

Auto Unionists Face Vital Battle Against Big Motor Companies

By Auto Worker

The United Automobile Workers of America is the largest of the new unions of the C.I.O. and the most successful, in the business sense of the word. It is moreover, one of the few major unions of the C.I.O. which has developed its own independent leadership. In contrast, the Steel Workers Organizing Committee is a synthetic affair; the leadership, primary and secondary, is the private property of the Mine Workers bureaucracy. The Textile Workers Organizing Committee leadership, the private property of Hillman and his friends. The A B C principles of democracy, common even in many of the American Federation of Labor unions, such as strike votes, strike committees, elected negotiating committees, have been blandly disregarded by these two organizations. The Auto Workers Union is unquestionably the "best" that the C.I.O. has so far produced.

Leaders an Obstacle

Eighteen months ago, the United Automobile Workers launched their organizing campaign. Objective conditions were highly favorable. The rank and file responded with energy and enthusiasm. Dillon and his reactionary crowd were ousted by an almost unanimous vote. A new, young and progressive leadership had been placed in office. In eighteen brief months, this truly progressive leadership has become a furiously reactionary, red-baiting clique, whose only thought is the perpetuation of its own existence and position. Personal prestige and standing overbalance very easily with them the interests of half a million men and women. The leadership has become a hindrance and an obstacle to the further progress of the organization.

Events move with such whirlwind rapidity today; the problems of a union organization have become so complicated and difficult in this era of capitalist decline, that it has become virtually impossible for a man to be consistently progressive in a union, without the guidance and direction and aid of a left wing workers' party. The evolution of Martin and his crowd is not accidental. Dalrymple, President of the Rubber Workers Union, a man of far greater personal honesty and integrity, has undergone an almost identical transformation and plays an almost identical role. The "heroic period" of the Auto Workers Union as of the C.I.O. is definitely over.

The September meeting of the National Executive Board of the Auto Workers Union was marked by retreat and reaction. The warning of the Milwaukee convention was ignored. General Motors was informed it could dismiss all employees guilty of violating union discipline and responsible for unauthorized stoppages. Thus, Knudsen and Sloan have become the new control commission in charge of enforcing the decisions of the union. In five minutes, the Martin Executive Board destroyed what the auto workers had fought ten weeks of furious battle to win. The convention revealed that delegates were possessed of too

much initiative and boldness, qualities none too welcome in the union today. The National Executive Board ruled that no local could issue its own newspaper and that all printed material was subject to the censorship of the National office. With another stroke, the Executive Board violated the decision of the Milwaukee convention and incidentally the basic democratic rights of the local union organizations.

Martin was too ill during the NEB meeting to give an organizational report. The question was tabled until after the Atlantic City conference. Martin recovered sufficiently two days later, however, to discharge fourteen International organizers. The reason: Economy. Martin forgot that his own Executive Board had increased organizers' salaries

by 25 per cent the day before.

"Unity" Group Collapses

What about the "Unity group" members of the Executive Board? How did they respond to these bureaucratic usurpations and to the policy of shameful surrender to General Motors? On these crucial questions the Executive Board voted favorably by a unanimous vote. On the key issues of democracy and the policy toward the corporations, Martin and the "Unity" people obviously see eye to eye.

When on top of the decisions at the Executive Board meeting fourteen organizers, including Victor Reuther and Robert Travis were fired, the membership really got riled up. Martin's hotel was picketed. Delegations started pouring in from Flint, Pontiac,

Detroit locals, protesting the bureaucratic action. Martin accused Walter Reuther and his local as the instigators of this revolt, of provoking "hooliganism." Reuther ducked from underneath the responsibility, disclaimed any connection with the revolt. No "Unity" meetings were called. No program offered the membership. The "Unity Group" played dead. A pall settled over Detroit. Explanation of the Communist Party: We must do nothing to disrupt the Unity of the Auto Workers while the elections are pending in Detroit. In other words, "there is more important business on hand right now." We have got to elect Walter Reuther and Maurice Sugar; the auto workers can wait.

The C.I.O. is today at a low point, both in morale and attractive power. The reaction to the ignominious defeat in "Little Steel" has not yet abated. A year ago, rank and file C.I.O. members would have opposed bitterly any negotiations between the C.I.O. and the American Federation of Labor Executive Council. Today, they are all hoping and praying that an agreement will be reached between the two organizations. As the '38 season is getting under way, the Auto Workers Union faces a crisis of the first order. After three months of negotiations, General Motors has still not offered a reply to

the contract submitted by the United Auto Workers. Chrysler is busy rebuilding the company union. It violates seigniority rights of union members daily, discriminates against union men and is actively heading for a break with the Union. The Ford organizing campaign is hopelessly bogged. Companies throughout the industry are stiffening their attitude and refuse to sign agreements with the union. Martin is maneuvering desperately to avoid a strike, a weapon he hates and fears.

Strike Only Answer

This background is Martin's Achilles' heel. He cannot stabilize his rule and supremacy, because General Motors and Chrysler are still determined to crush the Auto Union, because Ford is still unorganized. The membership, especially in General Motors' plants, is seething with dissatisfaction and impatience. The only way the Auto Union will extricate itself from its present numerous difficulties is to arouse the membership to the dangerous state of affairs, and prepare and organize for a battle with Chrysler and General Motors. If those corporations refuse to budge from their present stiff-necked attitude: STRIKE!

A progressive group will be reconstituted in the days to come on the firm basis of a fighting program of militant action and organization. The revolutionists in the Auto Union have the opportunity of playing a highly important role in this new movement—a movement that possesses gigantic scope and opportunity for the future.

Stalinists Betray China Struggle by 'New Line'

Shanghai Students Forget The Lessons Of 1925-27, Hail Imperialist Troops As "Our British Friends"

By Lucifer

When the Russian proletariat, under the leadership of the Bolsheviks, ended the rule of the capitalists and landlords twenty years ago, they established not the prerequisites for building an isolated socialist society or one-sixth of the earth's surface, but a point of departure and support for the world-wide proletarian revolution. The October revolution afforded an exemplary inspiration not only for the toilers of the capitalist countries of the west, but also for the oppressed peoples of the colonies and semi-colonies—above all China, where a youthful proletariat was striking out on the path of revolution.

The October tradition played no small part in the great Chinese Revolution of 1925-27, but the opportunist policies of the Chinese Communist Party, dictated to it by the dominant Stalin-Bukharin faction in the Comintern, brought the revolution to tragic disaster. Those same policies have been revived again today in China, but in a crasser and more monstrous form. The interests of the Chinese workers and peasants, if the "Communists" have their way, are to be wholly subordinated to the requirements of Soviet foreign policy.

Kuomintang Gets Red Army

What remains of the Chinese Communist Party has become almost an integral part of the bourgeois Kuomintang. The "Soviet Government of China" has been liquidated. The "Red Army" has been virtually dissolved and brought under the high command of Nanking. With almost un-

believable shamelessness, the Chinese Stalinists have abandoned the cause of the downtrodden peasantry and act as open strike-breakers against the workers.

All this has been and is being done in the interests of a "People's" Anti-Japanese United Front, just as in 1927 the Chinese revolution was betrayed and wrecked in the name of a "national united front." All the prestige of the October Revolution is being employed by the Stalinist epigones to strangle the beginnings of the new Chinese revolution by harnessing the Chinese workers and peasants to the chariot of the national bourgeoisie. Stalin needs an ally in the Far East against Japan. He wants China to fight Japan so that Japan will be unable to fight the Soviet Union. It is for this reason that Moscow ordered the liquidation of "Communism" in China. This was the price which Chiang Kai-shek and the Chinese bourgeoisie demanded for a diplomatic deal with Moscow and "resistance" against Japan.

Agents for Britain

The new Stalinist line in China is already bearing poisonous fruit. Last week, three British soldiers were killed by Japanese gun-fire at Shanghai. At the subsequent funeral, according to press dispatches, "thousands of Chinese students lined the cemetery walls and later paraded through Shanghai streets carrying banners which read: 'Long live our British friends.'"

How short is human memory! On May 30, 1925, British police fired on demonstrating workers

and students in Shanghai, killing nine and wounding scores. A few short weeks later, British troops opened fire on a demonstration of Chinese students at Shameen, in Canton, killing 52 and wounding 117. In the following year there was the British naval bombardment of Wansien, Yangtze River port, resulting in heavy casualties. And in 1927, British warships, combining with American, Japanese and Italian naval units, poured shells into Nanking. But that was all 10-12 years ago. Imperialist Britain has since been promoted into the ranks of "peace-loving" powers. Hence, the British soldiers now at Shanghai, although sent for the sole purpose of "protecting British lives and property" (read British imperialist interests) are hailed by Stalinist-trained Chinese students as "our British friends."

How Bolsheviks Defend China

The new Stalinist-Kuomintang alliance, instead of promoting and assisting China's struggle for national independence against imperialism, will result in the betrayal of that struggle. The national struggle is closely bound up with the class struggle and cannot be separated from it. Any policy which hinders and betrays the class struggle militates against the national struggle. It was not so very long ago that the Stalinists themselves recognized this fact. Thus the Sixth World Congress of the Comintern in 1928 affirmed that "the Party must explain to the masses the impossibility of a radical improvement in their position, the impossibility of the overthrow

of imperialist domination... without the overthrow from power of the Kuomintang and militarists and the creation of the rule of Soviets."

Much later, at the Thirteenth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. in December, 1933, Wang Ming, the Chinese representative declared that "the overthrow of the Kuomintang regime is a condition of the successful prosecution of the national-revolutionary war against Japanese and other imperialisms."

Today, Wang Ming announces: "We, Chinese Communists, openly declare that we support the Kuomintang and the Nanking government, and will fight shoulder to shoulder with them against Japanese imperialism."

Revolutionists must of course support the struggle against Japanese imperialism, but the progressive character of the national war is no excuse for giving political support to Chiang Kai-shek. Any such support is a betrayal.

Stalinism thus becomes a prostitute agency of the national bourgeoisie, and by that measure a prostitute agency of imperialism. The revolutionary Marxists, in China as elsewhere, have the task of tearing the standard of the October Revolution, the great traditions of Bolshevism, out of the hands of these traitors and leading the workers and the oppressed peoples out onto the clear road of the proletarian revolution.

NOTICE

The New York District of the YPSL will conduct a torch-lite parade through the East Side on FRIDAY, NOV. 12, the day after Armistice Day. Mobilize at district headquarters between 7 and 7:30 P. M. and march to the new headquarters of the Lower East Side branch at 159 Rivington St. In case of rain, go directly to Rivington St., where a mass meeting will be held. Ernest Erber, who has just returned from a nation-wide tour, will speak.