The Meaning of the Elections

EDITORIAL NOTES

WHERE IS THE MOONEY MOVEMENT?

It is nearly three months since Tom Mooney issued his memorable appeal "To All Militant and Revolutionary Labor Organizations and Groups" for united action in his behalf. Thereby he put the fifteen-year old case once more on the agenda of the labor movement. He aroused the enthusiasm of every conscientious militant for a new struggle for his liberation and for the cause of the working class which he symbolizes in his prison cell. Because of the profound response which it called forth from the depths of the movement, the call of Tom Mooney sent the leaders of all the factions scurrying to prepare their answer. The class war prisoner has a great authority and nobody dared to ignore his appeal. All the factions and groups answered. Each in its own way made a gesture of compliance. And there the matter rests at the present moment. Where is the new "Mooney movement" which the rank and file militants desire with all their hearts. It is not yet up the horse-play of a united front emunder way. Even the campaign to set the great movement in motion still waits the initial steps of organization.

And this is not because there is no basis for the issue. All the elements for a truly gigantic movement, one that can reach into the very depths of the most conservative labor organizations and set its members into action, are at hand. It is the method that is lacking: it is understanding and the will of the leaders of the factions and groups to whom Mooney addressed his appeal It must be said plainly, because it is the bitter and incontestable truth: they have all diplomatized with the appeal; they have played factional politics with it; they have sabotaged it. The problem is to break through this rotten game. And the best weapon for this is the appeal of Mooney himself. In that document the means and methods for unfolding the movement can be found.

Tom Mooney's letter of August 18th is a remarkable presentation of the question in every respect. All the sabotagers justify themselves on the ground that "Mooney is in jail and doesn't understand the situation". They are all wrong The class war prisoner, immured in San Quentin these fifteen years, understands the question better than they do. It is even possible that his superior wisdom can be attributed to his imprisonment. New turns and new periods percolate through the prison walls only after a certain delay. Mooney has assimilated the idea of the united front as Lenin taught it. Perhaps he has not yet learnrate he has not been converted to them. That is his strength, and the strength of a 15% flat increase in freight rates, his appeal That is why his appeal constifutes the guiding line alone which crease, whose proceeds are to be pooled alone a real mass movement for his lib- among the weaker roads, shows again eration can proceed.

The open letter of Tom Mooney was and yet remains a great opportunity for the Communist Party and the International Labor Defense. On the one hand it was a formal notice from Mooney to the trade unions, to the socialists and to the so-called progressives: no exclusion of the Communists from the Mooney movement. On the other hand-rightly understood-it was an intimation to the Communists: I depend on you to press the issue and lead the way, to force the reformists and the trade unions, including the most conservative ones, to fight with you in a common front. Mooney meant to say, as he said personally to the present writer three years ago: "The reds are the dynamic element; they must start the movement; they must set it into motion."

It is bad that the leaders of the Party didn't understand this, and still worse that they do not understand it yet. They are people to whom the obvious is aiways a mystery sealed with seven seals. Any one who has as much as a causal acquaintance with the line-up in the labor movement ought to know that the trade unions under their present leadership, and the other groups addressed in the letter, whether conservative, pseudo-radical or socialist, will not make a genuine and militant fight for Mooney in deference to the sentiments of the ranks, arrange a formal demonstration, make a mild, polite and orderly protest -all of which means nothing, or next to nothing, in such a bitterly-contested class issue as the Mooney case.

But is it not equally clear that the protests of the Communists and their close sympathizers alone—a mere handful of the American working classscare nobody, and least of all the stiffnecked and class-conscious persecutors appears to be the beginning of purely

the protests of the Communists so long as these protests are not supported by wider masses of the workers. This is the crux of the question. Without the initiative and driving force of the Communists-"the dynamic element", the organizing force-there can be no militant movement on a national scale. But the agitation of the Communists cannot be effective until it penetrates the masses and sweeps them along in a joint move ment. Tom Mooney understood this as his letter shows. His letter created the most favorable ground to realize this necessary union of forces. The Stalinist leaders of the Party have bungled the whole question. The next move is up to the Communist workers. It is for them to force the issue and compel a change of course.

What does this mean, concretely, now? It means for the Communist Party and the I. L. D. to make direct, formal proposals to all the organizations and groups mentioned in Tom Mooney's letter for joint action on the single issue of the fight for Mooney. It means to give bracing only Communist organizations

other cases will not lose by this temyet time means in New York and such other places where separate conferences have been organized-Communist and goes without saying that every direct engineer in the White House. proposal to the official leadership of the reformist organizations and conferences has to be accompanied and supplemented by an intensive agitation in the ranks of these organizations to compel an acceptance of the unity proposals.

This is the way to blow the breath of life into the Mooney movement. This is the tactic of the united front as Lenin taught it, and as Mooney appealed for in his letter. The reformists are doing everything in their power to make this letter remain a scrap of paper. But we have no advice to offer them. Our suggestions are directed to the Communists as a means of forcing the reformists. The Leninist tactic of the united front is a powerful means to this end. That is not the least of its merits.

-J. P. C.

THE ECONOMIC MONTH

broke in the first week of October, in- and paper values have been created at itiated by the Steel Corporation, and a more rapid rate than physical goods. quickly followed by Bethlehem the The outstanding illustration is the fact Aluminum Co., Allied Chemical, etc. that the Federal Reserve banks, on Oct. Capitalism serves notice on the worker 28, 1931, had outstanding in the form of that it can no longer maintain the "Am- rediscounted paper and bills bought in erican standard of living". In previous the open market, 1 1-2 billion dollars, crises, too, wages have been cut, but they have sooner or later recovered, as and less than 400 million a year ago-American capitalism has increased its a year during which business has eerproductivity to new high levels. Unless tainly not improved. To be able to pump American capitalism can turn the trick again, this time wages will not come

American capitalism needs low wages, if it can be created on such a low cost tivity, profits-and, if the workers do basis, due to low wages, that the newlycreated fixed capital will produce a profit. Such a policy may not make sense, but it makes money.

The recently-announced decision of the and suggesting instead a 3 to 4% inhow hard is the way of the demagogue and the social reformist in times of crisis when a showdown is called for. The maintenance of wages, "agreed to". by reason why the showdown was deferred in these gloomy times. so long is that the railroads fear the strong railroad unions, and particularly the militancy of the rank and file as demonstrated in the 1922 strike of the shopmen. How far this militancy has been worn down by the growth of company unions, B. and O.-ism, and the class collaboration policies of the leadership will be demonstrated in the next few weeks. In Canada, the question of voluntary acceptance of a wage cut has been put up to the workers and definitely

The flood of gold out of the country, and the tendency to hoard bank notes, have both subsided sharply, and Monday, Nov.2, for the first time in six weeks, there was an actual gain of some \$25,-000,000 of gold. These who expected a spectacular breakdown of the banking system are probably disappointed. The American banking system has a long way to go yet, in concentration and the creation of still more gigantic banking monopolies than have been known yet, before its internal contradictions, together At best they will only render lip-service with those of capitalism in general, split it into pieces. There are still some 25,-000 separate banks in this country, compared with in Canada, and four that amount to anything in England.

> The price of wheat has recovered from 48 cents a bushel early in October to 67 cents; cotton and petroleum have also been strong. The bourgeois press, with its indestructible optimism, sees the beginning of an upswing. The basic factor

The long-expected wave of wage-cuts; the price of commodities; that is, credit against less than a billion six weeks ago these credits into the money market, the Federal Reserve had to create an artificial money shortage, which sent up East 10th Street, New York, N. Y. interest rates quickly and commodity first to meet the aggravated competition prices more slowly. The immediate purof England and Germany, second, to en- pose of the inflation was to be able to able it to create new fixed capital at low meet the outflow of gold-now that this costs based on low wages plus low raw has been achieved, the inflation will in material costs. The fact that there is all probability either be checked at once already an excessive supply of fixed capi- or if it gets out of hand, will itself gental in the form of industrial equipment, erate the forces which will before long not offer adequate resistance, wages too.

able to plan as well as communism? as the worker's interest in his wages is the same as the capitalist's interest in his profits. The advice of the advisory council need not be taken too seriously, the railroads at Mr. Hoover's 1929 con- if it comes to a showdown; and after all, ferences, is a pleasant illusion shipwreck- it will help to amuse the working class, ed on the rocks of reality. The only particularly the most advanced workers,

> Capitalists are being kept busy these days, when they have no business of their own to attend to, by taking the place of nice young ladies from the set-

in which the Mooney case is tacked on as necessary ideologically to the capitalto a number of other issues, and in its as his profits and his power. The which its special appeal is lost-the same broad social vision is applied to relief activities for busted and misporary segretation of the Mooney issue; guided bankers by the Hoover Banking they will gain a hundred-fold by the Plan. True, the bankers who need relief sweep of the broader Mooney movement have to come with hat in hand and three which can be created. To change the different kinds of security before they course and correct it now while there-is can get a loan, and there is no telling but that some of the relievers will need relief themselves before long, but a good game of ring-around-a-rosy with banking reformist-to propose to the reformists funds will give evidence of constructive a merger of the conferences into one. It activity from the greatly misunderstood

—В. J. F.

«YOUNG SPARTACUS» OUT THIS MONTH!

The National Youth Committee of the Communist League of America (Opposition) is speeding the work of publication of the first number of Young Spartacus. The announcement of the proposed publication of a youth paper of the Left Opposition in the United States met immediately with an enthusiastic response. In New York a drive for donations and subscriptions is now being carried on by the comrades, and a number of donations and subscriptions have already been received, as well as bundle orders. 100 subscriptions is the immediate goal of the Youth Fraction of New York.

The subscription price to Young Spartacus is fifty (\$0.50) cents per year; for Canada and foreign, \$0.65. Older comrades and workers are asked to subscribe on behalf of young people whom they know, or for their children and friends, and also to aid in the general subscription drive for Young Spartacus. Bundle orders are at the rate of \$

cents per copy in bundles of five or The first issue of Young Spartacus, will go to press in less than one month The present editorial committee consists of Joseph Carter, M. Abern and George Ray. Send denations, bundle orders and subscriptions to Young Spartacus, 84

- The Opposition Forum -

On Friday, November 6, at the Open Forum of the New York Branch of the Communist League of America (Opposition), comrade Arne Swabeck spoke on "Fourteen Years of the Russian Revolurailroads, houses, will not hinder capital- counteract it and cause renewed declines | tion." The comrades felt that this forum ism from adding still more fixed capital in prices, interest rates, industrial ac- and anniversary celebration was worthwhile, for one of the best methods for joining in solidarity with our Russian comrades, is to understand the nature Senator La Follette is sponsoring a bill and significance of the October revoluto create a national economic advisory tion, to appreciate its great achievements, council. In this worthy effort he is to know the dangers that threaten it seconded by the U. S. Chamber of Com- from without and within so that we can Interstate Commerce Commission dony- merce and the A. F. of L. After all, be armed to fight against them. Equiping the application of the railroads for why not? Why should not capitalism be ped with knowledge and insight, we are prepared more realistically and enthus-Production for use, for which planning iastically to participate in the defense is necessary, is the same as production of the Russian Revolution. It was in for profit, which will certainly be inter-this manner that comrade Swabeck fered with by planning; in the same way spoke. He made an analysis of the economic processes developing in the Soviet Union, and cited the tasks of the Communists in the capitalist countries in relation to the Soviet Union, and spoke of the role of the Left Opposition.

> At the next forum, the chairman announced, comrade James P. Cannon will speak on "The Haymarket Martyrs". The workers of today can learn many valuable lessons from the great 8-hour day movement that culminated in the a Workers' and Farmers' Government. Haymarket events of the '80s, particularly now when the tremendous unemworking classes. Unemployment relief the 6 hour day. The lecture promises demands without real examination as to of 75 immediate demands. The result committees, money raising activities, to be an interesting one, and takes place help keep them in trim and bring that on Friday, November 13 at the Labor rosy glow of self-satisfaction which is Temple, 14th Street and Second Ave.

(Continued from page 1) The Communist Party Vote

An interesting feature in this connection is that appeal to the secondary or cancer growths of capitalism,-corruption, gangsterism, etc.-had no effect on the voters who overwhelmingly returned Tammany politicians or their blood-brother Republicans to office. Fundamental education on principle questions of socialism, the class struggle, etc. was naturally missing, with the exception the principles of Communism. here and there of a socialist candidate who spoke for "socialism" in the soc-

ialist manner. And what was the case with the Com munist Party and its election campaign. To cite one example, I. Amter, Commun ist candidate for Borough President of Manhattan, received the miserably, invotes were stolen or uncounted, as the Party claims, and it is still far beyond lgitimate expectations. The living is-Eucs were there: the economic crisis and unemployment, around which the Communists have centered their agitation for two years. Why the pitiful showing in the elections?

The Communist Objective in Elections We do not over-emphasize the counting of noses at election time, but its value as a partial barometer of working class development has been indicated. For Communists, election time offers a special opportunity to intensify the continuous, all-the-year-round campaign to reach the workers with the message of communism, to explain the class struggle and the solution. Even actual election to office, unlike with the socialists, is for Communists essentially but a chance to use the parliamentary tribunal for Communist education, to point out why the capitalist machinery of government cannot be used to achieve fundamental gains for the working class, and why a complete class change of government and social system is the only bona-fide

Did the official New York Communists carry out the tasks of Communists during election time? The answer is NO. If it is true that the Communist Party and movement has an influence greater than its organizational expression, it failed indeed to consolidate its strength and influence at the ballot box. Actually, however, misleadership and false policies of the Party in the trade unions and in strikes reflected themselves also at the polls, in the failure of unionists and strikers to vote Communist.

The N. Y. Party Program

The Militant has dealt before with the crying weaknesses of the party program in the New York elections, which found similar manifestations in Philadelphia and other points. There was first and foremost a program of immediate demands with no less than 75 demands, good and correct ones mixed, like chopped herring or chop-sucy, with demands of the most reformistic and petit-bourgeois kind, a mish-mash that left everyone bewildered as to what it all meant. These demands concerned themselves with cheaper milk, ex-service-men's demands, a limit of \$3,000 salary for police captains (! Yes, it is sad, but true), the return of money to mulcted bank depositors, for unempoyed relief, against the war danger, defense of the Soviet Union, and, lastly, the 75th demand, for We are given to declare that no Socialist Party local in American history ever put together such an enormous list of meaning or purpose in regard to class content or reality to the situation. The masses, it is true, again voted

overwhelmingly for the capitalist system. But there were some thousands who, thinking a little more clearly, voted for the first time for what they regarded as a "vote for socialism". They voted either for the Socialist Party or the Socialist Labor Party. Why not for the Communist Party, the official representative of the future society commun-

ism? Because the Communist Party campaign was scarcely distinguishable from a stupid, near-sighted campaign such as one expects from reformists and socialists. Under the conditions of a volume is just one way a worker could reflect

in' making his decision. What Kind of Demands Should be Raised We are for immediate demands. But they cannot be 75, or 50, or 25 or even 15. and use them as their cover and protect-They must be a few clearly and definite- ors. ly selected and centralized demands which fit a given situation. Immediate demands are not permanent; nor are the same ones always emphasized. These selected demands must appeal to and

Very Significant Facts! -- by Alfa

his approval.

be of great significance. When Orjonik- but every informed apparatus man adidze was transferred to the Ali-Union mits that it might have been so. In the Council of People's Economy, Yaroslavsky undoubtedly expected the appointment to the post of chairman of the Central Control Commission; but the appointee was Andreyev, one who is much younger and who, it would seem, "earned" it incomparably less. There were even whispers in Moscow, half was going over to the opposition.

As a matter of fact the leadership of the G. P. U. has been concentrated in recent years in the hands of Yagoda. He seemed to be the natural successor of Menzhinsky, Suddenly Yagoda is demoted to the post of second assistant and the little known Akulov is advanced

to first place. What is the meaning of this? Yaroslav sky and Yagoda are two figures of the same order, of a similar type, as if created for similar commissions. Closely tied to each other, they were carrying out, through the two organs of apparatus repressions-the C. C. C. and the G. P. U .- Stalin's most delicate commissions in the field of struggle with his opponents, and even in matters of personal revenge against all who at any time, in any way, brushed against Stal-

These people, Yaroslavsky and Yagoda, could be assigned any sort of commission, without the risk of meeting with their refusal. Who but Yaroslavsky could be commissioned to bring about the suicide of pure Glazman? Who but Yagoda could have been capable to starve out the innocent Boutov? And what other pair could better carry out "the soviet and party order"-the shooting of Blumkin? One could consider quite probable that the alleged article suggested third hand to the reactionary sive ones, should be expected in the fuagainst the Soviets. We do not affirm more "very eignificant facts".

Even the bureaucratic shiftings can that this is precisely how it happened, past, there were hundreds of similar feats carried out under the direct instructions of Stalin, or in the hope of

It would seem: exactly who should be put at the head of the C. C. C. if not of reformist demands, why should any the incomparable Yaroslavsky! And worker choose particularly the Communwho is more qualified than Yagoda at ist as against the milder-toned Socialist. earnest, half serious, that Yaroslavsky the head of the G. P. U. to execute Stalin's most "intimate" commissions?

The Apparatus Men Are Nervous

Nevertheless, why was this so picturesque Yaroslavsky pushed aside by the pale, though zealous, figure of Andreyev? And why did Yagoda, who is ready for everything, have to concede his place to Akulov? This is an interesting question. In the impossibility for Stalin to appoint to the most responsible posts the people most necessary to nameless, but insurmountable resistance of the apparatus against the latest reof the apparatus against the latest results of the Stalinist system. In general and in the main, the Stalinites will accept Stalin and all that is not alien to ple most needed by him even in secondvoiceless struggle with the apparatus, year's dance and entertainment. which somehow feels upon itself the pressure of the Party. The passing by of every means to have the Militant Ball Yaroslavsky and the demotion of Yagoda a spirited and happy gathering of the is a singular warning to Stalin on the comrades. part of the apparatus, one could almost There will be good music for the

press by Yagoda, after which Yaroslav- ture and even in greater numbers. A Keep this date open. Come to the Milisky, who is connected with him through growing alarm of the apparatus precedes tant Ball on November 21, at Stuyvesant co-participation, revealed in Pravds the inevitable awakening of the Party. | Casino. Trotsky's counter revolutionary crusade In the future we should expect more and

ANNIVERSARY DANCE

On Saturday, November 21, 1931, the him. But here we find that even Yaro- third annual Militant Ball will be held slavsky and Yagoda cannot swallow ev- in New York at the Stuyvesant Casino, amine its past and present. If it will erything down. Stalin has to make ex- 9th Street and Second Avenue. This will look straight, it will find that, wittingly traordinary efforts to retain the peo- be a grand get-together of all friends, sympathizers and members of the Comary and tertiary roles. Here lies the munist League of America (Opposition) symptom, one of many symptoms, of the Each year the attendance at this annual fact that Stalin who was lifted up affair has measurably grown, and an through the apparatus, is in a constant, even larger turnout is expected at this

The .committee in charge is utilizing

say a secret vote of lack of confidence. dancers and listeners, and at the tables Such symptoms, and even more express good food will be served. Comradeship,

THE DATE: NOVEMBER 21

meet the vital needs of the workers at the moment; but, moreover, they must be linked with and be capable of causing agitation against, difficulties for, and exposure of the capitalist class and capitalist government who will and can not carry out or concede to fundamental demands of the working class. Our object in a class sense, in presenting immediate demands in connection with our ultimate program, is WORKING CLASS EDUCATION AND ORGANIZATION for

Under the conditions, where king nunger held dominion in New York City with an approximate million unemployed, the issue of IMMEDIATE RELIEF, came first. As natural corrolaries to achieve real immediate relief, there followed the demand for unemployment insurance, at eredibly low vote of 1,789. Add what the expense of the bosses and government, agitation for a six hour day and five day week, and, from a broader but correct political class angle, the agitation for the widest possible economic collaboration between the capitalist United States and the Soviet Republic through the medium of the extension of large and long-term credits to the Soviet Union. These immediate demands, in election campaigns and NOW, remain the immediate demands and issues for the Comunists to present. These demands, alive and comprehensible, if intelligently presented, more than adequately cover the sum total of the actual working class demands set forth in the 75 demands by the Party. But it is even far more important to present clearly in the election campaign that there is no lasting way out for the working class but the Social Revolution. Win Workers to Communist Principles

The object of the Communists in election times and at all times, is to teach, to develop and to organize Communists. This is simple, but primary. If the Communist Party had really had this object in mind during the campaign, the results, votes or no votes, would have been better from a Communist viewpoint.

Far better to go to the extreme of alleged revolutionists as the Socialists Labor Party, and put forward only the demand for the realization of the Social Revolution, than like the Communist Party to put forward 75 demands which smother the main task of Communist education. The Communists cannot compete with the reformists or capitalists on the matter of amelioration of conditions of the workers; to do so means only to sink into the quagmire in which socialist weeds flourish, or into the quicksands in which the revolutionary outlook is buried.

The Central Committee on the Elections

On the day before the elections, the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Daily Werker, (11-2-31) said, in its appeal to the workers to vote the Communist ticket: "Our party . . . is the party of class war . . . It organizes the proletariat on the basis of class against class, working class against capitalist class, for the struggle for power."

What a pity it is that the Communist election campaign was not conducted on the lines of this basic appeal. At least then some workers would have undrestood the basic distinctions between the Communists and the Socialists, not to mention the capitalist parties. But it is this same Stalinized Central Committee that formulated the election program another brand of "socialist competition". That is, the Communists "competed" with the socialists on the platform and arena of the socialists and the socialists naturally won this "competition" hands

The Communist Party forgot the main issues in this campaign. In trying to understand the workers, it fell to the level of outlook of the, in the class sense, undeducated worker. The Party dealt too much with the manifestations of capitalism, and too little indeed with the causes and cures for capitalism.

In brief, capitalism in America held its ground, though getting ready to switch the personnel of its political committee, the government; it made no concessions and holds the fort. The Socialist Party, weak too, nevertheless developed its main ideology of reform and poultices for capitalism, and laid the ground a little better for the period when capitalism will need to seek them out

The Party Pays the Price of Wrong

The working class as a class is still capitalist-minded. It must yet take its first steps as an independent political force. The Communist Party had great opportunities to make forward strides for Communism, but failed almost totally. In a principle manner, there is only one answer to the failure of the official Communist Party. The Communist Party must once again set both feet on solid theoretical ground, it must exor unwittingly, it has been under the insidious and corrupting effects of Stalinist theory and practices, sinking, even as other Communist Parties, into national reformism and even local provincialism, coupled as yet with a general outlook and comprehension of communism. The elections are but an outstandding example. The Communist Party is paying the heavy toll of being wrong in theory and principles. Party ignorance receives payment in kind from the workers.

If the Communist Party will then examine a little further, they will see the Left Opposition standing by and offering the original Communist program of Lenin. Will the elections help the Party to learn, and to redress and reform itself

before it is too late? -MARTIN ABERN.

