

WORKERS  
OF THE  
WORLD.  
UNITE

# THE MILITANT



Weekly Organ of the Communist League of America [Opposition]

Published weekly by the Communist League of America (Opposition) at 136 East 19th Street, New York, N. Y. Entered as second class mail matter, November 22, 1928 at the Post Office at New York, N. Y. under the act of March 3, 1879

VOLUME VI, NO. 45 [WHOLE NO. 192] NEW YORK, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 1933

PRICE 5 CENTS

## For a New Party and a New International!

After the ignominious collapse of both the Social Democracy and the Communist International in Germany, and the subsequent inability of both these organizations to draw any lessons from this historical catastrophe, it is impossible any longer to conceal the fact that a revolutionary organization of the proletariat capable of leading it to victory does not exist. It must be created anew.

The National Committee of the Communist League of America (Opposition) is in complete agreement with the declaration issued to the Paris conference by the delegation of the International Left Opposition and approves its actions there. The N. C. likewise endorses the steps taken by the four organizations at the Paris conference toward the formation of a new Communist International and will devote its efforts henceforth, in cooperation with all other revolutionary groups and organizations willing to participate, to the task of directly assembling the forces for the creation of a new party, as the American section of the new (Fourth) International.

The entire membership of the League has unanimously endorsed this course after a thorough internal discussion of the question and has empowered the National Committee to proclaim its complete break with the Stalinist Comintern and its American section and to renounce the struggle to reform them. From this time onward the Communist League ceases to regard itself as a faction of the official Stalinist Party, which has become a direct brake on the development of the workers' movement, and invites the cooperation of all revolutionary workers, regardless of their present affiliation or non-affiliation, in common efforts leading to the construction of a genuine Communist Party in America.

Taking the necessity to create a new party as the point of departure, the Communist League proposes a frank and comradely discussion with other individuals, groups and organizations aiming toward the same goal and submits, for their consideration, the following points:

### American Perspectives

Under the terrific pressure of the crisis years the conditions have been rapidly maturing for the class awakening of the American workers and for an enormous acceleration of the class struggle. In the next period the social contradictions will explode in a series of gigantic class battles in the course of which the workers can assimilate the revolutionary lessons in an abridged form and rapidly leap forward on the path toward revolutionary action. To assist and guide this process a new party, wresting the banner of Communism from the sabotaging bureaucratic clique of Stalinism, must be created. And, under the given conditions, this new party will have before it the possibility and prospect of expansion into a powerful mass organization within a comparatively short time.

### Fundamental Principles

The new Communist Party, the necessity for which arises from the complete bankruptcy of reformism on the one side and of bureaucratic centrism (Stalinism) on the other, cannot consist of an indiscriminate combination of reformist and centrist elements. On the contrary, the new party can come into existence, take shape and grow up to the requirements of its colossal historic task only if it stands on a firm programmatic foundation and tolerates no conciliation toward reformist and centrist currents. For this program no new revelation is needed. The revolutionary teachings

### Declaration of the National Committee of the Communist League of America - Opposition

of Marx and Engels, cleansed once again of the reformist and centrist distortions and falsifications, are the fundamental principle guide for the new party.

The first four Congresses of the Comintern, conducted under the leadership of Lenin and Trotsky, have concretized these teachings and applied them, in a series of unsurpassed theses and resolutions, to the basic problems of our epoch. The ten-years' struggle of the International Left Opposition (Bolshevik-Leninists), during which the guiding ideas of the first four Congresses of the Comintern were carried forward and counterposed on each and every important question of the living movement to the degenerating course of Stalinism, have been summarized in the "11 Points" adopted by the International Pre-Conference of the Left Opposition. All these documents referred to above retain their fundamental validity and constitute, in our opinion, the programmatic basis for the new party.

### For Revolutionary Internationalism - Against the Theory of Socialism in One Country

The theoretical source of the degeneration and final downfall of the Communist International and its national sections, including the American, was the rejection of the Marxist principle of revolutionary internationalism and its substitution by the theory of "socialism in one country". This reactionary movement which has been destroyed by the Communist International theory cannot arise again without a clear and categorical rejection of it.

### Defense of the Soviet Union

The ten-year regime of Stalinism has strangled the party and the workers organizations in the Soviet Union and has facilitated enormously the danger of a counter-revolutionary capitalist overthrow. The Stalinist regime has undermined the foundations of the Soviet state and is leading it toward destruction. The social content of the October revolution, however, is still alive and, by its property character, which is the decisive criterion, the Soviet Union remains, even with the monstrous bureaucratic distortions, a workers' state.

The defense of the Soviet Union, encircled by a world of class enemies and systematically weakened from within by the Stalinist regime, is the unconditional duty of the international proletariat. The formation of new parties and a new international does not contradict this task but is necessitated by it. The reform of the Soviet workers' state in the U. S. S. R., and its defense against capitalist intervention and counter-revolution, now depend upon the formation of strong revolutionary organizations in the capitalist countries which will be capable of putting up a revolutionary resistance at home to capitalistic military ventures and of exerting a pressure on the internal regime in the U. S. S. R. and influencing the Soviet proletariat. Under the theory of "socialism in one country" the role of the Communist parties has been debased to the task of the pacifist "defense of the Soviet Union", and for this all kinds of dubious "Friends of the Soviet Union" have been recruited and hired

while the tested revolutionary militants have been persecuted, slandered and expelled.

But it is precisely in the task of defending the Soviet Union at the moment of danger that the present Stalinist parties are most completely impotent. The strongest party of the Comintern, the German C. P., capitulated without a sign of resistance to the Fascist bands before the latter were armed with state power. The possibility that the weakest of such parties can offer any resistance whatever to the military designs of the capitalist states must be dismissed altogether as the most dangerous phantasm. The internal reform and regeneration of the Soviet state and its defense against world imperialism is the joint task of the new parties in the capitalist countries and in the Soviet Union.

### The United Front

From its inception, and also in the process of its formation which will be more or less prolonged, the new party will naturally take part in the living movement of the working class and employ therein the tactic of the united front. This tactic, which presupposes temporary agreements with reformist organizations for specific separate actions, requires the categorical rejection of the theory of "social Fascism" and the united front from below only. On the one hand, the new party should conduct negotiations and make temporary agreements with the official representatives of reformist organizations when they take a step forward under the pressure of the masses—a tactic which the Stalinists have rejected "in principle"—and on the other hand, it will reject any proposals for a "non-aggression pact" excluding criticism—which the Stalinists have accepted.

### Trade Union Policy

The new party will find its road to the masses and gain influence over their movement only on the condition that it follows a Marxist policy on the trade union question, that is, the most important question of the American movement. Such a policy requires a penetration of the workers' mass organizations as they exist in reality, regardless of their form, and at the same time an irreconcilable struggle against the capitalist agents within them. The Stalinist dogma of "red" paper unions and the opportunist policy of "adaptation" to the reactionary leadership in the trade union movement are equally pernicious.

### Against the Right Wing Apologists of Stalinism

The new party cannot represent a mechanical combination of "opposition" groups, but will be obliged to take a precise attitude toward each of them with respect to their platform and, especially, with respect to the general direction of its development. The Brandlerist clique (Lovestone, Wolfe & Co.) which effected a formal separation from the Stalinists with the dissolution of the Right-Center bloc in 1929, devotes itself to servile attempts to reestablish this bloc. It remains in fundamental unity with Stalinism on all the principle questions and shamefully justifies and apologizes for its systematic errors and crimes. The irreconcilable struggle of the new party against Stal-

inism presupposes and requires an equally unrelenting hostility to the Right wing camp followers of Stalinism.

### Party Democracy

The new party must establish within its ranks a regime of democratic centralism which permits freedom of discussion and criticism from the one hand and unity of action on the other. The free election of officials from top to bottom, the control of the officials by the rank and file and the right of every member to express his opinions in an atmosphere free from baiting and threats of expulsion, must be combined with a clearly defined principle foundation for party membership and a disciplined unity of the entire organization in action before the outside world.

### Forces for the New Party

The Communist League, as it is at present constituted, does not consider itself a party and has no intention of anticipating the real establishment of the new party by proclaiming itself as such. The task now is to recognize firmly that our role as a faction striving to reform the party of official Stalinism is exhausted, and to prepare on a completely independent path, and to strike out, in cooperation with all other groups and organizations moving in the same direction, for the formation of a new party.

In the course of its struggle to reform the official party, as a faction of it, the Left Opposition worked out a program, consolidated a cadre of principled militants and formed the skeleton of a national organization. These accomplishments can be regarded now as part of the capital of the new movement; not all that is necessary for the formation of the party, but contributions to it.

What is needed now is the coming-together of the various groups\* or revolutionary workers who have broken, or who are in the process of breaking, with reformism and centrism as well as those dispersed individual revolutionists who have been repelled by the Stalinist bureaucracy and remain without affiliation. It is self-evident that the working out of a common program and the eventual concentration of these forces into a single party must be preceded by an exchange of opinion and discussion and, very probably, will involve a transition period of cooperation before the final fusion.

Whatever form the next development may take, the Left Opposition is ready now, to enter into open and comradely negotiations and discussions with other groups which seriously set for themselves the same goal. After its long and unrelenting struggle against the arrogant bureaucracy and ultimatic methods of Stalinism, the Left Opposition least of all can seek to impose anything on others or to demand the acceptance in advance of its proposals, its program or its "leadership". Submitting the foregoing points for discussion, we on our part are ready to give attentive and comradely consideration to any different proposals and to bring them to the attention of our members and supporters by publication in the *Militant*, together with our comments on them.

With this object in view the columns of the *Militant* will be open for a discussion of the question of a new Party and a new International.

NATIONAL COMMITTEE,  
COMMUNIST LEAGUE OF AMERICA  
(OPPOSITION)

### The Eleven Points - The Fundamental Principles of the International Left Opposition

We are republishing herewith the Eleven Points of the International Left Opposition Pre-Conference Thesis, as amended at the latest international plenum. The amendment is contained in Point 10. Formerly this point corresponded to our position as a faction working for the reform of the Comintern, for the victory within the Comintern of Marxism over the Right and Centrist currents. The present text contained in this point corresponds with our orientation for regroupings into a new International. This text is proposed for the ratification of the various International Left Opposition sections.—Ed.

The International Left Opposition stands on the ground of the first four congresses of the Comintern. This does not mean that it bows before every letter of its decisions, of which many had a purely temporary character and in individual practical consequences have been refuted by subsequent practice. But all the essential principles (relation to imperialism and to the bourgeois state; the dictatorship of the proletariat; the re-

lation to the peasant; work to the oppressed nations; soviets; work in the trade unions; parliamentarism; the policy of the united front) remain even today the highest expression of proletarian strategy in the epoch of the general crisis of capitalism.

The Left Opposition rejects the revisionist decisions of the 5th and 6th World Congresses and considers necessary a radical restatement of the program of the Comintern, in which the gold of Marxism has been rendered completely worthless by the Centristist alloy.

In accordance with the spirit and the sense of the decisions of the first 4 world congresses, and in continuation of these decisions, the Left Opposition sets up the following principles, develops them theoretically and carries them through practically:

1. The independence of the proletarian party, always and under

2. Recognition of the international character of the proletarian revolution; rejection of the theory of socialism in one country as well as of the policy of national bolshevism which complements it in Germany (platform of "National Liberation").
3. Recognition of the Soviet state as a workers' state in spite of the growing degeneration of the bureaucratic regime. Unconditional demand that every worker defend the soviet state against imperialism and

4. Condemnation of the economic policy of the Stalinist faction both in its stage of economic opportunism in 1923 to 1928 (struggle against "overindustrialization" and staking all on the kulaks), as well as its stage of economic adventurism in 1928 to 1932 (over-stretched tempo of industrialization, thoroughgoing collectivization, administrative liquidation of the kulaks as minimal bureaucratic legend that "the soviet state has already entered into Socialism"). Recognition of the necessity of a return to the realistic economic policies of Leninism.
5. Recognition of the necessity of systematic Communist work in the proletarian mass organizations, particularly in the reformist trade unions, condemnation of the theory and practice of the Red Trade Union organization in Germany and sim-

6. Rejection of the formula of the "democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry" as a separate regime distinguished from the dictatorship of the proletariat which carries along the peasant and the oppressed masses in general behind it, rejection of the anti-Marxist theory of the peaceful "growing over" of the democratic dictatorship into the socialist one.
7. Recognition of the necessity of mobilizing the masses under transitional slogans corresponding to the concrete situation in each country, and particularly under democratic slogans insofar as it is a question of struggle against feudal relations, national oppression or different varieties of open imperialistic dictatorship (Fascism, bonapartism, etc.).
8. Recognition of the necessity of a developed united front policy with respect to the mass organiza-

9. Rejection of the theory of Social Democracy and of the whole practice bound up with it, as serving Fascism on the one hand and the Social Democracy on the other.
10. The struggle for the regrouping of the revolutionary forces of the world's working class under the banner of International Communism. Recognition of the necessity of the creation of a genuine Communist International capable of applying the principles enumerated above.
11. Recognition of Party democracy not only in words but also in fact; ruthless condemnation of the Stalinist plebiscitary regime (gagging the will and the thought of the party, the rule of the usurpers, deliberate suppression of information from the party, etc.).

The fundamental principles enumerated above, which are of basic importance for the strategy of the proletariat in the present period, place the Left Opposition in a position of irreconcilable hostility to the Stalinist faction which currently dominates the U. S. S. R. and the C. I. The recognition of these principles on the basis of the decisions of the first 4 congresses of the Comintern, is an indispensable condition for the acceptance of single organizations, groups and persons into the composition of the International Left Opposition.

mass  
meeting

For a NEW INTERNATIONAL!  
And a NEW COMMUNIST PARTY for AMERICA!

SPEAKERS

JAMES P. CANNON  
MAX SHACHTMAN

Irving Plaza Hall  
IRVING PLACE and 15th STREET  
SATURDAY, SEPT. 30, 8 P. M.  
ADMISSION: 15 CENTS