

WORKERS  
OF THE  
WORLD.  
UNITE

# THE MILITANT



Weekly Organ of the Communist League of America [Opposition]

Published weekly by the Communist League of America (Opposition) at 84 East 10th Street, New York, N. Y. Entered as second class mail matter, November 28, 1928 at the Post Office at New York, N. Y. under the act of March 3, 1879  
VOLUME V, NO. 45 [WHOLE NO. 141] NEW YORK, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 1932 PRICE 5 CENTS

LEON TROTSKY

## September Plenum of C. I.

Some Fleeting Marginal Observations on the 12th Plenum

1.—The report on revolutionary strategy was read by Kuusinen. His role in the Finnish revolution of 1918 shows he is just the right man to be the strategist of the international proletariat.

2.—The principle these declare again. "The relative stabilization of capitalism has come to an end." In 1932? But didn't the Sixth World Congress already speak of the end of the stabilization? The Tenth Plenum of the E. C. of the C. I. proclaimed the "third period," that is to say, the period which leads directly to the proletarian insurrection. Now we are told—without any comment—that the stabilization of capitalism has again come to an end. That makes how many times?

3.—As to China, it says, "The soviet revolution has triumphed over a large part of its territory." A revolution can be bourgeois or proletarian. Which of the two are we to understand in the present instance? Why does the C. I. cover the class content of the revolution with its soviet form?

4.—"The new world imperialist war has become an immediate danger." The Sixth World Congress already had declared the danger of war to be immediate. For over four years the E. C. of the C. I. has been repeating the same formula. In any case, it is closer to a reality now than in 1928. But exactly what does the word "immediate" mean in the language of the C. I.?

5.—The Communist Parties are under the obligation "of opposing real struggles against the war preparations to the abstract and hypocritically pacifist declarations of the social-democracy." That is right. But in that case how about the no less abstract and no less hypocritical declarations of the Congress of Amsterdam? It is remarkable: not a word on the Amsterdam masquerade in the resolution. Are they already ashamed of their own child?

6.—The theses give learned definitions of the different forms of fascism. They say, "The social-fascists prefer the moderate and 'legal' application of bourgeois violence...; they defend its democratic facade and try to keep as much as possible of its parliamentary forms." Now we understand. A square is a triangle whose four sides intersect at right angles.

7.—As to France, they say that while the C. P. and the revolutionary trade unions have been weakened, to make up for it a strong revolutionary movement against war has been developed. But a movement against war, when the proletarian vanguard has been weakened, necessarily becomes a petty-bourgeois movement and becomes transformed to the benefit of reformist pacifism.

8.—The German C. P. is advised to strengthen its struggle "against nationalism and chauvinism for proletarian internationalism." That is right. But how about the program of "national liberation"?

9.—The duty is placed before the Polish C. P. of destroying the influence of the Socialist Party on the masses," and of "overcoming its weaknesses in the big works, among the railroad men, in the army." No advice could be simpler: destroy the enemy and become all-powerful. Kuusinen forgets only to show how to do it.

10.—For Spain, the advice is to strive toward "the dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry under the form of Soviets." How this regime is different from the dictatorship of the proletariat is not explained, as usual.

11.—For England, as incidentally for all the other countries, the advice is to realize the united front from below. In other words, the Plenum of the E. C. of the C. I. has again approved the renunciation of the policy of the united front.

12.—For Manchuria, it is proposed to create, on the basis of the guerrilla war, "an elected popular government." A democratic slogan? Why is it given so vaguely? Why only for Manchuria? Why is it not applicable to all China?

13.—The Indian C. P. is assigned the task of "liberating the masses from the influence of the National Congress." But at the same time, the E. C. of the C. I. fraternizes with Patel through the Amsterdam Congress and artificially increases the authority of the National Congress.

14.—In the organizational field, the Plenum advises "the resolute liquidation of the excessive centralism, the system of pure and simple command," etc. This advice does not sound bad from the mouth of the E. C. of the C. I., which for the fifth year now has failed to call an International Congress and commands by usurping the name of the International.

15.—The E. C. of the C. I. insists (!) that the "Communist Youth be transformed into a genuine mass organization." Magnificent advice. But why do the youth organizations vegetate and decay in spite of all the advice of Kuusinen? Just because they have not been freed from his advice.

16.—In conclusion, the theses advise one and all to struggle for the purity of

the doctrine on the basis of "Stalin's letter." Poor purity! Poor doctrine! Poor C. I.!

17.—Soviets are mentioned in the theses in passing, in connection with China and Spain. As to the other countries, in spite of the revolutionary perspectives set up in the theses, soviets in general are not mentioned; in particular the slogan of soviets is not raised before the German proletariat. It is not difficult to find the explanation. In Germany, as in the majority of advanced countries, real soviets can only be created on the basis of a broad and audacious united front policy. Ultra-leftism and the slogan of soviets cannot be reconciled with each other. By renouncing the united front, the Stalinists renounce the soviets.

L. TROTSKY

Prinkipo, Oct. 13, 1932.

## Emergency Number

We have found it impossible to issue the present number of the "Militant" as the special Double-Anniversary issue, commemorating the 15th Anniversary of the Russian Bolshevik Revolution and the 4th Anniversary of the launching of our Militant. The extraordinary difficulties encountered by us in the process of moving and re-arranging our headquarters and printing equipment were to great to overcome in time; in addition, the extreme financial hardship of the National Office added to the burdens. However, in order not to break the continuity of the paper, we have made desperate efforts to get out the present emergency number with only two pages.

This does not mean that the special issue we announced last week is not to appear. Even though slightly delayed, we intend to make the next number of the Militant sufficiently enlarged to carry all the material we announced previously, and more. Just as this goes to press we have received a number of highly timely articles from comrade Trotsky, including a lengthy study of the present position of Soviet economy in the period of the Second Five Year Plan, an article on the significance of the expulsion of Zinoviev, Kamenev and others, as well as a shorter article on the 15th anniversary of the seizure of power in Russia by the workers and peasants. We shall make every effort to include in the next issue the maximum possible amount of this material, together with various articles on the significance of four years of struggle of the Left Opposition and the Militant in this country. It goes without saying that the usual material on the development of the class struggle in this and other lands will also be included.

But to make sure of the issue, we require the speediest assistance from all our comrades and friends. This means financial aid, sent quickly, by air mail from every part of the country. We need it urgently! Do not delay!

## Hunger March in London

British Working Masses Make New Turn Towards the Left

For the first time since the general strike of 1926 workers of Great Britain have again begun to stir. There is an upward surge of masses struggling in earnest, their demands seriously meant, and with all indications at hand that the compelling force of economic necessity, which has increased in momentum through the shifting rule of the Conservative government to "Labor" and back again to the Conservative, is now propelling these masses definitely in a leftward direction. Unquestionably the whole capitalist structure of the British kingdom will soon stand before its most serious tests, and just as surely it can be affirmed that the objective factors are beginning to mature rapidly for a serious Communist movement within the isles.

Dramatic have been the accounts of these recent struggles. Following shortly upon the determined fights of thousands of unemployed workers in Belfast, other thousands from Scotland, Wales and other points began converging upon London to lend emphasis to their demands for redress from the growing unemployment misery and more particularly for the abolishment of the vicious capitalist measure of the "means test". The actual rulers of "the City" and their lackeys at Downing Street knew only one method how to meet this "invasion", and that they employed. Scotland Yard was kept busy enrolling special police forces. Thousands were put "on duty" and at every attempt of the unemployed masses to present their petition to parliament they were met with savage attacks and clubbings. Scores upon scores were wounded and other scores rushed off to jail with the old and staid machinery of justice geared up to a higher speed meeting out heavy prison sentences.

But in these fierce battles, which several times turned historic Trafalgar Square into a bedlam, the unemployed workers gave a good account of themselves.

The baton wielders carried off some of the cars and received later a generous extra vacation for their "heroic" effort in rescuing the silkkhatted theatre crowds. Thus while the workers are learning the art of effective resistance above all it can be said that the general lessons of the London demonstrations will serve as additional experiences gained which will count in future developments.

That these unemployment demonstrations are not mere isolated affairs becomes further clear from other developments. Last summer saw a powerful weavers' strike in Lancashire. Now 200,000 spinners have struck in protest of an eight percent wage-cut. The British railroad workers have persistently refused to accept a wage cut. But there is also another aspect of recent events which deserves notice. In the municipal elections just concluded the votes cast clearly show a new swing toward the Labor party. Bearing in mind the increasing reactionary turn of the ruling class since the conservatives replaced the labor party at the government helm, this voting, of course, gives further evidence to the present working class Leftward direction.

The objective results of such a swing of voting toward the labor party is however, an entirely different matter. The Communist party entered a number of candidates in these elections, none of whom received sufficient votes. In the sense of this comparison, which is fundamental for future development, it must be acknowledged that while the British workers are being pressed Leftward into opposition to the rule of the outright capitalist party, this direction still lacks so much in essential clarity that it can today be utilized to advantage by the traitors of 1926 and of the period of the Labor government. But this also compels us to acknowledge the fact that the British Communist Party has not yet attained to a leading role in the general working class movement.

There is sufficient evidence to judge from a distance that the Communist party was a very active and a leading force

in these unemployment demonstrations. It appears that it is making some progress toward Leninist tactics. This we welcome. But such a gain, and it will become an important gain for the party, in order to be fully and securely consolidated, first of all requires a correct estimation of the last great struggles of the strike of 1926, the policy of the Anglo-Russian committee and its contribution to the defeat then and the subsequent decline of the Communist Party. Given such an estimation, some important obstacles in the road of the Communist Party much more effectively asserting its leadership in the coming events of the class struggle in England, destined to be of gigantic proportions, will have been removed.

—A. S.

## OPEN FORUM

### THE RESULTS OF THE ELECTION

Speaker:  
HUGO OEHLER

Friday, November 11, 1932

126 East 16 Street,  
near Irving Place  
ADMISSION: 15c

Sponsored by:  
N. Y. Br. Communist League of America  
(Opposition)

## Fight in Illinois Sharpens

Armed Forces of Operators Mobilized Against the Miners

SPRINGFIELD.—

The class struggle in the Illinois coal field is as sharp as the crack of the rifles in the hands of the imported gunmen, the state militia or the state police which in the last few weeks sent their deadly missiles into the bodies of unarmed miners and their women folk.

Who are the heroes hailed by the capitalist press? Are they the men and women of the mining camps, led by the Progressive Miners Union, who face with their bare hands the forces of Peabody state government armed with every device of modern warfare, who gave their lives that Lewis is smashed and that the labor movement be stronger?

No, the heroes of the capitalist press are the well-armed gunmen hired by the coal-operators, the state militia and the state police who club and murder at the orders of the capitalists of Illinois.

Brave men these. The capitalist press is able to report that one was hit by a stone and one had a finger slashed.

Out of Society's Gutter

Pick and the striking miners on the picket lines and they will tell you that these "heroes" have been recruited from the underworld, that part of the population composed of gangsters, thieves, murderers, etc., who are now very active in trying to crush out the Progressive Miners Union and wipe out by open struggle all unionism among the miners of Illinois, and the state police and the state militia fits into this like a head into a body.

The yellow uniformed state police are big, portly fellows with muggy faces, some of them former union officials, shady characters, sluggers. They know the underworld, the gangsters that work for Al Capone, etc. The state police was created during the post-war open-shop drive to fight the unions and now that the miners of Illinois are putting up a militant fight for their new union, the state police are ably fitted for the Lewis-Peabody dirty work. They are the ones that led the miners during the West Frankfort march into the nest of Lewis' gangsters. There the marching miners were pounced upon by the Lewis' gangsters, black-jacked right and left, kicked and stabbed, while the yellow uniformed state police stood by, ready to use their clubs and guns in case the striking miners should get the upper hand.

And this gang is supported by the state militia, made up largely of young unemployed workers who do not realize to what use they are actually being put. Many of them had not yet time to learn that they really belong on the side of the miners, and so, under the mask of protecting "law and order" and the "sacredness of private property" they are carrying out the filthy work of the coal-operators.

The state police and the state militia have a free hand against the striking pickets. They see that the pickets carry no weapons, while Lewis' strikebreakers (Continued on page 2)

## Class Against Class in the Presidential Elections

Communist Vote Will Test the Policy of the Stalinists

On November 8, millions of American workers will go to the polls to vote for the next president of the United States. Millions of these workers will cast their votes for the parties of reaction. Millions of other workers, the most exploited and subjected will not go to the polls. These millions who stay away from the polls are the disfranchised American Workers in normal periods, the bulk of the Negro masses of the south are denied this bourgeois "liberty" by legal and "illegal" means of brutal suppression. Millions of foreign-born workers, who have not yet obtained their papers, because of the special discrimination are prevented from voting, yet these millions are numbered among those who do the most useful and basic work under the capitalist system.

Workers' Vote Cut Down

The laws dealing with election right are so complicated and exclusive, with poll tax in some states and other qualifications that the unskilled and semi-skilled millions of workers are automatically eliminated. In addition to this, the crisis and mass unemployment have broken up the homes of additional millions, who will not be qualified to vote. The Communist Party will also be unable to get on the ballot in many important states, including some important industrial states. All this this important, plus the stealing and counting out of Communist votes will not enable us to have an accurate picture of the motion and direction of the working class unless these factors are taken into consideration.

On the other hand, a more accurate picture of the other classes can be registered by the November 8 election. The bankers are putting their eggs in more than one basket. Hoover and Roosevelt have the backing of the imperialist who want to play safe, knowing a shift to the left will be registered in the coming election.

The big capitalists of America have their sectional interests within their class but this interest is in no way menaced by the election of Roosevelt instead of Hoover, in case the working class and the middle class protest vote is sufficient to dislodge the latter.

Position of Middle Class

The middle class has shown the greatest confusion in the pre-election days. Most of the middle class have shifted their support from Hoover to the "left." Many of the middle class are of the opinion that Roosevelt is to the Left of Hoover and will vote according. This also applies to a big layer of the working class. The Jingo, Hearst, with his middle class outfit, are in the Roosevelt bandwagon.

Other layers of the middle class are rallying behind the Socialist candidate, Norman Thomas, and a layer, led by the intellectuals has endorsed Foster and Ford, the Communist Candidates. The majority of the middle class will divide their vote between Roosevelt and Norman Thomas.

The agrarian division of the middle class—the reformers par excellence of the past—is up in arms with pitchforks against Hoover and the monopolists, with their "holiday" movement and farmers' strike. The farmer has shifted to the Left in the present crisis and the Roosevelt forces are counting heavily on polling a goodly share of this discontent. Roosevelt has been busy with the stunt of straddling as many classes as possible, promising everything in words that will be so many after-dinner jokes of the bankers the day after the election if they replace Hoover with Roosevelt as their new office boy.

As for the workers, everyone knows that layers of the class will vote for the parties of reform and reaction, and mainly the parties of reaction. The important question to consider is just to what degree these layers have shifted to the Left? What has caused them to stop on the way side? What has repelled them from a further Leftward shift and how can we dislodge this "resting place" between reaction and revolution-Reform.

The important question for us to solve is what the new relationship of classes as reflected by the vote? Just how far has the shift to the Left developed? How successful have the parties of reform and reaction been? How successfully have our policies accelerated this process? Or, how negatively have the wrong Stalinist policies and program repelled this Leftward shift? All these questions are fundamental ones. Not a Stalinist "victory" of counting the "gains" mechanically compared to the last election without taking into consideration the shift in class forces and new relationship and ideological changes.

Socialist Advances

The inability of the Stalinists to understand the tactic of the united front not only in their present activity but in all fields of activity has cut from under us a broad base of workers who will vote the socialist ticket this year instead of

the Communist ticket. An outstanding example of this is the Illinois coal field where the party was a power in the past. Now the socialist party is running wild through here. This is the reaction to the Stalinist policies.

We at least know one thing, that the election will not solve the accumulating contradictions piling up upon the ruling class and their henchmen. The workers must be told to vote Communist. The workers must be told that our class solution is through the proletarian revolution. —H. O.

## The New March on Washington

The National Committee of the Unemployed Councils of the United States has adopted a plan for a National Hunger March on Washington to reach the capital on December 4, when Congress convenes. The plan call for 3,000 elected delegates composed of workers from every state in the union. All working class organizations are invited to elect delegates.

On the march, demonstrations are planned for every city along the route. In Washington the Council will hold a Workers Congress, draw up demands which they will present to Congress. After this another Congress will be held to determine the next step.

The plan is to "win winter relief from local and federal government."

The first march on Washington was organized around the campaign for the "Unemployment Insurance Bill." The second march on Washington does not feature Unemployment Insurance. Immediate Relief is to replace Unemployment Insurance as the main central slogan.

This is a change in emphasis which itself can be explained by the pressing importance of the need of immediate relief. What cannot be justified is a shift in emphasis that means the exclusion of the other immediate demands. However, this is what has happened.

No Automatic Connection

The resolutions sent out by the Council to be endorsed, coordinate the demand for immediate relief with the demand for unemployment insurance, but the campaign itself is void of this relationship.

The fight for immediate demands in the form of immediate relief does not lead automatically to the fight for social and unemployment insurance as some of the party functionaries think.

If the class is put in motion on the basis of the struggle for immediate relief and when this fight is well under way we move to the next "stage" of directing the energy of the class toward social and unemployment insurance, and so on, until we move for power, we will never arrive. Instead we will be somewhere along the wayside in the swamp." This is the concept of the social reformer.

If the Marxist, the Communist revolutionist does not connect these different immediate demands properly and at the same time connect them with the ultimate goal the other parties of reaction and reform will beat us to our "next step" and we will find ourselves "two steps back."

The party has its eye on Washington, even more than it has its activity rooted in the factories. First we had the march on Washington with the Unemployment Insurance Bill, then we had the party side-tracking everything for the Bonus Army in Washington, and now we return to Washington for a "Winter Relief." If such activity is a subordinated auxiliary Communist work in the industrial field, the trade unions, etc., it could be understood, but when this parliamentary activity overshadows the more basic work, the outcome will be known in advance—no matter how excellent the demonstrations turn out to be.

The party must connect the Hunger March on Washington for immediate relief with the campaign for social and unemployment insurance, for long term credits to the Soviet Union, for the Six-hour day and the five-day week with no reduction in pay. The activity as a whole must rest upon solid class foundations in the mines, mills and factories, in the unions, the other workers organizations and on the basis of the Leninist United Front.

The Communist Duty

We must make the hunger march on Washington a success, not a demonstration without a base, which will mean a shell without content. We must fight for the Marxian program in the unemployment activity as presented in the unemphatic resolution of the Communist League of America. We must see that the march becomes the culmination, not of demonstrations from city to city (a necessary part) but of UNITED FRONT UNEMPLOYED COUNCILS activity of employed and unemployed workers, based upon a Marxian program for unemployment. —HUGO OEHLER

## N. Y. Greek Workers Organize New Club

In the Militant of October 22 we wrote about the appeal of thirty Greek workers in New York to the Spartacus Club for reinstatement. Also that comrade Brass was not allowed to protest the high handed and shameful method of suppressing the correspondence of the Club. The Executive Committee ignored the appeal and by this action has shown that they are determined to continue the splitting tactics that were followed in the past. Last Wednesday, October 26 the Temporary Unity Committee of the Club called the workers that signed the appeal to a meeting where a comrade for the Committee the results of its efforts for unity. A motion was proposed that reads as follows: Since the Stalinist

bureaucrats categorically refuse to accept us into the ranks of the Spartacus Club we, as revolutionary workers, can't any longer stand with our hands folded but wish ardently to participate in the actual work of the class struggle. To achieve this we propose the foundation of an Educational Organization which should be called "Protomagia". The motion was unanimously carried. The meeting lasted for five hours and drafted its constitution. Every worker participated in the discussion and very proudly on account of their bitter experience with Stalinism they were anxious to see that every point to safeguard against bureaucratic abuses, should be passed. A motion was carried to issue another appeal to the Spartacus members and the Greek workers for the unification of our revolutionary forces.

A chicken dinner will be served for only 40 cents. The Committee is promising a variety of entertainment. The date is fixed for November 12, next Saturday evening, and the place will be the Headquarters of the International Workers School, 126 E. 16th Street. The proceeds will go to the support of the Club and our Greek organ Communists.

## International Workers School

Entertainment

Saturday, Nov. 19 - 8 p. m.

126 East 16th Street

Watch for further announcements