

QUESTION BOX

COMRADE K. T., Waukegan, Ill.—If you will re-examine the "Question Box" of July 14th, you will note that it does not say that the workers in the Soviet Union control the means of production, but that they own them.

Your statement, based upon your own experience, and which is undoubtedly true, that the Russian workers do not have anything to say about the management of industry, etc., does not contradict this.

Y.C.L., Brownsville.—The Stalinist position on the Saar plebiscite before it came out for the "status quo" is indicated by the following quotation, which is the only one handy at present: "We are and remain in the Saar district a part of the German proletariat, and we fight for the abolition of the frontiers and the return of our class brothers."

BROWNSVILLE WORKER.—What you state is quite correct. There did appear in the Daily Worker of August 8, 1925 an article by comrade Trotsky, directed against Max Eastman and the pamphlet "Since Lenin Died", in which the rumors of a split in the party and the existence of Lenin's will are denied.

Your question, of course, implies doubt as to the existence of the will. However, Stalin himself admitted its existence: "... It has been proved over and over again that nobody has concealed or is concealing anything, that Lenin's 'Testament' was addressed to the 13th Party Congress and that it, this 'Testament' was read at that Party Congress (Cries of 'Quite true!')

"It is said that in the 'Testament' in question Lenin suggested to the Party Congress that it should deliberate on the question of replacing Stalin and appointing another comrade in his place as General Secretary of the Party. This is perfectly true. Let us read that passage, although it has already been read repeatedly at the Plenary session: 'Stalin is too uncouth and this fault of his, which is tolerable within our intimate group and in view of the connections between us, becomes unbearable from one who holds the post of General Secretary. I therefore suggest that the comrades should discuss the question of dismissing Comrade Stalin from this post and appointing for it another person who, in all other respects, is only distinguished from Stalin by one quality, i.e., that of being more tolerant, loyal, civil and considerate towards the comrades, less moody etc.' (J. Stalin, Speech delivered at the October Plenary Meeting of the C. C. and the C.C.C. of the C.P.S.U., International Press correspondence, November 17, 1927, p. 1428, emphasis ours.)

Now as to the reason for Trotsky's 1925 article. In the same speech is contained the evidence which shows that, under the pressure of party discipline, he was forced to sign the document: "As Eastman had formerly associated with comrade Trotsky, we, comrades Rykov, Zinoviev, Bukharin, Stalin, and Molotov, members of the Polit Bureau, requested (!!) comrade Trotsky to dissociate himself from Eastman. ... Comrade Trotsky actually dissociated himself from Eastman and made a statement to that effect in the Press, which was published. ..."

If there is doubt left in your mind as to the nature of Stalin's "request", just bear in mind that, as his speech shows, he knew of the existence of the will at the time he and all the other members of the Polit Bureau "requested" Trotsky to deny its existence.

COMRADE E. F. D., New York.—We certainly "do not disregard the ballot box." The following briefly gives the Communist position on this:

"We are Marxists and not anarchists. We are supporters of the utilization of parliament: it is not an instrument for transforming society, but a means of rallying the workers." (L. Trotsky, "A Talk with the Socialist Workers", Militant, April 1 and 15, 1933.)

"... participation in parliamentary elections and in the struggle on the parliamentary platform is obligatory for the party of the revolutionary proletariat just for the purpose of educating the backward masses of its own class, just in order to awaken and enlighten the undeveloped, downtrodden, ignorant mass. Just so long as you are unable to disperse the bourgeois parliament and other reactionary institutions, you are bound to work inside of them for the very reason that there are still workmen made fools by priests and the remoteness of village life; otherwise you run the risk of becoming mere babblers." (Lenin, "The Infantile Sickness of Leftism in Communism," emphasis in original.)

Pioneer Notes

"War and the Fourth International" You have probably read the ad in another page of the Militant for "War and the Fourth International", the Draft Theses of the International Secretariat of the League of Internationalist Communists. We take this occasion to stress the great importance and timeliness of this pamphlet. With the imperialist powers heading at breakneck speed towards a new imperialist slaughter, in a situation where any "incident" may light the powder keg of a world conflagration, the question of the struggle against war must become uppermost in the mind of ever revolutionist.

Bound Volumes of the Militant for 1933 have recently been received from the bindery and can be obtained from us at \$1.50 per copy. We do not need to agitate our readers as to the enormous value of possessing one of these volumes. In them are writings by comrade Trotsky which cannot be found anywhere else in the English language, as well as the great store of revolutionary tactics and strategy which the Militant has offered its readers throughout its existence.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY--IN 1914 AND TODAY

WORLD OF LABOR

Twenty years ago today the imperialist war... The World War of 1914-18 was preceded by a series of "incidents". No more important than many preceding "incidents" was the final signal at Sarajevo.

A series of "incidents" are now again taking place. For the second time in a year Austria last week became the likely crucible of the world carnage. Manchuria, the Saar, or a dozen other spots will provide the next occasions for war.

Where shall the masses of the world turn for leadership against imperialist war? August 4th is not only the anniversary of imperialist war. It is, even more significantly for the workers of the world, the anniversary of the betrayal of the masses to the war machine by the Social Democracy. Twenty years ago today the Reichstag voted war credits to the Kaiser.

How did it happen? Haase, who made the declaration in the Reichstag, was only a week before denouncing the war-mongers from the forum of the International Socialist Bureau. July 29th gigantic mass meetings of Socialists throughout Germany were organized under the slogan: "War Against War." On July 31st, martial law having been declared, came the final message of the Socialist Party Executive: "Up to this last moment the international proletariat has done its duty. ... So we must look at that which lies before us, firmly, unflinchingly. ..."

Meanwhile, the party organ, Vorwarts, was sounding the note of revolt against war, denouncing any war of whatever kind waged by capitalists. Even when mobilization was ordered July 31 Vorwarts continued to denounce its own bourgeoisie. On August 3, Vorwarts denounced German "patriotism" and those who suddenly talked of fighting "for freedom against Czarism". Yet, that very afternoon, it had already been decided, and the next day the Socialists in the Reichstag voted war credits, in the words of their official declaration, "for the protection of our country", "in its hour of danger Germany may rely upon us." How could this happen?

We have on numerous occasions pointed out the unrealistic character of the program of fighting war with a general strike, which was the pre-war program of Social Democracy. But this was scarcely the reason for the outright chauvinism of the main wing of Social Democracy, and the equally shameful pacifism of the centrists who either voted war credits or while not openly supporting the war, defended the right of socialists to do so.

Causes of Social-Chauvinism The causes of social-chauvinism and social-pacifism—socialists in words, chauvinist or pacifist in deeds—lie deeper than the specific anti-war program which is violated. The three groupings of socialists during the World War was, as a whole, a direct reflection of the pre-war groupings on fundamental principles. Right wingers became chauvinists, centrists became either chauvinists or pacifists of the Kautsky stripe, which meant to defend the chauvinists and to stick to the bounds of legality in advocating the war. Only the left wing—led by Lenin and Trotsky, Liebknecht and Luxemburg—remained adamant on the war question. Turn the imperialist war into civil war, cried the Bolsheviks, and they did. Then to the horrible crime of fighting on the side of the bourgeoisie in the imperialist war, the Social Democracy added the horrible crime of fighting on the side of the bourgeoisie in the civil war.

As war is the continuation of politics by other means, so the position on war of groups within the working class is a continuation of their general politics. If the masses' hatred of war led the Social Democratic leader-

ship to talk general strike before war, it was their general politics that prevailed when war did break out. They did not throw aside their general politics, with its worship of legality at any price, their fetishism of peaceful means, their worship of the sacredness of the capitalist state, their practical class-collaboration. The weight of this reformism crushed the specific anti-war program. When, with the outbreak of the war, the choice became clear: Either fight the capitalists or accept the war—the reformists made their choice and the centrists went with them. This happened wherever reformism held control, including America.

American Socialists in War There is a myth abroad in the land about the conduct of American Socialists during the last war. Let us tell the truth. The chances for honorable action by American Socialists were great. First, the war had been going on for three years, with consequent disillusionment everywhere. Second, the party had a strong left wing—which later split off to become Communist. Despite these advantages, the true story of the American Socialist Party, and especially of most of the outstanding leaders, is a shameful one.

Within two months of the St. Louis convention the S. P. leadership was organizing the "Peoples Council", hand in hand with liberals and pacifists. The "Council" said nothing about opposing war, nor did it even discuss its causes and the necessity of eradicating them. Soon after, the Socialist leadership of the needle trade unions frankly came out in support of the war. In April, 1918 Algon Lee and six other Socialist leaders in New York voted for the

Third Liberty Loan. In August, the National Executive Committee passed a resolution which said nothing about the war, except to denounce the Kaiser! Meyer London sat in Congress and neglected every opportunity of manifesting serious opposition to war. Victor Berger was frankly pro-German. To the protests of the left wing against all these outright violations of the St. Louis Resolution, the Socialist Party leadership turned a deaf ear.

How deadly did Eugene Debs pay for the mistaken belief that there was room in one party for all shades of belief? When the left wing demanded the expulsion, early in 1916, of Charles Edward Russell who had already turned pro-war, Debs pleaded with the left wing to permit Russell to stay. What was the result of this policy? Those of the outright chauvinists who did not leave the party, as Russell did, joined together with the pacifists to keep the party impotent. Debs went to jail; but Hillquit, Solomon, Waldman, Panken & Co. could speak from every platform in the country with no fear of arrest—for they said nothing objectionable.

And even after the war was over, in the Assembly investigation of 1921, Lee and Hillquit assured the Assembly that the St. Louis Resolution was "not an incitement to the destruction of war work." Waldman swore that New York State was a "peoples government", the U. S. government "not quite" a capitalist government, and declared he would fight for his country "to repel any invasion" and that he favored necessary preparation to do so. Waldman had also voted for militia appropriations, in direct violation of the party constitution which made votes for military expenditures grounds for expulsion.

If the Old Guard and the centrists did these things after the St. Louis Declaration, what will they do in the next war? The Old Guard is by now largely and openly chauvinist, and, at the least, against any mass opposition to war. The "Militants" and the rest of the party majority which voted for the recent Declaration of Principles at Detroit, are today playing the role that Hillquit, Waldman and Algon Lee played in 1917. Lip service to the unrealistic weapon of the general strike will be more than outweighed by the general reformist orientation of the Militants. Again we repeat: War is the continuation of day-by-day politics. Those who, like the "Militants", are committed to the reformist fetishism of bourgeois legality and peaceful methods, will choose bourgeois legality when the choice becomes: Either fight against war or capitulate to bourgeois legality. Spokesman after spokesman of the party majority has defended the new Detroit Declaration on the grounds that, as the St. Louis Resolution did not drive the party into illegality, the new Declaration will permit the party to remain legal! True! For the same reason that worked in 1917. Then the Socialist Party remained loyal to bourgeois legality and would not fight war. Tomorrow the Socialist Party will remain true to its traditional reformism which, in war time, can only mean taking sides with the bourgeoisie against the interests of the workers of the world.

The Crisis in the Socialist Party The Coming Referendum

(This is the first of a series of articles on the problems facing the workers in the Socialist party.—Ed.)

The Referendum Before the S. P. The members of the Socialist party will soon be called upon to vote on the various declarations of principles before them. In addition to the Detroit declaration, there is the right wing declaration of the New York State convention of the S. P. (endorsed by the New York central committee), and the amendments to the Detroit declaration by the so-called "Unity Group". Both of the latter groups are right wing. They differ only on the question as to how to defeat the Detroit declaration.

After a heated dispute in a national sub-committee, the Thomasites decided to amend their own declaration in one respect. The original phrase that Socialists would support "any of their comrades who for anti-war activities or refusal to perform war service come into conflict with public opinion or the law" was changed to read that they would support, in the event of war, those of its members who come in conflict with the law in their anti-war work not in contradiction to "Socialist principles". All groups agree on this amendment.

But—the right wing is furious! "The National Committee has no constitutional right to amend the convention declaration". And according to the best lawyers this is quite so! The original wording was in line with Thomas' attempt to appear very radical. Under the hammer blows of the Right he flinched and retreated. Politically there was no real difference even at Detroit.

Why did Thomas reject the other amendments of the right wing "Unity Group"? "The sub-committee could not find that other changes of this sort were necessary or would command general support." (Thomas, New Leader, July 21st, 1934. Our emphasis.) Thomas did not basically disagree with these amendments, that is, to the program of the right wing, but he found the changes unnecessary or that they would not be accepted by the ranks. Thomas' strength lies above all in his forming a centrist buffer between the genuine lefts, the Communists, and the right wing reformists.

It is therefore not surprising that Thomas finds that "There is no cause for split. We need instead to increase unity among the workers in the face of war, fascism and a disintegrating capitalism." Thomas seeks, nay, pleads for unity with the Waldmans, Solomons and Cahans. And rightly so, for he enumerates the common basis of their mutual program. (Same as above.) The Centrists Versus Right Wing Then what are the differences between the groups? The criticism of the Detroit declaration by the right wing, the Committee for the Preservation of the Socialist Party (no less!) is summarized in its pamphlet "The Crisis in the Socialist Party—The Detroit Convention". A reply to this criticism by the defenders of Thomas, the so-called "Militant" group, has been penned by its leading theoretician, Halm Kantorovitch in "The Socialist Party at the Cross Roads". Here is a "left" interpretation of the declaration.

Let us examine some of the highlights. Kantorovitch examines the right wing's criticism point by point. We shall follow his arguments.

1. The charge that the declaration of principles is not legal. A committee of eminent lawyers, states Kantorovitch, has found that the declaration is within the law. The right wing had stated that "Our left wing (!) want to find out whether it is against the law to be revolutionists". The defender of Thomas, in chiding the right wing on its police-criterion of good socialism, forgets to mention that it was Thomas who submitted the declaration to the group of lawyers!

2. That the Socialist Party is against "insurrectionism, illegal acts, and acts of individual terrorism" is substantiated by the declaration statement that "the Socialist Party seeks to attain its objective by peaceful and orderly means", and other such phrases. On this score there is unanimity in the camp of the right wing and centrist forces.

3. The reference in the Detroit declaration to the support by the S. P. of their comrades who, in time of war come in conflict with the law or public opinion is explained by Kantorovitch as meaning a defense of those who work within Socialist policies. This latter position was supported even by Louis Waldman at Detroit! As stated above, the Thomasites have already amended the section. It should be noted in passing that the original ambiguity was caused by one factor: the attempt to appear very radical and thereby control the leftward movement in the S. P.

4. On the question of Socialist program on war. a). Kantorovitch, for the first time, scores the pro-war record of Waldman and Lee of 1918. Only yesterday in his "Militant Program", when discussing the record of the S. P. during the World War, he forgot all about these actions! He also quotes Abe Cahans as being in favor of the defense of the American government in case of an attack by Japan or Germany. (Page 12.) But what conclusion is drawn? A break with the supporters of imperialist war? No, that would mean communism!

b). The phrase "massed resistance" is interpreted by Kantorovitch as meaning "mass protests, mass meetings, mass demonstrations, mass petitions" and if "practicable" a general strike. Then why was this not made clear in the declaration? Again because the Onells and Waldmans would not have disagreed with such formulations—they have given similar pledges in the past. The term was left unexplained because it could be interpreted by the genuinely left wing workers as something new for the Socialist party. Incidentally, is "mass resistance" at a time of war legal? Kantorovitch does not say. But it is obvious that if in periods of social crises a working class party is hindered by the laws of capitalist democracy, then the party must conduct illegal work. But with what apparatus is the S. P. going to conduct this mass resistance? An illegal apparatus? Kantorovitch is silent on this essential practical question. Again the only clear, consistent and effective answer is given by the Communists.

—JOSEPH CARTER.

ship to talk general strike before war, it was their general politics that prevailed when war did break out. They did not throw aside their general politics, with its worship of legality at any price, their fetishism of peaceful means, their worship of the sacredness of the capitalist state, their practical class-collaboration. The weight of this reformism crushed the specific anti-war program. When, with the outbreak of the war, the choice became clear: Either fight the capitalists or accept the war—the reformists made their choice and the centrists went with them. This happened wherever reformism held control, including America.

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Starvation Wages for German Workers

Hamburg (TIS).—The starvation level to which the German workers' wages under the Nazi regime have sunk, is startlingly revealed by the Nazis themselves in an extensive wage investigation conducted by the "German Labor Front". The statistical compilation has been published in the official labor magazine "Arbeitertribune" and is based upon the reports of the affiliated trade unions for the month of February, 1934.

The investigation included 16,600,000 workers with a weekly wage total of 435,000,000 Mark. The average weekly income is thus 25.9 Mark, or approximately \$10.00 at the present rate of exchange. It must be kept in mind, however, that the purchasing power is much less since the decline of the German wage level has been accompanied by a steady rise in prices.

The average weekly wages for the various industrial groups are:

Table with 2 columns: Industrial Group, Weekly Wage (Mark). Building workers 28.5, Miners 24.7, Wood and Lumber Workers 28.8, Agricultural workers 20.8 (including goods given in lieu of cash), Metal workers 32.1, Textile workers 21.4, Tobacco workers 13.5, Stone and earthen workers 20.5, Public workers 28.8, Leather workers 29.5, Food workers 25.6, Other factory workers 20.0.

The report also calls attention to the fact that the wages in numerous cases were much less than the above-mentioned average figures. Since February 1934, wages have shown a further considerable decline. Before Hitler's accession to power wages were often twice as high as the average given above.

MASSACRE IN CHILE

We are in receipt of definite information concerning the recent peasant uprising in the little village of Ranquil, Chile, which was featured a few weeks ago in the press as a Communist led revolt of the peasant masses. The truth of the matter is as follows: Having no other means of subsistence, a group of unemployed workers numbering about 600, ascended an uncultivated mountain valley some months ago and making their home in that unoccupied region, commenced the cultivation of the land. The ground was cleared, the soil was plowed, and at last it was time to reap the harvest. At this point the "Producers Society of Industry and Commerce", claiming that this land was part of the 40,000 acre estate of one of their members, the colonists were ordered to move and upon their refusal the troops were sent in. A frightful massacre followed, in which the colonists gave a good accounting of themselves, but which could have but one result. In spite of the declared solidarity of the Chilean workers, accompanied by the hysterical antics of the Stalinists who claimed they were "leading a revolution", the colonists of Ranquil found their efforts to gain a livelihood, drowned in their own blood.

The Chilean government, seeking a plausible excuse for the massacre, claimed that there was a Communist insurrection afoot. The Stalinists fell right in with this maneuver of the reaction by claiming the same thing when nothing was farther from the truth. Among the irresponsible followers of an irresponsible movement, the Chilean Stalinists merit the first prize. Not so long ago, when the sailors of the fleet rebelled in Coquimbo, these poor clowns issued fantastic proclamations, claiming to have organized the outbreak. When the uprising failed due to lack of organization, it then became apparent that the officers themselves had inspired the whole thing. Other cases could be cited, such as that of the carabinieri conspiracy of Captain Villouta; and each time we find the Stalinist party of Chile claiming leadership.

While making no claims to lead non-existent revolutions, the Communist Left of Chile is laying the basis of the new party that will be found when the time arrives, in the leadership of the Chilean workers' revolution. New forces rally daily to the banner of the Fourth International in Chile, Stalinism loses ground daily, the Socialist Party is heading for a split, and the Chilean Communist Left announces that the first issue of its theoretical magazine, The Fourth International will soon be off the press. In this way the basis is being laid for the new party.

SPAIN

The Spanish Communist Left, while growing organizationally, is distinguishing itself by its printed material. A fortnightly paper La Antorcha is now being published. It is devoted primarily to matters of general popular interest, written in a freer, more popular style, and thus supplements Communismo, the organization's theoretical magazine. Innumerable books and pamphlets, most of them by members of the Spanish Communist Left, have been published in the recent period.

The rightist government of the "republic of workers" is hounding the working class organizations to the very brink of illegality. A new ruling now provides that only regular licensed news vendors may sell the publications of political and working class organizations. It is claimed that this aims at the Fascists as well as the working class organizations. But this is not true, because the Fascists' newswomen have already been forced off the streets by the workers through "direct action" methods.

Mass arrests are taking place in connection with every strike, publications are suspended, and "fines" levied on them before they are permitted to reappear. In spite of all difficulties, however, most of the working class papers still continue to appear with more or less regularity and all of them are attempting to maintain a legal status.

SPANISH YIPSELS FIGHT OPPORTUNISM

Between the radicalization of large sections of its following, and the natural opportunism of many of its leaders, the Socialist movement in Spain is in the throes of an internal crisis. On the one hand, the Socialist Youth Federation at its latest congress declared for the armed insurrection and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat; on the other, the party's parliamentary fraction and its leadership generally, orient towards a new coalition with the left republicans. Largo Caballero, president and most outstanding leader of the party, while sincerely striving for a militant leftist policy, attempts to preserve the unity of the heterogeneous movement.

In Renovacion, organ of the young socialists, for July 7th, a demand is made for the purging of the party, through the expulsion of the members of the parliamentary fraction. The treacherous policy of capitulation followed by the latter in a whole series of situations in the recent session of the Cortes are the basis of the charges now leveled against the right wing elements, who are making a fetish of parliamentarism and legality in a period of revolutionary agitation. On several occasions the Youth Federation demanded that the S.P. deputies withdraw from the Cortes, a demand which coincided with that raised by the Communist Left.

Recent issues of Renovacion publish photographs of Young Socialist Red Shirt detachments in which thousands of uniformed youths can be seen marching and drilling in preparation for the coming struggle. The caption in one issue, hails the "future Spanish Red Army".

NEW PARTY IN AUSTRALIA

Greetings to our Australian comrades who by this time have probably founded a new revolutionary party. We are in receipt of the Draft Program and Policy of the new Workers Party of Australia which was issued in May by the provisional executive committee elected at a conference of the organization in the same month. A twelve page mimeographed bulletin, the draft theses includes an outline on the present world situation, notes on the situation in Australia, their attitude towards the labor party of that country, the Communist party, the trade unions, strikes, the united front, war, defense, immediate issues. It concludes with a constitution. From beginning to end it is a Marxist program worthy of the Communist group that will become the section of the Fourth International in that far-away corner of the world.

The Workers Party of Australia issues a monthly mimeographed theoretical organ called the Militant. A lively revolutionary group, it devotes itself with skill and ability to the political problems in that outpost of the British Empire as well as to the unemployed and trade union movement in which it is active. Similarly the Australian group is thoroughly imbued with the ideas of internationalism which are so well reflected in their paper.

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