

DISCUSSION ARTICLES

The Party and the Opposition's Tasks

(Continued from last issue) The Communist party came on the scene in 1918-19 following on the heels of the October revolution.

suits of this wild adventurism is that from a following of 50,000, the industrial today commands a membership which is variously estimated from 3500 to 1500.

The I. W. W.

The native proletarian elements who at that time still centered around the I. W. W. were at first neglected by this rising movement.

It was not until 1923 that the Communist movement became a serious factor in American political life.

1. The needle trades: By constant Left wing activities within the reactionary needle trades unions, the Left wing leadership succeeded in winning the majority of the organized workers under its sway.

2. The next outstanding event was the Passaic strike where despite the slowness of the party leadership to accept the gage of battle some 25,000 to 30,000 workers carried on a struggle for a half a year.

3. There had been a miners' strike embracing some 3 to 400,000 workers spread over the principal mining centers of the country.

4. By far the most favorable field of work for a number of years has been the marine industry.

5. Because of all this, as well as the fact that each generation arrives at Communism under changed objective conditions and in its own way, the Y. C. L. in its relation to the party is organizationally independent.

large port on both coasts. After the '21 strike this tremendous strength was dissipated. Two years later the Marine Transport Workers of the I. W. W. could truthfully claim a membership of from 25 to 30,000.

Education and the Young Communists

In the program of the Young Communist International adopted at its Fifth Congress its character as an educational organization is affirmed.

9. In the Y. C. L. the members are not permitted to criticize the policies and lines of the apparatus which must be viewed as infallible.

10. The future of the Communist youth movement depends on the struggle against the bureaucratic regime and all the revisionist policies upon which it rests.

11. The tasks of the Left Opposition in relation to the youth are:

1. Propaganda on the real nature and functions of the Young Communist League.

2. Elaboration of youth policies on the basis of facts.

3. United front of youth members of Opposition with Y. C. L. on every possible occasion.

4. Building of a strong fraction in Y. C. L.

5. Relentless criticism of Stalinist policies in Y. C. L.

6. Special attention to Marxian education of youth comrades in the opposition.

7. Participation of Opposition youth in all phases of class struggle to the greatest extent possible.

this point the struggle between Foster and Lovestone sharpened as a result of which the opportune time for launching a union was deferred for years.

(To Be Continued) —S. M. ROSE.

organized in accordance with these fundamental ideas. The Rights and the Centrists have distorted the whole idea of the party.

12. Our Recent Activities The Boston branch has been temporarily reinforced by the arrival of comrade Sam Gordon from New York.

13. In view of this situation what tasks devolve upon the Left Opposition? The inability of the Young Communist League to fulfill its function because of Stalinist bureaucratic strangulation imposes an enormous responsibility on the shoulders of the Left Opposition.

But does this mean that because the Y. C. L. is prevented from performing its real task correctly, that the Opposition ought to ignore the Y. C. L. and perhaps attempt to create a new Y. C. L. which, because of correct Marxian leadership, will perform its functions?

The tasks of the Left Opposition in relation to the youth are:

1. Propaganda on the real nature and functions of the Young Communist League.

2. Elaboration of youth policies on the basis of facts.

3. United front of youth members of Opposition with Y. C. L. on every possible occasion.

4. Building of a strong fraction in Y. C. L.

5. Relentless criticism of Stalinist policies in Y. C. L.

6. Special attention to Marxian education of youth comrades in the opposition.

7. Participation of Opposition youth in all phases of class struggle to the greatest extent possible.

Organization Notes

For the arrangements of our pre-conference discussion the National Committee has decided that it is necessary to arrange contributions in such a way that they do not exceed two columns per article, but with no restrictions upon the number of contributions which any member may wish to submit.

For those who may at the outset look for an analysis and conclusions from the revolutionary developments in Spain, while that was not contained in the main draft thesis it will become part of our proposed resolution on developments within the International and in the Left Opposition.

In taking up this discussion in the various branches the best method will naturally be the one of first taking up the general estimates and the conclusions which the draft thesis presents. Once that is thoroughly understood it becomes easier to take up possible amendments on certain aspects, adding omissions or proposing changes of formulation if any.

Our Recent Activities

The Boston branch has been temporarily reinforced by the arrival of comrade Sam Gordon from New York. He will function there in an organizing capacity, help the branch by speaking at meetings, helping to make contacts and in taking up more effectively the work within the general mass movement.

Comrade Stamm will henceforth carry on alone in Cleveland while Clarke is making a tour further west through the mine fields to St. Louis, Mo. There he will remain for a while and help organize the activities of our branch.

The Minneapolis branch has made a record of taking in several new members during the last couple of months. For a period some of its active forces spent some time in the Duluth-Superior territory and established contacts through which literature is now being distributed.

Our Expansion Program While big progress cannot be reported, this time there is nevertheless results showing that the interest is still alive.

From the preceding notes it will be observed that we are making some progress in a modest way toward extending our general organization activities. That, of course, is part of our program and thus indicates further advance.

Nevertheless we must say—more speed. The contributions received since last report were as follows:

Table with 2 columns: Location and Amount. Includes Boston br. \$5.00, New York B. J. Field 25.00, Toronto br. 4.00, Cleveland I. A. Brody 8.00, Minneapolis br. 11.56, Kansas City br. 20.00, Total \$73.86, Previously reported \$1103.41, Total \$1,177.27.

FRAGMENTS OF TRUTH FROM UNDER THE GARBAGE OF SLANDER

In 1924, Zinoviev set into circulation an accusation against Trotsky for issuing the railroad "Order 1042", which was supposed to have nearly ruined transportation. Upon this canvas, Stalin, Yaroslavsky and Rudzutak embroidered their designs.

"At this time, transportation was completely ruined. There was not only no talk about its rehabilitation, but matters went so far that in the Council of Labor and Defense, a member of the collegium of the People's Commissariat of Transportation, Professor Lomonosov, made a report to the effect that transportation is on the eve of complete and unavoidable standstill.

And so on and so forth. As we see, the function of "Order 1042" was different at different periods. —ALFA.

Books

by Leon Trotsky

THE DRAFT PROGRAM OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL A Criticism of Fundamentals Introduction by J. P. Cannon

140 pages hard paper cover 35c THE STRATEGY OF THE WORLD REVOLUTION

86 pages, two-colored paper cover 25c Introduction by Max Shachtman

THE SPANISH REVOLUTION 30 pages, paper cover 10c COMMUNISM AND SYNDICALISM

The Trade Union Question Introduction by James P. Cannon 64 pages, paper cover 15c

THE PERMANENT REVOLUTION 208 page book—cloth bound 1.00 paper bound .50

TURN IN THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL AND THE GERMAN SITUATION 30 pages, paper cover 10c

SINCE LENIN DIED 1924 By Max Eastman 50c

158 page book printed in London THE REAL SITUATION IN RUSSIA Introduction by Max Eastman

364 page book formerly \$2 now 1.00 MY LIFE—600 pages 5.00

Just Off the Press THE SPANISH REVOLUTION IN DANGER 64 pages paper cover 15c

PROBLEMS OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE U. S. S. R. 48 pages, paper cover 15c

Special Rates in Bundles of 5 or more Order from PIONEER PUBLISHERS

84 East 10th Street New York City

Subscribe!

With the Militant now appearing weekly there should be excellent possibilities for all of our supporters to enlist new subscribers. If you agree with us you will want to extend the Militant circulation.

THE MILITANT.

84 East 10th Street, New York City. Please enter me for a subscription one year, \$2.00; six months, \$1.00.

Name Address City State

TWO NEW PAMPHLETS For the Pre-Conference Discussion

by LEON TROTSKY

THE SPANISH REVOLUTION IN DANGER

64 pages — 15c per copy Special Rates in Bundles

PROBLEMS OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE U. S. S. R.

48 pages — 15c per copy

PIONEER PUBLISHERS

84 East 10th Street New York City

EDITORIAL NOTES

WAGE CUTS AND STRIKES

A speeding up of the wage cutting campaign on the one hand and the growth of the strike movement on the other are the two outstanding and related developments of the month in the domestic field.

They are doing so. And even more significant than the reductions already made are the wide-scale preparations for a bigger assault all along the line, and especially in the big industries.

The defensive struggle of the workers is gaining momentum, although slowly and in a tentative fashion. There is nothing in the facts to sustain the blockheads who describe the situation as a "workers' offensive".

Coal, steel and railroads were represented in the labor revolts of that year and constituted the heart of it. The present defensive movement of the workers is confined largely so far, to soft coal and textiles where the industry is the "sickest" and the pressure on the workers has been the heaviest.

The theory that the workers are not inclined to strike during periods of crisis and wide unemployment receives a certain confirmation from American labor and economic history, and is borne out within limits by the experience of the past two years.

They argue rather for the idea that the workers in other industries, such as the railroads and steel mills, caught in the furious wage-cutting drive, will not wait for a revival to give their answer in terms of struggle.

THEY SAY IT WITH FLOWERS

The exponents of Bolshevik self-criticism are at it again and true stories stranger than fiction are unfolding themselves on the pages of the Daily Worker for anyone to read if he will and to understand if he can.

The resolution of the district leaders bristles with accounts of "weaknesses", "failures", "opportunism" "Leftist mistakes", "dissolution", "demoralization" and "collapse" in every field, all related

with the gusto and enthusiasm of a hypochondriac boasting of his diseases. The section devoted to the Southern Illinois mining fields is a fair sample of the whole document.

This, we contend, is pretty close to a hundred per cent efficiency in the work of clearing out the sprouts and shoots of Communist influence. The grasshoppers in a Dakota field could hardly make a cleaner sweep.

In the political struggle we grow accustomed to much, and we are ready to believe that this incredible document was really adopted, that is not a forgery elaborated to make fun of the party.

The Real Situation in Russia

By LEON TROTSKY

Introduction by Max Eastman

364 pages. Sold formerly at \$2. Through special arrangements with the publishers can be had from us now at \$1

CONTENTS PART I—The Fear of Our Platform PART II—The Real Situation in Russia and the Tasks of the Communist Party PART III—Stalin Falsifies History

PIONEER PUBLISHERS 84 East 10th St., New York City

Mistakes of Comrade Maurin

Problems of the Spanish Revolution

It has been said that without revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement. In Spain, this truth has never been so much in evidence as at the present moment.

Theoretical poverty has always characterized the Spanish Socialist Party. But if its leaders gave no revolutionary theory to the working class of our country, it was not only out of incompetence but with the aim of subjecting its hosts to the liberal bourgeois ideology.

In the Communist movement painful as it is to say so, the situation is not much more alluring in this respect. In the official Communist party, the system of bureaucratic leadership chokes off in its infancy all possibility of theoretical life.

Should the present ideological disorientation persist, the immense possibilities that the situation contains objectively for the proletariat, will be wasted. There is lacking in Spain a powerful Communist party capable of directing the spontaneous movement of the masses towards the conquest of power.

In this sense, the lecture given on June 8 at the Ateneo of Madrid by comrade Joaquin Maurin cannot be allowed to pass in silence, inasmuch as an attempt at revision of the basic principles of revolutionary Marxism, an attempt which, should it succeed, would represent an immense danger for the Spanish revolution.

The author of these lines, at the

meeting which followed the next day at this hall, combatted the errors of Maurin. But they are of such importance that we deem it indispensable to bring them forward once more before the Spanish Communists.

An . . . Uncomfortable Position

Maurin began by declaring that the Communists of the Catalan-Balearic Federation, in whose name he spoke were regarded as Stalinists by the "Trotskyists" and as "Trotskyists" by the Stalinists.

The tragic conflict that now divides the international Communist movement has its roots in profound differences on the fundamental problems of the revolution. These differences can and should be overcome by the sole effective manner known up to now: the application of democratic centralism, converted into a dead letter by bureaucratic centralism of the International.

Why Maurin Is Not with the "Trotskyists"

Since politics does not tolerate a vacuum, Maurin had to say why he was not with the Left Communist Opposition and why he dissented from the policy of the International.

Against the political orientation of the Opposition, Maurin was unable to oppose his own, or else he had none, or still better because he did not presume to declare that its evaluation of the Spanish political situation and the tactics it recommends were correct. Therefore, he went off on a tangent, resorting to one of the arguments favored by the sub-Stalinists of every country: to assert that the Communist Left Opposition is an enemy of the Five Year Plan.

in who, for various reasons, is much better informed on what is going on in Russia than many other militants, Maurin who cannot limit himself to the simple worship of a neophyte before the Russian revolution, but has the duty to study its problems and to know the genuine history and not that manufactured by the Stalinist bureaucracy-- knows perfectly well that the accusation he formulated does not correspond to the reality.

The "National" Character of the Spanish Revolution

Having liquidated with such lightness the difference that separates him from the Communist Left Opposition, Maurin had to explain wherein lay his disagreements and those of the organization in whose name he spoke, with the Stalinist leadership of the Communist International. Here the mistake of comrade Maurin is even more serious.

Maurin asserted that what separates him from the Communist International is primarily a difference of evaluation of the present situation. The International--according to him--wanted to impose the experiences of the Russian revolution upon other countries, and this led to the defeat of the Communists in Germany, in Bulgaria in China and in Estonia.

Nothing could be more disastrous to the Spanish proletariat than to separate itself from the international Communist movement and to claim to orient it in accordance with a domestic policy of home manufacture. The working class, precisely because of international experience, will elaborate the methods of

its emancipation. In the elaboration of the tactics of Marx and Lenin the contribution of the experience of the great revolutionary movements of the nineteenth century, and more specifically of the revolutions of 1848 and the Paris Commune, played a role of the first order.

If the Communist International failed in the countries mentioned by Maurin, it was not because it imposed the experiences of the Russian revolution, but precisely because it forgot them completely. In China, in place of assuring the hegemony of the proletariat and of guaranteeing its independence in face of the bourgeois parties, it proclaimed the "bloc of four classes" subordinating the proletariat to the bourgeoisie, represented by the Kuo Min Tang.

In Germany, the Communist International, thanks to its opportunist policy, did not know how to take advantage of the exceptional opportunity offered it by the exceptional situation in the country in the Autumn of 1923 for the seizure of power.

In Bulgaria, the lack of revolutionary decision and the opportunism of the party leadership provoked the reactionary coup d'etat of Tsankov, for which the Bulgarian workers and peasants paid in torrents of blood. The insurrection that broke out afterwards in this country and later on in Estonia were adventurist attempts to repair the consequences of the disastrous policy that had been practised.

Did the International fail in these countries because it imposed the methods of the Russian revolution? This is true up to a certain point insofar as the policy of the Comintern in these countries was inspired by the conceptions and the methods of the Mensheviks. We are of course in agreement with Maurin if this is the example which he urges us to follow.

Stalin in 1921 More About the Theory of Socialism in One Country Before Lenin's Death

It is already fairly well known how in two editions of one of his pamphlets, "Lenin and Leninism", both issued in the same year, Stalin expressed himself in two mutually exclusive ways about the theory of "socialism in one country".

How definitely Stalin took his place on the side of this theory--following 1924, of course; before then it was quite unknown in the ranks of Bolshevism or of any other Marxian current--is to be seen from the following quotation from a speech he delivered at the Sverdlov University on June 9, 1925:

in technique and equipment on the part of the victorious proletariat of the West? "Yes, this is possible. It is not only possible, but is both necessary and inevitable. . . ."

"The great significance of Lenin, also, by the way, consists in the fact that he adopted no haphazard attitude towards construction, that he does not contemplate construction without perspectives, and that he gives a clear and definite answer to the question of the perspectives of our work that we have all the pre-requisites for constructing a socialist economy in our country, and that we can and must construct a completely socialist society".

Now, Stalin has one doubtful advantage over the other leading theoretical defenders of national socialism. With Bucharin, for instance, it is not difficult to rummage through his old writings and bring forth one passage after another in which he speaks decisively against the theory he and Stalin have advocated from 1924 onwards.

Glancing through some old documents, the writer has come across an illuminating article in Russische Korrespondenz, No. 7-9, July-October 1921 a review published in German by the Communist International which, unless I am mistaken, was the forerunner of the International Press Correspondence.

we may have additional proof--if more is needed--of how all the Bolshevik leaders during Lenin's life time regarded the question of Russia's alleged self-sufficiency in the building of a "completely socialist society", and that "without aid in technique and equipment on the part of the victorious proletariat of the West" Let us quote the Stalin of 1921 at length:

And Stalin in 1921

"But the October also has its dark side. It is concerned with the fact that the seizure of power by the proletariat in Russia proceeded under peculiar external and internal conditions which stamped all the work after the seizure of power. First: Russia is a backward country in economic respects; it cannot rehabilitate transportation, develop industry and electrify urban and rural industry with its own forces, without exchanging the raw materials at hand for machinery and implements from the Western countries.

"From the economic point of view, the present conflicts and military clashes of the capitalist groups among themselves, in the same way as the struggle of the proletariat against the class of the capitalists, have at their foundation the fundamental conflict of present-day pro-

ductive forces with the national-imperialist boundaries to their development, and the capitalist forms of appropriation. The imperialist boundaries and the capitalist form strangle the productive forces and do not permit their development. The only way out is the organization of world economy according to the principles of fraternal economic collaboration of the advanced (industrial) states with the backward (fuel and raw materials) states (but not according to the principles of the spoliation of the latter by the former). It is for this precisely that the international proletarian revolution is required.

Thus spoke Stalin in 1921, before he had undertaken to "deepen" Marx and to "broaden" Lenin. At that time, far from believing that Russia had "all the pre-requisites" for a complete socialist economy, he even rejected the idea that Russia could "develop industry and electrify urban and rural industry with its own forces".

Naturally, one must take into account the circumstances of time and place, the specific peculiarities of each country in the same way that the doctor takes into account the peculiarities of each patient in order to apply the general treatment. What is essential is the general political orientation. And in this sense it must be said that the general takes precedence over the particular. When we speak, for example, of the bourgeois revolutions of the past, we do not refer to the various forms in which they manifested themselves in each country but to their fundamental characteristic: the destruction of feudal relationships to be substituted for by bourgeois democracy.

Let us record in this connection that in 1923, when the Political Bureau of the Russian Communist Party was discussing the problems of the German revolution it was precisely our comrade Trotsky who opposed Zinoviev's proposal to create Soviets, arguing correctly that at that moment the mass organizations around which the German proletariat had grouped itself were not the Soviets, as in 1918, but the factory councils. (To be concluded.)

THE MILITANT

Vol. IV, No. 18, August 8, 1931 Published weekly by the Communist League of America (Opposition) at 84 East 10th Street, N. Y.

Editorial Board Martin Abern James P. Cannon Max Shachtman Maurice Spector Arne Swaback

Subscription rate: \$2.00 per year; foreign \$2.50. Five cents per copy. Bundle rates, 3 cents per copy.

—S.N.