

Letters from Militants

Chauvinism Among Pittsburgh Stalinists

PITTSBURGH.—Some time ago we wrote in the Militant of the chauvinism that is poisoning the well of our party in Pittsburgh. That was on the occasion of an attack by Jewish Stalinists against Greek Oppositionists. We said at that time that this chauvinism unfortunately does not extend to Left Oppositionists alone and warned the party of the danger.

At the present we have a telling proof of how correct our conscientious warning was. The Icor, the Jewish organization which is led by the Stalinists, recently leased a headquarters. In the lease signed by the Stalinists representing the Icor a clause is contained guaranteeing that no Negroes are to be allowed into the Headquarters! An unprecedented example of white chauvinism! A telling proof of the degeneration that Stalinism is bringing into the ranks of Communism!

In defense of their action, the Stalinists (and we can furnish the names) offer the unheard-of, most unprincipled excuse: the clause excluding the Negro workers is to continue in effect for only (only!) one month! We ask: Does the party leadership condone this action, or will they take drastic disciplinary measures against the party fraction in the Icor? The workers will expect an answer.

As for the Left Opposition, it does not demand "mass trials" which turn the serious problem of uprooting chauvinism into a farce. It demands disciplinary action coupled with Communist education, which is so lacking in the ranks of the party today. Only a return to Leninism—only a ruthless rejection of strangulating Stalinism—will once and for all put a stop to the degeneration of our party. The Left Opposition will fight tirelessly for a return to Leninism, for the Bolshevik training of the ranks of the Communist party.

Boston Branch Moves Forward

BOSTON.—While Boston has not been heard from in the columns of the Militant lately (except for the article by comrade Schechet on the ILD), there has been considerable activity in this district.

Three of our comrades are members of local ILD branches, one, comrade Schechet now serving on the executive committee of the John Reed Branch. Two comrades are very active in the Left Wing Needle Trades Union and have held several committee positions.

Comrade A. Konikow has given the following lectures:

- "Why is there a Shortage of Food in Russia?" on November 13, before Branch 27 of the Independent Workmen's Circle. Attendance 25.
- "What does the Left Opposition Want?" on November 26 for the Independent Workmen's Circle of Peabody. Attendance 75.
- "Communism versus Socialism" on Dec. 14 for the Poale-Zionist Women's Club of Dorchester. Attendance 75.
- "What the Left Opposition Stands For" on December 16 for the Chelsea Labor Lyceum Forum. Attendance 65.

Comrade W. Konikow spoke before the Independent Workmen's Circle, Branch 27 on December 11th on "Communism versus Socialism", attendance 25.

All these lectures there was much enthusiasm for the Left Opposition views and the sale of literature was good.

Through the efforts of some of our comrades the Social Science Club, a non-partisan organization for the study of Marxism, was formed three months ago, with a membership of 35. Twenty members enrolled in an intense study course in Elementary Marxian Economics. This course was a huge success. On Tuesday, Jan. 10 there will be a regular quarterly meeting of the club to which the public is invited, admission free. This meeting will be held in Tremont Temple, Room A at 8 P. M. There will be a lecture on "Communism versus Socialism". Three new courses will be started: "History of the Three Internationals", "The Russian Revolution", and "Elementary Marxian Economics". For further information write the Secretary, 11 Keswick St., Boston, Mass.

On Jan. 13, comrade A. Konikow will debate with Louis Marcus of the Socialist Party on "Socialism versus Communism" at No. 1 Stuart St., Boston, Mass.

On Jan. 22, comrade W. Konikow will speak before Independent Workmen's Circle, Branch 27, at 12 noon, in Aperia Plaza (upper hall) on "Trotskyism, What It Stands For."

On Jan. 22, Dr. A. Konikow will speak on "Trotskyism, What It Stands For," in Huntington Chambers, Boston at 3 P. M. under the auspices of the New Thought Forum.

As a result of our activity we are glad to report the addition of two new members, with the possibility of three more joining very shortly.

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Greek Militant Expelled in Philadelphia

PHILADELPHIA.—On December 27, a meeting of the ILD Greek Branch of our city was scheduled to take place at the headquarters of the Greek Workers Club, Spartacus. Comrade Theodore Pappas suggested to comrade Caidis who happened to be in Philadelphia that day, to go to the Club and meet certain workers who are anxious to know some truths about the views of the Left Opposition. So far the only thing they knew was the continuous hurling of epithets against the Opposition.

Comrade Goodman came along with the two Greek comrades at the Club, but unfortunately no meeting and no discussion took place, the Stalinists explaining that the rainy weather prevented many workers from reaching at the Club.

Comrade Pappas was asked by many workers to provide a Greek Oppositionist from New York to debate with a Stalinist in order to be able to grasp the fundamental differences of the two viewpoints, and that they were going to propose this at the next business meeting of the Club.

The local Stalinists were panic-stricken at the appearance of comrade Caidis and the distribution of the Militant and Communists by comrade Theodore Pappas, and last week called a special meeting to take measures against the spreading of sentiments in favor of the Left Opposition.

They adopted the same splitting attitude as their New York brothers by expelling comrade Pappas from the Club. Also they held a Stalinist trial and they passed a judgment against Pappas that he can remain at the Club only if he apologizes for his past conduct and also undertake the distribution of the Militant for three months. Comrade Pappas told the "court" that he is willing to sell the Militant for three years if they will convince him that its editors are genuine revolutionary Marxists and not incompetent mercenaries of Stalinism. Then a few of the Stalinists forced him out of the Club room and forbade him to attend it in the future because he is a "dangerous" element. Comrade Pappas bombards the Greek Stalinists with the most effective weapon at his disposal at present: the Militant, Communists and pamphlets and books of the Opposition.

Stalinists Challenged in St. Louis

ST. LOUIS, MO.
At a recent meeting of the International Labor Defense, after listening for more than an hour to a young man from Cincinnati extolling the virtues of the I. L. D., I thought it time to place a few facts before the workers present. I was given a chance for the floor in the following manner. The young man from Cincinnati, evidently very well pleased with himself, proposed a question period following his speech. Posing before the speaker's stand, he was indeed a perfect picture of self-satisfaction.

Calmly taking the floor, I said first of all that I was in complete agreement with the role and functions of the ILD, but that certain events had convinced me that the organization was too narrow and sectarian. I cited the case of Morgenstern and Goodman, members of my organization, the Communist League (Opposition) who were arrested for distributing a leaflet pointing out not only the need for the struggle for immediate demands but stressing the fact that the final solution to the problems of the working class could only be the proletarian revolution. Yet the ILD had done nothing for them. I also cited the New York marine workers' case which the ILD sabotaged. I explained that while between the official party and the Left Opposition there were disagreements of a fundamental theoretical and tactical nature, this should not enter into the question of defense. The ILD must take up the case of any worker, regardless of his organizational affiliations.

During this short speech, the bureaucrats became very nervous. When I finished, the young Stalinist from Cincinnati apologetically and shame-facedly admitted that the ILD had formerly been sectarian and had made mistakes. But he would remind the comrades (myself) that at the last convention of the ILD the formula of self-criticism had been applied, resolutions passed, and everything was hunky-dory now. From now on a Trotskyist would be treated like anybody else.

Despite the fact that the bureaucrats considered the discussion at an end, I asked for the floor again it was given to me grudgingly this time. First I asked if the selection of the National Hunger March delegates had not taken place since the "historic" convention of the ILD. Then I told them of the case of comrade Payer who, although duly elected as a Hunger March delegate from his ILD branch, had nevertheless been rejected at the last minute by a "meeting"—where it was held and by whom, only god knows—and a delegate substituted for him who was not even a member of that branch.

Glaring at me like a bull at a red shirt, the Cincinnati Stalinist, although not the chairman, called me to order and commanded me to sit down. It was at this point that the real fireworks began. I was accused of attempting to disrupt the meeting and of having been sent here for that purpose. I was accused of bringing "theoretical questions" into the ILD. They were not interested in "Trotskyism", etc. In this manner a lynching spirit was worked up and one Stalinist

rose to demand that my application for membership be rejected. The bureaucrats rather nervously corrected this move, for it was a complete substantiation of my charge of discrimination against Oppositionists.

At this point, it was decided to "explain" the case of comrade Payer. The "explanation" by Julius Pollack, party candidate for U. S. Senator from Missouri, left the audience gasping for breath. To cover up the extraordinary procedure against Payer, Pollack employed the methods of calumny and falsehood. Knowing that comrade Payer was a coward, he said, and not steered in the class struggle, it was decided that he was not the man to help fight the Washington police, for he lacks the courage to fight the St. Louis police. Believing that I would not again get the floor, I shouted out that these were falsehoods. I was however given the floor by the chairman who asked what more I had to say on that point.

In spite of the threats of a physical attack, I took the floor to nail these lies to the wall. I cited Payer's long record of militancy in the struggle, his picketing of the British Consulate, arrest during our unemployment demonstration, record in the street meetings, and the number of times he had been arrested. I demanded a retraction of the falsehoods or a working class tribunal to hear the charges.

My proposals were of course not acted upon and discussion turned to other matters. Not until the meeting ended did a private discussion take place, with the Ohio Stalinist. He condescendingly explained that he disliked getting personal with a worker, as so many workers are confused, etc. I reminded him that we were so confused that we had numberless times invited the Stalinists to debate with us, so as to bring the differences before the working class; and at all times our invitation had been declined. With workers listening, he immediately proclaimed his willingness to debate us any time. But the bureaucrats promptly became cautious when I enthusiastically accepted. "Unless we cannot find time," they added, "and you know we are busy fighting the boss class." Nevertheless, we finally decided on the subject which (if they accept) is to be: "Is Trotsky a Friend of the Soviet Union?" That this is the last we will hear from this on the matter, is more than likely.

—G. ROBERTS.

Pittsburgh Branch Progresses

PITTSBURGH NOTES
The Stalinist terror campaign against the Left Opposition is in full swing here. Not only are Oppositionists slandered and attacked on every possible occasion, but even more, the tolerant party members are intimidated by the bureaucracy. Party members are forbidden to come to Opposition meetings and classes. Party members are warned against going into the houses of Left Opposition comrades. They are even threatened with disciplinary measures for speaking to our comrades.

In the meantime, the struggles of the rank and file within the party against the national bureaucracy are proceeding unabated. Only recently, the topmost bureaucrats have been forced to make a concession to the militant Pittsburgh rank and file. They have agreed to remove all the out-of-town functionaries, outside of the D. O., from their positions and to replace them with local comrades. While this is no doubt the fruit of courageous efforts by the bulk of the militants here it is important for them not to be deceived by such a measure. For, the bureaucrats still maintain the right to appoint functionaries (instead of having them elected by the responsible bodies), so as to assure themselves in the near future to place such local workers in leading positions as will carry out their bureaucratic designs and decisions.

But the Pittsburgh rank and file is wide-awake. It is conscious of the progress it has achieved by fighting and it has already been encouraged thereby to continue fighting, to clear the road for real Leninist advances. It would not be at all surprising, if the logic of their struggle will, very soon, lead them to demand the regular election of functionaries, which is a primary element of the old Leninist system of democratic centralism, instead of the appointment-from-above of functionaries, which is a distinguishing feature of the Stalinist system of bureaucratic centralism. In any case, the Leninist Left Opposition stands ready to offer every aid and to fight side by side with the rank and file militants.

In the Progressive Youth Club
Militant readers are acquainted with recent developments in the Progressive Youth Club. They know of the fight that the Stalinists—acting under the guise of "non-politicals"—carried on against letting in Left Oppositionists. Some time ago, we showed that this policy plays right into the hands of reactionaries and is bound to react even against the Stalinists. That we were not far from wrong, a more recent incident goes to prove. To wit:

Last week, two leading party comrades applied for membership to the club. A reactionary clique within the club, which has been thriving on the foolish struggle of the Stalinists against us, has cleverly used the anti-proletarian "No Politics" cry of the latter against the Leninist Opposition to entrench itself firmly with a good measure of power. In fact, they have grown so powerful, that they have found it extremely easy to reject these applications of the party members, abused them as being "disruptive Communists". They were so successful in their effort that they even managed to enlist support for this reactionary action from a miseducated party member serving on the committee

Opposition at Anti Pogrom Conference

PITTSBURGH.—In the Anti-Pogrom United Front Conference, which was called here by party auxiliary organizations, the Left Opposition was represented by a delegate in order to participate in the work. Comrade Frank Salov offered the assistance of the local League organization, speaking in its name. The delegate of the Communist League (Opposition) was seated and elected to the Conference Committee.

Arrangements are now under way to hold a mass protest meeting and a demonstration. The Pittsburgh branch of the Communist League (Opposition) calls upon all its sympathizers and friends to participate energetically in these actions and to help make them a success. While taking an active part in the work, the organization reserves for itself the right to independent criticism of all the actions taken and proposals offered by the various organizations represented in the united front.

Hold Public Meeting
On Thursday evening, January 5, the Pittsburgh branch held a small mass meeting at the Irene Kaufman Settlement, on Centre Avenue. A representative worker crowd was on hand and listened attentively to comrade Gordon who spoke on the subject "The Communist Party and the Left Opposition."

After the lecture, there were some interesting questions and discussions from the floor, to which the speaker replied in a brief summary. The group intends to hold more meetings of this sort in the future, in order systematically to bring the viewpoint of the Left Opposition before the Pittsburgh workers.

Leon Trotsky

History of the
Russian Revolution

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Czech Right Wing Collapses

Lovestone's Allies Take Final Step and Join Social Democracy

On October 16, 1932, the national conference of the Czechoslovakian Right Opposition decided upon unification with the social democracy and, together with a small number of members, it turned over to it a number of homes and other party properties which it had taken with it at the time of its expulsion. With this act, an instructive chapter in the history of Czech Communism finds its conclusion.

When in the year 1928 the Comintern leadership completed its swing from the Right-Centrist course of capitulation to "Muller and Chiang Kai-Shek to the adventures of the "third period", it encountered a stiff resistance in Czechoslovakia from the party membership, all the more so as the beginning of the new course promptly produced the catastrophe of the Red Day of July 6, 1928. Stalinist diplomacy was intent upon confining the indignation of the party workers within such limits that it would not do damage to the prestige of the Comintern leadership. It permitted a criticism of the preceding opportunism in so far as it was replaced by ultra-radicalism, and guarded against a clarification of the ultra-Leftist binders of the present. It succeeded in attributing the whole blame or the weakening of the party to the Hlek leadership, in spite of the fact that the latter had simply acted as the executors of the Moscow chiefs.

Centrism Assists Right Wing
The majority of the party membership concentrated its hopes upon the new Gottwald-Fried opposition which was overthrown from Moscow. But immediately upon the first actions of the new leadership, broad strata of the party moved away. The proclaiming of the immediately revolutionary situation at the time of the textile workers' strike, at the beginning of 1929, the bureaucratically impatient foundation of new trade unions, after the opportunistic Hais secretary of the IAV (International One Big Union) had carried the majority of the membership by surprise with the aid of organizational swindling and the police—all this swiftly strengthened the small following of the then removed party leadership and created the foundations of a new opposition.

The Gottwald party leadership, true to the Stalinist commandment, completely dropped the Leninist united front policy. The Right Opposition, at any hour of the day or night, was ready for a united front with the social democracy against the Communist party. The Right Opposition prepared the road for entry into the social democracy. But this remained concealed from many of its own members.

Even before it began to realize its goal of unification, the Opposition went through a split. A part of the deputies refused to contribute to the Opposition treasury out of their salaries. Is that how you understand democracy, that I, who do receive five times as high a salary as the average worker, should turn over half of it to the organization at a time when the others contribute a bare one—one hundredth of theirs?—said a deputy to the democratic babblers, and quit the Opposition.

When we come out for unity, then we mean above all the unity of the organizations' treasuries, for then the organizations will be all the stronger, opined old man Hais, and joined the social democratic trade unions with his organization. The German bishop Brandler was dispatched for the marriage ceremony and he even handed down a dispensation to the betrothed from the legally prescribed proclamation of the bans. The priest returned to Germany and described the Prague unification as a model of the Leninist tactic. It was indeed a model of Brandlerist policy; but it had nothing in common with Leninist trade union tactics. When Leninists come forward for the unity of the trade union movement, they put such conditions as guarantee the possibility of revolutionary agitation. The entry of the Hais organization into the social democratic trade union league was based upon a complete political capitulation to the social democracy. That was the music which Heinrich Brandler "overheard".

In the ranks of the Right Opposition could be heard soft voices which shyly criticized Hais' capitulation. But the secretariat of the Opposition remained in the Trade Union House, which now belonged to the social democracy.

The following which the Opposition leaders brought into the social democracy is slight. One part of their workers has remained indifferent, a second part capitulated to Stalinism, a third part is coming closer to the Left Opposition.

That the Czechoslovakian Right Opposition temporarily rallied a substantial number of party members around itself, that it was able for quite a time to de-

ceive itself and its ranks about the direction of its course, is to be ascribed above all to the Stalinists. For the latter conducted the struggle against the Right wing principally with the accusation that it was for agreements with social democratic leaders. They thus permitted the liquidators to utilize for their own ends the mistakes of the Centrist-led party, which rejected the united front with the leaders under any circumstances. A second fact is of still greater significance. By the reduction of the difference between themselves and the Right wing to the question of "from above or from below", "united front with the leaders or without them", the Stalinists excluded from the discussion the fundamental strategic questions.

Decline of Right Opposition
The Czech Right Opposition rose to its height in 1929, after a temporary economic boom and a series of mistakes of the Stalinists, produced a new dissemination of democratic-pacifist illusions within the Czech working class. But when the consequences of the world economic crisis violently gripped the economic life of the country, when the million and a half unemployed and partly unemployed once more had the occasion to feel the effects of the ruling social democracy's methods, when the revolutionary wave began to rise,—the Right Opposition receded. At the same time, the Czech Left Opposition took shape and grew.

The general direction of the Right Opposition was: Away from the revolution, over to the social democracy. The adventurist stupidities of the Stalinists, however, drove many workers into its ranks, who did not want to capitulate to reformism but to win the social democratic workers to the revolution on the basis of partial demands. That is why the process of differentiation within the remnants of the Right Opposition, which have not been drawn over to the social democracy, is inevitable. The Left Opposition says to these workers: We understand that the treachery and characterlessness of the leader of the Right Opposition restrain you from active policy and push you towards indifference. For you, for all of us, there is but one road: Closer to the Communist Party! Fight to win it back to the policy of Lenin, under the banner of International Left Opposition!

Prague. —O. FRIEDMANN.

North China Seized

(Continued from page 1)

this innocuous pact would have been of little consequence for the Japanese imperialists. It would not have stopped the military plans by one inch of conquered territory. But what they have done is significant. They have refused to sign the pact on a flimsy pretext. Stalin, they say, has changed the industrialization plans in preparation for war. In view of the present difficulties of the five year plan, this charge is not only absurd but is a cover for Japanese provocations against the Soviet Union. The Daily Worker reports that four Soviet ships have been interned by the Japanese military. Japan's hostile acts are clear to all.

At the same time another significant fact comes to light. Unlike the events of last year when the conquest of Manchuria was met with anxious outcries on the part of American and other imperialists who feared for their own profits and concessions, the silence of this year has been conspicuous. Is it because the imperialist powers know in advance that Japan's rampage will this time end up in an assault upon the Soviet Union? There are strong indications that this may be the case.

The workers must be on their guard for any eventuality. They must give their support to the Chinese workers and peasants in the struggle against the Japanese plunderers and the Chiang Kai-Shek butchers of the Chinese people!

—G. C.

ANNOUNCEMENT

All Militant readers are urged to watch for the next issue of the paper. It will be of especial interest to all Communist Militants. It is going to be a special anniversary number devoted to three great working class leaders, Lenin, Liebknecht and Luxemburg whose writings and deeds have blazed the trail for the Communist movement. The next issue will contain articles and reprints by well known revolutionary writers commemorating the life and analyzing the deeds of these heroic fighters for the proletariat. Watch for the next issue!

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