

Stalinists Split Trade Unions in Spain

Third T. U. Center Formed

We reproduce below extracts from the circular issued by our Spanish comrades relative to the creation in Spain of a third "trade union center."

Comrades: Against the will of the existing trade union centers, against the will of the Spanish workers, against the interests of the Spanish proletariat and even against the very interests of the trade union unity of the Spanish working class—just as we foresaw and forewarned—the criminal act has been perpetrated of creating a third trade union center, which will even more divide the forces of the Spanish proletariat precisely at the moment when it is more necessary than ever to achieve the unification of all workers. The Stalinist bureaucracy has realized its arbitrary aim.

It will be said that the Conference of Madrid has been an enormous success, it will be claimed that it was not a matter of creating a new trade union center. But in reality, underneath the words, we have seen the culmination of a split in the name of unity, in order to give satisfaction to the ambitious of some and in order to secure their positions. No matter what name is given to what has been perpetrated at Madrid, the fact remains that the conference created an organism called the "Unitary General Labor Confederation."

Conference a Swindle

The Madrid Conference was a swindle carried out on the working class. In the first place, why was it proclaimed that it would be held with the aim of making a decisive step toward trade union unity? Secondly, why, in order to justify a splitting act (which has been realized) have thousands of adherents been invented which have never existed and do not exist today? Two or three examples will clarify the matter. The Association of Commercial Employees of Madrid figures on the list of those that attended at the conference with 900 members. The Spanish Tobacco Workers Federation, with 18,000. It is quite certain that both of these organizations, after the conference, will break off all relations with the splitting elements. The Unitary Federation of Asturian Miners, of which it has been said at the conference that it represented close to 10,000 members, in reality does not number more than 2,000 ever since it has come under the leadership of elements from the official party. In this manner all the figures have been padded up to prove that numerous unions with thousands of members belong to the new trade union center.

All argumentation attempted against these facts is futile and false. What the Left Opposition has warned against from the first has been confirmed by the acts. The trade union split has become a reality. The conference was an obvious organizational defeat. The workers were not represented at it because they knew what was going to be brought about. All this, which should have sufficed for some of the leaders more conscientious about their responsibilities to change their attitude, has, on the contrary, given our Stalinists the pretext to consider this conference as a success unprecedented in the history of the Spanish labor movement.

Opposition Fights in Trade Unions

We have said what in our opinion constitutes the correct manner of arriving at the unification of all the Spanish trade union forces by normal means—by beginning with the penetration of the unions for the purpose of propagating our revolutionary and military points of view. That is why, in spite of the splitting action of the elements who convoked the conference in question, the militants of the Communist Left will remain within the trade unions and will fight inside of

them for the unification of the trade union forces in the only possible manner, that is, by bringing the autonomous unions into the C. N. T. (the class struggle trade union center) and by fighting that all the expelled militants, whether expelled through the sectarianism of the anarchists or through the adventurous policy carried on by the official C. P., be readmitted.

The Executive Committee of the Spanish Communist Left knows that in the future the struggle inside the trade unions will become sharper and will be made even more difficult and painful, precisely because of the state of split of which we have been speaking. The Stalinist elements bear the principal responsibility in this question insofar as they have contributed more than anything else to exhaust all spirits and all efforts, especially within the C. N. T.

The working class must be aroused against the maneuvers of those who place above the interests of the proletarian organizations the interests of their jobs and servile obedience to those who hand out the pay. A fratricidal struggle is being started in the trade unions. In order to achieve the thing which the masses mock at as a miserable abortion of a new trade union center, the trade union movement is to be enfeebled and the working class disarmed before the enemy!

In the struggle to prevent these consequences, the Spanish Communist Left will occupy the first place, by demonstrating that we have nothing in common with those who in this case have proved to be the avowed enemies of trade union unity.

Against the splitters! Against this new trade union center, created and dressed up in a hypocritical mask! For the revolutionary trade union unity of the Spanish proletariat! For the consolidation of the C. N. T. and for the struggle to change the orientation which still remains the same—inside of the organization. Madrid, July 5, 1932.

Letter to the Zurich Workers

(Continued from page 4)

democracy is concealing its task of treachery with columns against the proletarian revolution. It is undermining the authority of the workers' state to the great profit of the authority of the bourgeois state by placing on the same level the violence of the revolution and the violence of reaction.

I hope that every Zurich worker, the social democratic worker included, will deeply reflect upon these events and upon the role which the social democratic leaders have played in them in order to draw the necessary political conclusions. Only then will we be able to say that the June victims will not have been sacrificed in vain.

LEON TROTSKY.

Prinkipo, June 25, 1932.

BOUND VOLUMES OF COMRADE TROTSKY'S PAMPHLETS

So many comrades and sympathizers come in and write in for comrade Trotsky's brilliant pamphlet, "The Turn in the C. I. and the Situation in Germany", that we want to announce again that this pamphlet together with "The Draft Program of the Comintern" and "World Unemployment and the Five Year Plan" are out of print and available only in the bound volumes of Trotsky's pamphlets.

The number of these bound volumes is small and slowly diminishing. We watch them go with mingled feelings: happy to see them reach workers who will study them and carefully weigh their contents; sorry to realize that with each one we are getting closer to the point of being unable to supply what we consider the texts of the future cadres of the revolutionary movement. But we have no choice and since we must strike a balance we advise all our readers and sympathizers who have not done so yet to buy their copies at once before it is too late.

Bolshevik-Leninists Head Miners Strike in Belgium

Left Oppositionists on the Charleroi Firing Line!

Bulletin:

Our heroic comrades Lesoil, Huët, Vanderborcht, Henin and Lebrun are languishing in the jails of Belgian capitalism. Mad with fury over the success of the strike, the bourgeoisie is seeking vengeance, in an attempt to embroil our comrades in one of its infamous "conspiracy trials".

But they will not stop our advance. The meetings of the Left Opposition are packed to the doors. The circulation of our Belgian paper, *La Voix Communiste*, has been quadrupled. The Left Opposition which has showed its ability to create the united front of the striking workers is on the lips of all and sundry.

In Belgium, in Spain, in China, in Hungary, in Greece, everywhere the Left Oppositionists are in the forefront on the firing line, facing bourgeois repression. This is the true face of the Bolshevik-Leninists, whom the miserable mercenaries of the Stalinist bureaucracy characterize as "the vanguard of the counter-revolution!"

A Letter from our Charleroi Comrades

Dear comrades: As you have probably seen from the press reports, we have passed through some very significant events in the history of the Belgian labor movement. Mainly—in Hainant, Mons, Le Centre, Charleroi.

We wish to report here as briefly as possible but with all desirable clarity several essential details of this battle, which has superseded in its energy all the struggles of the past. In this report we will naturally describe the circumstances which brought the Communist Left Opposition to the head of the column in the struggle of the unions.

The Miners' Situation

The situation of the Belgian miners had sunk to a level of misery and deprivation which they could no longer endure. For some time great dissatisfaction has been current without finding any means of expression. The diplomacy of the trade union leadership succeeded to the last day in suppressing this need and in carrying through all of the proposals of the employers for wage cuts, one after another. In Le Borinage, the presumptuousness of the bosses gets its first shock. The poor standard of living, the spreading strike and the newly planned wage reductions serve to stir up unrest among the miners participating in an isolated strike. The social democratic leaders maneuver desperately to localize the conflict, which in spite of everything, expands over the entire region. In this manner, the leaders of the district center of the reformist miners are forced to declare a strike. The militant spirit rises swiftly. The miners of the Borinage, who know that, isolated, without the support of the miners in the rest of the country, they will be defeated, occupy Le Centre, march forward toward Charleroi, to call upon all for solidarity in the struggle. The federation of the Chevalliers du Travail (Knights of Labor) quickly issues a call on the evening of July 8, appealing to the miners in all the pits to show their solidarity and to establish a program of action. Monster mass meetings are called. The immediate declaration of the general strike is decided. The miners in every pit prevent the transport of coal right in the middle of the night—a thing that has never yet happened in the Belgian labor movement. The miners demand lamps, go down into the shafts, persuade their comrades to lay down their tools and proclaim the general strike in the places of work. In the morning the strike is universal in the mines, in the metal industry and in all the other labor unions. The worker has had enough of misery, he wants to banish it by struggle.

The activity of the working masses rises everywhere, monster demonstrations take place, calling for the stoppage of all work and for a drive to victory. The leadership of the movement in the Charleroi district lay in the hands of the Chevalliers du Travail, led in its entirety and completely under the influence of the Communist Left Opposition.

The Bourgeoisie Acts

Against the militant zeal and will of the masses to go through to the bitter end, the bourgeoisie employed radical

means—prohibition of all demonstrations, of gatherings of more than five persons, of all vehicular traffic. In spite of the police apparatus, equipped with machine guns and supported by the military, the proletariat declared its will to demonstrate. But unfortunately, the provocations of the police did not permit this to go on very long. And soon fierce battles ensued, barricades and little forts were erected against the armed forces. Everywhere, our Opposition comrades stood at the head of the struggle.

The socialist leaders of the trade unions had shut themselves in, in their *Maisons du Peuple*, their citadels, in fear of the wrath of the thousands of workers who wanted to confront their leaders. Even Vandervelde could not get their attention and called for the police, fleeing shamefully under the protection of the bourgeois powers. Then police were posted in front of the reformist citadels, to guard them against the workers who had wanted to storm them. In the *Maison du Peuple* at Gilly, the center of the revolutionary forces, the police forced their way through to the bureau, to chase out the workers and had the soldiers clear the nearby buildings.

Signs of the times! The workers awakened! A new stage begins. The socialist retreat. The influence of the Communist Left Opposition is on the increase in the region of Charleroi.

Opposition Progress

Under this threat to the bourgeoisie—it is not over yet—numerous arrests were made among the Communist elements. From the ranks of the Oppositionists, our comrades Lesoil, Huët, Vanderborcht, Henin and Lebrun were arrested. At the present moment, that is quite an unsalutary bargain. But we shall do all that is necessary to see that our paper, *La Voix Communiste* (The Communist Voice) appears twice a week.

Now, when the bourgeoisie, with the aid of the social democrats, demand the heads of the active elements, who for the most part belong to the federation of the Chevalliers du Travail (miners), the socialists are coming out of their cellars. They are returning to the strikers and are attempting to get the workers under their control. They are making parliamentary maneuvers with the bourgeoisie, achieving only wretched promises, which in the last analysis can change nothing in the situation of the proletariat. Above all, they are attempting to instigate the strikers to return to work. It still remains to be seen what the workers will do about these new proposals of capitulation which are being made by the three big parties, the Catholics, the Liberals and the Socialists.

But these are only plasters on a wooden leg which will break again and once more reveal the really deep contradictions of a regime which can never satisfy the demands of the working class.

The winds of our sails and although we have momentarily been weakened by the many arrests, our activity will go on as always. We are counting upon a serious strengthening of our group after this battle. In the course of the skirmishes, we have had to mourn the loss of the dead and of the numerous wounded. On the other hand, class consciousness has risen tremendously. An irreconcilable hatred has been sworn to against the police hordes. To the soldiers a fraternal hand has been extended.

Need for Revolutionary Leadership

We can openly say that this struggle, which is not ended yet, arose from the depths of the proletariat. We could sense that the workers wanted more than the programs proposed. The workers have realized more than ever the necessity of creating for themselves a revolutionary leadership. It is lacking in the present action.

This struggle is a precious experience for the working class youth of Belgium, which had already forgotten the history of the struggles of 1883. The year 1932 is a new stage for the entire Belgian proletariat.

—The Left Opposition of the C. P. B. The Charleroi Group. July 16, 1932.

French Opposition's German Campaign

Bureaucrats Resort to Violence

After months of intense agitation by our French comrades inside and outside of the Communist Party of France, and under pressure of the events themselves as well as the alarm of the party membership, the Stalinist bureaucrats in Paris were forced to call a meeting on the situation in Germany at the Salle Bullier.

The French Left Opposition immediately welcomed this important step and announced by placards all over the city that representatives of the Opposition would be on hand to present the Leninist point of view.

On the date of the meeting, July 28, our comrades took their places in the hall. Immediately upon entering, they were intimidated by the bureaucrat Reynaud, who called out to our comrades in his wrath:

"You had better make sure you've some iodine and bandages on hand."

From that moment on our comrades were subjected to an uninterrupted barrage of provocations, which they met with fearless discipline, marching in group formation to the center of the meeting room.

The chairman, one Arrachard, opened the meeting under the sign of Anti-Trotskyism and declared that the Left Oppositionist would not be granted the floor. Gabriel Peri, one of the parliamentary creatures of French Stalinism was the main speaker and restricted himself almost entirely to an attack full of slander and calumny against the Bolshevik-Leninists. Pierre Somard, the general secretary of the C. P. F. and one of the most corrupt of the international Stalinist bureaucrats followed along the same lines.

After a whole series of insults and epithet-slugging, Semard finally said a few words about the united front. Applause greeted these remarks. "That was all—And Semard picked this very moment to give the signal! "Throw them out!", he shouted.

About fifty of the bureaucrats' lackeys immediately pounced on the Opposition comrades. At their head was the whole bureaucracy of the Paris district. A disgraceful and repugnant scene ensued. Oppositionists were thrown to the ground, kicked in stomach, in the head, one youth comrade was beaten till he lost consciousness. All this time, Semard and the chairman were excitedly applauding the attackers and egging them on right from the platform. After about a quarter of an hour of this pogrom, our comrades were bodily ejected from the hall.

The bureaucrat Thoroz took the floor after this incident. He raised his foot demonstratively and pointed to it: "This is the method to deal with them!" and then proceeded to spout his share of insult and venom.

Numerous party comrades in all parts of the meeting room protested and some even left the place in protest. The spectacle of the Salle Bullier has not gone without effect. Letters from party members and militant workers are streaming in daily to *La Verité*, the central organ of our French comrades, declaring their sympathy with us and their disillusionment with the Stalinist bureaucracy, subscribing to our journal and enclosing donations. Whole columns of the current issue of *La Verité* are filled with these letters.

Bureaucratic Impotence—All over the World

As in New York, in Athens, in Shanghai and everywhere, so in France too the bureaucrats of the Stalinist camp express their bankrupt despair, their utter political impotence by violent physical assault against the Left Opposition. But these arguments will not hold. The Communist workers very well know the meaning of this argument with the fist, from their struggles against the bosses and against their yellow reformist agents. They will not fail to draw their conclusions—in France and internationally.

Our French comrades have only intensified and accelerated their campaign for the German revolution—the key to the international situation—with even greater determination since the incident of the Salle Bullier. Fresh from battle with our own—American Stalinist bureaucrats, we send them our revolutionary salutations. The Left Opposition is driving ahead with invincible force. The cause of Proletarian Internationalism, of the world revolution, will pierce its way through.

"Bolshevik-Leninists, Forward!"

Who Was Actually "Caught"?

Under a sensational headline "Caught!", the *Daily Worker* about ten days ago exposed a flagrant swindle practised by the well-known socialist mountebank, Mr. E. Haldeman-Julius, editor of the socialist weekly, the *American Freeman*, and Socialist party candidate for Senator in Kansas. This respectable elder had simply taken the official acceptance speech of William Z. Foster, the Communist party candidate for president, copied it word for word, and presented it to his readers as the platform of the Socialist party. Virtually the only change made in the whole text was where the word "Communist" was replaced by the word "Socialist". The two texts, Foster's original and Haldeman-Julius' bald plagiarism, were published side by side in the *Daily Worker* and the merest glance at the two reveals one of the most despicable pieces of political fraud that has been practised in recent times.

But in its rightful indignation, the *Daily Worker* fails to note a feature of this theft which we cannot refrain from indicating. Mr. Haldeman-Julius is a fairly notorious social reformist, who does not even enjoy that distinction of dubious "radicalism" to which the shoddy "Left wing" of the Socialist party pretends. We are hardly inclined to believe that he felt obliged to decorate himself with a revolutionary-Communist plat-

form because of a wave of revolutionary radicalism sweeping over the fields and mines of Kansas. Is it, then, possible that he found Foster's speech, an official Communist party declaration, of such a nature that as a social reformist he could adopt it—words, commas, exclamation marks and all—without altering a line. Is it possible that the C. P. platform is cut, trimmed and styled by the Honorable Socialist Candidate for Senator of the State of Kansas? We find it hard to believe.

The *Daily Worker* has been asking Norman Thomas questions concerning the plagiarism which must undoubtedly be very embarrassing for him to answer; nor has he answered. May we be permitted to put our question to the *Daily Worker*?

Was it Haldeman-Julius alone who was caught? Wasn't somebody else caught too, or almost caught? . . .

A REMINDER

This is to remind our comrades that we have on hand a number of pamphlets that are very useful in our daily propaganda work. These are the Communist Manifesto; Socialism, Utopian and Scientific; Wage-Labor and Capital; Value, Price, and Profit. We still have a number of Whither England by comrade Trotsky. The amounts that we get are small and they move fast. Comrades who want them should order at once.

PROBLEMS OF THE CHINESE REVOLUTION

The second wave of sales of Problems of the Chinese Revolution is about to break. A number of publications like the Nation, the New Republic and the Labor Age have undertaken to review it. The Modern Quarterly which is edited by Schmahaussen and to which Sidney Hook contributes will review both Problems of the Chinese Revolution and hat Next? in their next issue?

THE KEY—OUT OF PRINT

As we warned in the last issue, Germany—the Key to the International Situation, is out of print. The only way to get a copy now is by buying a copy of the Bound Volumes of comrade Trotsky's pamphlets of which we still have a dwindling number.

We have a very few of the Key in German and Greek.

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A Conversation With a Party Member on the Question of the German Situation

Party Member: There you are! . . . You Trotskyites gathered gloom and predicted disaster in Germany, and instead we won a glorious victory, polled a tremendous vote, and smashed the Fascist advance.

Oppositionist: We predicted and still predict disaster for your tactics, but not for Communism. How was your victory won?

P. M.: First by fearlessly exposing the social Fascists, and then by resolutely applying the correct party line: the united front from below.

Opp.: What do you call a united front from below?

P. M.: Calling upon all Socialist and other workers to unite and to follow the Communist leadership and thus create a real united front against the enemy.

Opp.: How have the workers of Germany responded to your tactics? Did they accept them? Not at all. The union between the Socialist and Communist workers takes on an entirely different

and a spontaneous form. Workers all band as workers without in any way accepting one or the other leadership. The Communists support a Socialist demonstration and join them in fighting the Nazis; the Socialists in turn help and support the Communists in the same way. That is not the tactic of the united front from below, but an inevitable step toward the program of a true united front, as it was outlined in the Opposition program; real unity without forcing party leadership upon Socialist workers.

P. M.: You would twist it around. That is the way we always understood the united front.

Opp.: Yet curiously enough, you never applied it as such. In fact the changed attitude of both Socialist and Communist workers was quite unexpected by the leadership of both parties. The workers feel the urgent need of uniting their forces—and Trotsky's thundering voice aids them in finding the correct ways of bringing it to real-

ity at once. The only way to destroy Fascism is by bringing about the true united front.

P. M.: United front with the workers, not with the leaders and the traitors. We are going to gain more and more Socialist workers, until there will be nothing left of the social Fascist organizations.

Opp.: Comrade, you must wake up, and stop mumbling in your sleep. If there were years before us, perhaps what you say can be accomplished. But then there would be no need to speak of any kind of a united front. At the present moment, we have reached the danger mark. The only place where you will find Fascism smashed is in the columns of the *Daily Worker* But in Germany the Nazis are now at the height of their power. The stage is set for their coup. In the government they have secret or passive allies. It took over the police force of 90,000 from the Socialists in Prussia and it restored to the Nazis the right to their

military organization. They have the direct support of 13 1-2 million voters and can expect support from another 1-2 million. Who opposes them? A divided working class. Five million Communist voters alone cannot stop the Nazis. To lull the Communists now with the fable that the Nazis are stopped or smashed—is to commit a crime against the proletariat of Germany and of the world. Only the united efforts of Communist and Socialist workers will save Germany from Fascism. The workers of Germany are doing it themselves, and this action spells the doom of the Nazis. Trotsky's correct application of Marxian tactics may save the situation for the party leadership. The Communist party will have to accept a united front from above, from below and from all the other sides—the onset of events and the pressure exerted by the workers will force it.

—A. K.