

For an Independent Movement

Our Road--The New Party

By JAMES P. CANNON

(Continued from Page 1)

by a conscious determination to get out of the propaganda circle into the broader movement. The actual fusion with the A.W.P., now on the order of the day, is in our understanding, a more decisive step on the same path; by no means a solution of the problem, for the combined forces of the two organizations are modest enough, but a real move in this direction.

The Fate of Our Critics

Those who built on firm foundations of principle proved to be most effective in mass work directly and in establishing relations and uniting with other progressive elements which, in the nature of the case, broadens the perspective mass activity in the future. The others, who did so much talking about "mass work" and condemned our preoccupation with propaganda as "sectarianism" (Weisbord, Field, etc.), made miserable failures with mass work, with propaganda, with organization and everything else.

The propaganda circle must give way now to the political party tied up with the movement of the masses. Under the impact of the rising activity of the general labor movement thousands upon thousands of workers are beginning to awaken to political life; others, who have fallen away in the period of reaction and stagnation, are being roused out of their passivity. These new forces will not go to little groups. They will seek political expression through the medium of one of the parties. This is understood, more or less, by all the political-minded people in all the groups. They are moving to adjust their activities accordingly, and, by the direction they take, they reveal their real colors.

Lovestone moves desperately to re-attach himself to the Stalinist party, in its swing to the right, before his group falls to pieces before his eyes. Giltow-Zam-Goldman crawl back into the Socialist party to make good the "mistake" of 1919. We, who are neither Stalinists nor social democrats, move to unite with other forces to form an independent party opposed to both. Each, according to his opinion and his inner tendency, will find his place; except those who want to continue to "clarify" themselves in a smut circle. For such there is no salvation and no political life in the period unfolding now.

Dilemma of Propaganda Groups

Degeneration is the fate of all propaganda groups which are not able to transform the nature of their activity and connect themselves with the broad movement when the hour strikes for such a transformation. We are prepared by our past for a great leap forward; but we ourselves must take the leap. We fought a good fight. It was historically necessary and progressive. Against the stream for six years, against unparalleled difficulties, against slander, isolation and poverty of resources we held tenaciously to our course. We have a right to be proud of our six-years' struggle. The history of the American movement does not know another example of a group that was put to such severe tests and stood up under them so firmly. We have survived. We have a right to be proud of our six-years' struggle for principle; but it would be a tragedy if we should fail to understand that this struggle was not an end in itself but a period of preparation for the new opportunities and new tasks which stand before us now.

We must acknowledge that we are not immune from such a danger. A certain element of "sectarianism" is inseparable from the life of a group which lives a long time in isolation and is compelled by the needs of the movement, as we were, to preoccupy itself almost exclusively with theoretical work, with the intransigent struggle to clarify questions of principle. It is possible that we will have to face the decisive turn in our work with some "sectarian" hangovers in our

ranks, some hesitations and fears of the new tasks and the broader stream. Such a tendency could have only a negative influence now. We must face the problem squarely at the national conference and solve it. That means: we must not yield an inch to any kind of sectarian considerations in regard to the fusion and the launching of the new party.

Sectarianism can be a great danger in the present period of flux and change in the movement when vast new perspectives open up before us; when new opportunities to extend the basis and broaden the influence of revolutionary Marxism are ours to grasp. We shall oppose every manifestation of such a tendency with all our strength—in the League, and in the new party, also, if necessary.

Giltow and Zam--Renegades!

But it goes without saying that our position in this regard has nothing in common with the position of those who seek to solve the problem of isolation by desertion of the revolutionary banner and entry into the Socialist party. Giltow and Zam, by this shameful performance, only complete the evolution which began with their crusade against "Trotskyism" in the C. P. They were among the originators, or at least the earliest practitioners, of the art of misusing the Leninist weapon of denunciation, hurling the epithet "renegade" at honest revolutionists until the word lost all meaning. How hollow that all sounds now. They even console themselves with the thought that the horrible misuse of epithets by the Stalinists has engendered such a cynicism on the subject of renegacy that their own return to the "party of revolutionary unity" without a program, without a banner, without—as they announce—the slightest intention to even form a faction in this "united" party, will escape the indignant denunciation of the revolutionary workers. Never mind. The sword of Lenin has been blunted, but it will be sharpened again.

A really serious analysis of the situation, the trends and the currents in the workers' political movement in the United States does not lead to the conclusion that the Socialist Party is or will be the revolutionary party of the future, or that it is the best field for the activities of the revolutionists today. Of all the groups in the S.P. there is not one that is revolutionary, that is, bolshevik. There is not one leader that deserves the name of revolutionist. As for revolutionists entering the S. P. from the outside, they cannot do it, as the case of Giltow and Zam proved, unless they give up their program and their banner. When revolutionists do that they cease to be revolutionists. The leaders of the "Militants" who, it must not be forgotten, are the leaders of the party nationally, exacted from Giltow and Zam a public declaration that they have no intention of forming a communist faction, or any other kind of a faction, in the party. Then, to avoid a conflict with the Old Guard over their admittance, they chivied the ex-communists over to New Jersey—to join the S. P., so to speak, as second grade members.

Mistaken Analogies

Some people attempt to find an analogy between the contemptible course of Giltow and Zam and the action of the French Bolsheviki-Leninists in entering the S.F.I.O. as a group. But in reality there is no similarity at all. Shaken to its foundations by the crisis of the democratic state, the French Socialist party reacts to the broadest possible democracy in its own ranks; the leadership is not in a position to place limitations upon it. The Bolsheviki-Leninists are able to enter the party without any conditions; they openly retained their whole program, their name, their banner, their press. They work within the Socialist Party for the same ideas that governed their activity as an outside group, and they do it openly. What does this course have in common with the skulking, shamefaced conduct of Giltow?

We have supported the action of our French comrades. Under the exceptional circumstances prevailing in the French labor movement we think it was the correct tactical step. But it is obvious that the situation in this country is entirely different. Here the road is open for the creation of an independent party. It is a hard road, let us not deceive ourselves about that, but there is no other for those who have serious revolutionary aims and do not shrink from the implications of a struggle for them. It will be a hard up-hill fight. Those who have no stomach for it can be expected to stand aside on one pretext or another.

Goldman's Desertion

How else is one to explain the action of Albert Goldman in jumping over the fence into the S. P. at the moment our plans for fusion with the A.W.P. and the formal proclamation of the new party were nearing completion? What is that but the act of a strike-breaker?

Goldman, like Giltow, forswearing any intention to form a faction in the S. P. and still less to proclaim the need of a split with the black hundred gang of the Old Guard, imagines that he has discovered a new political recipe. He is going to work wonders in the Socialist party all by himself by means of personal diplomacy, back-slapping the centrist leaders, and the devil knows what other tricks. It has been said that he even expects to remain a "friend" of the League and the new party. We have no need of such friends. The new party needs revolutionary militants who are firm in their convictions and loyal to their own organization. We have had a good chance in recent years to find out who they are. There are enough to make a start. Others will follow, and we will train them in the same spirit.

Our road is the road to the new revolutionary party. And, by that, not to conciliation with the parties of reformism and centrism but irreconcilable struggle against them. If we are equal to our task we have the opportunity to succeed. Ten o'clock classes were empty. Professors dismissed their classes as 4,000 students stood before Royce Hall steps and saw uniformed police and football heroes knock down the speakers who attempted to take the stand in the behalf of the recalcitrant free-speechers.

The Principles of the New Party

We need a declaration of principles that speaks out clearly on every important question. The first draft, taken as a basis, is naturally to be edited, revised and clarified on every point. The bulk of this work of improving and clarifying the program has already been accomplished by the joint committee. The second draft, embodying important amendments and reformulations, will go to the convention delegates of each organization and then to the joint convention for final revision. The work in the joint program committee has demonstrated beyond any doubt that we have a common standpoint on all the fundamental questions of principles and tactics. What remains now is primarily a literary task of formulating each and every point with such precision that it cannot have two meanings to anybody. In the program declaration of the new party there should be no trace of ambiguity. We are confident that the final draft which passes the convention will meet this Marxian test and become the charter and guide of all the revolutionary militants in the country.

If, as all signs indicate, the sixth anniversary of our struggle is to culminate in the conclusion of our existence as a separate group and the beginning of a new period of joint struggle with the members of the A.W.P. in a single party, it can only mean that we carry with us that system of ideas and methods which, thanks to our international collaboration, and above all to the aid of our great teacher, we have so firmly acquired. Our conviction is unshakable. We "Trotskyites" are convinced to the marrow of our bones that our fight was justified and necessary. We renounce nothing and repent nothing. Revolutionary internationalism remains as before our central, unifying idea. The great task now, as we understand it, is to carry this idea into the realm of organization and action. That means concretely: unite forces to build the new party of the Fourth International. We hope to contribute our full share to the accomplishment of this great historic task.

Elevator Strike Near

(Continued from Page 1)

Meanwhile a furious campaign of slander has been unleashed by the bosses in an effort to nip the strike in the bud. Five thousand scabs have been imported to fill the places of striking workers, while extensive preparations are being made by the police department to insure them adequate protection. A charge by the bosses that Chicago racketeers are in control of the union has failed to dampen the enthusiasm of the workers.

In a telegram sent to Mayor LaGuardia, the Real Estate Board warns of a "serious labor disturbance." This gives the lie to their recent assertion that the union has under its leadership no more than 20 per cent of the workers in the industry.

An offer by the bosses to submit the question of wages and hours to an "impartial arbitrator" was emphatically rejected by union leaders who first demand the closed shop.

Students Fight for Freedom of Speech

(Continued from Page 1)

upon-a-time-liberal and removed from superintendency of Los Angeles Public Schools for a pacifist stand during the war) of conspiracy to turn the university over to Trotsky (even quoting from the latter's book, "The Strategy of the World Revolution") and the Third International these students in reality advocated so communistic a measure as a student controlled forum.

Warned by Provost Moore to cease advocating a student forum, these students had the temerity to think freedom of speech is permitted within the sacred precincts of a University campus. The student constitution provides for the right of petition for the referendum. Dr. Moore's representative hurried to the Student Council and bore the words that if the students attempted to use their right to petition—that right would be taken from them. Shades of 1776!

Like a bolt from the blue on Monday afternoon, October 29th, the five popular and active students were suspended.

On the same day student interest and resentment began swelling. Plans were laid.

On Tuesday the students acted. Ten o'clock classes were empty. Professors dismissed their classes as 4,000 students stood before Royce Hall steps and saw uniformed police and football heroes knock down the speakers who attempted to take the stand in the behalf of the recalcitrant free-speechers.

Cops Guard "Academic Freedom"

Cries of "What are the cops doing here?", "Let him speak", "We want an open hearing" rang out. Yes, the students were learning there on those steps lessons more poignant than can be found in many classes. A cop was scuffed. Students booted.

In the office of the university, Dr. Moore shuddered and, looking at the four young men who had been expelled and who had been summoned to appear before him, said "Get out there, you four, and break up that meeting!" No one moved. Then one spoke quietly: "Dr. Moore, you break it up. You started it."

These were brave words, but the four students anxious to get back into school had repudiated Celeste Strach, N.S.L. member because of her membership in that organization, and were later going to take the stand against "Communism" in an effort to purify their banner.

Outside—Pleading of a few "loyal" students who called upon everyone to sing the college anthem, "Hail Blue and Gold"; Earl Miller, dean of men, requests the students to go back to their classes. Back they go. But a glowing page in student action had already been written.

Support from Stanford

And support pours in from outside, from Stanford University where the editor of the organ of the students there writes a fine editorial on free speech. The University of California at Berkeley students declare a one hour strike in sympathy with the suspended students.

Here as at U.C.L.A. "Cross-Eyed Kellys" of the gridiron try to "bust things up". Los Angeles Junior College sends a petition with 750 names calling for reinstatement.

The days that have followed have seen Dr. Moore appealing to student vigilantes (here we must remember the vigilantes used during the strike in San Francisco) to drive radicalism (spelled freedom of thought) off the campus. Says he: "A well-regulated university does not have free speech". So—a university is a "laboratory for experiment"? Says who?

The supporters of the "C.C.L.A. Americans" (as they call themselves) are: the American Legion, the Daughters of the American Revolution, the Better American Federation, the Chamber of Commerce, the Chief of Police Davis, the aristocratic Ebell Club. Cast an appreciative eye over that mob, Horatio!

But a wave of student support is starting, slowly, clumsily-directed. But, nevertheless, such a progressive wave, galvanized by demands for the reinstatement of the five students, for a student forum, for free speech that even the respectable Dr. Moore may be swept aside.

The latest paper carries news that 100 U.C.L.A. professors demand the ouster of this senile servant of reaction, this pitiful, broken old man.

Let letters, petitions, mass meetings all over the land swell the tide. Every school in the land will have to decide whether free speech is to be allowed at U.C.L.A., or these collegiate fascists, who helped break the longshoremen's strike, are to rule. Every college according to Dr. Moore will have to decide this problem. An avalanche of protests directed to the president of the University of California, Dr. Sproul, at Berkeley, will definitely help to decide that freedom of speech shall be safeguarded, that democratic rights shall be maintained! Dr. Moore will reap the whirlwind he has sown!

—BILL MONROE.

The Heritage of October 17 Years of the Workers State

By ARNE SWABECK

Seventeen years ago the October revolution brought the first great defeat to world capitalism. It transferred the power in a territory covering one sixth of the earth's surface from a class in decline and decay to a rising progressive force—the working class. This was then, and remains today its most fundamental aspect.

Around the working class rallied the great majority of the peasantry, cementing an alliance of mutual interests. This alliance has remained firm and found its joint expression in the Soviets, in the social and cultural institutions of the workers republic, in the Red Army and in the reciprocal relations of mutual benefits and mutual obligations between city and country. From this alliance the U.S.S.R. draws its great strength, serving in a dismal world as a beacon light of inspiration. And this also has held imperialist marauders back, although their palms are itching for the attack. The working class power has defied its foes. It has remained unshaken and stands as the guardian of the workers fatherland. To defend this fatherland remains an elementary duty for every revolutionist.

It is not necessary to make inquiries today about the accomplishments of the October revolution. We do not ask for its justification. It is sufficient to say that the world literally stands aghast, watching breathlessly every advance in the U.S.S.R. The world watches in wonderment or bewilderment, with admiration and sympathy or with fear and hatred, but there is unanimity in the respectful attitude shown when confronting the magnitude of its developments. Even the most powerful among the imperialist nations, the United States itself, no longer dares to depreciate these developments, not to speak of making an actual comparison of conditions and achievements of the respective national economies.

The Contrast

It is true that here the scope of the productive forces still far outstrip those of the Soviet Union, but here an overwhelming percentage of its capacity lies idle and despite all the NRA code regulations the anarchy of capitalist production prevails, millions of workers remain in the misery and deprivation of unemployment, the standard of living for the class as a whole vastly reduced while bankruptcies make inroads in the various layers of the middle class. The superiority of planned economy as pursued in the U.S.S.R. has been demonstrated long ago and beyond a shadow of a doubt. There unemployment has been eliminated and the standard of living of the population as a whole is improving.

But the imperialists still cherish hopes in the midst of their deadly crisis. They know that the Soviet Union cannot stand alone. They have no illusions about the peaceful coexistence of the workers republic alongside of the capitalist powers. They still dominate world economy and never before have

Roosevelt Plan Fails

(Continued from Page 1)

Three hours after Harry Hopkins had roused the congress of economists to wild enthusiasm, President Roosevelt himself knocked the pins out from under them and told them their work would be confined to formulating unemployment insurance—not any kind of insurance for the present unemployed, but a cheap little fund that would tide present job holders over a few weeks of unemployment.

The Great Social Security Program boiled down to a plan whereby workers at present employed might receive a few weeks support from a fund created partly out of their meager salaries and partly out of pay roll taxes, a sort of company union mutual benefit association, with very little benefit at that.

The President warned (warned!) the economists that they were not to consider any old age pensions, any health insurance, or any plans for bettering the ten million now unemployed.

The "Security" Grave

In a few short words the President dug a grave, buried the Social Security program, and erected a tombstone over the hopes of those who expected something from the New Deal.

There was rejoicing in one quarter. President Roosevelt has kept his promise to business. Said the New York Times: "Business leaders (read: robber barons) hailed the cautious policy enunciated by the President, who emphasized that all problems could not be solved at once and that in developing the component parts of a broad program 'we must not lose sight of the fact that there can be no security for the individual in the midst of general insecurity'."

In other words, the people can wait for five or ten years for their security, while business reinforces itself. Capitalism first, the workers afterwards, is the President's motto.

forces throughout the world. Hence the defeat of the latter instead of their victory. But it is because of these defeats that the danger of the existence of the Soviet Union is much greater today. Its actual defense has become a much more pressing necessity.

It is for these reasons also that the defense of the Soviet Union cannot be conceived of without a struggle to the very end against the Stalinist bureaucratic regime. The parties dominated by this regime have been strangled and destroyed or rendered impotent. And for the revolutionists the only course now left open is the one of creating new parties and the creation of a new International. From this we do not at all exclude the Soviet Union. But the center of gravity of the struggle against the victorious reaction is now in the west, with France at this moment as its most crucial point. In the United States, however, rapid developments of the class struggle are also in the making.

This is where we will take our part in the creation of a new International and organizing the real defenders of the Soviet Union. We will the seventeenth anniversary of the October revolution and pledge to it our loyalty and support. For us it meant the first stage in the international revolution and the beginning of a new civilization not to be confined to one single country. It is in this spirit that we are about to take the first serious step toward the organization of the American revolutionists into the new party. It is in this spirit also that we celebrate our sixth anniversary of the Militant.

Struggle to the End

The relationship between the workers republic and the capitalist powers is necessarily a compromise and will remain so until the one or the other conquers. It is in no sense a peaceful relationship no matter what the diplomatic coverings may seem to convey. The issues between them are fought out constantly in the class war and the advantage of either side is influenced step by step through the strengthening or the weakening of the position of either class on a world scale. The final victory will be determined by this position. Today the international revolution is not advancing. On the contrary, it has suffered serious reverses and defeats. It is a well known fact that within the ring of countries around the Soviet Union reaction is growing at a much faster pace than the successes of Socialist construction. The further direction of the reactionary offensive is clear and it has gained its advantages mainly due to the departure of the Stalinist regime in the Soviet Union and the official Communist parties from the theory and practice of revolutionary internationalism. Out of this the severe defeats of the real defenders of the Soviet Union became possible. In order to prove this contention it is necessary to record once again only the defeat of the Chinese revolution, the defeat of the German workers and the crushing of their organizations when Hitler came to power, and the defeat of the Austrian workers. These were the greatest blows struck not only against the international revolution but against the Soviet power as well.

What has the Soviet Union gained in return for these blows on the international arena? From the capitalist powers it is accorded respect in outward appearance. Even the mighty dollar empire has extended its official recognition. Several powers, no doubt, would at this present stage not spurn an alliance with the Soviet Union but, as far as they are concerned, it would be only to further their own imperialist aims. The Soviet Union has entered non-aggression pacts of the kind that were declared scraps of paper in the last war. It has been taken into the icy embrace of the League of Nations. Its representatives will sit on the council in Geneva constructed by the robber bands of nations which were victorious in the last war and for the purpose of maintaining the artificial national boundaries of imperialist loot and to continue the enslavement of humanity with the "blessings" of capitalist civilization. Empty diplomatic victories when compared to the disastrous defeats flowing from a fundamentally false theory and practice. On the weak reed of such victories the Stalinist bureaucracy leans for its support to ward off the attacks upon the Soviet Union instead of placing its real reliance on the strengthening of the working class

cuttomer's hand and forced Woodrow Wilson to have his sentence commuted to life imprisonment. Evertime since then that Mooney had a chance for freedom, it was because the labor movement was in motion.

Today again, if the Supreme Court is not to be permitted to find a legal loophole to deny Mooney a retrial, it will only be because the militant working class is on its feet and says to the doddering judges that it will not take NO for an answer.

The cause of Mooney is the cause of the oppressed and exploited. Tom Mooney went to prison because he fought labor's battle. As long as Mooney remains in jail a cloud of shame will hang over the working class.

Fighting Mooney, never weary, never discouraged, has time and again called upon the working class for assistance. That they have not passed unheeded is a matter of history.

But now, now! more than ever before it is our duty to answer his call!

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