PARTY PRE-CONVENTION DISCUSSION SECTION

(The article which follows is a sontinuation of the article by Comrade Foster in the Daily Worker of Feb. 12th, entitled, "As to New Lines and Old Lines." In this first Decline of the A. F. of L." in the Jan-Feb. issue of "The Commu- corruption, materially and ideologmist,") made by Comrades Bittelman, Browder, Aronberg, Hathaway, Wagenknecht, Costrell, Gomez and day. as well as with the answer in which follows, Comrade Foster contion of social reformism in the labor movement.)

. . .

defending the capitalist system, so- him. The central issue involved in the cial reformism is presented to the controversy now turning around workers from within their own ranks my article in the current number of as the working class program, by "The Communist" deals primarily their own leaders. Social democracy, with the role of social reformism in the chief exponent of reformism in the class struggle and its relation to the labor movement, and around bourgeois reformism. It will be well, which all other labor reformistic curtherefore, to consider this matter lents turn, including the A. F. of L. first and subsidiary questions later. bureaucracy, is in the realest sense Bourgeois reformism and social of the word, as Lenin said, the out entirely. (Now the CROM of proletarian revolution. reformism are basically the same. agency of the employing class in the They are merely two phases of cap- ranks of the workers.

40.00 1.—Social Reformism the Main Danger.

Of the two phases of capitalist dangerous character. Social democreformism, social reformism pre- racy is the principal instrument of sents the main danger for the work- the employers to weaken the ideoling class. This is because of (1) ogy of the working class, to prevent its strong organizational base in the the growth of revolutionary undercorrupted labor aristocracy and la- standing and struggle among the bor bureaucracy, and (2) its insid- workers, by the sowing of reformist ious approach to the workers under illusions among them and by forcethe guise of being the working class ful break-up of their movement. It is the central enemy that the Comprogram.

The social democratic leadership, to gain the leadership of the masses munist Party has to defeat in order rupted labor aristocracy and labor for the proletarian revolution. bureaucracy, uses all of its great

Consequently, although we must power as the controlling head of fight against all phases of capitalist vast political and industrial organreformism, we must concentrate our izations of the workers to push through its program of social remain fire against its most dangerform, which is only the program of ous form, social reformism, which the employers disguised and which in this country is represented paralyze.; the action of the workers. by the A. F. of L. bureaucracy. With the help of the employers and This we must be very clear about. the state it makes ruthless war upon the Communists at the head of the It is the error of my article not to increasingly revolutionary masses, for this attack, as differentiated breaking strikes and otherwise detionary struggles in Germany, in the British general strike, as well as in a thousand other working class bat- the Dec., 1928, "Communist International," etc. tles, show how effectively the cap-

italists use against the revolutionary All these documents, of course workers the powerful social demo- mako sharp attacks against social cratic, social reformistic organiza- reformism (concretely, the A. F. of tion. The treachery of the A. F. of L. and S. P.), but their weakness is L. bureaucracy and the socialist that they do not point this out as party can only be understood in the the main danger, as against bourgeois reformism. It was the draft same sense.

reformism. The social reformists, who include the A. F. of L. bureau-necessary explanations. Simply to

of the C. I. decision which gave the Social reformism not only has a lead to correct this mistake. How I Social reformism not only has a powerful organizational base in the skilled aristocracy of labor, but its manner of approach to the mass of workers is far more insidious and human the far more insid demoralizing than that of bourgeois Let the other comrades, who have

Bourgeois Reformism and Social Reformism

recourse to the methods of social gle becomes clearly evident.

By WILLIAM Z. FOSTER.

article he took issue sharply with italist reformism in general, the pur- of the employers, to readapt themthe criticism of his article ("The italists and main is to shield the capitalists and capitalism through the ists.

Comrade Bittelman is wrong when

ically, of the labor aristocracy, and he categorically declares that it is through the latter the exertion of impermissible to speak of social rea demoralizing and paralyzing ef- formist organizations, in a given Grecht, in the Daily of the previous fect upon the broad masses of the situation, being in crisis or decline. working class. The distinguishing He is also incorrect when he dethe same issue of "The Communist" difference between these two phases clares that if it is said that a given by Comrade Bedacht. In the article of capitalist reformism lies in the social reformist organization, the A. manner in which they are presented F. of L., is in decline, this necestinues his discussion of the situa- to the workers. While bourgeois sarily implies a theory of the liquireformism comes to the workers dation of the A. F. of L. and of from without, urged more or less social reformism. The dialectics of openly by capitalist elements frankly social reformism altogether escape

probably do thruout the development tively very little upon social reform-Let us consider the situation in if a "Left" fascism which brings ism, especially in its dealings with

formist method and will rely solely are all to be sharply criticized.

4. American Trustified Capital and Social Reformism.

In view of the foregoing analysis, developed in this country; the ultralet us now examine the extent to rapid growth of the industries in which trustified capital, the decisive general and the trusts in particusection of capital, has tended to rely lar, the rich natural resources of upon direct bourgeois dictatorship the country, the presence of a workand how much it has tended to- ing class whose development was the United States. The American resistance the attempts of the workwards utilizing social reformism. relatively slow because of various capitalists were strong enough to do ers to organize into the A. F. of L. basing itself primarily upon the cor-in the struggle against capitalism We must see how it has oscillated bourgeoisifying tendencies (free between methods of open dictator- land, etc.), lack of heterogenity,

ship and of social reformism. This etc.

direct methods of terrorizing and and bourgeois reformism. But, de- every industry. The state power whom they no longer had such keen corrupting the workers and to use spite this, they have not failed to was used violently to smash the old need for, and the taking more clearly single out social reformism less the traditional methods and or- promptly call into their service the unions.

ganizations of social reformism than social reformist agents wherever The objective of this assault, the of controlling and exploiting their noranzing the workers' mass at-tacks against capitalism and steer-ing it into illusory channels of re-form. The disastrous betrayals of the workers in the post-war revolu-

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(Continued from Page One) A. Kramer, New Milford, Conn. H, New York City 4.00

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1.00 1.00 indicate a widespread revolutionary 1.00 situation there, which the support-1.00 1.00 tage of. 1.00 General Vicente Perez-Soto, presi-

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1.00 ident Garbi of the state of Sucre. 1.00 Unit A. New York City .. both close friends of the dictator, time. H. Prvidlo, New York City 1.00 Juan Vicente Gomez, have been ar-Zean Day, Newport, R. I... 1.00

tion of the conservative unions. the social reformists. This did not prevent the capital-

ists, however, from making use of upon methods of force to hold the ing tempo in the different periods. through the National Civic Federa-

means. Even Italian capitalism, into four periods, (a) pre-war, (b) demoralize the workers. It was despite its present unconcealed dic- war, (c) post-war, (d) present per- characteristic of this period that tatorship, will, as it confronts its iod, and the varying tempo of so- great employers who would not per-

aristocracy, spreading reformist il-lusions among the masses, in order the trusts and up to the entrance chiefs, in such class collaboration in-the trusts and up to the entrance chiefs, in such class collaboration in-the trusts and up to the entrance chiefs, in such class collaboration in-the trusts and up to the entrance chiefs, in such class collaboration in-the trusts and up to the entrance chiefs, in such class collaboration in-the trusts and up to the entrance chiefs, in such class collaboration in-the trusts and up to the entrance chiefs, in such class collaboration in-the trusts and up to the entrance chiefs, in such class collaboration in-the trusts and up to the entrance chiefs, in such class collaboration in-the trusts and up to the entrance chiefs, in such class collaboration in-the trusts and up to the entrance chiefs, in such class collaboration in-the trusts and up to the entrance chiefs, in such class collaboration in-the trusts and up to the entrance chiefs, in such class collaboration in-the trusts and up to the entrance chiefs, in such class collaboration in-the trusts and up to the entrance chiefs, in such class collaboration in-the trusts and up to the entrance chiefs, in such class collaboration into shield itself from the revolution- of the United States into the world stitutions as the National Civic Fedary working class. This it will war, trustified capital relied rela- eration.

During the war period the capi- fare systems, group insurance, em- The post-war period has been one Italy, for example. There fascism, forward the pseudo-labor character- the workers directly in the indus-the workers directly in the indus-the indus-the set the workers directly in the indus-the set the set of with a whole series of illusions about of decline for the A. F. of L. and of "a method of the unconcealed dic-tatorship of the bourgeoisie," (Com-garb or by the reconstitution of the bob of corrupting the labor aris-the workers directly in the indus-their attitude towards the A. F. of with a whole series of illusions about their attitude towards the A. F. of with a whole series of illusions about their attitude towards the A. F. of with a whole series of illusions about their attitude towards the A. F. of with a whole series of illusions about their attitude towards the A. F. of unconcealed dic-their attitude towards the A. F. of unconcealed dic-their attitude towards the A. F. of unconcealed dic-garb or by the reconstitution of the the job of corrupting the labor aris-the indus-their attitude towards the A. F. of unconcealed dic-the abolition of poverty," "perma-nent prosperity." 'workers becoming intern program) has not only sent social democratic party and trade tocracy and breaking up the move- make more use of social reformism. nent prosperity," 'workers becoming the socialist party and the General unions in semi-fascist forms. So- ments of the semi-skilled and un- To mobilize the workers for the war capitalists," etc.), I have summarized not shut their eyes to realities. The Confederation of Labor into decline, cial democracy is the bulwark of skilled. It drove even the conserva- they had to call more directly than under the title of Capitalist Effibut it has practically wiped them the capitalist system against the tive A. F. of L. unions out of the ever before the leaders of the A. F. ciency Socialism, are well known and trustified industries. The smash- of L. into their service. Result, a need no description here.

Mexico also is in a serious crisis.) Because my article and the other ing of the Amalgamated Associa- wide modification of their former This was a period of the minimiz-Mexico also is in a serious crisis.) But does the smashing of the tra-ditional social reformist organiza-tions in Italy mean that the Italian N. F. of L. in this sense of the policy of trustified capital. Because my article and the other ing of the use of the social reformist of the trade unions into many in-the signal of the pre-war open shop onlicy of trustified capital. Because my article and the other ing of the use of the social reformist of the trade unions into many in-the signal of the pre-war open shop of ebb in the use of the social reformist of the trade unions into many in-the signal of the pre-war open shop of ebb in the use of the social reformist of ebb in the use of the social reformist of ebb in the use of the social reformist of ebb in the use of the social reformist of ebb in the use of the social reformist of ebb in the use of the social reformist of ebb in the use of the social re-formists by the employees. The of ebb in the use of the social re-formists by the employees. The old finally abandoned the social re- in varying objective situations, they Efforts of the workers to organize and strike were met with iron ing the unions freely to organize in Left unions but also the A. F. of industries, the employers at the testifies, McKees Rocks, Colorado, union movement as a barrier against West Virginia, Calumet, Lawrence, a too wide spread of the unions. In In no industrial country did many industries, notably steel, they etc. conservative trade unionism meet refused to depart from the open with such violent resistance as in shop policy and met with powerful

During the Post-War Period.

we shall do, looking towards a solu- The capitalists have been strong pendulum swung far back in the re- of the trade union movement. From employers turned a deaf car to the tation cannot be disputed. Comrade tion of the question of whether or enough to, as a rule, take pretty verse direction, towards the methods 1919 to 1923 practically every union A. F. of L. bureaucracy that it be Bittelman is in error when he denies not the A. F. of L. is in decline or directly in hand themselves the job of open dictatorship. The employers in the country, excepting only a re- permitted, with its company-union- the decline and sees only a process crisis, and if so, what this signifies. of corrupting the labor aristocracy generally, following the lead of big latively few ultra-skilled organiza- ized trade unions, to organize the of readaptation. The question is It is indisputable that American and of smashing back the move- capital, largely cast aside social re- tions were menaced with destruction. workers in the trustified industries rather whether this decline still conchiefly, industrially and politically, trustified capital has in general ments of the masses through use formism and delivered a violent at- It was a period of the capitalists and thus to help the employers ex- tinues and what forms the readaptended to depend more upon its own of state power, economic pressure tack against the trade unions in kicking out the social reformists ploit them. At the same time the tation is taking.

directly in hand themselves the job

Revolt in Venezuela

CUCUTA, Colombia, Feb. 19-Re-26 Union Square, who says that the only to the European countries but role in it?

dent of the state of Zulia, and Pres- book is having the largest sale a also to the United States, which is non-fiction book has had for some an integral part of the world situation.

without and to avoid the organiza- a diminishing need for the help of by breaking strikes of the old trade

the A. F. of L. leaders politically, began to elaborate the most insidious L. bureaucracy as betrayers of the workers in subjection? By no Let us divide recent labor history tion, the capitalist parties, etc., to It developed in its factories and by the refusal of the capitalists to developing revolutionary crisis, have cial reformism in the class strug- mit an A. F. of L. organizer within ruthless open shop policy in the in- clares that "Green and Company's a mile of their industrial plants dustries) to corrupt the labor aristo- service to capitalism at this time reformism in corrupting the labor In the pre-war era, that is, dur- would sit down and hob-nob with cracy and to demoralize the broad does not consist in capital accepting The main features of this bourgeois two million workers still within the

reformism (company unionism, wel- ranks of the A. F. of L."

clined as organs of struggle for the workers (and to emphasize this phase of the A. F. of L. decline was

spread of reformist illusions among unions have steadily crumbled in the resistance, not only in the case of the railroad, ship-building and other the workers in the industries in-face of American imperialism's creased. The big employers used policy of the industries of the open Let unions but also the A. F. of materine developed the company chiefly their own bourgeois reformist shop plus an elaborate system of apparatus, rather than the social bourgeois reformism. They have not reformist apparatus, the A. F. of L. been able to organize even the most Nor could all the shrieks and beg- highly skilled workers, although the gings and concessions and strike past several years have been ones breaking of the A. F. of L. leaders, of unprecedented industrial activity. the adoption of the "new wage On the contrary they have constantly policy," "higher strategy of labor," lost membership, organization, and and the whole elaborated policy of strategic position in industry. That intensified class collaboration, this is most distinctly a process of During the post-war period the war time, but to break the backbone change the capitalist policy. The decline and not only one of readap-

The Present or "Third Period."

The post-war period was distinctly what does this imply for the old we are entering into a new period, has in mind; does it mean the rewhich the 6th World Congress of the construction of the A. F. of L. as a Story of Soviet Rescue, Comintern characterizes as "the skilled workers' organization of a Grows; Dictator Acts "Krassin" Best Seller third period." This is a time of more or less traditional type, as sharpening inner and outer contra- Comrade Bittelman appears to to Crush Outbreaks at Workers Book Shop dictions of capitalism, of growing think; or does it, as I have pointed class conflicts and world war danger. out in my articles (and as the theses "The Krassin" is the title of a In this period the employers, con- of both the Majority and Minority, ports received here from Venezuela newly-published book written by a fronted with the Leftward drift of now discarded, indicate) mean the rewly-published book written by a the masses and an imperative neces- continued decline of old line trade sity to press the workers into the unionism and its gradual transfor-1.00 situation there, which the support-1.00 ers of General Cedeno, who is re- rice Parijanine, whose book is rap-rice Parijanine, whose book is rap-rice Parijanine, whose book is rapported marching from the south on idly approaching the best-seller tend to again call the social reform- type of unionism, somewhat akin to 2.00 Caracas, are seeking to take advan- class, according to Aaron Chorover, ists more directly into their service. fascist unionism, with the A. F. of manager of the Workers Bookshop, This general conclusion applies not L. bureaucracy playing a leading

(To Be Gontinued)

(The concluding article by Com-The hero of the book is not an in- This means that American capi- rade Foster, to be published in the

workers as a class through the capitalist parties, the Civic Federation, unions, etc. Here Comrade Zack, in his article in the "Communist Inter-With the aid of its tremendous re- national," makes a serious mistake sources, American imperialism then in denying the role of the A. F. of

capitalists continued to use these

fakers extensively to betray the

Page Three

methods of direct capitalist control. whole working class, when, confused plants an unprecedented growth of permit the A. F. of L. to organize bourgeois reformism (backed by a their workers into unions, he detoiling masses, so that it might have Green's production efficiency brand

cracy, typically present to the work-ers as their own program capitalist gloss it over will not do. Bolshevik reformism dressed up in working self-criticism demands the utmost class clothes. frankness and clarity of explana

This is what gives it its especially tion.

2.-The Varying Tempo of Social Reformism. Success.

So much for the matter of concen- trade union leaders." trating our fire on the main enemy, Later, when the attacks of the social reformism, that is, upon the workers had been beaten back, the A. F. of L. bureaucracy and the S. capitalists tended to slough off the P. Now to consider the question of "socialist" governments and to whether or not the A. F. of L. is in again make larger use of direct decline, and if this is so, does it, as methods of capitalist control. Thus Comrade Bittelman declares, imply says the thesis of the Sixth World the "declining role of social reform- Congress of the Comintern: igm?" "Through the medium of social

Although the capitalists, without democracy the bourgeoisie paved let-up, utilize social reformigm to the way for the stabilization of capitalism (the series of coalition demoralize the working class and to break up its mass attacks, they do cabinets in Europe). The consolidation of capital rendered the this with varying degrees of intensity and under various forms. Sofunction of social democracy as a cial reformism is not a static thing governing party in a certain meaused by the employers with the sure superfluous. The ejection of same tempo and forms regardless of social democrats from coalition governments and the formation of the changing objective situation. In times of less pressure from the 'purely bourgeois' governments masses the employers tend to rely more upon their own methods of took the place of the so-called era of 'democratic pacifism.'" direct control, that is, force and Now we see the reverse process bourgeois systems of reform. But again setting in, the capitalists are in times of increasing attack from increasingly utilizing the aid of sothe workers they tend to call social cial democracy against the workers. democracy more and more directly Under the pressure of the maturing into their service, that is, to make increasing use of their master wea-pon against the workers, social rc-flicts between the rival imperialist T. Sepp, West New York, formism.

powers on a world scale (attacks on This rhythm has been demon- Seviet: Union, colonial countries, Collected by Robert Sivert, Lanstrated time and again. For ex- etc.), the capitalists are confronted ample, during the post-war revolu- with a rapidly sharpening war situtionary struggles in Europe the cap- stion and a general Leftward swing italists called upon social democ- of the masses, with intensifying racy more than ever before to pro-tect them from the workers, draw-situation their direct methods of ing its leaders into all sorts of posi- control of the workers become less tions of governmental power so that, and less efficacious. They conseby virtue of their quality as "lead- quently call increasingly into their H. Levin, Chicago, Ill. ors" of the workers, they could the service their main weapon against better betray the working class. the working class, the social democ-The program of the Comintern de- racy, but it is a social democracy clares that the defeats of the post- constantly more tinged with faswar revolutionary struggles "were cism. Hence, as the world crisis of brought about primarily by the capitalism sharpens we hear more treacherous tactics of the social and more of labor governments, sodemocratic leaders and reformist cialist ministers, etc.

3. The Question of Decline and Crisis. During the periods of the more stroyed altogether, if the open capitalist dictatorship social forms of the capitalist dictatorship Maiso Acevedo, Bron, N. Y.

reformist organizations may and sometimes do go into decline and crisis. This has been the situation with the A. F. of I. for several years. Such are severe and prolonged. In such periods, the social demo-cracy, always the willing tool of the mployers, makes frantic efforts, through all sorts of concessions and Such are severe and prolonged. In such periods, the social demo-p. Golis, New York City 1.00 3F, 2A, New York City 1.00 J Sandor, Pittsburgh. Pa... 1.00 Such organizations may even be de- treachery, to win back the support'S. Elioff, New York City .. 1.00

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rested by Gomez, charged with rev-olutionary conspiracy. Other ar-in the Soviet navy which quietly and direct use of the A. F. of L. bureau-lowing points: the consolidation rests are pending. It is said a large unobtrusively smashed her way cracy in mobilizing the workers for tendencies ci imperialism: the comcargo of arms for rebels was found through hazardous icefloes and im- rationalization and war. On this we pany minent danger to rescue the sur- have no dispute. The immediate at the port of La Guaira.

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vivors of the Italia. The Cedeno revolt, while it may

question confronting us however is,

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