

Statement on the Situation in the International Left Opposition

The National Committee, having considered and discussed the most important parts of the material bearing on the present situation in the International Left Opposition, and the French section in particular, has come to the following conclusions:

1. The most important feature in the internal life of the International Opposition in the past two years, has been the struggle to free the movement from the influence of alien elements who paralyzed its activities by sterile intrigues, distorted its principles in practical application and hampered its development as the guiding force of the proletarian vanguard. We are and have been fully convinced of the progressive and revolutionary quality of the struggle for these ends which has been led by comrade Trotsky. It has been an unavoidable and necessary stage in the preparation of the International Left Opposition to fulfill its great historic tasks. The National Committee is in full solidarity with the estimate of the International Left Opposition outlined in the circular letter of comrade Trotsky under date of December 22, 1931.

2. The correctness and necessity of this struggle to purge the movement of alien elements is demonstrated, among other things, by the positive results in the German section after the liquidation of the worthless intrigues of Landau and the freeing of the section for its actual revolutionary tasks. The leadership of the German section, which has taken shape in the struggle against Landau and his sterile factional regime, must be given all possible international assistance and support in its tremendous responsibilities and opportunities. The necessity of the struggle for internal renovation is shown with no less force—although in a negative manner—by the present state of affairs in France. The demoralization there ensues directly from the fact that the two-year struggle has not been brought to a conclusion.

3. In our opinion the present situation in the French League—which ought to be a matter of grave concern to the entire International Opposition—is not a new one. We regard it rather as the rear-end of the struggle to clear the section of the influence of unassimilable and careerist elements, which has been unduly prolonged. The task there, as we see it, is not to seek a solution of the crisis from the standpoint of the episodic questions and differences. This only blurs the real issue. What is necessary is a decisive course toward the liquidation of the crisis by a firm stand against the representatives of the disintegrating tendencies. Among these we count the leaders of the Jewish group, and we particularly condemn their attempt to set up a nationality group as a faction within the League and their resignation from the National Committee in the name of such a group. Such methods and practices are incompatible with Communist organization. No less harmful, in the drawn-out internal crisis of the League, have been the ambiguous and diplomatic maneuvers of Naville, against which we have recorded ourselves in our previous resolution. In our opinion it is most necessary for the French League to bring the internal controversy to a conclusion, to draw clear and precise lines and make a selection on that basis.

4. The proposal of comrade Trotsky for the reorganization of the International Secretariat, by constituting it out of representatives of the most important sections who will be responsible to their sections, is the most feasible plan under the circumstances. As the experience of the past few years has shown, the International Opposition has not yet developed to the point where a secretariat based on the selection of persons—free from accountability to the respective sections—could fulfill the office. The Secretariat must become a responsible body standing above the intrigues and helping to liquidate them. We are of the opinion that comrade Mill misused the office of International Secretary and erred fatally by identifying himself with the factional struggle in the French League against the leadership. Thereby he helped to negate the whole progressive struggle against Landau-Naville-Rosmer and, at the same time, undermined the authority and discredited the International Secretariat. The reorganization of the Secretariat as a responsible body will help to shield it against such a fate by rendering it less susceptible to personal moods and vacillations.

5. The difficulties of distance, etc., make a timely and effective participation of the American League in the internal questions of the European sections extremely difficult, and preclude altogether any pretensions on our part to play a leading role in their solution. We must not undertake that. Nevertheless we consider it desirable to participate more directly in the work of the International Secretariat through an elected representative and the National Committee will propose to select such a representative of the American League as soon as possible. It is necessary to acknowledge a slackness in our international activities and duties, the nature of which and its basic causes have been accurately described in comrade Trotsky's circular letter. In order for our League to be useful in the solution of the internal problems of the European sections, and to educate itself in internationalism in the process, it must firmly organize a collective participation. The National Committee as a whole must familiarize itself with the international questions and bring a collective judgment to bear upon them. The most important material must be translated and supplied to the League membership for information and discussion. The progressive elements in all sections, which are struggling for the liquidation of circle psychology, sterile intellectualism and worthless factional intrigues, and for the consolidation of genuinely revolutionary cadres, must be assured at every step that they have a conscious and resolute ally in the American League.

—NATIONAL COMMITTEE
COMMUNIST LEAGUE OF
AMERICA (OPPOSITION)

ST. LOUIS WORKERS ATTENTION!
OPEN FORUM
Friday, April 29th
"Class Justice in America"
Speaker—GEORGE ROBERTS
Crunden Branch Library Auditorium
Fourteenth St., and Cass Avenue

For Unity in Needle Trade

(Continued from page 1)

needle trades situation, beginning with the International.
It goes without saying that this formulation of the slogan of unity has nothing in common with the liquidationist program of the Lovestonites. The Left wing suffered a defeat in its major undertaking to replace the reactionary union with another one. That must be frankly acknowledged. But it still retains its basic nucleus of the most reliable and tested militants. It still remains an organized force. This force must be kept intact and demand reincorporation into the International as a fighting unit. This should be the line of its fight, not a capitulation and the individual re-entry of its members into the International on the terms of Schlesinger. The masses will support this proposition, including those inside the International at present and thousands who are standing aside from both unions, discouraged and waiting for some new turn in the situation.

But, Foster and Browder will answer, Schlesinger and his black-and-yellow gang will not agree to this proposal. The slogan of unity, as the Communists present it, is not designed to meet the approval of the labor fakery but to facilitate the struggle of the workers against them. The new campaign for unity, along the lines we have suggested will start the re-organization of the workers around the banner of the Left wing. The Left wing will rise again as the authentic spokesman of the masses. On this basis the genuine unification of the needle trade workers struggle will take place, with or without the wishes of the socialist betrayers.
—JAMES P. CANNON.

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Failure of Danube Union

(Continued from page 1)

countries is needless to state. The situation in all countries is bound to change radically in the event of a victorious proletarian revolution in Germany. It is one of the by no means small tasks of the proletarian revolution to come to the aid of the small nations with a clear program for solving their vital and pressing problems. The Comintern and the German Communist Party, however, completely ignore the international situation and advance no slogan outside of the general slogan of a Soviet Germany and the abstract slogan of "Defend the Soviet Union". The fact that Hitler is successfully exploiting the existing situation in Europe and reacting on it in his propaganda deserves to be mentioned. There can be no doubt that the German delegation to the London Conference on the question of the Danubian countries was compelled to take a position of defiance towards France under the pressure of Hitler's propaganda. Has the German Communist Party made clear the Communist position on this question to the broad masses in Germany and the rest of the European countries?

The Slogan of a Soviet United States of Europe

In the year of 1923, at the time of the occupation of the Ruhr and the resulting revolutionary situation in Germany the Comintern under the pressure of comrade Trotsky adopted the slogan of a Soviet United States of Europe. But the leadership had nevertheless remained hostile to it. Later it entirely abandoned it on the ground that, in Stalin's declaration, it was impossible to foresee whether it would be necessary to apply the slogan of the United States of Europe after the proletarian revolution. Subsequently the slogan of a Soviet United States of Europe had been declared "Trotskyism" and bitterly attacked by the Comintern leadership. But this slogan has been and is today more than ever of vital importance to the European proletariat because it flows from the very character of the present epoch of the economic development.

The main characteristic feature of the present epoch is the international scale of the productive forces which come into conflict with and are breaking through the national boundaries. Hence, the national conflicts and the imperialism which oppresses and strangles the small nations. The last world war was a direct result of the above process of the development of the productive forces. Since the world war this process has greatly increased, and the contradictions of capitalism with it. Socialism which is progressive and must base itself on a higher development of the productive forces, surely cannot be driven into the framework of national boundaries. On the contrary, the international character of the productive forces under socialism will greatly increase. Socialism will spread itself over the face of the whole world. There is where it derives its international character and on which is based the slogan of a Soviet United States of Europe.

"The term: The Soviet United States of Europe expresses the idea that socialism is impossible in a single country. It cannot even attain its full development within the limits of a continent. The Socialist United States of Europe represents a stage of a historical slogan on the road to the Socialist World Federation." Leon Trotsky, *The Militant*, Dec. 7, 1929.

The present leadership of the Comintern, naturally, cannot adopt this slogan because it contradicts Stalin's theory of "socialism in one country." This false theory is the main source of all tactical mistakes and its bankruptcy in problems of the greatest importance to the international proletariat.
—ALBERT ORLAND.

Execution of Scottsboro Boys Stayed

Two developments in the Scottsboro case within the past week testify to the protest it has aroused in the working class. The execution has been stayed to June 24 upon the appeal of the I. L. D. to the U. S. Supreme Court. No doubt the bourgeois tiger still feels that its prey is secure. It feels that it can afford this small concession and expects that its judicial superior will confirm its finding.

The State Department has applied to the Governor for information about the case for transmission to U. S. consulates abroad. Unquestionably this is a reaction to the working class pressure abroad being brought to bear on the diplomatic representatives of dollar imperialism.

In the consciousness of the international working class the memories of the Sacco-Vanzetti and Mooney cases are still green. They do not need legal proofs of the innocence of the Scottsboro boys. The American frame-up system is familiar to them. In this case they see another attack on the international working class.

And they are protesting. They hold meetings and send cables of protest. The mother of one of the boys, Mrs. Wright, will tour Germany under the auspices of the International Red Aid to speak for all nine of the boys.

Will the U. S. Supreme Court confirm the decision of the Alabama Supreme Court? It may. It may reserve it. One thing is sure. Only an aroused working class movement can save these nine members of our class. Between now and June 24 the time is short. The small concessions the capitalist class has yielded must be a stimulus to yet greater activity.

Our protest must be organized. Of

this there is yet little sign. The I. L. D. is not doing it. The C. P. is not doing it. They limit themselves to calls for demonstrations in the Communist press.

This is not sufficient. Only a comparatively small number of workers read the Communist press. Only a small number respond to the party's calls. The overwhelming bulk of the working class is still non-Communist. It must be approached thru the press it reads, thru the organizations it supports.

For this is required the tactic of the united front of working class organizations. This the party and the I. L. D. should take the lead in organizing. There is no other way to build a mass movement to free the Scottsboro boys.
—T. STAMM.

ST. LOUIS MASS PROTEST MEETING

Saturday, April 31st
For the Release of Tom Mooney and
All Class War Prisoners
Central Library Auditorium
Fourteenth and Olive Streets
Auspices: Molders Mooney Defense
Committee
Left Opposition speakers included

MINNEAPOLIS, ATTENTION! STUDY CLASS

at the
Minneapolis Spartacus Youth Club
"Elements of Marxism-Leninism"
Every Friday Night
LABOR LYCEUM
Sixth Ave., N. at Irving
The course is open to adults as well
as to youth. No charge except for
textbook.
Instructor: CARL COWL

BUREAUCRATIC ULTIMATISM

by LEON TROTSKY

When the newspapers of the new Socialist Labor Party (the S. A. P.) criticize "the party egoism" of the social democracy and of the Communist party; when Seydewitz assures us that so far as he is concerned, "the interests of the class come before the interests of the party," they only fall into political sentimentalism, or, what is worse, behind this sentimental phraseology, they screen the interests of their own party. This method is no good. Whenever reaction demands that the interests of "the nation" be placed before class interests, we, Marxists, take pains to explain that under the guise of "the whole", the reaction puts through the interests of the exploiting class. The interests of the nation cannot be formulated otherwise than from the point of view of the ruling class, or of the class pretending to sovereignty. The interests of the class cannot be formulated otherwise than in the shape of a program; the program cannot be defended otherwise than by creating the party.

RELATION OF PARTY TO CLASS

The class, taken by itself, is only material for exploitation. The proletariat assumes an independent role only at that moment when from a social class in itself it becomes a political class for itself. This cannot take place otherwise than through the medium of a party. The party is that historical organ by means of which the class becomes class conscious. To say that "the class stands higher than the party," is to assert that the class in the raw stands higher than the class which is on the road to class consciousness. Not only is this incorrect but it is reactionary. There isn't the slightest need for this smug and shallow theory in order to establish the necessity for a united front.

The progress of a class toward class consciousness, that is, the building of a revolutionary party which leads the proletariat, is a complex and a contradictory process. The class itself is not homogeneous. Its different sections arrive at class consciousness by different paths and at different times. The bourgeoisie participates actively in this process. Within the working class, it creates its own institutions, or utilizes those already existing, in order to oppose certain strata of workers to others. Within the proletariat several parties are active at the same time. Therefore, for the greater part of its historical journey, it remains split politically. The problem of the United Front—which arises during certain periods most sharply—originates therein.

The historical interests of the proletariat find their expression in the Communist party—when its policies are correct. The task of the Communist party consists in winning over the majority of the proletariat; and only thus is the socialist revolution made possible. The Communist party cannot fulfill its mission except by preserving, completely and unconditionally, its political and organizational independence apart from all other parties and organizations within and without the working class. To transgress this basic principle of Marxist policy is to commit the most heinous of crimes against the interests of the proletariat, as a class. The Chinese revolution of 1925-1927 was wrecked precisely because the Comintern, under the leadership of Stalin and Bukharin, forced the Chinese Communist Party to enter into the party of the Chinese bourgeoisie, the Kuo Min Tang, and to obey its discipline. The experience resulting from the application of Stalinist policies as regards the Kuo Min Tang will enter forever into history as an example of how the revolution was ruinously sabotaged by its leaders. The Stalinist theory of "two-class workers' and peasants' parties" for the Orient is the generalization and authorization of the practice employed with the Kuo Min Tang; the application of this theory in Japan, India, Indonesia, and Korea has undermined the authority of the Comintern and has set back their revolutionary development for a number of years. This same policy—perfidious in its essence—was applied, though not quite so cynically, in the United States, in England, and in all countries of Europe up to 1928.

UNCONDITIONAL INDEPENDENCE OF C. P. UNDER ALL HISTORICAL CONDITIONS

The struggle of the Left Opposition for the maintenance of the complete and unconditional independence of the Communist party and of its policies, under each and every historical condition, and on all stages of the development of the proletariat, strained the relations between the Opposition and the Stalinist faction to the breaking point during the period of Stalin's bloc with Chiang Kai-Shek, Wang Chin Wei Purcell, Radich, La Follette, etc. It is quite unnecessary to recall that both Thaelmann and Remmele as well as Brandler and Thalheimer, during this struggle, were completely on Stalin's side against the Bolshevik-Leninists. It is not we, therefore, who have to go to school and learn from Stalin and Thaelmann about the independent policies of the Communist party!

But the proletariat moves toward revolutionary consciousness not by passing grades in school but by passing through the class struggle, which abhors interruptions. To fight, the proletariat must have unity in its ranks. This holds true for partial economic conflicts, within the walls of a single factory, as well as for such "national" political battles as the one to repel Fascism. Consequently the tactic of the United Front is not something accidental and artificial—a cunning maneuver—not at all; it originates, entirely and wholly, in the objective conditions governing the development of the proletariat. The words in the Communist Manifesto which state that the Communists are not opposed to the proletariat, that they have no interests separate and apart from those of the proletariat as a whole, carry with them the meaning that the struggle of the party to win over the

majority of the class must in no instance come into opposition with the need of the workers to keep unity within their fighting ranks.

DIE ROTE FAHNE is completely justified in condemning all discussions concerning the contention that "the class interests must be placed above party interests." In reality, the correctly understood interests of the class are identical with the correctly formulated problems of the party. So long as the discussion is limited to this historic-philosophical assertion, the position of DIE ROTE FAHNE is unassailable. But the political conclusions which it deduces therefrom are nothing short of mockery of Marxism.

The identity, in principle, of the interests of the proletariat and of the aims of the Communist party does not mean either that the proletariat as a whole is, even today, conscious of its class interests, or that the party under all conditions formulates them correctly. The very need of the party originates in the very fact that the proletariat is not born with the innate understanding of its historical interests. The task of the party consists in learning, from experience derived from the struggle, how to demonstrate to the proletariat its right to leadership. While, the Stalinist bureaucracy, on the contrary, holds to the opinion that it can demand point blank obedience from the proletariat, simply on the strength of a party passport, stamped with the seal of the Comintern.

CORRECT CONCEPTION OF THE UNITED FRONT

Every United Front, which doesn't first place itself under the leadership of the Communist party, reiterates DIE ROTE FAHNE, is directed against the interests of the proletariat. Whoever doesn't recognize the leadership of the Communist party is none other than the "counter-revolutionary" himself. The worker is obliged to trust the Communist organization in advance, on its word of honor. From the identity, in principle, of the aims of the party and of the class, the functionary deduces his right to lay down the law to the class. The very historical problem which the Communist party is yet to solve—that of uniting the overwhelming majority of the workers under its banner—is turned by the bureaucrat into an ultimatum, into a pistol which he holds against the temple of the working class. Formalistic, administrative and bureaucratic thinking supplants the dialectic.

The historical problem that must be solved is decreed as solved already. The confidence yet to be won, is announced as won already. That, it goes without saying, is the easiest way out. But very little is achieved that way. In politics one must proceed from facts as they are, and not as one would like them to be, or as they will be eventually. The position of the Stalinist bureaucracy drawn to its conclusion leads, in fact, to the negation of the party. For what is the net result of all its historical labor, if the proletariat is obliged beforehand to accept the leadership of Thaelmann and Remmele?

From the worker desirous of joining the ranks of the Communists, the party has a right to demand: You must accept our program and obey our regulations and the authority of our electoral institutions. But it is absurd and criminal to present the same a priori demand, or even a part of it, to the working masses or workers' organizations when the matter is broached of joint action for the sake of definite aims of struggle. Thereby the very foundations of the party are undermined; for the party can fulfill its task only by maintaining correct relations with the class. Instead of issuing such a one-sided ultimatum, which irritates and insults the workers, the party should submit a definite program for joint action: that is the surest way of achieving leadership in reality.

BUREAUCRATIC ULTIMATISM LEADS TO NEGATION OF THE PARTY

Ultimatism is an attempt to rape the working class after failing to convince it: Workers, unless you accept the leadership of Thaelmann-Remmele-Neumann, we will not permit you to establish the United Front. The bitterest foe could not devise a more unsound position than the one in which the leaders of the party place themselves. That is the surest way to ruin.

The leadership of the German Communist Party stresses its ultimatism all the more sharply by the casuistical circumlocution in its proclamations, "We make no demands that you accept our Communist view beforehand." This rings like an apology for policies for which there is no apology. When the party proclaims its refusal to enter into any kind of negotiations with other organizations but offers to take in under the party leadership those social democratic workers who want to break with their organizations without their being obliged to call themselves Communists, then the party is using the language of pure ultimatism. The reservation as regards "our Communist views" is absolutely ludicrous: the worker who is at this very moment ready to break with his party and to participate in the struggle under Communist leadership, would not be deterred by the fact that he must call himself a Communist. Jugglery with labels and subtleties of diplomacy are foreign to the workers. He takes politics and organizations as they are. He remains with the social democracy as long as he does not trust Communist leadership. We can say with assurance that the majority of social democratic workers remain in their party to this day not because they trust the reformist leadership but because they do not as yet trust that of the Communists. But they do want to fight against Fascism even now. Were they shown the first step to take in a concurrent struggle, they would insist upon their organizations taking that step. If their organizations balked, they might reach the point of breaking with them.

—L. TROTSKY.

(To be Continued)

(FROM WHAT NEXT?—Vital Questions for the German Proletariat)