

WORKERS  
OF THE  
WORLD.  
UNITE

# THE MILITANT



Weekly Organ of the Communist League of America [Opposition]

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## Hail the Anniversary of the Russian Bolshevik Revolution!

### 4 YEARS OF THE MILITANT

At this moment there is a new and perceptibly growing wave of sympathy and support to the Left Opposition in America. It is taking on a form distinct from the past slow process of winning a worker here and there who became convinced by individual propaganda. Those who have followed *The Militant* attentively will also have noticed that, in entering the fourth year of its existence, its contents begin more directly to reflect the struggle toward revolutionary developments in the country. That itself is a material expression of the growing support coming in the direction of the Left Opposition.

The reasons, of course, lie in the very conditions of the working class movement. The economic crisis is producing a new orientation. It is generally speaking a Leftward one. A working class force is beginning to emerge in the United States. It is emerging slowly, painfully, with much stumbling and with many bitter experiences in its course. But for the actual proof of its emergence one needs only to cast a glance at the election campaign just concluded. Willy-nilly, of the main contenders, the capitalist parties, the working class issues forced themselves to the fore. The conditions created are also beginning to put the various working class and revolutionary currents more definitely to their test. This, however, will be far more marked in the coming period of more intense struggles. But already now there is evidence that the Left Opposition is emerging to find its place on the solid grounds of the class struggle. And we can say today that an estimate of the significance of this new wave of support quite decisively indicates our future much greater role.

#### Some Examples of Growth

We have at this moment a series of new contact established, which are becoming included within our active ranks. A new branch of the League is organized in Davenport, Iowa. Branches are in formation in Des Moines, Iowa, in Pittsburgh, Pa., and in New Castle, Pa. Our existing branches with but few exceptions, are in the process of growth.

The enormous advantage of a correct theoretical foundation—a Marxist foundation—belongs to the Left Opposition. But we are compelled to carry on by the most primitive means, made so by the isolated position from which we began and by our sadly limited physical resources. Every step toward our objectives therefore of necessity had to be modest ones.

In both respects, both in regard to a correct theoretical foundation as well as in regard to our limited means the four years history of *The Militant*, furnishes eloquent proof to our contention. But while the latter is apparent, it is the former, which in terms more convincing than we could possibly venture, has attested to its enormous advantage. Just look at the healthy contrast between four years ago and today.

Then we had a handful of comrades coming forward with an unshakable conviction, having from the past received a certain preparation for their position, but also carrying over remnants from the past which still caused some uncertainty and lack of experience in applying the International Left Opposition platform to America. We made some mistakes; yet we were, of course, record shortcomings. Yet we are justified in giving emphasis to the healthy transformation which has taken place. We are justified in taking (Continued on page 6)

### Fifteen Years

The October revolution is finishing its fifteenth year. This simple figure gives evidence to the entire world of the gigantic force which exists in the proletarian state. No one, not even the most optimistic among us, foresaw such vitality. And that is not surprising; the optimism of such a prediction would have had to fear within it pessimism with regard to the international revolution.

The leaders and the masses saw in the October upheaval only the first stage of the world revolution. The thought of an independent building-up of Socialism in isolated Russia was, in the year 1917, neither defended nor sustained nor clearly formulated by anybody. In the following years, too, the economic construction was conceived by the entire party without exception as the substructure of a material basis under the dictatorship of the proletariat, as the preservation of the economic bond (smychka) between city and country, and finally as the creation of points of support for the coming Socialist society which could only be built up on an international basis.

The ways of the world revolution have shown themselves to be immeasurably longer and more tortuous than we hoped and expected fifteen years ago. To the external difficulties, of which the historic rôle of reformism showed itself to be the most important, came the internal ones, above all, the policies of the epigones of Bolshevism, false in their foundation and fatal in their consequences. The bureaucracy of the first Workers' State does everything decisive—unconsciously, but that is no excuse—to prevent the birth of a second Workers' State. The knots tied by the bureaucracy must be untied or broken to give a free road to the revolution.

If the delay in the development has gone beyond the framework which we had sketched, still we have accurately estimated the fundamental moving forces and their laws. This also applies completely to the problem of the economic development of the Soviet Union. Modern productive forces will not let themselves be confined within national limits by any resolution or any exorcism. Autarchy is the ideal of Hitler, not of Marx nor of Lenin. Socialism and national separatism are mutually exclusive. Today as well as fifteen years ago, the program of a Socialist society in a single country is utopian and reactionary.

The economic successes of the Soviet Union are very traditions and its difficulties have taken on a threatening sharpness. Delays, interruptions and disproportions bear witness in the first instance to a wrong leadership. But that is not all. They recall that building up of a harmonious society is possible only through an uninterrupted experience extending over decades and not otherwise than on an international basis. The technical and cultural obstacles—the break between city and country, the difficulties of import and export trade—all prove that the October demands an international continuation. Internationalism is not a ritual convention but a question of life or death.

There will be no lack of jubilee speeches and articles. The majority of them will come from those who were, in October, the intransigent adversaries of the proletarian insurrection. We Bolshevik-Leninists will be called "counter-revolutionists" by these gentlemen. It is not the first time that history permits itself such jokes and we have nothing against it on that account. Even if it is with confusion and slowly, history does its work.

And we too, we will do ours!  
Prinkipo, October 13, 1932

—L. TROTSKY.

### Roosevelt's Victory

#### Protest Vote of Middle Class and Labor Hits Republicans

The returns from the elections throw considerable light upon the class reaction to the crisis. The capitalist press is calling Roosevelt the victor of a "tidal wave", of a "landslide" that has wiped the Republicans out of office. The victory of Roosevelt and Garner has carried with it complete control of the House and Senate. Throughout the country their "landslide" has carried with it many state and local tickets. Not since the last world war has the Democratic wing of the capitalist reactionary parties gained such a favorable position.

The Democrats have full control and will have no "excuse" for not carrying out their program and election promises. Roosevelt made lots of promises, just as Hoover did in 1928. Roosevelt was forced to give these promises because he had to straddle different layers of classes and rally the mass discontent from the effects of the crisis in order to gain office.

Teddy Roosevelt started out by "trust busting" and ended with the greatest service rendered to the monopolists. F. D. Roosevelt with his "forgotten man" and his "new deal" will end in the same way. With a clear majority in Democratic hands the blind protest vote will expect immediate action and since the Democrats will carry out the imperialists will the "victory vote" will turn to its opposite, providing the Communists are able to take advantage of the favorable developments.

Roosevelt rode to power on the sup-

port of a big section of financiers, like Young and Taylor, jingoist and big navy advocates like Hearst and Baker, progressive republicans, confused middle class elements, "liberals", the solid reactionary Jim-Crow south and discontented and confused workers.

The protest vote of the middle class and misled workers will be a good cover under which Roosevelt will be able to speed up and carry out the imperialist program. Under cover of the "fight" to repeal the Eighteenth Amendment the Democrats will hid their real activity for Wall Street and use this at a critical moment as crumbs for the hungry, discontented masses.

The crisis with its effects of bankruptcy and ruin for large sections of the middle class, with drastic wage cuts, lower living standards and mass unemployment for the workers, has piled up a tremendous blind protest vote of discontent. Roosevelt's material base rests in Wall Street but his votes rest in the discontented middle class and the large layers of the working class who are not yet class conscious. Such was Roosevelt's victory.

To the Left of this Roosevelt vote is the real and decisive significance of the election for our class—the demand of the reformist party, the socialist party, for a place in the sun and against the Communist Party of Revolution. The complete returns of the socialist and Communist vote are not in but we have sufficient information for the main outlines of this problem.

The socialist party has piled up a large vote. The skeleton party of American social reformism has taken on form. Contrary to the Stalinist analysis of the past—that the base of reformism has been narrowed and therefore we will not have a period of reform in America—that we are heading toward a stage of revolutionary upsurges and the struggle of class against class—we find reformism growing. The editorial of the *Daily Worker* of Nov. 10 (City Edition) dismisses the socialist vote as unimportant and, as stated in the last issue of the *Militant*, as mechanically issued by the Communist vote of today with the previous elections. The Stalinists leave unanswered the question of the new relationship of class forces; the relationship of the party of reform and revolution; and the question of what the future holds in store for the reformers.

Our position on the question of a "period" of reformism for America has been dealt with at different times in the *Militant*. For the moment we want to take up just one phase of the problem and we will later return to it for further consideration on the basis of developments.

In New York, Hillquit, socialist candidate for mayor, polled 250,000 votes, the largest ever polled in New York by the socialists. Thomas obtained 120,000 votes. Thomas' votes were basically socialist votes of small shopkeepers and misled workers while Hillquit's vote had the additional protest vote of the middle class, the "good government" and "cheap government" vote against Tammany Hall.

The national vote of Thomas will be far above his 1928 figure of 275,000 votes. In fact indications are, from partial returns, that it will be close to or larger than the Debs vote of 1920 of nearly a million votes. Many of the basic central and western states as well as eastern industrial states are giving Thomas a fair vote.

The New York American of Nov. 10, in listing the elected members of the House presented the names of seven socialist candidates where the results of the election were still in doubt. The New York Times of the same date had already eliminated the socialist names. No doubt socialists and Communists were elected to local office here and there, only to be counted out, mainly the Communists, by capitalist democracy.

#### A Shift to the Left

One thing can be said upon the incomplete returns. The socialist vote, in relation to reaction, shows a shift of a layer of workers to the Left. In relation to the class struggle it shows the party of reform has checked Leftward shift of the workers. The socialist party vote shows that they have done their job well as a stone wall between the parties of reaction and the Communist party of revolution in slowing down and holding up the process of workers joining the Communists ranks.

The only returns of our vote we have are New York City. Foster and Ford obtained 24,018 votes compared to 15,500 in 1930 when he ran for Mayor. This is an indication of an increase of even greater proportions because so many of the workers are disfranchised. In spite of the favorable gains made by the Communists the gains in relation to the socialist party gives the reformers an advantage in the present stage of the struggle of the reformists and the revolutionists for ideological (Continued on page 6)

### 9 Scottsboro Boys Win Victory

#### Illusions Now Greatest Danger

The decision of the Supreme Court of the United States, reversing the lower courts in setting aside the trial and appeal verdicts in the Scottsboro case, is a triumph for the nine prisoners and the entire working class. It is a victory militantly won by the party in the face of great terror and repression. It is a vindication of the fighting methods of the Communists who placed the struggle on a class basis and fought it that way.

But no illusions! The fight is not yet won. The boys are still in prison. They are to be tried again in March, thus far, by the same judge, in the same court in which they were railroaded a little more than a year and a half ago. The statement has been made that at this forthcoming that there will be greater need than before for the militia. All this means that the Supreme Court has left the door wide open for a repetition of the death sentences. In fact it has indicated how this is to be done. All that its strictures mean is that if its august solemnity is to be invoked to sanction this kind of butchery all the fine technicalities of the law must be complied with.

The need for a fighting movement of the working class for the unconditional freedom of these victims of capitalist class justice is greater than it was before. What we have already accomplished must be the stimulus to yet greater efforts. We cannot stop until we have forced the bourbon tiger of the south to open his jaws and let our

class brothers go. This we can do.

Now is the time to organize the fight. Objectively the situation stands essentially as it did before. Only a militant class fight can free the boys. The working class must be united around this one issue. To do this we need organizational forms broad and democratic enough to allow all conflicting and contradictory tendencies in the labor movement to meet in a common struggle on this concrete issue. We need a united front of the entire working class.

The N. A. A. C. P. which stood in the way of a militant class defense, the Socialist party which spewed slander at the I. L. D. at the height of the fight, the trade union bureaucracy of the A. F. of L. which is still hamstringing the Mooney defense, the middle-headed liberals of the New Republic stripe will not issue the call for this united front movement. They have no interest in such a unity of the workers. Only the revolutionary party of the proletariat can unite the ranks and organize the movement.

That is why we say to the party: Call the united front conferences! We are with you with all our resources. We will help.

### OPEN FORUM

#### The Meaning of the German Elections

Speaker:  
**MAX SHACHTMAN**  
Friday, November 18, 1932  
126 East 16 Street,  
near Irving Place  
ADMISSION: 15c  
Auspices:  
N. Y. Br. Communist League of America  
(Opposition)

DANCING  
REFRESHMENTS  
BANQUET  
**CHICKEN DINNER**  
with  
Variety of Entertainment and Dance  
given for  
the benefit of the  
**GREEK WORKERS CLUB**  
"PROTOMAGIA"  
at the Headquarters of the  
International Workers School  
126 East 16th Street  
ADMISSION: 40c

International Workers School  
Entertainment  
Saturday, Nov. 19 - 8 p. m.  
126 East 16th Street  
ADMISSION: 25c

### Leftward Shift in German Vote

#### Parliamentary Gains Turn Heads of the Stalinist Leadership

While exact details as to the composition of the vote cast in last Sunday's German elections are not yet at hand, the total figures afford us the opportunity to compile the results and draw conclusions adequate for the moment.

As compared with the elections of last July 31, the social democracy lost approximately three-quarters of a million votes; an almost identical number of votes was gained by the Communist party. The Hitlerites, for the first time, lost the substantial number of more than two million votes, although they remain by far the largest party in the country; the Nationalist party, in turn, picked up close to a million additional vote. The other bourgeois parties revealed no decisive change in strength; the Centrists and their Bavarian co-religionists lost a few hundred thousand votes; the old People's party gained a few hundred thousand; the rest of the vote, slightly less in total than three months ago, was scattered.

From these bare figures, the following situation may be deduced:

**The Nazi Setback**  
For the first time in their recent years of uninterrupted and sensational growth, the Nazis have suffered a distinct setback. As we have pointed out previously in these columns, the Hitlerites cannot hope to arrive in power by the smooth parliamentary train. The preceding election already indicated that, so far as elections are concerned, the Nazi social reservoir of voting strength was well-nigh exhausted. Not a parliamentary movement in the ordinary bourgeois sense, the Fascists must strive to fulfill

their aims by the violent seizure of power and the more violent extirpation of all proletarian movements and institutions. Or, if the necessity for such a step is obviated by the collapse of the proletarian movement—as happened in October 1923—the bourgeoisie saves itself the expense of the inevitably ensuing sanguinary conflict, a period of "stabilization" sets in, and the Fascist movement begins to decompose. And with it, the revolutionary proletarian party.

From this it does not follow that the Fascist danger to the German proletariat is now eliminated, or even definitely on the decline. Such a conclusion can be drawn only by those for whom the class struggle begins at the ballot box and ends with a parliamentary mandate.

The heavy decline in the social democratic vote is another repayment made by the socialist workers for the base treachery of their leaders which could not be committed with impunity. That some 700,000 socialist workers deserted their traditional party, surmounted the barriers artificially erected against them by the Stalinists, and voted the Communist slate—is at one and the same time an arraignment of the reactionary role of the social democratic leadership and of that obdurate stupidity of the Stalinists whose course, in the first place, provoked masses of others from rallying to the banner of revolution, and in the second place, still detours the vast numbers of discontented socialist workers from moving any closer to the organized Communist movement than is necessary for the casting of a red ballot.

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### STALINISTS TAKE MEASURES

### The Expulsion of Zinoviev

#### The Lessons of the Second Expulsion of the Capitulators

Wireless and telegraph have flashed news to the entire world of the expulsion of Zinoviev and Kamenev from the party, and along with them of more than a score of Bolsheviks. According to the official communication, those who are expelled were, presumably, striving to reestablish capitalism in the Soviet Union. The political import of this new repression is imposing in itself. Its symptomatic significance is tremendous.

In the course of many years, Zinoviev and Kamenev were the closest pupils and collaborators of Lenin. Better than any one else, Lenin knew their weak traits; but he was also able to utilize their strong sides. In his "Testament", so cautious in tone, wherein both praise and censure are equally modulated in order not to strengthen some too much and weaken others, Lenin deemed it urgent to remind the party that the behavior of Zinoviev and Kamenev in October was "not accidental". Subsequent events confirmed these words all too clearly. But no more accidental was also that role which Zinoviev and Kamenev played in the Leninist party. And their present

expulsion brings to mind their old and unaccidental role.

Zinoviev and Kamenev were members of the Politbureau, which in Lenin's time was directly in charge of the fate of the party and of the revolution. Zinoviev was the chairman of the Communist International. Together with Rykov and Tsuriupa, Kamenev was Lenin's alternate, during the final period of Lenin's life, for the office of chairman of the Soviet of People's Commissars. After Lenin's death Kamenev presided over the Politbureau and the Soviet of Labor and Defense, the highest economic organ of the party.

In 1923, Zinoviev and Kamenev launched a campaign against Trotsky. At the beginning of the struggle, they took very poor account of its consequences, which, of course does not testify to their political far-sightedness. Zinoviev was primarily an agitator, exceptionally talented, but almost exclusively an agitator. Kamenev—"a wise politician" in Lenin's estimation, but lacking great will power and too easily inclined to ad- (Continued on page 2)

### LEON TROTSKY

### Soviet Economy in Danger

#### The Situation on the Eve of the Second Five Year Plan

The successes of the first two years of the Five Year Plan demonstrated to the bourgeoisie of the entire world that the proletarian revolution was a much more serious business than was apparent in the beginning. The interest in the Soviet "experiment" grew apace. Conspicuous groups of eminent bourgeois publications in divers countries began printing comparatively objective economic information.

At the same time the international Communist press played up the most optimistic estimates of the Soviet press, exaggerating them crudely, presumably in the interests of propaganda, and transforming them into an economic legend. Petty bourgeois democrats, who were not at all in a hurry to form an opinion about so complex a fact as the October revolution, welcomed with glee the possibility to discover support for their belated sympathies in the statistics of the Five Year Plan. Magnanimously, at last, they "recognized" the Soviet Republic in reward for its economic and cultural attainments. This act of moralism provided many of them with an opportunity to take an interesting trip at reduced rates.

It is infinitely more deserving, forsooth, to defend the socialist construction of the first workers' state than to sustain the pretensions of Wall Street or of the City. But one can take as little stock in the lukewarm sympathies of this gentry toward the Soviet government as in the antipathies of the Amsterdam Congress toward militarism.

People, after the type of the Webbs (and they are not the worst of this lot) are, naturally, not at all inclined to break their heads over the contradictions of Soviet economy. Without in any manner committing themselves, they strive chiefly to utilize the conquests of Soviets in order to shame or urge ahead the ruling circles of their land. A foreign revolution serves them as a subordinate weapon for their reformism. For this purpose, as well as for their personal peace of mind, "the Friends of the U. S. S. R.", together with the international Communist bureaucracy, require a picture of the successes in U. S. (Continued on page 6)