

Stalinist Record in the Cuban Revolution

In Cuba in the summer of 1933 there were only two serious organized political working class forces: The Communist Party (Stalinists) and the Bolshevik-Leninists. Our section was not quite two years old, and, at that time, still committed to the orientation of reforming the C.I. and the C.P. of Cuba, and was a comparatively small organization. Its greatest strength lay in its connections with the trade union movement. It wielded great and almost decisive influence in the Havana Federation of Labor composed of thirty trade unions in which anarcho-syndicalists were also influential. It was a leading organization in the general strike.

But in size, prestige, and influence it was weaker than the Communist Party which had a wider and more powerful organizational structure and base. In its trade union center, the C.N.O.C., National Confederation of Cuban Workers, were thirty-five unions. The C.P. had auxiliaries and peripheral organizations embracing thousands of workers. If it was not, as it claimed, the leader, it was the outstanding organized political force in the working class. On its record and in its policy, therefore, are to be sought the reasons for the failure of the workers to advance toward their liberation, and for their set-back at the hands of Mendieta.

Stalinists Come to Aid of Class Enemy

One the ninth of August, two days before Machado fell, when the general strike had reached its seventh day, the Executive of the C.N.O.C. (the Cuban Stalinist T.U.U.L. section of the R.I.L.U.) and the Political Bureau of the Communist Party issued a manifesto in which they said that "... Machado cannot be overthrown by strikes" and that the Labor Federation of Havana (trade union center, at that time under the leadership of anarcho-syndicalist elements and the Bolshevik-Leninists) "was leading the workers to massacre".

Let no one think that the view expressed here was only a question of evaluating the situation and working out a strategic line of struggle. No! although that in itself were enough to confuse the workers at the decisive moment and demoralize them, disrupting their struggle and doing yeoman's work for the class enemy. The manifesto was the "ideological" motivation for a treacherous act of strike-breaking. The Stalinists called on the workers to go back to work!

They themselves admit it. In one of the resolutions prepared for the Fourth National Labor Unity Congress of the C.N.O.C. held in Havana in January, 1934 they say: "The National Confederation of Labor of Cuba, failing to see and apply the experience acquired in so many years' of strike struggles, which showed in every strike that all economic demands have their profound political content—drew a false analysis of the content of the general strike. . . . The false appraisal which was a grave error (!) gave as a natural (!) immediate consequence, a second, graver (!) error, which consisted in the belief that the workers of each industry, once their demands were obtained, should return to work, and telling the workers that they should not be moved by the slogan of continuing the strike, when in reality the political content of the strike, were determined to continue it." (quoted from the January 12 Manifesto of the General Union of Commercial Employees of Cuba, an affiliate of the Havana Federation of Labor, to the Fourth Congress of the C.N.O.C. (Our emphasis throughout.)

Daily Workers Gives Assistance
Fatal admissions! The Stalinists claim the authority of Marx and Lenin! they call themselves the vanguard of the working class, yet they cannot recognize the political content of a general strike (!!), they are so obtuse with bureaucratic conceit they do not know what the masses want in the fire of the revolution itself!!

But it is not a question of stupidity alone. The Manifesto of the Commercial Employees Union charges: "What the Confederation does not say is precisely that knowing the profound political content of the movement that was developing, it believed in its own miserable con-

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New York Teachers Union Fights Red-Baiting

New York.—For the last two months the capitalist press has been calling for the blood of the "reds" in the New York school system. By "reds" is meant anybody who has the courage to put up a squawk against some aspect of the feudal regime of the reactionary Board of Education or who lifts a finger to fight against wage cuts. The yellow Hearst press is beating the patriotic drum louder than all the others combined. On the 4th of May the New York American tried to smear a coat of red-wash over 700 teachers who had signed a petition circulated by the Teachers Anti-War Committee. On the 8th the Evening Journal called the signers of the petition a "curious medley of alien and non-American names", "enemies from without, but, unfortunately settled within our gates", "such people must be rooted out like germs of pollution and disease". And so it goes.

The central purpose of this barrage was to whip up a red scare and create sentiment for the passage by the state legislature of the Ives Bill. In its original form this bill required every teacher in the system to swear support of the constitutions of the U. S. and the state of New York and to faithfully discharge "all the duties of any position to which I am now assigned or may hereafter be assigned". Under pressure of the storm of protest which this reactionary measure aroused the framers withdrew the last five words. But in this amended form the bill was merely a repetition of the oath required of teachers on entering the school system. The governor vetoed the bill and it is now dead. The next session of the legislature in the fall may see attempts to reintroduce it.

Persecuting Protesting Teachers

The bill was intended to place man-hunting weapons in the hands of the state to crush the teachers' resistance to wage cuts and other "economy" measures by expelling the militants as seditious and treasonable people. The defeat of the Ives Bill has not daunted the patrioters who are continuing the press campaign and who will concoct equally reactionary substitutes. Preceding this campaign and during it the Board of Education has been busy persecuting all teachers who have the courage to protest against its medieval rule. Wage increases established by law have been summarily denied on false pretexts; in some cases criticism of a superior has resulted in a punitive transfer to a school under a notoriously reactionary principal whose forte is a regime of petty persecution, etc., etc. Other teachers have been fired.

The Teachers' Union of New York, Local No. 5 of the American Federation of Teachers, chartered by the New York Federation of Labor, has picked up the gauntlet thrown down by the reaction and is fighting back. The high point in its campaign thus far was a remarkable mass meeting held Friday, June 8th, attended by about 1200 teachers. The principal speakers were Norman Thomas and Arthur Garfield Hays. Thomas, "militant" leader of the S. P. spoke mainly about values in education; Hays amused the audience with a witty, liberal speech. Willianna Burroughs, victimized teacher and Stalinist candidate for comptroller in the last municipal election revealed that the president of the union himself had poured oil on the flames of the red-baiting campaign by informing the Daily News in

what teacher organizations Communists are to be found!

Union Members Defeat Demagogue
A dramatic struggle took place over an amendment introduced from the floor to a resolution offered by the union, branding Superintendent of schools, Campbell, a red-baiter for vicious statements made by him in the press. Lefkowitz, legislative agent of the union, pillar of the union administration, apologist for La Guardia, former socialist and now member of the Fusion Party Education Committee, who is nursing bourgeois political ambitions took the floor in Campbell's defense. Everybody understood that Lefkowitz was keeping his record clear in order not to get in bad with the big boys higher up. He got his answer from the union members, however, when the amendment was carried, 415 to 152. The teachers want to fight!

With the passage of the amendment—although the union is not technically committed, since the vote was taken at a public mass meeting and not at a union membership meeting—the issue is squarely joined between the teachers and the Board of Education. The union has only one honest course—to fight the Board of Education over the issues of academic freedom and red-baiting. The union has indicated that it will fight and that it will conduct an energetic campaign and will welcome the assistance of labor. Labor is vitally interested in the question of the regime in the schools to which it sends its children and the subject matter taught them. If the issue is taken into the trade union movement support for the fight of the Teachers Union can be won. All labor organizations should get behind the union. —H.L.

After the Socialist Party Convention

The Right Wing of the Socialist Party is determined to bludgeon the majority into submission or split the party wide open. The events of the Convention in Detroit, June 1-3, and of the week following, show how far the Right Wing is willing to go.

Outright defiance and repudiation of the majority vote which established the new centrist Declaration of Principles was declared in a public statement by Louis Waldman, Chairman of the New York State organization and leader of the Old Guard, the day after the convention. Mr. Waldman, after three days of shouting himself hoarse at the convention in the name of democracy against illegality and violence (when used on capitalists), flatly declared on June 4 in a statement issued to the press, that he intends to disobey the mandate of the Party Convention. He said:

"The declaration that has been adopted, which was sponsored by Mr. Thomas and his allies, commits not only the national organization, but attempts to commit also the State and local organizations, to a program which runs contrary to everything for which the Socialist Party has stood and which it regards as fundamental. I know that New York State Socialists will not permit themselves to be driven into a position which they consider indefensible and untenable, and I am confident that I express the sentiments of many other State and local organizations.

... As between the program of orderly, peaceable, constructive and intelligent political action and the insurrectionary, destructive and violent methods proposed by the left wing (i.e., the centrist majority) Socialists will have no difficulty in making their choice." (New York Times, June 5. Our emphasis.)

Old Guard to Flaunt Convention Decisions

Waldman's bold repudiation of the hegemony of the national organization over the State and local units makes clear—his statement was issued before the National Executive Committee of the S. P. met—that no matter what the results of the referendum on the Declaration of Principles, which the N.E.C. decided on the day of Waldman's statement, the Old Guard has no intention of following the democratic decisions of the S. P. if they are not dictated by the Old Guard. Thus the S. P. will either back down, mutilating the already diluted Declaration of Principles or accepting the substitute prepared by the Old Guard; or it must face the fact that the Old Guard does not consider itself bound by Party decisions. This means, either collapse of the already-weak national structure of the Party, by capitulating to the complete autonomy for State and local organizations demanded by Waldman, or else the Socialist Party must expel the Old Guard for outright sabotage of its decisions.

So far, however, no sign has come from the N. E. C. that it will face the insulting repudiation of the Party by the Old Guard. All talk of splits in the party has come from the Old Guard, in the form of threats against those who disagree with them.

On the next day of the convention, when the resolutions voted for at the 2nd International

Congress in Paris by four out of six of the American Delegation, came on the floor for the party's approval, the Old Guard opened up the attack with an explicit threat by Judge Panken: "Pass this resolution and you split the party." On that issue the Old Guard was triumphant.

Old Guard Renews Threat of Split

In the debate on the Declaration of Principles, the Old Guard went even further. While every speaker for the centrist Declaration talked unity, almost every Right-Winger talked split. The speakers in this debate were picked by the leaders of the factions, as Vlodeck, the chairman, explained. Significant of the lengths the Old Guard will go was the fact that one of the speakers they chose was the veteran Joseph W. Sharts of Ohio, whose first words were: "This is probably the last meeting of the Socialist Party I shall ever speak to," declared that he and his ancestors had always followed the flag and that in the choice between the flag and the "red internationalists" (Thomas, etc.) he would follow the flag, and that anyone who would not fight for "his" country was a traitor. Choosing Sharts as spokesman shows that the Old Guard are ready to use the basest passions of chauvinism in their fight against any progressive tendency in the party. Their leader, Waldman, did not wait for the end of the convention to make clear his intentions. In the debate he openly declared that he could not, "as a Social-Democrat", follow the line of the Declaration. "The same high-handed tone was taken by Panken, Solomon, and the rest of the Right-Wing spokesmen.

One of the most unscrupulous tactics of the Old Guard was their use of the columns of the New York Times. The convention was covered for the Times by a friend of the Right-Wing, Joseph Shaplen, and his stories were deliberately written to scare wavering elements into the right wing camp. One story played up the presence of representatives of the various Communist groups, and made it appear that the left wing and Militants were under their direction. All Shaplen's stories were designed to indicate that the party was in imminent danger of a split due to the tactics of the opponents of the Right Wing.

"Militants" Afraid of Themselves
Instead of denouncing the provocative tactics of the Old Guard, the Socialist Party majority, including the Militants, have either been conciliatory to the point of further diluting their confused principles, or have pretended to ignore the Old Guard's bull-dozing. In the debate on the Declaration, whereas the Old Guard stood sharply by its reformist principles and taunted the Militants for bringing in a Declaration full of ambiguities, the spokesmen for the Declaration diluted its meaning even further by their verbal interpretations. Andrew Blemler, chairman of the Platform Committee and Militant leader, said the views in the Declaration "have always been the real views of socialism"—which puts Blemler to the right of Thomas, who at least speaks of a "new beginning for socialism". Daniel Hoan, Mayor of Milwaukee, watered the meaning of the Declaration still further by declaring that "the St. Louis Anti-War Resolution of 1917 went further than this", and gave a broad hint by reminding the convention

that "we never lived up to the St. Louis Resolution". Leo Krzycki, re-elected chairman of the party, spoke for the Declaration by saying: "I look upon this as the Socialist Party reaffirming the St. Louis Resolution"—and appealed for support to the memory of Hillquit, late leader of the Old Guard! This was the context given to the "radical" Declaration by the spokesmen for it!

The most creditable point in the majority spokesmen's support of the Declaration was the assertion, repeated by nearly all of them, in answer to Old Guard charges that the Declaration committed them to illegality in war-time—that what is legal or illegal is a question which is decided not by reason or an empire, but by the capitalist state itself, and therefore the capitalist state would rule illegal anything it chose. But the next day, at a meeting of the new N.E.C. which has a pro-Declaration majority, it was precisely this principle which was scrapped. The N.E.C. voted to submit the declaration to a committee of lawyers for their opinion as to its legal aspects!

Split in the S.P. is Inevitable

When Norman Thomas returned to New York June 6 he issued a statement to the press which reveals the weakness and confusion of the S. P. leadership. In the face of the open challenge to the party and repudiation of its decisions by Waldman, Thomas said he hoped Waldman "would have the good comradeship to remain in the party", and denied the possibility of a split. As to the committee of lawyers, it was, said Thomas, "being consulted purely on matters of phraseology." But his statement ends: The phraseology "has a certain possible importance in some States in view of the nature of the American tyranny that has been set up in them. The party can fight that tyranny better by effective organization than by endless legal cases." In other words, Thomas is now ready to let the states' conception of legality determine his program.

That the party majority is conciliatory and further dilutes its move to the left, and that the Right Wing continues to bludgeon its opponents in a determined drive to rule or ruin, does not mean that the majority will capitulate completely or that the Old Guard will win. The classic reformism of the Old Guard is dead, completely discredited by Germany and Austria, and the inevitable tendency in the Socialist Party will continue to be toward reform and revolution with the ambiguous formulas of centrism. The fight between the two camps in the Socialist Party will inevitably continue to the point of a split, as the Old Guard is well aware. The Old Guard, however, by fighting step by step, and forcing its opponents into conciliatory moves and confusing formulations, will split away at the moment most favorable to itself, taking with it the largest forces it possibly could muster—not to speak of the party property which is now in its hands and which it will never relinquish to the majority. The majority, on the other hand, will find itself on the day of the split weakened both in forces and ideology by its futile conciliatory moves, an incoherent mass with neither prestige nor strength.

The Foreign Policy of The Soviet Union

Soviet foreign policy has taken a decidedly anti-Leninist turn particularly since the recognition of the Soviet Union by the U. S. A.

In the first place, this recognition was granted only after American capitalism had been fully convinced that the Third International would no longer serve as an instrument of world revolution in general nor as a revolutionary incitement and inspiration to the American laboring masses in particular. Secondly, in order to emphasize their good faith, the Stalinist bureaucracy officially declared that President Roosevelt represented peaceful American capitalism which was honestly seeking a democratic and pacifistic solution to present-day imperialist contradictions and conflicts.

Recently Alexander A. Troyanovsky, the Soviet Ambassador to Washington, stated that the U.S. S.R. and the U.S.A. should be able to find a "common ground" in an endeavor "to secure complete or partial disarmament". "The foreign policy of the Soviet Union", he continued, "shows an increasing activity for peace. . . . We greeted the resumption of normal relations with the United States from this point of view. Not material gains for our country, but the gain for international peace was regarded in our country as the important thing in friendly relations with the United States."

Lenin's Teachings Forgotten

One can hardly doubt Troyanovsky's love for peace, especially if we take some of his other statements into account. "The cause of peace", he declared, "was so great that it must prevail over all other problems." And among these problems he cited the most important economic contradictions of our epoch. "All secondary (!?) problems, such as those of debts, of commercial competition, of tariffs, and so on," he explained, "must be settled as soon as possible by mutual agreements and to mutual satisfaction, for these relatively small (!?) questions spoil the international atmosphere and prevent friendly efforts to consolidate peace."

Can the worthy Stalinist Ambassador really mean this? Has he completely forgotten Lenin's teachings about the economic causes of war? Troyanovsky should be reminded that in Imperialism: The Last Stage of Capitalism Lenin actually proves that the "secondary" and "small" questions he mentions are at the very root of imperialist war in particular and all war in general. Or is this counter-revolutionary Trotskyism, Monsieur l'Ambassadeur?

In line with this trend the Stalinists have published abroad a brand new interpretation of capitalism and imperialism. They have divided the capitalist nations into two categories: one the peaceful, democratic and pacifist; and two, the warlike, fascist and aggressive. (This is precisely the theory of the Second International.) Under the former category are listed America, France, the Little Entente, and Possibly England; under the latter are listed especially Germany and Japan.

The Understanding With French Imperialism

Following through this anti-Marxist political philosophy, Litvinov is now engaged in discussions for an "understanding" with imperialist France. Frederick T. Birchall, N. Y. Times correspondent in Berlin, says that "... accompanying and alongside the military agreement, it is understood a thorough understanding has now been arrived at regarding Russia's entry into the League of Nations. It is to take place as soon as possible with the enthusiastic support of France, which, with the disarmament negotiations as an excuse (mark well!), will send to Geneva in the near future an impressive delegation. . . . The stage is all set in France to hail the Russian understanding . . . as a further guarantee of European peace and French security. Then France will be ready to talk about disarmament."

This maneuver is made in the name of Marx and Lenin, explain the Stalinists, in order to secure allies (!?) against a probable attack on the U.S.S.R. from the side of fascist and warlike capitalism, namely, Germany and Japan. Also the entry of the Soviet Union into the capitalist League of Nations, characterized by the Third World Congress of the Communist International as "the international trust of the victorious states for the exploitation of their vanquished competitors and the colonial peoples", has been facilitated.

How Pravda Explains Manoeuver

Today the Pravda, the official organ of the Stalinist bureaucracy, explains the politics of the League of Nations as follows: "As a matter of fact the withdrawal from the League of Japan and Germany—these countries which do not even try to conceal their determination to fulfill their imperialistic ambitions by the means of further armaments, encroachments and wars—has brought up the question whether the League could not to a certain degree (how cautious!) become the centre of united forces that are ready to delay the bloody settle-

ment of disputes and bring about at least some strengthening of peace." And Karl Radek adds: "The danger of war against the U.S.S.R. does not come from the League but from open opponents of the League and English diehards."

The Theses and Resolutions of the Third World Congress of the Communist International support this conclusion. "The new international labor organization is established for the purpose of organizing united action of the world proletariat, aspiring toward the same goal: the overthrow of capitalism, the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and of an International Soviet Republic, for the complete elimination of classes and the realization of Socialism, the first step toward the Communist Commonwealth."

Stalinism has eliminated all this. It has substituted in its place military alliances with capitalist countries and the insane theory of Socialism in one country. The Marxism-Leninism of the Third World Congress is now called counter-revolutionary Trotskyism. And in support of this thesis the French imperialist government is now persecuting Comrade Trotsky as a counter-revolutionist!

Soviet Union in Greater Danger

This new Stalinist policy will endanger not only the Soviet Union but also the prospects of a world revolution should an imperialist war break out. If the U.S.S.R. is maneuvered into the League of Nations, and thereby tied to the imperialist chariot of France and the Little Entente, or if it becomes a member of the permanent peace conference, it will have been demonstrated in either case that the Soviet Union is on the side of the strongest capitalist bandits. Thus, the emancipation of the oppressed by proletarian revolution is renounced, and the Soviet Union becomes a pawn (and ultimately a victim) in the imperialist game.

This policy, now aimed chiefly against Germany, is an inevitable consequence of the dastardly betrayal of the German workers and semi-proletarian masses by the C.P.G. under the direct command of Stalin. At first the German revolution was sabotaged in the interest of peace and credits. Now, with the threat of Hitler before their eyes, Stalin & Co. veer towards imperialist France in order to stay Hitler's hand, that is, to checkmate his Drang-nach-Osten policy.

As usual, the Stalinist bureaucracy does not calculate the effect of this course on the German masses. Having lost faith in the world revolution, and more particularly disdaining the revolutionary aid of the German masses in case of a fascist attack, Stalin once more plays into Hitler's hands. Goebbels has already broadcasted throughout bleeding Germany that the Soviet Union has formed a technical military alliance with the thoroughly hated France against the German people. And thus the last drop of revolutionary blood is drained from the veins of the German workers. This is the final stab in the back.

The Destruction of the Third International

The impending failure of the Disarmament Conference opens up a dangerous prospect for the Soviet Union. England cannot afford to have France increase its power on the Continent. It will not allow Germany to be further humiliated and crushed. It also supports the German rearmament proposals. It continues on friendly terms with Japan. For England needs both Germany and Japan, at least as potential allies, to maintain its far-flung empire.

The current policy of the Soviet Union, if carried through to the bitter end, leads to imperialist entanglements and aims a death-blow at the world proletarian movement. It is obvious that such a situation calls for a new party and a new (Fourth) International.

—SYMPATHIZER.

CHICAGO DEBATE

Spartacus Youth League vs. Young Peoples Socialist League.
Subject
Resolved that the organization of a Fourth International is indispensable to the victory of the World Working Class over Fascism.

Affirmative
Nathan Gould and Albert Glotzer (Members National Committee S.Y.L.)

Negative
Arthur MacDowell (National Chairman Y.P.S.L.) and John Riener.

Chairman
Ralph Chaplin—Editor Industrial Worker.

Friday, June 29th, 1934 at 7:45 P.M.
National Socialist Institute
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Admission 15c.

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