

IN THE INTERNATIONAL OF LABOR
Reviews and News of the Working Class and Revolutionary Movements

C. P. Policy in England

The Stalinists' Sterility Before the Problem of the United Front

Since the Fall of MacDonald "Labor" government the class struggle in England has entered a new and more decisive stage. A revolutionary perspective, although yet only in its embryonic form, is at hand. But the all important question of ability of the Communist party to meet this situation still remains unanswered.

... purely on the basis of reformist measures, but which can be accomplished only by revolution, they will soon change their tune. Then the actual separation of the masses from these charlatans begin.

C. P. Leadership Impotent

With these splendid possibilities the Communist party leadership has unfortunately not measured up at all. During the first phase of the present situation it displayed its utter impotence in failing to give any direction whatever. But a "turn" came, a turn with an adventurist vengeance, however, maintaining all its former opportunist essentials. It emerged with a basic program formulated in the following slogan:

- Not one penny off the "Dole", not one worker off benefit!
Not a penny off wages of the workers!
Not a penny off teachers' salaries!
Not a penny more tax on the people's food!

Down with the National Government! To this even the Henderson official labor opposition, since it has extricated itself from the MacDonald government can well subscribe without difficulty as it does not in the least take cognizance of the revolutionary potentialities of the present situation. It does not even approach the "challenge" of "socialism with speed" which is put forward by the "Left" mountebanks.

Adding New Confusion

Our London correspondent correctly criticizes the recent confusion of adventurist mixture added by the Communist Party leadership of calling for councils of action and general strike, all within one week and without any previous preparation. And further proposing to build alongside of the unemployment movement also the charter movement, which was already antedated at its inception and became only a sorry caricature of the proud old Chartist movement. It is naturally difficult for revolutionists to have any patience with such people, who, while remaining steeped in their opportunist outlook, suddenly discover at last that they are somewhat belated and hurriedly, in panic, call upon the working class for action without performing their duty of previous preparation. Their characteristics are that of contemptible bureaucrats.

Surely there should be opportunities for strike action against the National government economy program of drastic reduction of the working class standard and yet much more heavy cuts to come. Surely councils of action, which already have a good tradition in England, should be created to lead these economic struggles and become a weapon against treason of the reactionary trade union bureaucrats. However such strikes in the present situation will inevitably have dynamic political implications and naturally the danger of defeat by isolation or lack of preparation become so much greater. The actual steps of preparation, thorough preparation of organization, of tactics and of object are yet in order and no moment should be lost. As a matter of fact they should have been taken from the very first day of the National government. That much at least should be known to revolutionary leaders.

The United Front Policy

However, the main key to the present situation, which the C. P. leaders must learn to take hold of, is the united front policy. Not its perversion, neither of the alliances behind the workers' backs with reformist leaders nor the fakery of "united front from below", but a united front policy as taught by Lenin. The former method was well exemplified by the spurious Anglo-Russian Unity Committee. The latter has now become the "line" by which party bureaucrats can unload responsibility for their own failings upon the membership for not being in the shops and not understanding the unity with the workers. But it has nothing in common with the united front policy and does not lead toward a solution of the revolutionary problems.

It is necessary for the C. P. leaders to define their attitude particularly clearly toward the Leftward moving section of the I. L. P., to consider their potential revolutionists who, however, still follow the I. L. P. leaders. The C. P. must speak to them as class brothers in arms. It must say to them: "You trust these leaders, we don't, and in our opinion it is well founded upon past experiences. You believe their 'socialist program' is seriously conceived as an actual overthrow of capitalism and the building of a new system, we don't because that becomes a revolutionary objective which they fear. The realization of an actual socialist program, how-

ever, must of necessity proceed through the struggle for the immediate and pressing needs of the workers. On the basis of these needs we propose a united front with you so that we may in common endeavors work out the well defined immediate demands which the situation now requires and by united efforts fight more effectively for their attainment. We propose to reserve for ourselves the right to aim for an actual socialist program, for a revolutionary objective. For this objective we will fight also within this united front.

However, that itself must first of all imply on your part a complete break with the official labor party parliamentary opposition and its whole apparatus, both ideologically and organically, because their objective goes definitely in the opposite direction."

In such an attitude and approach lie the possibilities of the Communists taking over leadership of this Leftward moving section. It is true that in this process new problems will arise such as even the question of a slogan for a socialist government, which under present conditions in England has a different connotation from say, for example, in Germany. But once the approach to the problems is begun correctly the further solutions will not have the greatest difficulties. Finally it goes without saying that such approach can never in the least be confined within the narrow scopes of parliamentary activities. Revolutionary objectives by far transcend such bounds, and it is precisely around these objectives that the strike movements can have real meaning and become an integral part.

Now is the Time to Apply Lessons of Past Experiences

The present situation in England pre-eminently demands a revolutionary orientation by the Communist party. That dare not be delayed any longer if it is at all to take advantage of the exceptional possibilities. But to accomplish this means a definite fight to eliminate root and branch the heavy burden of the Stalinist bureaucratic leadership the penalty of which the party is now suffering. Of course, this would be altogether inconceivable without a broad, open and free discussion within the party. To any such attempt the bureaucrats will certainly answer by, if possible, re-inforcing their edict against any discussion under the plea that now is the time for action, and there is not a moment to lose. But for the party to act correctly in this situation first of all implies a proper evaluation of the experience and disastrous orientation of 1926. If this is further compared with the puerile banalities of the "third period", a good beginning will have been made. Many lessons could be learned of incalculable value for the present situation. And to initiate this is precisely the duty of a revolutionary leadership.

Of course, judging the present serious situation in England from a considerable distance, there may be many developments unavoidably escaping our attention and thus of necessity make our suggestions incomplete. Nevertheless we believe our Left Opposition supporters should give these suggestions their most serious attention.

-ARNE SWABECK.

LETTER FROM ENGLAND

The Struggle against the National Gov't

(Continued from page 1) dropping of the "Nine Points" of the Workers' Charter. After a year's campaign for these "Nine Points", they are quietly pushed aside and to save the faces of the sponsors of this Workers' Charter, the present slogans of the party against the cuts are now put forward as the "Charter".

Establish an English Opposition!

Clearly, the time is ripe for the consolidation of all the critical elements under the banner of the International Left Opposition. So far nothing has been done in this direction: isolated comrades have been crushed easily by the leadership: the party press has not only refused to publish criticism but it has even suppressed reports of very large and important demonstrations when those demonstrations have been carried through by comrades in disagreement with the party policy. At present, the control by the Stalinists of the press, and the lack of an organized Opposition, together with the low theoretical level of the English party membership, makes the position of the present leadership very strong.

The need is for an English Opposition platform around which the best elements in the English party can rally. London, October 3, 1931

-ANGLICUS.

LONDON.

In previous letters some of the weaknesses of the party's campaign around the National government's economy attack have been pointed out. Events have more than justified this criticism and more than ever it is necessary to rally the party membership against the policy pursued by the party leadership.

At the commencement of the campaign it was pointed out in these columns that failure on the part of the party to give a definite lead for the formation of councils of action and to urge preparation for strike action would prevent the widest possible mobilization of all workers under militant leadership. In addition, it was shown that the line carried out by the party was a reformist line, not a revolutionary one and that such a policy could only result in a strengthening of the I. L. P. "Lefts" at the expense of the party.

It is now possible to see that the virtual restriction of the campaign to the unemployed has found our party after seven weeks' agitation with no real gains to register as far as the trade unions and the factories are concerned. Whilst in the great demonstrations of unemployed, the party, as a party, has scarcely appeared at all. All the great demonstrations, have been organized by the National Unemployed Workers' Movement: all the speakers at these demonstrations have been unemployed leaders or local unemployed organizers. There can be, of course, no objection to the organizing

of the unemployed in the N. U. W. M., but the party should work to secure a workers' united front movement to bring together employed and unemployed under the leadership of the Communist party. The need for the party, its vote in the workers' struggle should be explained and demonstrated day in and day out, especially in this time when the workers are more politically active than for some years past. In the meantime, precisely because the party is not pursuing a correct policy, the influence of the "Lefts" increases: in Glasgow, for example, only a week ago, Maxton and other I. L. P. leaders were greeted with enthusiasm by a demonstration of 100,000 workers.

The Party and the Election

During the General Election, of course, we shall hear and see more of the party. This is a hard thing to say, but it is true, and one can even see that, under certain circumstances, a big party vote in the election will be a step backward for the movement.

How should the party approach the election? Clearly it should enter the election primarily to strengthen and develop the mass movement and not merely to get seats in Parliament. The worst thing that could happen would be that the naturally strong tendency amongst the workers is to rely upon the vote rather than upon their own organized strength, should be encouraged by our participation in the election. To enter the election to help to extend the mass agitation against the economy cuts and to prepare for strike action is one thing; to enter it to gain seats in Parliament is another. Let Communists go to the poll wherever possible by all means, but see that they utilize the campaign principally to gain support in the unions, in the factories, and at the unemployment exchanges, for the extra-parliamentary struggle against the employers' attack. Where it is not possible to raise the necessary money (150 pounds deposit is needed before a candidate can go to the poll which is lost unless a certain percentage of the total vote is registered for the candidate concerned) then let candidates be put up and lead mass marches of workers to the polling stations to vote Communist, although such votes will of course be disallowed. But everywhere the party should carry to the workers the message: build your movement in the factories and outside the factories for in this way only can you achieve anything real.

Fighting—for Votes!

Unfortunately, the party is not entering the fight in this way. The party seeks seats in parliament: it is therefore to concentrate mainly upon certain constituencies where they believe they have a chance of getting in. Although this plan has been partly defeated by the insistence of the locals upon running at least "demonstrative" candidates, yet in the main

it still holds good. It can only mean that in many areas, the workers will get no real and effective lead from the party, that the party comrades in certain areas will work, not amongst the workers in their own areas but in nearby places where, by concentration, the party hopes to secure a seat in Parliament.

This is opportunism of the worst kind and it means, so far as the party leaders are concerned, that they are more concerned about results to report to their Stalinist masters than with the effect of their campaign upon the mass of the workers.

Against such a policy, the Oppositionist in England should fight not only by raising the question inside the party but also by refusing to consent to the desertion of the workers in their own areas for the purpose of getting a Communist in somewhere else.

Division and Doubt

The serious nature of the crisis is revealed in the election, for at this election no less than eight different groups will fight for seats.

The Liberals are now divided into three groups: one led by Sir John Simon who is pro-National government and pro-tariff; another group led by Sir Herbert Samuel who is a member of the National government but anti-tariff; and a third group led by Lloyd George who is now out openly against the National government and getting nearer to the Labour party. The Labour party, save for one or two constituencies where the I. L. P. are running their own "rebel" candidate, without the sanction of the Labour party, will fight as one party but with their late leaders fighting against them and with several "National-Labour" candidates in various constituencies. Then, of course, there are "independents" of all shades, a few "Prohibitionists" and so on to make confusion worse confounded. To forecast the result of this election is obviously impossible but the Communist party, of whose candidates about forty may go to the poll, will do well in spite of its stupidities and the Labour party will probably get a very large working class vote. The result will be known on October 28.

The Case of the Meerut Prisoners

The campaign for the release of Meerut prisoners, three of them English comrades, started well over two years ago. Since then, it has, save for occasional spurts, almost disappeared and real effective agitation has long abandoned. Occasionally a letter from one of the English prisoners would be received and published in the Daily Worker. Will the Daily Worker publish the latest letter received from Meerut Jail?

In this letter, the English party leaders are bitterly reproached not only for the failure to conduct an effective campaign but also for their failure to fulfill their obligations to the English prisoners. The letter states that money due to them has not been sent as it should have been sent, which, considering the position of the prisoners, who have been nearly three years in Meerut Jail, is scandalous. The proletarian members of the League against Imperialism Executive raised an indignant protest, much to the embarrassment of the party functionaries present.

An attempt is being made to hush the matter up, but it should be made known and remedied. October 12, 1931

-ANGLICUS.

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Silence in the Ranks of the Party on the Tom Mooney Case

There is a sickening silence in my unit of the Communist Party of the U. S. pertaining to one of the major events of direct national and international importance for the working class—the appeal of Tom Mooney. There are over twenty members in my unit. Some are old members of the party. In that respect, the composition is such that the unit might have a good political guidance. But a good political guidance would immediately raise a question: why is the spirit of Tom Mooney's letter unacceptable to the party? The defeats and failures suffered by that part of the American working class which follows the leadership of the party are due to a large extent to the "united front from below" of the third period. And an honest leadership in the unit would not be able to escape the question: Why are these false theories stopping us from using the experiences of a genuine united front applied so many times by comrade Lenin? the united front which helped the party to gain so much influence in the Sacco-Vanzetti case? the same united front asked for by Tom Mooney in his open letter?

One thing is self-evident: the big party bureaucrats are afraid that those questions may be asked by those who are not corrupted as yet by the apparatus. The stifling silence on the burning question of first importance for the class struggle can be traced to them.

Yet, how can the bureaucrats explain the fact that Tom Mooney, whom even they do not dare to call a "social Fascist", offers a united front with those organizations enumerated in his letter?

A bureaucratic explanation is ready: "Tom Mooney does not know the actual situation in the labor movement of the country." Which situation? The one created by our defeats, such as in the Independent Shoe Workers Union, the N. T. W. I. U., the rotting away of the Food Workers Industrial Union? or the recent defeats in the coal mines and in the Paterson textile strike? But even to touch these situations would mean to expose the Fosters, Dunnes, Browders and the rest. They are only the willing tool of the same Losovsky whose "self-critical" letter was read in the unions. In this letter, Losovsky has enumerated all our defeats about which it became

impossible to maintain silence, but the only reason given for those defeats is "our inability". Yes, inability to realize the impossible "united front from below", which so far as the present leadership is concerned, is dooming Mooney to a permanent stay in prison.

In order to set at ease the revolutionary conscience of the rank and file of the party, the usual, dizzying cry is raised for "All out to demonstrate for Tom Mooney!" But the party is small. Its influence is far from what it should be and therefore those "all" may prove to be very few, and do prove to be very few.

Therefore, an order from above is

The N.T.W.I.U. at Work in Boston

After a long period of passivity the N. T. W. I. U. has awakened to the fact that something must be done. And while this is not the first time this has been said, let us hope and see that this time it is not only put into words, but into deeds.

During the past week, several meetings were held with leading comrades in an endeavor, finally, to consider seriously the united front policy. It must be said that it took long before we succeeded in getting a "leader" down to Boston and when Burochovitch finally came he received, together with a warm welcome, the well-deserved criticism to the G. E. B. for the many shortcomings as well as for sending away some of the heads to Russia during a period of such acute struggles. At a time when the furriers in New York and the cloak and dress makers throughout the industry needed leadership the most, no leader could spare three days in Boston but could spend nine months in the Soviet Union — with the result that the needle trades suffered severely. And today we have a shadow of what once promised to be a broad movement. However, this shadow still has life and needs building up. Every thinking worker will agree that the needle trades union needs the immediate and intensive activity of all forces including the leadership. How, then, could Hyman leave for the Soviet Union with the farewell words: "When the workers

will need me, I will come back?" When does Hyman think the time will be more pressing than the present? It is hardly believable that he thinks that the workers do not need him any longer, for he knows the situation thoroughly and also knows that the workers feel it too keenly to accept his statement literally. However, the future will undoubtedly tell the truth.

The united front question is not new and has received much mention but never been made clear to the minds of the workers. Consequently we often hear: "Yes, a united front, but how is it to be enforced?" This question intensified the interest of the workers to find out this time just what the leadership had to propose. When we came to the meeting and after Burochovitch spoke for an hour, he failed, as so many times in the past, to bring forth clearly this idea. Calling to the workers to organize shop committees, make this their fighting body that will demand conditions, that the workers are not compelled to join the Industrial Union is not enough to clarify to the workers the united front policy. We must in a united front draw up a slogan for demands. Together with the Right wing workers who are still deceived by their corrupt leaders, bring our demands to these leaders, emphasizing that they shall not sign agreements for us without fighting for our conditions, and if they will not do this then we will

REWARD!

From the October number of the trade journal of the "American Association for the Cure of Pyromaniacs, Adenoids, Monomaniacs, Paranoids and the Generally Mentally Infirm", we learn that the reward of fifty dollars for the capture, alive, breathing, or dead of Harrison George, is still being offered. The reward holds good whether he is apprehended under his own name or under an alias. Unemployed workers, take notice.

fight without them and against them.

The active membership meeting was followed by a mass meeting with Gold. This meeting of about four hundred workers, the majority of whom are Right wingers, again proved that the existing conditions are opening the eyes of the workers to the realization that only the unity of all workers can lead them to victory. It was precisely with this in mind that so many answered the call to pave the way for successful struggles in the coming season when the agreements with the bosses expire in February. It was here that our speakers had a splendid opportunity to bring forward more clearly our policy to the workers, and failed again to some extent.

However, let us call this the beginning of real earnest activity. Let us not neglect it as in the past. The time is now. Forward to a genuine united front of all workers in our coming struggles for victory. —C.

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