

EDITORIAL NOTES

THE CASE OF DREISER

The ideological superstructure of class society is only a reflection, and thereby a defense, of its economic basis of exploitation. This applies also to literature. Do not write against the prevailing social system, and above all do not advocate another one: this is capitalism's real standard of literary values. It is the decisive criterion which its high-priests and critics bring to their judgment of literature, for all their pretences of artistic disinterestedness and prattle about "art for art's sake". We are witnessing an illustration of this law of class society at the present moment in the beginning of the campaign to "revalue" and discredit Theodore Dreiser.

Ridicule is the first weapon with which they are attacking the great writer whom only yesterday they were hailing as the king of American novelists. Through the authoritative medium of the New York Times they are passing the word to make fun of Dreiser. This is the way they treated his suit to restrain the exhibition of the motion picture distortion of "An American Tragedy" as just another murder trial. In like manner the same paper has greeted his investigations of the reign of terror in the Kentucky mine fields. Rest assured the critics will take the tip, as they always do when the masters of the broad speak up. A general attack against Dreiser's commanding position on the field of literature is in the cards.

Bourgeois literary opinion never welcomed Dreiser. Rather it accepted him after he had bludgeoned his way to eminence by the truly colossal achievements of his pen. He never painted the social system of his day in rosy hues. On the contrary. The author of "Sister Carrie" and "The Financier" showed it up in all its hideous ugliness and injustice down to the most sordid detail. In exposure of capitalist society as it really is—not sparing the whitest sepulchre of its "morality"—he blazed the trail for other writers. Among all the American writers who, following him, have taken the social milieu for their theme, he drew the truest, the most striking and revealing picture. "He stands alone", said Mencken, and in that he recorded not so much an opinion as an inescapable fact.

But it was not by virtue of these achievements alone that Dreiser won the universal acclaim that has been his in the recent years. It was something in the quality, or rather something lacking in the quality, of his writings that made it possible for him to gain the "recognition" of all the literary critics, including the little word-jugglers who complained about his "style". Dreiser drew no conclusions from the tales he told. This was his saving grace in the eyes of the bourgeois censors. Over everything he wrote there hung a heavy fog of pessimism, futility, fate. Bourgeois opinion could tolerate that. Cynicism is its own creed, and designation is its prescription for the masses.

Dreiser's fall from grace is not due, of course, to any weakening of his literary powers. The shafts of ridicule that are being hurled at him now, and the heavier attack that can be expected to follow—witness his indictment in Kentucky on a "morality" charge—proceed from the profound change that has taken place in Dreiser's own attitude toward social questions. As is known, he has arrived at a positive communist social view, and with the intellectual honesty and courage which marks him and distinguishes him from his contemporaries, he is speaking his conclusions out loud. This is his crime. For this they want to tear down and destroy the titan of American letters.

Let them try. They will not succeed. Every blow dealt at Dreiser by the literary hessians of the slave system will only endear him all the more to the masses. Indeed, it is quite possible that the gifted writer will begin only now to find his own public and become a real tribune of the people.

That part of the proletariat which is beginning to awaken, which is not resigned to slavery will hear him gladly. The working class movement of the present generation has been poor and weak. It had little to offer to the intellectuals, and because of that it had but few of them to espouse its cause, and out of that few it can safely be said that ninety per cent were four-flushers and pretenders. It is growing stronger now and it will gain in strength as the exploiting system reveals increasingly the fatal weakness which proceeds from its own inner laws. With this new strength will come an accession of intellectual forces turning away from the hopeless, decaying system. Theodore Dreiser is a herald of this development, and a most welcome one. Let us hope that his first courageous steps are motivated by a conviction that will not be shaken and by a determination to follow the path to the end. If that proves to be the case his loss of prestige in the bourgeois world will have abundant compensations, and will be in itself a tribute to him.

Since the second conference our New York branch has recruited 12 new members. Six Greek comrades who have for some time adhered to the Left Opposition views, were among these twelve. They were rewarded by the Stalinist bureaucrats with expulsion from the Greek Spartacus workers club. These comrades are already functioning as a fraction, preparing as a first step to issue some of our literature in Greek.

THE END OF THE LAWRENCE STRIKE

The general strike of the Lawrence textile workers—the second strike at Lawrence within the year—which started on October 5, has ended in a defeat for the workers. The 10 percent wage cut, the immediate cause of the strike, remains in force, and in all other respects the victory of the employers in this important struggle is indisputable. Such is the immediate outcome. As to how long they will hold the present advantage or how soon the workers will

be able to recuperate from their defeat and undertake a fresh struggle—these are questions to be answered in the future.

To our regret the Militant was not in a position to receive authentic information regarding the strike from responsible comrades on the ground. For that reason we were not able to comment on its development or to offer opinions about the tactics from week to week. For the same reason we refrain now from an analysis of the defeat.

Attention is drawn here to only one point, a very important one for the future of the Left wing labor movement. The statement of the United Rank and File Strike Committee (a pseudonym for the National Textile Workers Union) says in its statement of November 11th, printed in the Daily Worker of November 16th: "The splendid general strike of the Lawrence textile workers . . . was broken on November 11th, 1931 in the Arlington and American Woolen Co. mills by the United Textile Workers Union". (Our emphasis.)

We are quite ready to believe that statement, even without detailed information to substantiate it. The McMahon organization has been a strike-breaking organization for decades. Everybody who has followed the struggles in the textile industry knows that. As far back as 1911 the same union under John Golden entered into a deliberate conspiracy with the mill owners to break the strike conducted by the I. W. W. The attempt however, was frustrated. In 1913 the

Japanese Imperialists Press Attacks

(Continued from page 1) and banking authorities profess to be alarmed thereat, because of the Manchurian situation and the speculation that has already taken place with the yen. It is desirous of checking the steady outflow of gold but at the same time must intrench the position of the yen in other countries, particularly in the United States with whom economic relations are increasing. By the end of November it is expected that 105 millions of dollars in gold metal will have reached the United States from Japan, by which it is hoped to strengthen Japan's position in the United States, as well as to stop speculation over the yen at home.

American Imperialism At Its "Job"

The position of the Chinese National Government of Chiang Kai-Shek is grotesque throughout. The Kuo Min Tang, which does not hesitate to slay tens upon thousands of the flower of the Chinese proletariat, is powerless before the Japanese invasion. It continues to call piteously upon the League of Nations and American imperialism for assistance. The latter is determining the best way both to check Japan and to plunder China. So far there has been no interference with the shipment of 6,000 tons of nitroglycerin which the Japanese government is reputed to have ordered from American manufacturers. The blood-profit is there, without as yet any difficulties for the United States and is therefore allowed.

The United States Government, through Secretary of State Stimson, is winding its way through secret negotiations, which, no matter what the immediate outcome, can bode no good for the workers of China, Japan, or America. When the imperialists are compelled to hide

same thing was tried at Paterson. Numerous other instances could be cited, running from that time to the present day. The U. T. W. was long ago discredited in the eyes of the textile workers. That is why, after the decline of the I. W. W., the revolts of the textile workers were expressed through independent organizations—first through the Amalgamated Textile Workers and later at Passaic and other points through the organization led by the Communists. There has been no lack of experience with the treacherous gang which leads the U. T. W. in the interests of the bosses.

The question which logically arises is this: How was it possible, after all this experience—and in Lawrence, the very citadel of the militant tradition, of all places—for another strike to be "broken" by the United Textile Workers Union? The I. W. W. was able to prevent it at Lawrence in 1911. The Communists prevented it at Passaic in 1926. The experience of the past and the radicalism of the times were two powerful elements of support for a Left wing victory. How then, did the reactionaries get the upper hand and thereby deliver the workers to the bosses?

The statement of the United Rank and File Strike Committee contains no answer to this question. And it can be assumed in advance that the impending flood of "self criticism" regarding the strike in the Party press will also pass it by. But the question will remain a pressing one for the Communist and Left wing workers. They will find the answer in the policy and methods of the Stalinist leadership. There is the real source of the Left wing defeats and the reactionary victories under circumstances which are most favorable to the opposite. —J. P. C.

their schemes, they are more than ever fraught with ill for the workers. War alliances for the future are no doubt being consummated in secret between the imperialist powers. The outstanding aim is a combination against the Soviet Workers' Republic. All workers must be on guard, and demand that the secret treaties be made public, so that the war-mongers can be unmasked. The behind-the-scenes negotiations must be made known to all. The imperialists are preparing war; all workers must be made to realize the danger and to work for its prevention.

Tactics for the Communists

Previously we have pointed out the necessary tactical lines for the Communist movement to follow in the Japanese-Chinese war and in the prospective war danger. These remain the same. The defense of China and Manchuria can best and only be achieved by a struggle of the Japanese workers against the Japanese imperial government; by the development of the struggles in China of the workers and peasants against the Chinese bourgeoisie, militarists and landlords, for the overthrow of the Chiang Kai-Shek government and the Kuo Min Tang, the hangers on of the Chinese proletariat and peasantry. There is the most imperative need for the unity of the Chinese Communists in this terrific struggle. The Comintern must be compelled to adopt this unity policy, despite Stalin, the splitter of the Communist movement. In every country the workers must be aroused to the dangers of world war.

It is for the Comintern to adopt a genuine international policy on all questions if there is to be a successful mobilization of the world's proletariat against the efforts of the bourgeoisie to

accomplish a unity of the capitalist powers to destroy the Soviet Republic. Less talk by the Stalinists of more or less fictitious Soviet Republics in China. More concentration on the revival of the morale and organizations of the Chinese working class; more efforts to rebuild a solidly founded Chinese Communist Party. No more talk about possible "alliances" with the Chinese Kuo Min Tang, either of the "right" or "left" variety. Rebuild the Comintern on its original Leninist foundations, so that once again it will be firmly impressed that a real defense of the Soviet Union and against a growing world war danger, rests upon the ability of the Communists in each country to organize the working class into labor unions, to draw them toward the Communist movement, and to bring them into militant struggles against their native exploiters. —MARTIN ABERN.

The Canadian Trial

(Continued from page 1)

were auxiliaries of the party. The Ukrainian, Finnish, and Hungarian language organizations, were similarly alleged to be controlled by party fractions. Following the technical ritual of identifying the accused as members of the Communist Party, the Crown sprang its "sensation", which was no sensation to anyone familiar with the course of such trials. They produced Sergeant Leopold of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, their under-cover man, who had functioned under the name of Eselwein as the government spy in the party from its inception in 1921 until his exposure and expulsion in 1928.

Leopold-Eselwein deposed that prior to joining the party he had been a member of the O. B. U. He had become secretary of the Regina branch of the party. The Z or underground organization had been formed under the mandate of the Pan-American Bureau of the Comintern which was staffed by Charles Scott, Louis Fraina and Sen Katayama. The Canadian party, he alleged, had received \$3,000 to initiate the activity. The organizer of the party on a tour through the West, Jack Macdonald, has informed him that the purpose of the organization was the overthrow of the existing institutions by the advocacy of force and violence. The Z party had been liquidated following the reports of the International delegates to the Fourth Congress, Maurice Spector and Jack Macdonald. —MAURICE SPECTOR.

(These brief factual data of the Canadian Communist trial marks a certain culmination of a series of increased reactionary onslaughts. An estimate and review by comrade Spector, of the issues involved and of the conduct of the party on trial will follow in our next issue.—Ed.)

Mooney Greets Soviet Russia

Tom Mooney, outstanding class war prisoner in the United States sent his greetings on the occasion of the celebration of the 14th anniversary of the Russian October Revolution. In a letter to Trud, central organ of the Soviet Trade Unions, he says:

"From this tomb of the living dead where I have been buried alive for the past fifteen years because of my militancy, devotion and fidelity to the working class, I greet the workers of the Soviet Union with outstretched eager hands of genuine working class fellowship and solidarity.

"As world capitalism sinks ever deeper and deeper into the quagmire of its own despair, corruption and brutal exploitation of the toilers, you, the conquerors of Czarist tyranny, the builders of a better civilization by your unbelievable successes in socialist construction in the Soviet Union are a sublime inspiration to the workers everywhere. You raise the hopes of the world proletariat ever higher and higher.

"We are miles apart, but space means nothing—the struggle is world wide. I am with you in spirit and with all my heart. I am with you in all your struggles. I rejoice in the success of your social revolution. I am with you unreservedly, and without equivocation."

Demonstrations in Soviet Russia

Mooney feels that he owes a debt of gratitude to the Russian workers because it was their demonstration in front of the American Embassy in Leningrad in 1917 which called the attention of the world to his case. The protest of the Russian workers was responsible for the action of President Wilson in urging that Mooney's death sentence be commuted to life imprisonment.

Demonstrations for the freedom of Mooney are now being held throughout the Soviet Union, as well as in all European and Asiatic countries, and will be intensified on the occasion of the anniversary of the commutation of Mooney's death sentence to life imprisonment on November 28, 1918.

Build a United Front Movement For Mooney

More than ever it is necessary for the American workers to mobilize for the unconditional freedom of Mooney and Billings, who have been imprisoned at San Quentin prisons, and Folsom California for fifteen years.

Mooney has demanded such a united front. The socialists and similar groups have naturally opposed such a broad movement. For the official Communist party and the I. Y. D. likewise to have prevented the development of such a united front movement is both stupid and criminal, and in direct violation of the request and hope of Mooney in his call for the formation of the broadest possible "Pardon Tom Mooney Committees".

Factory Councils in Germany and Workers' Control of Production

Dear comrades:

You refute the slogan of workers' control of production in general and the attempts to achieve it by the factory councils, in particular. Your main reason is the statement that the "legal" factory councils are inadequate for the purpose. Nowhere in my article have I spoken of "legal" factory councils. Not only that: I have quite unequivocally pointed out that the factory councils can become organs of workers' control only on the premise of such pressure on the part of the masses, that a double power in the factories and in the country has been partly prepared and partly already established. It is clear that this can happen as little under the existing law on the Factory Councils, as the revolution can take place in the framework of the Weimar Constitution.

And only anarchists can draw the conclusion therefrom, as if it were impermissible to exploit either the Weimar Constitution or the Law on the Factory Councils. It is necessary to exploit the one as well as the other. But, in a revolutionary fashion. The factory councils are not what the law makes them, but what the workers make them. At a certain stage, the workers "dislocate" the framework of the law or break it down, or else simply disregard it altogether. Precisely therein consists the transition to a purely revolutionary situation. Still, this transition is as yet before us, and not behind us. It must be prepared.

That careerists, fascists, social-democrats are very often to be found in the factory councils, does not speak against making use of them, but only proves the weakness of the revolutionary party. As long as the workers tolerate such factory councilmen, they will not be able to make a revolution. Apart from the workers, the party cannot grow stronger, for the most important arena for the activity of the workers is the factory.

The Employed and Unemployed

But, you will reply, there are the thousands of the unemployed in Germany. I did not overlook this. But what conclusion can be drawn from this? To neglect the employed workers entirely and to stake all hopes on the unemployed? That would be a purely anarchist tactic. Naturally, the unemployed form a powerful revolutionary factor, particularly so in Germany. But not as an independent proletarian army; rather as the Left wing of such an army. The chief kernel of the workers is always to be sought in the factory. That is why the question of the factory councils continues to exist in all its sharpness.

Furthermore, even for the unemployed it is not at all of no concern, what takes place in the enterprises and in the process of production as a whole. The unemployed must unreservedly be drawn in on the control of production. Its organizational forms will be found. They will result from the practical struggle itself. Naturally, all this will not take place in the framework of the existing laws. But forms must be found that will embrace the employed as well as the unemployed. One's own weakness and passivity cannot be justified by referring to the existence of the unemployed.

You say that the Brandlerites are for control of production and for the factory councils. Unfortunately, I have long ago ceased to follow up their literature, because of lack of time. I do not know how they pose the question. It is quite probable that here too they have not rid themselves of the spirit of opportunism and Philistinism. But, can the position of the Brandlerites, even in a negative sense, have a decisive importance for us? The Brandlerites learned something at the Third Congress of the Comintern. They distort the Bolshevik methods of the struggle for the masses in their application or propagation. Must we really, for this reason, give up these methods?

As I can gather from your letter, you are also opponents of the work in the trade unions and the participation in parliament. If that is the case, then we are separated by an abyss from one another. I am a Marxist, not a Bakunist. I stand on the ground of the reality of bourgeois society, in order to find in it the forces and the levers with which to overthrow it.

The German "Ultra-Lefts"

As against the factory councils, the trade unions, parliament, you counter-pose—the Soviet system. In this connection, the Germans have a very excellent verse: "Schoen ist ein Zylinderhut wenn man ihn besitzen tut". (Indeed a silk hat is very fine, provided only it is mine.) You have not only no Sov-

lets, you have not even a bridge to them, not even a road to the bridge, nor a footpath to the road. The Aktion has transformed the Soviets into a fetish, into a super-social spectre, into a religious myth. Mythology serves people as a cover for their own weakness or at best as a consolation. "Because we are powerless in the face of death, because we can do nothing in the factories, therefore . . . therefore," as a reward for this, we rise to such a height, that the Soviets fall from heaven to our assistance." There you have the entire philosophy of the German Ultra-Lefts.

No. With this policy, I have nothing in common. Our differences of opinion are not restricted at all to the German "Factory Council Law"; they are related to the Marxian laws of the proletarian revolution. —TROTSKY.

Phila. Defendants Appeal

(We reprint below the leaflet just issued by the Morgenstern-Goodman Defense Committee on behalf of the two young working class victims of the Flynn Sedition Act of Pennsylvania. The motion for a new trial in their case will come up on or about November 21st. The I. L. D. failed to defend these workers. It is the intention of the Defense Committee to carry the case as far as is possible in the courts, and to develop a militant mass movement for the release of Morgenstern and Goodman. All possible financial assistance should be rendered the Committee and funds should be sent to: Morgenstern-Goodman Defense Committee, 327 So. 11th Street, Philadelphia, Pa.—Ed.)

WORKERS! UNITE AGAINST BOSS TERROR

Once again, your interests as workers are threatened. This time in the State of Pennsylvania, the government strike-breaking law, the notorious Flynn Sedition Act, is being used to attack the living standards of the working class.

In Philadelphia, two workers, Communists, members of the Communist League of America (Opposition) have been made the subject of an attack by boss terror against the militant section of our class. Leon Goodman and Bernard Morgenstern, two young workers, are charged with sedition and face up to 20 years imprisonment for distributing leaflets presenting the Communist position on unemployment. They told the workers to struggle for unemployment insurance; the 6 hour day—5 day week without reduction in pay; for recognition and extension of long term credits to the Soviet Union; and against wage cuts. These leaflets told the laboring masses that unemployment, like war, is an inseparable part of the present capitalist hunger system: That only the social revolution of the working class, on a world scale, can solve the unemployment problem.

We must understand that the persecution of these two workers is not an isolated case, but is part of a nationwide attack on the part of the bosses against the living standards of the toiling masses. If they are put in jail today, any struggle you will put up tomorrow will meet with the use of this and similar anti-labor laws.

The united effort of all working class organizations and friends is necessary to protect these two young rebels and free all class war prisoners. It is the duty of every worker to come to the defense of these two militant fighters in the cause of working class emancipation.

(Goodman and Morgenstern have already been declared guilty in the courts of Philadelphia by Judge Reed. They are out under heavy bail. An appeal has been made for a new trial. In order that they be freed: in order for us to break the infamous anti-labor Flynn Sedition Act, the voice of all labor must be raised and heard in protest. Fight for free speech, free press and assemblage for the workers.

WORKERS! UNITE AND FIGHT FOR THE FREEDOM OF MORGENSTERN AND GOODMAN.

FOR THE IMMEDIATE RELEASE OF MOONEY AND BILLINGS, THE SCOTTSDORF BOYS; AND ALL CLASS WAR PRISONERS.

Issued by the MORGENSTERN-GOODMAN DEFENSE COMMITTEE 327 So. 11th St., Phila., Pa.

Organization Notes

Our recent activities reflect the results of some of the important decisions of the second national conference. Steps are being taken toward a general organizational tightening up. New adherents have joined the Left Opposition. Our members are becoming more active in the life of the Communist movement and workers' mass organizations. Efforts toward a greater Marxian clarity are expressed in educational and propaganda activities.

In regard to the first point, the New York branch can show results. Every member is being held to his obligations, dues payments and remittance on the sustaining fund pledge on time, with assignments of specific activities for each and a check up as to how it was attended to. All are being assigned to become direct participants in mass organizations and many have already aggressively filled their posts. This has become particularly evident by the onslaught of the party bureaucrats against Left Oppositionists voicing our views at party forums as well as by the campaign of expulsion of our members from the I. L. D.

Since the second conference our New York branch has recruited 12 new members. Six Greek comrades who have for some time adhered to the Left Opposition views, were among these twelve. They were rewarded by the Stalinist bureaucrats with expulsion from the Greek Spartacus workers club. These comrades are already functioning as a fraction, preparing as a first step to issue some of our literature in Greek.

Educational Activities

In this field the New York branch has only made a beginning which still leaves it behind other branches. But there is nevertheless one gratifying aspect which should be mentioned at the outset. Real efforts are now being made to build up the regular weekly open forum. The results have been a gradual improvement. The attendance has reached around one hundred. With continued efforts that number should soon be far surpassed. Two classes are being conducted: one

in the Fundamentals of Communism by Martin Abern, and the other in Marxism by Arne Swaback.

In other cities, results have also been obtained. The study class conducted by the Boston branch has an attendance of 30 members. Party and Y. C. L. members were among them despite special measures taken by party bureaucrats to keep them away. In fact, prior to the opening of the class, party functionaries called a special meeting and gave orders to all members not to attend the lectures.

The Chicago branch has made a very good start of its educational activities. Hugo Ochler has for some time functioned as instructor for a class of young comrades under their own group auspices. Recently the branch has itself organized two study classes, one elementary and one advanced. The latest reports were that the former had an attendance of 15 and the latter an attendance of 19 members. This records only a beginning. Since then the Chicago branch has obtained its own headquarters at 1435 N. Western Ave., and with a center for all activities, progress is certain to be recorded right along. One of the first steps is the decision to hold weekly open forums at the new headquarters.

From Philadelphia comes the report of 11 members attending their class in Marxism. "We consider it quite a success," writes the Secretary, comrade Goodman; "the attendance is composed of mostly young fellows of promise." Others who wish to attend can do so by getting in touch with the secretary at 327 S. 11th St.

Our two comrades, George Clark and Tom Stamm are again in the field, helping in building the organization. Comrade Stamm has now located in St. Louis for the time being. We have there only a small branch, but the effect of a little help from the outside is already increased activity. As reported elsewhere in these columns a successful Soviet anniversary meeting was held in Staunton, Ill., which is close to St. Louis.

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