint. If the C. P. S. U. were not correct in concluding that the Soviet proletariat was capable of overcoming fully all bourgeois elements within its country, that is, of building a socialist society, then, it would really have no reason for maintaining power." (Ibid.)

The line of division is clear: "Leninism" (a la Lovestone) declares that the Russian proletariat, by itself, is capable of the successful construction of a national socialist society. "Trotskyism" declares that this can be done only with the "state aid" of the revolutionary proletariat of a number of other countries. If this is the line of division, we are now in a position to look back at The Communist, official organ of the Communist Party of America (the underground C. P. of a decade ago) Vol. 1, No. 3, for September 1921, where we read an article by Roger B. Nelson, en-

titled "Russia's Hour of Need":

"Our speakers and agitators should utilize the movement for the relief of Soviet Russia for specific purposes. But at no time must we compromise the class character of our campaign for immediate results. Any other policy would in the end do more harm than good to the starving workers of Russia . . . We must bring to light the fact that no successful revolution can be accomplished in ANY ONE COUNTRY without the assistance of the international proletariat."

Who is this counter-revolutionary Trotskyist who smuggled his anti-Leninist views into the official organ of the Communist Party of America under the guise of a famine relief article? As we have said, it was Roger B. Nelson. And who is Roger B. Nelson? He is, or was—It is not much of a secret today—Jay Lovestone, yes, the same Jay Lovestone whom we quoted above. And if the revolution could not be accomplished successfully in "any one country" by the forces of the proletariat of that country alone, why did not Lovestone, in September 1921, tell the Russian workers—in line with his arguments of September 1931—that they "have no reason for maintaining power"?

But is it not possible that this was a momentary "Trotskyist" aberration of one individual? Let us look further in the same issue of The Communist, and on page five we find an article "The Third Congress" written by "James A. Marshall, Delegate Communist Party of America" who, after speaking of "Lenin, Trotsky and other irreproachable leaders" (he changed his mind about that later), writes:

"Soviet Russia cannot exist as an isolated state within a capitalist world." [Name of a name! Trotsky was expelled for saying no more than that!] "This is the problem. Two solutions are possible. One puts the burden of the action upon the revolutionary working class outside of Russia. The other must be carried out by the workers of Russia. The first is the overthrow of capitalism in the countries of Europe or America, and the establishment of a proletarian dictatorship there. The other is a method to break the deadly economic isolation of Russia. It waited until it could wait no longer." [Why did it have to

wait if Lenin "in 1915" said that they need fear no isolation because they could build socialism with their own forces?] "It now proposes to break the unbearable economic isolation. The concessions policy is one of the methods of doing it." And who is this Trotskyist No. 2? Is he Cannon or Swabeck? No. At the risk of producing the rupture of a blood vessel, we must point out that James A. Marshall was and is Lovestone's bosom friend of yesterday—Max Bedacht, member of the Political Bureau of the party today and professional Trotsky killer.

But perhaps we have before us only two individual aberrations? Not at all. In The Communist, official organ of the United Communist Party of America (both Lovestone and Bedacht were members of its Central Committee), No. 5, for August 15 1920, we read the following official pronouncement, presumably representing the standpoint of the whole party, unless Lovestone's and Bedacht's protests were concealed by the other "Trotskyists":

"The Soviets will realize that the theoretical deduction from the facts of the struggle between capitalism and communism, that a proletarian state cannot exist in a capitalist world, must be followed in practise and that Soviet Russia can only preserve itself by developing the Russian revolution into the world revolution. Soviet Russia will stand or fall as the revolution in that country becomes, or does not become the world revolution."

Cannot even exist! Can only preserve itself! But what about building up a complete national socialist society with their own forces, without "developing the Russian revolution into the world revolution"? Where was Stalin to put the quietus on such arrant Trotskyism? Where was Bucharin? Where was Bedacht? And Lovestone? The horrible truth is that they were all, all, "Trotskyists" in those days. . . .

There is no exact record of when Lovestone was converted. He may tell us some day what caused him to see the light and when. But we doubt it. He appears to be too busy dividing his tongue between Stalin's boots in Moscow and Muste's in the United States.

—MARSH.