

O'neal Discovers «Trotskyism»

Socialist Locals Come Out For The Fourth International

A sacred flame flickers in the weekly column of the socialist organ, *The New Leader*. It is kept alive by the oracular commentaries of the editor, Mr. James O'neal. Every week, Cassandra croaks a warning to one or another group in the flock which threatens to stray from the barren pastures fenced in by the high priests of the Socialist party. One would think that a shepherd who has had such unrelieved bad luck in the past fifteen years would shut up shop and go into a business more suited to his talents. But not Mr. O'neal.

Local Denver for 4th International
In the *New Leader* of February 10, 1934, the smallest available type in the most obscure corner announces the not unimportant fact that

"Local Denver has endorsed the Springfield (Ill.) resolution to withdraw from the International and join the Fourth (Trotsky) International."

Elsewhere we learn that, at least in New York, branches of the Socialist party are listening to speeches on "Trotsky and the Fourth International". At all events, the highly encouraging news that two branches as far apart as Springfield and Denver have adopted resolutions in favor of the new revolutionary International, would indicate that there is a distinct—if as yet a weak—current in the ranks of the Socialist party for a clean break with the Second International and association with the Fourth.

Into the breach rushes Mr. O'neal. In his column of February 17, he writes:

"A resolution has been adopted by a few (A few!—s.) Socialist locals which declares that the Labor and Socialist International, commonly known as the Second International, has an unbroken record of disservice to the working class of the world, beginning with its support of the nationalistic and imperialistic ambitions of the bourgeoisie before and during the war of 1914-1918, followed by its attempt (altogether too successful) to restore order and harmony to the disrupted capitalist economy in the defeated nations, and this at the expense of the proletariat."

"Then the strategy and tactics of evolutionary socialism and reformism have proved its inability to withstand the advance of Fascism which destroyed all the reforms and advantages that labor unions and political action have gained in decades". Therefore, it is urged that the party withdraw from the L. S. I. and join the Fourth International.

—And what would this mean? Mr. O'neal is not easily deceived. "Party members should understand that the Fourth International is a project of the Trotsky Communists and that it means that the Socialist Party should affiliate with a new Communist International. The resolution conceals this important fact."

O'neal Distorts Facts
But who is Mr. O'neal to cast a stone? He not only conceals facts of no lesser importance, but also he distorts several more. The merits of Communism versus Social

Democracy are today far less a matter of only theoretical dispute than they were over a decade ago when O'neal engaged in debate in the New Star Casino in New York and proclaimed that he would never join an International which harbored Noske and Scheidemann. There is today a far vaster store of factual material by which to judge than existed a decade ago—and there was more than enough even then.

As an historian of early colonial life, Mr. O'neal has delved as meticulously into facts as his un-Marxian mind would permit. Whenever he has occasion to touch upon the history of Communism and proletarian revolution, however, he becomes a disseminator of myths. To the erring "Trotskyists" in his party, therefore, he lectures as follows:

"That situations have been misjudged at times by the movements abroad may be granted, but that Communist ideology and methods have been wise and have served the working class is not true, as Bavaria, Italy, Hungary and Germany show....The Bolsheviks judged wrongly and paid the penalty in Bavaria, Italy, Hungary and Germany. The Labor Party in England miscalculated its duty in office and paid the penalty. The Socialists in Germany and Italy had not only their own choice to make but that choice was also limited by what the Communists decided to do."

Social Democratic Legends
If by "Communist ideology and methods" are meant the ideology and methods of Lenin, Trotsky and the Communist International which they founded, we don't know what O'neal is talking about. If he is referring to the legend created as a cover for socialist treachery, it should not take more than a few sentences to explode it.

1. The revolution in Bavaria was not led by the Bolsheviks at all, but by the Independent Socialists under Kurt Eisner, later murdered by Count Arco-Valley. Into the Eisner cabinet entered, upon the urging of agents of the Berlin Chancellery, the notorious social democrat Auer, who later sent a bouquet of flowers to Count Arco. Auer did not "miscalculate"; the Bavarian revolution was drowned in its own blood—but not because of the Bolsheviks.

2. It was not the Communists but the social democratic head of the Italian trade unions, D'Aragnona, who quit the meeting of their National Council (where for five days and nights the Right wing had been trying to find some way of calling off the two-weeks' old occupation of the factories) in order to proceed secretly to Turin to meet with Prime Minister Giolitti. It was these two who stabbed the Italian movement in the back at the moment of its highest ascent, on the basis of Giolitti's promise that a Factory Council Law would be proposed to parliament and carried—which it never was. Two weeks after the factories were cleared, the big Fascist offensive was launched which ended with the

march on Rome. Nor was it as a result of "Communist ideology and methods" that D'Aragnona boasted that he had remained within the Socialist party in order to prevent the revolution; or that Turati ran off Fascism by a coalition; or that Baldisi was ready to enter the first Mussolini cabinet. Despite all errors they may have committed in the early period of their party existence, the Italian Communists do not bear the responsibility for the crimes of Italian reformism.

The Case of Hungary
3. Hungary is just as poor a case for O'neal, because it was never an example of Communist methods. This is sufficiently indicated by the mere fact that the Hungarian Soviet republic represented a division of power between the Communists (if that is what the group around Bela Kun can be called) and the Socialists. The dictatorship was proclaimed after the conclusion (in half a minute!) of an agreement between the socialist leadership and Kun's group. In the council of five which actually directed the affairs of the Soviet republic, the socialists had the majority! The telegraphic inquiry of Lenin, who was deeply concerned about this union with the perfidious social democrats, was answered by Kun with a deceptive assurance that the Communist position in the government was adequately guaranteed. As to the role played by the Austrian and Czech social democrats when the counter-revolution crushed the Soviets—perhaps O'neal would like to spend a couple of paragraphs on the subject....

4. As for Germany, one must be possessed of a monstrous insolence to compare, let us say, the miscalculations of a Liebknecht with the "miscalculations" of an Ebert or a Noske, or fourteen years later, a Weis and a Stampfer. We will not affront our readers by elaborating on this theme!

Stalinism Is Not Communism
Mr. O'neal is disturbed, and properly so. He is not dealing here with Stalinists, you see. He cannot foist upon the "Trotskyists" the onus of any of the idiocies and crimes of the bureaucracy which disgraces the good name of Communism. He is unable to resort to the trick of dangling before the discontented Socialist militants the misshapen form of Stalinism and labelling it Communism, in order to lighten back his ranks from the path which leads to a revolutionary position. He must therefore fumble around in his memory for the tattered legends about the "failure" of "Communist methods"—"even under Lenin and Trotsky."

We do not think that those militants in the Socialist party who stand in the revolutionary vanguard by the very fact that they have properly put the emphasis on the key problem of the day—the International—will worry greatly over O'neal's oracular admonitions. They are obviously past that stage. And the ranks will swell of those who see that there is an uncommon amount of yellow in O'neal's guttering sacred flame.—S.

During the last month several different organizations of unemployed started among the CWA workers around every kind of issue. The Unemployed Council of the official Communist Party was given a new lease on life—under a different name however. There were Blue Eagle Clubs, Citizen's Worker Ass'n, etc. New branches of the Minneapolis Central Council for the Unemployed were formed, along with two CWA job councils.

This latter movement is a genuine united front of workers' organizations affiliated to a Central Council, which in turn organizes the unemployed, co-ordinates the efforts of all separate workers' organizations on a common minimum program of struggle against unemployment. The Central Council is made up of delegates from numerous local unions, from the co-operatives, and from three labor political groups, the Farmer-Labor Party, the Socialist Party, and the Communist League.

This movement by its program and policy is in a position to unite the organized and employed workers with the unemployed and bring the greatest pressure and striking force to bear upon the bosses and their administrators in the City Government. It has projected a conference of all CWA workers groups, not yet affiliated, to work out a program of common struggle on the CWA front. At the last meeting the M. C. C. U. changed its name to the Minneapolis Central Council of Workers, now the M. C. C. W.

A hard fought struggle of the upholsterers in Minneapolis for 'Union Recognition' has been interrupted for the time being by an NRA Labor Board 'Decision'. To say it is pro-boss would be mild, compared with what the striking upholsterers called it. The decision was that the strikers go back to work with the scraps that the labor board could not order a 'closed shop' or 'an open shop', neither could it 'order' that piece-work be abolished when it existed in other 'centers of the industry', and provided for the 'code' wages, and election of shop representatives for collective bargaining. On the Board were six 'Labor Leaders', six employers, and a liberal 'pro-labor' lawyer as impartial chairman. This decision smashed more illusions about the NRA and the 'New Deal' among the trade unionists of this region than any other single act of the administration so far. It solved none of the fundamental problems involved in this strike and lock-out situation.

The workers are going back to work to vote for their representatives and 'their demands', although under a handicap which may break the fine solidarity they maintained throughout the long weeks of struggle right up to the Labor Board decision. The betrayal of the A. F. of L. Labor Leaders, the Halls and Lawsons, sitting on the Board, consisted in this: they pawed off 'their rights' as labor leaders to organize workers into a union and get recognition for themselves before a Labor Board as representatives of the workers in that industry, 'their only right' under section 7a. The provincial petty-bourgeois prejudice, to keep this industry in this territory, by not putting too heavy demands upon it from 'labor', so that it can compete with other sections.' This is truth, was their position. The effect is this, slower movement into the unions, more suspicious of 'Labor Leaders' are the workers, and a more serious and deeper attitude towards the whole problem of union organization on the part of the rank-and-file in the unions.

The outcome to date has demonstrated the inadequacy, the hopeless futility, of the begging tactics of the local's leaders in all previous struggles, their dickerings with employers through politicians and lawyers, their emphasis upon 'legal defense' in court cases and injunctions coming out of the struggle, their failure to maintain mass picketing consistently when experience showed that as often as it was used gains were made by the workers. Labor has nothing to plead for, it has the job of organizing its forces, creating and using sufficient power to force its demands upon the employers in each given situation.

Minneapolis Mooney Conference Marks Time
The Minneapolis Mooney Council of Action has for several months been more or less dormant. After a failure to attract appreciable masses due to the United Front from below tactics imposed upon it by the Stalinists in co-operation with Walter Frank, who was going to build a movement that would ruthlessly fight (by slander) the 'labor fakers' the conference settled down to monthly meetings, where Frank would chide the Trotskyites for not attending meetings they were not notified of. The Mooney letter of Nov. 18th came into this situation, but it was not all there. All criticism and polemical sections were deleted, only the last paragraphs about the Motion Picture, the petitions, his birthday, etc., and his signature. Cazanov of the Left Opposition produced the original letter in complete form. Consternation ruled, the Stalinists were virtually absent from this meeting. Decision: to send both letters to Mooney and ask information.

Two weeks later another meeting was to be held. Only the Franks, the Left Opposition delegate, and a couple of trade unionists came. More material; statement of Stalinist-Secretariat, bragging of achievements, the reply of Mooney that they 'quit', the resolution in reply to Mooney that disbanded the National Council of Action.

No regular meeting was held, a discussion ensued during which Frank put up a weak defense for his former position in supporting the 'correct policy' of the official party in the Mooney movement. He was 'saving the face' of the conference before the trade-unionists present. At this gathering the party was completely absent. Where are our yesterday's all-knowing, all-seeing, all-powerful, and all-proud defenders of Tom Mooney?

More disgusting conniving, more thoughtless muddling, of our 'organizers of defeats'; more work, more hard efforts, more time must be expended to repair the damage done by the cynical Hathaways, and degenerate politicians like the Bob Minors. The local Mooney Conference decided to meet again and take up the work to win Mooney's freedom under the Moulder's Defense Committee or whatever other Centers are recommended by Mooney.

MPLS. LABOR NOTES

Minneapolis. — Immediately following the lay-off of four thousand GWA workers the Public Welfare Department was besieged with angry crowds of unemployed demanding food and fuel. A near-riot followed the arrest of one demonstrator at the Court House, when the extreme temperature of 20 below zero had driven some 20 men to the relief lines for 'emergency orders'. This spontaneous demonstration forced the issuance of hundreds of coal-orders along with some food-orders 'without investigation'.

The cause of this flocking back to the relief lines of thousands of CWA workers lies in the fact that the wages they were receiving were inadequate for men with large families.

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Stalinism on Austria

Comments Refute Course in Germany

"But the Austrian workers had drawn a lesson from the German events, a lesson that every worker must learn. They chose to die fighting on the barricades rather than to be tortured in the Fascist camps."

Who penned this unquestionably correct lesson from the German events? None other than those who shout from the roof-tops that the German workers should not have fought, that the Communist party did not have a majority of the workers behind it, that armed resistance to the Fascist mob would have been a putsch! None other than the Stalinist editorial writer of the *Daily Worker* (Feb. 14, 1934) who only yesterday fulminated against the "counter-revolutionary Trotskyists" who have the audacity to say that the Communist Party of Germany, which had a parliamentary strength of six millions, should have fought a defensive struggle against Hitlerism!

What happens to this bookish strategy of revolution (or rather retreat) of the Stalin, Heckert and Platnitsky's? These "generals" have clearly (?) explained that without a majority of the workers behind the revolutionary party, armed struggle against Fascism was impossible, futile and counter-revolutionary!

After the German defeat, the American Stalinists were quiet for a few days—Pravda had not yet given them the line! Today they write voluminously—following the Pravda editorials! "The Social Democratic workers of Austria, abandoned by their leaders, are carrying on their struggles with supreme courage and devotion," writes Pravda (Feb. 14). If it appears that the leaders called the general strike, that some of them are on the barricades, all this must be "overlooked". They do not like the facts, because they do not fit their theories. So they invent others. "The Social Democratic Leaders Are Already Coming to Terms with the Dollfuss Government" runs the subhead of the *Daily Worker* report of the Pravda editorial (Feb. 14, 1934—Special Edition). Without any proofs being offered!

"The devoted fighters for their class, the Austrian Communists, are in the front ranks of the present struggle. The small Austrian Communist Party has given thousands of fearless fighters to this struggle, fighters who are leading tens of thousands of workers in heroic struggle," writes Pravda. That Communist workers are active in the fighting is undoubtedly true; but that the non-existent Communist Party of Austria, wiped out without leaving a trace by the Dollfuss government months ago, is leading the struggle is a lie made out of whole cloth.

What happens to the theory of "social-Fascism"? Like all the spurious theories of Stalinism it goes up the chimney with all their other rubbish. The fact that Social Democracy and Fascism are irreconcilable is once again proved by

life itself. This does not disturb the equanimity of the Stalinists: so much the worse for the facts—they still persist in their theory!

The fact that the leaders of the Austrian Social Democracy by their whole course since the World War have paved the way for reaction and Fascism is indisputable. Their support of Dollfuss' emergency decree was a result of their programmatic bourgeois democratic viewpoint: Dollfuss was the "lesser evil" (as compared to the Nazis). This permitted Dollfuss and the Nazis to consolidate their forces. Their threat of a general strike "if and when" legality was violated by Dollfuss was a logical outcome of their "constitutional" program. Instead of putting it on this basis, the bureaucratic Stalinists turn the entire question on its head. Their whole emphasis is placed under the purely secondary consideration of the personal cowardice of the individual leaders of the Austrian Social Democracy.

By such methods the Stalinists are alienating the Socialist workers, instead of clear-cut explanation of the facts—distortions, fabrications, stupid boastings as to the activities of the non-existent Austrian Communist Party. And yet they shout with added emphasis for a "united front with the Socialist workers." What hypocritical gestures!

The *Daily Worker* of Feb. 14th carries an appeal of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the U. S. A. for a demonstration that day (Wednesday) before the Austrian consulate at 4 P. M. It appeals to all workers, particularly Socialist workers. The conscientious Stalinist worker is attracted by the apparently militant tone of the call. The Socialist worker reading the appeal grits his teeth at these professional splitters. For the Socialist Party, and several of its sympathetic organizations, had already made public its call for a demonstration for the same day at the same place at 5 P. M.! Not a word of this is mentioned in the Stalinist appeal! No attempt is made to appeal to the New York City Central Committee of the Socialist party for a united front demonstration!

At the demonstration itself the Stalinists behaved in a shameful manner. The misled Stalinist workers shouted "Socialists and Communists unite and fight!" but time after time their leaders disrupted the orderly procession of the demonstrators. Fist fights between Socialists and Stalinists were barely avoided. After some time, through the intervention of a member of the Communist League, the heads of the Socialist and Stalinist steering committees met and agreed to their banner be at the head of the parade with the Socialist banners. But even this was not sufficient for the Stalinists.

Various of their leaders, including Norman Tallentire, ran up and down the line of march calling on the Stalinists' workers to break their lines and get near the beginning of the parade! Here again fist fights were barely avoided.

The Stalinists repel the Socialist workers by such tactics at a time when it is a dire class need that a united front of all workers' organizations be formed which will rally behind the heroic Austrian working class. Time presses.

—JOSEPH CARTER.

Elections in New York Shops

Elections held a couple of weeks ago by the N. Y. Regional Labor Board in 16 shops hitherto unorganized, but several months on strike, to determine with which union the workers desired to affiliate recorded 9 for the United Shoe and Leather Workers Union, and 7 for the reactionary Boot & Shoe Workers Union of the A. F. of L. There is evidence of the most flagrant intimidation and crookedness in the conduct of these elections including wholesale importations for the day of the election from other factories in other towns. Protests have been filed with the Labor Board in Washington, but nothing can be hoped for from this source. Only future organizing activities of the new union hold a prospect of adding these and other oppressed groups to the fold.

—SHOE WORKER.

Here and There with the United Front

In the era of the "third period" the united front policy of the Stalinized Comintern was the united front from below. Reduced to its concrete meaning this policy was a call to the workers in the Socialist parties and the reformist and Right wing unions to leave their organizations, leave their leadership, and enter into joint action with the Stalinists under the leadership of the latter on a program determined in advance by them. The theoretical sugar-coating with which the Stalinists dressed up their conceptions did not for one minute alter their ultimatum and disruptive nature.

On March 6, 1933 when the situation was already lost in Germany and Fascism was decimating the organized working class the Comintern issued a call to the Second International for a united front of organizations, repudiating on its face the united front from below. Forthwith the journalistic hacks of the Stalinist apparatus set out to prove that the line of the C. I. manifesto was the only correct line, that this was always the line, that any other was counter-revolutionary.

On May 1 the C. I. issued another manifesto reverting back to the united front from below. The same writers wriggled like worms. The united front from organization to organization had unmistakably demonstrated its superiority in the question of the Chicago relief demonstration, the New York May Day parade, the Mooney movement and the united front with the Socialist locals on the West coast. The people who had seen its fruits struggled against abandoning this policy. No doubt heavy pressure

from Moscow was instrumental in forcing the recalibrants to accept this inflexible line.

The theses of the Thirteenth Plenum affirmed again the united front from below: "The 13th Plenum of the E. C. C. I. calls upon all Sections of the C. I. persistently to fight for the realization of a united militant front with the social-democratic workers in spite of and against the will of the treacherous leaders of social-democracy." And the sub-head under which this appears is: "C. Against Social-Front Below."

That is the policy now. But within this same FORM a change has taken place. Two outstanding events demonstrate this clearly. In the New York Hotel Strike after many appeals for unity of the Stalinist paper union with the A. F. W. the Stalinists put their new united front from below policy to work. They called upon all the strikers to strike under the leadership of the A. F. W. And under this slogan they invaded the A. F.

W. The line they pursued there was no less disruptive than it was formerly when they were outside.

—T. STAMM.

In the Madison Square Garden protest the Stalinists, who were not invited, came down in the name of unity to make a united front from below. Under the direct incitement of the Party leaders they conducted themselves as Fascists do at workers meetings.

Their united front is a maneuver to transfer their disruption from the outside to the inside. In this way they want to cover up their weakness and bankruptcy.

Essentially the policy is the same: disruption of all organizations and movements not controlled by the C. P. in the name of and under the slogan of unity.

The appeal of the *Daily Worker* of February 18 to the Socialist Party for a united front is an attempt to cover up the Stalinists' entirely unjustifiable conduct at the Madison Square Garden protest. It means nothing. And it does not signify a change in the united front policy of the Communist Party.

The recent united front maneuvers of the Stalinists have given rise to much confusion on the part of workers who thought that the Stalinists unlike the leopard could change their spots. They thought the Stalinists, cognizant of their weakness, had finally come round to seriously promote unity in the workers' rank. The course of the Stalinists in the Hotel Strike and in the Madison Square Garden protest should show them that it is only a tactical shift within the framework of the old strategy; and that its essence is still the same: disruption.

JUST OFF THE PRESS!

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