

THE MILITANT

WORKERS
OF THE
WORLD.
UNITE

Weekly Organ of the Communist League of America [Opposition]

Published weekly by the Communist League of America (Opposition) at 84 East 10th Street, New York, N. Y. Entered as second class mail matter, November 28, 1928 at the Post Office at New York, N. Y. under the act of March 3, 1879.

VOLUME V, NO. 22 [WHOLE NO. 118]

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, MAY 28, 1932

PRICE 5 CENTS

The «Socialists» and their Line of Action

Within its shell of moribund reformist ideology considerable divergences have been for some time developing in the Socialist party. At its just concluded convention these differences, came to stand out quite clearly. It was not a matter of revolutionary views struggling against reformist encroachments. No, if it had been, their proponents would be obliged to find new fields of expression in some form of common action with the Communist movement, the Socialist party. Yet these divergences reflect the pressure of a working class moving toward the Left.

Essentially the differences were expressed in the groupings which have quite clearly crystallized. There are, on the one hand, the "militants" who appear to have hopes that the S. P. can be made to play a progressive role as a social democratic party. They speak of achieving a "social and economic system for the benefit of the workers", which would justifiably put down counter-revolution within a Socialist state through the use of violence, but strictly dissociated from class rule through the Proletarian Dictatorship. Hillquit characterized them as young, sincere and impatient—that is sincere to Hillquit's "ideals"—people who will soon settle down to more "sane" views. That evidently, is not far from the truth. Secondly there is the group of futile petty bourgeois liberals whose outstanding representative is Norman Thomas. It sees ever greater opportunities for its particular brand of "salvation" and conceives of the S. P. as a good instrument to further petty bourgeois liberation on a grand scale expecting it to be reinforced by the workers. Thirdly there are the so-called practical socialists, whom Hillquit also quite truthfully characterized as to their "noble" goal of building new sewers. Lastly, there is the old guard led by Hillquit and O'Neal. This is the most conscious group with a consistent program, deeply saturated with hostility to revolution. A group which cleverly manipulates reformist demands, clothed, when necessary, in Marxian phraseology, but as treacherously reactionary as its European brethren and as conscious in preparing the social reformist instrument to serve capitalism. With its deep seated hostility to the proletarian revolution it can pursue no other course. This group prevailed at the convention.

The S. P. claims a gain in membership of 8,000 in four years to a total of 25,000. In that is reflected in a sense the fact that some sections of the workers have taken the step away from the traditional bourgeois parties to social democracy. It shows also that what is at the basis of such growth reflects a pressure from which even the S. P. is not immune. This found its expression in the two extreme wings. In the "militants" striving for a new, better reformist driving for a decrepit body—all in an unblushing alliance with the petty bourgeois liberalism of Thomas and the "practical" new sewer socialists. Next it found its expression in the old guard sitting tighter on the lid but manipulating a few extra safety valves of concessions in phraseology. But above all, a large share of this growth must be laid at the doors of the Centrist zig-zag blunder policy of the official Communist party leadership and its failure to give proper direction to workers moving away from bourgeois ideology and allegiance.

The adopted S. P. declaration of principles, for example, again contains lip service to a recognition of the class struggle. It declares: "Freedom, equality and plenty for the workers can therefore be obtained only by socializing the ownership and control of the productive wealth which is now held as capital."

What is meant by such a declaration became clear when a credulous California delegate, who took it at face value, moved that the S. P. declares for confiscation of property. His proposal went down to defeat under the combined thunderclap of horror stricken "respectability" and the weight of the reactionary bureaucracy.

A survey of the S. P. convention, however, cannot leave out of account the new use to which the old guard of Hillquit and O'Neal put their ability of crafty maneuvering. Their new plan of organization contains two "united front" proposals. There is one for international "unity" professing to attempt to "bring together the Socialist and Communist Internationals (1) on the basis of democracy and civil liberties in Russia (?); (2) in Fascist countries, a union of both parties to overthrow Fascism by any means possible; (3) in countries where there still is democracy (sic), a union of both parties in an attempt to change the present system by peaceful means and by other means, if necessary." The "unity" proposals for the home sector reads: "In cities where Socialists, Communists, the L. I. D., the Friends of the Soviets, the Civil Liberties Union and other similar organizations exist, a permanent committee be organized to bring them together in in-

formal conferences to consider practical steps to be taken on matters of concern to all."

The recent years of experience have amply proved that the social reformists, now a distinct anti-revolutionary force, do not at all intend to unite the working class, not even for reformist objectives. But pursuing their cunning design they do intend to utilize the popular unity slogan to deceive the workers into support of their instrument deliberately destined to serve and preserve capitalism. This cannot be defeated by mere denunciation. It must be exposed in the open. This can be done effectively only by counterposing the policy of a genuine united front to attain the immediate working class aims as steps to the necessarily revolutionary objective. This is one of the particular tasks of the Communist party.

The future working class perspectives demand imperatively that the Communist party take up this task in earnest. The

Rush Funds to Save Weekly!

OUR CRITICAL SITUATION STILL PREVAILS. NOT ONLY DO BILLS CONTINUE TO PRESS ON US UNREMITTINGLY BUT THEY ARE ACCUMULATING JUST A LITTLE FASTER THAN WE CAN MEET THEM. WE HAVE MADE ALL POSSIBLE RETRENCHMENTS AND NOW EXPECT OUR SUPPORTERS TO DO THEIR PART.

EVERY ONE WHO SEES THIS APPEAL FOR HELP SHOULD UNDERSTAND IT TO READ—THIS MEANS YOU! NO ONE SHOULD DELAY. THE SITUATION IS TOO PRESSING FOR THAT. WE MUST HAVE MONEY AT ONCE. NO AMOUNT IS TOO LARGE; NO AMOUNT IS TOO SMALL.

revolutionary objectives first of all demand that social reformist ideology be defeated.

UNTIL WE HAVE WEATHERED THIS STORM EVERY COMRADE AND SYMPATHIZER MUST MAKE THE MOST SERIOUS EFFORTS TO RAISE MONEY. FIRST OF ALL HE MUST TAX HIMSELF TO THE LIMIT. WE CALL UPON OUR SUPPORTERS TO MAKE THIS SACRIFICE TO SAVE THE WEEKLY MILITANT. AND EVERYONE WHO HAS EVER PROFESSED ANY SYMPATHY FOR THE LEFT OPPOSITION MUST BE APPROACHED FOR HELP.

WE ARE NOT ALARMISTS, WE DO NOT EXAGGERATE. WE PUT THE SITUATION EXACTLY AS IT IS. WE HAVE STRAINED EVERY NERVE TO RAISE MONEY. THIS IS OUR LAST HOPE. EVERY COMRADE AND SYMPATHIZER MUST RESPOND NOW. OUR WEEKLY MILITANT DEPENDS DIRECTLY ON THEIR RESPONSE.

Jack Macdonald Joins the Left Opposition

Statement of the Former National Secretary of the Communist Party of Canada

We are publishing herewith a statement by comrade Jack Macdonald of Toronto, Canada. The statement speaks for itself. It is an unequivocal declaration for the political views represented by the Left Opposition. Comrade Macdonald has arrived at this position as a result of his experiences over a period of years in the labor and revolutionary movement as well as the serious study which he has made of the views presented by the various factions of the Communist movement.

Comrade Macdonald has a long and favorable record of struggle and achievements within the labor movement and within the Communist movement. Beginning with his joining the Social Democratic Party in Scotland at the age of 17, his activities and efforts have shown consistent continuity in many leading positions. He became one of the founders of the Communist Party of Canada, its national secretary, and one of its outstanding leaders, participating in several Congresses of the Communist International up until the point of the expulsion, when he was arbitrarily purged outside the party organization charged with "conciliation" and other technical charges. We are citing these brief points of comrade Macdonald's record of activities because of our conviction that his position, herewith clearly

and decisively expressed, should count seriously with thinking revolutionists—Ed.

After a careful and extensive study not only in retrospect of the pre-October polemics and activities of Bolshevism and the literature and general ideological activity of the Communist International, particularly up to the death of its founder and leader—Lenin and the opening of the struggle against "Trotskyism", but also of the more immediate and pressing situations and struggles of today, viz., Germany, China, Spain, etc., and the official C. I. programs, strategy and tactics therein, I have become convinced that the position program and general criticism of the "Left Opposition" under the brilliant, untiring and courageous leadership of comrade Trotsky are fundamentally correct; and that the Left Opposition is the historical bearer and custodian of true Marxist-Leninism.

In this necessarily brief statement I have no intention of reviewing at length the attitude of the Canadian Party during my association with its leadership or my personal attitude during the "discussion" and subsequent fight against "Trotskyism".

Suffice it to say, that the ideological campaign against Trotskyism—charged with the attempt to revise Leninism—

consisted of the scant distribution among the membership of occasional official bulletins from the C. I. containing alleged excerpts from the writings and speeches of Trotsky, counter-posed with the official "true Leninist" rebuttal from the leading scribes of the International.

Honest comrades, with their faith in the revolutionary integrity of the central leadership unimpaired and who therefore resent and reject any suggestion of bureaucratic intrigue, falsification or degeneration, accept these official communications at their face value and act accordingly; search with the official microscope, slaying and uprooting in the name of Communist discipline and democratic centralism any tendencies and deviations, or suspects that would weaken or dilute the revolutionary movement in the face of its class enemies. In this so-called ideological vogue (if self-criticism is still in vogue) I accept my full share of responsibility and error and admit its travesty. What organizational and ideological crimes have been committed in the name of discipline!

For some time I have had occasion to compare these "excerpts" as published in official bulletins, with the actual writings of Trotsky. Many are completely false; others torn from their context are deliberately misinterpreted; while others correct in text are presumably demolished with the dud bombs of anti-Leninist theory.

I recall the first appeal which came to the C. E. C. of the Canadian Party to record itself against the Russian Party Opposition. This was during a session of the Enlarged Executive of the C. I.—a Canadian delegate being in attendance. The delegate had recorded himself against. Why not? There are few exceptions. A cable was dispatched to Canada requesting the C. E. C. to solidify against the majority. Little if anything was known by the Canadian Party of the theoretical substance of the questions at issue. No liaison was in existence in these days where one could imbibe the latest on tap through "Lenin" students, etc. This honest unshoaled proletarian center dispatched a return cable withholding decision until adequate information pro and con was received by them. The Canadian center fell into very bad grace over this incident. They might at least have adopted the course of one C. E. C. member, who being unable to be present wired the C. E. C. to record his vote against Trotsky, but protested lack of information.

In brief the so-called question of Trotskyism was approached in a purely superficial and bureaucratic manner. This was in the days prior to deportations, exiles, etc. How far the regime has developed bureaucratically since these days must be obviously to all sincere comrades. It is positively criminal in the best revolutionary sense to close one's mind against the Left Opposition's trenchant criticism and charges of the growth of a bureaucratic regime in the C. I. The autocratic and mechanical removal and superimposition of leadership on sections of the Comintern; the hounding of old and tested bolsheviks on the pretext of some discovered heresy in writing or speech, but in reality to make way for a substantial prop for the present regime; the stifling of initiative and discussion; the parody of workers' universities where "leaders" are molded and manufactured to standard current pattern, etc., are evidences, if only in an organizational and limited sense, of the truth of this criticism.

One had only to attend the Sixth Congress of the C. I. and that was several years ago, to have proof of the opposition's contention in its broad international sense, not to mention the alarming bureaucratic growth since in virtually every section nor the tragedy of the internal party situation in the Soviet Union.

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For the Communist Unity of Our Party!

To the C. E. C. of the C. P. U. S. A.
To the Members of the Communist Party:

The developments in the international situation and the tasks they place before the Soviet Union and the Communist International—and more specifically before its American section—once more bring sharply to the fore the acute problem of the Communist unity in our party and the class struggle. These developments may be summed up briefly as follows:

1. The growth of the Fascist menace in Germany which, if it ends in the seizure of power by Hitlerism, would mean not only the bloody crushing of the Communist movement in Germany and elsewhere and a setback for the proletarian revolution for a long time to come, but would also render imminent a direct assault upon the fortress of the world revolution, the Soviet republic.

2. The events in the Far East, where the already established Japanese intervention in Shanghai, the establishment of a Japanese puppet government in Manchuria right on the border-line of the Soviet Union and the danger of an ultra-reactionary military coup d'Etat in Japan itself, all serve to indicate how the lines of imperialist policy are approaching the breaking-point. The danger of a direct intervention against the Soviet Union is running a mad race with the danger of the workers being flung into a new imperialist war for the repartition of subjugated China.

3. The deepening of the crisis in the United States, out of which the bourgeoisie has not yet succeeded in emerging, but which continues to offer to the Communists hitherto non-existing opportunities for crystallizing the extensive sympathy prevailing among broad sections of the workers for the most resolute section of the proletariat.

In considering these developments, our party can ill afford to ignore certain of their aspects which directly concern the immediate future of the movement. 1. The Communist Party of Germany has not yet succeeded in mobilizing the masses of the German workers for effective resistance to the advances of Fascism. The latter has not only leaped ahead at a far greater speed than has German Communism, but the staunchest bulwark of capitalist "democracy", the party of Wels-Scheidemann-Hilferding-Grzeschinsky, continues to exercise an unshaken influence over decisive sections of the proletariat.

2. In spite of the increasingly manifest threat of imperialist war upon the Soviet Union, and the undoubted popu-

larity which the latter's policy of peace must arouse among the world's workers, it remains a fact that the broad masses of the workers have not yet been made to realize the acuteness of the danger and, what is more, the Communist movement has not succeeded in mobilizing them for action to counter the plans of imperialism.

3. Although thousands of workers have joined our party in the recent period, particularly since the unfolding of the crisis, they have not only represented a small percentage of the gains made possible by the whole situation, but in addition, the inner life of the party has been of such a nature that it has caused, according to the official reports of the Central Committee, a 100 percent turnover in the membership, that is, an annulment of the organizational gains made throughout this period. This situation becomes ever more serious when it is contrasted with the growth which the Socialist party has been able to register in the same period.

The Left Opposition an inseparable part of the Communist movement, cannot permit itself to pass over these facts without candidly expressing its views to the party. We consider this all the more necessary in face of the fact that negotiations have just been undertaken between party representatives and representatives of the Lovestone Right wing looking towards the reintegration of the latter into the party. The antagonism which these negotiations have aroused among the party members is an additional indication that the burning problem of the unity of the Communist party cannot be solved in this manner. It is in the interest of a genuine solution of this problem, rendered more urgent by the events to which we refer, that we address ourselves once more to the Central Committee and the membership of our party.

The unity of the party can be achieved only in the open. Any attempt to realize it by secret negotiations behind the scenes not only brings confusion and uneasiness into the ranks of the party, but creates the danger of dealings of an unprincipled nature which wipe out the lines of demarcation and make harder the achievement of that clarification which must be a part of any movement for unity. The object of any negotiations must be made plain and visible from the very outset. They must be conducted before the eyes of the whole party. This method is the main guarantee against painful surprises, demoralization and unprincipled solutions.

It is this method we support in our present proposal that the party immediately take up the question of re-admitting into its ranks the members of the Left Opposition.

We, of the Left Opposition have no desire to conceal the fact that we do not share the views upon which the present line of the party is based. We could declare that we abandon our standpoint only by deceiving the party and ourselves. Our views relate to fundamental questions of Communist principle, of Communist strategy and tactics, and we stand now as Marx and Lenin. In spite of the differences of opinion existing between us and the present course of the party, we are convinced that the best, most profitable way of settling these differences and re-establishing Bolshevik discipline on the basis of the prevailing opinion, is not outside the ranks of the party, but inside of them, as loyal members of our Communist International.

In all the attempts we have made since our expulsion to work by the side and in support of the party, in all our public agitation and activity, we have never attached any conditions to our collaboration and support. In the struggle, in the trade unions, in strikes, in the united front conferences of the party, in the International Labor Defense, etc., etc., we have merely asked for the opportunity to work as Communists side by side with the other Communist workers, posing no conditions and asking for no special consideration or privileges. In putting before the party now our request for its unification by the re-admission of the members of the Left Opposition, we again put no conditions whatsoever. We stand for the unconditional defense of the Soviet Union, the workers' fatherland, the test for every revolutionist, especially now when the danger of intervention and counter-revolution is becoming more acute. We stand for the unconditional support of our party, which we built and defended in the past and are ready to build and defend in the future. These paramount questions take precedence with us and determine our (Continued on page 4)

Aid Beet Strike!

The spontaneous strike of the Colorado beet workers against a 40 per cent wage cut has grown to such proportions under the leadership of the T. U. U. L. that it is now one of the largest strikes of agricultural workers in the history of the American labor movement. It appears that more than 12,000 workers are out on strike. Their ranks have been swelled by the strike of the onion workers, who are also striking against a wage cut and in sympathy with their brothers in the beet fields.

The growers are replying to the strike with the usual repertoire of capitalist persecution. The merchants have refused credit to the strikers who, like the miners, buy on credit against their future pay. The store owners extend this credit on the say-so of a striker no such. The usual regime of terror has been inaugurated. Workers are being picked up and held for deportation. In one case a worker is being sent to Spain and his wife to Mexico. Arrests of the leading militants are a daily occurrence. Approximately 100 workers have been arrested on various charges. Others are held in jail for a time without charges and then released.

It will take more than this petty persecution to break the strike. The militancy of the strikers is everywhere in evidence. At the trial of eight workers in La Junta their brothers, 2,000 strong, overflowed the court room and by their insistence converted the trial into a mass meeting. The trial was resumed only when they were through. So strong was their protest that the obviously biased judge postponed sentence.

The strike is being over a large area. A comprehensive picture of it is difficult to get. The official capitalist press plays it down. The A. F. of L. press has thus far preserved silence. The leadership of the T. U. U. L. in the strike is a bitter pill for them to swallow. In future issues of *The Militant* we will attempt to give an analysis of the background of the strike and a more comprehensive picture of it.

What is needed now is relief to enable the strikers to hold out against the regime of terror and starvation inaugurated by the growers in conjunction with the state apparatus. All relief should be rushed to the United Relief Committee at 2736 Lawrence Street, Denver, Colo.

The National Convention of the S. P.

The Socialist party, at the time of this writing, is assembled at Milwaukee to nominate their presidential standard bearers, and to cogitate over the "revolutionary" profundities raised by the "militants" (the would-be Left wing). To this mind to be a decisive convention—a turning point in the history of the Socialist party. That remains to be seen.

This much however is certain. The pressure of the economic crisis has smoked out a ranking protest against the reactionism of Hillquit, O'Neal and Co. The convention was opened by Hillquit. True to type, and reflecting the conditions and moods in the country like a good weathercock, he made a bold keynote address. Capitalism has been shown as a miserably failure. It has collapsed and a new social order must be ushered in to save capitalism from consequent doom.

Brave words. But how is this to be done? Not a word about the vain endeavors of his European brother parties to save dying capitalism from the inevitable fate. Only an intimation that should the Socialist party be called upon, they will valiantly perform their "patriotic" duties to help stem the tide of proletarian resentment, where the republican and democratic twins are unable to shine. In the signal achievement of deception and perfidy. But this time has not yet arrived. Hillquit can still afford to be the "Marxist" and deliver a withering blast against the advocates of a third party, those who want to fritter away the important services the S. P. may in time render American capitalism, by firing with the non-descript liberals. This is an underhanded attack at Norman Thomas who is known to have a warm place in his heart for Dewey, Holmes and Co.

But Thomas was not to be outdone as a "revolutionary." The resolution of the "militants" counter-signed and amended by Thomas, on the Soviet Union, which the *New York Times* characterizes as "friendly neutrality" is the supposed resort to Hillquit. It tells us that while they don't endorse all the policies of the Soviet Union, and the proletarian dictatorship peculiar to Russia, and while political prisoners should be released, and civil liberties restored—nevertheless they are emphatic for the—defense of

Soviet Russia against Socialist intervention. But this dishwasher radicalism had already shocked the convention, and when a resolution appeared on the floor for the forcible confiscation of property, the delegates threw up their hands in horror. Thomas—the empty thunders of Norman Amidst—who threatened to decline the presidential nomination—about the applicability of this tactic in Moscow and Leningrad and the havoc and starvation it would wreak in New York and Chicago, the convention voted down this revolutionary pretension to the tune of 166 to 14.

In spite of the new "Left wingism" of the "militants", they swallowed Thomas whole and nominated him for president midst a rising vote.

At the same time, to show that their "militancy" on organizational questions prevails over clarity of principles they aligned themselves with Thomas to oust Hillquit from the national chairmanship. The convention went into a furor. Accusations of anti-Semitism stirred the peaceful demeanor of the pacifist proponents. Amid all this froth and rage we hear the hoarse roar of the "Left wingers": Mayor Hoan of Milwaukee! From the frying pan into the fire. Here Hillquit again rises to the occasion and castigates Hoan and Co. for the "modern sewer" socialism which he himself has advocated for years.

It is said that the "deep seated" difference between Thomas and Hillquit is determined by their attitude toward Soviet Russia. After reading the Blasphemy resolution on this question we can come to no other conclusion than that it is merely a difference of terminology—six of one and a half a dozen of the other. The real issue, as we see it, between these treacherous leaders of the American social democracy is another one that has been indicated above. Shall the socialist party remain the reformist traducer of the American working class (Hillquit) or shall it become an outright third liberal party of capitalism (Thomas). In this sense the pleadings of Thomas to avoid a split are beside the point at present: there is not yet a strong third party movement afoot. Hillquit is rejected and Thomas is biding his time.

Of course we need a humorous touch. This is provided by the mountebank, Brown, who insists on a wet blanket.

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DON'T FORGET THE PICNIC
The Place: Tibbetts Brook Park—Take Lexington Ave. Subway I. R. T.—Woodlawn-Jerome to last stop, Woodlawn. From there one can take a trolley to the Park. Conrades will meet at the Woodlawn station at 10:00 A. M. Plot 8.
Time: Sunday, May 29th from 10:00 A. M. till dusk.