

### 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

## 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 5000 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 of 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 O'Neal 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. The expression of the

is a grave danger lest, in the anxiety of some pro-  
trade-unionists to bring about a change of leadership  
of the trade unions, bureaucrats 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  
against 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, <sup>only just</sup> as Green and Woll. One should not force  
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 the workers and their organizations. Consequently they are  
prepared to have right wing Socialists make an alliance  
with the labor bureaucrats against them. So be it! We must  
not for one moment hesitate to struggle in the unions becau-  
se of the members of the Socialist party sympathetic with  
the members of the conservative union bureaucracy.  
The members of the Socialist party fighting against

in New York ...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. I 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 due to pleas advanced by the left socialists and other progress 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, 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 toward conflict and not simply a question of our attitude to a war in the future. An agreement can be arrived much difficulty on a resolution dealing with a abstract but differences become very sharp with the necessity of applying general p situation.

### Pacifism, Dominant Note of Pa

The party resolution is a lengthy or sarily bad. It is bad in this case bec primarily of a desire to please every general and against the Italian-Ethic contains paragraphs and sentences w are absolutely correct and, on the pressed which every revolutionar reject. The resolution is against t is a vague reference to the possi gue of Nations. But then th

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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 strength exclusively in the struggle against Italy. In that case there would be no question of Great Britain versus Italy or duty to come to the defense of Ethiopia would be brought into daylight except to some doctrinaire who would say nothing until the day of the proletarian revolution.

The interests of England demand that it struggle against the interests of the revolutionary proletariat in the defense of Ethiopia; from different and hostile elements are fighting for what appears to be the most absurd purpose. It would be the most absurd purpose to assume an indifferent attitude towards Ethiopia only because the imperialist interests demand that Ethiopia be kept free from Italian imperialism.

The working masses in the imperialist and semi-colonial people of the world are simply being exploited by the imperialist bourgeoisie. A kind of sympathy between

dous profits with the 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 should cease to support Ethiopian independence but that we should more clearly emphasize our sympathy with the proposition that we should

We are for the independence of Ethiopia against Italy but we are just as much against the capitalist governments 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-

## DEEPER AND DEEPER IN THE SWAMP

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 only to these comrades: the Soviet Union. It is to that. Furthermore, the defense 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 classes, which takes specific form in these countries, also becomes the policy of the Communist Party. In the last analysis this means a demagogic attack (and whatever they say) and the cap-

party is not against the... How that follows is a problem in logic which the NEC will see fit to solve. If, on the other hand, Mussolini will be as 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 Yipsel resolution on war. We do not know what the amendments consist of but we hope that the Yipsel membership will reject any resolution on war which is not based on the principles outlined in above article.

A. G.

By Herbert Zam

But the policies here enunciated go beyond that. Will anyone 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 "democratic" against "fascist" "small nations"? Again we are in a quandary. The answer is definitely de-

## Lenin's attitude on S and Belgium

Some reason or other those who oppose the slogan of defending the independence of Ethiopia point to Lenin's attitude 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 independence 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 imperialist 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 another? 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 consequently were progressive. In the epoch of imperialism a Marxist must support a colonial people in its struggle against an imperialist 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 explain that Haile Selassie rules the Ethiopian peasants and nomads with an iron hand for the benefit of the feudal nobility. Only the Stalinists 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

Once the position of defending the independence of a colonial people against an attack of an imperialist power follows that we cannot support any legislation which the term 'neutrality' could be used to describe. A revolutionary party, in the case of such a war, is out of the question.

neutral it is impossible, laying aside all other considerations to support the idea of the NEC resolution that we compel a capitalist government to enact stricter neutrality legislation.

But if we do not support neutrality legislation are we not thereby, indirectly at least, encouraging the capitalist government to throw us into an imperialist war? Not at all! The working class does not want our capitalist government to involve us in any war; the Socialist party must struggle to prevent that government from declaring war. But the Socialist party must teach the working class and the people in general that no reliance whatever can be placed in the hypocritical declarations of a capitalist government in favor of peace. It must be repeated over and over again that only the workers, supported by other classes, through their own organized efforts, can prevent war, and that in the last analysis only a revolutionary overthrow of the capitalist system can usher in permanent peace.

No capitalist government ever openly declared that it was in favor of war; peace is always what every capitalist government, including Hitler's, is striving for. Just as pacifists, in the capitalist government machine make it easier, when war is declared, to mobilize the masses behind the capitalist government, so any declaration of neutrality by a capitalist government will serve the same purpose. No worker should be misled into thinking that a capitalist government will be bound by neutrality legislation whenever it deems it necessary, in the interests of the capitalist class, to declare war.

Not that the Socialist party should carry on a campaign against neutrality but that it must carry on a campaign against the idea of trusting the peace declarations of a capitalist government. And should we have representatives in congress we must introduce amendments to the neutrality legislation which would show the insincerity of the capitalist advocates of neutrality.

Even admitting the questionable proposition that it is difficult to explain to the politically backward worker why we cannot support neutrality legislation introduced by a capitalist government, the difficulty of explaining why we supported neutrality legislation, in case a war is declared in spite of such legislation, will be a thousand times greater.

If we want to reason in a "logical" manner there is probably less chance of involving ourselves in a war through the independent activities of the working class than in urging governmental action even on behalf of neutrality. An embargo by government act is infinitely more provocative than a boycott by the workers themselves. And if we urge and support a governmental embargo, and if, because of that, we are involved in a war, how can we fail to support our government in such a war? All this abstract, "logical" reasoning, however, is irrelevant. The fundamental consideration is the necessity for the Socialist party to urge the workers to have no faith in a capitalist government's protestations for peace and to act independently of their capitalist government.

### Against Sanctions by a Capitalist Government

If we are for the independence of Ethiopia why not be realistic and practical about the whole matter and ask that the powerful capitalist states apply sanctions against Mussolini and thus assure the independence of Ethiopia? So runs the argument of the reformist leaders of the Socialist and Communist parties. This kind of practicality is a negation of the class struggle and a betrayal of the proletariat. The NEC resolution and the YPSL proclamation are against sanctions and that is to their credit. The NEC resolution says nothing about the attitude of the Labor party, of the Socialist and Communist Internationals; the YPSL proclamation mentions the position of the Socialist and Communist leaders but does not specify the position of revolutionary socialists in general and we must not hesitate to mention it.

No imperialist government, least of all the British government actually goes to war with Ethiopia. It will do so because its imperialist interests require it. In such a war the socialists by ally themselves with the working class and fight for the independence of Ethiopia. The working class, by supporting the Ethiopian struggle, is actually fighting for the independence of Ethiopia.

national liberation. Communist Parties will support war their own ruling class in defending the attacked nation. We have Poland and Czechoslovakia in mind."

Further light is thrown on the subject by the Communist Party of Holland which has declared its readiness to fight in a war for the national independence of Holland.

Czechoslovakia, Poland and Holland are secondary imperialist powers. Holland has an enormous colonial empire. Czechoslovakia has a highly trustified industry which dominates the country; it has within its borders several million living as oppressed nationalities. Poland has a semi-fascist governmental system, is an inveterate enemy of the Soviet Union and ally of Nazi Germany, and is ruled by a clique dominated by large landowners and manufacturers. Poland is very similar to Austria in these respects. Would we support the ruling class of Austria in war for its national independence?

And of course, if the above countries are also to be defended, the smaller ones like monarchist Greece and Yugoslavia, imperialist Belgium, "neighborly" Rumania, Horthy Hungary follow as a matter of course, not to speak of the Scandinavian countries.

The policy is now complete. The last chapter has been written. The Comintern has not left a single loophole for refusing to fight in a capitalist war: If the Soviet Union is involved, we fight. If democratic countries fight fascist countries, we fight. If small imperialists are involved, we fight.

Only such far-fetched eventualities as a war between the United States and England alone, or between Germany and Italy alone are still open to us. Won't some good Browder-Pollitt-Stalin hurry and explain this neglect?

### III

Perhaps the worst example of the degeneration of the Comintern attitude to war is to be seen in the manifesto of the Italian Communist Party on the Italo-Ethiopian situation. Of course the Italian Communists are unequivocally against Italy in this war, and that position is to be greeted. We must also take into account that the Italian Communists, like the Socialists, are working under the most difficult conditions, both in Italy and abroad. But we cannot overlook such gross opportunism as is found in the manifesto merely on this account. After all many have died for a false cause.

The manifesto is headed "For the Honor of Italy! Down with Mussolini and his Criminal Government!" Now this is a very peculiar reason to give for being opposed to the raid by Italy.

"The honor of Italy... the honor of Italy were as Mussolini insists, by the invasion of Ethiopia, would then be for it? Nor is this heading an accidental reference, dominates the entire manifesto and sets the tone. "The rub clique says... that this war is demanded by our national honor. This is false. Our honor is made slimy... Down with the fascist aggressor that dishonors Italy."

In addition to the argument that the war is contrary to Italy's honor, here is the paragraph which summarized the reasons for the Communists' opposition:

"This war is, from a military viewpoint, a tragic folly. It will completely ruin the finances and economy of the country. It focuses the indignation of the entire world against the brutality of the cynicism and ill-will of fascist diplomacy, humiliating Italy in the eyes of all people."

Not one of these reasons is a class-conscious, proletarian reason. This type of opposition sounds like the opposition of rank-and-file fascists, not of revolutionary workers. At best, these arguments are the arguments of "rotten liberals." If the war were not a tragic folly, would we support it? If instead of ruining the economy and finances of the country, would we support it? And why should we regret the fact that it focuses the indignation of the entire world against fascism? Isn't it obvious that on the basis of such arguments no revolutionary struggle against fascism or against war can be conducted?

Here is another gem.

"The fascists say, the newspapers of the capitalist war profiteers say, that war will bring prosperity, riches, land, raw materials. This is false. It is a miserable lie."

Again we are compelled to ask: Suppose it were not a lie? Suppose Italy did gain all that is claimed? Would that be a reason for being any the less opposed to a war? As a matter of fact, how have all other imperialist powers established themselves in the world except thru war? As Socialists, we are not opposed to war by this or that country, merely because they do not achieve the specified objective. That is the point of view of the opposition groups of capitalists, but it cannot be the point of view of the working class.

If Italian fascism is weakened as a result of the war, if the finances and economy break down, if world opinion turns against Italy, then we have no reason to lament, for these conditions are the prerequisites for the success of the revolutionary struggle against fascism. This is revolutionary defeatism with which the manifesto of the Italian Communist Party has nothing in common.

## TOWARD SOCIALIST CLARITY

ALBERT GOLDMAN

### A Permanent Feature of the Appeal

COUNTLESS problems arise in the socialist movement. Theoretical and practical questions crowd in one upon another in different sections of the country. They cannot all be treated at length, especially in a magazine so small as the Appeal. But they should be mentioned and discussed. An attempt will be made to treat those questions which do not receive extended discussion either in the Appeal or elsewhere in our party press.

If comrades disagree they are at liberty to say so in letters, without mincing words. If not too long, the letters will be printed; if too long their gist will be given. There is nothing in the revolutionary movement so important from an educational standpoint as a serious discussion on questions of theory and practice. We can have all the lectures and classes in the world and our membership will know very little about the problems confronting our movement. One hot discussion involving an immediate problem or a theoretical question can educate our members more than a hundred lectures and classes. And what is more, party members, like other human beings, love a fight and will come to hear a discussion of opposing view points but will not come to a formal lecture or class. We hope that the readers of the Appeal will not hesitate to write and take issue with any view point presented in the pages of the Appeal and in this particular.

### Socialist Election Victories

THE electoral victories achieved by the Socialist party in Reading and Bridgeport furnished occasion for the New Leader to go into raptures and to point out a moral which the right wing hopes the party members will take to heart. No one denies that the party organizations of Bridgeport and Reading are in the hands of the right wing. Consequently the fact that McLevy was elected mayor of Bridgeport and Stump mayor of Reading is to the right wing a justification for their kind of socialism.

"No pseudo-revolutionaries have shaped party policies, no scholastic speculations of what we will do during a period of chaos and confusion have disturbed the work of reaching the masses." So goes the editorial in the New Leader of Nov. 9th. It was said of the Bourbons of France that they learned nothing and forgot nothing. Of the right wing it can be said that they learn nothing and forget everything.

The socialists of Germany had tremendous electoral victories; the same is true of the communists of Germany. And what a pathetic role both parties played in the struggle against Hitler! They also pointed to their gains during elections as proof that fascism could not gain power. The Austrians had a tremendous number of votes. But the leadership could only point to the little, weak fingers of the Austrian fascists.



of the two cities. Those cities that the workers lose have travelled away from the capitalist parties and expect something from the Socialist party. With McLevy and Camp at the head of the Socialist parties in those cities the 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.

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### 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 to the 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 S.P. It is clear that the W.P. has nothing to do with the S.P. as an independent party 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.

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### 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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