

Apologia

The publishers regret the condition of the following number (Volume 2/#2). After unsuccessfully attempting to locate a perfect copy in every major collection in the United States, we finally settled for the fragments reprinted on the following eight pages, in favor of not reprinting the issue at all.

Although some text is missing, the context of the various articles is for the most part clear. If any library has a perfect copy of this number, we would appreciate their bringing it to our attention so that it can be reproduced and sent as a replacement to those libraries who have purchased this imperfect copy.

—The Publishers

FROM OUR VIEWPOINT

Old Guard Defies Decision of N.E.C.

THE New York old guard came to the last N. E. C. meeting with the request that the N. E. C. cancel the debate between Norman Thomas and Earl Browder arranged by the Socialist Call. The N. E. C. refused.

Every thinking Socialist understands the necessity of defending the viewpoint of the Socialist party against all other parties. Under no circumstances can we afford to refuse to debate any party with a substantial following. The Old Guard, composed of people who are unable to think at all when it comes to the question of communism, plays into the hands of the communists by refusing to defend its point of view.

Most important of all, however, is the fact that the debate is held under the auspices of the Socialist Call. The old guard, determined to put the Call out of existence, seized upon the debate as a pretext to expel or suspend leading elements of the Militants.

Charges have been preferred against Norman Thomas, Jack Altman, Max Delson and other Militants for promoting the debate. Since the N. E. C. approved of the debate these charges constitute a violation of discipline by the New York old guard.

It is obvious that the New York right wing is determined to suspend or expel leading Militants and thus precipitate a split in the party. The debate will go on regardless of the action of the old guard. What will the old guard do?

The left-wing throughout the country must be prepared to meet the situation. It must back up any Militant suspended or expelled with all the forces at its disposal. The right wing moves to split, the left wing must move to unify the party.

ATONEMENT BY THE N.E.C.

IT IS in the nature of the present National Executive Committee of our party not to be able to act decisively and consistently for a long period of time. There is no majority representing any definite tendency and consequently the actions of our N.E.C. have a contradictory character just as the resolutions of the N.E.C. on almost all important matters are full of contradictions aiming, as they invariably do, to please every tendency in the party.

A legitimate and praiseworthy desire to achieve harmony within the party leads the N.E.C. to favor the right wing at one time and the left at another time. This middle of the road path does not and cannot solve any problems and simply means that the party not only cannot grow but must actually lose members and influence. And as a matter of fact the party has lost over 8000 members within the last two years. A weak and indecisive N.E.C. is unable to lead the party in any direction.

Hope surged high in the breasts of many influential party members after the "peace pact" between the N.E.C. and the old guard. Now we could work and grow. Those of the left wing openly stated that no problems were solved by the agreement consequently the party could not proceed to function, especially since the old guard had come out with all it wanted from the agreement, were looked upon as born disrupters but have confirmed the prognosis of the revolutionary Marxists of the optimistic utopians.

It is stated here that in any struggle between two tendencies in the Socialist party there can be peace only by adhering to two propositions: 1) that the minority does not obstruct the decisions and actions of the majority;

old guard utilized every unfair means to prevent the minority of New York to present its viewpoint and achieve power in a normal manner the division between the two groups could not be reconciled on the basis of a minority obeying discipline. There can be no discipline if the minority is not permitted full freedom.

It is the desire of the old guard of New York to crush the growth of revolutionary ideas and it does not hesitate to use any means to achieve that aim. Consequently there can be no peace so long as these right-wing tactics continue. The attempt of the N.E.C. to achieve peace was doomed to failure.

The majority of the N.E.C. realized that it had made a mistake by giving in to the old guard at the New York session. No peace had been consummated in New York and the party was not growing as predicted. The Old guard was using the pact to exterminate the ideas of revolutionary socialism. If the majority of the N.E.C. had to be convinced of the fact that the growth of the party depends not upon the old guard but upon the virile left wing forces the trend of events subsequent to the pact should have convinced it.

With the failure to achieve peace in New York and the obvious failure of the party to go forward as a background, the N.E.C. met in Chicago and the general tendency of the meeting was an attempt to undo the damage wrought at the New York meeting of the N.E.C. A turn towards the left wing was made but again in such an indecisive manner that it cannot possibly satisfy either the right or the left.

Actually nothing that was done by the N. E. C. can be characterized as left wing. That could not be expected from the very nature of the composition of the majority of the N.E.C. The best that can be said is that the N.E.C. did not do what the old guard wanted it to do. It did not prohibit the Thomas-Browder debate; it did not reelect James Oneal as delegate to the International; it did not place the New York Yipsels under the domination of the old guard; it did not pass a resolution of war favoring sanctions. This and this only was the extent of the concession to the left wing.

Obviously the left wing prefers the N.E.C. to do what it did at its last meeting to what it accomplished at the New York meeting. But it would be a colossal act of self-delusion to act on the assumption that from now on the N.E.C. has turned to the left. The left wing of the party, now being hammered into a unified group by the Boundbrook conference and the mid-west conference, should and does realize clearly that without an N.E.C., the majority of the members of which are revolutionary socialists, the party cannot grow.

But to achieve an N.E.C. with a majority of revolutionary socialists it is first of all necessary to educate the membership so that a majority of the party will be willing to struggle and support revolutionary policies. To educate and guide such a majority is the task of the left wing.

PROGRESSIVES AND THE A. F. OF L. CONVENTION

THE TOP leadership of the bureaucratic machine has been in control of the American Federation of Labor so long and so completely that it was taken for granted by everyone that a convention of the A. F. of L. would simply rubber-stamp everything that the Executive Council proposed. A real struggle on some fundamental principle was almost inconceivable and the most that one could expect in the way of opposition was some lone wolf crying in the wilderness.

As a consequence the really bitter struggle that took place at the last convention held at Atlantic City and the shaking which the controlling element of the Federation machine was subjected to electrified the whole movement.

is a grave danger lest, in the anxiety of some pro-
trade-unionists to bring about a change of leadership
of the type of John L. Lewis and Sidney
Hillman would be pushed forward as the great "white hopes" of
the militant elements of the trade union movement.

It would be absurd to deny that the last convention showed a
significant trend forward. The mere fact that an open struggle
occurred on the floor of the convention between two elements in
the leadership of the trade unions is in itself a progressive factor.
A struggle amongst conservative leaders always affords the pro-
gressives a better opportunity to spread their ideas. To disregard
the struggle of Lewis against Hutcheson and Frey on behalf of
industrial unionism and to consider it simply as a struggle be-
tween two factions of the machine for power is to disregard the
tremendous forces at work within the labor movement at the
present time—forces which, in the last analysis, explain the bit-
terness of the fight.

The prolonged depression, the steady displacement of skilled
by unskilled labor by virtue of the development of new machinery,
the spasmodic improvement in economy, the National Recovery
Act—all these factors have brought into the unions thousands
and tens of thousands of new, and mainly unskilled, working class
elements. It was the policy of the dominant leadership of the
A. F. of L. in relying upon the government rather than upon
the strength of labor which largely retarded the growth of the
unions. It is because of the short-sighted and reactionary craft
union leadership that the workers in the mass production in-
dustries are at the present moment almost wholly unorganized.

The leaders of those international unions that are based upon
great numbers of unskilled workers recognize the danger facing
them if the workers in such basic industries as steel, rubber and
automobiles are left unorganized. They correctly see in the
policies of the dominant elements of the Federation a danger to
their own positions and they are determined to make a serious
attempt to destroy the influence of Woll, Hutcheson, Frey and
the others.

In so far as Lewis and his supporters are struggling against
an antiquated craft unionism which is one of the main factors
responsible for the failure to organize the basic sections of the
American workers, the progressive trade unionists must not and
cannot refuse to throw their influence on the side of Lewis.
Militant trade-unionists would place themselves in a ridiculous
position if they were to refuse to support a resolution in favor of
industrial unionism simply because Lewis was the one who in-
troduced and defended it.

But to look to Lewis or Hillman to lead the American trade
union movement into progressive channels is to fool oneself and
to fool everyone else. The past record of an individual is not
to be held against him provided he changes his tactics and openly
admits his mistakes. The role which Lewis has played in the
labor movement in general and in the United Mine Workers in
particular should make us hesitate to look upon him as a leader
of the progressives even if he would proclaim to the world that
he has now different ideas about running a union. And since
there is no indication that he has changed his ideas and tactics
it would constitute a betrayal of the interests of the American
workers to picture Lewis as the one who will lead the American
trade union movement into the path of the class struggle.

Concretely what should be the task of a group of progressive
unionists in the United Mine Workers? Should they cease to
struggle against Lewis for his suppression of the democratic
rights of the miners in their union? Should a progressive group
keep quiet about his class collaboration policy? Such a group
would be looked upon with contempt by every class conscious
miner who, out of bitter experience, knows the type of man
Lewis really is.

The secret of correct tactics in the struggle for progressive
unionism is the organization of true progressives on a definite
program and of the independent activity of the progressives with
reference to every problem and every leader. To support a trade
union leader at one time on a certain policy or to make a block
vote for him is perfectly correct even though that leader will have to
fight on different occasions. But to make a permanent al-
liance with him is essentially far from being

are a heavy job. One should not forget
as Green and Woll. One should not forget
unions they are capable of using gangsters and
every form of progressive opposition. If one
ties one is not in a position to play the role
socialists should play in the trade union movement.

Objectively, to-day Lewis is playing a progressive
American Federation of Labor, and therefore the inter-
progressivism, as well as of the working class as a whole, re-
quire that we co-operate with Lewis, as well as with other forces
who support a progressive program. But it would be false
strategy to fuse with Lewis, to forget the differences which
still exist, to fail to criticize when he hesitates or vacillates, to
refuse to put forward correct demands out of fear that he might
not accept them. Neither capitulation to Green nor to Lewis, but
constant, and fearless progressive activity will build the kind of
labor movement we want.

SOCIALISTS IN THE TEACHERS' UNION

AT TIMES it seems possible to keep the factional struggle
within the party from interfering with the work of the
party members in trade unions and other mass organizations.
It would appear that within the party we can assail one another
on some questions involving the principles of socialism and work
harmoniously in organizations outside of the party. The situa-
tion in the Teachers' union and in several other unions shows con-
clusively that when a deep gulf in principle separates one group
of socialists from another it is utopian to expect to be able to
keep the conflict between the two groups away from the non-party
organizations.

A controversy involving fundamental principles must sooner
or later be transferred to tactics involving every day activities.
The conception of socialism which the right wing has, necessarily
involves a close working agreement with the bureaucrats of the
labor movement. The right wing wants to and does adapt itself
to the conservative wishes of a conservative labor bureaucracy.
It has no desire to organize the working masses for any militant
struggles for better conditions regardless of the wishes of the
top leadership of the American Federation of Labor. In any
struggle of any militant group against the labor bureaucrats
the right wing of the party will inevitably be found on the side
of the bureaucrats.

Needless to say the left wing of the Socialist party must use
different tactics within the trade unions. Upholding the principles
of revolutionary socialism, left wingers within the unions cannot
and must not be servants of the labor bureaucracy. Their task
is to organize the militant and progressive forces of the unions
and wage a struggle for militant unionism which must inevitably
bring them into conflict with the top leaders. To act in any
other manner would be to cease being revolutionary socialists.

James Oneal and those who agree with his theories of social-
ism contend that the Socialist party must not interfere in the
internal affairs of the trade unions. But their theory of no
interference is an utter sham. What they mean is that no so-
cialists should conduct a struggle against the labor bureaucrats.
The right wing always interferes but on the side of the con-
servative leaders.

It is the duty of members of the Socialist party working in
the same union to organize themselves and, together with all
progressive and militant forces, strive to make of the union
progressive, democratic organization. Of course the bureaucrats
will howl that the Socialists are interfering in the internal aff-
airs of the union but let them howl. We are not and should not
be interested in what they say but in what the militant rank
file thinks and in the welfare of the union.

Only revolutionary Socialists will fight for the interests
of workers and their organizations. Consequently they are
prepared to have right wing Socialists make an alliance
with labor bureaucrats against them. So be it! We must
at no moment hesitate to struggle in the unions because
wing members of the Socialist party sympathize with
the conservative union bureaucracy.
The members of the Socialist party fighting against

in New York W. ...ing in its opposition to dual union tactics. Within the last few months, several incidents have occurred that have lined it up against certain A. F. of L. locals. Not only has it changed a policy, (that is no crime), but it has done so in order to back up members of the party who have either deliberately split a union, (Teacher's Union), or have been accused of racketeering and forced out by the A. F. of L. (Nemser).

We have no desire to indict Nemser in these pages. Whether or not he is guilty of the charges preferred against him is no longer the main issue. What is important is the position adopted by the Old Guard and the New Leader as events unravelled.

Briefly, the history of the affair is as follows: Nemser, who was once before in difficulty because of dual union tactics in the Amalgamated, was counsel for, and manager of, local 107 and 717 of the Retail Clothing Salesmen's Union. Early in the summer the public press printed a series of articles exposing a suspicious relationship between Nemser and one Silverman of a bosses' association. Both were accused for racketeering in collusion on the workers in the industry, and on the owners of retail stores. The situation became so bad that William Collins, local representative of the A. F. of L. asked for the union books so that he might investigate the matter. When the officials of the union refused to turn over the books to him unless they were first guaranteed immunity, the charters of the locals were revoked. In the meanwhile the international Association disclosed that it had not received dues in accordance with the alleged membership of the union.

The locals were then reorganized and a new charter issued. Through all this the Old Guard supported Nemser wholeheartedly. Instead of using its influence with important leaders of the trade unions in N. Y., members of the S. P., to the end that a labor committee should be appointed to investigate the accusations, it preferred charges against Eddie Levenson, a militant, who had exposed the set-up.

Then came one of the most amazing chapters in the S. P. trade union history. In the course of its organization work, the newly chartered local, 1006, struck one of the largest stores in the city. Nemser's remnant of the outlawed "union" supplied the scabs. While the legitimate pickets paraded in front of the premises they were rivalled by members of the Young Socialist Alliance (Local New York's official "youth movement") who carried signs alleging that there was no strike in the store. Both groups then resorted to street meetings.

In pursuance of Local N. Y.'s professed policy of neutrality (sic) in the situation August Claessens, N. Y. Labor Secretary, spoke from the platform of the outlawed "union." Word of this spread like wildfire. A wave of disgust spread over the city. Murray Baron, a member of the National Labor Committee was called upon by the A.F. of L. union, and spoke in the capacity of a trade unionist, in the hope that the S. P. would not be com-

Subsequently the strike was settled and an amalgamated on condition that Nemser step out of the picture. pressure from the legitimate elements Nemser was forced out. Why did the right wing in New York buck a legitimate A. F. of L. union and support a shady dual union? For factional reasons? Nemser, a member of the New York Central Committee votes with the right wing on every issue. Possibly for other reasons?

Factionalism once more precipitated the Old Guard into an impossible position in the Teachers' Union. Again we need not concern ourselves with the merits of the contending sides within the union. If, as the Linville-Lefkowitz group asserts the Communists in the N. Y. local of the American Federation of Teachers were obstructive and undisciplined, then they should have been dealt with in accordance with the usual democratic processes provided for in the constitution and by-laws of the union. It was entirely indefensible to demand that a substantial part of the local, well over one-third of the membership, be ousted because it disagreed with the leadership. Defeated in its attempt at the convention to split the local by official action, and to pleas advanced by the left socialists and other progressive groups within the union, to remain and fight its battle, Linville-Lefkowitz group, with the backing of the Old Guard leadership, resigned. They then organized a dual union.

Their hope, of course, was to receive the support of the Central Trades of New York and of the A. F. of L. convention. This hope proved abortive, when Mulholland, vice-president of the N. Y. Central Trades, sharply criticized the right wing position of support for splitting tactics. The union today is as strong as it was before the defections. The attitude of the splitters was such as to galvanize the sentiment of people who had hitherto been only passive supporters of the union, resulting in a large number of new applications for admission. Although not in agreement with the Communists in the Teachers' Union, left wing Socialists fought well against disruption and split.

The objectives of the Old Guard stand out clearly. It determined to discredit the left wing socialists in the union led by Maynard Krueger. It hoped to curry favor with the top leadership of the A. F. of L. on the spurious "communist" issue. Recent articles in the Jewish Daily Forward and the New Leader confirmed the suspicion that the Old Guard in New York do not intend to support the progressive forces in the labor movement, but instead, will play its cards with the Green-Woll group. It is impossible to find any guiding principle for the Old Guard labor position, unless it be that it will oppose anyone whom members of the left wing can work with; or else that it will support the present leadership in the unions regardless of what it may stand for.

The policy of the left wing in the union: FOR PROGRESSIVISM WHETHER IT BE WITH OR AGAINST THE UNION LEADERS.

Socialists and Attack of Italy Upon Ethiopia

By Albert Goldman

IN THE last issue of the Appeal there was an editorial dealing with a proclamation of the National Executive Committee calling for the defense of Ethiopia. That proclamation was issued prior to the October meeting of the NEC. At that meeting the NEC adopted a resolution on war which is certainly a vast improvement over the proclamation. Nevertheless it is not a resolution which revolutionary socialists can support wholeheartedly. The proclamation on the war question adopted by the NEC of the Young People's Socialist League is one which we can support as against the resolution of the party NEC. This does not mean that the YPSL proclamation is without errors but in essence it states the revolutionary socialist position on the Italian-Ethiopian conflict and is much clearer and superior to the resolution of the party NEC.

actual conflict and the position that we must take towards conflict and not simply a question of our attitude to a war in the future. An agreement can be arrived at with much difficulty on a resolution dealing with a abstract but differences become very sharp with the necessity of applying general principle to a situation.

Pacifism, Dominant Note of Party

The party resolution is a lengthy or sarily bad. It is bad in this case because primarily of a desire to please every general and against the Italian-Ethiopian contains paragraphs and sentences which are absolutely correct and, on the other hand, pressed which every revolutionary socialist would reject. The resolution is against the vague reference to the "policy of the League of Nations." But they

The attack of Italy upon Ethiopia brought the problem of the

down from an abstract theoretical question of principle to a question of action.

at it cannot be said to express any one

dous profits wh... exploitation
to keep its hold upon the working masses of the countries

It needs colonies to get rid of its surplus products and to find investments for its accumulated capital. Without colonies to exploit capitalism would be faced with many more and greater difficulties to continue its existence.

The revolutionary interests of the proletariat of the imperialist countries necessitate that the working class come to the aid of all colonial people struggling against imperialism. Every defeat of the imperialists by a colonial people is a victory for the working class. The proletariat therefore must champion the interests of the colonial and semi-colonial peoples not simply out of a vague sympathy but out of consideration of its own class interests. A revolutionary socialist party, representing the interests of the working class, cannot afford to be indifferent to the fate of any colonial people. Every struggle in Asia and Africa against the imperialist robbers must get the whole-hearted support of the Socialist party, especially of the party of that country against which the colonial people is struggling.

In the struggle of Ethiopia against Italy we must raise the slogan of defending the independence of Ethiopia. Otherwise, we shall be taking the side of the imperialists against the colonial and semi-colonial peoples.

Both the party and Yipsel resolutions are defective in that they fail to raise that slogan clearly and without equivocation. In the party resolution a vague sympathy for the Ethiopians is expressed without even hinting at the necessity of definitely raising the slogan of defending Ethiopia. The Yipsel proclamation takes a very peculiar attitude to the question of defending Ethiopian independence. In a sublime aloofness it declares that "socialists cannot limit their judgment to a weighing of the wrongs of Italy as against the rights of Ethiopia." In their legitimate desire to emphasize the imperialist rivalries between Great Britain and Italy and the possibilities of an imperialist war arising out of the attack of Italy upon Ethiopia, the Yipsels are willing to forget that at the present moment the actual struggle is against Italian imperialism. What a comfort it must be to the Ethiopian people to know that we are analyzing all the possibilities of an imperialist war and meanwhile preparing only for those possibilities. Nor can it gladden the hearts of the Ethiopians laying down their lives fighting the Italian invasion to know that the Yipsels are in favor of all colonial peoples.

It is a sign of a surrender to opportunism to clothe oneself in high sounding generalities and disregard the necessity of taking definite stand on a concrete problem.

The Yipsel proclamation is absolutely correct in pointing out that Ethiopia must also be defended against British imperialism and that Great Britain is not at all interested in the independence of Ethiopia for any altruistic reasons but that does not relieve us of the responsibility of taking a definite position in favor of Ethiopia as against Italy and of saying so clearly.

Victory of Ethiopia is Defeat Also of Great Britain

But if Ethiopia wins Great Britain wins, argue some comrades. That is taking a short-sighted view of the struggle. Should Ethiopia win, repercussion would undoubtedly occur all over Africa and Asia. The colonial slaves of all imperialist countries would be encouraged to raise the standard of revolt. That is one of the reasons why Great Britain is so anxious to settle the matter without a struggle. Great Britain does not want to see Italy victorious but neither does it want to see the Ethiopians the victors. It fears the effects of such a victory amongst the colonial slaves everywhere. To help the Ethiopians come out victorious in the struggle against Italy is, in the last analysis, to help defeat not only Italy but also Great Britain.

No argument is necessary to support the proposition that should an imperialist war break out in Europe as a result of the Ethiopian conflict the question of the independence of Ethiopia is relegated to the background and the main emphasis must be placed upon the struggle of the working class against their own governments. That does not mean we cease to support Ethiopian independence but that we more clearly ever with the proposition that or

While it is true that expressions can be found to justify claim that the party resolution caters to every tendency, it is doubtfully correct to state that the prevailing note of the resolution is a pacifist one. It appeals to all people and to all ears of peace. Probably the most characteristic sentence in the whole resolution is the last one in the first paragraph. Nothing less than the maximum effort of the American people, based on the most realistic policies, can prevent their country from being drawn in." One can hardly imagine a more utopian and well-meaning attitude than that reflected by that sentence.

To appeal to the deep desire for peace which exists in all sections of the population in order to attract a great number to the banner of the Socialist party is a temptation which only those comrades who are grounded in revolutionary Marxism can withstand. To give expression to beautiful sentiments for international peace and good will is indeed simple but exceedingly dangerous. It throws the struggle against war off from the rails of the class struggle and in effect lends assistance to the imperialists. No further proof should be necessary than the fact that the eleven million pacifist votes recently obtained in England on behalf of the League of Nations, actually serves to mobilize the masses behind the British imperialists in their present struggle against Italian imperialism. How easy it is for a capitalist government to convince peace-loving people that they must go to war in order to fight for peace.

In contradistinction to the party resolution the Yipsel proclamation breathes the spirit of the class struggle and emphasizes the necessity of organizing the workers to wage such a struggle. The unequivocal statement in the Yipsel proclamation that the chief enemy of the people is at home and that the working class must not, for any reason, declare a truce with the capitalist class, during war or peace, makes of the proclamation, in spite of its defects, a revolutionary one.

Defense of Ethiopia

Three major problems are involved in any discussion on the question of the attitude of the Socialist party to the Italian attack on Ethiopia. They are: 1) the question of defending the independence of Ethiopia; 2) the question of sanctions by the imperialist governments; 3) the question of fighting for neutral-legislation. We shall leave out the question of supporting democratic capitalist states in a war against a fascist state because it is a more general and also a more indirect question as far as the problem of the Italian attack is concerned and because it requires more extensive treatment.

It is indeed surprising to what an extent comrades with revolutionary tendencies will object to the idea of defending Ethiopia against Italian imperialism. What has thrown them off the track is the fact that Great Britain, in order to protect its imperialist interests, has assumed the role of the protector of Ethiopia. But why should we forget Ethiopia entirely just because England has interests contrary to the interests of Italian imperialism? It is not at all excluded that England and Italy might come to some agreement giving part of Ethiopian territory to the latter and that Ethiopia would have to depend upon the strength exclusively in the struggle against Italy. In no case there would be no question of Great Britain versus Italy or duty to come to the defense of Ethiopia would be in daylight except to some doctrinaire who would say anything until the day of the proletarian revolution. The demands of England demand that it struggle against the interests of the revolutionary proletariat defend the defense of Ethiopia; from different and hostile elements are fighting for what purpose. It would be the most absurd thing to assume an indifferent attitude simply because the imperialist interests of Great Britain and Ethiopia be kept free from Italian

exploiting masses in the imperialist colonial and semi-colonial people of the world simply of being exploited by the imperialist. A lead of sympathy between

We are for the independence of Ethiopia against Italy but we are just as much against the capitalist government, who voted for sanctions. Just as in the matter of neutrality legislation, so in the case of defending the independence of Ethiopia, the Socialist party must urge the working class to act independently of the capitalist government. There is this difference. Whereas we do not oppose neutrality legislation, we must actively and fiercely oppose sanctions. We must work for a boycott against Italy, a boycott so effective that it will defeat Italian imperialism. But we must also struggle against being involved in any war on behalf of "our" imperialist government. We must clearly state that no matter what the ostensible reason is, the real reason for any imperialist government in declaring war is to protect the interests of the capitalist class and under no circumstances can we support such a war.

Based on our conception of the necessity of supporting the struggle of Ethiopian independence against Italian imperialism we reject the idea of boycotting both Italy and Ethiopia. Nor can revolutionary socialists accept the absurd idea of permitting food to be shipped for the Italian civil population. That is living in the realm of humanitarian clouds and not in the world of reality. Perhaps our NEC will insist upon sending a committee over to Mussolini for the purpose of supervising the distribution of the food. Perhaps our kind-hearted NEC members will insist that the food be sent to the victims of Mussolini's terror. Perhaps our charitable NEC will insist on labelling the packages "For babies only."

The argument for that brilliant idea seems to be a double-

partly is not against the... the...
How that follows is a problem in logic which the NEC see fit to solve. If, on the other hand, Mussolini will be stupid as to give the food to the army and the fascists, then the workers will rise in revolt against such perfidious conduct. That this argument will receive the prize both for soft-heartedness and soft-headedness is a fairly safe conclusion.

We want Mussolini defeated and we want the Italian workers to revolt against him and that is what the Italian revolutionists also want. The Italian revolutionists would undoubtedly grind their teeth with rage if they should see food being sent at the request of socialists which food is helping Mussolini stave off defeat. Every socialist will agree that war is a horrible thing but a revolutionary socialist will insist that we have to struggle against it with all the forces at our command and not with humanitarian gestures. The only real and consistent humanitarians are revolutionary Marxists.

The task of a revolutionary socialist is clear: For the defense of Ethiopia against Italian imperialism by independent working class action; against sanctions by any capitalist government; no support of neutrality legislation but a real struggle against the capitalist government to prevent its declaring war; struggle for the proletarian revolution if war is declared in spite of all our efforts.

NOTE: At the last minute we were told that a combination of right wing and centrist elements succeeded in amending the Nipsel resolution on war. We do not know what the amendments consist of but we hope that the Nipsel membership will reject any resolution on war which is not based on the principles outlined in above article.

A. G.

DEEPER AND DEEPER IN THE SWAMP

By Herbert Zam

WITH express-train speed the war policies of the Communist International are unfolding themselves, each unfoldment disclosing more clearly the amazing depths of chauvinism in which the Comintern is now wallowing. After the decision of the Seventh Congress against the mechanical transference of policies from one country to another, one might expect at least an apparent orientation to the conditions in each specific country. Instead, we find the opposite: All the Communist parties, in all the capitalist countries are orientating less to conditions in their own countries, and more and more exclusively are being guided entirely by the policies of the Soviet Union. We pick up Browder's report on the Seventh Congress, for instance, (Daily Worker, Oct. 5, 1935) and find:

"Is it not clear, therefore, that every effort to fight for peace, against fascism, requires in every country that we should take as our basis and starting point the peace policy of the Soviet Union? Is it not clear that every one who rejects or casts doubt upon that peace policy is helping the fascists and war makers?"

Lest we might conclude that this is due to Browder's failure to understand the decision of the Seventh Congress, we turn to another authority, Harry Pollitt, the leader of the British C. P. (Labor Monthly, Oct. 1935) and find almost the same statement:

"...and there is not an honest man or woman in this country who professes to be Socialist who can say to us that at any price and at any cost they are not prepared to defend the Soviet Union, because it is the text of our Socialist faith."

We will not argue here as to what "at any cost" might or might not mean. What we are concerned with is the outlook which is here

of the entire class struggle in the entire world to these comrades: the Soviet Union. It is to be carried through along lines of conditions in each country, but in line of the Soviet Union itself. That is, to remain at peace with the ruling class, which takes specific form in these countries, also becomes the policies of the Communist Party. In its last analysis this means a demand that the Communist Parties (and whatever we call them) and the cap-

But the policies here enunciated go beyond that. Willingness to defend the Soviet Union, declares Pollitt "is the text of our Socialist faith." Nothing else? We always thought that the ultimate test of Socialist faith is in our attitude toward our own ruling class. Even a "rotten liberal" can favor the defense of the Soviet Union. Aren't there thousands who are ready to stand for the defense of Ethiopia who are not Socialists or Communists? How many more thousands are ready to stand for the defense of the Soviet Union, a workers' country, who are not themselves Socialists or Communists!

That this is not just a bad formulation we see by following the footsteps of Pollitt. In discussing the prospects of economic recovery, he makes the following analysis:

"Whilst at the moment there are certain forces within capitalism which are making for capitalism getting out of the worst phase of the economic crisis, the ordinary forces within capitalism that lead to periodical trade depression are going to meet the forces that are making for recovery much sooner than is realized. Then there will be a renewed struggle for the world market and renewed attacks on the working class in every capitalist country..."

And what should the working class do, one logically asks? Fight back? Make a revolution? Take over power?

"When the situation arises again," continues Pollitt, "then the defense of the Soviet Union will become the chief paramount consideration of every working man and woman in the capitalist countries..."

Comment is really superfluous. The working class, according to this, has nothing to fight for on its own behalf. Even in the midst of a crisis, of collapsing capitalism, it has only one duty: "Defend the Soviet Union!"

All we can say to them is: God save the working class from such advice and God save the Soviet Union from such defense!

II.

Another phase of Comintern war policy which is becoming clearer is the question of the defense of small nations. The Seventh Congress declared in favor of the defense of small nations (in addition to the defense of small nations) against "fascist" war of "democratic" against "fascist" "small nations"? Again we are in the answer: infinitely determined at the

some reason or other those who oppose the slogan of de-
termining the independence of Ethiopia during the World War.
on the question of Belgium and Serbia during the World War.
To use the name of a great revolutionist who, more than anyone
else, insisted upon supporting the struggle of colonial peoples
against imperialist bandits, in order to avoid the elementary
duty of every socialist to support the struggle of the Ethiopians,
is to evidence an indescribable confusion. It was not against
the idea of the self-determination of Belgium and Serbia that
Lenin fought but against the policy of the socialists in supporting
their own governments on the pretext of fighting for the in-
dependence of the small countries.

And it would be a mistake to compare Belgium and Serbia
with Ethiopia. The former countries had a proletariat and
socialist parties; Ethiopia has not yet graduated from the feudal
system. Capitalism has practically left it untouched. Serbia
and Belgium are so interconnected with the European imperialist
powers that it is almost impossible to make any valid separation.
That is not the case with Ethiopia, the last semi-independent
country of the African continent which is totally under the
domination of European imperialist countries including Belgium.
Lenin suggests that if Belgium or Serbia had been attacked
by a big power and no other factor were involved the socialists
would look with sympathy upon the efforts of the bourgeoisie of
the smaller countries to guard their national independence. But
he simply suggests it as an abstraction and hardly considered it
as a possible reality. That Lenin, were he alive to-day, would
support the struggle for Ethiopian independence and at the
same time fight bitterly against the Communist and Labor and
Socialist Internationals for advocating sanctions by the im-
perialist governments is a conclusion which we are certainly
justified in making from his writings and actions.

But is not Haile Selassie the feudal lord and exploiter of the
Ethiopian people? And are we not, in defending Ethiopia,
actually defending the interests of one exploiter as against an-
other? To consider the matter from this angle means to lose all
sense of proportion and to stray far from the realm of Marxism.
To a revolutionary socialist the question of supporting a war
always revolves around the interests of the proletariat. In the
early days of capitalism Marx supported the wars of capitalist
nations against feudal powers because they served the interests
of the development of the revolutionary proletariat and con-
sequently were progressive. In the epoch of imperialism a Marx-
ist must support a colonial people in its struggle against an im-
perialist power in spite of the fact that the colonial people may
be living under a feudal regime, because the victory of the
colonial people is a defeat for imperialism and advances the
interests of the international proletarian revolution which will
destroy all forms of slavery in the backward countries. The
right of self-determination of a colonial or semi-colonial people
is not conditioned upon the form of government which that people
may have.

Needless to say no revolutionary socialist would fail to ex-
plain that Haile Selassie rules the Ethiopian peasants and
nomads with an iron hand for the benefit of the feudal nobility.
Only the Socialists are capable of making a hero out of Selassie.
Probably from the habit of making a hero out of every miserable
functionary. The fact remains that Italian imperialism under
Mussolini is trying to subjugate Ethiopia under Selassie and not
vice versa. The fact remains that a victory of Ethiopia under
Selassie is a defeat of imperialism in general and of Italian
imperialism in particular. And what must be emphasized over
and over again, a defeat of Italian imperialism is a victory for
the Italian working class and that kind of victory is a thousand
times more important than a victory for the Ethiopians.

Against Supporting Neutrality Legislation
The position of defending the independence of a
people against an attack of an im-
perialist power, it is out of the question
a revolutionary party, in the case
the term "neutrality" could be used
it follows that we cannot support any
such a war the socialists by ally
will do so because its imperialist
ment actually goes to war with
ted in the independence of Ethio
No imperialist government, least of
and we must not hesitate to mention
position of revolutionary socialists in
Communist leaders but does not speak
YPSL proclamation mentions the positio
Labor party, of the Socialist and Communist Inter
The NEC resolution says nothing about the attitude of the
proclamation are against sanctions and that is to their credit
a betrayal of the proletariat. The NEC resolution and the YPSL
This kind of practicality is a negation of the class struggle and
assure the independence of Ethiopia? So runs the argument of
capitalist states apply sanctions against Mussolini and thus
and practical about the whole matter and ask that the govern
If we are for the independence of Ethiopia why not be realistic
Against Sanctions by a Capitalist Government

ment.
tions for peace and to act independently of their capitalist govern-
workers to have no faith in a capitalist government's promises
consideration is the necessity for the Socialist party to urge the
"logical" reasoning, however, is irrelevant. The fundamental
fall to support our government in such a war? All this absurd
and it, because of that, we are involved in a war, how can we
themselves. And if we urge and support a governmental embargo
act is infinitely more provocative than a boycott by the workers
action even on behalf of neutrality. An embargo by government
dent activities of the working class than in urging government
less chance of involving ourselves in a war through the indepe
If we want to reason in a "logical" manner there is probably
will be a thousand times greater.
legislation, in case a war is declared in spite of such legisla
ment, the difficulty of explaining why we supported neutral
support neutrality legislation introduced by a capitalist govern-
cult to explain to the politically backward worker why we cannot
Even admitting the questionable proposition that it is diffi-
show the insincerity of the capitalist advocates of neutrality.
introduce amendments to the neutrality legislation which would
ment. And should we have representatives in congress we must
the idea of trusting the peace declarations of a capitalist govern-
against neutrality but that it must carry on a campaign
Not that the Socialist party should carry on a campaign
capitalist class, to declare war.
tion whenever it deems it necessary, in the interests of the
that a capitalist government will be bound by neutrality legisla-
the same purpose. No worker should be misled into thinking
declaration of neutrality by a capitalist government will serve
to mobilize the masses behind the capitalist government, so any
ist government make it easier, when war is declared,
including Hitler's, is striving for, just as pacifists, in the capti-
favor of war; peace is always what every capitalist government
No capitalist government ever openly declared that it was in
the capitalist system can usher in permanent peace.
and that in the last analysis only a revolutionary overthrow of
classes, through their own organized efforts, can prevent war.
over and over again that only the workers, supported by other
capitalist government in favor of peace. It must be repeated
whatever can be placed in the hypocritical declarations of
teach the working class and the people in general that no relinque
government from declaring war. But the Socialist party must
in any war; the Socialist party must struggle to prevent that
ing class does not want our capitalist government to involve us
ment to throw us into an imperialist war? Not at all. The work
thereby, indirectly at least, encouraging the capitalist govern-
But if we do not support neutrality legislation are we not
capitalist government to enact stricter neutrality legislation
neutral it is impossible, laying aside all other considerations

of the two cities. Those who expect something from the Socialist party. With McLevy and workers will surely be disappointed. Not the type of socialism represented by the good government socialists of Bridgeport, Reading and Milwaukee will solve the problems of the working class. Undoubtedly that type of socialism might receive more votes because McLevy and the rest of the reformists are ever ready to compromise in order to get votes and because it takes time for the workers to decide to take the path of struggle rather than of voting.

We are not at all opposed to socialist victories at the polls. We shall work for such victories at every opportunity. But revolutionary socialists never forget that such victories at best are only an indication as to the development of the masses. Such victories in themselves do not give power to the working class. The working class will gain power through organization and struggle and left wing socialists would much rather prefer a victory of the workers in a strike than in an election for an alderman. To utilize every election for the purpose of educating the masses in the principles of socialism and organizing them for the inevitable struggle is the task of revolutionary Marxists.

Let the right wing gloat at their "victory" and sneer at those who are interested in theoretical problems. Their road is that of the social democracy of Germany. The left wing, without minimizing the importance of the gains made, will realize that the struggle is far from being over with the election of a respectable socialist as a mayor of a city.

* * * *

Workers' Party Splits

LESS than a year old, the Workers' party has just experienced one of the inevitable "pains of growth." Some fifty to a hundred members of that party, led by Hugo Oehler, have been expelled from or left the party. They will probably form an addition to the numerous groups of revolutionary sectarians convinced that they are the only faithful disciples of Marx and Lenin.

At the very period when the Workers' party was being organized by the amalgamation of the Communist League of America (Trotskyites) and the American Workers' party (Musteites) Trotsky made a sharp tactical turn which history will undoubtedly record as one of the boldest and most brilliant maneuvers in revolutionary strategy. He advised the revolutionary internationalists of France to enter into the Socialist party. Later on he advised the same tactic for most of the other European countries. Naturally such a sharp turn caught many of his followers unaware and, accustomed to repeating formulas instead of analyzing every concrete situation, they accused Trotsky of "capitulating to the social-democracy."

In this country a bare handful of us also saw the necessity of bringing the isolation of the Trotskyists to an end by entering the Socialist party and participating in the general left wing movement of the party. The vast majority, however, determined to launch an independent party.

From the very beginning Oehler assumed a leftist position on the French turn and accused Cannon and Shachtman, the leaders of the W. P. of harboring designs of bringing the W. P. into the Socialist party. Although experiencing a considerable growth at the beginning, the new party did not continue to grow by leaps and bounds, as predicted by its organizers, and this fact aided in the formation of a factional grouping which in turn paralyzed the party completely. The question of the "French turn" was the center of the factional struggle. The more realistic Cannon saw the leftward movement in the Socialist party in this country and realized its importance; the doctrinaire Oehler swept that movement aside as of no consequence. A different approach to the leftward tendencies in the S. P. was advocated by the majority under Cannon advising a sympathetic approach. Oehlerites insisted upon an attack all along the line. The split has been consummated the W.P. is in a position to solve the problem of its relationship to the H. P. as an independent party. It is clear that the W. P. has not decided to except

highly improbable. The revolutionary movement would be strengthened tremendously if the Trotskyites decide to enter the Socialist party. Composed of a group of experienced revolutionists and probably the best trained theoretical group in the country, the Socialist party would have nothing to lose and everything to gain by admitting the Trotskyites into the party. The right wing, of course, will fight the admission of the Trotskyites tooth and nail but that should not for one moment make the left wing hesitate in advocating and fighting for their admission. Within the next six months we shall see whether the leadership of the W. P. and the leadership of the S. P. will further the interests of the revolutionary movement—the former by applying for admission to the S. P. and the latter by accepting that application, with the understanding that they should be given all the rights and assume all the obligations of Socialist party members.

* * * *

Can the Stalinists Go Lower?

WE WERE handed a sample copy of the People's Press. It was a Stalinist sympathizer who presented us with it. A look of triumph on his face. "Take a look at that and see what we're doing to reach the masses." We glanced through and not until we saw the names of Frank L. Palmer, and Carl Haessler, two stalwart Stalinist stooges, were we convinced that the Stalinist sympathizer was really serious.

This messy paper will obviously be justified as part of the American Approach, an idea which recently catapulted Louis Budenz into the Communist party. If the Stalinists are taking over July 4th, Memorial Day and perhaps Armistice Day why not become real Americans and get a large circulation of the press by showing the dainty ankles (and parts above it) of Hollywood stars? Why not give the American people Stalinism through sexual suggestion? And so with the blessing of the Stalinists the sympathizers have launched an organ which is a prelude to the People's Front (and rear).

Let us for a moment glance through the philosophy of the paper. We say 'philosophy' because after all a former professor of philosophy is connected with it. The first page informs the readers that fascism is a result of Mussolini's fondness for loose women. Afflicted with syphilis his brains softened and the result was visions of grandeur. On that same first page we are also treated with a suggestion that Hearst is what he is because of his fondness for Marion Davies. Knowing what we do about the communists we hope, for their sake, that no investigation be made into the private lives of some of the leading communists. Two "snappy picture pages" will undoubtedly convince the innocents that socialism a la Stalin is really superior to capitalism.

Now if this were simply a venture to make some money for the promoters we would be tolerant and recognize the right of a human being living under the capitalist system to descend to the gutter in order to make an easy living although such people would surrender the right of being taken seriously in the labor movement. But we are certain that the People's Press was launched for the purpose of educating the American masses. In that case we are justified in asking: Must not the educators themselves be educated?

Several times before we were of the opinion that Stalinism had reached the lowest depths. With the venture of the People's Press we have become convinced that the pit is bottomless.

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