

The Party's Shortcomings, Mistakes and Problems

NOTE: This is the ninth installment of the report for the Political Committee made by Jay Lovestone, at the recent Fifth National Convention of the Workers (Communist) Party held in New York City. This installment deals with "The Party's Shortcomings, Mistakes and Problems."

Regarding the two main historical streams in our Party—Our Party was born as a result of the splitting away of the left wing of the social-democrats from the socialist party. A certain section of our Party is therefore to be found largely in the elements coming out of the socialist party. As our Party developed it reached a second stage, the stage where it was able to attract masses from the trade unions. When the Party reached that stage, it reached one of the most important periods of its development. Here we have the second main stream of the Party. Comrades, when we speak of two streams, we do not speak of one stream here and another there, but as concepts merely marking temporary mile-posts, temporary signposts in the history of the Party. Just as it is necessary to develop the ideological homogeneity of the working class as a class in this country, so it is necessary to develop the ideological homogeneity of these two main trends in the composition of our Party. We will never be able to develop the ideological homogeneity of the working class as a class until we have accomplished homogeneity in our own ranks. More than ever before, today the two streams are no longer appearing as two streams, but more and more appearing as one stream, the Party stream.

There are other groupings in the Party. I speak concretely of the comrades known as the Cannon group. It would be foolhardy for us to say that the unification of the Party is complete with the unification of these two main streams alone. The fact of the matter is that these two main streams cannot unite unless their unity is of such character that it becomes the unity of all groupings. Not only no first and second class citizens, but no two and a half class. No persecutions; no discriminations. This may not be immediately realized, but the test of our policies must be to what extent are we making a conscious effort towards that end.

I am sure the incoming C. E. C. will consciously follow a policy to break down, to remove these prejudices and suspicions of groupings as groupings until all groupings end.

When we speak of the unification of the Party being achieved primarily thru the unification of the two main streams, we speak of it not in the sense of mistrust or suspicion or deprecation of any group which still exists, but in a realistic manner. It is an indisputable fact that the largest number of members and the sharpest differences in the Party have been in these two main groupings. But today, all groups have only one task left and that is to get out of business, that is, to liquidate themselves, that is, to try to merge themselves into one, the Party unified.

This convention will mark a period when more than ever before the incoming C. E. C., not any comrade of the C. E. C., not any combination of groups, not any blocs, but as a C. E. C., not as a combination of groups, but as a collective leadership, will fight for the removal of factional prejudices in the Party. There are basic reasons for this. The last decision of the C. I., the resolution on the tasks of the Party, the supplementary decision, the various cables, have laid the basis, helping the Party to remove its factionalism. We are no longer in a struggle in the Party for

a majority. The shortcomings of the groupings have been very largely removed in this struggle and by the criticism of the C. I. I refer to the criticism made by the C. I. of the majority of the former Polbureau. These comrades have been properly and correctly criticized because they have reacted too often as a group. This criticism, I am convinced, has gone a long way toward removing this shortcoming of this section of our Party leadership and membership.

Other comrades of the former Polbureau have been criticized for the use of factional methods. We feel that these comrades have taken the criticism earnestly and positively have learned their lesson. I am sure that all comrades will be nearer unification after this convention.

Our Party, comrades, has been mobilized more effectively for mass work thru reorganization. This is another factor making for the elimination of factionalism.

I think there is a greater will in the depths of our Party for unification. This is very important because small as our Party may be, still there cannot continue remnants of factionalism so long as our leadership is conscious that deep down in the ranks of our Party there is a desire and will for unity. Our leadership will respond to this and will do its share as the leadership to unify the Party. We are all sick and tired of factionalism, despite the fact that we all now and then show recurrences. We must recognize that the need for unity in the face of the war danger cannot be overestimated. We must overcome suspicions of individual against individual. No comrade who has ever contributed anything to our Party must be treated as anything but a comrade who has a place in our Party.

A few words about hegemony, unity and collective leadership. It is wrong to confuse the term majority with

hegemony. A C. E. C. may have a majority, but a majority does not necessarily mean hegemony. The question of hegemony is answered in the sense of the attitude of comrade to comrade, in the practice of taking comrades into confidence, of getting together on a basis of equality. It is the manner and spirit of working together which determines whether there is hegemony in our Party or not. We say, after this convention there will be no such problems and issues and that unity can be and will be achieved in the development of our Party, of all comrades, not only in the top, for maximum equal participation in the task of building a mass Communist Party.

What must the majority of the incoming C. E. C. do toward this end? In our opinion a big step has already been taken in this direction. The fact that in many districts the D. E. C.'s were composed on a basis different from the proportion of strength in the District Convention is a sign that the Party is moving forward. The fact that the Party D. E. C.'s are now largely composed on the basis of the utilization of all constructive elements, rather than on the basis of the arithmetical strength of the convention, is to be welcomed as an auger of unity. We must work together, dropping group attitudes. Our division of work must not be on the basis of division in the past, but on the basis of comrades being able to contribute to a maximum extent. Only this will help the growth of our Party. The Party must step forward before the masses. The comrades appearing before the masses must be chosen on the basis of ability, not on the basis of groupings. The relations in the development of our Party must be on the basis of Communist to Communist, not on the basis of past prejudices, not on the basis of past grievances or past differences which no longer exist.

(To be Continued)

The Communist International, The War Danger and the Role of American Imperialism

By ROBERT MINOR

(Continuation of Convention Report)

This tremendous U. S. imperialist structure Bucharin has described as opposite pole to the Soviet Union. This tremendous structure of American imperialism is nearest to us, and becomes our first adversary. American imperialism is of unprecedented absolute strength. It came through the war without the need of a stabilization of its capitalist system. Comrades don't make the mistake of speaking of the stabilization of American capitalism in the same sense in which European capitalism was partly and temporarily stabilized. American imperialism came out of the war capable of acting as the stabilizing agency for the other imperialisms of the world. This American capitalism takes a position dominating the world to a large extent. As has been pointed out already this monopoly position does not extend to exactly the same universal degree as the British Empire's monopoly in the past. But this American imperialism now stands before the whole world as the universal bully of all nations. Since it plunged into the World War on the side of its financial allies, American imperialism more aggressively uses its military power to attack those nations which happen to possess raw materials and markets which are desired. The in-

tensification of the role of American imperialism in the Pacific Ocean, its policy in China, its policy in regard to the Philippines, where the last vestige of independence has been declared to be dead, its policy leads toward that position where the United States imperialism will not hang back, but will take an active, initiative part in the world war which is coming.

However, the tremendous exhibition of strength of American imperialism, is accompanied by the seeds of its own destruction. The seeds of destruction lie in the very fact of the tremendous development of this imperialism. I will not dwell upon the general facts, but will speak of the crystallization of the Latin American bloc against American imperialism which appears to be already in the offing. We see Mexico, which suffers first of all from this American imperialism, beginning to show itself as a future center and rallying point for opposition. That is in spite of the recent evidences of supine policy on the part of the Mexican government. Comrades, Latin America is to play a big role in the war which is coming. This is of first importance to us, because Latin America will be primarily concerned with the struggle for liberation from the yoke of United States imperialism. We find the bourgeoisie of the United States very busy through