

Letters from Militants

Party and Opposition in Pittsburgh

Party and Opposition in Pittsburgh. The Left Opposition is on the go in old Smokytown. Our literature and our propaganda are beginning to dig deep into the sentiments of the Left wing workers.

They want to know why so little progress and so much backsliding has been the fate of the labor movement under conditions favorable for its growth. They want to know what the way out is.

Opposition Holds Classes

Recently, two classes, one in the history of the Three Internationals—with comrade Gordon as instructor and one in the Fundamentals of Communism (in the Greek language)—with comrade Sifakis as instructor, have been organized by the local committee of the Communist League.

In addition, a Greek Workers Circle has been organized which is going ahead with planned activities.

Gordon Speaks Before Young Workers

On Sunday, October 16, comrade Sam Gordon spoke before the Progressive Youth Club, a young workers' organization up in the Hill section. A few words are necessary for a description of this club.

The Progressive Youth Club of Pittsburgh was organized some seven or eight months ago to carry on social, sport and cultural activities among the local working class youth. Its membership is of a lively and spirited composition thoroughly proletarian in character and alert in mind.

The entire movement is kept in a state of ignorance and doubt on the latest developments of the critical situation in Germany, China and the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics.

Oppositionist Gets Floor in Spite of Machine Tactics

But, as in so many other instances, the Stalinist line imposed upon the party membership shows its real, back-sliding and opportunist character, in fact—in its meaningless, whenever it bucks up against the Left Opposition.

A short verbal skirmish took place among the members only, in the course of which, the workers supporting the demand that Gordon be given the floor called for adjournment and invited all those who wanted to listen, to stay.

The great majority of the club members remained and took their places in the next room. Even the party comrades decided to stay.

manner and explained to them how their previous action served a reactionary purpose. All these present listened attentively until he was through.

The "Freiheit" Lies and Slanders As Usual

In the Freiheit of Tuesday, October 25, there appears an account of this same meeting, coupled with a venomous, unscrupulous attack upon our courageous and fighting Pittsburgh comrade, comrade Jim Sifakis, leading Greek worker. After warning the Jewish workers on the Hill to keep away from this "Trotskyist" lie, the Freiheit correspondent proceeds to tell its readers that the "Trotskyist" speaker nearly provoked a fist fight and wanted to break up the meeting.

The workers of Pittsburgh, coming towards Communism, will, we fear, yet have many such actions and "reports" before them to be able to decide amply between the Stalinists and the Left Opposition.

New Protest Against Stalin Bureaucrats

DAVENPORT, IOWA. To all Young Communist League and Communist party members, sympathizers, and friends:

To the Section Committee of the Young Communist League and Communist Party, Davenport, Rock Island and Moline Section:

Dear Comrades: The fifteenth anniversary of the Russian revolution finds the revolutionary movement in America and throughout the world in perilous straits.

Bureaucracy has its stifling hold upon the throat of the movement, choking all initiative and life from the rank and file. The rights of the membership are disregarded. Important decisions are made and changed without the voice of the rank and file.

Discussion on theory and practice so necessary for the healthy life of the movement has been replaced by a military-like discipline whose entire substance is bound by the word "obey". There is no objection to discipline—a Communist discipline, a discipline of those who know and understand the decisions, their reason and importance.

There is a great need for study, discussion and consideration by the rank and file to bring out a clearer understanding of the theory and practice of our movement.

The entire movement is kept in a state of ignorance and doubt on the latest developments of the critical situation in Germany, China and the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics.

Bureaucracy bloomed at the expulsion of the International Left Opposition and has since held sway throughout the Communist International in the Communist Party of America and in the Soviet Union.

Bureaucracy is necessary for the Stalinist regime to hold sway. When bureaucracy is done away with, the party can return to its former Leninist path.

Comrades, the struggle against the Left Opposition constantly comes up throughout the world and has been brought to our attention locally. It is high time that the rank and file make a thorough study of the Left Opposition, its program and point of view, and then examine the program as drawn up by the present leadership, their point of view and demand a discussion and convention correctly to settle this question by the membership.

Comradely yours, GEORGE MILLAGE, E. E. THURSTON, S. R. CLAUSSEN.

October 25, 1932.

Utica I.L.D. Fails to Act

UTICA, N. Y. I am sending you a leaflet that speaks for itself. I don't know whether or not there has been anything in the Daily Worker about this.

I attended the meeting of the local branch of the I. L. D. the other night and found the state of affairs shocking. Six Utica workers were arrested last July, when the police broke up an unemployment demonstration.

is very general. It does not even tell the Utica workers how to organize the fight for the release of the men. Yet here we have a real class-struggle case that ought to be brought to the attention of every worker.

At the time of the six men's arrest, a representative from the I. L. D. was sent here in connection with the case, but soon left the city, after having made the local comrades understand that they must handle the matter themselves.

The comrades here are all foreign-born, with very little experience in defense organization. Ten members were present at the meeting I attended, and they appeared to be very pessimistic in regard to organizing a broad united front for the defense.

The defense committee gave in their report at the meeting, and several members then spoke on the report. Their speeches consisted largely of questions, such as: Why don't we get more support? Why doesn't the I. L. D. grow? Why do the workers desert us?

The Pittsburgh Hunger March Conference

(Continued from page 1)

half-hearted and lame arguments, all of them calculated and discreet. The Opposition and all certain to reflect more surely on the stupid and servile character of those who made them.

Myerscough once again summed up the discussion. Forced at first to argue politically, he repeated the Stalinist myth of the "united front from below" as against the Opposition's Leninist united front policy.

Bureaucrats against the Leninist Opposition

Next, the conference proceeded to elect an executive committee. Comrade Jim Sifakis, of the Pittsburgh branch of the C. L. A., was nominated among others. Immediately another flurry started among the party members.

In spite of all these provocations, the Left Opposition was the first to pledge a definite sum in financial support of the Unemployed Conference. The conference then adjourned with a hasty reading of resolutions.

The Left Opposition's action at the conference will not remain without effect on the revolutionary workers of Pittsburgh. An important wedge for the Leninist regeneration of the Communist movement and for the progress of revolutionary labor movement in Pittsburgh has been driven.

Des Moines, Iowa - A New Battleground For the Left Opposition

DES MOINES, IOWA.—Another pillar-albeit a very diminutive one—of the rotting structure of the Stalinist system has just fallen.

The movement will revive and march to victory as in the days of Lenin. Comrades, the struggle against the Left Opposition constantly comes up throughout the world and has been brought to our attention locally.

Helping this out was the newness of the party in the city (6 months), so that the bureaucracy was not yet developed and strong, the members were not poisoned by slander against us, arguments of reason accordingly exerted some force.

However, 5 days later, 2 days before the next unit meeting, we received the following note under a personal signature from Heinz Schroeter, the section organizer: "Your application for membership into the party with your statement denouncing (literally) Trotsky's theories and tactics in the U. S., has been received."

Comrade Barach and myself were unanimously admitted into the party on Sept. 12 by Unit 2 even though in our behavior weren't corrected, more drastic steps would be taken."

These were all significant questions, coming from sincere workers willing to learn and to do something for their class—a real good proletarian element, I thought. So when they were through putting their questions, I got the floor and attempted to give them an answer. I gave a little history of the I. L. D. and an outline of the party's mistakes.

I don't know how long I will be able to stay in Utica to follow up the work, as I haven't got a job yet, but I will do all I can while I am here.

mind the delegates, many of whom knew him from the past, of his long record of militancy in the Pittsburgh revolutionary workers movement. The party speakers, under Stalinist influence, were then forced to grasp—as to a last straw—on the word "Opposition" in the official name of our organization, to make a demagogic appeal to the sentiments of the audience, stressing that "Opposition" means—a desire to disrupt.

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Our Club Plan MILITANT BUILDERS

SECOND PHASE OF THE CLUB PLAN

The Militant is still desperately in need of financial assistance. If it is to appear regularly as a weekly we must build a sounder financial base under it. This is primarily a question of circulation.

It is in this connection that we want to introduce here the second phase of the club plan. You will frequently run across workers and people sympathetic to the Left Opposition who are subscribers themselves, have all our literature and who are willing to donate money to us but are unwilling to give money without getting something in return.

It is our idea to put them to work through the club plan to increase the circulation of the Militant. How can this be done? Very simply. We have on hand one thousand cards ready to ship when ordered. These cards sell for fifty cents apiece.

Anyone who sends in one of these cards with his name and address filled out will be entered on the Militant mailing list as a subscriber. How does he get this card? In this way. Suppose you approach a worker and ask him for a donation of two or more dollars. He says: O. K., but I want something for this money. I have a sub to the Militant. I have all of your literature. What are you going to give me?

To this comrade we say: "Very well. We understand your feelings and we have just the thing you want. If you give us two dollars we will give you four of these paid sub cards. Each one is good for a half-year sub to the Militant. Now you can do whatever you want with these cards. You can sell them to workers and people you know, one at a time; or you can give them away to workers who can then send them in to the office and be entered as subscribers; or you can sell them en bloc to workers' organizations. It is up to you to dispose of them as you can and please."

Now what are the advantages of this arrangement? First: the Militant sells these Paid Sub Cards ONLY on a cash basis. Thus we get money in advance. This is a very important point as all can see. Second: these Paid Sub Cards are sold by the Militant in blocs of not less than four at one time. This makes the minimum sale \$2. The purchaser can resell them according to his opportunity en bloc or singly. When he succeeds in selling them he can reorder more from the Militant. Third: workers get a fifty percent reduction in the price of a half-year sub. Everybody gets something and the Militant gets a boost on its upward climb toward a bigger circulation.

Now some points about the idea. The cards are known as Paid Sub Cards. They are sold by the Militant only on a cash basis. They are sold by the Militant in blocs. The minimum number in a bloc is four. There is no maximum. These cards apply only to new subs. They do not apply to renewals. The worker who has one of these cards given to him or sold to him has only to fill in his name and address and send it in to the Militant to be entered as a subscriber. Nothing more is required from him. A comrade who buys a bloc of these cards is a Militant Builder.

As we said we have 1,000 of these cards. In money that means \$500. How long will it take us to convert these potential assets into cash? Let us see. We will keep a record in these columns. Now who will be the first?

THE STAFF TO DATE

Comrade Vonas is no longer the undisputed leader of the staff. The Chicago Friends of the Militant Club shot in 8 subs on two club plan blanks and shot into a tie for the leadership. That is the way we like to see it go. A cut and dried affair has no interest in it. This looks like a lively race. We shall see.

Table listing staff members and their number of subs: Chicago Friends of the Militant Club 12, P. Vonas 12, B. Morgenstern 8, V. R. Dunne 8, H. Nash 7, W. Krehm 6, H. A. 4, H. Capelis 4, M. Gottlieb 4, J. Hamilton 4, W. Konikow 4, O. Coover 4, S. Lessin 4, J. Sifakis 4, A. Joel 4, E. McMillen 4, J. Miller 4, J. Ross 4, C. Shechet 2.

The record by cities also was changed from what it was two issues ago. Minneapolis is no longer in first place. Chicago has outstripped it. But this is not for long, say our comrades up there. Queen sabe as the Spanish say? We shall see this too.

Table showing paid sub card sales by city: Chicago 24, Minneapolis 20, Pittsburgh 16, Boston 10, Toronto 10, Philadelphia 8, Montreal 7, St. Louis 4, Des Moines 4.

As we foretold New York is moving up. Slowly, you say? Right but what counts is who crosses the tape first at the end of the race; and things which have great bulk and travel long distances pick up speed as they go along. Watch our dust.

PAID SUB CARD

Exchange This Card For One Half-Year Sub to the Militant. Good for One Half-Year Sub to the Militant \$1.00 a Half-Year without this card. 50c A Marxian Paper for Class Conscious Worker

THE MILITANT, 126 E. 16 STREET, New York City. Please send me THE MILITANT for 26 weeks. Name Address City State Militant Builder

members, you see, had not yet been introduced to the culinary art as Stalin practices it....

This incident, it is true, is in itself comparatively unimportant, especially seeing that the letter condemned itself by its tone and substance anyway. But what kind of a party is it any party, which has leaders who can attempt such little "maneuvers"?

Incidents of a similar order followed in quick succession. The unit meeting of Sept. 19 admitted us despite the protest of Schroeter, who disrupted the meeting and walked out when he was outvoted. The following evening a special unit meeting was called by the City Central, out of which we were violently ejected, while another comrade, Gay, was expelled by the City Central which met before the unit meeting—a City Central in which sat and voted Schroeter, who had been recalled the day before. Ten other members, protesting this use of violence and bureaucracy walked out after Gay and us.

The following week, in a more or less packed and hastily called meeting of the entire Des Moines membership, Enlick, the 100 percenter railed and stormed for an hour and a half with a long summary, and her supporters granted her another 50 minutes while we were just granted a meager 40 minutes (they first wanted to make it 20). We were expelled with Gay, 3 others put on probation and the rest warned, and all this, despite the packed meeting and lack of time, by only a slim majority of one—10 to 9. "Do we not have democracy in the party?" Erlich protested, "do not the members elect the functionaries at con-