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ON THE "NEW" PARTY AND TROTSKYISM

We publish below the statement of the National Committee Communist Party of the U. S. A. (Opposition) in connection with its endorsement of the general resolution of the July 1933 session of the Enlarged Bureau of the International Communist Opposition.

This statement deals with but two of the problems raised by the I. C. O. resolution by way of amplification, the question of a "new" party and "new" International and the question of centrism and Trotskyism. In these matters, as on others, the National Committee fully agrees with the I. C. O. resolution.—Editor.

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1. The National Committee of the Communist Party of the U. S. A. (Opposition) agrees with and endorses the resolution adopted by the July 1933 session of the Enlarged Bureau of the International Communist Opposition.

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The Question Of A "New" Party and "New" International

2. The National Committee of the C. P.-O. categorically rejects all proposals for the formation of a new Communist Party in Germany or in the U. S. A. or for the formation of a new Communist International. It especially rejects the political viewpoint from which these proposals emerge and declares that its fundamental objective still remains to unite and to rehabilitate the Communist movement in America, in Germany and on a world scale. The C. P.-O. still remains an organized tendency in the Communist movement in this country, just as the I. C. O. is internationally.

3. The champions of the "new party" orientation for Germany put forward three arguments, not always mutually compatible: (a) The C. P. G. has "betrayed" the proletarian revolution by "allowing" Hitler's accession to power, so that it is no longer a Communist organization, the formation of a Communist organization in Germany thus becoming necessary. This is the official Trotskyist argument. (b) The failure of the C. I. and the official C. P.s to change their tactics in spite of the lessons of the German catastrophe proves that it is hopeless to expect to have any effect upon the official Communist movement by fighting as an opposition for a change of line. (c) The C. P. G. is non-existent organizationally; it has been destroyed. Therefore, it is necessary to build up a Communist party in Germany.

4. The first contention, that the C. P. G. has "betrayed" the revolution, is totally false and leads logically to an anti-Communist position. The enormous tactical errors of the C. P. G., to which the Communist Opposition has called attention and which it has fought vigorously for many years, certainly paralyzed the German party and rendered it incapable of resisting the onslaught of Fascism and of organizing the proletarian revolution. But under no circumstances can its conduct be branded as "betrayal", which definitely means an open or covert pact with the class enemy. No one can doubt the sincerity and genuineness of the official C. P. G.'s opposition to Fascism at any stage of development, however much one may properly criticize its tactics in fighting the Nazi menace. The Trotskyite declaration that the C. P. G. experienced its "August 4" on January 30, 1933, is nothing short of monstrous slander, for it implies that, on January 30, the Communist Party of Germany sold out to the German bourgeoisie, made a pact with it, just as the German Social-democracy had done on August 4, 1914. Of the same

The National Committee of the Communist Party of the United States (Opposition) has issued a call for a national conference of the organization to take place in New York City on December 30 and 31, 1933 and January 1, 1934. The order of business of the conference is: (1) The international situation

and July 1933 session of the Enlarged Bureau of the I.C.O.—Reporter: Jay Lovestone; (2) The economic situation in the United States, the NRA and the labor movement—Reporter: Will Herberg; (3) The situation and tasks of the Communist Opposition—Reporter: D. Benjamin. The general discussion is to

open on October 25 and to close on December 25. In this issue The Workers Age will publish some of the documents presented for the conference. In future issues The Workers Age will devote one page and a half to discussion material. All members of the C.P.-O. are urged to participate.

character is the charge that the S. P. G. and C. P. G. were "equally responsible" for the triumph of Fascism. It is not possible to measure one against the other: the responsibility of Social-democracy came from its gross surrender of revolutionary Marxist principles while the responsibility of the C. P. G. came from its failure to apply effective tactics to realize its correct Communist principles and aims. To insist that the C. P. G. has committed an act of betrayal is equivalent to dissociating oneself from the principles of Communism.

5. The second contention, that today the futility of having any effect upon the official Communist

movement is demonstrated by the German events, is false upon the face of it. On the contrary, developments in Germany have greatly confirmed the contention of the Communist Opposition that it is quite possible to win the C. I. sections from below. Not only has the struggle of the C. P. G.-O., reinforced by the pressure of events, forced a virtual right-about-face in trade union policy on the part of the official C. P., but the relations between the C. P.-O., on the one hand, and the official C. P. members and lower organizations, on the other, have become tremendously improved and the possibilities of influencing the party membership much greater.

5. It is a gross error in fact to declare that the C. P. G. no longer exists. It still has at least 25,000 members organized illegally and is conducting work in most parts of the country. Any realistic policy in Germany must be based on the obvious fact that the C. P. G. certainly exists, altho greatly reduced in numbers, and still includes in its ranks some of the most advanced and most courageous class conscious workers of Germany, an essential element for the reconstruction of the C. P. G.

6. The position for a new party in Germany has important consequences internationally. If it is true that the C. P. G. has "betrayed" the revolution as a con-

sequence of its tactical course, then the C. P. S. U. and the C. I., which are at least as responsible for this course as the C. P. G. leadership itself, must also be considered as having "betrayed" the revolution, i. e., as anti-Communist. Very obviously, this means a "new" party in the Soviet Union, with all that it implies (a bid for power, civil war, etc.)—a position that is openly counter-revolutionary. The call for a new "Communist" International and for new parties in all countries also follows directly from this. Exactly the same conclusions flow from the position that the official Communist organizations are now "hopeless" and offer no possibility of being won to an effective Communist course. For the United States, too, the "new party" attitude for Germany has its direct implications, involving a new party with a definitely anti-Soviet orientation in this country.

7. If there is no political or organizational basis for a new party in Germany, there is certainly none for a new Communist International. Such an International would very obviously mean an International without the C. P. S. U. or else an International standing for the formation of a "second" party in the Soviet Union. Either alternative is impossible from a Communist viewpoint. The rehabilitation and the reunification of the Communist International still remains our basic slogan.

8. To propose a new Communist Party in the United States at the present time means to fly in the face of all reality. Neither political nor organizational relations in the revolutionary movement of this country have changed materially in the last period of time. The official Communist Party still remains in its principles a Communist organization, in spite of its suicidally disruptive and sectarian tactics. The official Communist Party still remains the largest and most decisive body of revolutionary workers in the U. S. A. The official Communist Party is today more accessible than ever to the influence of the Opposition struggle carried on by our group. Here too the tested policy of the Communist Opposition remains completely valid. To urge the formation of a new party in the U. S. A. on the basis primarily of alleged changes in the Communist movement in Germany, as do both the Trotskyites and others, discloses a hopeless divorce from the actualities of the labor movement and class relations in the United States.

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Centrism And The New Aspect of Trotskyism

9. A very significant phase of the present realignment of forces in the international labor movement is the transformation of Trotskyism from a tendency in world Communism to the ideological focal point of a new international centrist concentration. The traditional ideology of centrism, Austro-Marxism, has now completely exhausted its role and can no longer serve its function, so completely discredited has it become. Today it is Trotskyism that serves as the binding force, as the ideological platform, for the various groups attempting to crystallize an international organization "in-between" the Socialist and Communist Internationals. Trotskyism is rapidly becoming centrism in its contemporary classical form.

10. The new program of Trotskyism indicates very clearly its essentially centrist character. Its

For a New Perspective for Our Group

Statement Of The National Committee Minority

We publish below the declaration of the minority of the National Committee of the C.P.-O., consisting of Comrade Zam, on the international situation and the recent conference of the I.C.O.—Editor.

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1. When our group was first established it definitely rejected the objective of the establishment of a new Communist Party and worked to restore the Communist Party of the U. S. A. to a Leninist line. Even at that time, however, the perspective of a new Communist Party was not entirely excluded. We had a dual perspective: Either (a) our efforts to win the party to a Leninist line would be successful and unity would be established in that manner, or (b) the C. P. thru its wrong line, would continue disintegrating, would become a "shell" and our group, having the correct line, would continue to grow and gain in influence. We therefore would become a party. Now, after four years of bitter experience, we must frankly declare that neither of these perspectives have seen fulfillment in reality. What is true in the United States is also true on an international scale for the Communist International and for the International Communist Opposition.

2. Already at our last conference (September, 1932) we were beginning to modify somewhat this so-called dual perspective in the light of the experiences of our struggle. We substituted the slogan: "For International Communist Unity" in place of the one previously held: "For the return of the Comintern to the tactical line of Leninism", in order to make possible a more inclusive struggle and more realistic tactics, particularly in relation to forces which had not previously been in the Communist movement.

3. The initial steps we took a year ago in changing our perspective have been given tremendous impetus by the catastrophe in Germany. The German events not

merely express the most decisive defeat for the working class in the entire post-war period, they at the same time signalize the utter collapse of the policies of the Communist International, policies which, in the critical situation in Germany, became an objective aid in the defeat of the working class and of the revolutionary movement. This cannot be condoned by the adherence of the bearer of these policies to the proletarian dictatorship, any more than the scab activities of the "revolutionary" trade unions in Paterson can be condoned because they call themselves "revolutionary". At the same time, the German events also signalize the close of the first phase of the struggle of the Communist Opposition—a phase during which we considered ourselves as a faction of the Communist Party, temporarily separated from the party, fighting to correct the line of the party thru the pressure which we should develop.

4. Lenin said: "It too often happens that when events take a sudden turn, even an advanced party cannot adapt itself to the new conditions. It goes on repeating yesterday's watchwords, watchwords which, under the new circumstances, have become empty of meaning and which have lost meaning unexpectedly, just in proportion as the change in events has been unexpected. It is necessary to direct ourselves, not by old formulas, but by new realities."

This is the situation in which the International Communist Opposition movement now finds itself. To continue along yesterday's path today leads only into a blind alley. Yesterday's tactic has become historically outlived. A new one is needed.

5. Our general objective, the establishment of international Communist unity, remains the same but, in view of the defeat of our efforts to change the policies and methods of work of the Communist International by acting as a faction, it is now necessary that the

attainment of this objective be brought about by other means. Only one alternative is now open to us if we are to harness our energies for effective activity for Communist unity—we must direct ourselves toward the development of forces for the establishment in this country of a new Communist Party to continue the struggle for international Communist unity on a higher plane. There can be no thought either of establishing such a party at once or of the group becoming such a party. Nevertheless, this new perspective must be definitely stated, as the entire direction of our future activities depend on it.

6. The adoption of this new perspective, in view of the extended nature of our struggle, was inevitable even without the intervention of the German events. A faction existing outside the party over a long period of time and carrying on independent mass work tends to develop into a party. Already a year ago we were probing this perspective. The German events simply speeded up this development. The essential difference between a party and a faction is not merely a numerical relation, altho this is a very important consideration. A party is united by fundamental principle but within the party there is not necessarily any unity on the tactical and strategic course. Within a party, or even outside a party, factions grow up basing themselves not merely on the fundamentals, which are sufficient for membership in the party, but in addition on agreement on the current strategic and tactical problems confronting a party. In the normal course of events, these factions can be liquidated thru inner-party struggle. But, when the factions are involuntarily separated from the party and carry on an independent existence and activity, new differences tend to arise within the faction and the homogeneity of the faction on current problems disappears.

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THE STATEMENT of THE MINORITY

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pers—the faction either prohibits such differences and grows narrower in composition, as has been the case with the Trotskyites, or it permits such differences and tends itself to lose its character as a faction and become a small party, regardless of the name it gives itself. This has been the case of the C. P. O.

7. For the C.P.O. the problem of a new party is not a principle but a tactic. We do maintain that from a class standpoint there can be only one Communist party in each country. But this does not mean that there cannot be more than one such party for any given length of time. As a matter of fact, in this country there have been times when two Communist parties existed simultaneously. In fact this was the normal condition in the first few years of the existence of the Communist movement in this country. This has also been true in other countries and in the present period we have seen the simultaneous existence of two Communist parties in Sweden and Spain and Alsace. In 1920 Lenin advocated the formation of two Communist parties in England as a means of overcoming the differences of the Communists on tactical questions. It is true that in those days the parallel existence of Communist parties was a symptom of the formative character of the Communist movement. Anyone who deny that today we are also going thru a formative process, which is the positive feature of the present crisis in the Communist movement?

8. The rejection of the new party idea in principle, as is in fact done by some comrades ("No new parties where Communist parties exist"—Leston; "Against new parties"—I.C.O.) is based on the erroneous conception that the official Communist parties and the Communist International are the sole representatives of Bolshevism. Should this standpoint be accepted by the Communist Opposition there would be left no alternative but to liquidate and return to the Comintern. It is just as necessary to reject this conception as that of the Trotskyites, that the Communist International and the official Communist parties are counter-revolutionary. The adoption of either conception excludes any struggle for Communist unity and would substitute instead the idea that the entire Communist movement and all its problems revolve around one of its factions. For this reason also it is necessary to reject the August 1912 block analogy adopted by the Bureau of the I.C.O.

9. The adoption of the perspective of a new party in other countries depends entirely on the con-

ditions there. In Germany, Alsace, Switzerland, Sweden, Norway, Spain (in some of these countries parallel C. P.'s actually exist), there can be not the slightest doubt that the time has arrived for coming out on this new basis. It is necessary to emphasize, however, that a new Communist party can not result from one of the opposition groups declaring itself such but from a regrouping of forces on the basis of Communist fundamentals and internal party democracy, the problems of strategy and tactics to be decided thru inner-party discussion on a democratic basis.

10. There can be no talk of the creation of a new Communist party in the Soviet Union where the power is in the hands of the proletariat. A new party there can only be the equivalent to a struggle for power, that is, civil war. Consequently all those rejecting civil war in the Soviet Union as a means of settling differences on Russian questions, all those who recognize the proletarian character of the Soviet state, must reject the proposal for a new party in the Soviet Union. Nor does the advocacy of new Communist parties in the capitalist countries automatically lead to such a conclusion for the Soviet Union.

11. A new International will necessarily result from the establishment of a whole series of new Communist parties in capitalist countries, which are willing to cooperate on an international scale. Such an International will be a positive factor in the future of the working class and of the Communist movement if it is based on the lines here laid down for individual parties. It must necessarily exclude any group claiming to be a "Russian section" and will necessarily be an international center for Communist parties in capitalist countries only. This is neither a normal, nor a welcome, nor a permanent phenomenon but it is forced upon the Communist Opposition by the negative role played by the C.P.S.U. in the International Communist movement. A rejection of a new International because from it would be excluded the C.P.S.U. is an abandonment of our own "map" theory. The new International, if it ever becomes a reality, must be an international instrument in the struggle for Communist unity. At the present time, however, the conditions for the immediate establishment of such an international do not yet exist.

12. The Communist Party (Opposition) reiterates its evaluation of Trotskyism as adopted at the last conference and for that reason it rejects the "new" evaluation adopted by the Bureau of the I.C.O., just as we rejected the first attempts at this new evaluation last year. The latest documents of the Trotsky group bear out the correctness of this evaluation—that is, the left sectarian character of the Trotsky group. This is embodied in their "eleven points" and in their declaration for a new International, in which they endeavor to base such a new International not on the fundamentals of Communism, but on the well-thumbed Trotskyite dogmas which they endeavor to raise to the new level of fundamental Marxian "principles." The flirtations of Trotskyites with various centrist and near-Communist organizations is no more indication of their abandonment of Communism than the alliance of the Communist Party with the C.P.L.A. It is necessary to repeat that, on one point, Thermidor, whatever form, the Trotskyites separate themselves from the rest of the Communist movement. An abandonment of this point is the only condition for their admission into a united Communist movement and this must also be the condition with regard to a new Communist Party.

At the present time, the effects of the crisis have caused thousands of workers to abandon their Social-democratic illusions, while the sectarian Communist movement bears a dual character, but differs from the centrist parties of the period of 1920-1922 as follows: At that time there was a powerful movement of the workers to the Communist International, so powerful indeed that the C. I. was compelled to take measures to ward off some elements; consequently the main characteristic of the centrist parties was to prevent the working class from breaking with Social-democracy. At the present time, however, there is no power in the movement to the Comintern but there is the opposite situation. Consequently the centrist parties, to the extent that they help break the workers from Social-democracy, are performing a function which the Communist party cannot do. Of course, the centrist parties still remain centrist parties but the latter characteristic as well as the entire situation, and the fact of the continual leftward movement of these parties (for instance the I.L.P.), necessitate a new tactic in our attitude toward them—a tactic aiming at the conversion of these parties to Communism rather than their destruction and the absorption of their masses in the Communist parties. In

the course of working out this tactic concretely, the unity of the centrist parties will undoubtedly be destroyed but it holds greater promise of gains for Communism than the pursuit of the older but today outworn tactic of the destruction of centrist parties.

14. In connection with the above problems the C.P.-O. must express itself on a series of concrete issues which threaten not only to destroy the I.C.O. but also to bring great damage to the international Communist movement.

(a) The C.P.-O. stands for the maintenance of the unity of the I.C.O. It therefore differentiates itself from the measures which have resulted in the "expulsion" of the Communist Party of Sweden from the I.C.O., while at the same time not endorsing the standpoint of the Swedish comrades on the various controversial questions. Realizing that this is a period when the greatest freedom of discussion is not only necessary but unavoidable, during which it might even be necessary to forego certain measures of formal discipline, the C.P.-O. regrets that steps have been taken by the Bureau of the I.C.O. which lay it open to a possible lack of Comintern methods. The C.P.-O. urges that these measures be rescinded and all differences submitted to a thorough discussion of the entire membership of the various groups of the I.C.O.

(b) The C.P.-O. is of the opinion that a serious error was committed by the Bureau of the I.C.O. in not attending the Paris conference of independent parties and groups. We believe that this was an act of sectarian isolation. Regardless of the differences the Bureau had with the purpose of this conference, it would in no way have committed itself to anything by attending, while at the same time it would have had a splendid opportunity of strengthening its ties with other groups and of presenting its position to large sections of workers unacquainted with it.

(c) The C.P.-O. rejects the proposal of the Bureau of the I. C. O. for a block with the Comintern against Trotskyites and the centrists in defence of Bolshevism. Such a block presupposes that the Comintern at present is capable of defending Bolshevism against its enemies, and that it recognizes as the defenders of Bolshevism. If either of these premises were correct, then automatically the need for such a block would disappear, for then organic unity would be possible. These premises do not exist. Consequently the achievement of such a block, which is highly impracticable, would also become unprincipled.

(d) The policy of the I.C.O. of England with regard to the I.L.P. of England really constitutes a revival, under present-day conditions, of the notorious "August 1912 block". Just as in 1912, a concentration is today taking place of heterogeneous tendencies, running all the way from open reformism to self-styled ultra-radicalism. Today, as then, the ideology of Trotskyism is the binding force. Just as the August 1912 block was, in its political sense, an opportunistic concentration against Bolshevism on the platform of the democratization of the Czarist power, so is the concentration against Communism today the cloak of the Trotskyist ideology, represents a definite obstacle in the way of the revival and rehabilitation of world Communism so necessary to-day, an obstacle furthermore to the crystallization and progress of a genuine left movement inside the Socialist International. It is the duty of the International Communist Opposition to do everything in its power to prevent this centrist crystallization into new "Communist" parties, nationally and internationally, holding firm to its fundamental objective of winning the Communist movement back to the fundamental tactical course of Leninism.

(e) While we have correctly stung against a situation in the international Communist movement where one party (the Soviet Party) has assumed a monopoly of leadership in the international movement, we have not been sufficiently careful to combat similar tendencies in the I.C.O., where the German group has more and more tended to assume a monopoly of leadership in the I.C.O.—quite possibly not voluntarily so, but as a result of actual relations. This situation must be changed by taking the necessary political and organizational measures (location of I.C.O. center, composition of leading body, etc.)

(f) It is the openly avowed policy and increasingly common practise of the NRA to suppress strikes and discourage and stifle industrial conflicts as part of the administration of the act. The very right to strike and to picket are at stake. (g) By direct statement, by interpretation and by everyday practise, the NRA has made the open shop universal and, legally at least, banned the closed (union) shop, employing for the purpose the traditional logic of the open shop operation of the NRA tends to strike and to picket are at stake. (h) In the same way, and in spite of Section 7a, the NRA often tends to strengthen the position of company unionism in industry and even to encourage its growth (steel, automobile). (i) Practical experience has shown that the operation of the NRA tends to destroy wage differentials between skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled workers and reduce all scales to the minimum level.

(j) The maximum work-week provided for in the codes are far too high to allow any substantial reemployment and the real effect of the minimum wage provisions has hitherto been to "stabilize" the substandard wage levels of the depression, to reduce prevailing rates to minimum rates, leaving real general wage totals not much changed from what they are today after four years of crisis and merciless wage cutting. From the NRA as a measure of economic recovery labor has nothing to expect except continued failure and the inevitable reactionary repercussions of such failure.

THE C. P. AND THE NEEDLE STRIKE IN HARTFORD

Hartford, Conn.
In Hartford over 400 needle workers walked out on a strike for better working conditions, higher wages against the sweatshops and for the recognition of the union. The Communist Party was out of the picture. They had to do something about the strike. At first they sent their people to talk to the girls. They tried to discredit our comrades. They had the intention to demoralize the workers. We saw to it that they were removed from the meeting place. Then they printed a leaflet urging the strikers not to trust the leaders, telling them to join the N.T.W.U. The women refused to listen to them. They tore up the leaflets.

In the cleaning and dyeing industry the party was able to secure the leadership. The local newspapers came out with a story about the I.U.U.L. being a Communist organization. The I.U.U.L. denied the fact. The reporter of the "Hartford Courant" went to the union headquarters and found on the walls the following pictures: Mexican Revolution, Hunger Marches, Death of Harry Simms. Of course no denial will take the "Red" scare away.

17. The international renaissance of centrism, largely under movement inside the Socialist International, represents a definite obstacle in the way of the revival and rehabilitation of world Communism so necessary to-day, an obstacle furthermore to the crystallization and progress of a genuine left movement inside the Socialist International. It is the duty of the International Communist Opposition to do everything in its power to prevent this centrist crystallization into new "Communist" parties, nationally and internationally, holding firm to its fundamental objective of winning the Communist movement back to the fundamental tactical course of Leninism.

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N. R. A. and the Labor Movement

Resolution for the Conference

1. The American labor movement has entered a new period of development. The years of apathy and inertia, of organizational decline and moral decay, which threatened the very existence of unionism in this country, have now definitely come to an end. A wave of strikes and labor struggles is engulfing the country. The ideas of unionism and of organization are permeating the most backward sections of the American working class. Hundreds of thousands of workers are pouring into the American Federation of Labor and its unions, so that already the organized labor movement is reaching its record highest point of 1918-19. A new spirit of self-confidence and militancy is inspiring the trade union membership and even the most conservative officials have to pay their respects to it. At the same time, there are difficulties ahead on the labor horizon. The relations between the trade union movement, on the one hand, and the government and organized capitalists on the other, are fast approaching a crisis, which may bring disastrous consequences unless labor is prepared for the test. And inside the trade unions there is as yet no national left wing movement or organization to provide the militant and far-seeing leadership which is so acutely needed today. The situation today is a challenge to all class conscious workers, but above all to the Communists.

2. The upsurge in the labor movement is taking place within the framework of the NRA. The profound transformation of the socio-economic relations in this country embodied in the NRA has the most far-reaching implications for the labor movement and for the working class of the United States. The main outlines of policy and tactics of American labor in the next period of time will have to be framed on the basis of the new situation created by the NRA.

3. As a systematic plan of economic recovery thru reemployment by shortening the work-week and thru increasing buying power by minimum wage provisions, the NRA is already a failure. The question of the effects of the NRA is greatly obscured by the fact that it began its operations after the beginnings of an upturn had already become visible, an upturn which is substantially world-wide in its scope.

4. From a long-range viewpoint the most fundamental aspect of the NRA for the labor movement is its influence upon the basic class relations of labor and capital, upon trade unionism and labor organization. This influence is a complicated and many-sided one and must be understood in its manifoldness of labor is to be able to measure up to the tasks of the difficult and uncertain future.

5. The menace that the NRA holds out to organized labor comes from several directions: (a) The NRA elevates class collaboration into a fundamental governmental policy. (b) The very operations of the NRA organize the employers automatically on a nation-wide and all-inclusive scale, thus immensely strengthening the relative power of organized capital against organized labor. (c) Yet labor gets no more than the official recognition of its right to organize, a right in the realization of which the workers are already meeting with the increasingly open resistance of the NRA. (d) The gravest menace to unionism lies in the fact that, by taking over full control of wages and hours and assuming the power of interfering in the inner concerns of the labor organization, the NRA is undermining the very basis of unionism by attempting to deprive it of its essential functions. The carefully planned drive of the NRA to transform the genuine working class unions in the A. F. of L. into virtual Fascist "corporate unions" (see Section 13c below) is a striking dramatization of this menace.

The N. R. A. and the Unions

(e) It is the openly avowed policy and increasingly common practise of the NRA to suppress strikes and discourage and stifle industrial conflicts as part of the administration of the act. The very right to strike and to picket are at stake. (f) By direct statement, by interpretation and by everyday practise, the NRA has made the open shop universal and, legally at least, banned the closed (union) shop, employing for the purpose the traditional logic of the open shop operation of the NRA tends to strike and to picket are at stake. (g) In the same way, and in spite of Section 7a, the NRA often tends to strengthen the position of company unionism in industry and even to encourage its growth (steel, automobile). (h) Practical experience has shown that the operation of the NRA tends to destroy wage differentials between skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled workers and reduce all scales to the minimum level.

(i) The maximum work-week provided for in the codes are far too high to allow any substantial reemployment and the real effect of the minimum wage provisions has hitherto been to "stabilize" the substandard wage levels of the depression, to reduce prevailing rates to minimum rates, leaving real general wage totals not much changed from what they are today after four years of crisis and merciless wage cutting. From the NRA as a measure of economic recovery labor has nothing to expect except continued failure and the inevitable reactionary repercussions of such failure.

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Vantage Points For Labor

6. It would be a grave error, however, to stop at this point. It must be recognized that under the impact of the NRA, there has been created a situation full of vantage points for a labor movement which is alive, militant and realistic. It must be recognized that, under the impact of the NRA, certain changes are taking place of considerable benefit to the working class and to trade unionism. Of course, these elements of the situation are far from having been intended by the sponsors of the "New Deal" and are even less welcome to them. General Johnson's deliverance from on high change the inner logic of social relations. It is necessary for the workers to grasp this logic of events in order to take proper advantage of it under difficult circumstances.

7. Supplementing the normal effect of the recent upturn in the economic situation, the objective effect of the NRA has clearly been to help unleash a wave of strikes and labor struggles thru all parts of the country. The constant public discussion of such matters as wages and hours and conditions of labor and the mere wording of Section 7a, fortified by some of the earlier demagoguery of the NRA, have naturally enough created the impression among workers and sympathetic elements of the lower middle class that strikes and labor unionism are now "respectable", "legal", "guaranteed by the NRA", and what not. The pent-up resentment of four years of bitter crisis is at last breaking thru.

8. For the same reasons, the last few months have witnessed an almost phenomenal growth of many A. F. of L. unions, often coming as the result of vigorous and widespread organization drives. As significant is the widespread sentiment for unionization so keenly felt today among large sections of quite backward workers.

9. Altho the theory of class collaboration is still officially retained in all its features by the A. F.

Counter-Attack of the Bosses

10. The new situation in the labor movement, so closely connected with the NRA, is arousing the gravest concern on the part of the American bourgeoisie and its government, which expected quite other consequences from the NRA, namely the permanent "pacification" of the workers thru an elaborate government machinery of re-employment. The reaction of the bourgeoisie, its counter-attack against the upsurge of the labor movement, is taking the following lines: (a) As soon as the new strike wave became obvious, the NRA set to work setting up a complete machinery of strike repression and strike-breaking culminating in the National Labor Board. Taking the cue from General Johnson, who has repeatedly declared that "public opinion will not tolerate strikes", the entire NRA publicity machine is being devoted to the discouragement of labor militancy in all its aspects. Depending on circumstances, the NRA has not hesitated to proceed to more positive measures, to the prohibition of picketing, to police terror, to active strike-breaking.

(b) Similar steps are being taken to curb the revival of militancy and fighting power of the masses of the union membership, since the realization is spreading that nothing will be gained and much lost if a solid, determined and unwavering front is not put up.

11. The influx of hundreds of thousands of hitherto unorganized workers into the A. F. of L. unions will have many serious consequences and raise many grave problems before the labor movement. While they may easily serve as a decisive force, germinating a new spirit of struggle, militancy and power in these organizations, it is not altogether out of the question that their backwardness and lack of labor traditions and experience may be used by the bureaucracy to make them into a support for the conservative officialdom. It is to a very large degree a question of the character and direction of their assimilation in the labor movement, and thus of the effectiveness of the left wing and progressive forces in the unions.

12. In the trade union bureaucracy itself, important realignments are today under way. While the new situation generally remains thoroughly pro-NRA, there is a disaffection and protest are being heard in many quarters with the provisions of the codes and with their operation. In general the situation has made for the emergence to the fore of the more "up-to-date", "modern" and, in a

THE 'NEW' PARTY AND TROTSKYISM

Statement Of The National Committee

(Continued from Page 1)
fundamental plank is the demand for a new labor International and a new workers party as against both the Socialist and Communist organizations. The orientation of this new tendency is already indicated in the joint declaration for a new International signed by the Trotskyites, the Socialist Workers Party of Germany, the Revolutionary Socialist Party of Holland and the Independent Socialist Party of Holland ("The Militant", September 23, 1933); it is based fundamentally on the theory of "betrayal" and brings to explicit formulation all of the reactionary consequences of this theory.

11. Altho it declares itself against reformism, the Trotskyist manifesto for a new International carefully avoids all reference to Communism, evading even the use of the term "Revolutionary Socialism", "Marxism" and many other phrases abundant but not Communism. The scrupulous avoidance of the very term in a document urging the formation of a

12. Altho it declares itself for the proletarian dictatorship, the Trotskyist Manifesto for a new International carefully avoids all reference to soviets as the form of the proletarian dictatorship. The deliberate refusal even to mention the soviets likewise constitutes a virtual renunciation of the fundamental principles of Communism.

new labor International is a virtual renunciation of Communism as a practical dissociation from it. The demand of the Trotskyites that the traditional twenty-one conditions for admittance into the Communist International be "radically revised" is seen to be of similar significance, when it is remembered that the "twenty-one points" were first formulated as a means of radical differentiation of Communism from centrism.

13. The specific Trotskyist coloring of the new centrism is provided by its attitude towards the Soviet Union, which is the traditional Trotskyist position carried to its ultimate counter-revolution-

ary extreme. The Communist Party, the trade unions, the soviets in the U. S. S. R. and all other organizations of the workers are declared to have been "destroyed" by the "Stalinist bureaucracy", which is supposed to represent the interests of elements alien to the proletariat. A definite approach is made to urging the formation of a new party in the U. S. S. R. and even the prospect of civil war is being tentatively raised in Trotskyist literature. It is this overt anti Soviet attitude that has made possible such an easy rapprochement between Trotskyism and centrism.

14. Just as the centrists are rapidly borrowing the specific ideology of Trotskyism on the "Russian question", so are the Trotskyites taking over the point of view of centrism on the tasks facing the working class in Germany. Trotsky's sudden championship of the demand for the restoration of bourgeois democracy as a political system (the Weimar Republic) as a transition program for anti-Fascist struggle in Germany, is an outstanding example of this process. Coming from different directions, the two tendencies are now merging.

15. The regrouping of centrist forces on the basis of Trotskyism

16. The centrist transformation of Trotskyism discloses the unprincipledness of this tendency. After parading for years as the "left of the left", as "Bolshevik-Leninists Left Communists", after hanging on to the party as its spineless tail-end, a partner to all its sectarian crimes with only a gesture of verbal criticism to absolve it, the Trotsky group has overnight made a complete right-about-face, breaking with the official Communist movement, turning its back upon it and all its organizations and activities. It is characteristic of the fundamental nature of Trotskyism in the Un-

The Attitude of Trade Unionism

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20. For the Communist Party, the new situation in the labor movement has meant the clearest possible exposure of the complete falsity of its trade union policy and tactics. Its fantastic prophecies of the collapse of the A. F. of L. (Continued on Page 4)

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The N. R. A. and Labor

Resolution For The National Conference

(Continued from Page 3)

L. and the glorious future of the dual T. U. U. L. unions have been thoroly smashed by events. But, characteristically enough, the C. P. refuses to recognize the new situation and its implications; it persistently attempts to minimize and to talk away the revival of the labor movement and the growth of the A. F. of L. It has limited its criticism of the NRA to meaningless phrases and abstract attacks and it persistently attempts to minimize and talk away the great revival of the labor movement and the growth of the A. F. of L. So far has this gone, indeed, that the official Communist press is willing to attribute gains of the workers to the beneficence of the NRA rather than to admit that it is possible for A. F. of L. unions to put up militant and successful struggles in behalf of the workers. In the face of the complete practical collapse of its trade union policies, the official C. P. is reviv- ing in the crassest form its old-line sectarian theories in their worst "third-period" form.

The old "company union" theory, according to which the A. F. of L. unions are really capitalistic organizations of the same kind as company unions, is now again officially recognized, precisely at the time when this theory is practically bankrupt in the face of the facts. Precisely when the reactionary character of dual unionism is becoming more obvious than ever, the dual unionist theory of union-splitting and "Red" unions is again in full favor without qualification. The current practise of the T. U. U. L. is in full consonance with the C. P. theory—scabbery and "underselling" to the bosses, "shop committee recognition" agreements that are a practical invitation to company unionism, appeals to the NRA to bolster up the "Red" unions against the A. F. of L., etc.

The virtual resurrection of the complete system of dual unionist trade union tactics, at the expense of the half and quarter turns of the past few years, was dramatized at the Cleveland conference fiasco.

21. The C. P. L. A. has been losing all standing in the trade union movement and most of its influence in it, as a result of its alliance with the C. P., which has made it a miserable tail-end to the official Communist Party in its union splitting adventures, with only a weak gesture of protest here and there. Owing to its right-about-face in trade union tactics, the C. P. L. A. has acquired all of the odium of the official C. P. without any of its revolutionary prestige.

22. The Trotskyites have never had an independent trade union policy. Unable to develop any viewpoint of their own on any question on which Trotsky has not given pontifical utterance, they have—at least until their recent "change of orientation"—clung to the coat-tails of the official party, railing and scolding. They look upon the upsurge of the labor movement with uneasy suspicion and regard the spread of A. F. of L. influence and organization as a fact but an unfortunate one. They are ready, it seems, to "suspend", temporarily and partially, their customary dual unionism and perforce make some "little" concession to reality—but only for a little while. The exact character of the trade union policy of the Trotskyites under the "new orientation" is not yet clear.

23. Only the Communist Opposition has been able to forecast the main tendencies of development of the labor movement and to outline the proper Marxist tactics for the Communists. Of all Communist forces, only the C. P.-O. has been able to make significant headway with the upsurge of trade unionism. The Communist Opposition forecast the rapid growth of the A. F. of L. and the rise of the strike wave. The Communist Opposition defeated in theory and in practise the disruptive sectarian tactics of the official C. P. and championed, also in theory and in

practise, the traditional tactics of Leninism based on the struggle for trade union unity and militancy. The Communist Opposition alone made a realistic analysis of the NRA and of the situation created by it and alone was able to present an effective program for labor under the new situation. And finally it was the Communist Opposition alone of all labor political groups which has been able to play an active and leading part in the recent great struggles of labor and only the Communist Opposition has been able to enhance tremendously its prestige as an organization among large groups of workers.

A Program For The Labor Movement Today

24. On the basis of the above analysis of the present situation and tendencies in the labor movement, we propose the following program of action for unionism today:

- a. A united nation-wide organization drive to unionize the basic industries in the A. F. of L.
- b. The organization of a nation-wide strike movement for the following demands: union recognition, rise in wages to meet rising cost of living and to increase buying power, the shortening of hours to allow for real reemployment, etc.
- c. The defense of the right to strike and to picket.
- d. For the union shop. Against the open shop in all its forms ("interpretations" of Section 7a, the merit clause, etc.).
- e. The organization of a campaign to smash company unionism.
- f. For the class independence of trade unionism. Against class collaboration and "NRA unionism."
- g. For amalgamation and industrial unionism.
- h. For trade union unity inside the A. F. of L. Against dual unionism in all its forms.

ionism in all its forms.

i. For greater democracy in the trade unions. For the building up of a broad and responsible shop stewards movement. For the enlargement of the Executive Council of the A. F. of L. to include representatives of all big international unions.

j. For the removal of all restrictions upon colored workers joining the trade unions. For the abolition of all jim-crowism and discrimination in the trade unions.

k. For social insurance, especially Federal unemployment insurance.

l. For independent labor political action. For a Labor party.

25. One of the greatest problems facing the trade unions today is the assimilation of the millions of new members without any traditions and experience into the labor movement. It will depend largely on the progressive elements in the unions, and to a considerable extent on the Communist Opposition, to what degree these new strata are really assimilated and in what direction, as a haven for militancy and new life or as a passive support of conservatism.

26. The effective struggle for this program of action and the proper assimilation of the new elements as well as the other vital tasks of the trade union movement in this period cannot possibly be realized without building up a new left wing-progressive movement as the crystallization of the growing progressive sentiment in the ranks of labor. The drive for the revival of the organized progressive movement in the trade unions can, under present day circumstances, come only from the Communist Opposition and other militant elements (left S. P. members, etc.) working with it. This is the great historical mission which the present turn in the labor movement places upon the Communist Opposition and which we must fulfill in spite of our extremely meager resources and the tremendous obstacles in the way.

Against a New Intern'l

Letter Of The I. C. O. To The Paris Conference

(Concluded from last issue)

The history of centrism both nationally and internationally clearly establishes the following:

1. Centrism is not a fit weapon with which to correct the tactical line of the Communist party. It is undeniable that many Communist parties in the years 1918-1920 made very serious tactical errors (abstained from revolutionary use of parliaments, despaired of feasibility of revolutionary work in the trade unions, etc.). And it is, moreover, true that, on several of these questions, the centrists had a correct line. But, because of the unsoundness at bottom of their general political position, the centrist parties could exert no influence in correcting the mistakes of the Communist Party—which, with all its mistakes, was after all following a sound fundamental program in general—let alone take the place of the Communist parties.

Since its inception, the I.C.O. has carried on a stubborn fight against the tactical mistakes of the C. I., the C.P.G., and other sections. But it has conducted this fight strictly on the basis of the fundamental Communist position. Our experiences in Germany after the seizure of power by the Fascists have confirmed the fact that our critical methods are the only feasible ones.

2. The experience of the last fifteen years shows clearly that the strongest centrist parties, even the whole centrist International itself, go thru a short period of lively activity and then break up, precisely for the reason that they split up into a definite reformist wing and into a Communist wing. This experience is confirmed, furthermore, by the history of the Socialist Workers Party of Germany; it started to become the revolutionary mass party of Germany but it has steadily lost members since its inception and has already suffered a split. It is not possible in the long run to consolidate organizations which attempt to follow a "middle" position between open reformism and Communism. Such organizations are destined to fail, since part of their adherents are bound to move forward to Communism and others to fall back to open reformism.

We are firmly persuaded, therefore, that organizations which attempt to build nationally and internationally on a centrist base such as is indicated in the Brussels resolutions carry within themselves the seed of splits and dissolution.

The decisive test of workers organizations is the revolution, the immediate struggle for power. The example of the U.S.P.D. during the years 1918-1919 in Germany affords a very clear instance of how centrist parties meet this decisive test. The perpetual oscillation of the U.S.P.D. between revolution and counter-revolution, between bourgeois democracy and proletarian dictatorship, between revolutionary struggle and rotten compromise, led to the defeat of the German working class at every decisive situation.

The attempt to build up an organization on a centrist base to challenge the authority of the Communist party nationally and internationally can lead today to but one definite result, namely, to give aid and comfort to reformism and to extend its influence among the workers, even tho reformism is patently bankrupt in its strongest section, Germany. Such an attempt, therefore, does not work in the direction of revolutionary Marxism but rather runs counter to it. It doesn't lead to the unity of the working class on a revolutionary basis as its proponents maintain. On the contrary, it will bring on further splits, disorganization, confusion and disintegration, thus halting and retarding the renewal of the working class struggle against victorious Fascism in Germany and the massing of Fascist strength in other countries.

* * *

The Need For Unity!

These considerations explain why the I.C.O. refuses to take part in an international conference whose avowed purpose is the for-

mation of a centrist International and the bolstering up of the centrist Socialist Workers Party in Germany. On the other hand, the I.C.O. will be ready at any time and place to work shoulder to shoulder with the independent Socialist parties for such particular aims as will strengthen the working class in its struggle against Fascism and tend to consolidate its fighting strength. We maintain that the mutual cooperation of all workers organizations in opposition to Fascism is not only feasible but urgently necessary. Should the conference wish to further this aim, it would be bound, of course, to give up the idea of excluding the Socialist and Communist Internationals and their allied groups. On the contrary, it would have to get together with them and substitute for its international conference of independent Socialist parties a council of representatives from all anti-Fascist workers organizations. If the leaders of the Socialist and Communist Internationals refuse to take part, the conference would have to devote itself exclusively to consideration of ways and means of furthering the eventual realizations of such an anti-Fascist united front.

The tightening of the Fascist terror in Germany as well as the imminence of imperialist war demand immediate united action of all workers organizations opposed to Fascism and imperialism, irrespective of the fundamental differences between them on other matters.

A new attempt must be made at achieving a minimum of united action of all proletarian groups against the Fascist terror.

As concrete aims of such a united action we propose the following:

- 1. Outside of Germany. (a) United mass meetings and demonstrations against the Fascist terror in Germany. Preparations of proletarian mass actions against Fascism independently of the bourgeoisie, such as strikes against the hauling of German goods. (b) United collections for the victims of Fascist terror, particularly the calling upon trade unions and co-operatives for this purpose, as well as for the financing of illegal work against Fascism within Germany. (c) Material and moral support to the German workers in their endeavor to rebuild genuine trade unions (such as present can be constituted only as illegal skeleton organizations). (d) Exchange of reports as well as mutual technical aid.

- 2. In addition, within Germany: (a) Common organization for the defense and support of illegal work against the Fascist terror. (b) United action for rebuilding of independent trade unions.

The Independent Labor Party, which in its last resolutions voted against the creation of a new International and a new party in Germany, has for some time now carried on a united front campaign with the Communist Party of England against Fascism and the war danger. This would be unthinkable if it considered the Communist Party of England and the C. I. to be counter-revolutionary.

Our proposals have in view the broadening of this effort along two lines: (1) from a national to an international scale and (2) from being limited to united front with the Communist Party to embracing all workers organizations.

We would greatly appreciate if you would bring our proposals before the conference and get for them such consideration as would lead to definite decisions regarding them.

With Communist greetings.

Bureau of the I.C.O.

Paris, end of August, 1933.

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