

SWP Statement on Dissolution of Comintern

The Third International Is Dead--Long Live The Fourth International!

(The following statement was issued on May 25 by the National Committee of the Socialist Workers Party)

In dissolving the Communist International, the treacherous Stalin clique has provided official recognition of the fact that the Comintern has long been dead as a revolutionary international. Its place has been taken by Trotsky's Fourth International, which lives and fights and which nobody can dissolve.

The degeneration of the Comintern began in 1924, after Lenin's death. The degeneration was caused by the isolation of the first workers' state in capitalist encirclement and the rise in the Soviet Union of a privileged bureaucracy, product of the economic and cultural backwardness of the agrarian country inherited from the Czars. The bureaucracy was a fusion of the conservative wing of the Bolshevik Party and millions of state functionaries retained from the former Czarist and capitalist apparatus. The bureaucracy took advantage of the exhaustion of the masses after the civil war and was able to seize control of the party, the unions and, the state and to transform them into totalitarian instruments of the privileged caste. This process of degeneration could have been halted and turned back by victories of the proletarian revolution in advanced countries, but the Soviet bureaucracy in turn became the principal cause of the uninterrupted series of defeats sustained under its leadership by the workers of the world.

The Soviet bureaucracy consolidated its power under the banner of Stalin's reactionary and Utopian theory, first promulgated in October 1924, of building "socialism in one country" as against the Lenin-Trotsky program of international revolution; Events since then have fully demonstrated that "socialism in one country" means in reality socialism in no country. Instead of fighting for the extension of the October revolution to other countries, the Communist parties were deformed into puppets of Stalin's reactionary foreign policy. Instead of the World Congresses of the Comintern under Lenin and Trotsky (the first four Congresses, 1919-1922), the Soviet bureaucracy has held one Congress (1924) to seize control of the Comintern machinery; another (1928) to secure formal endorsement for the already accomplished expulsion, exile and imprisonment of the Left Opposition and to transfer the Comintern machinery into the hands of the Stalin clique at the top of the bureaucracy; and a final Congress (1935) to record the conversion of the Comintern to chauvinist support of any capitalist government allied with Stalin. Having thus sold the services of the Comintern to his capitalist "allies," Stalin could scarcely be expected to show any more compunction in similarly selling them its formal dissolution.

In 1933, in proclaiming the necessity for the Fourth International we, and our co-thinkers throughout the world, declared that the Comintern was dead as a revolutionary body, by which we meant that there could be no longer any hope of halting its degeneration and turning it back to its revolutionary origins. Like the Second International which preceded it, the Third International had become too ossified to permit of regeneration. This conclusion was rendered inescapable when the Stalinized Communist Party of Germany, with 600,000 members and six million followers, capitulated to Hitler fascism without a fight.

Stalin's monstrous crime in Germany climaxed other catastrophes which this organizer of defeats had perpetrated upon the international working class — by his collaboration with the British trade union bureaucracies which facilitated their betrayal of the General Strike of 1926, his collaboration with Chiang Kai-shek which enabled the Chinese bourgeoisie to crush the Chinese revolution (1925-1927), etc.

Since 1933 we have seen the most deliberate betrayals of the workers by Stalin's Comintern, first in the service of the

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New Jersey Unions Take Big Steps Toward Labor Party

Steps towards the creation of an independent labor party in New Jersey were taken this week at the seventh annual convention of the American Labor League held in Trenton, attended by 300 delegates, representing about 40 local unions and approximately 300,000 CIO and AFL workers.

While the convention did not organize a full-fledged political party, it did take three measures in that direction. (1) The Chairman of the League, Carl Holderman was empowered to form a committee of 12 to conduct an organizing campaign in the six most highly industrialized counties in the state. (2) Three county organizations are to solicit individual memberships in the League and call a state-wide convention as soon as 50,000 membership cards are obtained. (3) An increase in the per capita tax on the League membership was voted to provide necessary funds.

The need for an independent labor party was clearly expressed by delegate Steve Remsen of the UAW who said, "What else can we do for our people, the workers? We can't strike any more because of our no-strike pledge. We can't get wage increases because of the War Labor Board

and Byrnes. The only thing left for us is independent political action."

STALINIST OBSTRUCTION

The official leadership of the League in alliance with the Stalinists did their best to obstruct the formation of a labor party. Before the convention the Stalinists, whose main strength is in the Newark area in the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers locals, campaigned actively to send delegates to the convention instructed to vote against the formation of a labor party.

It was the pressure of the rank-and-file delegates from Shipyard locals 1 and 16, the dyers union, the auto locals, the Camden textile workers and the retail clerks that prevented the leadership from making the convention no more than an ineffective two-day talking spree for Roosevelt.

The delegates were warned against any blanket endorsement of Roosevelt by Samuel Colton, state executive secretary of the League, who said, "By 1944, it may be dangerous to go to labor and say, 'Support President Roosevelt.'" The Chrysler strikes and the rubber strikes in Akron are anti-administration strikes. We want an independent labor party so that we can tell the President that he won't have labor's support in 1944 under any and all circumstances."

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WORKERS IN MASS ACTION AGAINST WLB RUN-AROUND

How Strike of Detroit UAW Workers Began

DETROIT, May 24. — The rank and file walkout began at the Jefferson and Kercheval plants of Chrysler Corp. at 10 A. M. Thursday, May 20 when 8,500 workers walked out and formed a procession which wound around the buildings under a placard: "United We Stand." There was no further picketing after this demonstration. There was no need for it since sentiment was overwhelming against going to work until the grievances were settled.

The walkout immediately spread to the Dodge Main Plant containing over 12,000 workers and to the smaller Dodge Lynch Road plant. Next, 3,600 unionists closed the Kelsey-Hayes buildings. 2,500 workers then shut the de Soto Bomber plant. In addition to these the small Ray-Day factory staged a walkout. (The Dodge Truck Plant containing 4,000 men was forced to close on Saturday because of lack of parts.)

In all the plants it was the same story of failure to settle grievances. This is particularly true of the Chrysler and Dodge Plants. [See interview with a Chrysler union official which appears in this issue on page 4.]

Then there was ever present the question of promotions, demotions and departmental transfers in accordance with seniority rules. Men and women "were taken from the streets" for the better paying jobs whereas the old timers with long seniority records were not upgraded despite previous promises from the Chrysler and Dodge managements. It was just such an incident that touched off the spark in the Dodge plant.

About seven weeks ago Dodge opened up Department 229, the Sound Detector and Searchlight sections of the Radio Department. An agreement was made with the management that they would hire 300 workers to get the department started and after that they would transfer workers from other departments to take the better paying positions. Fourteen additional workers were taken off the street and the management refused to substitute older employees for these new people.

This dispute was raging when six additional girls were hired by the company at the rate of \$1.12 an hour while girls with a long seniority record were receiving from 93 to 97 cents per hour. This straw broke the camel's back and the Dodge workers acted with their feet. The deliberate provocations of the company was too much for the workers.

As Vincent Klein, Financial Secretary of Chrysler Local 7, explained, the answer to all the grievances was a flat—No! The company people would sit around in conference and grin. "Suppose we say no, what are you going to do about it? You can't strike!"

The Chrysler moguls are not the only ones who are baiting the men. This is likewise the studied policy of Henry Ford. To stay a

Life Today In The Mining Towns

By George Breitman

PITTSBURGH, PA., May 24—There are more than a half million coal miners in this country, but the great majority of city workers have little idea of the kind of life they live. Yet it takes only a short stay in the mining areas of Western Pennsylvania to get an approximate picture of their living conditions and to realize that their work is the hardest, most dangerous and, considering all aspects, the most underpaid of any important industry.

The typical miner in this area is not a young man or a newcomer to his work. He has worked in the mines since his youth. The age level is higher than before the war because so many miners have been drafted, probably a higher percentage than in industry generally; very few miners even ask for deferment. It is higher also because a considerable number of the youth in the mining areas have gone elsewhere, into higher-paying and far safer factory work.

DANGEROUS WORK

Coal mining is a normally hazardous occupation. With the beginning of the war program, and with the greedy coal operators seeing the opportunity of a generation to swell their profits, production has been speeded up, the coal is not allowed to "bleed," and industrial accidents have increased.

In 1941, 64,000 of the men who go down into the mines were killed or injured. The number of casualties had increased to 75,000 by 1942, and the United Mine Workers estimates that dead and injured will reach the total of 100,000 in the mines this year.

Coal work is as unhealthy as it is dangerous. Working down in the earth subjects you to colds, rheumatism, asthma, the "miners' cough" and a host of other diseases.

The miner's toil is arduous, cramping, back-straining. When he comes out of the mines at the end of the work day, he is thoroughly exhausted. When you hear him complaining about the low meat ration and the meat shortage, it is not because he has a special fondness for meat but because he needs it to replenish his energy. Nowadays, he complains, he finds it hard to do any work after the first five or six hours.

The miner's community generally offers a dreary cultural life. He sometimes calls his home a shack, and that's a fair description for these barnlike structures owned by the coal companies and furnished with nothing but the walls when he moves in. There are plenty of beer taverns and churches and the general store, and in some places there is a movie. Where the union has a hall of its own, it becomes an im-

walkout of the men in the Ford Highland Park plant Ben Garrison, President of Ford Local 1400, and other local union officials staged a 23 hour sitdown in the office of Fred Clark, director of labor relations, until the latter agreed to discuss the men's grievances.

portant center, but this is all too rare.

The roads are poor and it is not easy to get around. The miner's kids have to travel a considerable distance to get to school. They don't have a chance to go far in school as a rule—they are taught to read and write and salute the flag, and they go to work at an early age.

CAUSE OF THE CRISIS

The miner produced more coal last year than ever before.

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Pioneer Publishes New Cannon Book

In the first five months of publication the sales of Leon Trotsky's latest book, "In Defense of Marxism" exceed those of any previous Pioneer Publication by Trotsky, reported Pioneer Publishers this week. Letters from all parts of the country indicate that this collection of articles and letters written during the last year of Trotsky's life has been immediately recognized as a Marxist classic.

Pioneer has just announced that "The Struggle for a Proletarian Party" by James P. Cannon is scheduled for June publication. This book is a companion volume to Leon Trotsky's "In Defense of Marxism." It completes the documentation of the historical struggle, waged within the Socialist Workers Party against petty-bourgeois revisionism. It shows how that struggle was organized and elucidates the principles of Bolshevik party organization more concretely and comprehensively than this subject has ever before been treated.

The book includes J. P. Cannon's pamphlet "The Struggle for a Proletarian Party"; his letters written during the factional struggle; and the S. W. P. resolutions. The organizational document of the petty-bourgeois opposition: "The War and Bureaucratic Conservatism" is printed as an appendix in order to contrast their principles on organization with those of the Trotskyists.

"The Struggle for a Proletarian Party" is approximately 300 pages. Clothbound copies will sell for \$2.00, paperbound \$1.50. Place advance orders with Pioneer Publishers, 116 University Pl., N. Y.

Auto And Rubber Workers Join Miners In Militant Fight For Wage Increases

Workers Forced to Strike in Defense of Their Living Standards Slashed By Soaring Prices, Taxes, and Anti-Union Profiteers

WLB Rejects Main Demands of Miners Negotiations With Operators Resumed By Miners' Union

Amidst a spreading strike wave, directed against the War Labor Board and its policy of "starving labor," the board announced on May 25 its decision in the United Mine Workers case, rejecting the demand of the union for a \$2 a day wage increase. The board also denied all the other important union demands, except to raise the present \$20 vacation pay allowance to \$50 and to direct the coal operators to furnish the miners with safety equipment and working tools. Chairman Davis of the WLB estimated that the elimination of these occupational charges would benefit the miners from 8 to 15 cents a day. The WLB also directed the coal operators to resume collective bargaining negotiations with the union on the issue of portal to portal pay.

The WLB, by its decision, has proved the truthfulness of the Mine Workers accusation that it is a "court packed against labor" as well as the correctness of the UMW leadership's policy in the present coal controversy of opposing the WLB and disputing its role as superarbiter of the American labor movement.

Although the labor representatives on the WLB dissented from the board decision in denying the miners the wage increase, they continue to hold their membership and by their presence and support are propping up this labor hating, corporation-dominated body.

Throughout the present crisis the coal operators have refused to engage in collective bargaining with the union. From the first they rejected all the union demands and insisted on throwing the case into the WLB. The capitalist newspapers are predicting that the way is now paved for an agreement granting portal to portal pay allowance to the coal miners. If in the negotiations which are likely to be resumed again, the coal operators do not come across and grant the mine representatives a satisfactory agreement a walkout will be precipitated by the end of the month, when the present truce period expires.

The men in the coal fields are growing increasingly impatient and bitter. The WLB decision, when it hits the coal fields will be viewed as a flaunting insult to the coal miners and their plea for a right to live.

By JOHN SAUNDERS

DETROIT, May 24.—29,000 members of Chrysler Local 7 and Dodge Local 2 employed by the Chrysler Corporation returned to work today in accordance with decisions made at union meetings yesterday afternoon. This ended their four day walkout which was provoked by the management's failure to bargain in good faith and settle the ever mounting grievances accumulated over the past eleven months.

These workers went back to the plants only after overwhelming pressure from the entire Federal and State governmental apparatus, the War Labor Board, the Army and Navy top officers, the F. B. I., the management supported by the whole capitalist press and all the radio news commentators. On top of all this the workers found that their own international officers were arrayed against them to a man.

Despite the frantic broadcasts of R. J. Thomas, the international president, every few hours over the radio and despite the speeches made by him and Richard Frankenstein, Vice-President of the UAW-CIO, at the Sunday afternoon meetings, the rank and file resisted the pressure as long as possible. They agreed to go back only after they saw no other course open because of the cowardly attitude of their international officials.

WANT GRIEVANCES SETTLED

The rank and file made their sentiments known in no uncertain terms. They intended to see that the company bargained in good faith and were determined to stage another walkout if the management failed to live up to its agreement. But their wrath was mainly directed at their own international officers whom they called upon to "represent the workers and not the management."

Leo Lamotte, UAW Chrysler director, was singled out for special attention. At both meetings resolutions were passed unanimously calling for his removal as director. Not even Thomas and Frankenstein dared come to his defense. Nor were the men satisfied when Thomas told them that he had appointed Frankenstein to sit in on future discussions with the management and the WLB. "Boo-Boo" Frankenstein received his usual share of Bronx cheers when he arose to speak. When he grabbed the mike to try and explain to a young militant worker why the local union men were not contacted by the international officers before they went into session with the management and the government officials, he was howled down from

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By JOE ANDREWS

AKRON, OHIO, May 24 — Outraged by the recent decision of the War Labor Board, 40,000 rubber workers in the Goodrich, Firestone and Good-year companies, continued their protest strike into the third day.

After almost a year's delay, the WLB handed down a decision on May 21, granting only a three cent an hour wage increase to the rubber workers, and flatly rejecting their demands for night shift bonuses. This came after a WLB panel had recommended an 8 cent increase, to which the rubber workers are entitled according to the "Little Steel" formula. The labor members of the WLB dissented in the decision.

As soon as news of the decision reached the plants early Saturday morning, department after department at the Goodrich company walked out. By 10 a. m. the plant was shut down tight as a drum, and thousands of workers jammed the United Rubber Workers Local 5 hall nearby.

SPONTANEOUS WALKOUTS

A similar angry reaction to the WLB ruling occurred at the Firestone plant, where almost all the workers quit work shortly after the news of the decision was out.

The walkouts were spontaneous. As the news of the WLB decision spread like wildfire through the various plant buildings of both Firestone and Goodrich, department meetings were held. Rank and file workers denounced the unjust ruling and threw down their tools.

The miserable three cent wage increase was an insult they could not take. When the larger departments walked out, the rest of the plants at both companies emptied like a sieve as workers poured out of every exit. After the first hour only those workers necessary for maintenance of working on perishable materials remained within, and this was by agreement with the strikers.

"We've waited 12 months, the WLB has pondered this thing for almost a year . . . and all for three cents an hour," one union leader stated. "That's our reward for patience."

The Goodyear Plant was not shut down immediately. This plant is not as well organized as the other two major plants. Some departments continued to work Saturday and Sunday, and a majority of the plant was shut down only after picket lines were stationed at the plant gates.

At Firestone small picket lines were sufficient to keep all workers out. At Goodrich no picket lines were necessary.

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JAMES P. CANNON

National Secretary of The Socialist Workers Party Will Speak On

THE END OF THE COMINTERN AND THE PROSPECTS OF LABOR INTERNATIONALISM

SUNDAY EVE., MAY 30 - 8 P. M. IRVING PLAZA - 15 IRVING PLACE - NEW YORK CITY

Question and Discussion Period

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