

“For the Fourth International”

# INTERNATIONAL NEWS

No. 2

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## DRAFT RESOLUTION

### THE SITUATION IN THE SOVIET UNION AND OUR TASKS

The recent events inside the Soviet Union, as well as the state of the relationships between it and the imperialist world, emphasize the correctness of the position taken on the Soviet Union by our party in its Declaration of Principles and in its current propaganda.

The so-called "Kirov affair" was only a sensational expression of a process that has been developing in the Soviet Union for quite a number of years. Summed up in a phrase, the process may be characterized as the concentration of the direct exercise of power in the hands of an increasingly restricted section of the remnants of the Bolshevik Party, viz: the most intimate circle of the Stalinist bureaucracy. Separated to an ever growing extent from the masses, and even from the more or less broad base of the Soviet and party officialdom, this bureaucracy continues to develop special caste interests of its own. These not only conflict with the revolutionary interests of the world proletariat, but also with the interests of the Soviet masses themselves, out of which the ruling bureaucracy grew, and with the interests of the workers' state; on the basis of which the bureaucracy grew up. Its evil consequences are not restricted to mere political or structural changes which it has affected in the Soviet system, but are clearly visible throughout the economic life of the Union. It is, therefore, a distinctly reactionary (i.e.: retrogressive) factor in Soviet life; its "progressive" features are not inherent in it but are a product of the fact that, resting as it still does on the foundation of a workers' state, and therefore subject to the class pressure of the proletariat, it has been compelled time and again to adopt in whole or in part those progressive ideas which it borrowed from its proletarian and left-wing critics.

But even if it has been, from time to time, a weak, distorted and leaky channel through which progressive forces have flowed, it has always tended to negate the achievements of the Russian socialist proletariat by the fact that it has steadily tightened its bureaucratic control to such an extent that all genuine party, trade union and Soviet life has been effectively stifled. What is significant in the "Kirov affair" is not only that the Stalinist bureaucracy seeks to resolve this ever acuter contradiction by terrorism against its proletarian critics - actual and potential (it has used this weapon before) - but that it apparently can no longer trust its own bureaucratic ranks. In a word, the base of the actual leadership has become narrowed down to a small point, and it preserves itself by the increasing use of arbitrary and purely coercive measures.

The latter fact emphasizes another of the great contradictions in the present Soviet situation; the growing economic successes and advances are not accompanied by a decline in the coercive machinery and measures, but by their increase. Formerly, the Bolshevik leadership relied for its strength upon the self-acting, vigorous, independent party, and thru

it, upon the living mass organizations (trade unions, Soviets). Today, the leadership does not rely upon these forces; it does not call them to life again for fear of unleashing a power that would unseat the bureaucracy; the latter therefore finds itself forced to trust increasingly to sheer coercion.

Not itself believing in the absurd illusion that "socialism has already been established in the Soviet Union", but fostering the idea for the purpose of consolation, the bureaucracy is, in addition, obliged to make numerous concessions to the non-proletarian sections of the people. Some of these are real (e.g.: the abolition of the bread rationing system and the shifting of the national income to the advantage of the peasantry); some of them are imaginary or for show purposes (e.g.: five-fold multiplication of the peasant's suffrage, giving him the right to cast five times as many votes for Stalin where he cast but one yesterday). While these concessions are made almost exclusively at the expense of the proletariat, it is entirely possible that the relationship of forces within the country, and perhaps more important, Soviet relationships with hostile imperialist forces, may necessitate such concessions in order to exchange the interest of the peasantry in the defense of the workers' state. But here, too, the incubus of bureaucratism shows its pernicious influence. Instead of showing candidly that the interests of the proletarian state require (assuming that they do) a concession here or there to the peasantry, the retreat is presented to the world as a "great step forward", and the already badly confused and disoriented working class is thus further paralyzed.

On an international scale, matters are much worse. As the danger of an imperialist assault upon the Soviet Union increases, the bureaucracy relies less and less upon the natural ally of the Russian proletariat - the international working class - and more and more upon compromising and discreditable manoeuvres with one section of world imperialism and another. If it is correct to speak of a rightward swing inside the Soviet Union, it is five times more correct to speak of the rightward plunge outside the Soviet Union - both in the labor movement (united front at all costs, non-aggression pacts, trucking to the social democracy) and in the diplomatic field (status quo policy, Litvinov on the Saar, silence on Abyssinia, adoption of the French "security" policy in disarmament).

These, and a multitude of other circumstances that could be adduced, not only reveal the great danger to the Soviet Union, but underline the only policy by which it can be overcome. That danger, which becomes more keenly felt every day that war against the Soviet Union moves closer, is the virtual absence, due to its destruction by Stalinists, of an organized international vanguard of the proletariat. The proletariat in the Soviet Union has no genuine party that can lead it through the trying period ahead of it; the bureaucracy has smashed the party. Yet, the reconstruction of a Bolshevik Party in the Soviet Union is its most urgent problem, precisely in face of the impending war danger and crisis, in the course of which all the rottenness, incompetence, vacillatoriness and impotence of the bureaucracy will be most glaringly revealed. If, however, the Russian proletariat does not take

those steps which would lead to the rebuilding of such a vanguard party, it is because conditions do not permit it to take the major, or even the initial steps. Also, it is only too well aware of the weakness of the international labor movement.

It is right at this point that we record the fact that the task we have in solving our specific problem, viz: the overthrow of American capitalism and the building of the party that can affect it, coincides in every respect with our internationalist obligations, particularly our obligations to the Russian proletariat and its state. Our task in connection with the "Russian question" is not a spectacular one, but a clear and simple one: to accelerate the work we have undertaken to build up the party of revolutionary Marxism in the United States and to help rally throughout the capitalist world the movement for the Fourth International. The building up and centralization of the parties of the Fourth International is, today, the best defense of the Soviet Union, not only because it constitutes the surest threat to the imperialist economies of Russia but because it will speed the awakening and crystallization of the revolutionary elements in the Soviet Union and facilitate their work of eliminating from the workers' state those bureaucratic deformations, as Lenin called them, which have grown monstrously in the last decade.

Concretely, this means not only the more zealous prosecution of the general work of the party, but also specifically:

A greater utilization of our popular press, not so much for theoretical refutation of Stalinism in the Soviet Union, as for concrete criticism of those manifestations of the evil as regularly appear, for example, the events connected with the Kirov affair.

Constant emphasis on the conception that the real defense of the Soviet Union means the overthrow of our "own" capitalism and the building of the party and the International which can accomplish it, means the elimination of the incubus of Stalinism on a world scale.

At the same time, unremitting defense of the ideas of the Bolshevik Revolution and the great achievements of the workers' state against such attacks as the Hearst poison campaign and the Newleader-Forward assaults.

At the same time, no compromise with pseudo-revolutionary arguments to the effect that the Soviet Union is no longer a workers' state, which must be unconditionally defended by every proletarian and progressive person, that the recent sheeitings or the concessions to the peasantry represent a fundamental change in the workers' state, that present-day Stalinism represents the triumph of the counter-revolution (i.e.: the restoration of capitalism) over the revolution, etc.

The establishment of closer and more active relationships with all those organizations, groups and parties which stand for the Fourth International or which are moving towards it. The

mere formation of the Workers Party of the United States has had a most gratifying effect throughout the international labor movement and has automatically placed it in the leadership of the Fourth Internationalist movement. It has played no small part in the unification of the two Holland parties. It has given great encouragement to all similarly minded forces throughout the world. It has heartened, especially, all our comrades and co-fighters in the Western hemisphere. It is, therefore, necessary to intervene more systematically in the movement in Europe and help crystallize and strengthen the elements working there for a Fourth International, even to the extent of sending direct representatives to accelerate the process with the aid of our authority and prestige. Especially are we obliged to the Latin-American movement which has, with us, the most direct common enemy - American imperialism. Steps should be taken forthwith to link the independent parties else to us in Cuba, Chile, Panama, Costa Rica, and groups in other lands. Our press should, of course, mirror the advances of the Fourth International movement throughout the world.

M. Schachtman.

## THE INTERNATIONAL QUESTION

- 1.....The fate of the Soviet Union, the first and so far the only fortress conquered by the world proletariat, is the dominating international problem. The continued existence of the first Workers and Peasant State, ruled by the dictatorship of the proletariat, is today, in view of the prostration of the international forces of the revolution and in spite of the warped form which the dictatorship has taken, the decisive factor which still temporarily holds back the world forces of reaction and war. The overthrow of the Soviets would give the signal to a new onslaught of reaction and fascism on an international scale.
- 2.....The October Revolution (the Soviet Union), and its extension, has been and is one of the central orbits of world politics, and is the decisive question for all working class parties. Those working class parties throughout the world that cannot give a Marxian answer to the so-called Russian Question at every turn are doomed to failure.
- 3.....The Soviet Union today holds a unique position in the international situation. The outcome of the class struggle within the Soviet Union, which now once again is reaching an acute stage, will to a large extent determine the imperialist re-groupments for the second world war and the international status of the working class and its allies in this struggle. The revolutionary Marxists throughout the world and within the Soviet Union can influence these events. The answer to this question involves: (a) a correct characterization of the present status of the Soviet Union, of the Stalinist regime, and the character and strength of the contending class forces, and the pressure exerted upon them by world imperialism; (b) a correct position on the question of how to defend the Soviet Union and the October Revolution.
- 4.....The Soviet Union is a Workers and Peasants State, in which the working class rules, which at present under Stalinism constitutes a warped form of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. The present Stalinist regime, while continuously undermining and weakening the dictatorship, cannot be said to have fundamentally altered or replaced it. The Dictatorship of the Proletariat cannot be abolished except by civil war.
- 5.....Soviet economy is a transition economy containing elements of capitalist and pre-capitalist economy and some basic features of socialist economy. This transition economy is moving, by a contradictory process, toward the socialist mode of production.
- 6.....Since 1923, the revolutionary defeats under Stalinism on a world scale have favored the Thermidorian and Bonapartist elements in the Soviet Union. The Stalinist bureaucracy has stifled the proletariat politically, strangled the party, the Soviets, the trade unions, all of the institutions of the working class, in pursuing its false course and has enormously aggravated the difficulties arising out of the backwardness and isolated Soviet State.

The Stalinists' policies, both in the sphere of international and internal policies, reflect ever more the pressure of world capitalism and are culminating now in a growth of the non-socialist sector of economy and the anti-working class forces, which as the result of the economy and political structure of the Soviet Union are forced to gather within the collectives, the cooperatives, the Soviets, the Red Army, the Planning Commissions; and in the Communist Party itself. Their growth and boldness, as witnessed in the pressure which they successfully exert on Stalinist bureaucracy (suppression and terror against the revolutionary Marxists in the Soviet Union, anti-working class measures, measures favoring the peasantry and other non-proletarian sections, concessions to imperialism), now menaces the Dictatorship itself.

7.....The alarming events within the recent weeks clearly reveal that now the stage is being set for the overthrow of the proletarian dictatorship. At this time no one can predict, if it comes to the worst, which form will be utilized by the enemies of the Workers' State, the Thermidorian overthrow or the Bonapart overthrow.

The right turn of the CI and the "democratic" measures of the Soviet Union helps to conceal within the state and workers' organs the more dangerous element that the ultra-left turn of 1928 retarded momentarily. This shows that we must not consider a Thermidorian overthrow less likely than a Bonapartist. By Bonapartist overthrow we mean an open return to capitalism which would take the form of a military dictatorship. By Thermidor we mean a shifting of power from the working class to the bourgeoisie, which in essence is already decisive but is accomplished within the framework of the Soviet system under the banner of one faction of the official party against another. Both a Thermidorian and a Bonapartist regime in a country like Russia would support themselves internally on the peasantry, in the main. There is no Chinese wall in between these two regimes. While an outright Bonapartist overthrow is by no means excluded, a Thermidorian overthrow appears most likely, unless the revolutionary Marxists inside and internationally prevent this. This variant is more likely, at any rate at the beginning, since all counter-revolutionary forces are today forced to assemble within the party, the state, the army, etc.

The "Bonapartist" feature of the present Stalinist regime (in the narrow and somewhat misleading sense of a "personalist" dictatorship, without reference to the class character of the regime), could as easily lead toward a Thermidorian as toward a Bonapartist overthrow.

8.....The foreign policy of the Soviet bureaucracy, reflecting the workers' defeats on a world scale, is clearly indicated by the pressure exerted upon it by the enemy element, internally and internationally. Its concessions of a principle nature to American imperialism for recognition, concessions to French imperialism, entry into the League of Nations, whereby the Soviet Union became a partner to imperialism for the status quo and their colonial policy, for their pacifist propaganda to cover up war preparations.

9....The new opportunist right turn of the CI under Stalinism is adapted to the needs of the foreign policy of the Soviet Union and flows from the German debacle as one of its many traits. Its non-aggression pacts, organic unity proposals, pacifist set-up, make for its own liquidation and represents a capitulation to social democracy.

10....In the sphere of internal policy Stalinism has, under the pressure of counter-revolutionary forces within and imperialism without, driven the Dictatorship farther and farther to the right, reorganization of the War Council which has eliminated workers' control over military policy, restoration of part of the free internal market; a sharp rise in private trade; abolition of the pegged price for bread in the interest of the peasants; land to the collectives handed over to them for permanent use; "limited" restoration of civil and legal rights to counter-revolutionists, kulaks; semi-legalization of the Mensheviks; continuous persecution of the Bolshevik-Leninists and revolutionists; new election laws which abolish the five to one ratio favoring the workers and the abolition of the secret ballot - all in favor of the peasantry.

11....The events surrounding and following the Kirov assassination; the summary executions, the secret trials, the imprisonment of Zinoviev and Kamenev and other outstanding Bolsheviks, the attempt to link Trotsky with this, as well as the Workers Party of the United States - these are desperate acts of a panic-stricken bureaucracy striking at the left with its famous "amalgam", in defense of a course which is rushing the proletarian dictatorship to the brink of overthrow - unless we act.

12....Imperialist pressure on the Soviet Union has increased. American imperialism holds the center in this struggle. Her main role in the past, to prevent the extension of the October Revolution with the aid of the American Dollar, has been successful. Now, her policy turns to the task of further undermining the Soviet Union and tying it to the tail of its imperialist aims in Europe and Asia. American imperialism demands big concessions from Stalinism for the "defense" of the Soviet Union against Fascist Germany and Japan. America demands more than France for this "aid", and all indications are that American imperialism still has the upper hand against the bankrupt policy of Stalinism.

13....The Thermidorian or Bonapartist overthrow cannot be a peaceful act. Regardless of the degree of violence used by counter-revolution or the proletarian revolutionists; regardless of the fact that the main struggles proceed, accompany, or follow the political overturn, the Dictatorship of the Proletariat can only be overthrown by the ARMED MIGHT of counter-revolution---by civil war.

The question of: in what degree and with what success this violence from counter-revolution will be met by violence from the forces of revolution, will in the main depend upon what the revolutionary Marxists throughout the world and inside the Soviet Union do, and upon the existence of a revolutionary party of the proletariat in the Soviet Union---which is the



only force capable of directing the defense of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.

14....The Stalinist parties cannot combat the dangers of an overthrow. These parties will now begin to crack up on a larger scale. Social democracy will attempt to rehabilitate itself upon the new developments. The real defense of the Soviet Union means, above all at the present juncture, full encouragement of those within the Soviet Union to build a new revolutionary party; the building of revolutionary Marxian parties in the capitalist countries and the organization of the Fourth International: the overthrow of our own imperialists.

The Workers Party must take the initiative in calling for an international conference of all forces standing on revolutionary Marxism and working for the Fourth International. Such a conference at the present stage is most urgent as one of the necessary steps in the defense of the Soviet Union.

Feb. 1935

Editor's Note:

The following two resolutions, dealing with the Russian question, were submitted to the PC of the Workers' Party immediately following the Kirov affair and before the Trotsky material arrived. You will note that two opposing views are presented by Oehler and Shachtman. This is one of the many questions upon which the PC and the party has not yet found time to adopt a position:

July 16th, 1935.

ON THE INTERNATIONAL QUESTION (USSR)

Last February, immediately following the Kirov affair, we presented to the Political Committee of the Workers' Party, a thesis on the International Question presenting our point of view on the series of developments that took place within the Soviet Union, in the sphere of its foreign policy, and the Comintern. Shachtman contradicted our thesis and entered his own position in the form of a resolution, and at the same time called us alarmists on the basis of our position. Now, after a half-year, the Party has published in the July issue of the NEW INTERNATIONAL comrade Trotsky's article on this question. This article was received many months ago, even before the "Kirov Assassination" pamphlet was published by the Pioneer Publishing Company. There seemed to be good reasons for holding this article in abeyance, because it contradicted the Shachtman-Cannon thesis on this question.

In the light of the Trotsky article on the Russian question, we are again considering the position we presented, pointing out wherein we agree and disagree with the position of Trotsky in juxtaposition to the position of the Cannon-Shachtman faction.

In an analysis of the Trotsky article it should be divided into two parts: first, the Marxian analysis of the present situation in the Soviet Union, and second, the use of the term Thermidorianism and Bonapartism with the special limitations of this analogy used by L.D. for the Soviet Union. What is decisive is the question of analysis. The agreement or disagreement on the use of specific analogies and terms is of secondary importance.

A comparison of the Shachtman thesis and our thesis with the Trotsky position on the Soviet Union at the time of the Kirov assassination, reveals that in so far as an analysis of the basic factors are considered, the Shachtman thesis is at wide variance with the Trotsky thesis, while our thesis presented a fundamental agreement with the Trotsky position. The basic points of dispute we had with Shachtman before either side had seen the Trotsky article were on the following points:

1....Although the recent events revealed a big shift to the right, the fact remained that the Soviet Union is a workers' state with the Soviet form warped by Stalinism, and that the Workers' Party must raise the alarm signal of the

grave dangers that now confront the USSR. This was ridiculed and the Shachtman thesis clearly shows that they considered nothing had happened to be alarmed about. The content of the Trotsky article is an alarm signal to the world's workers.

2....Our thesis pointed out that the danger of an overthrow was most acute, while Shachtman refuted this. The Trotsky article says, "The proletarian revolution is already exposed to mortal danger under the present regime of Stalin: it will be unable to withstand a further shift to the right". IT WILL BE UNABLE TO WITHSTAND A FURTHER SHIFT TO THE RIGHT. This is an alarm signal and denotes, as our thesis stated, that a turning point is at hand.

3....Our thesis stated that the transfer of state power from the workers' state to the rule of the bourgeoisie could only take place through a period of civil war. Shachtman holds to the position, and has stated it many times (although his thesis does not openly state it), that it is theoretically conceivable that a transition from the present status to the rule of capital can take place without civil war and by peaceful methods. Since this dispute with the Shachtman-Glee forces, comrade Trotsky again re-affirmed his previous position anew in the pamphlet on the "Kirov Assassination", in which he ridicules this false concept. Our thesis also presents the fundamentals of the question of civil war.

4....There are other differences, when we compare the two theses, which were presented to the Workers' Party over six months ago, and which went through two Plenums and have not yet been voted for or against. Shachtman's thesis speaks of imaginary concessions to the peasants when speaking of the multiplication of the peasant suffrage. Yes, this is the surface phenomena of the change in ratio for voting, but this change contains beneath it a real danger that the blindness of Shachtman does not see. In relation to the past, this change in suffrage presents an accomplished fact of a giant step to the right; in relation to the future, it represents a legal cover for counter-revolutionary manipulations of many varieties.

Shachtman says, "If it is correct to speak of a rightward swing inside the Soviet Union, it is five times more correct to speak of the rightward plunge outside the Soviet Union". Trotsky on the other hand says, "It" (the Soviet Union) "would be unable to withstand a further shift to the right". "The inevitable collapse of the Stalinist Bonapartism would immediately call into question the character of the USSR as a workers' state". Shachtman saw nothing new in the events revealed by the Kirov Assassination, while Trotsky says the opposite.

5....Our thesis deals with the question of the need of a new party in the USSR as a part of the new International, while comrade Trotsky leaves this point out of the particular article in question. Our thesis deals with the relation of American imperialism to the Soviet Union, while comrade Trotsky leaves this question out of the discussion. Of course, Shachtman omits both points.

So much for the Shachtman thesis. Now let us consider some points of difference with comrade Trotsky. The Trotsky article, besides giving a Marxian analysis of what is, also

re-formulates the terms, THERMIDORIAN and BONAPARTIST, as an analogy, and states that we must revise our position, that we were wrong in the past. Wrong in the past in the use of an analogy and NOT on the ESSENCE of the question. Yes, the Left Opposition was not wrong on the essence of the matter, as comrade Trotsky correctly states. The Shachtman thesis does not even take up this question. Our thesis only deals with the analogy from ONE ANGLE and not as a whole, but in this limited comparison there is a difference in the thesis of Trotsky and our thesis.

Trotsky fills the terms, Thermidorianism and Bonapartism, with a new content, limiting these terms to a greater degree than before. With the new narrow definition, AS AN ANALOGY, comrade Trotsky says the Thermidorian process, which started in 1923, has completed itself, and we now have Stalin Bonapartism, which he defines in one aspect with the Bonapartism of rising capitalism and not with the Bonapartism of decaying capitalism.

Since our thesis does not take up the question of the Thermidorian process or the Bonapartist process, while comrade Trotsky does, then wherein does the difference exist? Although we do not speak of a process, we speak of the danger of a Thermidorian or Bonapartist OVERTURN, and state that, "The 'Bonapartist' feature of the present Stalinist regime could as easily lead toward a Thermidorian overthrow as toward a Bonapartist overthrow". Therefore, in a comparison of analogy, even though we agreed that the Stalinist regime contained a Bonapartist feature (in the narrow and somewhat misleading sense of a "personalist" dictatorship, without reference to the class character of the regime), there is a contradiction between our use and comrade Trotsky's use of these terms. If comrade Trotsky speaks of Thermidor in the past and we speak of the danger of a Thermidorian overthrow in the future, and at that the most likely danger, there is a discrepancy here.

In reality, this discrepancy conceals two problems: first, we used the terms in a different way. Each has filled these terms with a different meaning. Comrade Trotsky admitted that he is changing his position on this secondary question of analogy and re-defines these terms. Therefore, when you consider the different use of the terms and consider the content of the question, there only remains a difference in analogy. But underneath this question is another question. Trotsky says, if the working class does not oust the Stalinist leadership in time----"In all other cases, in place of Stalinism there could only come the Fascist-capitalist counter-revolution."

Our thesis, instead of presenting one formula, the danger of the establishment of a "Fascist-capitalist counter-revolution", speaks of the danger of TWO variants of the establishment of the rule of capital.

By Bonapartist overthrow we mean an OPEN return to capitalism which would take the form of a military dictatorship. By Thermidorian overthrow we mean a shift of power from the working class to the capitalist class, accomplished within the framework of the Soviet System. In our thesis on this point we use a formula of comrade Trotsky's. Therefore, the contradiction in analogy is the contradiction of the difference in

the use of the terms. For the sake of argument, we will drop the two terms and speak of the variants possible if an overthrow takes place. We still maintain, as presented by our thesis, and not dealt with by comrade Trotsky, that there are two main variants: the open overthrow, or the overthrow within the framework of the Soviets - using the second Soviet variant banner to conceal these steps to capitalism. However, there is no Chinese wall between these two possible variants of overthrow. The overthrow may be a combination of both variants, passing from the concealed to the open form at a later stage, whether rapidly or slowly does not matter in essence. In this sense we speak of the danger of a Thermidorian overthrow.

To repeat: our resolution and the Shachtman-Cannon resolution are contrary positions. The Trotsky article in the July issue of the NEW INTERNATIONAL refutes and contradicts the Shachtman thesis. It is unfortunate that the false new turn of the ICL has caused those who support the "French turn" to suppress, delay and sort international information as well as comrade Trotsky's articles. It is unfortunate that the PC or the Plenum did not see fit to adopt our position on the Russian question and present this to the world as the Party position a half year ago. The negative influence, acting as a brake upon the movement, is again revealed as that of the Cannon-Shachtman faction, by their role on the Russian question.

#### CRUX LETTER TO THE IS

Dear Comrades:

We are obviously entering a new period. Two events determine it - the development of our section in France and the definite turn of the CI.

(1) The correctness of our entry into the SFIO is now proved by objective facts. Our section, thanks to the entry, has changed from a propaganda group into a revolutionary factor of the first order. No one will dare to assert that our group, in adapting itself to the new environment, has become softer, more moderate, opportunistic. Quite the contrary, we can correctly say that the Bolshevik-Leninist group in France at the present moment surpasses all our other sections by the revolutionary precision of its slogans and by the offensive character of its entire political activity. The comrades, who were opposed to our entry, ought now to recognize that they were wrong. The danger of such a move is incontestable but no less incontestable is the manner in which the facts have demonstrated that, thanks to the tempered character of our cadres and thanks to the control of our international organization, we can and we must resort to very daring moves to get out of our isolation and penetrate the masses. Vereecken and others, who had violently opposed the entry, have demonstrated by their very position that they have not sufficiently understood the inestimable advantages of our Bolshevik education and of our centralized organization. Should they continue now, after the experience, to repeat their abstract arguments, they would

only make themselves ridiculous. The best advice we can give them, if they still can be saved, is that they take cognizance of their mistakes and re-enter our ranks.

(2) The decisive betrayal of Stalin and of his CI view, opens to us great possibilities not only within the CI but also within all the working class organizations, especially the trade unions. Up to quite recently, every stage of the radicalization of the masses implied inevitably a new flow toward the Stalinists. This was precisely the cause for our isolation and for our weakness. Going to the left meant going to Moscow, and we were looked upon as an obstacle on this road. Today, Moscow has taken on an aspect which means the obligation to support the imperialism of France, Czecho-Slovakia, etc. For us, it is no longer a question of propounding the subtleties of the theory of socialism in one country and of the permanent revolution, but of putting squarely the question: Are we the willing slaves of our own imperialism or its mortal enemies? Even if the differentiation within the framework of the CP does not take place quite rapidly (although we may also expect catastrophic upheavals, above all if we know how to intervene), the elementary flow of the masses toward the CP must inevitably slacken and even stop.

The latest electoral successes of the French CP in no way invalidates this assertion. The masses have not had the necessary time to assimilate the Stalinist betrayal, even in its most general aspect. Yesterday's inertia is still in effect, but Stalinism today is corroding on all sides. It must fall to pieces. Tomorrow, or the day after, we will appear to the masses as the only revolutionary possibility. The slogan for the Fourth International assumes, under these conditions, an exceptional importance.

(3) The self-same circumstances demonstrate the necessity for the implacable struggle against the SAP which we have undertaken after two years of negotiations, attempts at rapprochement, hesitations, etc. The SAP gentry have revealed themselves to be irreconcilable and perfidious enemies. They prowl around us, pilfer our ideas, our slogans, dulling their revolutionary edge and spreading insinuations about us that we are sectarians, bunglers die-hards; one can have nothing to do with us despite the seeming correctness of our ideas. The fact that Bauer went over to their side has supplied them with a telling argument, all the more so since our German section is not quite intransigent enough towards the SAP gentry. The more flexible, many-sided and, above all, daring our policy of penetration into the mass organizations, all the more intransigent must be our general policy, all the more aggressive must it be against all centrist ideologies, both those already hardened and those crystallizing. The banner of the Fourth International must be immutable, opposed to all other banners.

(4) The preparation for the Mulhouse Congress (which has opened today, at the moment these lines are being written), was a remarkable schooling not only for our French section, but also for our entire international organization.

The struggle centered around 3 motions: the right, the centrist and ours. In all the districts in which our comrades,

numerically weak as they are, have counterposed unswervingly our resolution to the others, they gained votes and sympathizers and at the same time they compelled the centrists to draw away a little further from the right in order not to lose their entire influence. And, on the other hand, in the few cases in which our comrades committed the grave error of entering into a combination with the centrists, they gained nothing for our tendency and at the same time pushed the centrists toward the right.

These experiences provide us with the key for our entire policy in this period: to enter into combinations with the leaders of the SAP of the IAG (London-Amsterdam Bureau) and so forth, would imply to lose our own identity, compromise the banner of the Fourth International and arrest the development of the diverse centrist currents on the road of the revolution. As regards our French section itself, the Mulhouse Congress implies, or should imply, the beginning of a new period. The SFIO is not only not a revolutionary party but it is not even a proletarian party. It is petty bourgeois not only in its policies, but also in its social composition. This party opened to us certain possibilities and it was correct to have formulated and utilized them. But these possibilities are limited. The Mulhouse Congress, together with the repercussions which will follow it, should more or less materially delineate these possibilities. The prestige gained by the Bolshevik-Leninist group must transform itself by flooding light upon the workers. But the workers are primarily outside of the SP, in the CP, in the trade union organizations and among the unorganized. The Bolshevik-Leninist group must know how to effect a new turn, which is the logical development of the previous stage. Without, of course, making the slightest concessions, it is necessary to concentrate nine-tenths of the efforts upon the denunciation of the Stalinist betrayal.

(5) The struggle of the different tendencies against us coincide today almost entirely with the ideological preparation ("bourrage de crame") for the new imperialist war. Opposition to the war must coincide to an ever increasing degree with sympathy for the Fourth International. The condition for success is the ruthless struggle against the slightest concession in the theory of national defense. The inevitable regroupment in the different working class organizations (CP, trade unions, etc.) must open for us an outlet to the working class masses. It is necessary to orient ourselves in this direction with all the required independence. This regroupment can result in the creation of a new party within a set and quite close period of time.

(6) It is absolutely essential to speed up the preparatory work for the Fourth International. The revolutionary elements which will separate themselves during the general regroupment inside the working class must have the possibility to join directly an international organization basing itself on the entire experience of the revolutionary struggles.

June 10, 1935

CRUX

August 15th, 1935

## CRUX (TROTSKY) ORDERS A NEW TURN!

The French section of the ICL, which entered the SFIO, "must know how to effect a new turn", because, "we are obviously entering a new period", says Crux in his letter of June 10th, which was presented to the members of the PC of the Workers Party August 5th. Let us consider this new turn and this new period of which Crux speaks. What Crux means by the new turn can be clearly understood by reviewing the "new turns" up to the present.

First we existed as the Left Opposition of the Comintern with the perspective of restoring it to a Leninist policy and regime. After the German debacle we changed our perspective; we said that it was no longer possible to reform or use the parties of the Third International as instruments for revolution and that it was necessary to build new revolutionary parties and the Fourth International. The theoretical motivation for the relentless struggle against Stalinism and the attempt to oust it from leadership, revolved around its revision of Marxism on the theory of socialism in one country and its bureaucratic regime. Our strategical line of reforming the CI rested upon the premise that the class events, the revolutionary workers in the CI and the action of the Left Opposition, based upon Marxism, could prevent Stalinism from consuming the decisive structure of the whole organization. We thought that in the race with time we would win. Instead, the German event proved not only that the CI could not be reformed, but that the Soviet Union was on the brink of the abyss. The new turn to the Fourth International was necessary. The capitulator, Person, is incorrect.

The weakness of the new turn has its roots in the inability of the major sections of the former Left Opposition to carry on independent class activity, mass work, in conjunction with their efforts to reform the Communist Parties.

The theoretical motivations for our intransigent struggle against Stalinism were based on Marxist principles. Nevertheless, we worked as a faction of the CI, although we were outside of it and maintained an INDEPENDENT ORGANIZATION. Trotsky and his followers began the struggle against Stalinist revisionism at its inception and hoped to cut out the cancer before it consumed the body.

The principle question, which motivated the struggle against Stalinism, called for a strategical line of working as a faction of the CI to reform it. But after Hitler took power it was no longer possible to reform the CI. We adopted a new strategical line, issued the slogan for the Fourth International and took the first step in this direction through the Pact of Four and the Committee of Four (Summer of 1933).

We have failed to continue to march forward on this road; rather we have taken a few steps backward. When Hitler came to power, we said that no revolutionary party existed, no revolutionary international existed; therefore the need of the Fourth International. We declared that the Second and Third Internationals were stumbling blocks on the road to revolution and that the only world organization which was based upon revolutionary Marxism was the Left Opposition.



We were not a party, not an international, but we were the embryo of that International and its Parties, and the decisive instrument realizing this gigantic task. We were the core of the ~~future~~ International. The logical step to follow the Committee of Four, which indeed should have preceded it, was to consolidate the world force of the Left Opposition through a world conference, through establishing a world authoritative body. This was the time to take steps to become a functioning organization on a world scale and create a genuine and collective international leadership.

To call this world convention of our forces and plan our next step, as proposed by us through the Oehler letter to the IS in January, 1934, months before the "French turn" was proposed, was the duty of the leadership. Instead, comrade Trotsky, the IS and the United States section, which I proposed should take the initiative and demand this step - all failed to respond and said it was not possible. We were going to build the Fourth International, and it was not even possible to consolidate our own world force ORGANIZATIONALLY, for the new perspective!

This fatal error was the beginning of the backward steps. Upon its heels, out of the clear blue sky, without preparation for it in our organization, internationally, came a new turn - the so-called French turn. A plenum was called after the "turn", after the entry of our group in France, which was nothing more nor less than a rubber-stamp approval of what had already been done.

The failure of the Pact of Four should have warned us to re-examine our past. To understand our past weakness and our inability (and often opposition) to combined faction work with mass work. The failure of the Pact of Four should have warned us to speed up the organizational consolidation of our world groups. Instead, comrade Trotsky and the others forced through a new turn which liquidates our sections into the Socialist Parties.

Following the entry in France, it became an international orientation and, like a plague, affected section after section with opportunist moves in the direction of the Socialist Parties or, where they did not exist, with opportunist methods of overcoming isolation from the masses.

This new orientation was not a logical step flowing from the new turn for the Fourth International after the German debacle. This "new turn" contradicted the real turn. It is not primarily a question of organizational entry or non-entry of one section into a centrist party, although it was presented that way. Entry is only one phase of the new orientation, the organizational phase. More important is the political-theoretical phase which is decisive. In France, and subsequently in other countries, the entry was motivated by theoretical considerations, which involved principle questions. The mechanical separation of entry or non-entry from the theoretical motivation was, and is, false, and helps the "French turn" group sneak in their false line step by step - as they have done.

The theoretical motivations for the entry, as we have said so often before, involve: (1) a new evaluation of Social Democracy; (2) a false concept of Organic Unity; (3) a false organizational perspective for the Fourth - that the road to the Fourth leads through the Second International; (4) the liquidation of the only INDEPENDENT REVOLUTIONARY MARXIAN WORLD ORGANIZATION in the world; and (5) the "tactical turn ONLY FOR FRANCE", as we correctly predicted was the beginning of an INTERNATIONAL ORIENTATION.

Speaking of the preparations for the Mulhouse Congress, the June 10th letter says: in those cases where our comrades committed errors and entered into combinations with the centrists, we lost ground, and only in those cases where our factions held up an independent banner did we gain. But this way of correctly posing the problem is only ONE PART of the problem. If this is true within the SFIO, and it is, it is a hundred times more important to realize that the entry of sections of the ICI in many parts of the world into the parties of the Second International had, on a world scale, the effect Crux points out in the SFIO. The liquidation of independent sections and their entry of sections into the parties of the Second International, is a form of combination with centrists of the Second International, just as our factional entry into the CI would have been a form of combination with bureaucratic centrism.

Yesterday we would have liquidated our independent sections into the parties of the CI if we had been able to obtain guarantees of democratic centralism; today we should carry on faction work in the parties of the CI as an auxiliary tactic in the work of building the independent parties of the Fourth International. We should do the same in the parties of the Second International. Both Internationals are non-revolutionary; neither can be reformed; neither can be used as instruments of revolution.

In the June 10th letter Crux tells us (what the Opposition to the "French turn" know) that the SFIO is not a revolutionary party, is not a proletarian party, is a petty-bourgeois party; that the possibilities of work in it are limited; the workers are primarily outside of the SFIO, in the CP, in the trade unions, among the unorganized, etc. This is not a new fact. This was known to Crux and to us before the "French turn". Why did he not say this then? Why did he wait until entry and only deal abstractly with this question in a postscript to his November 1st letter to the IS and the leadership of the Belgian section. After the entry in France he sent out this letter as the next step on the new orientation, to lay the basis for its international application and to prepare the road for the Belgian entry, counterposing the petty-bourgeois SFIO to the POB with its proletarian cadres.

Now the June 10th letter again "discovers" the favorable opportunities for work in the CP of France. Crux develops this point in the June 10th letter when he speaks of the CI and the new period, resulting from the decisive betrayal of the Stalinists which opens up "great possibilities not only within the CI, but also within all of the workers' organizations". This is correct, but fundamentally nothing new. Didn't we all agree that Stalinism was moving rapidly to the right in the Soviet Union and internationally? Of course. This latest development is only the fruit of the road Stalin is following and the concretization of what we all pointed out before.

But the IS, and especially the Cannon-Schachtman faction in the United States, turned their backs on faction work in the CI, and marched rapidly toward the Second International. There is a mass of evidence to prove how bitter the "French turn" faction was against our forces who demanded careful and speedy faction work in the CI parties. We correctly pointed out that the crack-up in the CI following the German debacle would be slower than the crack-up and factional activity in the Social Democratic parties, but that it was inevitable and that we prepare for it.

For a detailed analysis of this international turn see the special articles by Stamm, Eiffel, and Oehler of the Workers Party of the United States.

Now, Cruz has another "new turn" for France, as presented in his letter of June 10th, which is attached. Wherein does it differ from the other turns, and in which direction does it lead? Whereas, the slogan of the Fourth International correctly flowed from the new perspective, after Hitler's victory, the "new turn" presented in the letter of June 10th by Cruz conceals within it two perspectives: one which contradicts the "French turn" and one which flows from the "French turn". If the "new turn" includes a repudiation of the "French turn", then a split in the SFIO would be the first step toward correcting this fundamental error. If the "new turn" does not include a repudiation of the theoretical motivations for the "French turn", and that seems to be the variant presented, then it is only a tactical turn within the framework of the new orientation of the ICL, the so-called French turn.

We have explained this in detail in the article, WHAT IS THE FUTURE COURSE OF THE BOLSHEVIK-LENINISTS FACTION IN THE SFIO, published in the Internal Bulletin of the Workers Party.

Unless the theoretical motivations for the "French turn" are rejected, the split, no matter how many members it will carry with it, will not succeed, in spite of the best intentions in creating an independent Marxist Party. Likewise, the new open letter of the IS, which has placed absolute CONTROL, no matter who joins the Contact Committee, into the hands of ONLY that tendency which endorses the "French turn", and which excludes those who oppose the "French turn" from the left (Veroccken, Argentine and Brazilian sections, etc.), will lead to defeat of the objective, the creation of a world center for the Fourth International. It will not have even the positive results of the Pact of Four which, despite its failure, was in the main a correct and necessary step.

The June 10th letter says that we must take very daring steps to get out of our isolation. Yes, some sections of the ICL have taken very daring steps to get out of their isolation. These steps can be only labelled opportunist attempts. Even the IS had to criticize the "application" of the new turn of the ICL as applied in Belgium, Poland, Chile, Cuba. The "line" was correct, but the "application" was wrong, says the IS. This has a familiar sound! Our material presents additional "application" of the new turn, which the IS "overlooks".

A revolutionary policy calls for intransigence against all forms of centrism, but the intransigence of the new orientation is shown only against the CI and the centrist groups outside of the Second and Third Internationals. The new orientation and its application carry with it a watering down of our intransigence against the Second International, as objective facts for the last year so amply prove. The "French turn" groups will answer that they are maneuvering to win the centrists from the Second International. Very good; but they have the wrong method. It is false to give up our organizational independence; the theoretical motivations presented by the IS are false. It is correct to carry on factional work in the Second International Parties. But it is likewise as urgent to carry on factional activity in the centrist groups outside of the Second and Third Internationals and in the CI.

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST LEAGUE (BOLSHEVIK-LENINISTS)

Brazilian Section

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Resolution on the French Question

April, 1935.

The IV National Conference of the International Communist League (Bolshevik-Leninists) Brazilian section, at its March 31st session, and with the attendance of the delegates from the Rio Janeiro, Sao Paulo and Ceara regions, decided, after a thorough discussion of the published documents on the French Question and on the basis of the following motives:

- (a) Politically, the SFIO is already a bankrupt organization, and thanks to its countless betrayals of the proletariat has no longer any revolutionary value.
- (b) The increasing radicalization of the French workers, that can only express itself in their progressive Bolshevization, demands more than ever a consistent policy by the French section, a policy that should consist on the one hand of an infiltration of part of their members into the ranks of the socialists, and on the other hand the preservation of the absolute independence of the League organization, especially because of the extremely favorable objective situation.
- (c) The French section should have proposed their entrance into the existing united front, so that in case of their rejection they could prove to the workers the inactive and bureaucratic character of this united front, and in case of their acceptance, to utilize every possible means to make the united front a genuine weapon against fascism.
- (d) The majority of the French section (66 against 41 delegates to the National Conference) decided on sacrificing the independence of their organization, and in spite of all solemn declarations about "faithfulness to principles", etc., actually degraded themselves to hangers-on of the social democracy, in actual disregard of the basic principles of the theses on which the foundation of our international organization was laid. These tactics lead necessarily to a raising of the prestige of the centrist bureaucracy and thereby to a certain extent to a damming up of the process of radicalization that is taking place among the masses of socialist workers.
- (e) This position of the majority of the French section must be considered as the beginning of a general process of revision and liquidation that has been going on internationally since the declaration of independence of the League; and it is causing international political differentiations and serious crises in the other sections, a situation that is made even worse by the attitude of comrade Trotsky and the International Secretariat.
- (f) This attitude of the French section proves practically that it is indulging in opportunist hopes for a revival in the II International, which, through its countless be-

We were ridiculed by these "Marxists". At the same time we were for FACTION work in the Social Democratic parties. The new orientation of the ICL prevented us from laying the proper base among the Stalinist workers, retarded some of them from developing toward us, as well as other layers within the working class. The June 10th letter is attempting to correct some of the past errors, especially for the comrades throughout the world who have applied the new orientation by rejecting all concepts of faction work among the parties of the CI.

The IS must repudiate the new orientation, must correct this error, must come back to the clear cut theoretical and organizational perspective for the Fourth International as laid down by our group in the United States and the increasing number of other sections of the ICL and groups throughout the world who agree with our perspective. We are opposing the "French turn" from the left. We are for faction work in all centrist and reformist organizations. Those who oppose the "French turn" from the right, oppose us even more, because in us they see the real Marxist opposition to their line.



The Echo Of Stalin's Communique In Reformist Camps

We shall only quote two influential opinions here, that of Blum and that of Lebas, the two actual leaders of the united front in France. Blum writes: "Stalin's pronouncement leads - if we extract its logical meaning - to conclusions that the Socialist Party has not been willing to accept at any time in its history: the unconditional duty of national defense, participation in the government's armament policy, agreement with the government's thesis of "Safety in armed force". In fact, Stalin's formula leads directly to a conception, the danger of which the latest conference of the Second International paid especial attention to: of being drawn into the Holy Alliance of pre-war times, on account of the war danger, and thereby dragging the proletariat into war preparedness."

As you see, Blum knows pretty well how to place himself as a "revolutionist" to the left of Stalin: who helps whom? But listen further: "This is the theoretic conflict. But far from being a hindrance to unity, on the contrary it will facilitate it, if we know how to convince the masses of workers, that it can only be resolved in unity itself. First unity. Then the re-united party can freely and independently establish its platform".

In other words, reformism hopes to cure itself at the expense of Stalinism. The reformist poison will again become more dangerous! And observe, a Lebas, a right SFIO leader, who suddenly recalls - what? (Populaire v.3.VI. 35):-

"And if in spite of the patent wishes of the people never to see another war, the policy of the bourgeois government leads them to one, a certain resolution of the International Congress of 1907 could very well become the pattern of action for the working class parties". (A literal quotation of the final passages of the Stuttgart Resolution: "In case of war nevertheless" and so forth, follows).

And L'Humanite is bound by the terms of the united front pact and Stalin's communique to be silent where it should be the first duty of a communist party to expose this cynical demagoguery to the French working class.

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The Echo In The French Imperialist Camp

Here the officious voice of le Temps will suffice. Their correspondent, who accompanied Laval on his trip, wrote a gorgeous  $1\frac{1}{2}$  column article on May #1 about "Stalin" - Barbusse couldn't have done it better. There we find the following sentences:

"We know the statement that Stalin made, and that was expressed in the final communique. They say it was the leader of the Third International himself who decided to give this condemnation of the campaign against the defense of France a more festive form than that of an interview or a speech. If we remember the fact that German diplomacy, even in the flourishing days of Rapallo, never managed to achieve as much, if we remember that this is the clearest proof that Stalin would not hesitate, in case of need, to sacrifice any theory in the interests of defense of the SU; then we can form a picture of the consequences that Laval's trip to Moscow and the hearty

faith it created, can have. May they not even be greater than it seems at the moment, and may not these negotiations form a milestone in the evolution of the Russian revolution and its foreign policy?"

No doubt the French bourgeoisie know, from long experience, what a military alliance means. They have not a bad understanding of the pact with the Soviet Union.

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### The Opposition

Fortunately, a wave of protest of considerable size immediately rose against the treacherous policies of the two working class parties. But not everyone who cries "traitor" has the revolution in mind. The opposition is composed of the most varied elements that we can divide about as follows:

(1) Those who reject the pact and Stalin's statement because they are pacifists, opponents of armament and of the Versailles "unpleasantness."

(2) Those who consider the pact a necessity but wish to know that the independence of the French proletariat is being protected (no civil peace, revolutionary action, "revolutionary" defense of the S.U.).

(3) Those who reject Stalin's declaration and the pact on revolutionary grounds.

Naturally, a clean-cut separation is not possible, and the transitions are fluid, for the present situation - in the very midst of peace - does not yet force the proletarian groupings to take a decided and unambiguous position, on the contrary permits all sorts of gradations and creates a "united front" ranging from petty bourgeois pacifists to revolutionary defeatists.

It is interesting to note that the Amsterdam-Pleyel movement of the Stalinists was badly torn as a result of the latest events, and that the consistent pacifist and "revisionist" intellectual "faction" there (in the AP movement) led by Professor Rivet and Professor Langevin, felt themselves compelled to give out a resolution in which, although in a mild form, they speak their minds about the Russian pact ("Without revision of these unjust laws - the Versailles agreement - the mutual assistance pact would strengthen a territorial status that is hated by 80,000,000 Europeans. Ultimately they would hinder neither armament nor war.")

A similar petty bourgeois social-pacifist position is also taken by the "Frontist" movement of the former radical socialist Pergory for rejection of the pact and propaganda for direct dealings with Hitler. The Pupists also move on a similar track; Doriot, who also, it is known, declared for direct dealings with Hitler, carried on the election campaign in St. Denis almost exclusively under the slogan "Down with the Holy Alliance", "For Peace", without giving a positive revolutionary slogan; in connection with the Russian military alliance he even declared that Stalin intended to carry the revolution into Germany on the points of bayonets - which the peace-loving Doriot sharply pilloried. The Doriot weekly, EMANCIPATION, does not wear this open pacifist face, but apart from the articles of Doriot, presents a whole series of articles emphasizing the revolutionary tasks of the French proletariat.



Is there an opposition against the new stalinist line in the CPF itself? All we know about it is that in the 15th Paris district the IC is said to have decided against Stalin's declaration; that in the above-mentioned membership meeting on May 17, Thorez' speech was received with a stony silence, that in the voting on the final resolution only 7 comrades abstained and a youth comrade voted against it. It is said that a series of protest letters kept coming to the office of the Humanite day after day, that among other things demanded the expulsion of Stalin. The provincial districts of Jura, Aurrillac, Montlucon, are supposed to have held protest meetings. We take this news from the monthly "Que Faire" of June, 1935. The "Que Faire" group is, to be sure, not organized in the Communist Party, but has relations with it. They take the position that the Russian pact as such is to be supported, but not Stalin's declaration, that is: the slogan of civil peace. They gave out a leaflet reading:

"Defense of the Soviet Union? Yes.

But the one defense that is possible is the revolutionary defense of the S.U.

For this we must fight today

Against national defense and the Holy Alliance

Against all the imperialist and militarist behavior of our bourgeoisie

For workers' control

For the factories

For the arming of the proletariat

For soldiers' committees and their sponsoring by workers' organizations.

For popular voting for officers.

And the result of this independent revolutionary struggle of the proletariat in peace as in war, will be the workers' and peasants' government, the genuine ally of the Soviet Union, who alone will be able to wage a revolutionary war in brotherly partnership with the German and Russian workers and those of the entire world."

A genuine revolutionary opposition to civil peace within the SFIO is conducted by the group around Marcel Pivert, by the Bolshevik-Leninist faction, by individual "Planists" like Dumoulin. Pivert in expressing himself against the civil peace policy of Blum & Co., is at the same time damning that of the Stalinists:

"The National Council (of the SFIO) was not willing to ask the party's advice about the struggle against war. But the party is more or less involved with the policies of French imperialism...by the sentence in Leon Blum's speech, where he offers the collaboration of the proletariat (without having consulted them) for a so-called war of national defense. Therefore, we shall vote against the report of the parliamentary group. This protest is intended to crystallize an opposition within the party that will take a firm stand against all forms of social pacifism and collaboration on the plea of national defense."

NOTES ON SOCIAL-PATRIOTISM -- 4-

The urgent need of an independent revolutionary Marxian organization in France, which will carry on faction work inside the contrist parties, as proposed by Lhuillier and others, can be clearly seen by the re-alignment of forces taking place in the working class around the question of Social Patriotism. The new turn of the ICL, which has been translated throughout the world, wherever it has been applied into an opportunist road to the masses, and has played into the hands of the reformist and contrists, the defenders of Social-Patriotism.

The right turn of the CI and the degeneration into the swamp of Social-Patriotism, in some respects, has placed the Stalinists to the right of groups and sections of the Second International, even though neither organization can be reformed or used as an instrument for revolution. At the same time, the Stalinists left this wide open breach, the former Left Opposition made a counter-move, not as expected, toward the Fourth International, but rather toward the Second International, through the so-called French turn. This has disoriented many of our sections, who endeavor to reach the masses through opportunist moves or through outright capitulation to Social Democracy, as was the case of the entry into the PCB. In turn, other sections of the class, moving to the left reacted to the Stalinist right swing and the ICL new turn, by themselves moving toward or remaining in the parties of the Second International.

The one step forward through the Pact of the Four has now been transformed into two steps backward through the new turn of the ICL and the new contact committee for the Fourth International, a contact committee which gives mechanical and complete control to that faction which endorses the French turn.

The organizational steps of the question of building the Fourth International, to replace the two bankrupt internationals, cannot be separated on the one hand from the theoretical motivations which it emanates from, as well as the relation of these organizational aspects to the concrete questions of the day, first among them the question of Social-Patriotism and the rehabilitation of the contrists of the Second International on the basis of the blunders of Stalinism and the new turn of the ICL.

## A HANDSOME PRESENT

(On The Letter Of Pivert And Some Letters Of Trotsky)

The tenseness of the class relations in France was dramatically portrayed by the strikes of the arsenal workers and their bloody clashes with the imperialist state. These were lightning flashes heralding the onrushing storm. They will be followed by other struggles of a wider and more serious character. Such events cannot pass without producing profound effects on the organizations of the working class. The SFIO was no exception. The immediate effect there was to sharpen immensely the equally tense struggle between the social patriots and the revolutionists. Not by accident the struggle became hottest in the youth. The Bolshevik-Leninists find themselves in the center of this struggle and the object of attack by the social patriots.

The expulsion of Zeller and others, including some comrades of the Bolshevik-Leninist youth, and the impending expulsion of the adults from the SFIO, put on the edge of a knife the question of the perspective of the Bolshevik-Leninists with respect to the Fourth International in concrete terms of a new party in France and especially in relation to the SFIO. It is clear that the game in the SFIO is almost up. The Bolshevik-Leninists will have to continue the struggle as a separate organization. The letters of Trotsky to Rous and the French Bolshevik-Leninists are attempts to impress this fact on them, and - this is the important thing - adapt the course of the Bolshevik-Leninists to the new situation. In a word, the independent course has been imposed upon them by the social patriots.

If Trotsky's remark that "--none among us has ever considered that our possibilities inside the SFIO were unlimited and that we would remain linked to this party indefinitely" is intended to convey the idea that the independent course was their perspective and that the present situation is the occasion for its realization, it is completely false. The entire course of the Bolshevik-Leninists, in entering the Second International, and the logic of the new orientation, contradict it. Moreover, in the summer of 1934, Trotsky wrote, in connection with the liquidation of the French Communist League into the SFIO, that there was a likely possibility of repeating the Congress of Tours! If the perspective has always been what Trotsky says, why has he found it necessary to emphasize so vigorously for two months (letters of June 10, July 30, August 11) what should be, in the present circumstances, the obvious outcome of their course - the immediate creation of an independent party? Isn't it clear that Trotsky is either trying to overcome resistance to that course in the ranks of the Bolshevik-Leninists themselves or anticipating it and trying to overcome it in advance? Whence comes that resistance if the independent course is the true outcome of the perspective on which they entered the SFIO?

The truth of the matter is plain enough. Under the pressure of events Trotsky is trying to make a turn which contradicts the former course. The motivation he gives shows that. He argues for the independent course on the ground that the situation is objectively revolutionary. Only a year ago he argued for the liquidation of the French

Communist League on the ground that the situation was pre-revolutionary and the denouement was a question of six months, a year or two years!

According to his purpose Trotsky draws different and opposite conclusions from essentially the same facts. Both the past and present course cannot flow from the objective situation. If the imminence of decisive events dictated the liquidation of the independent Marxist organization and its immersion in the party of the social patriots, the greater imminence of decisive events cannot dictate exactly the opposite course, independence from the social patriots.

Objection will be made by those who support the new orientation that the "progress" of the Bolshevik-Leninists in the SFIO makes the independent course possible now, whereas the weakness and isolation of the French Communist League made its liquidation into the Second International a burning necessity. The implication of this objection is that the decisive consideration in determining the course is the size of the Marxist group and its connections with the socialist workers, that is to say, tactical considerations. The objection and the criterion which is implicit in it comes straight from the arguments Trotsky himself made last year in motivating the new orientation. But now he advances a new criterion: the decisive consideration is the necessity for the revolutionists to act independently of the social patriots because decisive events are imminent.

What Trotsky is saying here is that when decisive revolutionary events are imminent the independent policy and independent organization of the revolutionists are indispensable conditions for the independent action of the class. That is of course a principle of Marxism which Trotsky himself did much to establish against the Stalinists in the post-Lenin period. But that is what we have been saying in the struggle against the new orientation. On this line it is possible to build a Marxist independent party.

Now it follows that Trotsky violated this principle theoretically, politically and organizationally when he conceived the opportunist and liquidationist new orientation. It follows, too, that all those including Trotsky who insisted and still do that the new orientation is a tactical question are incorrect. And it follows further that we are entirely correct both in our contention that a principle of Marxism was involved and in our stubborn opposition to Trotsky's position. This is a handsome present even if it is unintentional.

It remains for comrade Trotsky to draw the obvious conclusions, acknowledge his error and begin to struggle vigorously for a correction of the new orientation internationally.

But this is precisely what Trotsky is not doing. On the contrary, he affirms the correctness of the past course. Consequently, the independent course will proceed on the basis of the same theoretical and political premises which motivated the previous course. The independent course is, therefore, a tactical shift within and on the basis of the new orientation. It is not a correction of the past course to a Leninist one. It is not a fundamentally new course at

all. To what this will lead, we have already discussed in the article WHAT IS THE FUTURE COURSE OF THE BOLSHEVIK-LENINISTS IN THE SFIO?

The result of this policy is that the Bolshevik-Leninists are placed in a dilemma. They affirm their past course, which led them into the SFIO, to make it the center of revolutionary unity. But now they are faced with the necessity of steering an independent course outside of it. The new orientation prevents them from making the turn on the correct basis of demanding that all revolutionists and class-conscious socialists split from the social patriots immediately. If they begin now to advocate this Leninist line they would contradict their previous course which was objectively the direct opposite and expose it as a manoeuvre!

The result would be that there would be great resentment against them precisely among those workers to whom their appeal should be directed. Let us see why. Before it gave birth to the new orientation the ICL demanded the destruction of the Second International and criticized as left centrists those who having declared for internationalism refused to split from the Second International. Its entire literature was permeated with the thought. The following quotations from the Draft Theses of the International Secretariat of the International Communist League formulated in January, 1934, on War and the Fourth International, will show clearly what we mean: "The struggle with the patriotic prejudices of the masses means above all an irreconcilable struggle against the Second International as an organization, as a party, as a program, as a banner." (Section 29) (First emphasis in original, second ours). "The left centrists, who are in turn distinguished by a great number of shadings (...the Zyromski and Marceau Pivert groups in France and others) arrive in words at the renunciation of the defense of the fatherland. But from this bare renunciation they do not draw the necessary practical conclusions. The greater half of their internationalism, if not nine tenths of it, bears a platonic character. They fear to break away from the right centrists; in the name of the struggle with 'sectarianism' they carry on a struggle against Marxism, refuse to fight for a revolutionary International and continue to remain in the Second International at the head of which stands the king's footman, Vandervelde." (Section 22. First emphasis in the original, the others are ours). This is very clear. The practical conclusions which make internationalism real include a split from the Second International. That was Lenin's line from 1914.

The line of the new orientation runs in exactly the opposite direction. It liquidates the independent organization of the revolutionists. When the Bolshevik-Leninists entered the SFIO thousands of workers in the SFIO, outside of it in France and also those outside of France took their course to mean the rejection of the old line and the "return" to the Second International. That is how Pivert understood it. In his letter to the expelled youth Pivert puts it very clearly: "They" (the SFIO bureaucrats) "therefore impute to you the intention, which has long been that of the C.P., 'to bore from within', to demolish the socialist organization, in order to win the leadership, but with another

structure....But I never understood your return to the Party as a method of this kind. All the confusion exploited against you arises from that."

It is true that there is confusion, enormous confusion. Pivert is correct on one point: the ICL is responsible for the confusion. This confusion has already done much to vitiate the positive results of the fight the Bolshevik-Leninists are making against the class-collaborationist program and policies of the bureaucracy. It has prevented them from attacking the illusion of the Socialist workers that the SFIO is the party of revolutionary unity. Thus it has prejudiced the success of their future course when, as a result of the present developments, they attempt to create an independent party.

It is likely that were there an independent Marxist organization in France or an authoritative world organization which hammered home this Leninist line to the socialist and Stalinist workers, entire currents in these organizations, including Pivert, would see clearly the Marxist road to the revolution and the Fourth International. But there is none. The ICL, to which history has assigned this role, has been working on the line of its new orientation and stubbornly refuses to correct its course.

Instead of correcting their course, explaining their error and calling for the split the Bolshevik-Leninists are going to follow a policy of putting the responsibility of organizational split on the bureaucrats, who had already split the revolutionary movement with their social patriotic course in 1914 and have continued it ever since. In this way, the Bolshevik-Leninists hope to justify their independent existence. They are going to fight for reinstatement. In his letter to Rous, Trotsky says: " - we are - entirely in agreement that the struggle against expulsion, eventually for the reinstatement of the youth, must have an extremely aggressive character: We accuse! We can draw up posters with this title: We accuse the leaders of the French party of preparing the betrayal of the French youth." They are going to fight for reinstatement into the party of social patriotism on the basis of the struggle against social patriotism!

The immediate results will be dangerous for the success of any independent course on whatever basis. In the first place it introduces into the Bolshevik-Leninist movement the absolutely anti-Leninist policy of deceiving the workers. "We must say to ourselves," says Trotsky in the letter of August 11th to the Bolshevik-Leninists, "that the transitory period of the adaptation to the regime of the SFIO is drawing to its natural end. We must orientate ourselves practically towards the revolutionary party with the shortest possible delay....".

But to the workers the Bolshevik-Leninists are going to present the opposite policy. They are fighting for reinstatement, that is: for unity on the basis of the SFIO. But these are only "statutory manoeuvres" says Trotsky. In the letter to the French Bolshevik-Leninists, Trotsky makes it very clear: "The declarations of the youth in favor of discipline, etc., are useful to demonstrate to the inexperienced the bad faith of the reformists" (is it only a question of bad faith?!) "and the Stalinists and to unmask the intrigues of the SAPists...."

Yes, comrade Trotsky, you know that these are manoeuvres. And we know it. But how shall the workers know it is not your real policy? And why should they be fooled? Will they be more sympathetic to the Fourth International when they find out they were deceived? And for how many who may be thrown out with the Bolshevik-Leninists will it be the correct policy? When will they be told the truth?

Bolsheviks must always resort to manoeuvres against the class enemy and against political opponents. But they must never deceive the workers as to their intentions and they must explain patiently to the masses the character and purpose of all of their actions. Lenin and Trotsky always observed that rule. It is just as necessary today. Helping the masses to learn from their own experience demands that the Bolsheviks always tell them the truth.

But as a result of the new orientation the Bolshevik-Leninists and Trotsky cannot tell the truth. Trotsky's reply to Pivert perfectly illustrates his dilemma.

The letter of Marceau Pivert expresses the sentiments of a sincere but badly confused man. Its thought is the clearest expression of the centrist character of the left wing in the SFIO. The central axis of his appeal to the expelled youth is that revolutionary unity is possible on the basis of the SFIO. On this basis he is opposed to the expulsion of the youth and for their reinstatement. He is also opposed to the expulsion of social patriots.

Pivert's position apparently is that social patriots and Marxists can live in one organization. From 1914 on, Lenin confronted this question. He gave one unvarying answer: the prime duty of revolutionists was to split from the social patriots; to constitute the new international on this basis; the policy of unity with social patriots was to serve the bourgeoisie and split the working class. Lenin's formula is good today. The social democracy is a hopelessly social patriotic organization. Pivert himself recognizes that Blum and Co. want a free hand to dragoon the proletariat into the war in the service of French imperialism. Yet he cannot rid himself of the idea that the SFIO is THE party of the class. And he is for its aggrandizement through fusion with the social patriotic Stalinist party.

Pivert and all those who think as he does can arrive at a Leninist position on the question of the new International, which can only be the Fourth International, only if he masters the idea that the revolutionists must unite in a revolutionary party independent of the social patriotic internationals by splitting from them immediately. The unnecessary loss of a day can endanger the success of the future revolutionary party, so swiftly is the situation moving now toward its inevitable denouement. It was Trotsky's duty to make this clear.

In his reply to Pivert, comrade Trotsky effectively demonstrates a number of the errors made by the former. But he evades the central question of Pivert's letter - the SFIO as the center of revolutionary unity. Yet this is the question which is agitating thousands of workers and involves the entire question of the Fourth International in France. Tomorrow it will be an even more burning issue.

Instead, he makes an excellent and stinging denunciation of the "democratic" regime of the SFIO and sharply criticizes Pivert for idealizing it. (Trotsky himself gave the democratic regime in the SFIO, brought about by the crisis in it induced in turn by the crisis in the imperialist state, as a reason for the possibility of revolutionary work inside the SFIO and the liquidation of the French Communist League!). He says: "In the final analysis those will not be the Blums and the Zyromskys but the masses, the millions of exploited. The party must be built on and for them." Correct a thousand times. But why doesn't Trotsky also tell Pivert that the revolutionary party must be built outside of the SFIO with the shortest possible delay? He believes it. That is his policy. Here is an excellent opportunity to proclaim the truth, long, long delayed. He cannot do it however, without exposing the "statutory manoeuvres" of the struggle for unity on the basis of the SFIO, without in effect, repudiating the new orientation. Trotsky finds himself in a dilemma, and tries to escape by evasion. It is a course unworthy of so great a Marxist.

The policy of deceiving the workers will make it extremely difficult to demolish the idea in the minds of the socialist workers that the SFIO is the party of the proletarian revolution. It negates the idea that the revolutionists must split from the social patriots as a matter of principle. It puts the Marxists in the utterly false and compromising position of seeking unity with the social patriots. It allows workers to think that the Bolshevik-Leninists are outside of the SFIO because the bureaucrats stand in their way. It will turn them against the bureaucrats. That is true. But it will not permit them to draw the necessary practical conclusions and, in the end, benefit only the bureaucrats. And it will encourage ideas of organic unity between the two parties. What is more, these ideas will be encouraged inside the new party itself and weaken its independence.

The new orientation exacts a heavy toll at every step. The revolutionists march in chains; they cannot say what they should. A Marxist party cannot be created by a policy of deceit. On this road there is only catastrophe ahead, no matter how glittering may be the first showing. Numbers are important. Revolutionary quality is decisive. The Finnish revolution was lost, wrote Trotsky in his Lessons Of October, because the majority of the party were social democrats. The new party must be Bolshevik. The first step is to tell the truth. The first condition for that is to strike off the chains of the new orientation. A line which leads to a dilemma, which can be "solved" only by deceiving the workers, is false, is opportunist.

There is time to make the turn boldly on a Marxist basis, but it is passing swiftly. In four months, five or six, it may be too late. Bolshevik-Leninists, an end to evasions, half truths, deceit! Speak the truth! Proclaim the split from the social patriots! Build the new party under that sign! Reject the new orientation theoretically, politically, organizationally! That is the Marxist road to the Fourth International!

T. Stamm  
For The Left Wing.



THE NEW CONTACT COMMITTEE FOR THE FOURTH  
INTERNATIONAL

A new contact committee for the Fourth International has been established to replace the defunct Committee of Four. The committee and initial signers of the Open Letter of the ICL consist of the: ICL, Bolshevik-Leninist faction in the SFIO, RSAP, Workers' Party of Canada, and the Workers' Party of the United States. Can we say that this is a step forward in relation to the Committee of Four, or is this a few steps backward? To answer this question we must understand the connection of this organizational step with the dispute over the new turn of the ICL, the so-called "French turn". We have dealt with the "French turn" question in every issue of the INTERNATIONAL NEWS, and therefore confine ourselves to the organizational aspects of this question.

In the international revolutionary movement, among the groups and parties which have broken with the Second and Third Internationals, and which advocate the Fourth International, there are three different positions presented on the question of the establishment of the contact committee for the Fourth International. The first position calls for the entry of the different groups of the ICL, and others, into the London-Amsterdam Bureau (2-1/2 group with Schmidt of the RSAP as the secretary) to work there as the left faction, to win the London-Amsterdam Bureau, or the major part, to the Fourth International and to revolutionary Marxism. This position is presented by the S.A.P., by a large group in the R.S.A.P., and other forces.

The second position calls for the complete CONTROL (through decisive votes) of the contact committee for the Fourth International by those parties and groups which support the new turn of the ICL, the so-called "French turn". This is the position of the I.C.L. and its sections.

The third position, which is to the left of the above two positions, calls for the establishment of a contact committee to be composed of a broad contact committee, organized around a Marxian programmatic statement and an open letter which rejects the liquidation of ICL sections into the parties of the Second International, and calls for the split perspective of all left groups in the Second and Third Internationals. The third position was presented to the June Plenum of the Workers' Party of the USA by the left-wing group. Our position was defeated.

We are of the opinion that the first position - to have all groups enter as a faction in the London-Amsterdam Bureau, would be as fatal for the Fourth International as the "French turn" position of liquidation into the parties of the Second International. Likewise, we are of the opinion that the present set-up of the contact committee is a few steps backward. The complete and mechanical control of the contact committee by the "French turn" group and the exclusion of the left-centrist groups, or even a bid to gain them; and, above all, the exclusion of the forces to the left of the "French turn" group, will work to the detriment of the contact committee work.

The ICL has three basic factors to consider in taking the step of establishing a contact committee controlled by the "French turn" group; (1) It reflects a narrow sectarianism covering up its opportunist road to the masses

(the new turn of the ICL); (2) it is attempting to cover up the "retreat" of the Bolshevick-Leninist group of the SFIO, who, according to Crux, have reached a "new turn" since the Mulhouse Congress. If they are not expelled soon they will possibly split. However, all indications are that the theoretical considerations which motivated the French group will not be repudiated, rather the ICL will claim the turn was correct; (3) the necessity for the speedy establishment of the contact committee, to act as a stimulation for the disintegration and splits taking place within the ICL, due to the "French turn".

The contact committee must change its course. The contact committee must open the door to the left elements that oppose the "French turn". The contact committee must immediately give them representation. The contact committee must draw up a clear-cut statement on the question of the road to the Fourth International, rejecting the road of liquidation of sections into the parties of the Second International; must carry on faction work inside the Social Democratic and Stalinist parties; must work for split perspectives, according to each national condition; and must use every means possible to win the left-centrist groups that are independent of the Second and Third Internationals.

The Workers' Party of the USA is now part of the contact committee for the Fourth International. As the left-wing of the Workers' Party, we become part of this contact committee through the Workers' Party. We will fight in this capacity for the line presented in our INTERNATIONAL NEWS.

By Leon Trotsky (Continued from last issue)

6. A democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry, as a regime that is distinguished from the dictatorship of the proletariat by its class content, might be realized only in case an independent revolutionary party could be constituted which expresses the interests of the peasants and in general of petty-bourgeois democracy - a party that is capable of conquering power with this or that aid of the proletariat and of determining its revolutionary program. As modern history teaches - especially the history of Russia in the last twenty-five years - an insurmountable obstacle on the road to the creation of a peasants' party is the economic and political dependence of the petty bourgeoisie and its deep internal differentiation, thanks to which the upper sections of the petty bourgeoisie (the peasantry) go with the big bourgeoisie in all decisive cases, especially in war and in revolution, and the lower sections - with the proletariat, while the intermediate section has the choice between the two extreme poles. Between the Kerenskiad and the Bolshevik power, between the Kuo Min Tang and the dictatorship of the proletariat there cannot and does not lie any intermediate stage, that is, no democratic dictatorship of the workers and peasants.

7. The endeavor of the Comintern to foist upon the Eastern countries the slogan of the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry, finally and long ago exhausted by history, can have only a reactionary effect. In so far as this slogan is counterposed to the slogan of the dictatorship of the proletariat, it contributes to the dissolution of the proletariat into the petty bourgeois masses and in this manner creates better conditions for the hegemony of the national bourgeoisie and consequently for the collapse of the democratic revolution. The introduction of this slogan into the program of the Comintern is a direct betrayal of Marxism and of the October traditions of Bolshevism.

8. The dictatorship of the proletariat which has risen to power as the leader of the democratic revolution is inevitably and very quickly placed before tasks that are bound up with deep inroads into the rights of bourgeois property. The democratic revolution grows over immediately into the socialist, and thereby becomes a permanent revolution.

9. The conquest of power by the proletariat does not terminate the revolution, but only opens it. Socialist construction is conceivable only on the foundation of the class struggle, on a national and international scale. This struggle, under the conditions of an overwhelming predominance of capitalist relationships on the world arena, will inevitably lead to explosions, that is, internally to civil wars, and externally to revolutionary wars. Therein lies the permanent character of the socialist revolution as such, regardless of whether it is a backward country that is involved, which only yesterday accomplished its democratic revolution, or an old capitalist country, which already has behind it a long epoch of democracy and parliamentarism.

## THE P.C. OF THE PARTY FORBIDS THE PUBLICATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Since the formation of the Workers Party the official press, under the control of the Cannon caucus, has printed volumes of material in support of the new turn of the ICL, and has presented opportunist positions on many other important issues. Information and material has been systematically sorted, in the Stalinist fashion, to present one side of the dispute, and to exclude the other side. This has been carried through by the Cannon-Shachtman caucus under a cloak of legality because it has the editorship of both party organs, and is due to the political spinelessness of the P.C., which is dominated by the Cannon caucus, but not entirely controlled by it. All this has been carried through even though the party has adopted no position for or against the "French turn".

Four groups and four positions on the so-called "French turn" exist in the party. The liquidators, (Cannon group) - for the liquidation of our groups into the Second International, and the opportunist road to the masses; the Buffer group, (Weber-Glotzer) - the tail of the Cannon group; the Muste group, against the "French turn" on tactical grounds; the Left Wing, (Basky, Oehler, Stamm) - for the independence of the Marxian party and group; for faction work in centrist organizations. These four positions boil down to 2 fundamental positions: the support of the "French turn" as a tactical question; principled opposition to the new orientation; for the Leninist line of building the Fourth International on the basis of assembling the revolutionary cadres from the Second and Third Internationals through splits from the social patriots.

Not only has the press been denied Left Wing comrades on many vital issues; in addition, departments which we were leading were either dissolved or liquidated by other means. Left Wing comrades are hindered from carrying out activity by the opportunist policies under the Cannon leadership, and by outright suppression. Our Party work is sabotaged, and systematic exclusion from posts and work is merely preparation for wholesale expulsions - already two important Negro comrades have been hounded out of the party.

After patiently waiting for eight months in which two Plenums have been held, with no solutions, the Left Wing comrades decided to issue the International News in order to present their side of the disputed questions.

The P.C. forbade the publication of the International News before it was issued, and now after the issuing of the first number have condemned it as an illegal document and forbid further numbers. Twice the P.C. took action, and twice we moved that articles we presented should be published in the party organs. Both times our motions were defeated by the three other groups.

This leaves the Left Wing in an unbearable condition, to which no revolutionary Marxist can submit. The Cannon caucus has free use of the press for their opportunist line. The Left Wing has been denied the use of the press on the vital issues dealing with party policy questions. The Left Wing is told to confine itself to discuss-

sion articles in the Internal Bulletin.

The following two statements presented to the P.C. by Basky, Oehler and Stamm present our position on this question:

STATEMENT ON THE PUBLICATION OF MATERIAL IN PUBLICATIONS NOT CONTROLLED BY THE PARTY

(Submitted to the P.C. 8-11-35)

1...The Party must have control over its membership in all of its activity. This includes the publication of material in non-party papers and periodicals. In this respect, a secondary distinction must be made between publication of articles in bourgeois periodicals and the activity of party members on trade union and other working class publications. Before members submit articles to the bourgeois press, they should be submitted to the proper party committees. On the other hand, editors and writers for trade union papers cannot present all material to the party fraction for approval, but must see to it that articles and editorials dealing with the decisive questions of the general line and the policy, must be submitted to the party. In addition, the writings of our comrades in these non-party working class publications must at no time present material contrary to the line of the party, but must present to the fullest extent, according to circumstances, the line of the party. It is understood that when other members of a trade union, who are not members of the party, and who oppose our line, present material in the press, our comrades must, according to circumstances, see that they are not involved and at the same time present our opposing position. This also applies to other working class publications. Writers for liberal publications should be governed by sub-committees of the P.C.

2...The presentation of material endorsing the new orientation of the I.C.L. and the exclusion of material presenting the opposite position in the organs of the party, has up to the present been the policy of the Cannon caucus. Although the party has not yet taken a position on this important question and has censured them for doing so, at the same time those who control the press have systematically excluded material presented for publication by the Left Wing. In addition, the party has failed to take a position on a number of the most important political issues confronting the American working class. In this whole period, under the leadership of the Cannon group, the party has shifted far to the right of the Declaration of Principles. Therefore, it is necessary for this vast amount of suppressed Marxian material to reach the party members.

Concretely, in regard to the Workers Party of the United States, the problem raised must be governed by the following:

(a) At no time shall the material presented conflict with the program of the party. It must present a Marxian position on the questions involved.

(b) "At the same time, we consider that while the press and the regular channels of the new party would be available to all members for the expression of their standpoint, it would

not be detrimental to the party if any group of members desired to publish a periodical, which, while supporting the party wholeheartedly, expressed in its columns a specific point of view not in conflict with the party program. We stand in principle in favor of the party ownership and control over all political periodicals published by any of its members. A truly revolutionary party with a thorough-going Marxian program can take no other position.

"In this case, however, when the complete program of present-day Marxism - the permanent revolution in all its aspects and implications - has not yet been accepted by the party although the latter's program is not in conflict with it, we feel that it is permissible for members to take the responsibility for a periodical whose central object is the propaganda of the fundamentals of this theory." (Excerpt from Third Convention Thesis of the CIA adopted unanimously by the National Committee).

(c) Contrary to the above premises, the party has allowed and is allowing comrades to publish periodicals and articles, etc., in non-party publications. This material referred to is in CONFLICT with the Declaration of Principles and some of the material is even anti-Marxian. Examples: Calverton, Budenz, Polemic Publishers, Solon, L. Lore. The first two are no longer members of the party, the latter two are.

Oehler and Stamm.

T O T H E P . C . S E P T . . 4 T H .

The basic right of a party member, or, in a factional situation, of a group of party members, consists in the opportunity to present political views before party members through the regular party channels (the Party press, internal bulletins, etc.). While the Cannon faction, monopolizing the Party press, has unlimited opportunity to use the Party press for propagandizing their opportunist policies, the Party's press is closed to the Left Wing. Although the Cannon caucus voted for a motion to open the Party press to the Left Wing, simultaneously with this decision it voted to reject articles submitted by Left Wing members, thus violating and nullifying the decision of the P.C.

Under such circumstances we refuse to accept any decision depriving use of the right to put our views through the various Party channels, or, lacking these, through whatever means we have at our disposal.

We reserve the right to enter a more elaborate statement in a few days.

Basky-Oehler-Stamm.

## SEQUEL TO GANGSTERISM IN THE W.P.

In the first number of the INTERNATIONAL NEWS, we gave a factual statement, in the form of a letter from Moyer Hirsh, of the physical assault upon the Left Wing in Philadelphia, by Goodman and Banks, Cannonites. The P.C., in special sessions, merely suspended Goodman for one year and Banks for three months. Goodman remains one of the most "active" Cannonites in Philadelphia and is known there still as a member of the W.P. His name appeared recently in the NEW MILITANT as a contributor of \$14.00, but the Cannonites do more than build him up, - they openly fraternize with him, as Cannon, Shachtman and Swabeck did in a public restaurant in New York after his suspension - and in Philadelphia, the Cannonites, including Goodman, tell Party sympathizers that Paul Hirsh, the victim of Goodman's bloody attack, is the gangster!!

The Left Wing made motions in the P.C. for the expulsion of Goodman and Banks and for a carefully worded statement to this effect in the NEW MILITANT. These motions were voted down by the Cannon majority.

In Philadelphia, Paul Hirsh and two other Left Wing members of the W.P., plus two non-party trade unionists, have been charged with inciting to riot in connection with the A.F.L. Fruit Clerks' strike. On this frame-up, which means 5 years in jail for each of these workers, the NEW MILITANT merely published a very small face-saving, factual statement on the back page of one issue!

Thus the Cannonites honor the Party in whose name they speak! Meanwhile, charges have been brought against Eifel and Beardslee of the Left Wing for their part in the Left Wing struggle against the liquidators and bureaucrats of the W.P.

NOTES

\* Send in your request for additional copies of this bulletin. Copies of the first bulletin, Vol. 1, No. 1, August, 1935, are also available as well as supplementary bulletins as follows:

Vol. 1, No. 3, 1935, the New Turn of the ICL.  
Crux: Nov. 1 letter on the French Turn---  
Crux: Letter on Organic Unity---  
Reply to Crux letter  
Letter from IS to Oehler  
Reply to IS

Vol. 1, No. 4, 1935, Special Documents on Spain.

Vol. 1, No. 5, 1935, The French Turn Reaches Chile.



trayals of the international proletariat should be considered completely bankrupt----as Rosa Luxemburg called it: "a moldering corpse".

(g) The International Secretariat sanctioned this criminal attitude of the French section, thereby acting as a shameless agent of reformism; its fate is sealed and it can only sink anonymously into the swamp of social democratic demagoguery.

(h) The revolutionary policy of preparing the proletarian vanguard must be continued nevertheless, if the problems so ignominiously betrayed by the 2nd and 3rd Internationals are to be solved.

(i) The Brazilian section of the International Communist League, by an overwhelming majority and after exhaustive discussion, declares itself against the position of the French majority, considering said line to be a basis for future betrayals.

(j) The French "minority" has shown us the way; they have set themselves the task of continuing the independent organization in the name of the League.

(k) Similarly, there exist in other countries, as in Germany, Belgium, Poland, Greece, the United States, the Argentine, etc., entire sections or at least opposition groups that reject the present policies of the International Secretariat.

In consideration of all these motives the IV National Conference decides:

1...To condemn the joining of the SFIO by the French section, as opportunistic, liquidatory and objectively counter-revolutionary, and

2...To break off relations with the International Secretariat and to seek direct connections with the sections and oppositions in other countries, with the perspective of calling an international conference, of which it shall be the task to establish organizational unity and to work out new directives for revolutionary policy.

The Central Committee of the  
International Communist League  
(Bolshevik-Leninists) of Brazil.

**RESOLUTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT OF THE  
ICL ON BRAZIL (ATTACHED TO MINUTES OF IS OF APRIL  
30TH, 1935.)**

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After studying the letter sent by comrades Ricardo, Apparacio, Dasilio and others to the provisional CC and the letter received from the latter (Rio de Janeiro, April 23rd), the IS resolves:

(1) The crisis which has gripped the IC of Brazil is in part itself a consequence of the inadequate international coordination of the Bolshevick-Leninist groups in Latin America, which dooms them to construction within their national framework; on the other hand, the cadres of the League as in other countries have shown themselves to be unprepared for their transition from propaganda activity to mass work. It is along these two roads that we must seek to overcome the crisis that has hit the Brazilian IC, as well as the other groups in Latin America; more international activity and better coordination of this activity among the different countries on the same continent; and an orientation to the masses.

(2) Studying in particular the questions dealt with in the letters of the Brazilian comrades, the I.S. is of the opinion that:

(a) the CCP in acting as indicated by its letter of 4/23 has proved by its stand its desire to motivate itself by the general interests of the BL organization in Brazil. Nevertheless, its task cannot be considered accomplished until the Brazilian organization will assume its place upon new organizational and political bases, which are able to guarantee its subsequent development.

(b) as regards the differences on the application of democratic centralism, we have here, above all within small groups -- is impermissible. But a discussion on national and other questions should be held on as wide a scale as possible. The leading bodies must be elected democratically. They are bound to act between the Convention on the bases of the decision arrived at, but on all important questions which demand a change from the position adopted by the Convention, it is obvious that only a Convention could pass on this. This does not mean to say that the leadership cannot and must not have a position itself on all the questions which rise before it.

(c) as regards the demonstrations on May 1st and October 7th, 1934, it is necessary to reject entirely the tendency to consider as "adventurism" real actions on the part of the masses. One must not fall into passivity on the pretext of fighting adventurism. Nevertheless, the IS rejects the labeling of the other tendency as "a right tendency". Labels are of no great aid and they are particularly harmful to the life of small groupings. It is necessary to correct and fight against any erroneous tendency by opposing to its correct solutions of the different problems.

(d) the creation of a trade union organization similar to that of the Knights of Labor or of the Holland N.A.S. is to be condemned. In the first place, the Knights of Labor have re-entered their central reformist trade union; as regards the N.A.S., the situation is quite different. We have fought

RESOLUTION OF I.S. ON BRAZIL - 2-

against the Lozovsky, Thalemann tendency on establishing our own trade unions, and we cannot apply this method to Brazil. Our comrades must be there where the masses are and they must not isolate themselves from them through the creation of new trade unions. Within the ranks of the existing trade unions, it is naturally necessary to establish an independent fraction.

(e) as regards the united front, it is necessary to take into account the Spanish, the Saar and the French experiences. United front between the tops is not a genuine united front. It is necessary to have agreement from organization to organization in order to create REPRESENTATIVE MASS ORGANS ON DEMOCRATIC PROPORTIONAL BASIS. (Example: Committees for anti-Fascist struggle, elected by the workers, etc.).

(f) methods to be pursued in elections. (Blocs in this sphere are the worst form on the united front. Given our own weakness, such blocs are not to be recommended).

(g) it is necessary to secure the regular publication of a PERIODICAL.

(h) it is necessary to elaborate a joint platform for work on a national scale (analysis of the situation, perspectives, practical tasks).

(i) it is necessary to orientate towards a new national conference on the basis of the widest discussion possible.

(j) To prepare this conference in complete agreement with the I.S.

(k) To suspend all organizational measures.

It is the opinion of the I.S. that the CL of Brazil will by no means of its own forces and with the aid of the international organization surmount its internal crisis and face the future.

## TWO RESOLUTIONS

Attached are two resolutions: one by the 4th National Conference of the Brazilian section of the ICL; and the other by the International Secretariat of the ICL.

The first was adopted on March 31st, 1935, and the latter is attached to the minutes of the IS for April 30th, 1935. Both have come to hand only recently.

Both documents are extraordinarily interesting and of great importance. Because they are a part of the historic controversy raging around the new orientation of the ICL, in which we are playing a certain part, we want to make our position on them clear. Perhaps this way we can at the same time answer in advance some of the charges which will be made against us in this connection, if the past is any guide to the future.

We greet with joy the firm opposition of the Brazilian comrades against the "French turn". Together with the Argentine comrades and ourselves, they take a Marxist position on the question of the liquidation of the French Communist League and its transformation into a faction of the SFIO. They oppose the "turn" on clear and entirely correct principled grounds. Point "B" in the list of "motives" is almost perfect. It is necessary to add what follows by implication, but which, in view of the mountains of distortions which have been heaped on the position of the opponents to the new orientation, should be made as definite, explicit and full as possible, that the infiltration should have as its objective the crystallization of a revolutionary current, its break with the SFIO and its fusion with the independent Bolshevik-Leninists to form an independent revolutionary party.

What is puzzling in the resolution is that, despite its date, March 31st, which follows the Crux letter of November 1st, the split in Belgium, etc. and despite its own statement that the entry in France has caused splits in other sections, it speaks of the new orientation as something which has as yet to unfold in the future (see "E"). Moreover, the language is not clear. The resolution says the entry in France "must be considered as the beginning of a general process of revision and liquidation that has been going on ever since -". This doesn't make sense. The Brazilian comrades should clarify their points.

We disagree with the resolution on two scores. The first is its failure to take a position on the political and theoretical motivations for the new orientation. This is now becoming the most important aspect of the problem. The organizational phases are important too, but secondary as the experience in the United States in the Workers' Party and in the Cuban party have shown, and as will soon be seen in France, if the Bolshevik-Leninists are expelled or withdrawn from the SFIO. On this point, too, the Brazilian comrades ought to clarify their position. Their resolution indicates the character of the position they will take. Let us hope they will do it soon. (See our documents dealing with this aspect).

We think the Brazilian comrades make an error when they characterize the IS as a shameless agent of reformism, say that its fate is sealed, and the entry in France was objectively counter-revolutionary. All of this reckons without

Trotsky. There is implied, in this position, that Trotsky cannot be forced by a political fight, and the ruinous results of his course, to change his position. We think it can be done. We agree that others have a right to think it cannot be done. But they have no right to motivate a political course on an a priori assumption. Let them try. If the attempt itself demonstrates its futility, it will be in order to draw the appropriate conclusions, which will be the more convincing by the fact that they flow from experience. (That is the worst case - but as we said, we think it can be done. At least we are trying, and we are encouraged by the position of the Brazilian comrades themselves to persevere). We disagree with the decision to break relations with the IS. It is not so much the organizational break to which we object, because the IS would have made it, it is the political idea which lies behind it. The political premise for that decision is that the ICL is no longer a revolutionary force. It is true that if the new orientation is not defeated, it will transform the ICL into a force for opportunism. Tactically, it is to our advantage to fight for our position inside of the ICL as long as possible. If nothing else, it still has Trotsky. And that is not a small consideration. We think that there is a possibility of forcing the ICL to give up this orientation. If our struggle and life itself will teach us otherwise, it will then be in order to draw the conclusion which our Brazilian comrades anticipate.

The resolution of the IS must be in answer to the resolution of the Brazilian conference. (The minutes to which it is attached read "Brazil". The groups in Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro have passed through a crisis following our "French turn" - see the IS resolution.) The resolution deals with a number of points. But it does not take up the most important - the position of the Brazilian comrades and their decision to break with the IS. It says, apropos of everything and nothing, that it is necessary to orientate toward a new national conference. Why? For what purpose? It does not say.

Martin, Dubois, Nicole and Clart, who were present, voted for this resolution and thereby signed a confession of utter bankruptcy.

For The Left Wing