

French Bolshevik-Leninists Decide To Enter S.F.I.O. as Faction

At the recent conference of the French Section of the International Communist League (Bolshevik-Leninists) it was decided by a majority vote to enter the S.F.I.O. (French Socialist Party) as a faction and to work there for the same principles which our organization has upheld on an international scale, first as the Left Opposition of the Comintern and, after the German debacle, as an independent group. The tactical turn of the French League is motivated by the near approach of the decisive struggle with Fascism in France and the necessity of establishing closer contact with the mass of socialist workers who are experiencing a deep process of ferment and political differentiation. The tactical move of the League is designed to put it in a position to influence them for a revolutionary policy. The united front pact concluded by the Socialist and Stalinist party bureaucracies had excluded the League from participation, thus isolating it from the mass movement. With its small numerical forces the League, despite the power of its ideas, would have been condemned to ineffectiveness in such a situation. And since, in the estimation of the International Communists, the showdown with Fascism is near at hand—perhaps a matter of months—a swift tactical turn on the part of the League was deemed necessary. The French comrades did not wish to stand aside as sectarians in order to draw lessons after the victory of Fascism. They chose to force their way into the mass movement, through the only door open under present conditions, to influence the movement for revolutionary struggle and victory.

It goes without saying that the sharp turn in tactics decided upon by our French comrades does not in any way or in any degree signify a renunciation of any of the ideas which have bound the Bolshevik-Leninists of the world together—ideas which are all now compressed into the slogan of the Fourth International and the struggle for its realization. The action is taken without any thought of reconciliation with reformism or centrism as represented by the parties of the Second International, any more than ten-years' existence of the International Left Opposition as a faction of the Communist International meant a reconciliation with Stalinism.

Both the major French parties today—Stalinist and Socialist—are centrist parties. There are two important differences, however. The former is moving backward from the principles and methods of revolutionary Marxism and is deprived of any semblance of internal democracy; the latter is in a crisis marked by the complete bankruptcy of reformism, a deep process of radicalization is taking place in the ranks, and the bureaucracy is not in a position to prohibit a wide internal democracy. In these circumstances—with the danger of Fascism imminent—the French League of International Communists arrived at the conclusion to enter the Socialist Party as a faction.

Prior to the decision of the conference to take this step the National Committee of the Communist League of America decided, by a majority of 8 to 1, to recommend this course to the French comrades, despite the great dangers and difficulties involved in such a drastic reorientation. We recommended this course with full confidence that they would remain true to their banner and carry it with them into the Socialist Party. That this confidence was fully justified is confirmed by the latest issue of *La Verite* which has just arrived. It is published now in the name of "The Bolshevik-Leninist Faction of the S.F.I.O.—formerly the Communist League."

We print below the declaration of the French comrades upon entering the S.F.I.O. as well as a statement on the decision of the national conference. From these documents it is clear that the Bolshevik-Leninists of France remain what they were and that they have been accepted by the socialist workers as such.

We shall follow and report the feverish developments in France and the part played in them by the Bolshevik-Leninists. The key to the whole world situation is now in France. The issue will not remain long undecided. The question is: The horrible reaction of Fascism, or—the liberating victory of the working class, for France, and not only for France. The Bolshevik-Leninist faction of the French Socialist Party will have a great role to play in the answer to this momentous question. We shall watch their struggle with passionate sympathy and give them all the moral and material aid in our power.

—J. P. C.

Declaration of French Bolshevik-Leninists

(Translated from *La Verite*)

At the Third National Conference of the Communist League, the Bolshevik-Leninists of France after examining the French and international political situation and the situation in the workers' movement, reaffirmed their conviction that the program and methods of Leninism, the bases of their activities, are today more necessary than ever for the proletariat in order to resist Fascism, overthrow the capitalist system and march towards the socialist society.

The Bolshevik-Leninists maintain that, following the February events, the two great organizations of the working class have accepted the slogan of the united front, for which we struggled for many years; however, they have not endowed it with the active content so necessary because of the threat of reaction. Nevertheless, a deepening and radical regrouping of the working class is taking place, political differentiation occurring through a process of unification. The Bolshevik-Leninists want to play the greatest role in this regrouping towards a single revolutionary party of the proletariat, which cannot take place except in action, in the elaboration and criticism of action.

Under present conditions, to continue as a small independent group would not permit us to play our role with the force demanded by the gravity of the situation. That is why we have decided to enter the Socialist party, as we are, with our program and ideas. In the ranks of the sections of the Socialist party, shoulder to shoulder with its revolutionary workers, with the working class of France, in the common struggle against the bourgeoisie, we want to ELABORATE WITH THEM THE BEST MEANS, THE BEST METHODS TO EMANCIPATE OURSELVES FROM THE FITTERS OF CAPITALISM.

In entering the ranks of the Socialist party, the Bolshevik-Leninists ask only the right to participate in its activities, to defend, equally with all other tendencies, those ideas which have been forged in years of struggle; we agree to be disciplined in revolutionary action.

The Bolshevik-Leninists call upon all their sympathizers to transform their sympathy into adherence, by associating themselves with us in this decisive step.

Comrades, join us in the ranks of the Socialist party for the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat!

Without renouncing our past and our ideas, but also without any mental reservations of sectarianism, we speak out what is: it is necessary to enter the Socialist party; not for the sake of exhibitions, nor of experiences, but for serious revolutionary work under the banner of Marxism.

—National Conference of the Communist League of France.

Third Conference of French League

(Translated from *la Verite*)

Our third national conference terminates a decade of struggle of the revolutionary group, the Bolshevik-Leninists of France. In 1924 a handful of militants of the French Communist party reacted against the first signs of the Stalinist policy of revising Leninism which was characterized by the anti-Trotskyist offensive in the Russian Communist party and then in the entire Communist International. "Oppositionist" sections formed. Without international connections, isolated from the powerful reserve of the Russian opposition, suffering from the vices of a section only recently released in Tours from the opportunist and social-patriotic grip, these new sections suffered many crises, the toll paid to the process of doctrinal selection.

Foundation of *La Verite* and the Struggle for the Reform of the C. I.

In 1929 hardly a dozen militants founded *La Verite*. The shameful expulsion of Trotsky from the U.S.S.R. deprived the Russian Opposition of its leader, but allowed its forces greater activity in the service of the world revolution.

The Degeneration of the C.I. The German Defeat

The degeneration of the C. I. depended. It was characterized by a multitude of zig-zags and a bureaucratic-hierarchical regime. The result was the German defeat; the importance of this defeat which, measured by its effects on the workers' movement, the fact that the mistakes causing the defeat were approved without discussion in any section, removed any perspective of reform. As a revolutionary party of the proletariat, the 3rd International could no longer play its progressive role. Like the 2nd International in 1914, it had ceased to live as a dynamic revolutionary factor.

Our Record in this Period

In our struggle for the reform of the C. I., step by step we formed a strong organization on an international scale which now consists of more than 25 sections on every continent, unified on a common programmatic and principle platform, having a press and cadres in each country. By this method it reconstituted the political capital of the world proletariat.

Towards the Fourth International

The theoretical bases of a new international laid, the propaganda for the Fourth International begun in September 1933, the attempt at joint work made with formations who were expelled or previously left the 2nd and 3rd Internationals, serious progress was made and the

current for the Fourth International gained in the entire world. The cry of rabid hate of the world bourgeoisie against L. Trotsky, and then the expulsion order in April 1934 is on a par with the reception the world bourgeoisie gave the 1st International at its foundation!

The Third International was born in the grandiose circumstances of a victorious proletarian revolution. The 4th International found its *raison d'être* in the dramatic circumstances of the degeneration of this revolution. The task of Lenin in 1914 struggling against the torrential current of chauvinism was difficult; our task in the centrist morass is quite as difficult. Defeats have been suffered by the masses and have created a reflux in the sentiment of internationalism. So much more imperative is the struggle for the 4th International. In the teeth of the threat of an imperialist war, of the Fascist wave, our 3rd National Conference makes this struggle the axis of its activity.

For a United Revolutionary Party!

To build a revolutionary international means to struggle on a national scale for a revolutionary party. This is an urgent task in France where the coming to power of Fascism would have as its consequence the disappearance for a whole period of any perspective of socialist revolution in Europe, while on the contrary, a revolutionary rise would crack Fascism in Italy and Germany and open up a new development of the world revolution.

In the face of the new situation created in the French workers' movement by the rapprochement of the two large parties which claim to speak in its interest, by the perspective of organic unity of these parties, in the regrouping of such a perspective would cause, our 3rd National Conference believes that the S.F.I.O. can in this situation by its present state of evolution, and thanks to a political differentiation actively taking place in its ranks, become a milieu of revolutionary regroupment. That is why our 3rd National Conference decided for the entrance of our members into the S.F.I.O. without that in any way meaning the abandonment of our conceptions, the renunciation of our past struggle which guarantees our continuity.

Disapproval and Equivocal Approval

This decision of our National Conference has caused much confusion and violent disapproval. It comes from numerous comrades who confuse our organization with a revolutionary party, for the constitution of which we were only a medium. These comrades forget that correct ideas have an active effect only when they have a mass basis, consequently an organized basis capable of playing a decisive independent role.

Approbations are not lacking. A diversity of partisans of "organic unity" approve our entry. Those

Youth Unite Against Fascism

(Continued from Page 1)

After detailed discussion, and several proposed amendments to the draft the entire matter was referred to a steering committee consisting of one representative from each of the organizations at the meeting. The steering committee was empowered to make the detailed plans for the demonstration, invite other organizations to the arrangements committee, etc. It was unanimously agreed that seats on the arrangements and steering committee would be left open for the Young Communist League and the National Student League. A letter is to be sent to each of these organizations asking them to reconsider their decision.

Relief Endangered

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The City of New York has financed this relief by obtaining one half of the sum needed from Federal relief, one fourth from the State and the remaining one fourth from the City.

An increased number of far-sighted capitalists and their politicians realize that unemployment has become an integral part of "Americanism" and advocate a long term relief program. The Executive Committee of the United States Conference of Mayors, presented a plan to the President which calls for special emergencies to meet the winter's need, and advocate unemployment insurance.

The problem confronting the workers of New York is similar to the one in all other cities of the United States, if not worse. This calls for renewed action for the organization of the unemployed into city, county and state-wide organizations, and united action between the different unemployed organizations for our demands.

OPEN FORUM

LATEST TURNS IN THE UNITED FRONT
(The united front between S.P. and C.P. in France and America)

Speaker: **MAX SHACHTMAN**
Editor of *New Internationalist*
Sunday, Sept. 30, at 8 P.M.
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Questions : : Discussion
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HOT SPOTS IN THE WORLD SITUATION

The Need for the 4th International

FRANCE—October 7, 1934, 8 P.M.
Speaker: ARNE SWABECK

SPAIN—October 14, 1934, 8 P.M.
Speaker: MAX SHACHTMAN

UNITED STATES—Oct. 21, 8 P.M.
Speaker: HUGO OEHLER

IRVING PLAZA
15th St. & Irving Pl., N. Y. C.
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Auspices: Communist League of America, New York Local

who aspire to this unity by confusedly giving to it the content of a strong revolutionary party, which is still to be created, should understand that this "unity" can only have this virile content on the basis of revolutionary principles. The Populists (Party of Proletarian Unity, formerly Right Wing Communists) who confine themselves to applauding our entry, should stop subordinating themselves to the electoral cretinism of their leaders. The partisans of the "unity of fire and water", with the Marquets and the Renaudels, should know that "we carry not unity but battle to the social traitors" (Karl Liebknecht).

We have not broken with Stalin in order to collaborate in the policies of the Marquets or the other Ministers of the king. The exclusion of a part of social traitors, create, through the evolution it expresses, the possibility of our entry. It is necessary to emphasize that we did not break with the Communist International in order to allow the lieutenants of Stalin to freely continue (even when we were expelled from the party) their work of the revision of Leninism. We greeted the evolution of the Saint Denis district, in the degree that it was progressive. We will carry on a firm struggle against any anti-Leninist degeneration!

Militant socialists! We have refused "the infiltration into the S.F.I.O. by any means" which was proposed by several militants who are no longer with us. We think that the Socialist Party can play an important role for the regroupment and activity of the revolutionary forces in France. We will bring all our energy to bear in this work. You can count on it as our revolutionary discipline!

Communist League Replies to Letter Of A.W.P. on Unity

Sept. 27, 1934.

Provisional Organization Committee
American Workers Party
A. J. Muste, Chairman
Dear Comrades:

We have given careful consideration to your letter of September 18 and agree with you that the fusion of our organizations for the task of building a new revolutionary party would be a revolutionary step forward. Since such an action would signify the first move for the unification of the revolutionary forces, after more than a decade of disintegration and splits, it could hardly fail at the very beginning to inspire and attract a considerable number of revolutionary workers in addition to the present members of our respective organizations. In view of these prospects it is our opinion that the fusion would provide a sufficient basis to justify us in formally launching the new party.

Armed with the program of Marxism, such a party, despite its comparatively small size at its inception, would have a good opportunity to become the rallying center for those workers who are breaking away from reformism and centrism, as represented by the Socialist and Stalinist parties. More than that, by direct participation in the class struggle, the new party could draw into its ranks a large number of workers who are awakening for the first time to political consciousness.

The lightning speed of class developments, however, makes it imperative that we grasp this opportunity while there is yet time, before the developments pass us by and seek another point of crystallization. Our chance to introduce the new revolutionary party into the situation as an independent force, and to make that party the axis around which further developments proceed, depends in the highest degree on the speed with which we compose such differences as may remain between us and proceed directly to the organic fusion of the two organizations and the formal declaration of the new party.

The maximum of clarity in the fundamental questions of the program is, of course, a prerequisite for success. The new party must cut with a sharp blade. If during the past six years especially, in close collaboration with the Bolshevik-Leninists of the world, we have preoccupied ourselves with theoretical work, and stubbornly pursued that work as an isolated and hounded group, it is precisely because we have understood the fearful debacle in the practice of the dominant parties on an international scale as the direct outcome of the degeneration of theory.

We aim to continue this work and to contribute all we can to the clarification of principle in such further discussion as may be necessary to prepare the fusion, and in the new party, after the fusion is accomplished, also.

But, in our opinion, this work must be carried on now in direct and immediate connection with the task which is imposed upon us by the general situation, namely, the founding of a revolutionary party. The fusion of our two organizations and the joint struggle to establish the new party as a power in the labor movement need not and cannot wait until every comma is put in its proper place and every hair is split in two. Our central task now, as we understand it, is to unite our forces and create a movement. The extent to which we comprehend this, and the speed with which we accomplish it, will be a good test of what theory means to us as a guide to action.

The programmatic documents submitted to you by the Communist League delegation during the discussions previously held, taken together with the revised draft program of the American Workers Party, contain the essential principles which, we believe, constitute the sufficient programmatic foundation upon which a party, formed out of a fusion between your organization and ours, is justified and possible. There remain, of course, a number of differences of opinion as to formulation on certain points; but many of these have already been overcome to a large extent, and we are confident that the necessary further clarification can be achieved in negotiations to prepare the unity and in the active common life of the new party.

It is our opinion that the full program of the new party must be an elaborate and carefully worked out document, and that in all probability its final form will not be arrived at for some time to come. For the present, we believe that the new party needs a concise direct statement of principle and action, omitting the expository, explanatory, and semi-narrative material of your revised program. We believe that such a statement could be drawn up within a very short

time by the use of your draft program and our programmatic material. We hold that such a statement should be a joint product of our organizations, and therefore propose that a joint committee be immediately appointed to proceed with this work. The points, concisely formulated in this declaration, could subsequently be expanded expositoryly in the form of popular agitational pamphlets.

The new party, formed by the merger of our organizations, will naturally be an autonomous organization which will determine for itself its own international affiliations or connections, as well as all other questions. Upon the completion of the merger it is our understanding that both organizations will dissolve into the new party. The Communist League will therefore sever its organizational connections as a separate group with the International Communist League. We will propose, at the same time, that the new party establish fraternal relations with the International Communist League and all other groups and parties working for a new (Fourth) International and collaborate with them in the work of preparing the new world party.

We agree with you that the best defense of the Soviet Union, and the most effective way now to liberate the Workers State from the incubus of Stalinism is the building of powerful revolutionary parties of the new international in the capitalist countries. This conception lies at the root of our fundamental conceptions and has animated all our activity. We consider it incorrect, however, to counterpose this fundamental task of reviving the revolutionary movement in the capitalist countries to the struggle of the Bolshevik-Leninists within the Soviet Union to preserve and strengthen the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, to reform it and cleanse it of bureaucratic degeneration. Since the regime of Stalinism has strangled the revolutionary party in the Soviet Union no less than in other countries, this struggle for the reform of the Workers State requires that the Bolshevik-Leninists in the U.S.S.R.—and the new parties of

the Fourth International with them—aim at the creation of a new party, that is, the revival of the Bolshevik party under new conditions. But this can be accomplished only as a result of the successful development of the New International in the capitalist countries.

In your letter reference is made to the different origins of the two organizations, different habits of work, etc. This undoubtedly will present certain difficulties in the first stages of the fusion, and possibly even afterward. But there is also a positive side, insofar as the different experiences and differences in emphasis which have marked the main activities of the members of the two organizations, can be regarded now, in the light of the concrete tasks of the present, as rather complementary than antagonistic. The reciprocal influence of the active militants of each group on the others, within a single organization, can make for a rounded and firmly united party.

Our fundamental task, as we see it, is to bring our forces together and form the new party without delay. As a practical method of preparing and hastening the unification we submit the following concrete proposals:

1. That we set up a joint unity committee composed of an equal number from each organization.
2. That this joint committee be charged with the task of preparing a draft of a declaration of principles and a program of action for the new party.
3. That this joint committee draw up the organization plans to effect the unification at a joint convention in the near future, and also work out detailed plans to adjust organization questions, press, name of the party, etc.

If these proposals meet with your approval, we are ready to select our representatives to the unity committee without delay.

Yours fraternally,
National Committee
Communist League of America
ARNE SWABECK,
Secretary

A.F. of L Convention

(Continued from Page 1)

The Frisco strike also revealed the role of the reactionary leaders in their struggle against the strike and the left wing.

Organizing the Left Wing

These struggles have been big lessons to the new developing progressive and left wing force in the A. F. of L. The opposition is beginning to learn the ins and outs and the need of an organized left wing. The Toledo struggle and the Minneapolis strike brought to the fore, in the clearest form, the kind of new leadership we need and the tactics necessary to win the strikes and defeat the reactionary aims of the A. F. of L. leaders.

The new progressive opposition is a growing force. On the one hand, there is the vast army of new members coming into the A. F. of L. through the organization of workers in the basic industries, forming new unions. On the other hand, in the old craft outfits, such as the teamsters, the longshoremen, etc., new recruits and conditions under the NRA are making for unions and locals that are putting up battles that every worker can be proud of and which strike fear into every reactionary leader.

The "Red" Scare

The "red" scare will be played up to the highest point by the conservatives. Most of the "reds" in the union have nothing in common with Stalinism, and said so, a goodly number must yet be introduced to the theories of communism. The "red scare" that Green and Company speak of is in reality the militant progressive left wing movement that is now developing. They realize this and want to nip it in the bud. They understand what a strike like Minneapolis means. They know that the strikers were unanimous in their support of the leadership of the Minneapolis strike. They know that strike leadership of this type and calibre is deadly poison to their treacherous conservative role, and that this type of unionism spells ruin to the bosses and to their labor lieutenants.

Against Political Discrimination

The progressive left wingers must fight in this convention for the right of union members to be long to any political party of their choice. A fight must be put up against Green and Company who endeavor to expel communists and others. They must fight for social insurance. They must see that the six-hour day and five-day week, with no reduction in pay, becomes

a fighting point for the general reduction of all hours of work, especially in the industries where 44 and 54 hours still prevail for millions of workers. The labor leaders must be instructed to resign from the NRA and all other class collaboration labor boards. A struggle against the NRA must be developed through a militant class trade union policy.

The compromise proposal of the metal trades unions on the struggle over the "vertical" or industrial form of union organization does not conform to the developments. It will retard the forward march toward amalgamation. In fact it is more of an attempt to head off amalgamation in the building of industrial unions than a step in that direction. The federal unions must be transformed into industrial unions as rapidly as possible.

It is true that the militant left wing will not be able to win its objectives at this convention. Nevertheless, it must put its program before the gathering and use the convention as a forum to further crystallize its forces. The future of the American labor movement belongs to the new type of militant leaders and the new tactics that they are developing.

—HUGO OEHLER.

OPEN FORUM
THE FOREIGN POLICY OF THE SOVIET UNION
Soviets Enter League of Nations
Speaker: **HUGO OEHLER**
Member National Committee C.I.A.
Friday, October 5, 8 P.M.
144 Second Avenue, N. Y. C.
Questions and Discussion
Admission Free
Auspices: Downtown Branch, Communist League of America

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