

A LETTER TO COMRADES BY LEON TROTSKY

EDITORIAL NOTES

FURRIERS' UNITY

The central feature of interest in needle trades labor circles for the past weeks has been the negotiations and discussions over the question of unity of the furriers.

The fact that all the leaders without exception have been compelled to listen to this demand and profess agreement with it is a singular confirmation of the idea, which we have advanced more than once, that no one can do just as he pleases with the trade unions.

The initiative for the unity negotiations came from a section of the Right wing fakery, with the Lovestoneites acting in their now fully established role of butlers for them.

On the other hand there is no room for doubt that the fakery has gained a certain advantage in the situation and that the Industrial Union has been out-maneuvred.

The Industrial Union leaders presented a sad spectacle throughout the affair. Here was a singular case of the pre-conceived theories of Stalinism colliding with the logic of the class struggle.

The basic fault in the strategy of the Industrial Union, which has given a real if only a temporary advantage to the Right wing disrupters, proceeds from the abandonment during the "Third Period" of the Lenin teaching on trade union unity.

the Left wing banner. And conversely, although there are other factors, the decline of Left wing power and influence and the revival of the Rights in this field are closely related to the dropping of this slogan.

The idea expressed there has gained force in all the experience of the Left wing on the trade union field in the intervening period. It has been given a fresh and startling confirmation in the recent developments among the furriers.

We have no intention of suggesting here any "clever" answers for the Industrial Union to make to the fraudulent unity maneuvers of the Right wing disrupters and their Lovestoneite come-ons.

The closer it is to production, to the factory, to the shop departments, the more impossible is this regime, for it is a question here of the direct vital interests of the workers, and the whole process develops before the eyes of the workers themselves.

The present whereabouts of comrade Christian Rakovsky, exiled leader of the Russian Bolshevik-Leninists, are unknown, as we pointed out in our last issue.

The present leader of the Communist reconstruction in Ukraine, the head of the People's Commissars, Christian Georgievich Rakovsky, was born on September 1, 1873 in a little Bulgarian town, Kote.

In 1890, Rakovsky unable to finish his studies, went to Geneva, Switzerland. Here he immediately entered into the Russian Social Democratic organization at the head of which at that time were Plechanov, Sazulich and Axelrod.

After having completed his studies in the Medical Faculty in 1897, Rakovsky wrote a brilliant doctor's dissertation which gives a Marxian explanation of criminality and degeneration.

In answering your inquiry I will endeavor here, as an introduction to the exchange of opinions, to outline a few general considerations which concern the slogan of workers' control of production.

The first question that arises in this connection is: can we picture workers' control of production as a fixed regime, not everlasting of course, but as one of long duration? In order to reply to this question, the class nature of such a regime must be more concretely determined.

The workers need control not for platonic purposes, but in order to influence practically the production and the trading operations of the employers.

If the participation of the workers in the administration is to be lasting, stable, "normal", it must rest upon class collaboration, and not upon class struggle. Such a class collaboration can be realized only through the upper strata of the trade unions and the capitalist associations.

What state regime corresponds to workers' control of production? It is obvious that the power is not yet in the hands of the proletariat, otherwise we

would have no workers' control of production but the control of production by the workers' state as an introduction to the regime of state production on the foundations of nationalization. What we are talking about is workers' control in the domain of the capitalist regime, under the power of the bourgeoisie.

If the bourgeoisie is already no longer the master, that is, not entirely the master in his factory, then he is, consequently, also no longer completely the master in his state.

This relationship, however, should not be understood mechanically, that is, not in the manner that the dual power in the factory and the dual power in the state see the light of day on one and the same day.

Under the conditions traced above in broad outline, especially characteristic of Germany, the dual power in the country can develop precisely out of workers' control as its main reservoir.

-J. P. C.

Who Is Christian Rakovsky?

The Russian Government was watching the July manifestations in Galatz. In a telegram of June 17, 1916, the Russian envoy Poklevsky informed his government as follows:

"For the happenings in Galatz the Rumanian Government has removed from his post the Prefect Gussy. It transferred the prosecuting attorney and indicted Rakovsky and the chief syndicalist sponsors of the manifestations.

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During the great war the Rumanian Government shamefully persecuted Rakovsky as well as the Socialist press. There were arrests and armed police attacks in one of which Rakovsky was wounded.

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There is much to say for the idea that in the present revolutionary ascent, too, the factory councils in Germany, at a certain stage of developments, will fulfill the role of Soviets and replace them.

Today, in 1931, the word "Soviets" sounds quite differently from what it did in 1917-1918. Today it is the synonym of the dictatorship of the Bolsheviks, and by that the bugbear on the lips of the social democracy.

At the time of the November Revolution Rakovsky was in Stockholm from which place he sent his greetings and support of the revolution.

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STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION, ETC., REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912.

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Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Arne Swaback, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and swears that he is the Manager of THE MILITANT and that the following is to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management (and if a daily paper, the circulation, etc., of the aforesaid publication, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, embodied in section 411, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse of this form, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business managers are: Publisher: The Communist League of America (Opposition) New York, N. Y. Editor: Max Shachtman Managing Editor: None Business Manager: Arne Swaback

2. That the owner is: (If owned by a corporation, its name and address must be stated and also immediately thereunder the names and addresses of stockholders owning or holding one per cent or more of total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, the names and addresses of the individual owners must be given. If owned by a firm, company, or other unincorporated concern, its name and address, as well as those of each individual member, must be given.)

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eyes of the bourgeois states, especially of its Fascist guard, the Communists setting to work creating Soviets which were equivalent to a direct declaration of civil war by the proletariat, and consequently, can provoke a decisive clash before the Communist party itself deems it expedient.

All these considerations prompt us strongly to doubt if one could succeed, before the uprising and the seizure of power in Germany, in creating Soviets which would real embrace the majority of the workers. In my opinion, it is more probable that in Germany the Soviets will first arise on the morning after the victory, already as direct organs of power.

The matter stands quite differently with the factory councils. They already exist today. They are composed of Communists as well as of social democrats. In a certain sense, the factory councils realize the united front of the working class. It will broaden and deepen this one of its functions with the rise of the revolutionary tide.

The factory councils' central of a city can thoroughly fulfill the role of city Soviets. This could be observed in Germany in 1923. By extending their functions, applying themselves to ever bolder tasks, and creating federal organs, the factory councils, intimately connecting the social democratic workers with the Communists, can grow into Soviets and become an organizational support for the uprising.

By all this, we in no case want to say that the rise of Soviets before the proletarian overturn in Germany is completely excluded in advance. There is no possibility of foreseeing all conceivable variants. Were the collapse of the bourgeois state to come long before the proletarian revolution, were Fascism to run its head into the wall, or fall to pieces, before the uprising of the proletariat, then the conditions could arise for the creation of Soviets as the fighting organs for power. Naturally, in such a case, the Communists would have to perceive the situation in time and raise the slogan of Soviets. This would be the most favorable situation conceivable for the proletarian uprising.

but he was arrested in Vilna and forced back to Russia. In January 1919, according to the decision of the Ukrainian Communist Party Rakovsky was called back and at the Third Congress of the Ukrainian Soviets confirmed as head of the Soviet power returned after the crushing of Denikin, comrade Rakovsky became again the head of the Soviet of People's Commissars, being at the same time the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine, and member of the Executive Committee of the Third International.

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ARNE SWABACK, Business Manager Sworn to and subscribed before me this 3rd day of October 1931.

G. W. LORCH, Notary Public (My commission expires March 30, 1933)

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