

WORKERS
OF THE
WORLD.
UNITE

THE MILITANT



Weekly Organ of the Communist League of America [Opposition]

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Liberal Protest Chen's Arrest

The continued imprisonment of comrade Chen Du-Hsiu, leader of the Left Opposition in China, has called forth a protest from a number of leading liberal and radical figures in American public life. A cablegram sent by them to Chiang Kai-Shek in Nanking reads as follows: "Leading Americans protest prosecution Professor Chen Du-Hsiu and associates. Urge their release."

Among those who signed their names to the cabled protest were a number of writers who are notably sympathetic to the Communist movement in the United States and closely associated with it. These include Theodore Dreiser, Sherwood Anderson, H. W. L. Dana, Malcolm Cowley and Waldo Frank. Among the liberals and socialists who signed the protest are to be found Upton Sinclair, John Haynes Holmes of the Community Church in New York, Floyd Dell, Oswald Garrison Villard, editor of the liberal weekly, THE NATION, Arthur Garfield Hays, the lawyer, and Roger N. Baldwin, of the American Civil Liberties Union.

The official Communist party, however, and the International Labor Defense, have not yet raised a single protest against the arrest of comrade Chen and his comrades, whose lives are still endangered. The only comment yet made by the Daily Worker was aimed at preventing any protest from the militant labor movement on the grounds that comrade Chen is a "counter-revolutionary Trotskyist". To the disgrace of the movement, it has remained for liberals and radical intellectuals to speak out where the party preserved that dreadful silence which could not be of greater good to Chiang Kai-Shek and his butchers than if the latter themselves had arranged for it.

The Communist blot must wipe out this shameful work by demanding that the party and the I. L. D. take up the fight for the Left Oppositionists in China and connect their case

with those of the many other brave militants whose lives are at the mercies of the Kuo Min Tang brigands.

HELP!

There is every reason to hope that the Weekly MILITANT will continue. Thus far, our paper has depended almost exclusively upon the membership of the Communist League, out of their limited resources, to maintain the leading English expression of Bolshevism. Now, today, our readers and sympathizers must lend a hand to save the Weekly. The demands upon our numerically small membership have been heavy, especially so in this lengthy period of economic crisis.

We have no doubt that our readers will respond to the plain, frank appeal of the Left Opposition to maintain the Weekly MILITANT.

The requirements of the situation demand more and more the participation and direction of the Left Opposition in the daily class struggles. Through the MILITANT, still our best organizer, the ideas and practices of Leninism, of the Left Opposition, are made known to the Communist movement, to the Left Opposition, to the broad masses of workers coming steadily, if yet slowly, toward class consciousness and Communism.

The MILITANT can and must be maintained. Its existence as a Weekly through these scouring years of the economic crisis, have shown clearly the devotion and sacrifice of the supporters of the Left Opposition to their paper. What has been done before, can be done again—better and even more generously. Sympathizers, readers—help the MILITANT now! Save our and your Weekly!

Send money at once to:
THE MILITANT
126 EAST 16TH STREET,
New York, N. Y.

Left Opposition Demands Broad United Front at N. Y. Unemployment Conference

Presents Revolutionary Program to Stalinist Confab Oriented on Opportunist Half-Turn

L. O. Resolutions

Note: This statement was distributed to the delegates at the Unemployment Conference at Irving Plaza, New York, on Sunday, January 22.

The United Front conference for Unemployment Insurance and relief is a step in the proper direction. Properly developed it can result in a genuine and big movement of the working class against the scourge of unemployment and its source capitalism.

Through such a broad movement the working class can be more closely welded together in common struggle for the immediate and historical interest of the masses. The Communist League of America heartily welcomes this movement and works for its advancement.

The call for the present conference proposes a state-wide conference to lay out a legislative program in defense of the interests of the unemployed and working class. This proposal to put pressure on the capitalist legislature is a necessary part of a fighting movement for the unemployed. The fight on this front, however, can become really effective, even to serve the immediate interests of the unemployed only if it is supplemented by and combined with a program of direct mass pressure through huge united demonstrations of the workers.

This preliminary conference, should aim to put the movement on a firm foundation by recommending a concrete program for the consideration of the State-wide conference. For this program we proposed the following points:

1. Immediate Relief.
2. Unemployment Insurance, to be paid for by the employers and State government.
3. The 6 hour day and 5 day week, without reduction in pay.
4. Long term credits to the Soviet Union, as a means of unemployment relief for American workers and the cementing of fraternal relations between the American and Russian workers. This implies the demand for recognition of the Soviet Government and the establishment of trade relations.

In supporting the movement for legislative action the Communist Left Opposition deems it necessary to point out the inadequacies of a parliamentary campaign to achieve any of these demands. Such a tactic by itself is insufficient and would be misleading and incapable of obtaining the aims of the Conference. The broad masses of the workers must be drawn into class struggle activity for these demands. Through mass demonstrations and activity among the working class organizations—trade unions, fraternal organizations, etc., the employed and unemployed, organized and unorganized must be united in the fight for these demands. In short, the widest possible mass pressure of the economic and political organizations of the working class must be exerted upon the ruling class to reinforce the legislative demands.

It is necessary that this Conference shall conduct a sharp campaign of exposure and criticism of the so-called labor representatives and their lobbying methods behind the scenes with the politicians at Albany and elsewhere in order to secure a few cheap and meager concessions for the unemployed. This capitalist "politics" is only a snare and delusion to the workers and serves to disarm them before the attacks of the capitalists and their agents. These labor fakers must be shown up in their true colors by counterposing a program of class struggle to their political chicanery.

In order to achieve the aims of the Conference in concerted struggle, it is necessary to take a further step forward on the road of a broad united front of all working class organizations—unions and political parties (A. F. of L., Socialist Party, Communist Party, etc.) It is not enough to invite the branches of these organizations. The respective central organizations and the official leaders of these organizations must be put to the test before the eyes of the workers and compelled to show their colors in action. The Communist Party must participate officially in this movement and undertake thereby, to give direct leadership to the struggles of the workers for their immediate needs and final aims—the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of a Soviet Government.

Communist League of America
(Opposition) N. Y. Branch
126 East 16th Street
New York City

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The New York conference held under the auspices of the A. F. of L. Committee for Unemployed Insurance on Sunday, January 22, 1933, was of such significance for the struggle against unemployment in general, and the Communist movement in particular, that it deserves a detailed account and treatment.

The importance of the Conference did not lie so much in the organizations represented. In this respect, the gathering fell far short of the possibilities as well as the requirements of the situation. Of the American Federation of Labor locals in the city, only a handful (23 of them) were present. With isolated exceptions, the balance of the organizations present were those in which the Communists have already gained predominance. When it is considered that the ravages of the crisis, plus the treacherous passivity of all the reformist leaders and the exclusive position occupied by the

Comrades and Fellow-workers:

In the limited time allotted for speeches from the floor it is naturally impossible to deal adequately with the whole problem which has brought us into conference here to-day. I will therefore confine myself to some of the most salient points which must be considered in connection with our next steps on the road to a broader movement and a more effective struggle. Permit me to refer you to the mimeographed copies of the statement and resolutions of the Communist Left Opposition which have been distributed to the delegates. In this material you will find a more thorough elaboration of the program and tactics which the Bolshevik-Leninists advocate than I will be able to present orally in my limited time.

The conference here today represents a step forward in the direction of a united struggle of the workers against the unbearable burdens of the crisis. The tendency towards such a union of forces in the fight, progressive from our point of view, the constructive feature of this conference. For it is only when the workers of various organizations and political trends are welded together in a common front that real blows can be directed against the class enemy on the great class issue of unemployment. When this union of forces is lacking, when the comparatively small groups of the workers' vanguard take the field alone and fight as isolated detachments, the blows fall heaviest on them, the class enemy remains unshaken and the masses of the workers gain no advantages.

To the extent that the present conference signifies a progressive step toward the united front struggles of the workers, we, of the Left Opposition, declare our readiness to give hearty support to the movement and to work loyally for its advancement.

Broader Base Necessary

The invitation which the committee extended to the branches of the Socialist Party, to the trade union locals of the A. F. of L. and similar conservative organizations means in itself and can only mean a recognition of the fact that the unemployed issue is not an issue of any party, tendency or group, but rather an issue of the class. This is the only way to present the question and to lay the groundwork for a real struggle. But this step in itself remains uncompleted. The roll call of the delegation bears eloquent testimony to this fact. Between the aspirations of the committee which called the conference and the workers' organizations actually represented there is an enormous gap. From this there do not emerge the calculations of the committee were wrong or that the aspirations to draw the reformist and even the reactionary organizations into the joint struggle are without foundation.

No, we only have to conclude that the step taken toward this end must be followed by others. The tactics of the united front as Lenin laid them down, and as they have been verified by experience on an international scale, must be unfolded in their full scope. It is not sufficient to invite the branches of the Socialist party and the local unions of the A. F. of L. to join us in a common fight. To be sure that is something. By such an invitation we recognize the fact that the workers in these organizations also suffer from the plague of unemployment and that it is quite possible for them to join in a fight for a program of immediate demands even while they remain reformist and conservative in their political views, even while they retain membership in organizations representing these political currents. That is the beginning of wisdom on the question of the united front.

But it is by no means the whole of it. The fact remains that these workers in the reformist and reactionary organizations who have good cause and very probably a real will to fight against the scourge of unemployment are not ready to break with their organizations and are not convinced that their leaders who talk against the evils of unemployment,

no less than we do, do not mean what they say. They are not ready to break with their leaders at the present moment and to respond to appeals over the heads of their official leadership and their respective central organizations. This is the situation as it exists in reality, and not in somebody's imagination. The problem is to base ourselves on this reality and find the way to draw these workers into the common struggle with us in spite of that. For this we must have recourse to the political wisdom of Lenin who has taught us how to do it. For this we must have recourse to the genuine tactics of the united front.

The appeal to the Socialist party branches of greater New York brought a response from one single branch which is represented here alone—and even that branch is located outside the metropolitan territory. The appeal to the A. F. of L. locals brought a mere handful of delegates and even these, in almost every case, come from locals already under the influence of the Left wing. Do not shut your eyes to these facts, comrades. Let us not delude ourselves with the idea that we have a united working-class front. For that we must have a large section of the workers who are absent here to-day. If we proceed from the point of view of the committee that the workers generally, regardless of their political views and their affiliations, want to struggle against unemployment—and I think this is the correct point of view—then we ought to ask ourselves why they have not responded to the call.

And if we face the problem clearly, we will have to say that the fault lies not with the workers but rather with the manner in which they were approached. By ignoring the central organizations, by ignoring the official leadership of the reformist and conservative organizations, the committee unfortunately gave these treacherous leaders all the ground they needed to excuse themselves before their own membership for their failure to participate.

Moreover it put the locals and branches of these organizations before the problem of acting over the heads of their official leadership and their official bodies. If you understand something of the mechanics of organization you will recognize that this is an untimely demand. The reformist workers take their organizations seriously, no less perhaps than we do. They do not act over the head of their official in-

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Communist in leading whatever militant fight for unemployment relief there has been in this country, it will be seen that the representation at Sunday's conference was far below the vast possibilities at hand for the mobilization of a strong fighting movement. The very fact that the meagre response can be said by the Daily Worker to have "exceeded the best expectations of the Committee", is only an indication of the extent to which the sectarian policies of the official party in the past period have isolated it from the bulk of the workers and their organizations.

This phase of the Conference may be summed up in the following observation: To the extent that the representation from non-Communist organizations was small in comparison with what it should and could have been, its size is to be attributed to the "Third Period" antics of the past, the elimination of the united front, the ultimatum policy of the party, as well as to the inadequacy of the turn made in the recent Chicago united front and at the present Conference. To the extent that non-Communist participation "exceeded the best expectations" it is due to the turn made in dropping the idiotic verbiage about "social fascism" and approaching the standpoint on the Leninist united front which the Left Opposition has sought to drill into the mind of the party for the past few years.

Our Reservations Justified

The fact that the turn was made, and while still defective, was nevertheless made in the right direction, could not fail to bring it the endorsement of the Left Opposition. At the same time, however, all the shortcomings and dangers already perceptible at the first stages of the party's turn—which we pointed out from the very beginning as factors which made it impossible for the Opposition to accord the turn an unreserved endorsement—were obtrusively present at the very first Conference in New York.

The keynote of the Conference was struck by the Committee representative who opened the meeting, Bordinan, and by the Committee chairman, Weinstein, who made the general report for the hand-picked credentials committee. The burden of their appeal was the need of presenting to the legislature soon to convene in Albany a program for "unemployment insurance and other labor legislation". The burning problem of connecting with the fight for unemployment insurance, the demands for immediate relief, the six-hour day and five-day week without pay reduction, and long-term credits to the Soviet Union—this was not dealt with at all by either of the two spokesmen before the Conference. Anxious to get as far away as possible from yesterday's "fight for the streets", of the "Third Period", the speakers sedulously avoided any reference to the need of mass pressure from the workers in the attainment of their demands. The whole program of action outlined by them shimmered down to the presentation of a petition to the capitalist legislators assembled at the Capitol. With not a single word did these two Communists—who apparently thing that the way to function in the trade union movement is to cease acting and fighting like Communists—emphasize the danger of entertaining any illusions about what could be obtained by "petitioning the legislature", or the limits necessarily set by a parliamentary campaign. They neither drew a clear line of demarcation between their program of action and the pernicious "lobbying system" of the A. F. of L. and the Socialists, nor did they stress the quintessential importance of organized action by the masses to force concessions from the ruling class and its government.

The warning we gave a week ago against the tendency towards parliamentary opportunism already visible in the party's half-turn, proved to be more than well-founded. The straining towards "respectability" was positively painful. In an overwhelming Communist assembly, the party members and apparently been instructed to adhere strictly to the solemn ritual of avoiding the term "comrade" and addressing each other as "brother" and "sister", obviously for the sole purpose of impressing the half-dozen or less "pure and simple" A. F. of L. delegates present with the fact that the sponsors of the Conference were beyond reproach or the suspicion of being connected in any way with the "Reds".

Socialist Workers Absent

The same game of hide-and-seek was played by the party in the selection of the chairman. The call for the conference, while saying nothing about "so-

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Nazis, Cops Provoke CPG

Von Schleicher Uses Fascists to Bolster Bonapartist Regime

On Sunday, January 22, tens of thousands of Fascists made a demonstration in Germany. In clashes with workers and Communists one worker was killed and a hundred were wounded. According to the press the occasion was the anniversary of the death of a Fascist killed in an assault upon workers. Touching sentimentality! The Kaiser sent a wreath of flowers to lay upon the grave.

Had the demonstration for this sort of human rubbish been part of the usual Fascist tinsel of bluster and burlesque pomp it could have been set down as another item in the ledger of the working class account with these agents of capitalist reaction to be settled in full and forever by the proletarian revolution. But there are aspects of the demonstration that mark it as an event of great significance for the German and international working class and its vanguard.

In Berlin the Fascists invaded the heart of the proletarian districts to assemble in front of Communist party headquarters. Alone the Fascists would not have dared the anger of the workers. But the Fascists were "guarded" by the largest police mobilization ever made in Berlin. This was a sinister united front between the Fascist hordes and the Bonapartist police. This fact gave the demonstration a character of the highest political significance. It was not a memorial meeting at all, but an enormous provocation of the workers' vanguard. Under the circumstances the party correctly refused to be drawn. That is to its credit.

In the mind of every worker questions will arise: Why was the party not able to arouse the masses of workers to resist this hostile demonstration in its stronghold? Why could it not call on the socialist democratic workers to join with it against their common foe? The knowledge of its ability to do so would have made the demonstration in red Berlin impossible.

To ask the questions is to hint at

OPEN FORUM

REPORT OF THE PROGRESSIVE
TRADE UNIONS CONFERENCE
AT GILLESPIE, ILLINOIS

Speaker:
J. P. CANNON
now in Illinois Coal Fields

Friday, February 3, 1933
126 East 16 Street,
ADMISSION: 15c
Auspices:
N. Y. Br. Communist League of America
(Opposition)

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