

NEW MILITANT

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A L A R M Signals in the Soviet Union!

By A. J. Muste & James P. Cannon

RECENT events in the Soviet Union, commencing with the assassination of Kirov and followed by secret executions totalling 103 at the present writing, cause the deepest alarm to the thinking revolutionary workers of the entire world for whom the Soviet Union is and has been since 1917 the star of hope and inspiration.

The alarm that every revolutionary worker feels at any indication of danger to the Soviet Workers' State is increased and intensified enormously by the secrecy and mystery in which the present happenings have been shrouded. For days after Kirov's assassination there was complete lack of any explanation as to the identity of the assassin or the reason for his act. Then the Soviet authorities placed the blame upon White Guards, counter-revolutionists left from the old Czarist regime. Later it was hinted that representatives of some foreign capitalist power were engaged in dastardly counter-revolutionary activities in the Soviet Union.

If the Soviet Union is in danger the advanced workers throughout the world will rally to its defense as they have always done and they will not object to drastic measures against conspirators.

The right and the duty of the proletarian state to adopt the sternest methods of repression against its class enemies is indisputable for a revolutionary worker. Lenin and Trotsky taught it. And history will applaud them for it, for the young revolution fighting for its very existence, and learning from the terrible mistakes of the Paris Commune that leniency to the class enemy ends in the bloody massacre of the workers, had to crush the resistance of the overthrown class with swift and terrible blows. But, once the power of the revolution was consolidated, after the working class had triumphed in the civil war and the wars of intervention, the prosecution of counter-revolutionists was conducted in court. From the beginning, moreover, Lenin and Trotsky always proved the necessity of their actions; they explained everything clearly, fully and honestly to the international working class as well as to the workers in the Soviet Union and were supported by them.

Workers who see the operation of the white terror in a large part of the world, the mass murder of the victims of fascism and reaction in Germany, Austria, Spain and other countries—not to speak of the killing of strikers in the "democratic" United States—will not shed tears over the fate of a few White Guards and counter-revolutionists who seek to restore the capitalist order in the Soviet Union. They need only to be convinced that the victims are really White Guards and that it is really necessary to resort to such drastic measures against them.

The revolutionary workers have nothing in common with the hypocritical outcries of anti-Soviet elements, whether they be Social Democrats or capitalist editors, who come forward now with increased aggressiveness to renew their agitation for bourgeois "democracy" as against workers' dictatorship. These critics were effectively silenced in the past, or at least deprived of all influence among the advanced workers. If methods are now employed which enable them to raise their heads again it is only another count in the indictment of those responsible for the methods.

In the Summer of 1922, more than twelve years ago, the trial of the leaders of the Social-Revolutionary Party, charged with responsibility for an organized campaign of terrorism and sabotage, took place in Moscow. It was held in open court in the one-time "Hall of the Nobles", then and now the headquarters of the Moscow trade unions. The accused, at the request of the parties and organizations of the Second International, were allowed to have foreign counsel—Ironically enough one of the attorneys for the accused S.R.'s was Vandervelde, Minister of the Belgian King during the war and the present head of the Second International to whom the Comintern recently offered a "non-aggression pact". The guilt of the accused was established at the public trial beyond any doubt, in part by their own confessions. They were convicted of responsibility for and the direct organization of the assassination of Volodarsky, the attempts on the lives of Lenin and other Soviet leaders, the dynamiting of bridges and other acts of terrorism and violence against the workers' state. As a result of this open trial, conducted before the eyes of the world, the revolutionary vigilance of the Soviet Government was approved and endorsed by the international working class; the moral position of the counter-revolutionists, including the Mensheviks and the Social-Revolutionaries, was completely destroyed.

So strong was the position of the Soviet Government then, in 1922, when the country was still suffering from the devastation of civil war and famine, when industrial production was at its lowest point, far below pre-war standards, before anybody had even thought of "socialism in one country", not to speak of proclaiming its existence—so strong was the position of the victorious revolution that the Soviet Government, with the approval of the Communist International, found it possible to commute the death sentences passed on the terrorists by the proletarian court.

It was Trotsky who came before the Executive Committee of the

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Muste Calls for Funds To Carry on Mass Work

The contents of this issue of the New Militant give the reason why the drive for the \$5,000 Party Foundation Fund must be put over, and furnish at the same time conclusive evidence that it will be. Consider the situation: One of the founders of the Communist Party in this country, prominent leader in its trade union work, has joined the W. P. In at least two basic industries this week, automobiles and steel, the workers have again been put off with empty promises and gestures by the capitalists and the Roosevelt administration.

In automobiles, for example, one of the million and one Roosevelt commissions is holding hearings on "stabilization of employment", but refuses to listen to the testimony of workers regarding the anti-unionism of the bosses which is the root of the turmoil in the industry. Discontent mounts among the workers. "Send an experienced organizer," cry our Toledo comrades, "to look about on this situation."

Get abraded and we witness the swift, amazing developments which have followed the assassination of Kirov in the Soviet Union and which constitute the subject of an important statement in this issue. On every hand, on the economic

and the political field, in the unions and in other political parties and groups, at home in the United States and abroad, the evidence piles up that the new party was launched at the most opportune moment, that in the midst of confusion and disintegration everywhere else, our Declaration of Principles answers forth clearly and sharply the answer to the questions of the day in the revolutionary movement.

COMRADES, WE MUST NOT SHIRK OUR GREAT RESPONSIBILITIES NOW BY FAILING TO RALLY ALL OUR RESOURCES AT THIS CRITICAL MOMENT TO GET OUR REVOLUTIONARY MESSAGE TO THE MASSES.

Now every branch, every member, every sympathizer, must get busy. Bring in every dollar, every penny that can be raised. Forward money to the national office as quickly as you get it. A dollar given early in the drive will do the work of two.

FOR THE WORKERS PARTY OF THE U. S.

FOR WORKING CLASS SOLIDARITY!

A. J. MUSTE,
National Secretary

Steel Truce In Deadlock At Capitol

Roosevelt's Plan is Balked
By Failure to Agree on
Company Unions

WASHINGTON.—A three-point "truce" program for the steel industry ended in a conference deadlock when labor leaders, mindful of pressure from below, refused to agree to "company unions" in the industry.

The plan was submitted by President Roosevelt and Secretary of Labor Perkins as the first step in carrying out the President's personal desire, announced in October, to extend the "truce" between workers and employers throughout the industry. It was submitted by the President at a special White House conference of leading steel barons and A. F. of L. leaders.

The three points in the President's plan, which would have bound the steel workers for a period of six months, were:

1. The employers would bargain with all groups of employees. This proviso would have given Federal sanction to company unions in steel.

2. Both labor and employers would recognize the National Steel Relations Board as the arbitration agency of the industry. The proviso was submitted despite the fact that the Steel Board has been unsatisfactory to labor. The Board was appointed by the President at the time of the threatened strike in steel last June and since that time has been swamped with complaints and petitions from union locals in the steel centers, but has held only one election, at a small concern, the West Virginia Rail Company, where the workers won over the company union.

3. Both sides would agree on a six months' "truce", during which no elections of representatives for collective bargaining purposes would be held. Myron Taylor, chairman of the board of the United States Steel Corporation, had been campaigning for several months for both the "truce", as outlined by Roosevelt, and the proposal that the employers should have clear governmental sanction of company unions.

Asks More Conferences

When it became evident that the conference had reached a deadlock, President Roosevelt asked the Steel Board to continue its "good work" and to arrange further conferences. The deadlock over the question of "majority rule" was caused mainly by the fact that Green, Tighe and other A. F. of L. representatives in the conference were being subjected to pressure from the rank and file, which is fast becoming more progressive and militant than the old-line union leaders.

What the next steps of President Roosevelt and the Steel Board will be was not announced. Unrest pointing toward a general strike is reported in steel.

Hit Sabotage In C.P. Trial

BERKELEY, Calif.—Indignation of the rank and file members of the Communist Party at the incompetence, mismanagement and outright sabotage of the defense of the 18 comrades on trial in the Criminal Syndicalism case at Sacramento last week reached the point of explosion. Last week the general membership meeting of the C. P. at Berkeley adopted a resolution calling the district leadership to account in the most scathing terms and categorically demanding a radical change of policy and attitude toward the case and towards the defendants involved.

The leading defendants, among them Caroline Decker, are allowed to lie in jail for lack of bail while favorites of the C. P. clique are taken out. Nothing is done to promote a broad united front with other working class organizations in behalf of the prisoners, the case is deliberately played down in the party press and a venomous campaign of slanderous insinuation is conducted against the leading defendants in the case. The reason: they are "suspected" of deviations in the direction of the Workers Party!

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MERRY CHRISTMAS—WHERE?

By DAN EASTMAN

The fifth Christmas of the New Deal is a very merry one indeed—in some classes. Looking through the newspapers one finds nothing but optimism, bright hope, and reassurance. Steel is turning up, Henry Ford is reemploying, recovery is just around the corner, unprecedented Christmas boom, business and government cooperate for the common welfare, department stores show rise, and so on and so on.

Somewhat overwhelmed by all this good cheer, your reporter determined to carry the message of Christmas down to the people. In Madison Square Park he stopped to have his shoes shined, and engaged the bootblack in conversation.

His name, he said, was Bill Shields, sixty years old, born on a poor farm in upstate New York. A tall, gaunt Yankee, with a white stubble on his jaws, he was wrapped in an old army coat, and wore a ragged cap over his eyes. He kept his shoe cream bottle in an inside pocket, near the warmth of his body, to prevent its freezing.

"I make three to five dollars a week," he said, "depending on the weather. Make less in winter, barely three last week. I'd rather bootblack than go on home relief. They ask you too damn many questions, and even then you have to wait around for months before they give you anything. Of course if my health fails me, I'll have to take a different point of view."

"It's pretty tough in winter."

Joseph Zack, C.P. Leader, Joins the Workers Party

The trend of the revolutionary workers toward the new Workers Party was illustrated in the most striking manner this week by the action of Joseph Zack, one of the most prominent veterans of the American Communist movement, in withdrawing from the Communist Party and simultaneously joining the W. P.

As will be seen from the statement of comrade Zack which appears in another column he came to this decision after a thorough study of the fundamental problems which have arisen in the last decade and, in doing so, arrived at the same conclusions on all the principle questions as those outlined in the party's Declaration of Principles. The action of comrade Zack produced a sensation in radical labor circles in New York where he is known to every militant who has taken active part in the movement during the past 20 years. The panic of the leaders of the C. P., signified by their hasty announcement of his "expulsion" after his resignation from the party, is increased

by the knowledge that he does not stand alone. The C. P. will have plenty of "expulsions" to announce in the near future, and the names of some of the most active and militant workers in the trade union movement will appear on the lists. Joseph Zack was a foundation member of the Communist Party. He was a member of the Central Committee in the underground days and afterward. For years he was the head of the party trade union work in the New York district and secretary of the T.U.U.L. Later he held the same office in the Cleveland district whence he was "expelled" for the capital offense of having opinions and talking about them. Commencing next week the New Militant will publish a series of articles by comrade Zack which will be of interest to every revolutionary worker.

COMRADE ZACK'S STATEMENT
New York City
December 20, 1934

To the National Committee
Workers Party of the U.S.A.

Comrades:
I hereby present my application to join the Workers Party, having resigned from the Communist Party.

I have been a member of the C.P. U.S.A. since its inception. Before that I was a member of the Left Wing of the S. P. My differences with the leadership of the C.P. originated on the Trade Union question more than two years ago, leading up to the 1934 Party Convention held in Cleveland. As a result of my brief talk as a delegate to that convention, organization measures were taken against me in plain and flagrant violation of inner party democracy. I was threatened with expulsion 24 hours after the convention if I did not retract the views I had expressed at the convention the day before. I was immediately removed from all party activity. As a result the whole question of the inner party regime

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9 Join Party At Philly Meet

PHILADELPHIA.—A crowd of 300, including members of every political current in the world of labor—Syndicalists, Stalinists, Socialists and ex-radicals of all shades—turned out to hear A. J. Muste and James P. Cannon present the program of the new revolutionary party here on December 16. Nine new members were added and \$73.50 pledged to the party building fund.

Mostly workers were present—militant trade unionists—Negro and white, many unemployed and professional people.

The speakers told of the fusion of the former American Workers Party and the Communist League on a principled basis of revolutionary Marxism to build the Workers Party of the United States. The addresses were warmly applauded and sale of the new party literature was good.

The Lehigh County Unemployed League asks that readers of the NEW MILITANT will help them build a library by sending them books, pamphlets, etc. Send them to: Ed. Moser, L. C. U. L., 341 Union Street, Allentown, Penna.

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Super Lobby Seeks Wage Relief Slash

Capitalists in United Front
Against Labor to Put
Screws on Congress

WASHINGTON.—The "super-lobby" set up by the capitalists who met last week at White Sulphur Springs, W. Va., will lay before President Roosevelt and Congress when it convenes plans to put the unemployed on doles and to perpetuate company unions.

The united front of industry against labor was formed with the aid of members of Roosevelt's Cabinet. Ninety leading industrialists and bankers of the nation attended the conference.

Will Ask for Dole

For the unemployed, the lobby will demand that Federal relief be reduced and gradually replaced by the dole, the funds to be provided by local charity and the state through "strongly centralized bureaus".

For the workers in industry business will ask that the Administration continue the NRA codes another year, with labor having the right, as at present, to bargain collectively with employers through organizations of their "choice", including company formed unions.

United Front

The lobby will speak for the United States Chamber of Commerce, the Manufacturers' Association, railroads, banks, utilities and the corporations which control the country's industries. Permanent headquarters have been set up in Washington. The Administration, it was said, "can no longer misinterpret the desires of industry and business."

"Let industry take the lead in recovery" was in effect the slogan adopted.

Screws on Congress

A simple analysis of the united front and preparations being made to put the screws on Congress to halt government spending and stop labor organization reveals that the capitalists have got together to slash wages and living standards all down the line. A "wild" Congress is coming in, a Congress under pressure from the "people back home" to appropriate more and more funds to relieve distress and somehow make President Roosevelt's golden political phrases and promises come to life.

The danger, as seen by the super-business lobby, is not that this can be done while they hold the reins of wealth and industry, but that the people might begin to believe it is possible and so expect "too much".

Pressure on the Administration recently forced Harry L. Hopkins, Relief Administrator, to cut relief wages below \$12 a week.

The Journal of Commerce, which interprets business and political trends for Wall Street, predicted in the early fall that the Administration would soon be "forced" to reduce relief wages to help industry stabilize industrial wages at a "reasonable level".

Cats Eat Relief Meat—Live

TOLEDO, Ohio.—Toledo relief authorities have found a new way to test the fitness of meat for the bellies of unemployed workers and their children.

When unemployed workers here brought tainted relief beef to the authorities the relief agents set out to demonstrate to the workers that the meat was edible. Mice were put in the cage with the mice of the suspect beef, but the mice, caged and caged, turned up their soft pink noses at the meat. Determined to show that the meat could be eaten, some alley cats were captured and fed the meat.

The cats, noting the similarity to their regular fare of garbage, pronounced the meat good. The nameless tabby martyrs convinced the relief authorities that the o. f. is—(a) not good for mice, (b) edible by cats, (c) perfect for unemployed workers and their children.

FOLLOW THE NEWS IN THE
NEW MILITANT.

JOIN THE WORKERS PARTY.

MASS MEETING
Sunday, December 23rd, 9.00 p. m.

IRVING PLAZA
Irving Pl. & 15th St.

J. P. CANNON A. J. MUSTE

SPEAKERS: