

The Communists and the Agrarian Crisis

(Continued from last issue) In America the problem of city and country has taken on new dimensions. The 1930 census reports a 68,954,823 urban population and a 53,820,223 rural population. The majority are urban, the overwhelming majority are proletarian while, in the country where we seized power first, the overwhelming majority were peasants. Rural, in no sense means farmers. For example of the rural population only 30,447,229 make up the farm population in other words the farm population is only 56% of the rural and only 24.8% of the total population. The bourgeois economist presents the problem as though it is about 50-50 for town and country, for "farmers and city people" and the average worker has accepted this trash. The farm population as 24.8% of the total population are by no means farmers. This means all persons living on farms without regard to occupation.

trial city to which it is bound and from which American agriculture cannot escape, not retreat, not to mention the financial network that encompasses agriculture and ties it, binds it to the city. In capitalist countries with feudal carry-overs, with peasant economy still lingering, we have a far more difficult problem. Although at that level, capital has already shown itself to be master of the house, it by no means has a free reign. The peasant economy weighs heavily upon capital and its development, but nevertheless, capital, and in turn the proletarian class is the decisive force in the relationship of the class struggle. What is true in these backward sections, where the country can eke out an existence even if the city goes to hell, but where in the city cannot continue without the country; is more so true, in developed capitalist countries like America. In fact, however, the problem is turned around. The city needs the country and has safe-guarded this need by a thousand and one ties that bind the country to the city, but the country on the other hand cannot exist without the city—not in advanced America. Not on the present mode of production. That is only possible by stepping back a stage or two and this is not an overnight step but one which would follow a chaos, when neither capitalist nor proletarian rules.

LETTERS FROM THE MILITANTS

Drug Clerks Organize

NEW YORK.—The present chaotic condition prevailing in the pharmaceutical industry, which is merely a photostatic copy of the existing chaos in the decaying capitalist structure as a whole, and the intense, almost inhuman exploitation of the drug clerk by a degenerate middle class of independent drug shop retailers, by the ever growing chain store magnates and the rich independent "cut-rate" parasites, are threatening to reduce the standard of living of the drug clerks to the lowest level of existence—to that of the Chinese coolie.

His vanguard, leaderless, without experience and program, but in excellent fighting morale, has been intercepted by the A. F. of L. bureaucracy and has definitely landed in the right flank of the labor camp. On March 8, the Drug Clerks' Union was officially christened by Mr. Collins, national officer of the A. F. of L. and chartered as the Drug Clerks' Union of Greater New York, Local 581 of the Retail Clerks International Protective Association.

Stalinist Flattery or Marxist Education

NEW YORK.—It is mildly entertaining to behold Sam Don, the well-known "anti-war expert" come out in the Daily Worker (Feb. 20, 1932) and say that "The Five Year Plan has demonstrated beyond a shadow of a doubt that Socialism can be built in one country", a statement which corresponds only too well with the utterings of his comrade-in-arms, the eminent Israel Amter, who only a week previous to that explained that same theory of Socialism in one country at an Open Forum of the new "Water Front Section of the C. P. U. S." in the following way:

The Dress Strike in Boston

BOSTON.—The cloakmakers under the leadership of the "United Front Committee" went back to work already in some cases under somewhat improved conditions. The cloakmakers under the leadership of the International went back to work with no wage cut. Wages were cut plenty in the past two years. The International did not make an effort to get anything back. Now an agreement is being made for the dressmakers with no improved working conditions.

Our Subscription Drive

After a long and hard struggle The Militant became a weekly. The apparatus of its production, so to speak, has been built up step by step by much sacrifice. Now it is necessary to build on a firm foundation its distribution apparatus. During the period of the present drive, March 1st to June 1st, this effort should take an intensive form. First of all we must get new subs. Friends and sympathizers must be canvassed. Wherever possible whole days should be set aside for the carrying out of this task. This drive for new subs must be geared to a high pitch. It must be sustained at that pitch for the duration of the drive.

Attention, Greek Workers

In New York City two daily Greek bourgeois newspapers are published, the "National Herald" which supports the present "democratic" regime of Greece while the other the "Atlantis" represents the Royalist party of Greece and lately takes a pseudo-labor attitude. The "Empros" undertook a one sided struggle against the National Herald overlooking any kind of attack against the "Atlantis" which is more dangerous because it appears with the cloak of liberalism and therefore the "Communists" our Greek organ attacked this criminal neglect of the Greek Stalinism vigorously.

Another Expulsion from the I. L. D.

On Thursday, March 10th, I was formally expelled from the Yorkville English Branch of the I. L. D. The main charge was that I was a "Trotskyist" and therefore my criticism of the so-called "united front from below" policy of the I. L. D. was incompatible with membership any longer. In opening the attack, the organizer of the branch went to some length to state my "disruptive" activities; i. e., I had committed the audacious crime of speaking with members of the branch about the differences between the Left Opposition and the leadership of the official Party, and criticized the policies of the leadership.

No attempt was made to center the charge on inactivity, as my activity in the branch will attest to the fact that I have always volunteered for work and accepted all the tasks assigned to me. It is interesting to note that previous to the horrible discovery that I was a "counter-revolutionary, enemy of the working class", my activity and membership had been considered wholly satisfactory. Comrade Hacker himself, personally asked me to preside as chairman at the second Scottsboro Conference held a few months ago at a large downtown hall. Evidently, the stamp of "renegade" had not yet materialized before his eyes. The chairman last night, a new member of the branch and, I think, a party member purposely assigned to the branch—since he does not live in our district—refused to permit me the final say. He insisted on his formal right as chairman to be the last speaker. He emitted a long harangue on Trotsky's "menshevism" of 1903, adding incidentally that Trotsky from the time of the revolution until 1923, had done good work, "when he was under the thumb of Lenin" (!) A long attack on Trotsky, not permitting me to answer. There were seven comrades present. The vote was called for. The chairman, organizer, and Labor Defender agent immediately responded. One young comrade who works for the district and is also a new member of our branch, also voted for my expulsion—because he considered Trotsky an enemy of the working class, although he admitted he had never read a single document of the Opposition! When I explained to him that it was the epilogue of the I. L. D. to permit workers of any organization to enter the I. L. D. and work for it, he appeared puzzled, but voted for the expulsion, nevertheless. My vote was the only recorded against, the two remaining comrades were for abstaining, admitting that they were not acquainted with the questions—but decided to vote for the expulsion provided that it was to come to the District Committee and that I would be given a chance to appear. Comrade "Schneider, Labor Defender agent, assured the comrades that I would be given a chance to appear. I hold him to his word, as he is a member of the Section Executive Committee, and am only afraid that his confidence in the "workers' democracy" of Hacker and company will not be sustained. I was accused of being the cause of the failure of the branch to grow. Any comrade who is acquainted with the Yorkville English Branch knows that the reason for the failure to grow has been the lack of consistent, regular activities. I fought continually for a systematic plan of meetings, house to house canvassing, educational lectures, distribution of Labor Defenders before unions, open air meetings, etc. I myself held several open air meetings alone when the district failed to supply speakers. I was suddenly thrown off the list of speakers, and since that time we never held them regularly. I advanced a plan for regular educational meetings every other week; it was accepted—I carried out my share of the work. In all activities, I can say that I did all required of any member of the organization. These things I state, not to gain reward for, but to outline for the comrades the only way that I see to build the branch, if they plan their work thus, the branch will grow—if not, it will remain stagnant as before. The decision of expulsion is pending before the District Executive Committee. The policy of the I. L. D. is to admit all workers into its ranks, so long as they carry on the work of the organization under its discipline. I claim that I have proved that I have done so and can continue to do so. The only charge is "Trotskyism", which is no valid charge according to the ruling of the I. L. D. itself. I sincerely hope the District Executive will reverse the obviously unfounded expulsion of myself from the Yorkville English Branch of the I. L. D. —HERBERT CAPELLS

ATTENTION, GREEK WORKERS

ATTENTION!

At a recent Left Opposition forum meeting two members of the official Communist Party during the discussion accepted a challenge to debate the Platform of the Left Opposition. The debate will take place Friday evening, March 25, at the Public Library, 14th St., and Cass Ave. For the Left Opposition: John Scott For the Communist Party: ?