

National Mooney Meet Prepares Broad Fight

Congress Elects National Council of Action; Left Opposition Among Many Groups Represented

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the Left Opp. Comrade Cannon declared: The Opposition does not consider the present congress as the culmination of the movement to free Tom Mooney, but rather as the beginning of the struggle, the basis upon which to broaden the entire movement. He proposed to begin a new series of local and district united front conferences mobilizing ever-broader sections of the working class, drawing in new forces into the united front, and preparing for a national and international Mooney Day. All this work, Cannon stated, must lead to the organization of another national congress with a goal of at least 10,000 delegates. "The policy for all this work," said Cannon, "which shall govern the activity of the leading committee on a national scale and all the local organizations is the policy of the united front of workers' organizations." He closed with the declaration that the Left Opposition would present motions on program and policy and along this line to the resolution committee. It was only following the speech of comrade Cannon that efforts were made by other speakers to touch upon the subject of policy and program.

With the first session drawing to a close, Muste in reporting for the presiding committee made the preposterous proposal to conclude the congress on the afternoon of the second day in order to bring the congress to a fitting climax with the Mooney Mass Meeting scheduled for six o'clock in the evening, at the Chicago Stadium. This proposal took the congress by surprise. The congress had no sooner settled down when this proposal for adjournment was made. Herbert Zam, the delegate of the Communist Party (Opposition) rose immediately on the floor to object to the proposal of the presiding committee. He was followed by a representative of the Proletarian party. An obvious confusion existed among all delegates, who found it difficult to understand the nature of this proposal. In speaking of this proposal, comrade Grotzer stated for the Left Opposition, that the most important task of the congress, policy and program, was still to be reported upon and discussed. He pointed out that until then the congress had merely reviewed the Mooney case; but it had not even elected a resolutions committee (scheduled for the next day) nor begun the decisive work for which the congress was called. Considerations of a financial character or the desire to bring the congress to a fitting climax could never outweigh the importance of the deliberations of the congress itself. Throughout the hall delegates rose in objection to the proposal of the committee. A motion was made to table the proposal until the following day. In observation of the mood of the delegates, the presiding committee accepted this substitute.

Election of Resolutions Committee

The second day of the congress opened with Wm. Leader in the chair. Discussion continued on the report of comrade Minor, while awaiting the proposal of the presiding committee for the Resolutions Committee. This committee was the most important of the congress. It

had to take up the question of policy and program and report back to the congress floor. The committee was composed of delegates from the Proletarian party, the YPSL, the YCL, the TUUL, the Communist party, other Mooney local conferences, and the Left Opposition (comrade Cannon.) The selection of comrade Cannon was more the result of pressure by certain delegations, rather than by the presiding committee in which the party had the majority. The proposal to add Zam to this committee, to represent the Right Opposition was defeated by the overwhelming Party vote. At the conclusion of this point, the resolutions committee went into session and the discussion of Minor's report continued.

Before the closing of the second day of the congress, it was decided to continue the congress on the third day as originally scheduled. The proposal was made the night before for adjournment, stood out even more ridiculous, on the second day, when it became clear that even after the second day, the congress had not yet concerned itself with the question of policy and program, or with a report of the resolutions committee.

In behalf of the presiding Committee, Bill Gebert proposed to adjourn the congress in time to permit the delegates to attend the May Day demonstrations held by both the socialist party and the May Day United Front Committee (Left wing.) This proposal was unanimously accepted by the congress. All delegates were to be present at the Mooney Mass meeting in the evening.

The Third Day of the Congress

The congress reconvened on May 2nd, at the Masonic Auditorium, with Joe Weber, of the TUUL, acting as chairman. The resolutions committee which could not conclude its work remained in session while the congress continued the original discussion on the report of Minor. During this discussion comrade Albin Goldman, the Chicago Attorney for the International Labor Defense took the floor. He made two criticisms of the congress which were by and large correct. Goldman stated that in calling this congress the policy of the Molders Committee should have been directed to the organization of a joint arrangements committee representative of the socialist party, the A. F. of L., the Communist party, the TUUL, etc. Such a committee should have then called the conference into existence. While this policy was finally adopted, Goldman declared that it was adopted somewhat too late to be of real effectiveness.

His second criticism was on the manner in which the congress was conducted; referring to the abnormally long discussion of a purely agitational character and the failure of the congress to spend the major part of its time on the question of policy and program.

Scott rose to answer Goldman, but his reply did not meet the criticisms made. During the course of his answer Scott made clear to the delegates that he was not a member of the Communist Party nor the International Labor Defense. Among the following speakers

were Gebert and Zam. In the course of his speech Gebert again raised the question of the united front from below. In this he only repeated the remarks of Amter, who had stressed sharply this same policy before. Zam declared his opposition to linking the general struggle for workers' rights, or the Scottsboro case, with the fight for the release of Tom Mooney. Speaking in the name of the Communist party (Opposition) he informed the congress that it was their policy that the congress and its policy confine itself exclusively with the issue of Tom Mooney, without raising the other questions of workers' rights.

The Reports of the Resolutions Committee

Discussion on the report of Minor closed with the arrival of the resolutions committee, which remained in session during the first part of the last day of the congress. C. A. Hathaway reported for the resolutions committee. On a number of minor resolutions there was agreement, but in discussions of the main resolution different points of view were presented. He said that resolutions presented by the Lovestonites and the Left Opposition were tabled. Differences existed on the main resolution over one particular point upon which there will be a minority report by comrade Cannon. The I. W. W. presented separate resolutions favoring a boycott of California products and the calling of a general strike in the event that Mooney is not freed or continues to remain in prison. The resolutions committee while not opposing these resolutions in principle proposed their non-adoption by the congress, because of their inapplicability at the present stage of development of the workers' movement in this country.

Sidelights of the Struggle on the Convention Floor

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both the Lovestonite and Stalinist positions. We were opposed to the Stalinist attempt to turn the Mooney Committee into a Mooney-Scottsboro Committee, but we were equally opposed to the Lovestonite right wing attempt to separate the Mooney case from the Scottsboro case and other class struggle issues. Both the centrists and the Right wing confuse the question of organizational and propaganda relations, as well as the relations between different issues of the class struggle.

The final draft of the resolution had some bad points on this question and some wrong formulations, such as: "The unity of the workers and Negro people". In the main, however, it was correct, and we found common ground on which to vote with the Stalinists.

The C. I. May Day Bombshell

After the Resolutions Committee had adopted a very good and correct formula on the united front with the exception of the sentence dealing with "no attacks" the Stalinist steering committee, Amter, etc., discovered, through our information that the *Daily Worker* that had arrive in the morning of this session carried a manifesto from the C. I. on May Day that again returned to the united front from below. It was a wrong position and a return to the old formula. At least one thing was clear, that the C. I. formula and the formula adopted at the Mooney Congress were two different positions. Which one will the Stalinists try to live up to? This is their contradiction.

The Left Opposition differed with

Speaking for the Left Opposition, Cannon declared that aside from one clause, he supported the resolution which was in general correct. The amendment made by Cannon read as follows: "Each organization entering the united front obligates itself to discipline in action but retains its full independence and its right to criticism." This clause would permit of no misunderstandings by anyone participating in the united front. It is the only correct basis upon which the united front can be organized. To do otherwise is to tie the hands of the revolutionary elements, which could react favorably only to the reformists.

Toward the close of his minority report, comrade Cannon read from the *Daily Worker* of April 30, the declaration of the Communist International, revising again its position on the united front and calling for the resumption of the tactic of the "united front from below." As a parting question Cannon asked whether this meant that the Party would now change its position again and revert to its old policy. This change of line by the C. I. caught the Party unawares and in replying to a similar question put by comrade Gerry Allard, Hathaway replied that this did not mean a revision of the line, but applied only to the May Day demonstrations.

The conference adjourned to move to the People's Auditorium for the final session of the congress. Discussion followed upon reconvening. Regier Baldwin before leaving the congress made a statement in complete support of the majority of the resolutions committee. A similar declaration was made by Sol

Larks, recently expelled from the YPSL, because of his struggle in support of the Mooney Congress and the united front. Larks is one of the leaders of the left wing in the YPSL, and the socialist party. He supported the position of the majority on the non-aggression clause because in his opinion it would make possible further proposals for united front action to the socialists. Williamson speaking for the Party, made a vicious attack upon Goldman, Zam and Cannon. Coming when it did, the speech mocked the whole effort of the party to force through the non-aggression pact.

Grotzer Replies to the Critics of the Minority Report

Comrade Grotzer was given the floor in defense of the minority report. He declared that the main tactic of this congress should be the extension of the united front policy. The correct utilization of the united front tactic would make possible the increase of pressure upon the reformists. Only by such pressure will it be possible to force the leaders of the A. F. of L. and the socialist party into united front action. To expect this in any other way, for example, by a non-aggression pact, was a mere illusion. Paul Mattick, representative for United Workers Party, spoke again against the non-aggression pact and called for rank and file control of the united front. He declared himself against the resolutions on boycott and united front. He was followed by Hansen, a member of the IWW, who spoke in favor of the resolutions on boycott and general strike.

A motion was introduced to close the discussion. In view of the fact that many speakers had not yet had the opportunity to present their positions on the floor, protests came from all parts of the hall. Zam particularly protested this action. He pointed out that he made an amendment to the resolution; that the amendment had not been presented to the congress and that no one had had an opportunity to speak for it on the floor. A period of medium seized hold of the conference. During the confusion the motion carried and Hathaway proceeded to sum up his report and the discussion. During his summary speech, Zam again demanded to be given the floor to present his amendment and defend his position. At this point, Hathaway made the motion to give Zam five minutes to present his motion and to speak in defense of it. The motion carried.

The essence of the amendment by Zam, was designed to confine the Congress to the one issue of Tom Mooney and to leave the general question of the struggle for workers' rights out of the main resolution. In continuing his summary Hathaway attempted to cover the struggle of the Left Opposition for correct policy by asserting that the Left Opposition was only interested in presenting its political program at the congress. This remark made little or no impression—it was an attempt to declare the position of the party against the Left Opposition.

Voting on the Resolutions

An endeavor was made to vote

Highlight of Meet -- Clash Between Stalinists and L.O. on 'Non-Aggression' Clause of Main Resolution

on the main resolution first thus making it unnecessary to vote on the various amendments proposed. Such a motion was carried. Here, comrade Cannon took the floor to object to the procedure and proposed voting first of all upon the various amendments and then in the main resolution. In making his statement comrade Cannon declared that the delegation of the Left Opposition in voting for its own amendment (see above) would at the same time vote for the general resolution, excluding that section containing the non-aggression clause. This proposal was carried and the voting proceeded on the different amendments.

The amendment proposed by the Left Opposition received 63 votes. This was the largest minority vote in the congress. It showed too, that next to the party, the Left Opposition was the strongest political factor in the congress. The boycott resolution of the I. W. W. received 27 votes, and their general strike resolution 57 votes. The amendment proposed by Zam got 51 votes. Thus, the overwhelming majority of delegates voted in favor of the general resolution.

The final report of the congress was the election of a permanent committee. The Presiding Committee proposed a committee of 43. The name of the committee was adopted as the: National Mooney Council of Action. Additional nominations were made to this Committee. Among those nominated was Zam. When the motion was made to elect the original 43, comrade Cannon in the name of the Left Opposition proposed voting individually on the additional nominations, because the Left Opposition was in favor of a representative of the Communist Party (Opposition) since they represented a definite current in the working class movement, had their own press and organization. In addition, it was made clear that neither the party nor the Left Opposition could represent their point of view.

This proposal was defeated and the project of the presiding committee carried by an overwhelming vote. The motion that of the permanent committee, those residing in New York City, shall compose the working committee, and that New York should be the central headquarters also carried. In addition, the presiding committee proposed that the secretary of the committee should be C. A. Hathaway. The last proposal carried without any objections. Among those on the National Mooney Council of Action are: A. Renner, Proletarian party; George Smirkin, YPSL; J. P. Cannon, Communist League of America (Left Opposition); Van Gilder, socialist party; R. M. Lovett, I.I.D.; Selena Burrell, Women's Auxiliary of the P.M.A.; Pat Anshoury, Progressive Miners of America; L. Scott, Molders Defense Committee, Chas. Bloom, A.F. of L.; Emil Arnold, A. F. of L.; M. Olay, Anarchist; Robert Minor, C. P.; Wm. Patterson, J. L. D.; C. A. Hathaway, C. P.; J. Muste, C.P.L.A.; I. Amter, Unemployed Councils, J. B. Mathews, Socialist Party, Joe Weber, TUUL, and Alec Frazer of the Progressive Miners of America.

Albert Grotzer

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Prospects of Development of the Progressive Miners

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Months on strike or unemployed, increased relief means strength to the Progressive Miners in their struggle against the Peabody forces. Governor Horner knew this and acted accordingly. The Right wing, the Musteties and the Right wing Socialists opposed the Hunger March from within, sabotaged it, fought against it, and in some cities the Right wing even allied members of the Progressive Miners to be deputized to beat down the Hunger Marchers.

The struggle of the Progressive Miners for victory over the Peabody forces cannot be separated from the struggle of the unemployed workers, through mass pressure, for more relief. The Right wing element in the Progressive Miners Union have not only allowed this important weapon to lie idle and rust but have attempted to prevent the Left wing element from utilizing it in the struggle against the Operators. Has the Union officially taken one step in the direction of organizing the unemployed coal miners? No. Strike relief is the nearest they came to it, but that alone misses the mark entirely. The Progressive Miners Union must take up the activity for the unemployed miners inside and outside of the union. The Left wing must lead in this fight.

Red Baiting Campaign

Right on the heels of smashing the State Hunger March, the Peabody forces followed up in the southern area by killing two Progressive Miners, arresting scores of others and terrorizing the Progressive Miners in their base of operation just outside of Franklin County. This in turn was followed up in quick order by an attack upon the Left wing forces of the Progressive Miners Union by a charge of Communism and through a red baiting campaign.

The aim of the Peabody forces was to divide the union forces, force the Right wing into retreat, and the left wing, under cover, they wanted the Right wing in the union to make a drive against the Communists and other Left wing elements and thereby, to further weaken the union—in order

The Tendencies in the Union and the Tasks Facing It

to facilitate a finishing blow in the Fall of the year. They did not succeed entirely in the last move, that of red baiting. However, the Left wing position was weakened because all those forces, with few exceptions, who were under attack, wasted their time trying to prove that they were not Reds, instead of pointing out the real aim of the bosses "red drive." The guns cannot be aimed at the Communists as Peabody desires if the union is to live; the guns must be aimed at the Peabody forces and expose the "Red drive" for what it is worth. To be called a Communist when one is only a left wing is an honor. For a Communist to deny being one in the Progressive Miners of America is a first rate mistake.

The Situation in Franklin County

We have already dealt in previous articles with the two year contract; the legalistic attitude of the leadership on the frame-up cases; and the factions in the Gillespie conference. More light can be thrown on this question, if we consider the two year contract in relation to the Franklin County strike. The situation in Franklin County was ripe for the strike weeks before the men were pulled out. The leadership held back, would hear nothing of it—until the Monday following the signing of the two year contract and then they were all for it. Did you ever hear of any worse strike strategy, or rather any better class collaboration "strike" strategy, than to sign a contract with a section of the most pull operators on Saturday and then to pull out the most strategic county in the state the following Monday? Even some of the Musteties in the field could not swallow this "strategy."

The Musteties play an odd role in the Progressive Miners of America. Most of their return students make good watchdogs against Communism in general. Tom Tippet is conducting classes in Economics and other subjects for the union. His first outline on Economics dealing with wages is as far from Marxism as

Marxian Economics is from bourgeois Economics. He will succeed in sowing confusion and will help strengthen the Right wing elements or its "Left" cover within the Progressive Miners Union.

The Stalinist faction and their policies and blunders have been dealt with many times in the columns of the *Militant*, so we will only take up a couple of important aspects of the situation. The outstanding factor to consider when one speaks of Stalinism as the official representative of Communism in the Illinois coal fields is the fact that the "vanguard" has control of the majority of the unemployed councils and the progressive forces have control of the trade union and the strikes throughout the coal fields. This contradiction cannot be explained away with a jumble of words. It flows from the wrong international approach. The same contradiction was seen in Germany on an enlarged scale where the Communist party had "control of the unemployed" and the "social democrats were strong in the trade union field.

The greatest contradiction of the Left Opposition is the gulf between its trade union policy, which has been proven correct in the struggle of the Progressive Miners of America, and its lack of material forces. Due to this, the main line of march of our trade union policy is often blurred by the tactical shifts along this line and by mistakes of a member or two.

Tasks for Next Period

A fight against the Right wing class collaboration policy must be launched all along, up and down the line, in the Progressive Miners of America, if the union is to be strengthened in the coming period if it is to be in a position to fight the Peabody forces. The red baiting campaign in the union must stop and the Communists must have the rights of minority expression as well as members of any other political party. The Left wing forces must formulate a minimum program around which to unite. These steps must be taken at once in every mine town, in every local of the P. M. A. If we are to defeat the Peabody,

The 30 Hour Bill: Stagger System and Wage Cuts

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Representative Conroy asserted that unless the bill carried an amendment barring imports manufactured by industries operating on more than the thirty hours a week it would not carry. In this he was supported by those industries which are competing in the domestic market with the product of industries abroad. The administration is opposed to this provision. It contradicts all the presidential blarney about trade agreements and freely flowing international exchange (Ramsay Mac Donald).

William Green appeared before the House Labor Committee and opposed the minimum wage provision. Later he appeared again and urged the passage of the bill as it stands. The *New York World-Telegram* of May 1 reports that "Eastern representatives of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Engineers are in favor of the principle of the six-hour day for railroad employees—with no reduction in pay. A resolution endorsing it is sent to President Roosevelt, Secretary of Labor Perkins, and chairmen of interested congressional committees."

Under the accumulating pressure the administration retreated. Senator Robinson, the administration's "whip," announced that the bill is "not now in the picture." The bill will probably die in committee.

In the period when this bill which so vitally affects the working class was in the process of becoming legislation, the official Communist party, caught unawares, did not lift a finger to rally the masses against its inimical provisions. The TUUL, to be sure, sent a representative to the Senate Judiciary Committee to put forward its view. That is one thing. Another is to organize a movement behind this delegation to give its view a force.

Why did the party stand by with folded hands? Why did it allow the initiative in opposing the bill to fall in the hands of Green and others?

A Quick Turn in Policy on Part of the Stalinists

seven hour day without reduction in pay. It has never explained why. At the meeting of the Resolutions Committee, in the N. Y. May Day conference, in voting down our proposal for the inclusion of the six-hour day slogan in the May Day Resolution, Winter explained that the A. F. of L. stood for the six-hour day and that the C. P. had to "distinguish itself from the demagogic A. F. of L. fakery!"

When the capitalists themselves proposed the six-hour day and the five-day, week they inadvertently exposed the bankruptcy of the party's position on the question. The Black Bill made it impossible for the party to advance the seven hour day any longer. And, as a matter of fact, the party press is now free of it.

Instead of typical bureaucratic cowardliness the Stalinists have changed the slogan without saying so, and without explanation to the party membership and the working class.

And to what have they changed the slogan? On April 8 the *Daily Worker* said that to the capitalist wage cutting bill we must oppose the slogan of a shorter work day without reduction in pay. This formulation is broad enough to include the I. W. W. slogan of the four hour day without reduction in pay. And it can also include the position of the A. F. of L. demagogic fakery for the six hour day, from whom, said Winter, the revolutionary movement must distinguish itself by the clock!

But the Stalinists were unable to crawl out of a bad situation by the use of an ambiguous and confusion-sowing slogan. The struggle against the bill requires concrete measures and definite slogans. The *Daily Worker* of April 20 carried an article by Stachel, in which he reports that the TUUL appeared before the Senate Judiciary Committee and proposed an amendment to the Black Bill providing for the six-hour day, five-day week with no

Chaco War Formally Declared

As this issue goes to press, it is announced that the war between Paraguay and Bolivia, which has been raging for nearly two years now, has been "officially" declared. A comprehensive article dealing with the Chaco mix up will appear in the forthcoming issue.

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THE SEVEN HOUR DAY

There is a reason. The party was committed to the slogan of the

T. STAMM

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