

DISCUSSION ARTICLES

Tasks of Our National Conference

The Second National Conference of the Communist League will mark an important milestone in the development of our organization and, consequently, in the history of American Communism...

Our ranks have been welded together on the basis of a correct political line. If the Conference accepts the proposals of the National Committee it will not find it necessary to confront the organization with any new or surprising turns...

will signify an enormous step forward, for the Opposition cannot succeed with its great historic mission, unless it prepares its soldiers for the coming day.

4. Finish the Expansion Program before the end of the year. Raise the balance of the fund. Stabilize the Weekly Militant. Start the theoretical magazine. Arrange at least two national tours.

6. Enroll every member of the Communist League in at least one of the non-party mass organizations, and systematically organize their work for the constructive building of these organizations...

The League and Problems of the Youth

The Draft Thesis on the Youth Question attempts to state in concise terms the position of the youth under capitalism, the need of a Communist youth league, its attitude toward other youth organizations and finally the tasks of the Left Opposition youth.

The scantiness of the discussion on the youth is one of the none too few in this field of our work. Among the signs that there is not enough interest youth comrades there are many who have never been in the Y. C. L. or carried on activity among young workers...

From this follows the necessity of making the young comrades "youth conscious"; proving to the adult comrades that youth work is essential and can be done. Towards this end, the Draft Thesis proposes: the issuance of an internal youth bulletin, the publication of the Young Vanguard as a semi-monthly section of the weekly Militant on the one hand, and the section of a National Youth Committee of five, the election of at least one comrade in each branch to be in charge of youth work...

The aim of our youth is "the organization, education and consolidation of a revolutionary, capable, and advanced Communist youth cadre". In the immediate sense this means the winning of the Communist youth for the Left Opposition. Through participation in the work and affairs of the Y. C. L., through classes on fundamentals of the Communist youth movement, Communism, Marxism, etc., by spreading the Militant, and our literature we can attract the young Communists.

2. Tighten up the organization. Make a decisive break with the habits of looseness and slackness which hamper the Bolshevik development of the League. Impose tasks on every member and hold every member to account for his activity.

3. Begin the actual formation of a cadre of professional revolutionaries who put themselves entirely at the disposal of the organization. Select a group, out of the younger and foot-loose elements, and train them deliberately for full-time professional work.

Even the beginning of such a work

with members and sympathizers of the party. That means, in the first place, to penetrate the non-party mass organizations and unions and work actively there.

7. Strengthen the central apparatus of the Communist League. Reject all amateurish conceptions which make a virtue of political leadership on a spare-time basis.

It will be seen at once that the suggestions indicated above, taken all together, do not constitute a very ambitious program. All the tasks enumerated are small ones, they are comparatively simple and they are all easily possible.

It is not for us to adopt grandiose projects which are beyond our capacities at the moment, which are soon forgotten and never accomplished.

The practical proposals which have been outlined here proceed from this point of view. If we accomplish all of them—and we can do so without undue strain if we have the will—it will not change our position in a qualitative sense. But it will indubitably raise our hard-pressed faction to higher ground and prepare it for a further ascent.

—JAMES P. CANNON.

The Youth Thesis

The general problems of a theoretical nature and political sphere find a unanimous opinion among all our comrades. This will help very much to facilitate matters in an organizational sense.

1. The thesis treats "the youth as though it were some queer product of society complete in itself, and having no relation to anything else."

2. The slogan of "equal pay for equal work". The thesis does not enumerate any youth demands. We intend carrying on a discussion after the Conference, on this question in our internal youth bulletin.

3. On the question of youth auxiliaries. The thesis states: "A thorough examination of the functions of Youth auxiliaries and the actual activities of the existing ones is needed. If this is not done, this important part of League activity will continue to yield no results."

4. Imperialist conquest of foreign markets is by no means as immediate

tact with the League members and sympathizers.

4. On the other points raised: Work in the Y. C. L., educational work, independent work wherever possible there is general agreement.

JOSEPH CARTER.

The Youth Thesis

The future growth of the American section of the Left Opposition depends in a great measure upon our ability to win the youth to its banner.

At our first conference, over two and half years ago, we signalized our approach to this problem by asserting that the task of the youth members in our ranks, was to work as oppositionists in the general struggle of the Communist Left without concentrating on specific youth questions.

The exigencies of the first period of our existence have passed. Our problems remain basically the same—but that an organizational and political stabilization has taken place nobody can deny.

An estimate of our membership will show that the youth make up one of its largest sections. They are a vital part of the organization, and have contributed a great share toward its growth.

The letter by Trotsky which we publish further on, will prove sufficiently to the members of the Catalan Federation that their leaders were not happy in their idea of defending the thoughts of Trotsky against his "epigones".

1. Thus, Maurin, the "leader" of the

Maurin and the Catalonian Question

La Batalla, organ of the Catalan Federation, is taking many pains to show the Comintern bureaucrats that it is not "Trotskyist". It is really a needless work. In reality, the further the Spanish revolution develops, the more the Catalan Federation shows, by its activity and by the very "original" position of its leaders, that it has never had anything in common with the International Left Opposition.

Maurin and his young disciple, Jordi Arquer, boast in La Batalla of being independent of the orders coming either from the Comintern or from Trotsky. As a sign of independence, Maurin has engaged in copying servilely the vocabulary of the bourgeois revolutionists of the French revolution of 1789.

Thanks to the extreme weakness of the official C. P. in Catalonia, the confusionist and Right wing leadership of Maurin still remains at the head of the most numerous Communist Federation, in the most industrial region of the country.

The letter by Trotsky which we publish further on, will prove sufficiently to the members of the Catalan Federation that their leaders were not happy in their idea of defending the thoughts of Trotsky against his "epigones".

1. Thus, Maurin, the "leader" of the

workers' and peasants' bloc shares the point of view of separatism. After certain hesitation, he has resolved himself into the Left wing of petty bourgeois nationalism. I have already written that Catalan petty bourgeois nationalism in the present stage is progressive.

2. What does the program of separatism mean? The economic and political dismemberment of Spain or, in other words, the transformation of the Iberian peninsula into a sort of a Balkan peninsula, with independent states, divided by customs barriers with independent armies and conducting independent Hisppanic wars.

3. Are the workers and the peasants of the various parties of Spain interested in the economic dismemberment of Spain? In no case. That is why, to identify the decisive struggle for the right to self-determination with propaganda for separatism, means to accomplish a fatal work.

4. In the Balkans, the old pre-war social democracy already put forward the slogan of the democratic Balkan Federation, as the way out of the madhouse created by the separated states.

5. The syndicalists, at least certain of their leaders, declare that they will fight against separatism even with arms in hand. In this case, the Communists and the syndicalists would find themselves on two sides of the barricades because, without sharing the separatist illusions, while criticizing them, on the contrary, the Communists must stand up pitilessly against the hangmen of imperialism and their syndicalist lackeys.

6. Should the petty bourgeois succeed—against the advice and the criticism of the Communists—in dismembering Spain, the negative results of such a regime will not take long in manifesting themselves.

7. Monatte hopes that the Spanish syndicalists will create a new "syndicalist state". Instead of this, the Spanish friends of Monatte are integrating themselves successfully into the bourgeois state. It is the story of the luckless hen who sits on duck's eggs.

The gifted idea of the syndicalists consists of controlling the Cortes without participating in it! To employ revolutionary violence, to fight for power, to seize the power—all this is not permitted. In its place, they recommend the "control" of the bourgeoisie which is in power.

—L. TROTSKY.

Kadikoy, July 13, 1931

preparations which it implies, cannot be accomplished overnight, and is not the immediate answer to the present crisis of capitalism.

Rather do we expect such an imperialist war to break out in the course of the long downward trend after a recovery from the present crisis, as an expression of the fact that contradictions have become even more acute than at present.

—B. J. FIELD.

Perspectives of the American Crisis

1. The writer has consistently stated his belief that America will recover from this crisis, in the immediate. The means whereby this will be done will apparently be through a drastic wage-cutting campaign designed to restore the margin of surplus value to the capitalists.

2. This does not imply accepting a perspective of long-time stabilization for capitalism in America, which economic analysis indicates to be improbable. The long perspective implied is of temporary stabilization on a lower plane, accompanied by further crises and temporary stabilizations, with a generally downward trend.

3. A long period of years of general capitalist advance, the opposite of the above perspective, would involve in general repetition of the 1923-1929 situation of slow paralysis of the labor movement. A short period of advance, in the other hand, in which capitalism solves its immediate problems by cutting the wages of labor, on the contrary, would not involve a deadening of labor resistance, but rather an intensification of it.

4. Imperialist conquest of foreign markets is by no means as immediate

a solution for capitalism as wage-cutting, but will unquestionably result from the intensification of present contradictions. Owing to the advanced state of the general capitalist crisis and the position of America with respect to the rest of the world, imperialist conquest cannot solve America's contradictions for any long period.

5. In an advanced state of dissolution is to offer an old man the remedies applicable to children's diseases. When peasants in the most backward countries are torn loose out of a self-supporting village economy into the production of "commodities" for the world market, at a time when the world market cannot absorb increased amounts of raw material, the new production must displace an equivalent supply from older sources.

6. In most cases the United States. For this reason, we say imperialist conquest of foreign markets will merely shift the scene of American capitalist contradictions, not lessen their crushing weight.

—B. J. FIELD.

SPANISH REVOLUTION

The Revolution in Spain . . . 10c

The Spanish Revolution in Danger . . . 15c

These two pamphlets will give the reader an invaluable analysis of the present situation in Spain and the prospects of the further development of the revolution. The standpoint of the Opposition, in contrast to that of all the other groups involved in the present Spanish situation (the official Communist party, the Maurin group, the syndicalists, and others), is presented with the exceptional clarity and penetration for which the author is so well-known.

Send Orders and Funds to the PIONEER PUBLISHERS 84 East 10th Street, New York, N. Y.

Subscribe!

THE MILITANT, 84 East 10th Street, New York City. Please enter me for a subscription one year, \$2.00; six months, \$1.00. Name Address City State