## Comrade Trotsky's Letter to the Weisbord

Comrade Weishord:

Your organization on its own initiative has delegated you to get an exchange of views on questions which separate you from the American League which is the section of the International Opposition (Bolshevik-Leninists). In the course of several talks you have explained the opinions of your organization over the fundamental litigious questions. You have proposed that I put down in writing my conclusions from the talks which we have had. In the following lines I shall try to do this without pretending in any way to exhaust the questions raised by you.

1. I am inclined to consider as the most important the question of the Labor Party". Here it is a question of the essential instrument of the proletarian revolution. Every lack of clarity or ambiguity on that question is pernicious. The ideas developed by you for the defence of the slogan of the "Labor Party" I have criticized in a special document which I have given you. Here I deem it necessary to add only several words.

On the question of the Labor Party position of Lovestone which is notoriously opportunistic. The Lovestone group is consistent in its denial of the indeprinciple of Communism in the one case before the bourgeoisic and in the other case before the lieutenants of the bourgeoisie within the working class.

Your group, as far as I know, condemns the politics of the Stalinists in China and in Great Britain but at the same time it accepts the slogan of the Labor Party. That is to say: In taking or trying to take a Marxist position towards the past events in other couptries you take an opportunist position try. I believe that without a radical revision of your position in the central question of the party an effective rapprochement between your organization and the International Left Oppositino cannot be affected.

2. Your group has rejected up to the present the definition accepted by us of the international Stalinist fraction as Bureaucratic Centrism. You start out from the view that one can give the name "Centrism" only to those groupings which occupy the place between the official camp of reformism (Social-Democracy) and the official camp of Communism. Under this purely formalist, schematic, undialectical conception of centrism is hidden in fact a lack of clarity of the political position of your own group. You are concerned to efface the difference between the official party, the these demands the larger objectives of the Right wing fraction (Lovestone group) and even the American League. This makes it easy for you to remain in an eclectic position and defend your right of a bloc with the Lovestone group.

That the Lovestone group does not represent a purely reformist organization is incontestable, but the question is in its tendency and political orbit. The Lovestone group represents a variety of Right wing centrism which is evolving from Communism to Social-Democracy. The German Socialist Labor Party (S. A. P.) which broke from the Social-Democracy, contains a more progressive tendency than the Brandlerites although according to the theoretical formulae the last are apparently nearer to us. Statically, the Lovestone group, the German Brandlerites as well as the S. A. P. represent varieties of Right-wing Centrism. But dynamically one is different from the other and it is the dynamics which de-

Certainly, in a number of partial questions, the Lovestone group has taken a position more correct than the official party but to conclude a bloc with the Lovestone group would mean to augment its general authority and by that to help it to fulfill its reactionary historic mis-

I shall not stop here to go into more details on the question of centrism. I permit myself to refer you to my last brochure which will soon appear in America (What Next?)

tional Left Opposition cannot be achieved.

3. Your criticism of the American League starts to considerable degree from wrong premises (the most important of which are given above). At the same time you give to your criticism al character so immediate, exaggerated and ing, Christian clergyman cannot subembittered that it forces us to see in you of the International Left Opposition but gotten the class struggle? Who are the in any given place . . ." The commitof its adversaries if not of its enemies

Upon the bases of criteria which are partly false, partly insufficient and arbi trary, you deny, as I have said, the ex istence of differences in principle between the American League, the Lovestone group and the official party. With this you declare not only that the leadership of the League is classed in an opportunist position but also that the International Left Opposition as a whole is absolutely incapable of distinguishing between Marxism and opportunism on a most essential question. Is it that you are astonished after that, that the Bolshevik-Leninists demand what binds you to the International Left Opposition?

4. You stress with special energy the necessity of active participation on the part of the Left Opposition in general in the movement and the struggle of the working masses. Although at the present stage, the Left Opposition is, in the majority of countries, a propagandist organization, it puts forth propaganda not in a sectarian but in a Marxist man-

by comrade Trotsky to comrade Weisbord, which was written as a conclusion to discussions held between them. In subsequent issues we will publish the answer of comrade Weisbord to this letter and a statement by our National Committee in regard to this answer.-Ed.

ner, that is to say, upon the basis of itiative and experience.

sibility in mass work. I am ready to ad- Landau and his methods. Precisely for be on the basis of definite principles a Noah's Ark. It is necessary to choose a number of fundamental questions a serious and certain. necessary unanimity will be attained remain lifeless.

your group eclectic. By this I do not not exist. Unification with the Ameri- same thing can be said of Bucharit, and an emission consists precisely in that you ignore pendent historic role of the Communist wish at all to express any condemnation can League is possible only on the basis many others. The ideological and moral the work of the Left Opposition in this Party. That group approves up to today as a whole which bars the possibility of of unity of principles and methods which decomposition of Radek is witness not fundamental question. the policy of the Comintern in regard to a future rapprochement. The question is must be formulated theoretically and only of the fact that Radek is not made the Kuo Min Tang and the British Trade here also decided dynamically. You verified by experience. Unions, that is to say, the capitulation in must openly, clearly and attentively re- The best thing would be, in my opin- fact that the Stalinist regime can rely But the task does not consist to refer vi-e your baggage so as to take care to ion, if you would devote a coming issue only upon impersonal chinovniks or mor- to this or that quotation from Lenin We want to help with this job. We ask uncover by that not only your manifest of your organ to a critical revision of ally decomposed individuals. political faults but also the historical and your ideological baggage, especially in However, it is necessary to take facts other conditions, but to use correctly the ment as a group. principled roots of these faults. I have regard to the litigious questions. Only the as they are in reality. The Brandler- method of Lenin. In Lenin you do not reacted with such warm praise to the character of this revision (before all na- ites chased out of the Comintern, and find, naturally, anything about bureauthesis of the Second Conference of the turally its content but particularly also their worst section (the Lovestone group) cratic Centrism because the Stalinist Americal League on the Labor Party its form) can demonstrate just to what have proved themselves condemned to fraction was formed politically after the because in this thesis there was taken degree the practical steps on the side political degeneration. Their ideological death of Lenin. In the struggle with not only a correct position in the essence of unification are really ripe. of the question but also there was given The most important extracts of your not and cannot have As an independent position grew. Also in this question, you an open and courageous criticism of its article could be printed in the Interna- group they are capable only of bringing ignore its critical activity. own past. Only in this way can a rev-| tional Bulletin as information material. towards the future of your own coun- olutionary tendency assure itself serious. Naturally the question will be decided by sooner they will be liquidated the betly against a relapse.

with the participation of all the or-ciple from the American League. But matter of indifference. international Left Opposition does not basis of principle will be confirmed. exist for the first day. In the struggle! It is not necessary to say that I shall! About a political bloc between the Left! May 24, 1932.

We are publishing herewith a letter I for its ideas and methods it has purified be very glad if your trip here and our start from the idéological work already Bolshevik-Leninists. accomplished and to fortify its results May 22, 1932. and to systematize them. To enter on the road which was proposed by your group would mean to make a cross over the past and to return to the state of original chaos. Of that we cannot even

your organization is very near to the disputes; on "mass work" will inevitably by in mind that the road to the Inter- which was well understood by Lenin, thesis was submitted to a gigantic test. 5. Above, I have called the position of the American League; a second road does and Kameneff to political death. The sense, from that test. The fault of your

its ranks of foreign elements. The in- discussion will contribute to the going ternational conference can and must over of your group to the camp of the —L. TROTSKY.

Postscript to the Letter to Comrade Weisbord For the sake of better clarity I wish

to add some remarks:

1. If I speak about the inadmissabil-The Left Opposition is not a mechani- ity of direct or indirect support of the participation in all the life of the pro- cal sum of vacillating groups but an in- Lovestone group or the Brandlerites in letariat. I am not able to admit that ternational fraction created on the general I do not wish at all to say by anyone of the leaders or of the members granite basis of the principles of Marx- that, that these elements could not, under of the American League denies this prin- ism. A rapprochement and a fusion any circumstances, find for themselves a ciple. The question reduces itself to a with the International Left Opposition is place in the Communist ranks. On the great extent to the real possibility to not able to be obtained through organi- contrary; under a healthy regime of the which pertains also natural capacity, in- zational manipulations or through adven- Comintern the majority of the Brandlerturistic combinations a la Landau. I ites would have executed, without doubt, Let us admit, for a minute, that the was glad to hear from you that your this or that useful work. One of the American League lacks this or that pos- group has nothing in common with pernicious consequences of the Stalinist you refer to the decision of the Fourth bureaucracy consists in this that it is mit that your group would be able in this reason it is necessary to renounce compelled by each new empiric zig-zag, entirely on the basis of the decisions of that respect to complete the work of the once for all the thoughts of transform- under fear of its own collapse, to push the first four congresses but distinguish-

and methods. Until the time that, in another road less precipitate but more ly qualified elements. Under the regime sions. The decisions of the Fourth Con-Before everything you must keep clear- sible work in spite of their insufficiency tactical hypothesis. After that the hyponational Left Opposition leads through The regime of Stalin condemned Zinoviev The Left Opposition grew, in a certain of first class material but also of the tion of Centrism. You refer to Lenin.

confusion and decomposition. The 5. I do not wish to say at all that

submitted to an enlarged interpretation. group.

Opposition and the S. A. P. with its actual obvious centrist leadership one English Opposition cannot even speak. The progressive tendencies within the S. A. P. can be uncovered only by our implacable criticism against the leadership of the S. A. P. and also against the old Brandlerites who are under it and who play within the S. A. P. a manifestly reactionary

role. We cannot put your American Left Socialists at all on the same plane even with the Centrist leaders of the S. A. P., who at least have broken with the Social-Democracy. By a correct policy of the Communist Party, the S. A. P., before its disintegration, could become a precious auxiliary instrument for the decomposition of Social-Democracy. As for the American Left Socialists we do not have the least reason to distinguish them from Hillquit that is to say, to see in them anything else than agents of the

bourgeoisie in the working class. 3. In the question of the Labor Party Congress. The Left Opposition stands American League. But mass work must ing the International Left Opposition into out of the party its allies of yesterday. es the decisions of principles and pro-Zinoviev and Kameneff represent high-gram from tactical and episodic deciof Lenin they accomplished very respon- gress on that question could be only a

> 4. The same thing applies to the queswhich is concerned with other times and you, comrades, to demand our re-instateresources are zero. Masses they have this fraction, the International Left Op-

your group defended in the past the unthe American League. But all our sec- ter. Which part of them will be trans- worthy methods of the Landau group. 6. Your group has raised up the tions will want to be informed. Not one formed by this into Stalinist chinoviska However, you are in error in thinking slogan of an international conference of them will demand concession in prin- and which into Social-Democrats is a that this question is an internal question of the Left Opposition. The Left Opganizations and groups who count them- however all of them will cooperate com- 2. The remark made above that the position does not have and cannot have seives with the Left. This way presents pletely in the cause of a rapprochement S. A. P. elements are more progressive anything in common with the Landau itself to me to be false to the roots. The and fusion if the existence of a common than the Brandlerites must in no case be group nor with those who support that

—L. TROTSKY.

# Expelled from Party

(Continued from page 1)

ter part of 1931. We hold that wrong party policy and bureaucracy in the party are responsible for its unsatisfactory position.

Answer to Threat of Expulsion

Unless we give up our point of view, we are threatened with expulsion. But we joined the Party believing it to be the only party for the workers; we still think this, and we shall hold both to our point of view and to the party. We shall not be harassed, as was Murphy, into deserting the party. We shall work to win the membership to our point of view. Expulsions and "liquidations" will not be the last word in this struggle. We shall fight within the party for reinstatement, we shall appeal to the Central Committee, to the party Congress, to the Comintern. Meanwhile, we shall constantly put before the party our criticisms and suggestions, and shall-in this area-keep n working for Communism and for the party, side by side with all other party members.

We do not want to return in order to 'vote and keep quiet," we want to play our part in the struggle against wrong policy, against bureaucracy, and for the correct policy essential for Communist work for the revolution. Only by struggle can the party be changed from a paper-distributing, phrase-mouthing, resolution-passing machine, into a live and vigorous section of the International.

We are, comrades, yours fraternally,

#### THE BALHAM GROUP

Steve Dowdall	11 years' me	mbership
Jim Barrett	8 "	**
D. Groves	6 "	49
F. Chalcroft	8 months'	**
I. Mussi	8 "	**
C. Whiting	8 "	,,
Harry Wicks	11 years' me	embership
Henry Sara	9 "	**
Reg. Groves	5 "	**
N. Dowdall	6 "	,,
M. Simmonds	8 months'	**
W. Pyne	9 "	**

MILITANT BUILDERS

Well, the August contest is over. At

the head of the staff stands a new name

-comrade Weber of the New York

branch. He tops the list with a total of

four dollars in subs. To him goes, very

reluctantly, the Eastman biography of

Close behind him was a Minneapolis

standby, comrade H. Schwartz; and close

behind him were a number of comrades

who usually score bullseyes in these con-

tests. The staff record tells the story:

2 1.2

15 1-2

5 1-2

2

comrade Trotsky.

J. Weber

H. Schwartz

A. Weaver

W. Wynne

M. Abern

J. Keller

C. Cowl

H. Mashow

R. Sacharow

L. Goodman

J. Edwards

P. Schulman

L. Schlossberg

The record by branches finds New

York away out in front with 15 1-2 dol-

lars in subs. In second place, displacing

In a week or so we will be back at

you comrades with a brand new idea. It

will put all of you on your toes and

have you up early and late getting subs.

R. Karsner

R. Ruskin

Minneapolis, comes Chicago.

New York

Minneapolis

Philadelphia

Miscellaneous

Cleveland

Roston

Chicago

### Unemployed Activity in Retrospect the program projects must become united it is as correct as it was when issued.

(Continued from last issue)

sion that it is incorrect to fight for these demands wherever they are issues. But by an almost exclusive concentration on movement are lost sight of and these demands do not become steps leading toward the development of class consciousness and the raising of the struggle to a higher plane, but ends in themselves. They become reformist, opportunist demands. And they sow confusion in the minds of the workers by wiping out the essential differences between the revolutionary-Communist program, and the Socialist and other reformist programs.

This can best be seen from the text itself. The program is based on "-a recognition of the fact that those who own and control the wealth and government are willing to allow millions to their great wealth shall not be drawn on for relief." (Emphasis in the original). "The Unemployed Councils are the organs for the determined, uncompromising

struggle against all who are responsible for and all who assist in imposing upon the workers the miseries that result from mass unemployment." Again: "In the ployed. effort to safeguard the masses from the effects of unemployment the Unemploydaily struggle--'

It is in keeping that such "theoretical" opportunism should find its counterpart in the schema of fighting methods. Under the heading. How to Formulate and Fight for Immediate Demands, there is to be found the following axiom of opportunism; "It should be obvious that if ployed movement is thus, of necessity fight embracing both employed and unfind it more convenient and safer to program as the basic form of unemployed had to be linked up with the final rev- The demand is shooting up like a very grant the demand for cash relief or more adequate relief as the case may be."

(Emphasis in the original). What working class content do these formulations and methods have? What is there in them to which a well-meanscribe? Have the Stalinist authors of "all" who are responsible for mass unemployment? This is degeneration to Uberalism. It makes of the occasional ghastly masquerade.

solution, and "recognition and unhamas an end in itself. The result is that no basis is establish-

ed by the program for drawing into the movement the Socialist and A. F. of L. no directives are issued by the program leads in another direction. It will not should raise their voices for such a disto accomplish this vital task. The program thus makes the same blunder made through struggle because the struggle the Left Opposition be given an opporby the T. U. U. L resolution of last which it will conduct is conducting, is movements as separate, and it is forced gram attempts to put a programmatic suffer hunger and want in order that to pose the question of uniting the two seal on the flight to opportunism-It conmovements. Its solutions are a repeti- summates the turn initiated by Browder resolution which have been tested by time and found to be no solutions at all. In short the program does not advance united movement of employed and unem-

strument of clarity in the direction of lief. class consciousness, but a vehicle of confusion.

adopted in the meeting (of workers) act as a bridge. where the election takes place . . . "

militant phraseology of the program a the basis of a united front. But it is these centr l slogans and stated that Buchler writes from Kansas City. It It is true that the program lists in its fatal limitations to this happy beginning, a genuine united front basis. "basic" demands the "seven hour day With no basis laid for drawing the So-

the movement the united fronts which ever, did not make it incorect. Today movement's orientation on relief unempered trade relations with the Soviet ployed workers for the most part, are drawn into the movement and the united adoption of our program. But we candressing. They are not explained in the fronts will be, are composed of unem- not wait while unparalleled opportunities text of the program, nor is their connection with the fight for relief estab. ism. The united front which begins so is time now to make a step forward. lished. They do not outweigh the ex- happily in the program can, in practice, cessive weight laid on the fight for relief turn out to be nothing more than an-

work in demonstrations, etc. the road to the opportunist swamp. The free. Party members seriously interestworkers without whom no broad move- program in practise cannot bring us closer to our revolutionay goal. It and in building a movement for relief October. It is forced to present the two based on reformist premises. The protion of the solutions of the T. U. U. L. last year. It is the second step backward.

#### One Step Forward

Against this opportunist course the us a single inch toward building one Opposition has repeatedly warned. It has done more than that. It has offered comrades. For some time we have, all of a program in place of the ideological us, been speaking of a wave of member-But it does narrow the chasm separat- mess of porridge the Stalinists have ship coming over to us from the ineviting the Communist relief program from served up. In its Open Letter to the able smash-up of Stalinism. As one of ment Councils organize and conduct the the Wobbly charity-begging schemes C. C. of GPUSA, issued early in 1931, the results of this wave of membership and the Socialist reformist program it emumerated six basic points of a dressed up in militant phrases. In this Marxist program upon which to build a our literature stocks. The wave is very sense the program becomes not an in- fighting working-class movement for re- definitely on the horizon. In a short

It predicated it program on the absolutely correct assumption that the . . regardless of any other opinion or clared that the slogans of today had to roads on our stocks of literature. affiliation who agrees with the program prepare the movement for tomorrow and Orders are pouring in from every cor

On this basis it placed in the fore-These unemployed committees are groups front of its program the slogans of the that work by comrade Trotsky had betof "from three to fifteen workers who six-hour day, five-day week with no re- ter order it at once. Whoever is busy have been elected by a body of worker's duction in pay; unemployment insurance propagandizing workers had better lay tees elect delegates to a larger territorial its government; and long-term, large- are unavailable. scale credits to the Soviet Union. 1t

without reduction in wages" which it cialist and A. F. of L. workers into the party ever one knows. That, how- of our growing influence.

fronts of workers sympathetic to Com- The party's failure to build a movement munism, which is to say, no united fronts around its program emphasies the corany more than did the T. U. U. L. re- at all. More than this, because of the rectness of our program in a negative

The class struggle will yet force the

The party should adopt our program now. It should begin by opening up a other party auxiliary good for useful discussion in its ranks on the entire question of unemployment and the fight What remains is another milestone on for relief. The discussion should be ed in learning from the Party's failures tunity to participate in the discussion and defend its program.

#### Pioneer Publishers Notes

LITERATURE RUNNING OUT

We want to sound a serious note of warning to all our propagandists and we anticipated a tremendous demand on time it will break and surge up to the shore.

While you are waiting breathlessly for But as it often happens in life and our announcement suppose you run This narrow conception of the unem- fight for relief must be a general class the class struggle, a secondary, so to speak, and component part of the process around and get new bundles orders. It we constantly appear in a given relief carried over to the organizational forms employed workers. It rested its program precedes the primary process itself. We is only a thin trickle. It indicates they question in my opinion a rapprochement agency to dispute over the contents of worked out for the movement. The unbetween your fraction and the Interna- every basket—the authorities will soon employed committee is established by the that, for revolutionists, a relief program is what is happening with our literature. that if you go after them you can do it. writes very, very encouragingly "Farmmovement. This is defined as an elected olutionary goal as a step toward that light. It is a source of no little gratificaers from Nebraska and Texas come and body to which is eligible "any worker goal. As its third major premise it de- tion to us. But it is making great inhunt us up now. Trotsky seems to be their favorite. Even cloth bound books are in more demand now. Enclosed find

ner of the globe. Our stocks are dropping. Whoever is lacking a copy of this or

The great interest in our literature This formulation seems to establish called for a fighting movement around can be seen in part from what comrade That this program was not accepted by daily mail brings evidence after evidence the last call on this book.

WORLD UNEMPLOYMENT AND

48 pages paper cover 10c

140 pages,

cloth cover \$1.00

(Out of Print)

COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

THE FIVE YEAR PLAN\*

DRAFT PROGRAM OF THE

Part 1 and 3

RUSSIA

364 pages

A Criticism of Fundamentals\*

cloth bound

THE REAL SITUATION IN

REVOLUTIONARY LESSONS AND WHITHER ENGLAND The first of these two works by com-

check-". That's the language to talk.

Farmers, workers, everybody wants to

read The Milltant. Let's give it to them.

After the subs! Get bundle orders!

rades Lenin and Trotsky is out. We have only an appearance. There are some such a movement could be built only on is quoted in The Militant Builders Column on more. But we still have a few of This is not an exceptional instance. The Whither England. This will probably be

#### THE MILITANT 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. Published weekly by the Communist League of America (Opposition) at 84 East 10th St., N. Y. EDITORIAL BOARD

James P. Cannet Martin Abern Maurice Spector Max Shachtman Arne Swabeck

SATURADY, SEPTEMBER ? '32 Vol. V, No. 23 / Vole 2. Subscriptic rac .00 per year; foreign \$2.50. Five cents per cent Bundle rates, 3 cents per copp.

## BOOKS BY TROTSKY

Unemployed Council.

PROBLEMS OF THE CHINESE REVOLUTION

Cloth cover \$1.50 450 pages paper cover 1.00 GERMANY — THE KEY TO THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION\* -SHALL FASCISM REALLY BE VICTORIOUS

(Out of print) THE PERMANENT REVOLUTION paper cover 50c 158 pages cloth cover \$1.00 | 64 pages

HISTORY OF THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION-Vol. 1

Retail at \$4 522 pages By Special arrangements with the PROBLEMS OF THE DEVELOP-MENT OF THE U. S. S. R.\* 48 pages COMMUNISM AND SYNDICAL

publishers of this book we can offer it to certificate holders at \$3

paper cover 15c paper cover 15c STRATEGY OF THE WORLD REVOLUTION\* Part 2 of the Draft Program

86 pages 25c THE SPANISH REVOLUTION\* paper cover 10c 30 pages THE SPANISH REVOLUTION IN DANGER\*

paper cover 15c 64 pages THE TURN IN THE C. I. AND THE GERMAN SITUATION\* (out of print)

10e

PIONEER PUBLISHERS

New York, N. Y. 84 East 10th Street,