

# It Is Impossible to Remain in the Same International with Stalin, Manuilsky, Losovsky and Company -- (A Conversation)

A.—It is time to break with the caricature of an International which is in Moscow. It is impossible to bear even a shadow of political responsibility for the Stalinists. We have been very prudent and very patient with regard to the Comintern; but there is a limit to everything; now that, before the eyes of the entire world, Wells on the one hand, Stalin on the other, have placed Hitler in the saddle, now that the Comintern despite the catastrophe has proclaimed its policy inflexible—no man of judgment will any longer hope that this clique can be "reformed".

**The Comintern "As a Whole"**  
B.—The clique certainly not, but the Comintern taken as a whole?

A.—One must not be deceived by general phrases. The "Comintern as a whole" is an abstraction, not to say, an empty expression. The control is in the hands of the Stalinist clique. For six years now, there has been no Congress. Who has trampled the statutes underfoot? The clique. By what right? By the right of usurpation. Not one section, not one local organization, not one paper has dared to breathe a word about the necessity of an International Congress. This means that in fact, the fate of the "Comintern as a whole" lies in the hands of an irresponsible clique.

B.—That is incontestable, but isn't that just how the matter stood a year ago, when we had not yet withdrawn the slogan of the reform of the Comintern?

A.—No. That is not how the matter stood. A year ago one could still hope to save the situation in Germany. We did everything in our power to throw light on the logic of the situation. If the Comintern were a responsible organization, its leadership could not have failed to hear the voice of events. It is absolutely impossible to expect a more powerful voice. And if the Comintern remained deaf this time, it means that it is a corpse. In still another respect a decisive change has taken place. Last year the German Communist party still existed. In the whirlpool of great events, it still had to reckon with the working masses. One was able to hope with a certain right—up to the hour of the verification—that the development of the struggle of the masses would not only make Thaelmann's Central Committee turn about, but also the Praesidium of Stalin-Manuilsky. That did not take place. Of the German Communist Party nothing has remained but an apparatus which grows weaker every day and becomes increasingly alienated from the masses. The point has been reached where the Central Committee prohibits the illegal local organizations from publishing their own articles and appeals; the duty of the local committees is but to reprint the revelations of the Manuilskys and the Heckerts. Every movement of thought represents a mortal danger for these people. The victory of Hitler is not really a "defeat" for them; it has freed them from all control from below—but now that the strongest party of the Comintern has left the stage there is decidedly no means, no channel and no lever, left by which to act upon the clique that rules the Comintern.

**The German Party**  
B.—Can the German Communist Party be spoken of as the strongest party of the Comintern? You seem to forget the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

A.—No, I have not forgotten. Even if one recognizes that the C. P. S. U. is a party (in reality, within the administrative cadres of the C. P. S. U., which change according to the will of the clique, several parties are conducting a covert struggle against each other), this party is, in any case, not an active section of the Comintern. The Soviet workers have no idea of what is happening to the proletarian movement in the west; nothing is communicated to them, or still worse they are ignobly deceived. Within the Political Bureau itself, with its present composition, there is not a single person who knows the life and the tendencies of the workers movement in the capitalist countries.

The slogan of the "reform" of the Comintern was, for us, never a hollow phrase. We counted on reform as on a reality. Developments followed the worst road. That is precisely why we are compelled to declare that the policy of reform is exhausted to the very end.

B.—Is it then possible for us to leave the centrist bureaucracy the banner of the Comintern?  
A.—One should not be misled by ambiguous formula. What is understood by a banner? A program? But it is long, since we have rejected the program adopted by the VI Congress as a pernicious admixture of opportunism and adventurism. In the course of several years, basing ourselves on the lessons of events, we counted upon changing the program of the Comintern by internal means. Now this possibility has disappeared at the same time as the possibility of "reform". To the miserable eclectic program of the Comintern, we must oppose our Marxian program.

**The First Four Congresses**  
B.—And the first four congresses of the Comintern?  
A.—Naturally, we do not abandon them. All the more so as the Stalinists have long since renounced them and given them over to us. Our program will build up on the foundations established by the

first four congresses; it is an irreplaceable Marxian foundation, it is our foundation. The lessons of the recent years—only the Left Opposition has translated them into the language of Marxism. Our International Pre-Conference has drawn the balance of these lessons in its eleven points. There is, however, a gap in this balance. The Pre-Conference met on the eve of the decisive examination to which history submitted the Comintern. The complete and conclusive collapse of the Comintern is not recorded in the decisions of the Pre-Conference. It must be done by the Conference. As far as everything else goes, the decisions of the Pre-Conference retain all their force. The principal documents of the first four congresses plus the "eleven points" of the Left Opposition—these are the fundamental elements of the true program of the Communist International.

B.—The opponents will, in spite of everything, say that we are renouncing the banner of Lenin.

A.—The opponents have been shouting that for some time, and all the more loudly, the more they trample in the mud the heritage of Bolshevism. As for us, we shall say to the workers of the entire world that we are taking upon ourselves the defense of the banner of Marx and of Lenin, the continuation and the development of their work in the intransigent struggle not only against the reformist traitors—that goes without saying—but also against the centrist falsifications of Bolshevism. The usurpers of the banner of Lenin, organizers of the defeats and the capitulations, the corrupters of the proletarian vanguard, the Stalinists.

**The C. P. S. U.**  
B.—Then what is to be done about the C. P. S. U.? What is to be done about the U. S. S. R.?

A.—The opponents will not say that we consider as lost the achievements of the workers' state and that we are preparing the armed insurrection against the Soviet Government?  
B.—Certainly they will say it. They have been saying it for some time now. What else can they say to justify their ignoble persecutions of the Bolshevik-Leninists? But we are guided not by the calumny of the opponents, but by the actual course of the class struggle. The October Revolution, with the Bolshevik party at its head, created the workers' state. Now the Bolshevik party no longer exists. But the fundamental social content of the October revolution is still alive. The bureaucratic dictatorship, in spite of the technical successes acquired under its reign (against itself), enormously facilitates the possibility of the capitalist restoration. But luckily, the point of a restoration has not yet been reached. With favorable internal, and above all international, conditions, the edifice of the workers' state can be regenerated on the foundations of the Soviet state, without a new revolution. For a long time we have reckoned that we would succeed in reforming the C. P. S. U. itself, and through it as intermediary, in regenerating the Soviet regime. But the present official party, now bears much less of a resemblance to a party than two or even one year ago. The party congress has not taken place for more than three years and nobody talks about it. The Stalinist clique is now whitening down and reconstructing its "party", as if it were a disciplinary battalion. The aim of the purging and of the expulsions was first of all to disorganize the party, to deprive it of the possibility of thinking and of acting; now the repressions have as their aim to prevent the reorganization of the party. Yet the proletarian party is indispensable if the Soviet state is not to perish. There are many elements for it, but it is only in the struggle against the Stalinist bureaucracy that they can be brought to the surface and united. To speak now of the reform of the C. P. S. U. would mean to look backward and not forward, to assuage one's own mind with empty formulae. In the U. S. S. R. it

is necessary to build a Bolshevik party again.  
**The Road of Civil War**  
B.—But isn't that the road of civil war?  
A.—The Stalinist bureaucracy conducted the struggle against the Left Opposition even in the period when we were quite sincerely and with conviction for the reform of the C. P. S. U. The arrests, the deportations, the fusillades—what are these if not the civil war, at least in embryo? In the struggle against the Left Opposition, the Stalinist bureaucracy was an instrument of the counter revolutionary forces and by that fact, it isolated itself from the masses. Now the civil war is placed on the order of the day along another line, between the counter revolution going over to the offensive, and the Stalinist bureaucracy on the defensive. In the struggle with the counter revolution the Bolshevik-Leninists will obviously be the left flank of the coalition with the Stalinists. It should not, however, be thought that in this struggle the Stalinist bureaucracy will be unanimous. At the decisive moment, it will break up into fragments and its component elements will meet again in the two opposing camps.

B.—So the civil war is inevitable?  
A.—Right at the present moment it is taking place. By maintaining the present course, it can only become more acute. With the further impotence of the Comintern, with the paralysis of the international proletarian vanguard and under the conditions of the inevitable growth of world fascism, the victory of the counter-revolution in the U. S. S. R. would be inevitable. Naturally, the Bolshevik-Leninists will continue their work in the U. S. S. R. regardless of the conditions. But the saving of the workers' state can be effected only by the intermediary of the world revolutionary movement. In all of human history, the objective conditions for the regeneration and its rise have never been

so favorable as now. What is lacking is the revolutionary party. The Stalinist clique can rule only by destroying the party, in the U. S. S. R. as in the rest of the world. One can tear himself away from this vicious circle only by breaking with the Stalinist bureaucracy. It is necessary to build a party on a fresh spot, under a clean banner.

**Pressure on the Bureaucracy**  
B.—And how will the revolutionary parties of the capitalist world be able to act upon the Stalinist bureaucracy in the U. S. S. R.?

A.—The whole question lies in the genuine strength. We have seen how the Stalinist bureaucracy crawled before the Kuo Min Tang, before the British trade unions. We have seen how it is crawling now, even before petty bourgeois pacifists. Strong revolutionary parties, truly capable of fighting against imperialism, and consequently of defending the U. S. S. R. will compel the Stalinist bureaucracy to reckon with them. Much more important is the fact that these organizations will acquire an enormous authority in the eyes of the Soviet workers and will thus finally create favorable conditions for the rebirth of a genuine Bolshevik party. It is only on this road that the reform of the Soviet state is possible without a new proletarian revolution.

B.—So then we abandon the slogan of the reform of the C. P. S. U. and we build up the new party as the instrument for the reform of the Soviet Union.

A.—Perfectly correct.  
B.—Is this tremendous task commensurate with our forces?  
A.—The question is put erroneously. First of all, it is necessary to formulate clearly and courageously the historical task and then to assemble the forces for its resolution. Certainly we are still weak today, but that does not at all signify that history will grant us a delay. One of the psychological sources of opportunism is the fear of great tasks, that is, the lack of

faith in revolutionary possibilities. However, great tasks do not fall from the sky; they emerge from the course of the class struggle. It is in these same conditions that we must seek the forces for the resolution of the great tasks.

**Danger of Adventurism**  
B.—But doesn't the overestimation of one's own forces often lead to adventurism?

A.—That is absolutely correct. It would be pure adventurism if we were to "proclaim" that our present organization is the Communist International or if, under this name, we were to unite ourselves mechanically with the various other opposition organizations. The new international cannot be "proclaimed": it still has to be built. But one can, and one should, from today onward, proclaim the necessity to create a new international.

Ferdinand Lasalle, who was no stranger to opportunism, nor to adventurism, nevertheless expressed the fundamental requirements of revolutionary politics: "Every great action begins by the assertion of what is." Before replying practically to the questions: How is a new international to be built, what methods are to be applied, what delays are to be fixed—it is necessary to assert openly what is: **The Comintern is dead for the revolution.**

B.—On this point, in your opinion, there can be no longer be any doubts?  
A.—Not a shadow. The whole course of the struggle against National Socialism, the conclusion of this struggle and the lessons of this conclusion—equally indicate not only the complete revolutionary absence of the Comintern but also its organic incapacity to learn, to mend its ways, that is, "to reform" itself. The German lesson would not be so crushing and so unimpeachable, if it were not the crowning piece of ten years of the history of centrist blundering, of pernicious errors, of ever more frightful defeats, of increasingly fruitless sacrifices and losses, and, in connection with that—of a complete theoretical devas-

tation, of a bureaucratic degeneration, of passivism, of demoralization, of duping the masses, of interrupted falsifications, of the banishment of revolutionists, of the selection of functionaries, mercenaries and pure lackies. The present Comintern is an expensive apparatus for the weakening of the proletarian vanguard. That is all! It is not capable of doing more.

**Muenzenberg a Symbol**  
Wherever the conditions of bourgeois democracy open up a certain space, the Stalinists, thanks to the apparatus and the cash box, simulate a political activity. Muenzenberg has now become a symbolical figure of the Comintern. But who is Muenzenberg? He is an Oustrie on the "proletarian" arena. Empty slogans, which engage one to nothing, a little bit of Bolshevism, a little bit of liberalism, a stock exchange of journalists, literary drawing rooms where friendship for the U. S. S. R. has its price, a theatrical hostility towards the reformists, changing easily into a friendship for them (Harbusse) and, what is important, a well-adorned cash box, independent of the working masses,—that is what Muenzenberg is. Living politically on the aims of the bourgeois democracy, the Stalinists still demand of it the crowning point—that is strike down the Bolshevik-Leninists. Can one sink lower?... Yet, let but the bourgeoisie seriously lift the fascist, or the simple police, fist, and Stalinism draws its tail between its legs and retires docilely into the void. The Comintern in agony can give nothing to the world proletarian, absolutely nothing, save evil.

**The Comintern a Brake on the Revolutionary Movement**  
B.—That the Comintern, as the central apparatus, has become a brake on the revolutionary movement, it is impossible not to acknowledge, just as it must be agreed that a reform of the apparatus, independent of the masses, is absolutely unrealizable. But what about the national sections? Are all of them in the same stage of degeneration and decadence?

A.—After the German catastrophe, we have seen, in Austria as well as in Bulgaria, how the Stalinist parties were liquidated without resistance on the part of the masses. If the situation is more favorable in some countries than in others, the difference, despite everything is not very great. But let us even admit that one section of the Comintern or another is conquered by the Left Opposition: the morning after this fact, if not on the eve, it will be expelled from the Comintern and it will have to seek for itself a new international (something of that sort happened in Chile). Cases of that sort took place also during the appearance of the Third International: thus, the French Socialist Party, transformed itself officially into the Communist Party. But that did not change the general direction of our policy with regard to the Second International.

B.—Don't you think that thousands of "Stalinists" sympathetic to us will move away from us in fright when they learn that we are breaking finally with the Comintern?

A.—It is possible. It is even absolutely likely. But it is with all the greater decision that they will join with us at the following stage. It must not be forgotten, on the other hand, that in every country there are thousands of revolutionists who have abandoned the official party, or who were expelled from it, and who did not join us in large measure because, in their eyes, we were only a faction of that same party with which they were disgusted. An even greater number of workers are right now separating from reformism and seeking a revolutionary leadership. Finally, in this situation of putrefaction of the Social Democracy and the collapse of Stalinism, a young generation of workers is rising for whom a stainless banner is needed. The Bolshevik-Leninists can and should form the axis of crystallization of all these numerous elements. Then all that is of a living nature in the Stalinist "international" will shake off its last doubts and will join us.

B.—Are you not afraid that the new orientation will encounter an opposition within our own ranks?  
A.—In the first stage, it is absolutely inevitable. In many countries, the Left Opposition is linked up by all its work, more than anything else, if not exclusively, to the official party. It has penetrated very little into the trade unions and had hardly interested itself at all in what is happening in the ranks of Social Democracy. It is high time an end were put to narrow propagandism! The turn should be preceded by a broad and serious discussion. It is necessary that each member of our organization reflect to the very bottom of the problem. The events will help every day will bring irrefutable arguments on the necessity of the new international. I do not doubt that the turn, realized together and with decision, will open up before us a broad historical perspective. July 20, 1933. —G. G.

**Ignore Shanghai Workers**  
Quite characteristically, the delegation completely ignored the waiting demonstrators, who cheered and shouted slogans, the white defending their banners from police at U. S. A. (John Dos Passos), Canada and Australia. The world contempts to seize them. Lord Marley addressed the press instead. He said that the congress to be held at Shanghai was organized by the world congress against war held at Amsterdam last year and that further delegates were expected from the press had affiliated with it "more than 30,000 organizations, representing millions of people" (we know what Stalinist "thousands" and "millions" really amount to). The labor lord went on to express the hope that the conference would be able to establish a permanent bureau in the Far East. "With the help of the people, we may be able to accomplish something. We depend upon the support of all intelligent people both here and abroad." And then the redoubtable war resisters were whisked off in automobiles to comfortable hotels, leaving the demonstrators to march down the street without their "heroes".

Detachment from the masses, the lofty disdain of the intellectual for the "common herd" (the support of all "intelligent" people is what is wanted), the pious hope that they may be able to accomplish something—here is the true measure of this latest Stalinist outfit.

(Continued in the next issue)

## British Lord and Ex-War Minister Leads Stalinist Anti-War Junket in Shanghai

**SHANGHAI.**—Long heralded by advance press notices, the delegation sent out by the Paris Committee of the World Congress Against Imperialist War to organize and take part in a Far Eastern Anti-War Congress, arrived in Shanghai on August 18.

In all, five delegates arrived. They are Lord Marley, who was under-secretary for war in the MacDonald government in 1930-1931, and who describes himself as the "independent chairman" of the delegation; Paul Vaillant-Couturier, editor of the French Communist Party organ, L'Humanite, Georges Poupy, member of a Left Socialist grouping in France; Dr. Jean Martel, Belgian social democrat and deputy-mayor of Brussels; Gerald Hamilton, of the British Committee of the World Congress Against Imperialist War.

The delegation was met and welcomed by Soong Ching-ling, widow of the late Dr. Sun Yat-sen, who has blindly followed Moscow leadership and lent her name, efforts and personal prestige to any cause, short of Communism, which possesses a radical tinge. Thus she figures prominently in the League Against Imperialism and was a prominent sponsor of the short-lived and now defunct China League for Civil Rights, through which she thought it would be possible to unite various "liberal" people to fight against the imprisonment, torture and killing of political prisoners in China, including Communists.

Dr. Sun's widow has still to learn, apparently, that just as fighters for the proletariat of China can be saved, if at all, from the Kuo Min Tang hangmen only by sweeping mass actions of the workers through their own defense organizations and that no hedge-podge league of liberals can substitute for such organizations—so war and the war danger, which are concomitants of capitalism in the imperialist stage and as inseparable from it as the spots from the leopard, can be combated effectively only by the workers, under Communist leadership, and ended solely by a revolutionary overturn of the system which produces them.

Those who proclaim, or imply, as do the sponsors of the congress to which Lord Marley and his confederates have been sent, that imperialist war can be combated otherwise than by the revolutionary mass action of the workers, whose task is to convert imperialist war into civil war and an armed struggle for power, are sowing illusions and deceiving the masses. True, the members of the delegation pay lip service to the necessity for mass working class action. Even Lord Marley does so, though doubtfully and hesitatingly. But mass action cannot be conjured up by phrases and windy congress speeches made by persons of the Marley stamp, who have no connections with the masses, represent nobody but themselves, and who, most likely, will find adequate reasons for flocking to their respective imperialist colors in a real war crisis.

**Motley "Sponsors"**  
Who are the sponsors of the projected anti-war congress in Shanghai? The same people who

brought to birth the Anglo-Russian Committee, the Communist-Kuo Min Tang alliance, the League Against Imperialism, the World Congress Against Imperialist War held last year at Amsterdam and, more recently, the Anti-Fascist Congress at Paris—the centrist managers of the Communist International, headed by Stalin. That the tracks lead un-

mistakably to Moscow is sufficiently indicated by the presence among the delegates of Vaillant-Couturier, editor of L'Humanite, who certainly would not be here without Stalinist approval. To be sure, he is not a representative of the Communist International or even of the French Communist Party (he would doubtless vigorously repudiate any such charge), but as a representa-

tion of the ubiquitous Henri Barbusse—that good novelist made a poor politician by the Moscow epigones. However, we are already acquainted with this old Stalinist trick. By refraining from having any direct, official representation of the mandarin of the Communist International insure itself in ad-

vice the widest degree of inner party democracy. The various groups composing the New Party must be given the freedom to present their views to the party membership. There must be freedom of discussion and the most thorough consideration by the Party as a whole of the problems before the movement.

3. The system of discipline can under no circumstances parallel or be similar to that of the official Communist Party today. The right of the bureaucracy from on top appointing all the functionaries must be abandoned. The election of officials from the lowest to the highest must be instituted. Leadership must come as a result of worth, ability and approval of the membership. Discipline must be built up on the basis of establishing the authority of the leading organs of the Party. Bureaucratic mechanical discipline, characteristic of the official Communist Party cannot be continued in the New Party.

4. The building of new Communist Parties in the various capitalist countries, based upon the conditions of the respective countries and the needs of the masses assures the building up of a genuine International Communist organization.

5. The New Party can under no circumstances support the present Communist International system of organization. It must oppose the right of an international organization to dominate policies and determine the leadership of its sections as destructive of the best interests of building up an International Communist movement.

6. The New Party must recognize the Soviet Union as a workers' State and give it its wholehearted support, however not giving up the right to criticize the policies of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and its leaders.

## Discussion Articles

### For a New Communist Party by Ben Gitlow

We reprint below the article by Ben Gitlow on the question of a new Communist Party which appeared in the latest issue of the *Voice of Labor*, official organ of the Workers Communist League. In view of the prominence of comrade Gitlow in the American Communist movement, and the fact that the group for which he speaks split away from the Lovestone faction some months ago, the importance of his declaration is self evident. It is published here for the information of our readers in connection with the statements of the Left Opposition on the same question.

At the present time representatives of the National Committee are conducting discussions with a committee of the Gitlow group on the question of a new party. The results of these discussions will be reported in the *Militant*.—Ed.

The gravity of the crisis in the Communist movement is bringing to the fore the question of the organization of a new Communist Party. The German events have had a great deal to do with this question. The Party in Germany has been destroyed. Its policies led to catastrophic defeat. Furthermore the Communist International was not an aid in preventing the defeat. It was directly responsible for the policies of the German Communist Party, which made defeat, at the hands of the Hitler fascist bandits, a foregone conclusion. In addition so badly was the party dispersed and the movement routed, that the German working class was left stranded without a revolutionary party to guide it, to organize it, and to prepare it to overcome its defeat. It was a consideration of these facts that induced Trotsky to pose the question of the necessity of immediately establishing a new Communist Party in Germany upon the ruins of the old one, a party that shall be free from the domination and policies of the Stalin regime of the Third International.

But the question of a new Party is not only a question for Germany. It is a question for the most important capitalist countries. The official Communist Parties have become so discredited, have lost so much in influence and have become so completely isolated from the masses because of the sectarian, disruptive and stupid policies of the Communist International, that

2. The New Party must guaran-

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