

Problems of Marxism

"Workers' Democracy"

No one with the least understanding of Marxism would insist upon using a certain traditional term in a revolutionary program if there are weighty reasons for discarding that term and using some other one conveying exactly the same idea.

It must be absolutely certain, however, before a word or term is changed, that the new term is exactly synonymous with the old. We assume that the idea expressed by the old term is correct. If not, a change of term is necessary because the old idea must be changed.

The Program of the A.W.P. With the rise of new and different groups in the revolutionary movement and with the probable fusion of some of the groups to form a new party, the question of program assumes great importance.

One of the most important changes in the A.W.P. program is the use of "workers' democracy" for "dictatorship of the proletariat".

Two main reasons are advanced by Hook in justification for displacing the "dictatorship of the proletariat" by "workers' democracy" in the program of the A.W.P.

In all probability Hook is correct in his claim that the "non-political" worker (who however is political enough to follow the capitalist parties) tends to associate Fascism with Communism when he hears the word "dictatorship".

It is necessary to remember that we are dealing here with a program of a revolutionary party composed of advanced workers and trying to attract to itself the more conscious elements of the working class.

The Dictatorship in Russia. The same argument applies to the contention that the dictatorship of the proletariat is misunderstood to mean dictatorship over the proletariat.

ions are controlled by a self-seeking bureaucracy which does not permit the union members to say a word in opposition to the confidence of many workers in trade-unions? And should we for that reason advocate a change in the name from "trade-unions" to something else? It is necessary to explain that a trade union should give to the members the right to criticize and decide important matters, that the workers must struggle constantly against any bureaucracy for these rights.

Necessarily comrade Hook assumes that workers' democracy is exactly the same thing as dictatorship of the proletariat. If that were so one could, though not fully convinced by the reasons given for the necessity of the substitution of terms, agree that a change of terms might do some good or at least could not do any harm.

The Characteristics of the Transition Period

It is absolutely correct to say that the dictatorship of the proletariat is workers' democracy. But it is not correct to assert that workers' democracy is the same as the dictatorship of the proletariat.

In a revolutionary program it is essential that the terms be exact and not such that can be stretched to suit one's convenience.

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There was a time when some socialists claimed that the best way to win the American workers for socialism is not to mention the word "socialism".

The League Marches To New Victories

The Communist League of America stands on the threshold of great events. Never in the history of our organization have opportunities been so favorable.

The whole physiognomy of American labor is undergoing a radical change. Everywhere the workers are stirring out of the chains of the economic crisis.

In the stress of the class struggle today the cry for leadership—honest, courageous revolutionary leadership—becomes more insistent. The minions of the capitalist class in the A. F. of L. hold back the struggle, stemming the tide when possible or knifing the movement when it gets out of their leading strings.

Spontaneous revolt against the reaction in the A. F. of L. crops up in another union. First in the steel union and now in the longshoremen, tomorrow the militant workers will break the bonds in another union.

REVOLUTIONARY LEADERSHIP VITAL

Political leadership of a revolutionary nature is the key to the successful outcome of the workers' struggle. This leadership cannot be had without the touchstone of Marxism.

It becomes more apparent every day that both the political parties claiming to represent the workers have failed where history called upon them to fulfill their self-appointed mission.

The Socialist party, torn by internal dissension, hopelessly compromised by the major events in Austria and in Germany,—what revolutionist could think of this "stinking corpse" directing the movement of the American working class?

BUILD THE NEW PARTY NOW!

Now then is the time to build that organization which for five years has been forging the weapon of Marxism, testing and tempering it in the crucible of world-shaking events.

Then their is the titanic job of erecting the new party in the fires of the class struggle. The creation of the new party depends for its momentum on the Marxian corps being rooted in the proletariat.

And already our training over the past five years, our granite foundation in the teachings of Marx, Lenin and Trotsky have begun to bear fruit.

Minneapolis is the first milestone on the road. There the international experience of the Bolshevik-Leninists as congealed in our trade union policy inspired a strike that has been exemplary in the whole labor movement.

And Minneapolis will show the way once more! The new strike which will probably break as we go to press will make the last one, with all its militancy, look like a social tea party.

On the other side the entire Minneapolis movement knows that this is a finish fight and has pledged itself to pitch in, in a general strike.

GENERAL STRIKE IN MINNEAPOLIS

On the other side the entire Minneapolis movement knows that this is a finish fight and has pledged itself to pitch in, in a general strike.

Out of the Minneapolis and similar struggles we will build a stronger and bigger Communist League. New recruits from the firing line. New influence in the mass organizations.

All our members and our sympathizers must realize how tremendous are these tasks. If we carry them through properly then it is a certainty that the Communist League will be on the map as a political force to be reckoned with throughout the labor movement.

Building the Communist League requires an apparatus, a functioning staff, and a whole corps of field organizers.

BUILD THE LEAGUE!

Besides these organizers there is another organizer, the collective organizer—our press—that must be built, that must be popularized.

In supporting the Organization-Press campaign you are building the firm edifice of the new party in strengthening the League as the major instrument in its creation.

F U N D S ! On those five letters hangs the whole campaign. As a revolutionary worker, as a supporter of Marxism in the labor movement, now is the time to rise to the task you are called upon to perform.

Our organization is small. We make no bones about this fact. The resources of our membership are insufficient for us to carry through the great tasks before us today.

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Support Grows in Org-Press Drive

The heroic struggles of the workers in Minneapolis, Toledo and the Pacific Coast are firing our members and sympathizers with a stubborn determination to build the League and its press.

Two organizers have already been selected to be sent into the field. One to Minneapolis, the other to Detroit. If the funds continue to come in as they have in the past week, both organizers will be able to proceed into the field within a few days.

From Minneapolis we get word that our members there have already rented a headquarters, anticipating the arrival of the organizer.

MEMBERS OF THE LEAGUE, FRIENDS AND SYMPATHIZERS, DON'T LOSE ANOTHER DAY!

Los Angeles Branch \$20.00, Waukegan Branch 11.00, New Haven Branch 10.00, G. Duell, New Haven 1.00, S. Gendelman, New Haven 1.00, Pittsburgh Branch 17.20, Boston Branch 15.00, Cleveland Branch 6.50, Youngstown Branch 11.00, New Castle Branch 15.00, Newark Branch 5.00, Philadelphia Branch 5.00, Rose Hegedus, South Bend 1.00, Pearl Kling, Boro Park 1.00, A. Friend, Springfield, Ill. 1.00, Jeff. Rall, Bryan, O. 1.00, Manhattan Branch (King) .50, M. M. New York City 5.00.

Receipts (Since Last Report)

Los Angeles Branch \$20.00, Waukegan Branch 11.00, New Haven Branch 10.00, G. Duell, New Haven 1.00, S. Gendelman, New Haven 1.00, Pittsburgh Branch 17.20, Boston Branch 15.00, Cleveland Branch 6.50, Youngstown Branch 11.00, New Castle Branch 15.00, Newark Branch 5.00, Philadelphia Branch 5.00, Rose Hegedus, South Bend 1.00, Pearl Kling, Boro Park 1.00, A. Friend, Springfield, Ill. 1.00, Jeff. Rall, Bryan, O. 1.00, Manhattan Branch (King) .50, M. M. New York City 5.00.

M. M. of New York City has disposed of a total of 32 coupon books to date. The last time he came into the office, he took another 25 books. When asked as to how he manages to sell so many, he told us—"I go from door to door. The other day I rang the bell at a door and a man answered. I told him what I wanted and he refused to have anything to do with anything like it. I talked to him a while and discovered he was a Fascist sympathizer. But most of the places I get results."

Perhaps the method M. M. uses can be used by other comrades with good results. M. M. has also pledged \$2 weekly to our Pledge Fund, saying: "I cut out smoking. The money I save on this expense I'll give weekly to the Pledge Fund."

M. M. is not a member of the organization. He is an example of the kind of sympathizers a Communist organization should have.

Another sympathizer of ours from the Bronx came in to the office two weeks ago with a coupon book in his hands. He had gotten it through the mails. He tore the book in half, as we looked on saying: "I have no way of selling these coupons, so I am tearing it up. Tear another fourteen books for me, and here is \$15."

Here is another interesting item from a sympathizer:

"Dear Comrades: It was because I like the Militant so much that I got so annoyed when it did not come. I am now far away, therefore I really don't think I shall be able to sell any of the coupons. Instead, I am enclosing Ten Dollars, my birthday money, slightly anticipated. Helen Mason, Columbus, O." Marion McLeod, of Iowa Falls, writes: "This will acknowledge receipt of the coupon book. While I was not able to dispose of them to other people, I am happy to be able to take the book myself and enclose \$1."

First Annual PICNIC Given by Communist League of America (Cleveland Branch) SUNDAY, JULY 22, 1934 Garfield Park - Section 7 (Take 105th St. Car - Garfield Pk.) SATURDAY, JULY 14, 1934 Admission 10c. Free Refreshments

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Hitler's Dilemma The Crisis in Germany

Behind the recent events in the top circles of the Fascist dictatorship in Nazi Germany there looms the dark cloud of an economic crisis which more than any other single factor influenced the course of Hitler and his camarilla. Trade balances are unfavorable. The gold coverage on currency in circulation have dwindled by more than one third. Credit with other nations has been reduced to the zero point.

Germany's trade balance, unfavorable for the first time in four years, amounted to \$5,500,000 in January and increased by March 1st to \$8,750,000. The government itself has augmented this adverse trade balance by placing restrictions on imports. At the same time, trade with the Soviet Union which had for years been one of Germany's leading customers declined from 626,000,000 marks in 1932 to 282,000,000 marks in 1933, and then catapulted again to 21,000,000 marks in the first quarter of 1934.

Unfavorable Trade Balance

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By the side of the unfavorable trade balance stands a monetary system so tampered with by the financial doctors of Hitler from Dr. Schacht down to the menacing shadow of inflation looms big in Germany. Gold reserves in the Reichsbank have dropped from 351,241,000 marks on June 7, 1933, to 111,135,000 marks in the same month in 1934. The ratio of the Reichsbank's gold to outstanding circulation fell to 3.4% as against 7.3% on June 7, 1934.

Wages Slashed

It is difficult to conceive how conditions could be very much worse for the German masses even if inflation were instituted. Wages have been slashed to below the subsistence level. An indication of this is given in the war industries which have operated at high capacity since the advent of Hitler. In the Krupp works where 35,647 workers were employed in 1932 and

43,409 in 1933 the payroll fell from 69,000,000 marks in 1932 to 67,000,000 marks in 1933. In the Hoersch works with an increase of almost 1,000 workers in employment the payroll dropped some 5 million marks. Like facts can be adduced to cover almost every German industry. If one were to take the boast of Hitler seriously that he has reduced unemployment from 6,000,000 to 2,500,000 then one gets an indication of how deeply wages have been slashed by the statistics of the Institut fuer Konjunktur Forschung as quoted in the Current History for July 1934. The payroll for Germany has careened from 6,850,000 marks in the last quarter of 1933 to 6,100,000 marks for the first quarter of 1934.

Prices Rise

While wages have declined to the vanishing point prices have risen more than 15.2 in the six months covering the last quarter of 1933 and the first quarter of 1934. How close the German masses are to starvation is again shown by the fact that food consumption has fallen 1,000,000 marks in the course of 1933. Retail sales in groceries, delicatessen, department stores, clothing and other staples bear further eloquent testimony to the ration system Hitler has instituted among the already impoverished German population.

Capitalism under its democratic form had become too expensive for the German ruling class. One of their principal objects in destroying the German trade union movement was to eradicate the gains made by the workers in decades of struggle. Tens of thousands have been removed, under Hitler, from the unemployment benefits. Even such an elementary social service as invalid insurance pensions were reduced by more than two million marks under the Brown Shirt regime.

The Master Is Repaid

Hitler has served his masters well. He has destroyed the entire political and labor movement in Germany, slashed wages to the bone, raised prices and made heavy inroads into the social services. The Thyssens, the Krupps and the others have every reason to be grateful to this depraved bandit. And why not? Profits in the Hoersch works were 23,700,000 marks in 1933 as compared with 12,500,000 marks in 1932. Thyssen's profits rocketed more than fifteen million dollars in increases over what was "earned" in 1932. All told German industrialists have been presented with a gift of more than \$1,000,000,000 in the form of tax reductions, subsidies and authorized wage reductions.

The record of one year of Hitler's stewardship in office speaks for itself. Plenty of gray for the capitalist parasites and nothing but misery and the iron heel for the workers. —G. C.

The Man on the Flying Trapeze

(Continued from last issue)

In 1931, Dunne swings into action again. And whoops! what a radical fellow. As graceful as a swan, he leaps through the air with a new theory: The American working class is on the offensive, and what the employers are engaged in is a counter-offensive. This in 1931! And alas! here too our uncontrollable literary man committed his views to paper with the result that he was kicked unmercifully around the lot by no less a man than Earl Browder, and he took his punishment without a peep. (O Time, O Morn! And in the old days Dunne used to refer to Browder in such disrespectful terms as "Foster's clerk" or "Bill's office boy".)

"It is therefore clear," said Browder in his most imperial manner, "that it is absolutely wrong to speak of the 'offensive of the working class and the counter-offensive of the capitalists'." An example of this wrong use of these terms, which can create an entirely erroneous political atmosphere around our struggles, may be found in a recent issue of the Daily Worker, which says: "increased mass picketing at Piney Fork and other mines Saturday morning checked the counter-offensive of the coal operators." (Earl Browder, Daily Worker, July 14, 1931. Browder refers to a dispatch sent the Worker by Dunne.)

And as a parting kick, Browder damned Dunne for "the idea that, because we have a splendid fighting spirit among the masses therefore we are already developing an offensive of the working class. Sometimes this is theorized. . . . In its least harmful form, this is no better than phrase-mongering. It is a substitution of the wish for the deed." (The Communist, August 1931.)

Now we ask, in any good conscience, why should anybody take seriously the criticisms of the man whose ideas and theories, according to Browder himself, are, in their least harmful form, no better than phrase-mongering? Why?

We cannot refrain from one last quotation. The Stalinists, and in particular Dunne (or as his Bohemian friends of the New Masses now call him for the first time in his life, William Francis Dunne) indignantly condemn what he labels the bureaucratic trade union practices of the Trotskyists in the Minneapolis union. Dunne ought to know, even if he doesn't. In 1931, he was the official representative of the T.U.U.L. to the Pittsburgh convention of the organization which for some unknown reason goes by the name of the National Miners Union. Let us again listen to Browder's observations on Dunne:

"At the miners' convention, there occurred unprecedentedly bureaucratic distortions of the correct revolutionary line. This was typified by the method used in making a change in the name of the Union. The miners were all for the old name, National Miners Union; the Party had never made any decision instructing its members to try to change the name. And yet one comrade holding a strategic position proceeded upon his own personal whim and by use of personal prestige to propose and to have adopted without discussion the change of name to Mine, Oil and Smelter Workers Union (without even a discussion with the Communist fraction!) . . . It was an extreme example of bureaucratism, of going over the heads of the workers—and even of the Party. Further demoralization was thrown into the work of the Union at this convention by the postponement of the election of the official leadership and the installation of a 'provisional' committee instead. This again was an individual action." (Earl Browder, The Communist, August 1931.)

If the "democratic" trade union practices followed by Dunne, and the daring leaps through space which he makes regularly over the field of trade union policy, are what he recommends to the Minneapolis teamsters—is it any wonder that the Stalinists are another than them —8.