

Americans Speak at World Conference of Communists in Moscow

Among the speakers at the Enlarged Executive Committee Meeting of the Communist International, in Moscow, were Alexander Trachtenberg and Israel Amter of the Workers Party of the United States, and Charles Johnson, Workers Party of Canada. They spoke on the report rendered by Chairman Zinoviev, in part as follows:

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By ALEX. TRACHTENBERG

He was pleased to hear the references made by Zinoviev to the splendid strides made by the American Party in the past year. If the American Party has improved it is due to the action adopted at the last International Congress.

He wished to deal with the application to America of the new slogan of a Workers' and Farmers' Government issued by the International. There is in the United States a large farmer population, the position of which had recently come to resemble that of the European peasants. Many of them are gradually losing possession of the land they had got freely 25 years ago. They were sinking to the position of landless tenant farmers. Statistics collected last year showed, that 75 percent of farms were mortgaged, and the indebtedness of the farmers had increased 13 percent over 1910. The farmer population had decreased because many had left the country for the cities. The temporary war prosperity of the farmers has since been snatched away by the railroads, elevator companies and other intermediaries.

This position of the farmers has induced them to organize their own political party. In the few years of its existence the Non-Partisan League has gained considerable political successes. It was advocating the nationalization of the railroads, storage houses, elevators, etc.

The Workers Party had taken note of this position and had issued the slogan of the Workers' and the Working Farmers' Government. But the slogan was not without its dangers. The American Socialist Party had also gone amongst the farming population, but it had been ill-advised to fuse with the Non-Partisan League and similar political parties, with the result that in many States it became as a party, completely lost. It is important that when the slogan is issued by the Party in America this danger be understood and that it be interpreted as working along with the working farmers and not with the farmers' political parties.

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By ISRAEL AMTER

He believed that in America, the slogan of the Workers' and Farmers' Government was necessary, but in common with the British comrades he was of the opinion that it should be so framed that the poor and working farmer would be got to understand, that there was a cleavage between him and the exploiting farmer. To secure such a cleavage would be a victory for us. There was no danger that the peasant farmer would be a danger to the proletarian dictatorship.

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By CHARLES JOHNSON

(Canada)

Canada is predominantly an agricultural country with a large population of poor and small tenant farmers. These farmers are in such a hopeless state that many are selling their farms entirely. In the Western States there are 150,000 Ukrainian and Russian emigrant farmers. Last year they sent a delegation to the District Party Convention of Manitoba demanding that the Party should come to their assistance.

The farmers' organization was controlled by the rich grain growers and the delegation asked the Convention to assist them in forming a rival party for the poorer farmers. The Convention referred the matter to the Dominion Convention. When the latter considered the matter, the party felt itself too inexperienced and uninformed to formulate a policy.

It accepted the principle of Workers' and Peasants' Government issued by the International, but this slogan still faced the party with the question, whether the poor peasants should be taken into the party, or whether they should be organized into a separate farmers' league. The Party accordingly set up a Commission to study the question.