

WITH THE INTERNATIONAL LEFT OPPOSITION

Some Experiences of the Illinois Miner's Struggle and the Policy of the Communists

Greece

The economic crisis has been sharply aggravated in Greece, drawing in its wake the depreciation of the drachma, raising the prices of commodities and consequently the weakening of the consumers' power.

Great Social and Revolutionary Struggles Ahead

Already in the months of the May and June Greece has seen in the principal centers the upsurge and the rising of masses of workers. Unfortunately they are far from being organized and led by the Communist Party.

During the strike of the letter carriers, the railroad workers of Macedonia, the tobacco workers of Patras and the workers of Cavalla, they have shown that the proletariat is not only disposed not to tolerate the bourgeois repression but also that it does not fear to fight to stay the worsening of its situation and obtain better living conditions.

The Greek comrades of the Left Opposition are preparing for struggle. But what are its perspectives, its slogans and its preparations? What is it doing to apply the methods of struggle which correspond to reality?

The organization of Bolshevik-Leninists (Archlo-Marxists) consequent upon its Marxist positions, after having examined the organizational situation of the workers has come to the conclusion that the working class needs firm organs of struggle, applying the slogan of the united front.

AN APPEAL TO THE COMMUNISTS AND TO THE WORKING CLASS

The workers can neither be mobilized nor can they struggle when their ranks are divided. The need for united struggle and for unity is making itself more and more felt in the conscience of the workers and becomes more and more imperative. The application of the tactic of the united front is the only guarantee for the success of the mass struggle of the workers.

Only in the small number of unions led by the Archlo-Marxists does proletarian democracy exist. Our organization proposes the convocation of a Workers' Congress in every city where representatives elected by the factories and industries will participate.

The unemployed workers, organized into districts, are to delegate their own representatives. This Congress will elect a council of representatives which will undertake the leadership of the workers' struggles, strikes, the fight against unemployment, for political and trade union freedom and will head the working class in the counter-offensive against the bourgeoisie.

MILITANT BUILDERS

The Home Strutch

Do our Militant Builders remember that the comrade who stands highest in the staff at the end of the month receives a copy of Max Eastman's biography of comrade Trotsky, Portrait of a Youth?

NEW BUNDLE ORDERS

For some time now we have been watching the Chicago branch send in new bundle orders. New York occasionally adds one or two. But in Chicago they go at it hammer and tongs. We have an idea that it is principally due to the driving force that is unparalleled literature agent under that bears the name, Sacharow. Readers of this column will see her name near the top or at the top of every drive or contest we conduct.

A number of new orders are coming in from their own accord, so to speak. This is a good sign. But it indicates that we are not realizing all that can be done in this direction. From which we draw the conclusion: to work. All those in favor get busy and send in new bundle orders; or go around to the stand that already carries the Militant and increase their orders.

elect a council of representatives which will undertake the leadership of the workers' struggles, strikes, the fight against unemployment, for political and trade union freedom and will head the working class in the counter-offensive against the bourgeoisie.

These representative councils of all Greece will have to elect a central organization for the leadership of the whole struggle. The councils are to constitute the highest form of the united front, in which each political fraction of the working class movement will have the right to express its viewpoint on the basis of proletarian democracy and will at the same time be submitted to the discipline and resolutions of the council adopted by the majority.

The councils are to be renewed at each Congress, which will be called as often as possible.

To prepare for this Congress, our organization proposes the creation of a committee from the existing trade unions, which will concern itself with the organization of the Congress and other details of the election of representatives. This committee will convolve the Congress on the following platform:

- 1. "Adaptation of wages to the high cost of living."
2. Abolition of arbitrary dismissals and rehiring of all licensed workers.
3. Unemployment subsidies equal to wages-abolition of armaments.
4. Social insurance at the expense of the bosses and the government.
5. Protection of women and children workers.
6. 7 hour day without wage cuts.
7. "Adoption of working class legislation."
8. Equal salary for workers of both sexes.
9. Abolition of indirect taxation-increase of tax on capital.
10. Annulment of the public debt.
11. Abolition of debts of refugees and poor peasants.
12. General amnesty - Abolition of special laws of counter-revolutionary suppression.
13. Political liberty (of press, speech, organizations and meetings.)
14. Trade union freedom.
15. Abolition of laws for the use of the army against strikers, against Communists-abolition of resolutions for the dissolution of unions.
No organization which considers itself proletarian can refuse to collaborate on this platform.

These problems are faced by the workers: they realize the necessity of fighting for their solution because they stand at the basis of their existence; they are questions which preoccupy them independently of their political opinions.

These councils, higher than parties, higher than factions, than dissenting groups and groupings, will be capable of uniting masses of workers for common action.

Comrades and fellow-workers:
"Each day the situation grows more and more serious. Life is growing in-

tolerable for us. Every day we are plunged deeper into poverty.

"The bourgeoisie causes and will continue to cause all the weight of the crisis to fall upon us; the needs of the struggle demand the creation of a united front of city and farm workers having as its organ the council of delegates elected by the Congress.

"In loyalty to its principles and obligations, the Bolshevik-Leninist organization will work on this basis with all its powers for the realization of a workers' united front and for the success of the Congress which will elect the council of delegates. Long live the workers' united front!

"For the expulsion of the bourgeois offensive!

"For political and trade union rights!
"For the struggle against dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and for the installation of the proletarian dictatorship!"

The Greek Opposition is advancing the slogan of workers' and peasants' Councils while silence and inertia prevail in the C. P. which continues to practice its tactic of disintegration. Our comrades have been working for the establishment of a committee of temporary councils and are moving toward this goal through the trade unions.

This temporary committee of councils on June 22 called an enlarged meeting at which 1700 workers participated; they voted for its resolution to undertake action for general amnesty, etc.

It was decided to maintain the temporary committee, which stands under the leadership of the Left Oppositionists.

Belgium

The splendid miners' strike is continuing. The reformist leaders are continuing their maneuvers to destroy it. Our comrades, particularly in the Charleroi region, continue to lead the struggle in the front line. Five comrades, among them Lessil, are still imprisoned at Mons. Nevertheless, La Voix Communiste, the Opposition's paper, now appears every week and sells five thousand copies, in spite of the police persecutions.

The influence of our comrades is growing. The workers place more and more confidence in them and in the leadership they give in the struggle. The infamous slanders of the Stalinists are shattered in the face of this reality, on which every proletarian in Belgium can lay his hands. Immediately below is the latest bulletin on the situation, which appeared August 12 in La Voix Communiste:

Wednesday, August 12—Since a considerable section of the Limbourg miners, who have regrouped their forces and some back into the struggle side by side with the miners from the other basins, has come out on strike again, the strike has become general throughout the country. The new important development of the week is the fact that the leaders of the Belgian Labor Party, of the Trade Union Commission and of the Trade Union Federation have openly pronounced themselves against the general strike and also against expressing

solidarity with the miners.

This threat of a general strike, which the bosses and government dread, has been dispelled for the moment. Consequently the ministry has been able to reply to the journalists that it considered the convocation of the mixed commission useless; in addition, the coal bosses failed to reply to the summons.

The bosses' attitude is significant: they have at their disposal the police, militia, the army, the tribunals—to defeat the strikers; and in addition, the leaders of the Belgian Labor Party and the syndicalists to keep the workers of other industries from solidarity with the miners, they count in this way, on putting an end to the miners' resistance.

But the miners are firm, in spite of the difficult conditions under which they are struggling; they are alone against the bloc of bosses, the government and the reformist leaders, united in the common will not to let the miners carry off the victory; but the miners are resolved to continue the strike, which they do not regard as useless and aimless, because they want to prove their determination to end the regime of famine which was imposed on them before strike.

Harder than ever must the miners expend all their efforts, in order to spread their movement to other industries, despite the trade union leaders.

This is the condition that must be realized to win a speedy and decisive victory over the bosses and government which, terrified by the general strike, retreated; but they are again attacking the miners' defeat to begin their attacks against the whole mass of workers once more.

Spain

Not only was the Azana government not ignorant of the plans for a military coup d'Etat but underhandedly tolerated them. The abortive "revolution" of the Spanish bourgeoisie really is supported by the landlords and the cadres of the old regime; it is massacring and imprisoning the workers. The reaction of the popular masses to the hated militarists has been growing powerfully. It has even reached their accomplices in the Azana government.

At Barcelona our comrades of the Opposition immediately issued a leaflet which they distributed in thousands of copies, and held very successful open air meetings. As soon as the authorities got word of this comrades Fersen and Robles were arrested.

Our comrades' leaflet declared: "The government has made use of the rebels (Monarchists) as agents of repression against the proletariat, strengthening the former and weakening the latter. Faithful to its conduct, the government, which is not in the least embarrassed by legal considerations when it is a question of imprisoning and deporting workers, involves the law to leave the generals unpunished. But, the working class will not allow this, and, forming its united front, will demand the firing squad for the generals and the arming of the people to struggle against reaction."

The revolt against the Stalinist bureaucracy and their wrong policies in throwing up layer after layer of Communist workers who no longer intend to keep silent while the party and the industrial unions flounder in opportunism and adventurism. The following statement issued by J. Johannesen, member of the National Bureau of the M. W. I. U., shows how deep the fight against the corrupt Stalinist regime has penetrated. In all sections of the party and its auxiliary organizations these struggles against the opportunist policies and bureaucratic methods are springing in being. Many of these struggles are in the upswing process.

Unless these comrades are able to trace these surface sores to the cause, the Communist movement and the Marxian wing will not gain by the first steps against the Stalinist revisionist. An increased number of these workers are tracing these errors to the source and are moving toward the Left Opposition, realizing that the policy of the Bolshevik-Leninist faction is the only policy that has gone to the root of the matter and stands on the Marxian principles.

Entirely too many of these Communist workers drop by the wayside. Some take a back seat in the party and keep silent, others dissimulated in the fundamentals of Marxism move either to the camp of the socialists or the syndicalists.

The methods of Stalinism in the Industrial Unions play in the hands of the Syndicalist, while their general political strategy has rearmend the Social-Democrats.

For the past period the policies and action of the Stalinist in the Marine Workers have played into the hands of the syndicalists. Many of the most active syndicalists on the waterfront are former members of the M. W. I. U. who left or were driven out by the Stalinist policies which the workers have confused with Communism, with Marxism.

The main danger that the present struggle against the Stalinists in the Marine Workers Industrial Union must guard against is the relapse into the camp of syndicalism. That is not the policy of the Left Opposition, the Marxian policy, is the only remedy.

FELLOW SEAMEN:

The ship owners shifted the burden of the present crisis on to the shoulders of

simultaneously on strike under the banner of their independent union, and the Illinois miners were in revolt against the U. M. W. of A. officials. Our united front proposal to be organized through a conference of these sections was rejected by the official party. Now such a step is becoming an ever more pressing duty.

We can go back further into the history of developments. At the time of the Illinois miners break with the Lewis Administration, cleverly utilized by the Fishwick-Walker-Howatt combination, we warned against any false illusions toward this combination but at the same time emphasizing the need of the left wing continuing the struggle within this mass movement. The official party pursued the opposite course and isolated its forces from the movement and from the union.

There was a repetition in the revolt following shortly after headed by the Edmonson forces. Once again a mass movement, though practically leaderless, a new opportunity. The course pursued by the Left Oppositionists in participating in that movement and to point toward the right direction for the future is now bearing its fruits. The Left Opposition Communists has now all the prospects for, and is taking shape as a force in reality, fighting for a correct direction to the present gigantic movement. The official party policy of boycott of mass revolts not entirely controlled by it has led it to its present fatal isolation from the Illinois miners.

This can be repaired still; but only by the official party leadership rectifying its mistakes and changing its attitude and policy. The course, which it must adopt has been very clearly indicated by the position we have taken. The correctness of this position has been fully vindicated by the event. The logic of the party position adds only one additional fact commentary further reinforcing this lesson.

The present Illinois miners' struggle must start a new chapter in the history of their organization. Only a complete break with the past, with the corrupt union bureaucracy, can secure the victory they have set out to win against the operators, against the armed state forces and against the official traitors. The Left Opposition is developing a force in this struggle capable of constantly more serious intervention, and it will show the way.

It becomes decisive in more respects than one; but particularly by what is already clearly indicated, that a victory in this strike must necessarily open up a new chapter laying the basis for an entirely new method and practice of unionism. It must be a final and complete separation from corrupt, treacherous practices of the past and from corrupt officialdom.

A mere victory on the wage proposition with union conditions and leadership remaining as before would at best be only a short truce to be utilized for preparation of new betrayals.

Union Future Hanged in Balance
This strike has gone beyond the bounds of a mere ordinary shut down. There are virtual armies arrayed with mass picketing on a scale never witnessed before. There is additional importance in the miners being the very spearhead of workers resistance against the wage cut onslaughts, and in the double objective of their fight—to also decisively defeat the wreckers from within. It is a struggle of gigantic proportions.

The future of the Illinois miners union now hangs in the balance. To estimate its prospect it will be well to note some of the experience of the past, and particularly the all important question of policy pursued by the revolutionists. In this respect a comparison of the views advanced by the Left Opposition and the policy and practice of the official Communist party will prove illuminating.

The Illinois miners do not stand alone. There are sections in rebellion against the U. M. W. of A. administration in every field, some having already definitely split away. The question of future unity of these sections, as a temporary measure, at least a united front on minimum objectives, is still a crucial one. It was therefore completely in accord with the fundamental principles of working class interest and proceeding from a basis of revolutionary policy that we, at the time of the Pennsylvania-Ohio miners strike of last year urged a united front of these various sections to fight for their common immediate objective. The Pennsylvania-Ohio miners struck under the banner of the party controlled National Miners Union. The West Virginia miners were

A Letter From China

We have received the following brief message from our Chinese comrades: Shanghai, August 2, 1932—

Several of our comrades (all Lenin students returned from Moscow) have been missing for eleven days. One of them is the chairman of the Organization Committee of the Chinese Left Opposition at Jiefan Park (west of Shanghai). We lost trace of them immediately after our last secret meeting. We believe that they have been captured by the "Blue Coat Society"

The Blue Coat Society is a new secret party. Its full name is the Blue Coat Society of the Kuo Min Tang of China. It is of about the same type as the Nazis in Germany. Its Hitler is Chiang Kai-Shek. Its basic nucleus consists of students recently returned from the Moscow Sun-Yat-Sen University, renegades from the party and students of the Wampoa Military Academy faithful to the Chinese Hitler. One of its mediums of activity is assassination. All the intellectuals of General Chiang's troop and many notorious politicians are flocking to this group. In short, it is the rising Fascist movement of China.

The History of the Russian Revolution is being published in Chinese... By the end of August or September, we hope to reestablish our legal Shanghai weekly...

Fraternalty yours, CH.

Pioneer Publishers Notes

LITERATURE SALES
A NEW WAVE OF INTEREST in the publications of the League is sweeping over us. Our campaign on the German situation, on the Anti-War Congress, on the expulsion of comrade Pappas, and now on the frame-up charge of murder by the Stalinists has aroused new interest in our point of view. Orders are coming in. Our stocks are dropping. Some numbers are out. Germany—the Key is completely out of print. Revolution in Spain is pretty nearly out. There are only some twenty copies of the Real Situation in Russia left. And so it goes. Now is the time to order.

TROTSKY'S COMPLETE WRITINGS
A number of sympathizers have sent in orders for bound volumes of Trotsky's "complete writings". We did not announce the Bound Volumes as his complete writings. We could not. It is our understanding that comrade Trotsky's complete writings which have not yet been collected would fill some sixty or seventy volumes. Some day we will bring them out in a uniform edition.

In the meantime we continue to advertise the Bound Volumes as a collection of nine of his recent writings; all of them dealing with the current struggle in the Communist movement in relation to the problems of the international proletarian revolution. And may we remind our readers once more that these Bound Volumes contain four pamphlets that are out of print and unobtainable otherwise; and that the Bound Volumes are going—?

But, before we can wage any successful struggles we must rid ourselves of the bureaucrats who will not even shrink from stooling in order to enforce their arbitrary will. On the waterfront there is no place for these reptiles. —J. JOHANNESSEN.