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UNITE

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The Cleveland Fiasco

The Cleveland Conference was another Stalinist "united front" masquerade which adds nothing positive to strengthen and unify the Left wing for the struggle. That was to be expected. A service to the working class would have been possible there only if the conference had been convened under the sign of a change of trade union policy and a renunciation of the monstrous system of mistakes and crimes which have demoralized and decimated the Left wing forces in the labor movement, robbing them of the possibility of playing their natural role in the present beginning of a new rise in working class activity. Instead of that the whole affair was consecrated to the task of covering up the past and perpetuating the policies, methods and practices which have brought such tragic results.

From the point of view of trade union tactics, the class conscious workers have to reject the findings of the Cleveland Conference in toto. Faced with the overwhelming evidence on every side of a revival of the conservative labor organizations and a sweeping movement of the workers into them, a trade union conference at this moment can serve a progressive purpose only if it draws the inescapable conclusion. That is, to recognize that this new impulse of the workers for organization, even in the most conservative unions, is in itself a progressive development which the revolutionaries must assist and encourage and take part in. Regardless of variations in the process, due to the exceptional conditions in certain instances, it is absolutely clear to anyone who has eyes to see that this drift toward the A. F. of L. unions is the main line of trade union development in the new situation arising from the collapse of the Stalinist paper unions, the economic upturn and the inauguration of the N.R.A. A national trade union conference, called together in such a situation, must deal with main lines if it does not want to leave the track entirely.

The Stalinist engineers of the Cleveland Conference could not do this without revealing and admitting the falsity of all they have said and done and tried to do on the trade union field in the past period. They would have had to admit that life itself is refuting the contentions which they set up as rigid principles. They would have been obliged to recognize that the sectarianism and bureaucratic mismanagement of the paper unions under their control have brought results which operate as an objective factor to discredit and paralyze the independent union movement, to rob it for the time of its great vitality and by that to push the main stream of the awakening workers back into the conservative organizations, even into those against which they have previously revolted.

From the point of view of the proletarian united front the Cleveland conference was a comedy, unique and perhaps a little more ridiculous than the previous exhibitions. As every vegetable has its season, so every change of the moon brings a new type of "united front". The "united front from below", which condemned all non-Communist leaders as Fascists and excluded any cooperation with them, gave place to the approach to all reformist organizations for a united front with a non-aggression pact excluding criticism. This attempt to include everybody at any price is already out of date. The dealings with the Fascists and Social Fascists in general are given up, in a favoring of the exclusive unity—and a touchingly affectionate one—with the Musteltes, that is, with the "Left social Fascists", the "most dangerous" of the whole conglomeration of black shirts and brown shirts who lurked behind every bush.

This bloc in reality is a crude horse trade which Muste conducts on the principle of give and take, with the express proviso that the CPLA does not do any of the giving. Muste and Budenz sign their names to joint manifestos (which cost nothing), sit on the platform, and gain a certain rehabilitation before the Communist workers. This is a real gain for them. They are hot foot for this kind of "unity", and naturally so. But when it comes to the question of concrete agreements in any sector of the trade union field, they invariably balk. The "united conference" at Cleveland showed the Musteltes dissenting and keeping their hands free in every case.

All this is funny enough. But the sum total results of the Stalinist adventures in the trade union field are no joke. Just at the moment when the workers are beginning to stir again, to move in masses in sharp collisions against the employers—in a word, in a situation made to order for an advance of revolutionary organization and influence the reactionary labor bureaucrats reestablish their organizations and secure their positions and prestige on the support of new

hundreds and thousands of workers, while the Left wing suffers catastrophic defeats. The most outstanding illustration of this anomaly is to be seen in the needle trades.

But this superficial appearance of things is in reality a contradictory process which is not without positive aspects which promise much for the future. If thousands of the class conscious workers, caught in the overwhelming pressure of external forces, are turning their backs on the cut and dried trade union schemes of the Stalinists and reentering the conservative unions, this movement does not necessarily imply a retrogression on their part. Any movement toward trade union organization is progressive. And when this is accompanied by a profound disillusionment with the Stalinist dogmas and the Stalinist leadership its progressive nature is by no means impaired. On the contrary, the decisive break of the advanced workers out of the straight jacket of Stalinism is the first and most necessary condition for the reemergence and flowering of a genuine Left wing in the labor movement. And that also is the necessary basis for a reconstruction of American Communism.

—J. P. CANNON.

Stalinists Ready to Give Up Saar to Hitler

One bloody sacrifice of the German working class is not enough for the adventurers of the C. P. G. leadership. They are all set to commit a new crime. A crime which constitutes a crowning laurel worthy of all their previous deeds. A crime which shows up to a "U" their unconditional capitulation before the nationalist phrasology of the Nazis.

The negation of internationalism in proletarian politics and the headless race with the Nazis for the exploitation of the chauvinistic instincts of broad masses in Germany—these are the fundamental causes of the class treachery of the C. P. G. "Tear the Chains of Versailles", "National and Social Revolution of the People", the united front with the N. S. D. A. P. (National Socialist German Labor Party)—i. e., the Fascists under Hitler)—during the "Red Referendum", the wooing of degenerate militarists and notorious labor assassins (like Major Giesecke, who later betrayed the whole party apparatus)—all these are important milestones in the German workers' path of sorrows. The consistent execution of such a policy, based on the fundamental error of nationalism, could not help leading to capitulation.

This course is now to be continued by the position of the party on the Saar problem. The party's position in this question is the most monstrous thing imaginable for Marxists and Internationalists. The working class of the whole world must be made aware of what a completely degenerate bureaucracy is capable of. It is not in this case a matter any longer of theoretical dispute. No, it is simply a criminal offense.

The Saar territory, which is to decide by referendum in 1935 as to how it wishes to shape its political future, has been under a League of Nations protectorate ever since the peace treaty. In the referendum the natives will have an opportunity to express their will in three ways: namely (1) for the maintenance of the status quo ante, that is, the present state of autonomy; (2) for annexation to France; (3) for the return to Germany.

Due to the social and economic composition of the Saar (preponderance of the coal and iron industries) there can be no doubt that the labor vote will play the decisive role in the referendum. It is also clear that nothing is further from the minds of the workers than the idea of desiring annexation to French imperialism. That possibility is excluded beforehand.

The Saar bourgeoisie is already today falling into step with the Third Reich. The Catholic Centre also. This surprises no one. The social democracy is of greater importance, however. For years they stood in the front ranks of the repatriation enthusiasts and there was no official celebration in Prussia in which some S. P. G. minister did not participate in the intonation of patriotic hymns to the German loyalists of the Saar proletariat. Today, after the S. P. G. has thus helped Herr Hitler into the saddle, after the latter has banished all the patriotic ministers to the concentration camps, the social democrats in the Saar are forced to revise their point of view most radically. They put forward the slogan

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The Class Face of the N.R.A.

The class conscious worker who has pursued with any measure of watchfulness the unfolding improvisations of this latest "Great Effort" of capitalism will receive the Green-Woll legend of N.R.A.'s unionism with his tongue in his cheek. He will remember the sudden "strike truce edict" of the great labor friend in the White House following hot on the trail of the powerful challenge to the coal bosses thrust out by the miners of Pennsylvania last July. (The promised, "fair", "pro-union" coal code is, by the way, still in the offing.) He has witnessed the Johnson-Ritchberg comedy around section 7 (a) of the Recovery law. He has seen an automobile code adopted with a stridently anti-labor, open shop "merit" clause. He has heard the Recovery cop, Whelan, invoke N.R.A. for the arrest of pettishly picketing shoe and bakery strikers in New York. And so on down the line.

But even more striking than all these manifestations of the "pro-labor" tendencies of the Recovery administration are its acts which involve the parts assigned to Green, Lewis and Co. themselves. A national arbitration board is named: Only two representatives of "organized" labor. And what representatives?—John L. Lewis, the reactionary Czar of the United Mine Workers and Bill Green, Hoover's darling. Two labor representatives out of a board of seven....

The steel barons meet for a code hearing. Bill Green arrives as representative of the administration. The steel men rise in angry protest—they won't negotiate with the President of the A. F. of L. Green apologizes, swears he is not there for good, as a representative of labor but as a legitimate spokesman for the N.R.A. No use. You can't fool the good capitalist instincts of the steel men. They turn their heels on poor Mr. Green.

A few facts, an incident, that speak volumes! The case-hardened boss class will not give up its class positions one inch without a fight. They know that it is only the docile William Green. They know that he is ever ready to talk peace to them, to betray every last worker he represents.

But no matter. To accept him as an administration representative? The idea alone makes the steel Tories see nightmares of a Soviet! Not an inch of such a concession, it sets precedents!

And the good General Johnson wears out his knees in genuflections before them, repudiates Green as representative and ruefully rehabilitates him upon the protests of his colleagues.

But enough—the class face of the N.R.A. is unmistakable. For Roosevelt it represents an effort toward a revamping of capitalism by internal reform and through the mobilization of a huge class collaborationist machine. For the steel barons it is a risky experiment. They will not deal with Browder's "Fascist" A. F. of L. Green. Tomorrow they may have to deal with social Fascist Norman Thomas and the day after tomorrow—with Left social Fascist Muste? You never can tell. It isn't safe to give in to anyone who represents labor!

But the labor movement remains silent. The official Communist party shows no comprehension for the events or their possibilities. The Left wing of the trade unions is out of the picture.

Only one solitary gesture of protest rises against this hypocrisy of the N.R.A.: It comes—alas—only from a lady social worker who has been appointed to a post in the administration.

Mrs. Kleecok of the Russel Sage Foundation withdraws her acceptance of the post on the grounds that N.R.A. does not give labor sufficient representation, that it deprives the workers of their only genuine weapon of bargaining—the right to strike, etc. The lady liberal took the reformism of Roosevelt at its face value. Her protest is genuine. Of course, it is only the isolated protest of a sincere labor sympathizer.

What the N.R.A. deserved was a protest from mass pressure by labor itself. That will come, that will be effective and take the road to workers' victory when the Left wing realizes the tremendous opportunities afforded by the situation, when the Communists appraise and analyze the present situation realistically, when the militant section of labor penetrates the A. F. of L. and snatches the leadership of organized labor away from the Greens and the Wollis and the Lewises.

—SAM GORDON.

HANDS OFF CUBA!

Stalin Invites Pilsudski to Review the Red Army

The hangman of Communists, the jailer of thousands of workers and peasants, the Fascist dictator of Poland has been invited by Joseph Stalin to participate in the Red Army demonstration on the anniversary of the Bolshevik revolution.

Marshal Joseph Pilsudski, whose vicious, bitter hatred and enmity to the Workers Republic is a secret to no one and which he has taken no pains to conceal is asked to come to Moscow to celebrate the overthrow of the landlords and exploiters; to review the army of Lenin and Trotsky. Sinister omen!

The revolutionary workers throughout the world must ask with horror what is the significance of this move that is so filled with implications of treachery.

Following close on the heels of Radek's visit to Poland, where he was feted and entertained in regal style by the editor of Pilsudski's official organ, the *Gazeta Polska*, the invitation to Pilsudski contains the serious warning that the Stalinist betrayal in Germany was but the first stage in their complete repudiation of internationalism.

The question becomes more insistent: Is the defense of the Soviet Union to be entrusted to the Pilsudskis, the Herriots? And is the world proletariat to be sacrificed to that insidious end?

The heinous theory of Socialism in One Country has led directly to the capitulation before the Brown Shirts. Why? Because civil war in Germany might have disturbed the chimera of an isolated national socialist society. For these self-

same reasons the Communist International has not met in Congress for more than five years to discuss the burning problems facing the working class of the world. In its stead are the non-aggression pacts—scraps of paper which will be violated at the first opportunity by the imperialists.

And now the logic of the Stalinist policy leads them not to call upon the world proletariat to observe the November revolution by a powerful struggle against Fascism—and Fascism is not in Germany alone—but by tender felicitations for the Fascist Pilsudski. What can the Polish workers say to this invitation when they are clubbed, jailed and murdered for the observance of the Russian Revolution? Stalin is indifferent to them. What cynicism is expressed for the revolutionary movement in the sending to Pilsudski the dossier of the latter's record in the Polish nationalist movement in the Czarist days.

It is hinted in the bourgeois press, and has not been denied by the *Daily Worker*, that a military alliance between Soviet Russia and Fascist Poland is in preparation. We sound the warning that there can be no greater betrayal of internationalism, of the interests of the working class, no greater danger to the Soviet Union than the consummation of such a perfidious alliance. Let the Communist workers take note. The cook is preparing in another peppery soup. This time it is Soviet Russia that is at stake!

U.S. Prepares Assault on Europe

The *New York Times* in an editorial on August 20, issues a warning against any attitude of panic should the N.R.A. not succeed according to expectations. It says: "But it is now evident that the issues of the battle will not be decided by the first shock of attack. A long period of what may be called trench warfare is before the country."

The main issues of this trench warfare are already discernible—and it will have plenty of new and greater shocks of attacks, covered also by barrages of heavy artillery. First and foremost, in the order of importance, is the onslaught upon the world market to be launched as soon as the home front is sufficiently prepared. In other words we are facing the American imperialist offensive against Europe. Its further fate and even the fate of the recovery program, is bound up closely with this offensive. Conversely that will also influence the trend of the American working class movement in the coming period.

Let us say at the outset that this should not lead to a minimizing of the importance of the domestic market or of the significance of relationship of forces at home. On the contrary. Precisely that aspect must be the starting point of an accurate estimation of American prospects in the world market. The huge domestic market is the stronghold and the reservoir from which proceeds the operations abroad. The extent of this penetration since the world war has already lent the American imperialist imprint upon Europe. But no operations are being prepared for a far more formidable scale destined to put all past ventures in the shade.

The American bourgeoisie needs to strengthen its hands at home in order to be able to move with that much more certainty abroad. Efforts toward this strengthening are taking place in three different directions which, however, all fit in to one pattern: Between the various financial and industrial units which make up the national economic structure; in the relationship between capital and labor and finally in the relationship of the government to both. The specific method, or instrument, by which this is hoped to be accomplished, is the N.R.A.

In regard to the first of these directions named, the most noteworthy factors are the reorganization accomplished in the financial structure of the country, eliminating some of its most antiquated features and immensely strengthening the great metropolitan institutions as well as the reorganization of industry on a much more formidable monopoly basis. Not only is this the monopoly form of the past large enterprises, but it is the addition of a degree of governmental supervision and control through industrial codes which facilitates the elimination of small com-

petitors on a perfectly legal basis. In regard to capital and labor relations the efforts are distinctly to re-establish the old condition of "identity of interests" which was somewhat badly shattered during the crisis. The aim is not merely the "identity of interests" on the old narrow basis of collaborating directly with unions, exclusively craft in composition, and confined to the aristocracy of labor, or through labor banks, labor insurance schemes or stock ownership schemes—the methods of fattening the aristocracy of labor as a means of better keeping the proletariat under control. Such means are no longer sufficient. Moreover changes have taken place in the composition of American labor; the leveling process has not been without effects. Now the idea is to extend the "identity of interests" to an alliance based upon joint interests in recovery, to embrace the working class generally. First among the measures applied is the reorganization of labor power to the productive forces through reduction of working hours in order to blunt the most dangerous edges of the unemployment problem. Secondly, the affirming of the right to organization and collective bargaining which in reality means a tacit agreement to a further extension of the conservative unions for the purpose of cementing the alliance. Wages are, of course, to be adjusted to the needs of capital and its profit incentive. But for the whole it is hoped that the N.R.A. machinery of labor ad-

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Soldiers and Students Oust Gov't.; U.S. Sends Navy

The rapidly developing events in Cuba have found an answer in the "democratic" regime of Roosevelt. Warships are steaming full speed ahead to Cuban waters. Marines are being mobilized—not for intervention!—just to protect American lives and property. At the first serious threat to the money bags of the Wall Street oligarchs the mask is stripped from the face of the "liberal" administration and it reacts like the most honored of the reactionary regimes in United States history. For the workers in the United States the central problem is the fight at home against intervention.

The Cuban situation is developing with hurricane speed. De Cespedes and his concentration cabinet have been swept away. The regime was not one month old when the military, the students and the ABC dissident wing blew it into eternity.

Communists to Be Tried for Goering Reichstag Fire

On September 17 the trial of those accused in the German Reichstag fire will commence before the Supreme Court at Leipzig. Unquestionably this represents the most monstrous and most brazen frame-up yet recorded in working class history engineered with all the skill for which the Nazis have become notorious. The accused are Ernst Torgler, former chairman of the Communist party Reichstag fraction; Van der Lubbe, the Dutch Nazi dupe, and the three Bulgarian Communists, who had been living as exiles for some time in Germany. Demitroff, Popoff and Taneoff.

The Reichstag fire on Feb. 27, dramatically initiated the terror regime which today can claim among its victims hundreds of workers, killed or maimed for life; acts which in their gruesome details defy description, the battering and devastation of all semblance of working class organization, the muzzling of all freedom of opinion and about 80,000 victims suffering the horrors of the Nazi concentration camps. On Feb. 27, under the glare of the flames, Hitler said to the reporter of the *London Daily Express*: "You are witnessing the commencement of a great historical epoch. This blaze is the beginning." And strangely enough, although this date fell right at the height of the election campaign, neither Hitler nor Goering nor Goebbels were out on the stump; all were assembled in Berlin—waiting for the fire.

All aid by foreign counsel has been denied the accused by the Nazi government. No one not under strict Nazi discipline is to be allowed to pry into this frame-up. Among such foreign counsel offering their services were attorneys Arthur Garfield Hays of the United States, Branting of Sweden, the well known writer Romain Rolland and many others. These have now constituted a committee to conduct a public hearing at the Hague simultaneously with the Leipzig trial.

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Congress of Second International

The British empire, who will next year act as chairman of the disarmament conference. It is leadership of socialist governments, Branting here, Stauning there, who have for the first time introduced comprehensive, unilateral reductions of the military expenditures of their countries. It is socialists who, at the head of the Prussian government, stand in the front line of the struggle for the defense of the republican achievements. And as socialists have been, under changing circumstances, in the government in Belgium, in Finland, in the Baltic States, in Austria and in the majority of the German lands, it might be said without exaggeration that the majority of the members of the Executive of the Socialist Labor International are former or future ministers. This is certainly proof of mounting power.

In place of all these "proofs of mounting power", an unmistakable mood of depression has settled upon the upper circles of the Second International. It has missed becoming complete despair only because of the unquenchable hopes kept

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The coup d'etat was accomplished without bloodshed and with remarkable ease. The De Cespedes regime offered no resistance. Quietly and with "dignity" it abandoned the seat of power, saying only that the responsibility for the "burden of government" rested on other shoulders.

The painless amputation of the De Cespedes regime is to be explained by the fact that it failed entirely to enlist the support of the workers. Although the general strike came to an end with the return to work of the Havana bus drivers and later the stevedores and dock workers, strikes continued throughout the island in the cities and on the sugar plantations. These movements became ever deeper in character. Here and there the military attempted to put down the strikes but the soldiers, for the most part, FRATERNIZED WITH THE WORKERS. This strike movement cut away the ground under the feet of the government.

On the other hand the De Cespedes regime revealed its sympathies with American imperialism and the Machadistas. Not only had the De Cespedes regime organized Machado's escape but it revealed a great reluctance to arrest the popular demand for the arrest and trial of all the agents of the former dictator and the removal of his supporters in mayoralties and governmental posts. This infuriated the anti-imperialist elements of the petty bourgeoisie.

Finally the government signified its intention of cutting the soldiers' pay. This was the last straw. The soldiers rebelled. The movement developed with remarkable speed and immediately swept beyond its initial objectives. The soldiers of Camp Columbia, a Havana post, took to the radio and asked for the support of all enlisted men. The response was immediate. The entire army and later the navy joined the movement.

The rebellion of the military is a rebellion of the rank and file against the government carried out against their own officers. Their first action was to arrest all commissioned officers. And now for the first time in the present revolution the soldiers and sailors are putting forward THEIR OWN LEADERS. At the head of the army and navy stand non-commissioned officers. Throughout the army and navy the same selection is taking place.

The soldiers and sailors by themselves cannot constitute a regime. They need political leadership. In the present situation that has been supplied by the petty bourgeoisie. Under the slogan of the immediate convocation of a Constituent Assembly the petty bourgeoisie have created a junta of five: four professors and a banker.

What will the petty bourgeoisie demand in the Constituent Assembly? The petty bourgeois masses are inflamed with anti-imperialist sentiments. The press reports that they signify their intention to fire on American marines should they be landed. A student jumps to the roof of an automobile and denounces American intermeddling.

The situation indicates that the demand will be raised for the abrogation of the Platt Amendment in the Cuban Constitution giving the United States the right to intervene with military forces in Cuba. The demand will also be made to denounce the treaty between the two countries which gives the United States that right.

But the leaders of the new movement, the Junta, do not dare to say this openly. They are afraid of intervention by the United States to "protect foreign lives and property."

This lack of plain speaking characterizes the program of the new government. How could it be otherwise? The petty bourgeoisie have no social program. They cannot cope with the problems of modern society. Their position in society is a desperate struggle for existence between the capitalist and proletarian grindstones of the social process. They are incapable of conceiving, let alone carrying through, the revolutionary transformation of capitalist society that involves the obliteration of their own existence as a class.

In the Cuban revolution the summit of their social vision is the Manifesto of their junta of professors and a banker. On the one hand they stand in awe of the American imperialist colossus: "Strict respect of the debts and obligations of the republic." This is assurance to the Chase National Bank and the House

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