

COMMUNISM AND CENTRISM

by August Thalheimer

October 20, 1931.

Since differences have arisen, in the leadership as well as in the various parts of the organization of the Communist Party of Germany (Opposition), on the question of our relations to the Socialist Workers party, it appeared necessary to call a conference to decide upon this question. This conference took place last Saturday and Sunday in Berlin. At this conference were present the members of the National Council and representatives of the most important districts. The districts, in which various opinions had arisen, were given the opportunity of being represented by several delegates. The decision of the conference followed the report and the co-report and a discussion in which all districts represented were able to take the floor for an extended period. The decision of the conference is therefore as authoritative as possible under the given conditions. It is the decision of our organization.

The central point of the discussion was the fundamental relation of the C.P.G.-O. to the S.W.P.G., that is, of Communism to centrism. This had to be made clear and assured. The second question, dependent upon the first, was the tactical relation to the S.W.P. and to the various tendencies, groups and conceptions within it. The conference showed that it was necessary to place the fundamental problem clearly and sharply in order to arrive at a clear and definitive decision.

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The Fundamental Viewpoint

The fundamental viewpoint of our organization is:

1. The S.W.P.G. is a centrist party, i.e., a party that has not yet broken fundamentally with reformism, that represents a variety of reformism, in program, leadership and policies of the party as a whole. This

variety of reformism is hidden reformism, which rejects the definite consequences of open reformism (toleration policy) but which retains the prerequisites of reformism. In appearance it is an intermediary form between reformism and Communism, between bourgeois democracy and proletarian dictatorship; in fact, however, it remains on the basis of bourgeois democracy, of parliamentarism, of capitalism.

2. Between Communism and centrism, as represented in the S.W.P.G., there is a fundamental contradiction, which can only be overcome when the S.W.P. itself as a party is overcome. A centrist party cannot be transformed or developed into a Communist Party; it must be destroyed in order to open the way for its members who are striving towards Communism and the proletarian revolution. Between the C.P.G.-O. and the S.W.P. as a party there is therefore possible neither an organizational fusion nor a long-continued alliance. The C.P.G.-O. must lead a clear and decisive struggle against the S.W.P. as a party.

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Tactical Considerations

From these basic considerations of the nature of the S.W.P. as a centrist party a number of quite definite tactical and practical consequences emerge:

1. The C.P.G.-O. will conduct a continuous, clear and uncompromising basic criticism of the political and organizational principles of the S.W.P.

2. The C.P.G.-O. is ready, in spite of its basic opposition to the S.W.P. as a party, to cooperate with it in definite actions in various cases, in which, of course, it naturally maintains the full right of criticism within the limits of the discipline of action.

3. The C.P.G.-O. is ready to extend unconditional and comradely assistance to that section of the S.W.P. which is honestly striving, not only partially and superficially but completely and really, to break with reformism and to take the position, basically and practically, of the proletarian revolution (the Soviet dictatorship) and of determined mass struggle for it. It is ready to help them realize this aim and to remove all obstacles in the way. For this purpose, these forces in the S.W.P. must carry on a determined struggle in the S.W.P. without regard to those forces within it that are trying to keep the party in the swamp of reformism and vacillation. From centrism, Communism (today the only revolutionary Marxism) can be reached only thru decisive and irreconcilable struggle against reformism and opportunism in no matter what guise.

The C.P.G.-O. says to the members of the S.W.P. who today sincerely believe that they can transform their

the vain pedantry and counter-revolutionary theorizing of that one-time Socialist and Marxist, Karl Kautsky.

THE BORO PARK YOUTH CLUB IN ACTION

By BERNIE BRÖDER

During the Summer months the work in our club slowed down (as is true with all workers clubs). Nevertheless, numerous activities were carried on, such as open air meetings, a number of lectures, successful hikes, excursions, etc. We participated, as a club, in the *Revolutionary Age* picnic. One of the greatest accomplishments of our club is that we came thru the crisis created by the Communist Party fraction when it attempted to break up our club because it refused to become a department of the Party. In this fight we were successful; the disruptive forces suffered a miserable defeat.

During the last two months our club started out on its winter activities with a bang. All of our recent successes were overwhelming successes. We have organized a self-study circle which is attracting ever larger numbers of workers. We have initiated sports activities, with Comrade Hill as instructor. And now we are going to have lectures every two weeks on current events. In a word, our club has become a real workers center in Boro Park.

On November 14 our club is celebrating the 14th anniversary of the Russian Revolution on a big scale, with a concert and dance. Prominent speakers will address the meeting at the Boro Park Labor Lyceum, 1377 42nd Street, Brooklyn. As usual the "loyalite" club has organized a counter-affair!

We call upon all workers, particularly residents of Brooklyn, to help us make this celebration a success.

party into a really revolutionary party: Fight for this aim with all your might! We will give you fraternal support even tho we do not share your belief in the possibility of your aim. We know from experience that such a struggle, if carried on consistently, will finally break thru the bounds of the S.W.P. and become the bridge to a really revolutionary (Communist) policy, that is, to the C.P.G.-O.

The C.P.G.-O. is ready to help all those who want to complete their organizational break with reformism by a real political break with reformism (centrism), and to help them to shorten their way. Our help will be thru criticism and thru positive direction and thru common struggle.

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The conference has laid a good and sure basis for our work. Our organization has stood the test very well in the difficult conditions we have to face in the past. The decisions of our conference give us the basis for meeting the new situation in the most effective manner.

15.5% capacity. Adjusted to seasonal variations, the volume of money circulation shows a continuation of the trend to hoarding. The seasonal decline in carloadings was greater than normal during the week. The weekly business index has reached a new low in the present crisis. The weekly business index for October was 66.9 or about 15 points below the bottom of the 1921 crisis and even 5 points less than the 1893 crisis, hitherto considered the worst. For the first time since the opening of the century, this country has seen two successive years of decline in the volume of manufacturers.