

FROM THE MILITANTS

I. L. D. Expells Left Oppositionist

New Haven, Conn.—Again New Haven is on the map for expulsions by Stalinists of members of the Left Opposition from revolutionary organizations supposed to be free from all partisanship and based upon broad class issues. These are comrades M. Gandelman and A. ...

At the time of joining the I.L.D., Comrade Duell was known as an Oppositionist expelled from the official party and removed from her posts as secretary of the Workers International Relief and the International Working Women's Council. ...

How Trouble Started The trouble started when comrade Duell asked a few pertinent questions at a discussion period of an educational program held on March 2 last, by our I.L.D. Branch. ...

On May 14, a district Conference of Functionaries of the I.L.D. was held in New Haven. After a long report from the District Organizer of the I.L.D. and an address by the organizer of the C.P., the meeting was thrown open for discussion. ...

Cannon Meetings in Minneapolis

Minneapolis, Minn.—The situation in the Communist and labor movement is such today in Minneapolis that comrade Cannon, the National Secretary of the Left Opposition, can speak to "everybody." His last meetings here four years ago were marked by a violent physical attack by the Stalinists, a free speech meeting, and the arming of our members, etc. ...

On May 25 at a meeting of the E.C. of the branch a letter was read from J. Milton of the Workers School of New Haven by the chairman in which charges were presented against comrade Duell for so-called counter-revolutionary activities. ...

Workers and friends who read German and are interested in getting first hand accounts of conditions in Germany can do so by subscribing to Unser Wort, the illegal organ of the German Left Opposition, published in Prague. ...

The committee then retired to consult and bring in their recommendations to the members of the branch which held its meeting on the same night. There were sixteen comrades at the meeting, ten of whom were new members—some of merely a few weeks' standing. ...

On The Workers Front

Burning Problems Facing the New York Dressmakers

Throughout the entire dress trade in New York and out of town, the workers are talking strike. The question of the strike has become the central question for the dressmakers. Several years of abject misery, involving retreat from half-way colorable conditions gained by years of struggle, have brought this question to the front with piercing sharpness. ...

For the past 2 or 3 years, dress-makers in N. Y. have been working for as little as \$2 a day and with a top wage of no more than \$18 a week for the great bulk of the industry. Union hours are a thing of the distant past too. There are no union hours. The boss dictates and the workers have to acquiesce. ...

How did this dismal state of affairs come about? What are its root causes? That the depression and unemployment play their part is, of course, a foregone conclusion. But the source of the whole trouble runs much deeper than that. ...

The Division in the Ranks For nearly five years, two unions have been fighting each other fiercely, making the united action of the dressmakers in their own behalf an utter impossibility. Every serious and class conscious worker knows, to be sure, that it is the expulsion policy carried out so ruthlessly against the militant Left wing in the once united International Ladies Garment Workers Union by the reactionary, class collaborationist Sigman-Hochman-Dubinsky clique which started the split among the dressmakers and which forced the Left wing to organize itself on the outside in the Industrial Union. ...

Disunity Plays into the Hand of the Bosses This division in the camp of the dressworkers, initiated by the reformist clique and objectively abetted by the Stalinists, is what is responsible for the prostrate condition in the whole trade. The bulk of workers, grown apathetic because of the disunity, remains unorganized. The open shop prevails. More than that, the open shop is a constant source of pressure against the shops which still stand under union control. ...

The state of affairs of two unions fighting each other is, furthermore, a constant trump in the hands of the cockroach bosses whose threads are spread wide over the whole market. The contractor or jobber who is intent in fighting off the demands of the workers in his shop, has no trouble at all in playing off one union against the other to his advantage. ...

Another insufferable effect of the split is the division it has brought among the various sections of the trade. A section like the pressers, due to the chaotic conditions caused by the split, has become open prey for outright racketeers. ...

Problems That Need a Solution It is all these obstacles that have to be overcome, if the dressmakers and the other needle workers are to help themselves out of the rut. They cannot carry an such an action successfully against the boss unless there is a single, united struggle, unless the Left wing becomes the leaven of militancy in such a united struggle. ...

A strike in the dress trade can be effective only if it comes at the height of the spring season which is the busy season in the trade. To consider the possibility of a strike before next February is out of the question, if the strike is meant seriously. In order to prepare for a successful strike in February, it is absolutely imperative to do the necessary advance work. That is, it is necessary to carry on an intensive organization drive in the winter season which begins in August. ...

A Single Strike Without a Single Organization?

To talk of a single, united strike without a single, united organization drive is ridiculous. The unorganized are too apathetic to be recruited into two unions at the same time. The two organization drives will end only in confusion and wreck the preparations. If the necessary impulses toward the organization, or rather, the reorganization of the trade, is to be given, a sincere effort must be made toward the unity of the two unions, the International and the Industrial. ...

What Policies are Required to Fight the Bosses? By what policies can this be accomplished? That is the burning question for the Left wing workers. The Stalinists in the leadership of the Industrial Union, do, to be sure, speak of one strike. How do they propose to accomplish one strike? ...

The Union and Expulsions Blumberg was not a member of the union. But Begun and Burroughs and the others slated for expulsion are members of the union and of its Left wing. It is to the credit of the Left wing that it was quick to react to these expulsions. The "instant burst of clamor" that it made to throw the weight of the union into the defense movement raised the question sharply in the union itself. ...

A Policy to Fill the Need of the Moment The Communist Left Opposition (Trotskyites) long ago proposed to the Left Wing Industrial Union "to make an open proposal to the I.L.G.W.U. for the readmission of its membership in a body in the field of its jurisdiction. This proposal must demand the unity of the two organizations on the basis of no discrimination, no special conditions or restrictions imposed on the members of the Industrial Union, full rights for every member, union democracy and the right of minority political expression." ...

Left Wing Fights For the Teachers Expelled by B. of E.

The following analysis of the situation in the Teachers Union, of New York City, Local 5 of the American Federation of Teachers in the A. F. of L., embodies the ideas of a number of Progressive Group and Rank and File teachers, the two Left wing groups in the union. ...

The charges, of course, are technical and pertain to administrative matters. But they are only a convenient pretext. The B. of E. objective is revealed by its undercover campaign against all protest which it brands "red," "Communist," "radicalism," the familiar reactionary incitement of prejudice against progressive opponents. ...

The Ryan-O'Shea regime very severely timed its expulsion campaign to begin shortly before the close of the school term, calculating that the summer vacation would nip in the bud whatever protest movement the teachers would build. At the present writing the defense movement has reached considerable proportions and is still growing. ...

Such a policy, with the repetition of the stupid "Third Period" tactic of "Independent Strike Committees" and "Rank and File Leadership," no headway will be made. Whatever the motivation—let us say, the hope of the Left wing that in the course of the strike, the majority of the workers will endorse the militant policies and rally to the banner of the Industrial Union—such a policy defeats its own purpose. ...

Such a policy says to the B. of E. that it can count in advance upon the "neutrality" of the union while it "punishes" all protest against its faithful service in behalf of Wall Street-Albany economy and rearmament schemes. Such a policy places the union on the wrong side of the fence. Instead of arraying the union against the B. of E. and its banker-politician inspired economy it makes it a partner in their attacks on the teachers' salaries and conditions. ...

Such a policy will succeed only in discrediting the union in the eyes of the thinking teachers and of the labor movement generally. On the other hand, the policy of the Left Wing is a progressive one in the interests of the union and the teachers. The Left Wing must continue the fight to redress the line of the union. ...

This difference between the union administration and the Left wing is not the only one. The others also involve the fundamental questions of union policy. To understand the workers' old struggle between the administration and the Left wing it is necessary, first, to understand what sections of the teachers support them. The union administration today draws its support from the older, better-salaried and more conservative teachers. These men and women are little inclined to struggle. They look for- ...

St. Louis, Mo.—"Another week a million dollars, a million weeks a million dollars," was the rather gloomy prospect for the St. Louis nut pickers under Capitalism and wage slavery. None of them had ever read the new book at the public library, "How to Live on Nothing a Year," and Roosevelt's inflation program had swept over them like a hailstorm over a fourth of July balloon parade, leaving them flat. ...

AMONG THE YOUTH

First Hand Account of Young Nutpickers in Reforestation Swindle

Before coming to Camp Dix, I entertained no illusions about conditions here. Like so many other fellows, I "freely" chose this manner of life—the three meals and one dollar a day being the center of attraction—in preference to a more or less uncertain city life. My apprehension was amply justified. ...

I reported to the Army Building from which all fellows were sent to the camps. After a hasty examination, the batch of which I was a member, received a pep talk from the officer in charge. He drew a parasitical version of camp life, asserting it as a model place for moral and physical discipline. And in the 1920, "the cats are so swell they'll knock your eyes out." Well, it was wrong. They knocked out my stomachs out. It did not take us long to stamp him a liar. ...

Upon arriving at camp we were assigned to companies. The fellows I spoke to were pretty well disgusted. They probably expressed the mood of most of the camp—there are about fourteen thousand men here. It seems that inferior food, no female comradeship and low wages make for the main source of discontent. And to make matters worse, a robber trading post maintained by the government charges from twenty-five to fifty percent more for staple necessities. Since Uncle Sam does not supply toilet articles and the boys have no money to buy razors, towels, soap, etc., Camp Dix very much resembles the House of Davi. ...

Of course newspapers that play up the wonders of the Civilian Conservation Corps, religiously suppress news of any revolt or race riots. Some weeks back, the capitalist press reported that forty-five so-called agitators were expelled for revolting against the food. I spoke to about fifty men of the company in which the incident occurred. They—non-communists—vehemently denied that any of the expelled (they knew all) were even tinged with the palest vermillion. ...

Many fellows express their discontent by deserting. Others knowing what they are in for, penitence in the city, prefer to remain. True, the government does not force them to stay, but starvation does. They console themselves by reflecting that six months of forest work will develop their physiques. That it will, I have no doubt. What the government wants is men with strong backs and weak minds. Surely the tasteless swill that is served will not increase anyone's intelligence. The commanding officer assures the people that the "forest army" is much healthier than the men examined in the last draft. ...

Roosevelt's "New Deal" differs from Hoover's policy only to the degree of cornering some three hundred thousand young workers and forcing them to increase the wealth of the bosses. In this way the government kills two birds with one stone. It sets a new standard of wage cutting and at the same time paves the way for mass creation of constant capital that will make the present crisis look like an appetizer in face of the next and more terrible crisis. ...

The words which were deleted are given in blackface type above.

Militant St. Louis Strikers

Continuously the boss felt them out by offering them an increase which amounted to about 50 percent. They spurned it. And no wonder! The average weekly wage for the Negro girls was about \$1.50, while the white girls (due to greater skill) it was \$2.55. The boss was willing to use scabs but none applied in spite of the fact that the capitalist press maintained a cowardly silence about the true conditions as long as it could. ...

During the strike, several girl strikers were arrested, the excuse being given by the police that they were too young for the picket line. Not too young to be brutally exploited, but too young to defend their rights against the capitalist baby starvers. ...

Equal to the occasion, with their usual stupidity, the Stalinists of the FWIU immediately proposed a committee to put the case before Mayor Dickmann, hoping, doubtless, to "expose" him as the agent of the bosses. But the prophet of the New Deal was not found napping. Here was the chance of a lifetime brought on a silver platter by none other than the Communists, the very ones he was racking his brain for a plan to discredit. ...

Fortunately, the wage gains were enough to give the workers courage in their mass power. The former price of 30 cents a box was increased to 90 cents, an increase of 200 percent.

A very bad printer's error crept into the article "A Postscript on Anster" in the last issue of the Militant. A whole section following the beginning of the paragraph which reads: "But a word on the action of the Left Opposition caucus . . ." was deleted, and others bungled on the linotype. This section should read as follows: ...

"What was objected to is the fact, that instead of coming out with the complete truth; instead of telling the American workers outright that the Soviet Union is today gripped by a terrific economic crisis—which is by the way due to the adventurist bungling of bureaucratic centralism in Russia itself; instead of telling the American workers, that because of this and because of the rise of Fascism in Germany—for which Stalinism likewise bears its share of responsibility—the world imperialists, Wall Street in the lead, are more ready for bloody, open intervention against the workers' fatherland than for the extension of credits to it; instead of telling the American workers that, due to these dangers, the hand of the Soviets is more in need of their active help than ever, in their every day struggles, in the struggle against unemployment—that instead of all this: the epigones of Stalinism in America merely cover up the dangers and resort to a meaningless phrase—"where they are building socialism and have already abolished unemployment"—which only serves to cover up their own 'infallibility,' or rather, their own bankruptcy." ...

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