

ON THE WORKERS' FRONT

The Canadian Trials and the Opposition

Maurice Spector Addresses the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Canada

Toronto, November 9, 1931.
Central Executive Committee,
Communist Party of Canada.

Dear Comrades:
In the issue of the *Worker* of November 7th under the heading "The Spotlight on the Trial" there appears the following reference to the undersigned: "During the trial he (Maurice Spector) was in court but not in the prisoners' dock. . . ." The implication is drawn, tending to prejudice readers of our party organ, that I somehow voluntarily retired from the revolutionary party to escape the prisoners' dock. This is no time for recrimination. I am prompted to address you, however, not as a matter of mere self-justification but in the interest of our common cause, an objective statement of the facts.

Involuntary Exemption from Persecution

May I therefore be permitted to recall that my momentary exemption from the list of the accused is not of my own choosing? Had the capitalist authorities precipitated their attack on the legality of the party on any occasion prior to the Sixth Congress, the personnel of the comrades in the prisoners' dock would to some extent have been different, and as a member of the Central Committee, I should inevitably have shared the honor of indictment. I never withdrew from the Communist Party in whose organization and development I am proud to have participated. I was excluded, against my protests, by the Central Committee for reasons well known to you and to be found in the struggle over questions of principle and strategy ensuing in the Comintern after the death of Lenin.

Since my exclusion I have never ceased to be a member of a Communist committee and subject to its discipline. From the fundamental program of Bolshevism we have not, we believe, deviated a hair's breadth. We were never more convinced than to-day that the working class can conquer political power and reconstruct society on socialist foundations only by means of the proletarian dictatorship in the form of Soviet Power, and under the leadership of the Communist Party. Never were we more convinced that the world is in the throes of the epoch of the collapse of capitalism and the development of the social revolution. To the October Revolution as the prologue of the World Revolution, to the Soviet Union as the first proletarian state in history, we have never ceased to give our unwavering allegiance. Nor to the Communist International which we have always regarded as the organization of the revolutionary vanguard of the working class.

Why Revolutionists Are Proscribed

The Communist Party of Canada is under indictment not for any advocacy of "force and violence" but for organizing the resistance of the working class to the burdens of the economic crisis,

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BOSTON LECTURE!

A lecture on the "Rise and Fall of the British Labor Government" will be given by comrade Arne Swaback, member of the National Committee, Communist League of America (Opposition) on Friday, November 27, 1931, at 8 P. M., at the Ambassador Gardens, corner of Berkeley and Warren Aves., under the auspices of the Boston Branch of the Communist League of America (Opposition). The admission is 25 cents.

CHICAGO YOUTH AFFAIR

A Dance and Entertainment will be given by the Chicago Youth Group of the Communist League of America (Opposition) on Saturday, November 28, 1931 beginning at 8 P. M. at 1435 N. Western Avenue. All profits will go for the benefit of Young Spartacus.

Third Annual MILITANT DANCE

To celebrate the third year of the appearance of THE MILITANT.
AT
Stuyvesant Casino
9th Street and Second Avenue
ON
Saturday Nov. 21, 1931 - at 8 P. M.
DANCING - GOOD TIME FOR ALL - BUFFET
Admission: 50 Cents
Auspices: New York Branch, (Communist League of America (Opp.))

against unemployment and wage cuts. That is not to say that we make a secret of our program which flows from the scientific analysis of the motive forces of history. It is capitalism not Communism which engenders revolutionary crises. It is the unbearable contradiction between a mode of production ripe for socialization and the fetters of capitalist private property relations. But constitutional questions are primarily questions of power and the workers' conquest of political power demands as pre-requisites a sufficient degree of the demoralization of the ruling class in a given country and a sufficient degree of class consciousness in a majority of the working class. In this sense there is no immediate revolutionary crisis in Canada. But the attempt of the authorities to stem the tide of revolutionary organization by proscribing revolutionists will prove as futile as the anti-socialist legislation of Bismarck or the corresponding provisions of the Criminal Code of Czarist Russia.

(What follows is a matter of course. In an Open letter to the *Militant* (August 29, 1931) immediately on the arrest of the comrades indicted under section 98 of the Criminal Code, we publicly declared on behalf of the Canadian group of the Communist League of America (Opposition) our complete solidarity with the party in its struggle against the capitalist attack on its legal existence. In that connection we wrote that "there can be no question of the position every

class-conscious worker must take up towards this trial—absolute and militant struggle against the forces of reaction. The workers must organize in a broad united front, whatever their political and industrial affiliations, to protest against the wave of terror which the capitalist authorities have unleashed against the militants of the working class".

Restate the Left Opposition!

We are all aware that the Communists of the Left Opposition entertain significant internal differences with the official leadership of the Comintern touching principle and policy. We do not seek to minimize the importance of these differences for the correct Marxian development of the party. But the hour of common peril and crisis demands the utmost concentration of revolutionary forces. Confident that our differences can be resolved by the processes of party democracy and on the basis of the heritage of Marx and Lenin, we appeal for re-instatement in our full membership rights, prepared to submit to the requirements of party discipline.

In this spirit the members of our group have taken an active part in the work of defence of the arrested comrades, as delegates to the Workers Rights and Anti-Deportation Conference from various labor organizations. We shall remain at the disposition of the party for any tasks it may assign.

With Communist Greetings,
(Signed) Maurice Spector

ST. LOUIS OPPOSITION ACTIVE IN MOONEY MOVEMENT

ST. LOUIS.—
Following Tom Mooney's appeal for the organization of "Pardon Mooney Committees" as united front bodies, the I. L. D. in St. Louis made no attempt to initiate a movement along the lines laid down in that appeal. The members of the Left Opposition persuaded the St. Louis local of the Molders' Union to issue a call for a United Front Conference.

Through efforts of Opposition comrades, it was a genuine united front. Communists were not only not banned, but invitations were sent to the Communist Party and its auxiliary organizations. The Conference took place on September 16. There were some nineteen delegates from local A. F. of L. unions, two delegates from the Communist League of America (Opposition), U. U. L., I. W. O., the Unemployed Council, N. T. W. I. U., I. L. D. and other party auxiliaries. Although local party leaders were present, the Party was not officially represented.

The credentials committee reported for the seating of all delegates present. There was no objection. The chairman of the credentials committee, Charles Bloom, president of the Metal Trades Council of St. Louis, made a short speech in which he welcomed all the delegates to a genuine united front conference.

Stalinists Disrupt United Front Conference

The conference then got down to business. The party comrades distributed leaflets to the delegates, calling on organizations and individuals to attend a Mooney Conference called by the I. L. D. to be held September 20. This distribution caused objection to be taken from the floor. A discussion followed. In this discussion, a delegate from the T. U. U. L. introduced a prepared resolution calling upon the conference to recognize the pending I. L. D. conference, by having all delegates present attend the conference. In support of this resolution, the Stalinists launched into the familiar Stalinist tactic of name-calling and slander. Instead of greeting the participation in the conference of A. F. of L. locals together with Communists, as an evidence of the unity of the workers which it is the duty of the Communists everywhere to promote, they repelled these workers by heaping general abuse on the A. F. of L.

The delegates resented these methods and a heated discussion took place. Delegates took the floor and asked the Stalinists how they expected local unions to participate in a conference with them when all they could expect from the official communists was slander. The "third period" leaders had no answer. Their stupid tactics had placed them in the position of attempting to disrupt the Conference.

Confusion was the fruit of such a discussion. In order to prevent its becoming worse, a Left Opposition delegate introduced a motion to send a committee of three to the I. L. D. conference with instructions to report to the second gathering of this conference. The discussion on the Stalinist resolution consumed so much time that almost all the business of organization had to be tabled to the second meeting of the conference.

I. L. D. Holds Sectarian Meet

As for the I. L. D. conference, it was a narrow, sectarian affair, consisting only of delegates from the Party and Party auxiliaries. There was the usual speech-making about unity, denunciation of all non-Communists and the Left Opposition, as counter-revolutionists, enemies of the working class, etc., ad nauseam. The conference ran its appointed course and accomplished nothing.

This, however, did not disturb the bureaucratic complacency of the local Stalinist leaders. Nor did it teach them anything. To the second meeting of the United Front Conference, held after the I. L. D.'s "united front" affair, the party auxiliaries again sent delegates.

STALINISTS SLANDER EXPELLED GREEK WORKERS

On Thursday, November 5, the day before the expulsions of four supporters of the Left Opposition,—comrades Petras, Katsikis, Haidous and Marmarellis,—from the Greek Spartacus Workers Club *Empros* (issue of 11-7-31), renewed its campaign of slander in order to justify the expulsions.

The substance of *Empros*'s maliciously false attacks is as follows. First, comrade Koumoundoureas was denounced as the devil who had poisoned the minds of the other four comrades. Koumoundoureas never had been a Party member; he was rejected in the party unit because of his expression of sympathy for the Left Opposition. Of comrade Petras, *Empros* told the tale that, among other things, in order to avoid party obligations, he went to sell ice cream in the streets during the summer months; further, that in a demonstration some months later before the Greek Consulate, he had showed an attitude of cowardice, that he was generally inactive, and in the following summer again went to selling ice cream, and justified his inactivity on the ground of sympathy with the Left Opposition. In addition, that while he was a member of the district Greek Bureau of the party, he showed a contempt for the officials of the Party among the Greeks.

As for comrade Katsikis, he was also an egotist and even worse than Petras in his attitude toward the officials, and, like Petras, incapable of learning, and he also was a victim of the devil, Koumoundoureas.

Haidous who was active among the proletarian artists' group, was obsessed with the idea that he is a great artist,

and since the Spartacus Club could not recognize his talents, he had been out of the party for a long period.

The fourth comrade, Marmarellis, had dropped out from the party when the struggle became sharp, and had excused himself on the ground that his heart was weak, but now this illness does not prevent him from being active among the "renegades".

This is the story of *Empros*, typical of all the Stalinist flunkies and bureaucrats of either high or low order. What are the facts?
Comrade Koumoundoureas was actually one of the few active workers in the Spartacus Club. The appointed leaders were offended and disgruntled because comrade Koumoundoureas in a brief time succeeded in winning the respect and esteem of the class conscious workers because of his devotion to the movement. Hence, the party bureaucrats closed the door to him, and tried in every way to antagonize him. Thanks however to the comradely approach of the present Opposition comrades, he continued to remain active in the ranks of the workers and disdained the unproletarian attitude of the bureaucrats and their efforts to discourage any worker who shows capacities for leadership.

The Stalinist pen drips slander always against loyal comrades and revolutionists. The case of comrade Petras is a case in point. The Greek comrades know very well comrade Petras's activities in the class struggle on behalf of the workers. That he went to sell ice cream in the streets (well, isn't that counter-revolutionary?) is true. Stalinists find it necessary to do that too for simple enough reasons. Both comrades Petras and Katsikis were courageous enough to propose motions at meetings aimed to improve the functioning of the various organizations and to promote the movement. Such an attitude of initiative is contrary to the methods of Stalinism. It is very interesting to note, in regard to the Consulate demonstration, that Petras, after a motion by comrade Petras on the demonstration, in the name of the Greek Bureau, published an article in *Empros*, which criticized the failure of the Party to organize adequately the preparations for the demonstration.

Comrade Haidous served for years in the proletarian artists group, gave liberal financial support to the movement and supported every working class struggle, such as demonstrations, anti-evictions, etc.

Lastly, comrade Marmarellis is still suffering from heart trouble; and only his devotion to the revolutionary movement, causes him, in spite of everything, to remain active and to carry out the work of the Left Opposition among the Greek workers who are still under the malignant influence of Stalinism.

No attacks from the Greek organ of the bureaucrats will stop the Greek Opposition comrades from carrying out their revolutionary duty. The Greek workers will continue to hear again soon from the Left Opposition.

—H. L. GOLDBERG.

Furriers Need Real Move for Unity

Since the failure of the Unity Conference between the Industrial Union and the Fur Workers International, there has been another United Front movement on foot.

It has been known and become an established fact that the conference held during the month of September between the Fur Department of the Industrial Union, the International Fur Workers Union, were only maneuvers. The proposal for such conferences was only a move on the part of the right wing clique of the Fur Council to stave off the pressure of the fur workers against the intolerable conditions in the shops. Another aspect was the fact that Stetzky wanted to gain the upper hand in the Council through the Unity maneuvers and to give a blow to Kaufman. The events following the break-up of the conferences testify to that. Since then Stetzky and afterwards the whole Joint Council resigned. Kaufman appointed a temporary committee to take charge of the New York Joint Council.

Meanwhile activities are going on among those furriers who are followers of the United Rank and File Committee—an organization prompted by the Needle Trades Workers Industrial Union. The original program of the Rank and File Committee was changed time and again, until it is really impossible for the fur worker to know what it stands for or what it strives to achieve. But the recent manifestations were to the effect that the rank and file committee will try to carry out the united front in the shops. It will also try to influence the thousands of fur workers and to rally the sympathizers of the Left wing for a fight inside the International against the class-collaboration policies of Kaufman and against the breaking-up of the shops under the Industrial Union control.

At present, this United Front Committee under the leadership and guidance of the middle-heads in the T. U. U. L. has undertaken to execute a maneuver which is unprecedented in the struggle of the Left wing. When the offices in the joint council became vacant due to the resignation of Stetzky and company, the rank and file committee decided to ignore Kaufman's appointment of the temporary officers. Instead of advancing a demand for regular elections of officers for the

Joint Council, these super-politicians proceeded to hold "elections" for joint council officers under their own auspices. In this manner they expected to "elect" themselves into the leadership of the New York furriers.

Such a move might have been conceived of if at least a great majority of the furriers, members of the International, were under their immediate influence. As the division of forces stands at present, this policy is a policy of suicide for the Left wing in the International. The giant minds who have conceived this policy, are undoubtedly wrong, but they are not fools enough to believe that upon the completion of these elections, the Joint Council will be handed over to them on a silver platter. This is why they will not be caught napping when the leadership is refused to them. They already have their next move on the chess-board, worked out: First, to go through with these elections, fully confident that their officers would be elected, regardless of the number of furriers participating in the elections. And, secondly, after the offices of the council are refused them, to call a unity conference with the Industrial Union and bring forth "One United Union".

Demand Elections with Participation of All Registered Furriers

Every furrier in the trade knows that the Rank and File Committee is the Industrial Union, with the same leadership and the same approach to the burning problems of the fur workers. The policy of ignoring at this time the New York Joint Council is a fatal mistake. The results of this action will only react against the Left wing in the immediate sense and in the long run. Kaufman on the other hand will utilize this mistake and consolidate his strength for another crusade against the conditions of the workers. It will give substance to his cry that the Left wing is not interested in real unity.

Our tactic at this moment should be: To demand immediate elections of the Joint Council with all registered workers, having the right to vote and to run for office. Workers behind in dues because of unemployment should not be disqualified. The Left wing, the Opposition, in the International should have its candidates on the ballot, running on a Left wing program which would es-

pecially emphasize the need for unity of all furriers in one union. We must urge all workers to participate in the elections. The more workers who take part in the elections through the influence of the Left wing, the more of a showing will the Left wing make in the elections.

The Left wing would have a good chance now to score a victory in the elections of the Joint Council. Our call and participation in the elections would prove to the workers our sincerity in the fight for solidarity in the ranks of the furriers; it would prove our readiness to stand with the furriers and by the furriers in their struggle against all shades of Kaufmanism (Sorkin-Stetzky, etc.). Through a consolidated Left wing within the International we will herald a fight for One United Union of the furriers in New York and elsewhere, that will exterminate Kaufmanism from the ranks of the furriers.

Left Wing Must Support Striking Dress Furriers

Our second step must be to advance a call for a united front to help the striking fur dressers in Brooklyn and Newark against the 25% wage cut. The loss of this strike would be a defeat for the furriers generally. Even though this strike is at present under the leadership of the Right wing bureaucrats of the International, our aid to the workers in their fight to maintain conditions would raise the prestige of the Left wing in the eyes of the workers.

The time of the expiration of the existing agreements between each one of the Unions and the bosses draws near. Our forces are broken up; the sentiment for unity among the furriers is growing stronger; the offensive of the bosses against our standards is gaining impetus. We must consolidate all our strength to repulse this offensive. By united action to help the striking fur dressers, by a United Conference to work out demands at the expiration of the agreements, the fur workers will be able to wield a united weapon against the onslaught of the bosses.

We propose these demands to the rank and file of the fur workers of the Industrial as well as of the International Unions and call upon them to discuss these proposals and to work for their adoption.
—ROBERT BRILLIANT.

Laval's Visit

(Continued from page 1)

proletarian revolutions. It is taking all measures to crush it if possible. The French Bourgeoisie a Worthy Ally
France remained the strong European capitalist power in face of the crisis. Her internal market with its large peasant economy proved itself a strong absorbent. By virtue of low wages her production for the foreign market was cheap. Her bourgeoisie succeeded in strengthening the ties with, and continually bolstering the little entente. The present government is of the Bourgeoisie tight section, though headed by Laval, the former "socialist". Its economic non-aggression pact with the Soviet Union is solely in the interest of more effective exploitation of the Russian market. The French bourgeoisie is entering into a marauders' block with American imperialism for the redistribution of the world is, of course, nursing its own hopes of thereby attaining a larger ration in world economy.

American imperialism can well use this ally for the furtherance of its own heinous designs. It was with this in view that the American capitalist press called Senator Borah tactless when, at the time of the Laval visit, he advocated changes of the European boundaries as laid out by the Versailles Treaty. He was otherwise willing to leave the question of disarmament to France itself as it sees fit—and why should he not leave that to the ally? While the latter proposition pleased the French bourgeoisie, the former, being advanced at this moment, was somewhat painful. But then, it may serve in good stead for Senator Borah's real masters as a warning to the ally as to just how far it can go.

These definitely marked constellations of imperialist forces prove again that the kernel of contemporary international relations is still to be found in the furiously growing contest of the powers for redistribution of the world market. More precisely the contest between the United States and England.

American imperialism has definitely assumed its role of the main fortress of world reaction. Under its direct tutelage there is a sweeping onrush of reaction throughout capitalist Europe. In France the Right bourgeois block is more firmly in the saddle; in England the conservatives are in power stronger than before; in Germany a constant stiffening of emergency decrees. More serious yet, however, are the growing fascist hordes in Germany. While American imperialism may not yet be ready to assume the risk of giving support to an open rule of those hordes, they are being nourished as powerful reserves against the proletarian revolution.

From these prospects the important question inevitably arises: What is the Communist International doing to prepare the working masses to meet the onslaught of reaction. Unquestionably the immense pressure of the crisis, the ceaseless capitalist offensive and the reactionary governmental decrees, will bring the struggles of the workers more into the political field. It will favor a Leftward development of the masses. There are already such evidences in Germany, in its embryo in England and elsewhere. But at the same time it is impossible to close one's eyes to the weakening of the parties due to costly blunders of leadership in practically every capitalist country. In England this weakening became particularly outstanding in the recent political crisis and the elections. In France the strikes of last Autumn brought victory to reformism largely due to the party failure of applying the united front policy. In Germany there can be no other results than weakening from the dastardly adventure of a reckless Communist leadership of a united front with the fascists in the Prussian referendum.

The "Third Period" estimates spread its dangerous illusions of revolutionary upsurges not yet at hand. It deliberately aided illusions of the movement, its possibilities appearing stronger than reality. Its results became the policy of adventures. But worst of all, it prepared a new "turn" to the Right which has already found its classical expression in the united front policy with the German fascists.

The Stalin leadership carries the heavy burden of responsibility for decimating and politically weakening the Comintern forces, for reducing them to a mere appendage of interest of state of the Soviet Union. By the policies of this leadership, the progress of the world proletarian revolution has already been put in a position of being contradictory to the economic progress of the Soviet Union. This has become mainly expressed in the fear of upsetting the present status quo of the powers, that is, the capitalist equilibrium prior to the completion of the Five Year Plan. But the capitalist equilibrium does not remain constant. From the serious weakening caused by the economic crisis, we now have the new constellation of forces; the powerful block under American imperialist hegemony to further strengthen the capitalist equilibrium against the working class. It is developing with breath-taking speed and does not at all wait for the completion of the Five Year Plan. It will aim to take ruthless advantage of the weak position of the Communist parties.

Thus the chief contradiction is that of the task of the epoch and the maturity of the Communist Party.

These imperialist preparations can bring immediate revolutionary situations. To prepare—not to miss these situations—is the pressing need. This has become mandatory upon the Comintern leadership.
—ARNE SWABECK.

Agents and newstands throughout the country that now handle THE MILITANT will also carry Young Spartacus.