

NEW MILITANT

with which is merged THE MILITANT

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The Wall Is Cracking

After long years the wall behind which Stalin perpetrates his infamies on his revolutionary opponents and critics is beginning to crack and the terrible truth is making its way to the international working class.

The most timely and appropriate step that can be taken now is to agitate for the sending of an impartial commission to the Soviet Union to investigate the conditions of the revolutionary political prisoners there and to make a public report of their findings.

Along with the agitation for a commission to visit the Soviet Union we must demand the alleviation of the conditions of the prisoners; and do something to provide material support for the persecuted victims of Stalin's terror and their families.

For the Unity of Unemployed

Permanent mass unemployment brings new problems and new forms of labor organization. In the years since the beginning of the crisis the necessity for distinct organizations of the unemployed and part time workers has become increasingly evident.

The necessity of this close relationship and cooperation between the organizations of the unemployed and the established trade unions has been especially emphasized by the launching of the federal public works program and the part-time employment of a great number of workers previously unemployed.

The unification of the unemployed movement is undoubtedly the next step in the line of progressive development in this field. Whatever the original reasons for the formation of separate organizations of the unemployed there is no justification now for further division.

The unity negotiations between the National Unemployed League and the Workers Alliance of America have offered the best prospect for the combination of all the organized unemployed in a single national organization.

The failure of the WAA and the NUL up till now to come to an agreement for the unification is all the more to be regretted in view of the immense new possibilities that would be opened up before a united movement.

SHADES OF LENIN!

BOSTON.—Ushered in by a hysterical campaign in the Hearst Boston American, appealing to all patriotic Bostonians to prevent the meeting, the people of this city were astounded by a spectacle of patriotism and flag-waving under the guise of a Lenin memorial meeting held recently by the C. P. at Symphony Hall.

throughout the land there were no better, more loyal Americans to be found than in the flock of Stalin. In introducing the following speaker, a C. P. member, he carefully addressed him as "Mr. Moore to the amusement of the audience.

ature of the case, while important, are decidedly secondary.

In the face of the urgent need for unity, which overshadows all other considerations, leaders who haggle endlessly over these points for reasons of personal ambition or narrow organization patriotism stand self-condemned.

We especially urge the leaders of the National Unemployed League, among whom are members of the Workers Party, to take this broad view of the situation and to push forward the unification.

The New Labor Press

The labor awakening signalled by the waves of militant strikes under the Roosevelt administration is beginning to find expression in another form which has its own significance.

The Unionist, published by the Union of All Workers at Austin, Minn., where it dominates the big Hormel packing plant, emerges from its old form as a mimeographed bulletin into a full-sized printed paper.

Despite technical and editorial shortcomings these new labor papers are all distinguished by one quality that marks them off sharply from the traditional old-line monstrosities of conservatism and dullness humorously called the "labor press"; the new papers are alive.

The new trade union papers are harbingers of the coming day when the new unionism, the authentic movement of militant American labor, will come into its own and speak in its own voice.

Socialist Call and Daily Worker

The Trotsky-Hearst frame-up of the Stalinists and their slander system in general got a severe jolt from the editorial in the Socialist Call in which Trotsky's standing as a revolutionist and his right to criticize the Stalin regime are vigorously defended.

The position taken by the Socialist Call on the controversy over the Soviet political prisoners distinguishes it favorably from the reformist Socialist press of Europe which suppresses all references to Stalin's persecutions of the Bolsheviks—they know all about it and have no objection—as well as from the New Leader and the Forward which utilize the revelations in order to discredit the Soviet Union in the manner of Hearst.

But one remark in the editorial, if taken literally, strikes a decidedly false note: "We are not concerned with the truth of the statements in these (Trotsky's) articles." It is possible that this is meant simply to separate the issue of the Stalinist slander frame-up—which the Call condemns out of hand—from the accusations of Trotsky and Tarov.

The persecution of Bolsheviks strikes a blow at the Soviet Union. Those who believe Tarov's story should raise their voices in protest. If one doubts the truth of Tarov's statements he should call for an investigation by an impartial, pro-Soviet committee to establish the facts.

"revolutionist" is the following, delivered passionately and earnestly: "We Communists will never give up our American flag to Al Smith's Liberty League, or the Hearsts, and we always have an American flag at our meetings in remembrance of the Bill of Rights which assures life, liberty and happiness to all." (!)

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A Cry of Protest from A Siberian Exile Camp

Letter of 15 Bolsheviks, Written in 1934, Comes to Light for First Time

We publish below an authentic document, shocking in its revelations of the tortures to which the Stalinist bureaucracy daily submits the best Russian and foreign revolutionists, when the latter come to the U.S.S.R. We make this letter public (written in Jan., 1934) only after great delay because one of the comrades, with whom it deals, has only recently managed to make his way abroad.

To Akulov, Attorney General of the U.S.S.R., Moscow:

On November 28, 1933, the Yugoslav comrade Ciliga, who spent three years in the political solitary at Verkhni-Uralsk, made an attempt at suicide, in the offices of the central bureau of the G.P.U. by slashing his veins.

This attempt at suicide took place at the central offices of the G.P.U., where Ciliga had been taken and after his sudden arrest while he was under medical treatment at Krasnoyarsk, in order to forcibly transport him from Krasnoyarsk to Yenesseisk, even before his treatment was finished.

The entire past of comrade Ciliga and the system of repressions and persecutions with which the G.P.U. had surrounded him, demonstrate the truth of this contention.

Hounded by Bourgeoisie and Stalin Three Yugoslav Communists, comrades Ciliga, Dedich and Dragulich who had been able to withstand the repressions of the Yugoslav bourgeoisie, came to the U.S.S.R., which they considered, like so many hundreds and thousands of other proletarian revolutionists abroad, to be their socialist fatherland.

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ers' community. Dragulich was a member of the Central Committee of the party and Ciliga a member of the Political Bureau and on the staff of the central legal organ of the party. All three were hated for good cause by the Yugoslav government, all three could expect the most vicious terror from the Yugoslav bourgeoisie.

These comrades, who found a cruel exploitation of the proletariat in the U.S.S.R. and who had become convinced of the betrayal of the leading group, of its betrayal of the proletarian revolution, joined the opposition and soon shared the fate of the Russian Communists who carry on an unceasing struggle for the proletarian revolution and who, in the U.S.S.R., are also punished for it as they are in other countries by prison, by condemnation to life in concentration camps, by moral and physical abuse, by exile to the remotest corners of Eastern Siberia, to the province of Naryn, to the favorite places where Czarist Russia loved to send its prisoners.

The Hunger Strike

The three comrades, sentenced in 1930 to three years imprisonment were transferred to solitary confinement at Verkhni-Uralsk and cut off not only from the proletarian movement of their own country but also from their families and friends.

What the Yugoslav authorities failed to do, was accomplished by the government of Stalin and Molotov. Comrade Ciliga and the two other Yugoslav comrades, became the victims of the Soviet prison system, a system of provocation calculated to the meanest detail, which in the Spring of 1931 in the large Communist collective in the political solitary of Verkhni-Uralsk, numbering 176 persons, led to a hunger strike of 18 days duration as a protest against the shots fired through the window of a prisoner (Essayan) who was seriously wounded. Ciliga and his comrades who participated in the hunger strike, together with many Russian Communists who suffered all sorts

of humiliating beatings, were placed in chains and the water hose turned on them, as was the custom in the solitary of Verkhni-Uralsk.

Arbitrary Extension of Sentences Ciliga and his comrades were becoming acquainted with a new reality, existing only in the U.S.S.R. and unknown to the Communists active in bourgeois-fascist Europe.

In the U.S.S.R. every prisoner, on the termination of his sentence, may see it prolonged for a new indefinite period: for a term one, two, three years or more without the prisoner being indicted, heard or judged in any fashion, whatsoever. There are many examples of Communists, who through the practice of the Russian prisons have had their sentences prolonged perpetually. The prison term of the Yugoslav Communists (three years) expired in May 1933. Seriously suffering from isolation from the Communist movement of their country, the three Yugoslav Communists decided at this very moment to demand at any cost, the right to return to Yugoslavia, where, despite the danger which threatened them, they could function in the ranks of the struggling proletariat. The comrades demanded to be sent to Yugoslavia and announced that they would struggle to obtain this right by every means without eschewing the most extreme methods like the hunger strike and suicide. The reply of the G.P.U. was the order to transport them to another political solitary, in order to remove the possibility of their securing support in their struggle from the large important Communist collective, imprisoned for years in the solitary at Verkhni-Uralsk.

Ciliga's Heroic Protest Comrade Ciliga was separated from his friends (the fate of the other Yugoslav comrades is not known to us) and thrown into a dungeon of the prison at Chelabinsk, where he carried on a hunger strike lasting 23 days to obtain the right to return to his home in his country. But the leading group in the U.S.S.R., which betrayed the cause of the revolution in his country, is at the same time indifferent when it comes to strengthening the ranks of the international proletariat by intrepid, strong and tested revolutionists. Moreover, it prefers its own government methods in regulating their affairs to the Communists who struggle against the international bourgeoisie.

In reply to comrade Ciliga's hunger strike the G.P.U. informed him that his sentence would be extended two more years. Following this comrade Ciliga imperatively demanded his freedom, or else he would commit suicide as a protest

against the extension of his sentence. The G.P.U., fearing that the international proletariat might find out about the death of the Yugoslav Communists, tortured in the prisons of the U.S.S.R., freed comrade Ciliga and sent him into exile to far off Eastern Siberia.

Siberian Exile

But that in no way changed the situation of comrade Ciliga, since he was placed in the same conditions of absolute isolation as in the political solitary. Under the present Soviet regime exile means only that they continue their estrangement from life, but in different conditions. Separation from friends, from family, the impossibility of carrying on correspondence, which is intercepted by the local agents of the G.P.U. and in the greatest part destroyed or disappears without a trace. Repeated raids, frequent arrests without reason or charges—all of this makes of the places of exile, concentration camps with just a shred of freedom. And comrade Ciliga, sent into the waste lands of Eastern Siberia, and seeing no other prospect than of being transferred to a still more distant corner, finally tried to carry out his threat of suicide.

"We Hold You Responsible." In making these facts known to you, we draw your attention to the fact that the life of comrade Ciliga is still in danger, although this time his attempt at suicide failed. Since the main demand of comrade Ciliga has received no satisfaction, we send you this warning and we hold you fully responsible for the system of provocations of the G.P.U. and of its intent to physically exterminate the Communists among whom comrade Ciliga is one of the victims. You are entirely responsible for the subsequent fate of comrade Ciliga who belongs to the international working class and who must be given the opportunity of returning to its ranks. We declare that the international working class will one day know the fate of comrade Ciliga and the other Yugoslav Communists although the treacherous policy of the leading group thrusts them into the remotest places. We call upon you to issue an order to the G.P.U. to put an end to the systematic persecutions against the Yugoslav Communists, comrades Ciliga, Dedich, Dragulich and to give them permission to go abroad, since they are illegally and forcibly held in the U.S.S.R.

SIGNED: Bobinski, Volkov, Gourovskaya, Dehinschvili (I), Korkina, Ida Lemelman, Plomier, Kapoport, Simbirski, Sotnikov, Shapiro, Fedorov, Chiklin.

Yenesseisk, January, 1934.

February Issue of New International Out Soon

The February NEW INTERNATIONAL will be out soon. Among the material contained in this issue, the article on the Stakhanovist movement will probably attract the most immediate attention. Written by one of our Russian comrades, N. Markin, the facts presented are fully authenticated by references to information that appeared in the press of the Soviet Union. In each instance exact data is given, presenting on the whole a picture of this movement not previously known in this country, which should be of special interest also to all the readers of the NEW MILITANT.

An interview with Leon Trotsky, appearing in this issue, will no doubt be considered by many readers as its special feature. We can readily agree. The interviewer is a member of the British I.L.P., who recently made a visit to Norway, and in the course of his discussions with comrade Trotsky put a number of questions to which he received specific and quite elaborate answers. While the questions and the answers were concerned in the main with problems facing the I.L.P., they are all of much more than mere partisan interest since they touch upon some of the most fundamental aspects of tactics and strategy of the revolutionary movement.

Comrade John West takes up in this issue the question of organic unity. Since the Seventh Comintern Congress this question appears to have been transferred into the

realm of reality; the Stalinists, at any rate, have become ardent proponents of organic unity with the Socialist parties. While the actual consummation of such organic unity may still be doubtful and not at all solved by the mere formula of unity that usually appears so attractive to the average worker, it devolves upon the Marxists to give the answer to this Stalinist proposal. This is what comrade West has undertaken to do in his article. His analysis is presented with usual thoroughness.

An article by comrade Swaback is devoted to the question: Does the A. F. of L. Face a Split? No doubt this subject is of sufficient importance as well as to be, at this moment, of more than ordinary interest to our readers.

Among the other material carried in the February issue of the NEW INTERNATIONAL two articles deserve special mention. One of them, written by Felix Morrow, deals with the spirit of the American Constitution and the other is a continuation of the discussion by comrade Novack on the role of the American intellectuals.

We present in this issue also a new contributor, comrade Erich Wollenberg. During a number of years, but prior to the Stalinist "third period," he was the leader of the military sector of the German Communist party. His contribution to the February issue analyzes the question of: Just Wars in the Light of Marxism.

Fur Strike Called Off

(Continued from Page 1)

riers swallow the contract. The echoes of class-collaboration resounded throughout his entire speech; a strike, he declared, means suffering for the workers, ruin for the bosses and is bad for the industry (!) generally. Don't worry, he consoled the workers, some day we'll have a Farmer-Labor party and it will reform the rotten capitalist system.

Members of the Progressive Unity Group and other rank and file workers criticized the agreement and the leadership of the union responsible for it. They pointed out that it was presented to the membership as an accomplished fact and there was nothing to be done but to accept it since the leadership had not prepared for a strike. It was common knowledge in the fur market and well known to the bosses (see their organ, "Women's Wear") that the leadership of the union did not intend to strike and this, of course, made the bosses all the more arrogant.

The Stalinists' Record

In the six months the Stalinists have been at the helm of the united Furriers Union, they have induced a spirit of apathy among the workers and suppressed all sparks of militancy in their ranks. They re-introduced a system of craft locals instead of the industrial form of organizations which the right wing leaders dared not do in their bold-est moments. They made deals with unprincipled individuals, surrounded themselves with an apparatus of yes-men, including some Old Guard Socialists, a window dressing for their actions. The prestige of the Stalinists as a militant force in the trade union movement is today little but a dim memory. The furriers must recognize in them a force for evil only, a brake on the workers' struggle, ready for anything including class-collaboration indistinguishable from any of the old line A. F. of L. bureaucrats. Even the red paint has worn off. They must draw the proper lessons for the future.

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NEWS FLASH!

As we go to press the dress-makers are making final preparations for a general strike which will involve over 100,000 workers. Frantic last-minute efforts of La Guardia proved abortive. The bosses remained recalcitrant and the union refused to allow itself to be bluffed.

Unless unforeseen developments occur between this writing and Monday, the strike date, the walk-out is expected to close every dress shop in the city.

Thirty-three halls, hired for the purpose, will meet with striking working men and women. Many of

them will march in picket lines for the first time.

Dressmakers in New Jersey and Connecticut will be asked to cooperate.

The union is fighting for an increase in wages to meet the rising standard of living and a reduction in hours. They are also demanding a limitation of contractors and a regulation of the system of price settlement.

At this writing 20,000 workers Square Garden in one of the biggest are expected to overflow Madison Square Garden in one of the biggest since the heyday of the NRA.