

Conference Report

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Workmen's Circle and so forth—be invited to the Albany conference, the resolutions committee stated that this is what they had intended to do in any case, and when it was put to a vote, it was carried by a majority! Thus, on paper at least, the "united front from below" was rejected. It is most likely that the adopted motion will remain on paper. It involves too much of a blow at the party bureaucracy and its ever-changing policies to have much chance of being carried out seriously in practice.

From the whole course of the conference, it is clear that the party is in the midst of a serious turn-about-face, forced upon it by the increasing misery of the masses, the bankruptcy of its previous line of policy, and the incessant hammer-blows of Left Opposition criticism. Nor can there be any doubt that the turn is also the result of pressure from the party ranks which have been disturbed and disoriented with the policy of sectarianism and ultimatism which proved so sterile for the movement. That the turn is inadequate, that it is rendered far less effective than it should be, was also demonstrated clearly by the New York conference. The retention of yesterday's ultra-Leftism with regard to "no united front with the leaders or the organizations" continues to be a heavy anchor preventing the movement from advancing with the necessary power and speed. The combination with this feature of the turn of the opportunistic, parliamentary twist that has been incorporated into it, contains a grave danger for tomorrow. The Centrist bureaucracy, which swings between ultra-Leftism and a Right wing policy, is quite capable of dragging the promising movement into a stinking parliamentary swamp. In this respect, it has not changed fundamentally from the days when it worked in unbreakable harmony with Purcell and Chiang Kai-Shek. And that is what must be guarded against with the utmost vigilance.

Not only was the confused nature of the party's leadership of the present movement strikingly shown at the conference (opposition to "united front with leaders", but adoption of Weisbord's last motion, to give one example) but it was clear that the Stalinists have not thought out what their next step will be. To neglect this factor in any movement, is fatal. The function of a revolutionary leadership is to make a thorough analysis of the situation at hand in the light of past experiences; and on the basis of it to forecast the line of development for the next period; to think out problems and programs to the end; and to drive consciously and clearly headedly along the right course. This the party leadership has done at no stage of the struggle. It is incapable of doing it. It is the task of the Opposition to stand unbendingly by its

policy, which is verified over and over again by the events of every day, and to fight for its victory in the ranks of the Communist vanguard. The New York conference showed again that the Opposition is fulfilling its task.

—MAX SHACHTMAN.

Resolutions Presented to the N. Y. Conference

(Continued from page 1)

(Introduced at the Unemployment Conference by the delegation of the Communist League of America (Left Opposition).)

This Conference for the Unemployed recognizes that although a base has been laid for a broad workers' movement, the representation at this Conference is insufficient for a really effective campaign for our demands. It is necessary that a united front movement on the broadest basis for the unemployed be developed. Such a United Front movement must include representatives from all working class organizations—trade unions, fraternal bodies, political parties and groups.

Therefore, this Conference goes on record to issue a call for a second Conference within two weeks time. To this conference all working class bodies—central bodies as well as, local and branch organizations—shall be invited to participate in a movement on the basis of a minimum program of concrete demands. The respective central organizations of the Communist party, the A. F. of L., the Socialist party and independent trade unions shall be directly invited to participate. At this conference all representatives shall as a matter of course have the right to maintain their own particular views, but shall be under the obligation to engage in a common struggle for the adopted program.

In accord with the foregoing, a standing committee shall be elected with the following instructions:

1. To issue a call immediately for the Second Conference inviting all working class organizations to participate.
2. To organize the sending of speakers to the various organizations to urge the acceptance of the invitation and explain the aims of the movement.
3. To issue a minimum of 50,000 leaflets to popularize the conference and its projected program.
4. To call upon each organization represented to hold a public meeting in support of the conference under its own auspices.
5. To organize a joint mass meeting of all organizations participating in the conference with representative speakers from each tendency.

RESOLUTION ON PROGRAM AND TACTICS

(Introduced at the Unemployment Conference by the delegation of the Communist League of America (Left Opposition).)

We must aim to develop this conference into a broad movement of the working class against the menace of unemployment and against its breeder, capitalist society. In such a movement the working class can be united more closely and militantly in common struggle.

The call for the present conference proposes a statewide conference to map out a legislative program in defense of the interests of the unemployed and working class. This proposal is acceptable but in order to obtain the objects of this Conference, in part or while, the program must be widened.

Therefore, this Conference shall go on record as favoring the following program of immediate demands:

1. Immediate Relief.
2. Unemployment Insurance, to be paid for by the Employers and the State Government.
3. For the 6 hour day and 5 day week with no reduction in pay.
4. For trade relations with, and the extension of credits to the Soviet Union, as a means of unemployment relief for American workers and for drawing the American and Russian workers into a closer fraternal bond.
5. Recognition of the Soviet Union by the United States Government.

This Conference recognizes also the need to develop the struggle for its program beyond a merely legislative and parliamentary program. It is incumbent

INTERNATIONAL WORKERS SCHOOL NOTES

At the conclusion of his course in the History of the Third International comrade Shachtman will begin one in the Principles of the Left Opposition. Comrades interested in following the course from out of town should get in touch with comrade Weber, the administrator who will supply outlines and a list of reference works.

Such a syllabus on the Fundamentals of Communism drawn up by comrade Oehler is available.

The class in Elementary Communism by comrade Abern is proceeding smoothly.

Pioneer Publishers will supply all the literature required by the courses of the International Workers School.

The Case of Chas. Yale Harrison

We have received a copy of the statement sent out by Mr. Charles Yale Harrison, the author, announcing his resignation from the editorial board of the *New Masses* in protest against the treatment accorded to comrade Trotsky's daughter, Zinaide, which led to her suicide. The malicious attempt of the *Daily Worker* to link Mr. Harrison with the Left Opposition makes it necessary for us to state that there is not the slightest connection between the two. Moreover, the whole tone and content of Mr. Harrison's statement reveals so clearly the unbridgeable chasm between him and the revolutionary Left Opposition that only the hirelings of the *Daily Worker's* staff could impute to us any association with the author in question. That reactionaries or petty bourgeois "sympathizers" with the movement have taken advantage, from time to time, of the disputes within the proletarian movement to air their own particular prejudices or anti-working class views, is all too well known. In the present instance, the revolting persecution of our deceased comrade Zinaide, purely in the interests of Stalin's thirst for personal vengeance upon Trotsky, brought upon the bureaucratic regime the flaming protests of proletarian revolutionists. The bureaucracy was also laid open to hypocritical chidings from the enemy camp, especially from the bourgeois press, which shed some crocodile tears in the hope that they would wipe out the fact that every single day the bourgeoisie of the capitalist world adds new murders of working class fighters to its bloody record.

The Left Opposition, and the revolutionary workers it continues to draw to its banner, will settle accounts with the rude and disloyal bureaucracy, stamped with the brand of Cain, without any of the unskilled assistance of elements alien to the genuine proletarian movement.

therefore to build a broad united front movement of all working class and political organizations for mass struggles for the conference's aims through demonstrations and activity in all workers' organization for the unity of the employed and the organized and unorganized. The utmost mass pressure must be exerted upon the capitalist class and its agents to obtain our demands.

The Conference resolves further to work for the mobilization of all working class organizations for the attainment of its program in the swiftest possible time.

Cannon's Speech

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stitutions and leadership until they are ready, or nearly ready to break with the central organization. Do we act otherwise? And cannot we find our way to the reformist workers more effectively if we attribute to them something of the same sense of organizational loyalty that we ourselves manifest?

In the resolutions of the Communist Left Opposition which I have introduced here, there is a proposal to call a second conference within two weeks and to invite to this conference not only the locals and branches of the A. F. of L., the Socialist party, the Workmen's Circles and similar organizations but also their respective central bodies. I will be answered to the effect that the leaders of these organizations obstruct and sabotage the movement and do not want to engage in any real struggle with the employers and the state. We are quite convinced that this is true. But the A. F. of L. and Socialist party workers are by no means convinced and will not be convinced merely by our denunciations.

The way to convince them is to put their leaders to the test in action. That is the meaning of our proposal to invite also the leaders to join in the common struggle. It puts the conscientious workers in these organizations—those who really want to fight—in a position to demand of their leaders that they translate their words into deeds without in any way, at the beginning, involving a break with their organization. It puts them in a position to bring pressure on their leaders by normal organization means, to force some of them, if only for a short time, to participate in the united movement and to convince themselves by this test, by this experience that their leaders have been deceiving them with phrases.

Only in this way, in this process can we separate the masses of the conscientious workers in the reformist organizations from their treacherous leaders and draw them into a common struggle without those leaders and against them. This is not a new revelation of the Left Opposition. This, comrades and fellow-workers, is the A. B. C. of the united front tactic of Lenin.

This is the way we must move. This is the way the movement is tending under the enormous pressure of conditions on the one side, and the bankruptcy of all other tactics on the other. The united front tactic as we have laid it down in our resolution is a means for the mobilization of a genuine workers' mass movement for the struggle against the class enemy. It is, at the same time, a means for the separation of the reformist workers from the influence of their treacherous, phrase-mongering leaders.

The tactic that has been employed up till now, despite all the good intention, has served opposite ends. Here in the fourth year of the crisis the capitalists remain secure and arrogant. The reformist and reactionary labor bureaucracy in the political as well as in the trade union field remains unshaken in its position. The vanguard workers' movement remains comparatively weak, isolated and ineffective. All the objective conditions point to a difference state of affairs. The fearful mass misery, the appalling hunger, destitution and discontent of the millions is a powerful force to change the whole situation in a comparatively short time. It is to aid this process that the Left Opposition has come to this conference and submitted its resolutions for your consideration.

STRIKE WHILE THE IRON IS HOT!

Because the *Militant* goes to press before correspondence from the middle and far west, on the basis of the previous issue, has time to reach us, we are unable, at this writing, to gauge the response to our appeal for funds to print comrade Trotsky's speech, "The Defense of the October Revolution", as a pamphlet.

Of one thing we are sure. That is, that if the speech meets with the same reception outside of New York—as it did here—as it is sure to do—it will be hailed as a political weapon of tremendous importance for our movement. Once more we want to emphasize the absolutely burning importance of bringing it out as a pamphlet in the shortest possible time. Fully half a hundred comrades and friends here have been struck with the same idea independently of one another.

There must be hundreds more. While their enthusiasm is at white heat, while the greatness and beauty of the speech are still upon them—let us strike! Devoted comrades and sincere sympathizers need no exhortations to lubricate the revolutionary movement with funds. They will know how to act in the present situation. But out on the periphery of the movement there are people who must be moved by some unusual event or writing. This speech is such an exceptional event. The impulse to acquaint friends and fellow-workers with

Japan

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Japanese history embodies a great lore of bloody deeds of vengeance. When feudal society was dissolved by decree, there remained a class of "masterless men", the former samurai whose only occupation had been the wielding of the sword in the services of some lord. These ronin form the hirelings of the reactionaries in politics to convey and carry out threats against political opponents. Assassinations by these feudal mercenaries are of frequent occurrence.

In the split that followed the debacle of the all-embracing farmer-labor mass party, three parties gradually crystallized out, each one supported by a split-off section of the trade unions. The writer has been unable to obtain sufficient data as to the precise activities of the Communists in the various splits so that he can merely enumerate the parties and their strength. The Japanese General Federation of Labor supports the Shakai Minshuto (Right wing social democratic party) which obtained 165,000 votes and 4 seats in the 1928 elections. The Nihon Ronoto—Japanese Labor-Farmer Party was organized by the centrists of the General Federation of Japanese Labor and Farmers. It captured 2 seats with 96,000 votes in 1928. The Left wing organized the Rodo Nominato which obtained no seats despite its 85,000 votes. The centrists and Left wing parties were both dissolved by the government as being dangerous. However, the party reorganized, the Lefts forming the Shin Ronoto (Labor Farmer Party) in 1929. The centrists formed the Nihon Taishuto or Japan Mass Party. In the 1930 elections the combined vote of the parties was over half a million.

From the attacks made by Japanese Communists at the present time on the "social fascists" of the other worker parties, it is clear that the Japanese Communists have followed blindly the Stalinist zig-zag tactics, tactics that have resulted in this crucial moment in the history of the working class of the world, in causing loss of confidence in the vanguard by the Japanese masses. Although we cannot accept without question the opinion of so confirmed an enemy of the Communists as Matsuoka of the Japanese General Federation of Labor, yet there is a sufficient element of truth in his remark, made in 1929: "The Communist movement is getting more and more idealized and formalized. In other words the movement has become one of students or young men and women; it is diverging increasingly from the practical fighting line, so that it is coming more and more under the surveillance of the Minister of Education than that of the Home Minister. Their sphere of action is passing from the factories, mines and agrarian villages to the schools and colleges."

Nazis Provoke CPG

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"dress rehearsal" by this means to bolster his regime; this was the game of Von Schleicher and Hitler.

To accomplish this, Hitler moved up to the firing line. The time is not ripe for his special services of unrestrained murder and pillage of the working class organizations. But it may be soon in the calculations of the world bourgeoisie. The working class throughout the world must be on guard, alert.

Some shifts are taking place in the world situation but the key is still in Germany. Some shifts have taken place in the German situation but the slower tempo has not altered the basic issue. It is still: Communism or Fascism. The workers must tell Von Schleicher and the bourgeoisie that the alternative to Bonapartism is not Fascism but that the solution to the problem is the proletarian revolution. Everywhere the workers, and particularly the Communist vanguard must raise their voices with the Left Opposition to demand that the C. I. and the German party throw overboard the ruinous theory of social-Fascism and adopt the Leninist united front to unite the German working class around the banner of Communism for the proletarian revolution. —T. STAMM.

Unemployed & Barter Exchange

Petty Bourgeois «Solution» Reflects Pressure of the Crisis

The capitalist press has now picked up the "Self-Help" and "Barter Exchange" movements as remedies to solve the problem of the breakdown of capitalist production. Every new theory and new movement which claims to alleviate the desperate situation within the confines of capitalism is grasped by the press with the eagerness of a drowning man clutching a straw. This is the case with the widespread national movement of barter exchange.

Large sections of the middle class are participating in the movement. Exchange organizations have been set up by business interests in order to put their frozen assets into circulation. Otherwise these small business enterprises will fall into bankruptcy and thence the hands of the local bankers. The small business interests, taking the initiative in this field, hope to keep up a semblance of profit and prevent big business from taking its toll on the wave of the crisis. These movements first obtained a foothold in the West. Now they have been extended, in one form or another, to all parts of the country, drawing in large sections of the urban middle class, farmers and unemployed workers.

Whole layers of the working class have been drawn into the barter exchange movement. These unemployed workers, pressed between unemployment and starvation on the one hand and inadequate and, often, no relief on the other, have turned to the barter and self-help movements in an attempt to cheat hunger and starvation—until better times.

The barter exchange movement finds a working basis for the exchange of manufactured and farm products for the idle labor power of the workers. These movements take on varied forms, depending upon the initiative of local industries and organizations. The organizations vary from the business men's "cooperatives" to the cooperatives of the workers, with hybrids and temporary class collaboration plans in between. The business men's associations which have drawn in the workers as an auxiliary have by far been the most successful.

A Note On Max Eastman

To the Editorial Board of the *Militant*:

Dear Comrades:

Recently I have repeatedly had opportunity to convince myself of the fact that Max Eastman is carrying on a systematic fight against materialist dialectics, the philosophical foundation of Marxism and scientific Communism. In its content and its theoretical tendency this fight does not differ in any way from the other varieties of petty bourgeois revisionism, beginning with Bernsteinism (in its philosophical-theoretical parts). If Eastman while so doing keeps his warm sympathy for the October revolution and even for the Left Opposition this crying illogicality is subjectively honourable for him but does not raise by one iota the value of his criticism of Marxism.

I could have left the Croton variety of revisionism silently to its proper destiny, if I had not been bound for a long time to Eastman himself by personal and literary ties. Eastman recently translated three volumes of my *History of the Revolution* into the English language. As is generally acknowledged, he has carried out this great work in an excellent manner. I have expressed to him my sincere thankfulness for this, and am prepared to repeat it here. But as soon as Eastman attempts to translate Marxist dialectics into the language of vulgar empiricism, his work provokes in me a feeling which is the direct opposite of thankfulness. For the purpose of avoiding all doubts and misunderstandings I consider it my duty to bring this to the knowledge of everybody. With Communist greetings, L. TROTSKY.

Under the guiding hand of the business men's barter exchange associations, labor power takes on a form of charity.

The exploitation of labor power is still further disguised behind the "brotherhood of men", "self-help" and "charity". It becomes a substitute for social and unemployment insurance paid by the capitalists and their state. It "replaces" the class struggle; or, rather, becomes an inverted expression of the class struggle. This kind of charity is only given for a certain amount of labor power. The workers exchange their labor power at a discount for food and supplies. If this can be extended the local charity drive and the agitation for social insurance can be held in reserve—until the class pressure forces action.

These barter exchange organizations usually function on the basis of negotiable credit certificates or script. The smaller associations function on a pure barter base. The whole barter exchange movement, regardless of which way it leans—in the direction of the workers or the capitalists—is the result of the breakdown of commodity production and distribution under capitalism. It is a return to more elementary forms of exchange. This is no sense denotes a step forward. Socialism, not barter exchange, is the solution for the breakdown of capitalism. Barter exchange in a crisis, under the domination of the business interests, is not a step toward socialism. It is a class collaboration move to prevent the free play of the class struggle development of the working class. The barter exchange movement is an attempt to bridge through the crisis until normal exchange, which rests upon the capitalist mode of production, is re-established.

The barter exchange and self-help movement has more than one side for the workers too. Dominated by the business interests, the movement becomes a powerful lever of class collaboration. Where the self-help movement becomes a workers cooperative movement, subordinated to the interest and aims of the class and the party, it can be useful to the workers as an auxiliary movement. It cannot substitute for the class struggle. It cannot replace the struggle of the employed and unemployed for demands against the capitalists and their government, such as immediate relief, social and unemployment insurance, the six hour day and five day week with no reduction in pay; in short, it cannot replace the class struggle.

The workers who raise the slogan of "workers' control" in relation to the barter exchange and self-help movement are suffering from the worst kind of ultra-Left sickness. Opportunist class collaboration ideas and ultra-Left slogans go hand in hand. The slogans of workers' control are slogans for a period of the class struggle that we have not yet reached in America. When the class struggle reaches this stage, to delay issuing these slogans will be suicidal. In the dual power stage, when the working class and its organizations become the kernel and the capitalist class and its governmental and industrial administration becomes the shell, then the time is ripe. In the meantime, a revolutionary, international program with proper tactics in the day-to-day struggles of the workers is the order of the day.

—HUGO OEHLER.

Resolution on Weisbord

The following resolution was adopted by the N. Y. Branch:

The N. Y. branch of the Communist League of America endorses the position taken by the NEC in its negotiations with the C. L. of Struggle. We view as entirely correct the present suspension of the negotiations on the following grounds:

1. Every opportunity was afforded to comrade Weisbord, as spokesman for the C. L. of Struggle to clarify his position in relation to the Left Opposition. The NEC posed correctly, after the initial blunders of comrade Weisbord, the minimal, principle requirements set by the League for the fusion of the two organizations. The columns of the *Militant* were open for the free expression of comrade Weisbord's views on these requirements. Comrade Weisbord failed to meet the requirements.
2. The NEC in all its negotiations with comrade Weisbord showed clearly its desire to leave the road open for the entrance of the Communist League of Struggle into our organization. Comrade Weisbord, on the contrary, has yet to show that he seriously wishes to fuse with the League. Even aside from basic principle difference which remain unliquidated, notably those involving the relations within the Communist movements, of its three groupings—the question of centrism—the entire approach of comrade Weisbord was based on a false policy of maneuvering, on attacks on the NEC rather than a serious approach to the International Left Opposition, on the holding of public meetings for the specific purpose of appealing to the membership (united front from below) over the heads of our leadership.
3. We emphatically state that comrade Weisbord has placed obstacles in the way of fusion with our organization. If comrade Weisbord and his group still desire to make it possible for them to become an organic part of the C. L. of A. and the I. L. O. they must be guided genuinely by the proposals made them by the NEC.

Pioneer Publishing Fund

It must be well-nigh irresistible. For this purpose everyone will be willing to donate something. It cannot be otherwise.

Not very much is needed. Only ninety dollars. Here in New York we have already raised six and a half, four and a half through the efforts of comrade Finkel, one dollar from comrade Vomvas in Pittsburgh and one from a party member in New York. That is only a small beginning. Let us go to work!

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It opens up new propaganda fields for us. Who is not interested in the question? And what worker is not looking for a clear Marxist statement on it? We must strive to put copies into the hands of thousands of workers. The carefully and painfully built-up prestige of the Left Opposition will not be the least advantage to us in presenting our position on unemployment to the class. The weapon is forged. Let us wield it.

A REMINDER

Just a short note to remind our comrades and readers that we still have the following on hand and get in more from time to time: *Revolutionary Lessons by Lenin*; *Whither England by Trotsky*; *Value, Price and Profit*; *Wage Labor and Capital*; *the Communist Manifesto*; and other Marxist classics. If you want any of these speak up.