

EDITORIAL NOTES

CENTRIST-RIGHT WING UNITY?

The Party members who have taken the official fulminations against the Lovestonites "renegades" in good faith, may be somewhat surprised to learn about the secret unity negotiations between the Party C. E. C. and these same "renegades", which have been going on now for some time.

There is nothing really surprising, from a political standpoint, in the fraternal conferences of the Right wing and Centrist factions. Neither is there any principle barrier to an actual consummation of the unity between them, although this does not appear the most probable outcome at the moment.

Lovestone would prefer to wait for further developments in the American movement before taking any decisive steps one way or another. But he is not allowed to forget for a moment the fearful insecurity of his group's position.

The Stalinists are not restrained from another deal with Lovestone and Co. by scruples over principle, since they have no principles; or, to put it more precisely and correctly, no principles of their own.

In the trade union field, and especially in the strategically important sector of the needle trades, the Lovestonites, feeding on the crude errors of the Party and adapting themselves to the pseudo-progressive wing of the bureaucracy, have strengthened their position.

Who is there to object to such a proposition in the leading circles of the Party, and for what reason? Certainly not those who shared the responsibility for the whole perfidious course of Lovestone over a period of years and only left him at the last moment, under command of Stalin.

The whole affair is a shocking revelation of the hollowness and futility of the official Party campaign against the Right wing. Those who were deceived by this "left turn"—which was calculated to disorientate the proletarian elements in the Party and arrest their development in the direction of the Left Opposition—may begin to come to life again and re-examine all that has transpired.

WEISBORD BLOWS THE WHISTLE

There are more ways of judging leaders and would-be leaders of the revolutionary labor movement than to read their programs and theses, just as there are more ways of judging Texas steers than to measure the length of their horns.

"It was stated by the witness for the state, Hoyle, and reported widely by the press, that when he went for the dynamite with Soderberg he went from 'A Communist hall on East 27th Street' (which could be none other than Lovestone's headquarters) with several girls and in a car driven by a certain doctor.

When the dynamite had been procured and they had returned, according to Hoyle, they stored the dynamite for the night and part of the next day at the same headquarters.

"If this evidence is correct, then we see why Lovestone who expelled Soderberg after he had been arrested, never published his expulsion and why Lovestone . . . later entered the defense himself. Did he feel they were all in the same boat?" (Our emphasis).

Let us rub our eyes and read this over again. Hoyle, whom Weisbord gives the euphemistic title of "witness for the state", is the stool pigeon and provocateur whose "evidence" sent the three marine workers to prison for long terms.

But Weisbord is not satisfied merely to put Hoyle on the witness stand again in the columns of his filthy sheet, and to dress up the stool-pigeon as a dignified "witness for the state". He has to bring out some of his testimony more clearly and to give it new implications against others in addition to those already sent to prison.

There is very little need for a revolutionist, or for an ordinary militant worker for that matter, to comment on this attempt to "put the finger" on the Lovestone group. The thing, like a policeman's badge, speaks for itself.

The Left Opposition is opposed to the Right wing group of Lovestone; and Weisbord, as the above-quoted testimony would indicate, is not at present friendly to it. But there the similarity of positions comes to an end.

Oppositionist Speaks at Party United Front Meet

HILLSIDE, N. J.— May Day was celebrated by the workers of Hillside, N. J. Sunday afternoon in the Workers' Home of Hillside under the auspices of the United Front May Day Committee.

On the Anniversary of Marx's Birth

May 5 is one of the notable days in the annals of working class history. That date, in 1818, inaugurated a period which closed with March 14, 1883, and embraced the life-span of the greatest thinker of our epoch, and for that matter of all times, the life-span of Karl Marx.

Karl Marx belongs to the revolutionary proletariat. It alone can properly appreciate him and his life's work. It alone can carry forward the great heritage which he has left it and which today enables it to stand erect, conscious of its growing maturity and of its true position as the life-beating pulse of mankind.

Karl Marx, a towering giant in the realms of thought and action, was a product of his age. His birth almost coincided with the stormy ushering in of the capitalist stage of society. His life became dedicated to the elaboration of the theoretical system which bears his name.

To understand properly the Marxian system it is necessary first of all to learn to approach its study with the Marxian method of viewing all material things in motion.

The Marxian system took form and assumed life and blood during the first stormy period of the capitalist cycle, when capitalism rapidly developed toward a position of mastery.

portant events, the great French revolution and the industrial revolution in England. It therefore took form essentially as a summing-up of the developing conditions. The Marxian system, which, of course, takes into account the discoveries of certain preceding thinkers, is a logical conception of the main social and economic phenomena of the present epoch.

The tumultuous events of the class struggle during the active, mature life of Marx became the great historical laboratory, from which not only the proletariat emerged definitely as a class, but which also helped to work out and to test his theoretical system.

Marx kept in intimate contact with and studied the social and economic concepts and movements which had preceded him and of his time. He had early become influenced by French socialism and made himself acquainted with the ideas of the utopians.

Marx studied the conspirative proletarian organizations of France, and elsewhere, which were mainly influenced and inspired by the sentimental utopias of Fourier and the revolutionary gospel of minority, conspirative action of Blanqui.

While Marx had nothing but disdain and scorn for the vulgar economists of his time he set to work patiently at the herculean task of unraveling the economic laws of the various stages of society. For the study of these laws he made use of the discoveries already made by the classical school of bourgeois economy; which generally begins with William Petty in England, Boisguillebert in France and ends with Ricardo in England and Sismondi in France.

laws dictated by historical relations of production corresponding to a given degree of development of the material forces of production. What had so much puzzled this school of economy Marx discovered and embodied in his concept of the production of surplus value.

But above all Marx participated in building the revolutionary proletarian party. From the founding of the Communist League and presentation of the Communist Manifesto, there is a continuous thread of building and teaching. It next appears in the lessons drawn from the fateful events of 1848-50. Again, in the theoretical and practical work within the First International, beginning with 1864, in the serious lessons drawn from the Paris Commune and finally, in 1875 in the criticism of the Gotha program.

Here we have, through a whole chain of events and activities, conclusions compressed into a theoretical system, each part of which forms a harmonious whole. The essence of Marxism stands out today as incontrovertibly as when proclaimed in the final paragraph of the Communist Manifesto:

"The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions. Let the ruling classes tremble at a Communist revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win."

We recall that many have been the attempts to construct a new system and invest it with the name of Marx by tearing out of their context some casual remarks made by Marx on episodic questions in order to destroy the real essence of the system itself. As a part of the general foul revisionism, we know, it brought disastrous results to the proletarian movement of the Second International. Most outstanding were the attempts to distort, to cover up and to repudiate the concept of the proletarian dictatorship and to substitute for it the peaceful democratic means at all costs.

Another article on "Marx and Marxism" is to follow next week —Ed.

In the struggle with syndicalism and other currents in the working class movement in recent years the cause of Communism has been compromised by the ignorance of the official Stalinists and their abusive hooligan methods. This damage must be repaired and the struggle restored to its proper basis.

This is the significance of the debate to be held at the New York Labor Temple, 14th Street and Second Avenue, on Saturday, May 14th, at 8 P. M.

Stalinist Zig-zags on the Question of the «United Front»

by LEON TROTSKY

The former female social democrat Torhorst (from Duesseldorf), who has come over to the Communist party, spoke in the name of the party, in mid-January, in Frankfurt. In her official report, she said, "The leaders of the social democracy are sufficiently exposed, and it would be only a waste of energy to continue our efforts in this direction, with cooperation from above."

It is hardly necessary, however, to cite an isolated report. In the latest proclamation to reach me, DIE ROTE FAHNE (January 28, 1932) argues once again that the United Front can be established only against the social democratic leaders, and without them.

Since the outbreak of the war, several political generations have matured who must recapitulate the experience of older generations, even though within a greatly diminished scope. "The whole point of the matter is", Lenin coached the ultra-Leftists, "that we must not assume whatever is obsolete for us to be obsolete for the class, for the masses."

Moreover, even the older generation that did pass through the experience of 18 years hasn't at all broken with the leaders. On the contrary, it is just the social democracy that still retains many "old-timers", who are bound to the party by long standing traditions. It's sad, sure enough, that the masses learn so slowly. But in a godly measure to blame for this are the Communist "pedagogues" who have been unable to disclose palpably the criminal nature of reformism.

Without so much as hiding or mitigating our opinion, of the social democratic leaders, we may and we must say to the social democratic workers, "Since, on the one hand, you are willing to fight together with us; and since, on the other, you are still unwilling to break with your leaders, here is what we suggest:

Force your leaders to join us in a common struggle for such and such practical aims, in such and such a manner; as for us, we, Communists, are ready." Can anything be more plain, more palpable, more convincing?

In precisely this sense I wrote—with the conscious intention of arousing the sincere horror of blockheads and the fake indignation of charlatans—that in the war against Fascism we were ready to conclude practical military alliances with the devil and his granddam, even with Noske and Zoergiebel.

The official party, itself, violates its stillborn policy at every step. In its appeals for the "Red United Front" (with its own self), it invariably puts forward the demand for "the unconditional freedom of the proletarian press and the right to demonstrate, meet, and organize." This slogan is clear cut through and through. But whereby the Communist party speaks of proletarian and not only of Communist papers, meetings, etc., it thereby, in fact, puts forward the slogan of the United Front with that very social democracy that publishes workers' papers, calls meetings, etc.

Muenzenberg, whose practical horse sense occasionally falls foul of "the general line", wrote in November (DIE ROTE AUFBAU), "It's true that National Socialism is the most reactionary, the most chauvinistic and the most bestial wing of the Fascist movement in Germany; and that all true left circles (!) are most vitally concerned in interfering with the growth in influence and power of this wing of German Fascism." If Hitler's party is "the most reactionary and most bestial" wing, then Bruening's régime is, at least, less bestial and less reactionary. Muenzenberg, here, is

stealthily flirting with the theory of the "lesser evil". To preserve a semblance of piety, he goes on to differentiate between different kinds of Fascism: mild, medium, and strong, as if it was a question of Turkish tobacco. However, if all "the left circles" (and have they no names?) are interested in the victory over Fascism, then isn't it imperative to put these "left circles" to a practical test?

Isn't it self-evident that Breitscheid's diplomatic and equivocal offer should have been grabbed with both hands; and that from one's own side, one should have submitted a concrete, carefully detailed and practical program for a joint struggle against Fascism; and have demanded joint sessions of the executives of both parties, with the participation of the executives of independent trade unions? Simultaneously, one should have carried energetically this same program down through all the layers of both parties and of the masses. The negotiations should have been carried on openly in the eyes of the entire nation: daily accounts should have appeared in the press without distortions and absurd fabrications. Such an agitation by its directness and incisiveness would tell with far greater effect on the worker than the incessant din on the subject of "social Fascism". Under such conditions, the social democracy could not hide for a single day behind the pasteboard pageant of "the Iron Front".

\*The French periodical Cahiers du Bolchevisme, the most preposterous and illiterate of all Stalinist publications, pounced greedily upon this reference to the devil's granddam, never suspecting of course, that she has a long standing history in the Marxist press. The hour is not distant, we hope, when the revolutionary workers will send their ignorant and unscrupulous teachers to serve their apprenticeship with the above-mentioned granddam.

—L. TROTSKY. (To be Continued) (FROM WHAT NEXT?—Vital Questions for the German Proletariat)