

WORKERS
OF THE
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UNITE

THE MILITANT



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Miners Face Big Tasks

Progressive Miners of America Must Be Class Union

From the day the Progressive Miners of America began to take an organized form it was clear that the real tests of its existence as a union, and particularly as a militant union, were still ahead. These tests, of course, could not be expected to be easy ones. It could not be merely a matter of going out to line up the membership and collecting dues. No, the job is a far more serious one. The existence of the new union will be conditioned upon its ability to give battle and its ability to fight to win. That also presupposes a much greater degree of clarity of views as to what really constitutes a militant union—one which can actually win over the combined enemy forces, the Lewis-Walker clique and the operators.

Only a few weeks have passed since the day of formation of the union, and the test is already beginning. The operators have extended their line of the battle front against the new union. In this they have obtained some measures of success, at least temporarily. That this could be possible, there need be no doubt, is due to some of the weaknesses displayed by the new union leadership at the Gillespie convention and since.

Carrying the Offensive to the Miners

In Franklin County, it will be remembered, the powerful Peabody company had, at the time of the convention, with the help of the Lewis-Walker clique, plus the terror of unheard of strikers, succeeded in preventing the strike and compelling the miners to submit to the \$5.00 scale and with it to submit to the UMWA. These efforts had been extended to Taylorville, but there the miners were still fighting on the picket lines and solidly with the new union, U. S. soldiers were on guard at the Peabody mines there. U. S. soldiers also invaded Canton, in the Peoria territory, to break the strike. And now the mass picket lines appear to have been given up entirely by the new union.

This question of the picket lines is, of course, not the only point at issue. That itself is merely a part of the general strategy pursued. But for a new union, for a progressive union, which has to meet the enormous obstacles of all the enemy forces combined and merged into one, the question of strategy becomes a real problem. The rank and file will and readiness to fight can be depended upon but the strategy of the fight must be a superior one. It must be one which will outwit the combined enemy forces.

In this respect it is necessary to note the very first weakness represented by the acceptance of the \$5.00 scale at the Gillespie convention. For this those leaders who advocated its acceptance are fully responsible. The weakness lies not merely in the sense of its immediate effect but more so in the fact that the operators jointly with the Lewis-Walker clique are bound to take advantage of it. They will use it in this situation to strengthen the Lewis regime. They will be on the offensive, further extend the attacks to new territories and prepare for new and additional wage cuts. Naturally we are not unmindful of the fact that the logic of these measures inevitably brings their own conclusion in new and greater contradictions, new and greater antagonisms between the miners and the operators. But in this respect also the direction and the leadership

given by the new union becomes the decisive question.

Organization of the New Union

The new union starts out with the disadvantage of the retreat to the \$5.00 scale. This part of the basis is thus equal for both unions. Which one will prevail? That question is more fundamental than the wage scale. It is now an open direct struggle between the two. But the strategy to be pursued must take into account the conditions existing in the various localities. It is not a matter of a direct head-on collision everywhere. It is clear that in Franklin Co. the process of winning the rank and file for the new union is by no means completed. Their strike was broken, they are still in the UMWA. For the Progressive Miners of America the task is therefore the one of working from within to strengthen its foothold, to regain what is lost and to prepare for the complete break with the Lewis-Walker regime.

The Taylorville and Canton territories, on the other hand, present a different picture. The new union is solidly rooted there and has already replaced the U. M. W. The issues can be settled to its advantage. Its interests can be maintained, only in the direct collision with the enemy forces. Any retreating in this respect will surely react by the latter gaining ground, if not gaining the upper hand. This will surely hold true wherever the operators extend the battle front into the new union territory.

The Left wing must particularly make this clear to the mines. It is a part of the process of building a militant union. The issues, the conflicts can find their solution only through struggle against the enemy forces and not at all through collaboration with them. From the opposite direction the Peabody interests, which are the dominant interests in Illinois, have assumed this kind of an approach and are attempting to advance in head-on collision everywhere. This company is the main controlling factor in machine mining. As such it represents the crux of the problem of job control and union control. The Progressive Miners will in this respect have to meet the Peabody company face to face on its own ground.

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OPEN FORUM

FIFTEEN YEARS OF THE
RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

Speaker:

JAMES P. CANNON

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 4th

126 East 16 Street,
near Irving Place

ADMISSION: 15c

Auspices:

N. Y. Br. Communist League of America
(Opposition)

Protest Meeting

What is Happening in China

Chen Du-Hsin, founder of the Chinese Communist Party and member of the Left Opposition, and six co-workers were arrested. Unless action is taken at once they will be executed!

What are the effects of Japanese invasion? What is the role of American imperialism? Hear about the Peasant Wars and the Soviets.

Speaker:

MAX SHACHTMAN

Sunday, October 30, 8 P. M.

126 East 16 St.

Auspices:

N. Y. Br. Communist League of America
(Opposition)

VOTE COMMUNIST!

Vote Communist!

Against the Party of Petty Bourgeois Reformism

As the elections come to a close, the cold indifference of the two big capitalist parties and their leading spokesmen with regard to the burning problems and interests of the masses of the people stands out in glaring evidence of the fact that even in the wealth-saturated United States, the ruling class is not in a position to relieve the intense sufferings brought on by the crisis. The hollow promises, the spread-eagle oratory, the mutual recriminations and self-exposures of the capitalist candidates do not hold out the least prospect for a working class which is now in the fourth year of the crisis.

The ever-present liberals, in a quandary as to which of the two parties to support, are taking refuge in great numbers under the tent of the socialist messiah, Norman Thomas. The arch-Bourbon Hoover—they cannot endorse. As for Roosevelt, he has played the artful dodger so openly—even the bourgeois newspapers cannot refrain from pointing out this trait as his chief characteristic—that the middle-class liberals for whom he winked a flirtatious eye have not been able to muster around him.

Regardless of the handful of intellectual and scientific lights who have endorsed the Communist candidates, the fact remains that the overwhelming majority of the so-called "protest voters" out of the ranks of the more conscious petty bourgeois elements, have swung into line behind the American edition of the social democracy.

And there is no barrier in their path. Particularly since the war, the American Socialist Party and its leadership have moved in a virtually unbroken line to the right, doing everything conceivable to deserve the designation of the third capitalist party, which properly belongs to them. The party which surrendered to the bourgeoisie by declining from its constitution the disciplinary warning against those voting credits for military and naval purposes, is not calculated to

arouse the fear of a mobilized proletariat in the hearts of the ruling class. The party which erased from its banner, in deep actuality as well as formally, the recognition of the class struggle, aimed at shifting its base from the working class masses which at one time gave it their confidence, to the petty bourgeois strata bewildered by the crisis, crushed between the upper and nether millstones of capitalist society, and looking for a way out which is smooth and not lined with thorns or boulders.

The present campaign of the Socialist party, perfectly typified by its standard bearer, must look for its equal in opportunism to the days of 1917 when Morris Hillquit ran for Mayor of New York with an agitation centering chiefly around the issue of... five cent milk. "We offer," the official social handbook for 1932 hastens to assure all timid peasant-stand owners, "not only the one true hope for reorganizing our economic life, but also immediate plans for making things better. We are aware that masses of men will not vote for deeper purgatory now in the dubious hope of paradise hereafter. (Beware the Bolsheviks!) Hence we are concerned with programs to keep the peace now to relieve unemployed now; to help the farmers now. We ask you to examine our platform from this point of view. Are not our demands 'practical' as no other proposals are; 'practical' that is, for all those who are not trying above all things to hang on to the wealth and power which a comparatively small owning class controls?" (Page 30.)

And elsewhere (Page 64), the handbook soothes the apprehensions of the small property-holders, to whom Thomas and Thomasism make such a warm appeal, that "Socialists would not urge that all industry be run by the community. They would encourage many consumers and producers, voluntary cooperative organizations, particularly on the farm, in retail distribution and in educational, journalistic and artistic ventures.

There would likewise remain under the socialist commonwealth a certain amount of private ownership in agriculture and in handicrafts, in new industry and in intellectual production."

Grocers, traveling salesman and home managers of the world, unite, and vote Socialist! Your future is guaranteed!

In word and deed, the socialist party is a petty bourgeois party, masquerading with yesterday's tattered garments of a working class movement. The class-conscious worker, who does not want to throw his vote away in a futile attempt to register it until Norman Thomas is elected president and 51 percent of the Congressmen and Senators are members of the Socialist party—will register his protest against the capitalist regime of starvation, exploitation, misery, and war by voting for the Communist ticket all along the line. Our differences with the party's policy, which isolates it from the masses and impedes the development of the revolutionary movement in this and other countries, cannot eliminate the fact that the Communist party is the only working class party in the field, the only revolutionary party, the only party which stands for the interests of the working class today and tomorrow.

The Left Opposition therefore ranges itself alongside its party and calls upon every worker to cast his vote for his party, the Communist party!

Good Meetings in Boston

Two successful meetings were held in Boston and Lynn by the Communist League of America (Opposition), with Max Shachtman of New York speaking on the situation in Germany. In Boston, Otisfield Hall had between 60 and 70 Boston workers listening to the standpoint of the Opposition on the German question, ending in a number of questions put to the speaker from the floor revealing a keen interest in the importance of the events. Significantly enough, this is the first meeting held in Boston on Germany, for the official party has not displayed sufficient interest in this crucial problem for the world revolutionary movement to organize one single meeting on it. As a result of the Boston lecture, the branch expects to announce shortly the addition of several new members, who are not new to the movement, having been active in the Communist and labor movements for years.

The meeting in Lynn exceeded all our expectations, for it was arranged by one comrade alone, Celig Cooperstein, one of the well known militants in the shoe industry there. Some twenty-five workers gathered in the cooperative center to hear Shachtman, including several party members. A warm discussion took place. In Lynn also this is the first meeting ever held on the German events.

Indicative of the increasing influence of the Opposition is the invitation extended to our comrades to organize a meeting in Chelsea shortly for the purpose of discussing the standpoint of the Left Opposition. We are marching forward!

New Militant Forces Join the Ranks of the Left Opposition

Papcun's Statement

To the Rock Island Section Committee of the Communist Party
To all Communist Party members and Young Communist League

Dear Comrades:
Greetings. With the greatest joy do I greet the proposal of the Section Organizer for the purpose of discussing my reinstatement into the Communist party. The thought that the invitation for my re-entry was made in all sincerity is especially heartening since it refutes the obviously absurd and altogether unfounded charges made by Jack Wilson at the conclusion of the debate on Friday, September 30, 1932.

I take it that you have realized the injustice of those slanders and the invitation extended by the Section Committee by your Organizer Jack Wilson

We print here extracts from a number of declarations which have been made by well-known militants in the Communist movement, associating themselves with the Communist League of America (Opposition). It is with great joy that we

to rejoin the party is proof of that.

Now, as at all times since my expulsion, I am eager to rejoin the party. I want to re-enter the Communist party because I believe that it is the only real party of the working class... I stand ready to participate in all party activities and abide by Communist discipline—by the Leninist first principle of organization—by the principle of democratic centralism.

The reason for my being out of the party is, I believe, well known to you. I am not out of the party by my own free will. Briefly stated, at the present time I am out of the movement because I was rudely and bureaucratically expelled by the Stalinist leadership for my refusal to condemn the position of the Left Opposition and of comrade Trotsky as counter-revolutionary. My expulsion is due to my refusal to subordinate Communist principle to the bureaucratic leadership, for not condemning the views which I hold to be Marxian and for not belly-crawling before a leadership whose course runs counter to Marxism—Leninism.

The leadership that expelled me is part of the same Stalinist leadership which is responsible for driving out the best fighters from the Communist International, for expelling comrade Trotsky, for imprisoning comrade Rakovsky, and thousands of our Russian Bolsheviks who had the courage of conviction to fight for Leninist policies....

Comrades, at this moment it is not only my readmission which is in question. It is the re-entry of all the thousands of Bolshevik-Leninists who have become the victims of the bureaucratic regime of Stalin and Stalinism. If you desire my return, you must also strive for theirs. The Communist movement stands in need of these comrades. It is only the Left Opposition which is capable of returning the party and the Communist International to a Marxian course and thereby placing it at the head of the working class.

The demand of the Left Opposition has always been that we want to return to

welcome these fighters into the ranks of the Bolshevik-Leninists, confident that they are only one small section of the numerous Communist workers who will continue to swell the ranks of our movement.

the ranks of the Communist International, carrying on activity and abiding by Communist discipline. In re-entering we do not demand that the party accepts our views but that we merely be free to exercise the rights guaranteed by democratic centralism—the right of presenting our stand before the membership at convention time, and having the membership judge the correctness of our position. After the judgment is passed by the membership we shall abide by its decisions, be they what they may....

Comrades, you have invited me to rejoin the party. My answer is that I stand ready. But if you ask me to repudiate the Marxian principles of the Left Opposition I refuse. For me as for every real Communist, Marxian principle stands supreme. In spite of my differences with the present leadership I am ready to take my place in the ranks. Davenport, Iowa.

—GEORGE J. PAPCUN.

Declaration by Pappas

To the Communist League of America
(Left Opposition)

Dear Comrades:
In connection with the menace of Fascism in Germany and the ruinous policy of the German Communist Party and the ECCI—especially on the question of the united front as the most effective weapon with which to combat and sweep away the Fascist reaction—I addressed on August 8, a lengthy statement to my party unit and to the District and Central Executive Committees of the C. P. U. S. A. In it, I pointed out that no conscientious Communist can keep silent any longer on the crimes of the Comintern leadership. I criticized the silence of our central organ, the Daily Worker, and brought out the necessity of opening up a discussion to come to the aid of our German brother party.

For doing this, I was summarily expelled from the party by the District Secretariat without any hearing or trial. In the statement of expulsion appearing

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Auspices:

N. Y. Br. Communist League of America

Dead Hand at I. L. D. Meet

Feature of Convention is Absence of Discussion by Members

BOSTON.—

With the national convention of the I. L. D. in Cleveland, came to a close a most important event in the life of our organization. And when we term a national convention of the I. L. D. a most important event we are not exaggerating for the sharpening economic crisis and intensified persecution of the workers by the exploiting class, have unquestionably broadened the field of activity for the defense organization of the working class. Under these conditions, with a clear-headed leadership, correct policies and tactics, much can be gained for the International Labor Defense. A survey of our successes and failures affords us many lessons for the future.

Lack of Discussion

Yet at this stage in the existence of the I. L. D. when a balance sheet should be drawn up of the past and the basis laid for the future, the material to work with was left behind. This material was nothing less important than the conclusions, recommendations and proposals of the entire organization after a thorough pre-convention discussion by the membership. But there was no pre-convention discussion in the I. L. D. despite the constant protests and demands on the part of members! Since this is the case, it can hardly be said that ours was a convention reflecting the views of the membership. It is a small wonder therefore that the reports given us were so lifeless. It was important to know the number of delegates who attended, the number of delegates "represented" and the enthusiasm displayed. From all this something can be learned.

But where are the conclusions drawn? What about our past activity and our plans for the future? That we did not hear, for there was no time at the convention to deal with the several resolutions introduced at the last moment. It is true that certain achievements have been made and important battles have been and are being fought by us. We are justified in taking pride. But to spend a whole convention priding ourselves on our achievements, however small or great, criticizing the membership to the extent that we forget to learn from the past and consider the future, is false and detrimental. We must be able to give ourselves an accounting of the masses we approached in our struggles. Have we organized these masses? How well are we able to retain the recruits we make? The complete turnover in our membership during the first seven months of this year (see October 1932 Labor Defender), is no accident but speaks for something significant.

In the face of this, it was indeed painful to hear that the point stressed most at the convention was that the membership is not sufficiently active, hence the stagnation in our organization. But what else could be expected since the voice of the membership was not heard? Could we expect our leaders to come down and tell us that they bear the greatest responsibility for the existing situation in the I. L. D. and are ready to assume it? Not as long as they can dish out criticism to the rank and file and make them swallow it.

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Bankruptcy at 12th Plenum

Theses Fail to Give a Reply to the Burning Questions of the Day

The thesis of the 12th Plenum of the ECCI, published in the Daily Worker of October 20th (City Edition) once more gives us an inside picture of the bankruptcy of Stalinism. A resolution with more mistakes and with a greater number of meaningless revolutionary phrases is difficult to conceive of. A thesis of the vanguard of the revolution must present the determining factors of the world situation. The C. I. thesis gives more space to secondary questions, leaves out some determining factors and does not deal correctly with the important factors which are taken up.

A Communist thesis for 1932 even though it leaves out the fact the Communist International is itself going through a profound crisis under the Stalin leadership must at least give an answer to the following problems: (1) the world crisis and the perspective. (2) the danger of Fascism in Germany. (3) the role of American imperialism in the present period. (4) the invasion of China by Japanese imperialism (5) the position of the USSR after 15 years and the relation of its contradictions to the imperialist contradictions. From this analysis, directives for the sections of the C. I. must be formulated. The C. I. thesis does not take up these points in their proper relationship.

The third year of the world crisis has long ago passed beyond the economic stage, and has reached a stage of open conflict between the imperialists, in China, in South America; and in Spain and Germany where revolutionary situations developed out of the crisis. The C. I. thesis says that the crisis is mov-

ing to new low levels. It says the end of capitalist stabilization is at hand.

In 1928 the C. I. introduced the "Third Period", as the end of stabilization and the beginning of a period of revolutionary upsurge. In 1930 the C. I. swung to the Right. That is, the theoreticians of the C. I. moved to the Right as the crisis was moving the workers to the Left. Now in 1932, the C. I. in the 12th Plenum informs us that "the end of capitalist stabilization" is at hand. Compared to the Right zig-zag of 1930 (which dropped the form of the "Third Period" but which retained the kernel of the Left zig-zag) this seems to be a return to the 1928 Left zig-zag. However, facts prove the opposite: that the Left shell of the present move is a cloak for a new Rightward shift in the Soviet Union by Stalinism presented by the recent bureaucratic decrees, the expulsions of the 12th Plenum and the growth of the reactionary element.

If, as the thesis says, we are confronted with the end of the period of capitalist stabilization, we would like to know: was capitalism in a condition of stabilization for the last three years of the world crisis? A crisis itself is a condition of the shaking of the economic equilibrium. It is the economic explosion of the capitalist mode of production. Further, if the "Third Period" of 1928 ushered in the end of stabilization and in 1932 we again have the end of stabilization, then it follows that stabilization existed in between. This is a contradiction the Stalinists do not explain.

(Continued on page 3)