

WHY I SUPPORT THE MINORITY POLITICAL STRATEGY

By JOSEPH ZACK

Do We Lead the Left Wing?

YES and no! On the industrial field we do. There is no one else and the workers can see it easily enough; but on the political, we do not. And Comrade Foster ought to know that better than anyone else. For instance, the bulk of active T. U. E. L. strength in the unions are non-party members; and the overwhelming bulk of their followers are still farther away from Communism. If the T. U. E. L. were the industrial department of the party and its members were placed before the alternative of either joining the party or getting out of the groups, we would disrupt our industrial work. In fact, the influence of the age-long policy of Gompers upon the trade unionists of "no politics in the unions" (except for capitalism), has had such an effect that the left wing only began to warm up on class politics during the farmer-labor party campaign. No, the left wing does not follow us yet politically. If it did, we would be considerably nearer to our goal—the mass Communist Party.

Plainly, one of the main problems of our movement is to make this left wing politically active. The militants themselves who are not yet ready to join the Communist Party and they knowing that the masses are even more removed from the idea of joining the party than they themselves—this leads to the necessity of the use of the strategy of the farmer-labor party, in order to draw the left wing into political activity. Not only is that necessary, in order to get a mass political movement of the workers, but it is necessary in order to consolidate our position of leadership over the left wing. For should a petty-bourgeois movement gain control and influence over them politically it will undermine our influence over them industrially.

Surely if we were leading the left wing politically, Comrade Foster would have received many times the number of votes he received.

I am interested in the political untied front policy mainly from the point of view of making our left wing followers politically conscious, and of

getting an ideological hold upon them politically. And as strategy, for that purpose, as well as of connecting our sympathizers and followers everywhere, politically, of keeping an organized contact with them for a number of years so as to enable us to deepen their class consciousness and thus lay the basis for a mass Communist Party—which certainly is not possible by applying the majority tactics—the minority's political strategy offers the solution.

These semi-class-conscious workers, politically confused and timid workers, who are following our slogans on the industrial field, will not join our party. Still they are nearest to us, and if we wish to build a mass Communist Party, we must have a strategy not only of pursuing the task of organizing the class-conscious revolutionists, but of reaching out organizationally and politically to those closest to us. In a country where capitalism does not yet face its downfall, it is the best strategy to reach our goal—the mass Communist Party.

Do We Want a Labor Party a la Great Britain?

I would have considered it a calamity to our movement if the bureaucracy and the petty bourgeoisie, in their maneuver against us had really gone so far as to form a petty bourgeois farmer-labor party. The hold of such parties upon the illusions of the masses would have been much greater than a progressive or liberal party. The labor party which we should organize ought to be but a transition stage to the mass Communist party.

In this period of the decay of international capitalism, all the parties to the right of the Communist Party are being driven more and more to the right. Hence we are the only logical leaders in the struggles for even mild political reforms for the benefit of the working class. In Great Britain, on the other hand, at a time when capitalism was not shaken, the reformists could lead such movements and appear to be revolutionary. It is obvious, therefore, that just in this period we are the only logical leader

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to initiate this farmer-labor movement. It is very likely that we will not pass thru the stage of social-democratic parties in the United States and that the development will be in the direction of a big capitalist party, a progressive-petty bourgeois party and a labor party controlled by the Communists.

Now that the grip of the trade union bureaucracy and of the petty bourgeoisie on the workers is at a low ebb, owing to the dissolution of the LaFollette movement, our strategy must again be to get a hold politically of their imagination and crystallize it into a definite organization and thus eliminate the possibility of the left wing being absorbed politically by our enemies.

Here again the minority strategy offers the possibility of maneuvering and of eliminating the labor party as a factor on the side of our enemies, while the majority delivers it to them. However, our propaganda must be conducted in such a manner and the preparations even of our own party arranged in such a manner, that the work of organizing the farmer-labor party will take place during the coming economic crisis.

Liquidating the Workers Party.

Of all the silly accusations launched against the minority, this one takes the prize. How a farmer-labor party composed of affiliated organizations and under our leadership, which means without individual leadership, can lead to the liquidation of the Workers Party, must yet be an undivulged secret in the chest of the majority, for so far they have not yet revealed it. In such a party the only way to affiliate is to join the Workers Party or by being a member of a union, society, etc. In a party of the type of the labor party of Great Britain, owned and controlled by the bureaucracy, there is far greater danger of that sort and is the main reason for the numerical weakness of the Communist Party, the left wing outside of the Communists being absorbed by the labor party. Not only would the Workers Party not be liquidated, but would become the dynamic force within it. It would make it possible for us to conduct recruiting campaigns to get individual members within these organizations on a scale never attempted by us before.

This strategy will put the Workers Party to the front in the true sense. It is flexible, while the majority's tactics would put us into a political straight jacket that would revert into opportunism on the industrial field and into sectarianism on the political field. The Workers Party will get to the fore politically in as much as it got industrially thru the united front tactics thru the left bloc united front tactics formed under the auspices of the T. U. E. L., and it will consolidate our industrial strength, and give us the medium to effectively combat the petty-bourgeois political movement wherever and whenever it may arise. Farmer-Labor Party and Opportunism.

How can we be at the head of a party with a reformist program without sinking our whole movement into the swamp of opportunism? Industrially, it seems to me, we are keeping out of that swamp by the mere skin of our teeth. We will surely sink into it unless we make our followers there politically class conscious. The coming struggles even for immediate demands will so react upon capitalism, which is in a precarious condition, that they are bound to become more and more intense. This gives the struggles a revolutionary implication and prevents them from sinking into the reformism of pre-war days.

It seems, however, that Comrade Foster conceives of the labor party only as a respectable affair, organized

by the bureaucrats. And since, in his opinion, the bureaucrats are definitely lined up for a petty-bourgeois movement in one form or other, of course, there is no room for a labor party of his conception. But labor party advocated by the minority is not a party nicely camouflaged, with us in the background trying not to capture it. On the contrary, the labor party proposed by the minority is a roughneck affair, to be organized in the stress of the struggle and whose leadership is not to be camouflaged.

The farmer-labor party slogan cannot swing any masses into action at this time, says the majority. How far would they swing even for amalgamation? Not very far. Perhaps amalgamation, as we envisage it, will never be realized, and the unions as at present constituted will go down with the present leadership, and new ones may have to be built on an industrial basis. Certainly the "labor congress" is not a slogan that appears to have a great drawing power on the masses, but conditions and our activity may make it powerful. While for the labor party many unions, international, state and city and local bodies,

went on record and a great agitation has been developed for the last three years. With the success of the British labor party dangling in front of the workers, they certainly think along the lines of a labor party to the extent that they think politically at all. And considering that they are not ready for Communism, the next economic crisis, together with our activity, will make it possible to swing them en masses into political action. It need not be a political party for parliamentary action, as the British party is, but one that will follow our lead.

Slogans are of value to the extent of the masses we can swing behind them. Yes, the politically frozen territory of the United States has yielded us sufficient not to abandon it to the mercies of the petty bourgeoisie, but on the contrary, profiting by our mistakes and misconceptions in the past we should buckle down to build a militant farmer-labor party, thru which we will reach our goal, the mass Communist Party. It will not be a respectable farmer-labor party, neither will it be created in a year or so, in a hectic, get-rich-quick manner. Nevertheless, it is the best way to reach out among the masses politically, to combat the petty bourgeois and to establish the Communist Party as a powerful body politically.

MAJORITY ADVOCATES POLITICAL DUALISM

By ELMER P. BOICH.

IN the December issue of DAILY WORKER we read Comrade Cannon's article in which he states that "The outstanding characteristic of the right wing always and everywhere is its political cowardice."

Now I have nothing against Comrade Cannon personally, in fact, I look upon him and Comrade Foster as two of our ablest leaders in the party.

Their ability and courage have been displayed upon more than one occasion. Their leadership in some of this country's most important strikes must be well remembered.

But their prominence cannot and will not belittle their opponents of the minority, for, in fact, it is the first time that I ever heard anybody accusing Comrade Ruthenberg with political cowardice. Comrade Ruthenberg's history is an open book with which we are very familiar. In so far as courage is concerned few are his equal.

So much for the personalities. Now I shall deal with the fundamental issue involved. We are told by our majority that the farmer-labor party is no longer in demand, therefore, we must forget all about it. What brot our majority to this conclusion is beyond my power to understand. It may be longing for good times, peaceful enjoyment of life, so that we may be relieved of that hard task and burdensome trouble of working and agitating for a labor party.

Why, look at our grandma socialist labor party. She is still "alive" in spite of herself! Then take a look at our infants of the proletarian party. They are making a lot of noise and get along so nicely. So why shouldn't we of the Workers (Communist) Party feel safe, sane and secure in our little sect? We can form a united front with somebody sometime and somewhere. That is of course, when we get disgusted with ourselves and too lonesome. In the meantime we can go out and make great, big "revolutionary" speeches, to show to the "public" what great leftists and rebels we are.

We shall prove our revolutionary egoism by telling our audience of revolution which is coming tomorrow, and then we will ask: Are we leftist or are we not?

For a period of three long years Communists have been working for a labor party in the unions, fraternal societies, co-operatives and every

other workers' organization. After years of hard labor we met with great success everywhere. Four big labor unions endorsed the labor party idea.

Powerful international unions were forced by their own membership to elect and their delegates introduced resolutions for a labor party in A. F. of L. conventions. Communists took the leadership in the fight for a labor party and amalgamation. They were feared and hated by reactionary labor leaders. We bitterly condemned the

A Communist More Question

By MAX BEDACHT & JAY LOVESTONE.

19. Question—Where does the Cannon group get the brazen effrontery to call the Marxian group in the party liquidators?

Answer—That's more of the campaign mud-slinging in which Comrade Cannon is unsurpassed and unsurpassable. That's his most effective way of meeting issues—by avoiding them and throwing sand into the eyes of the membership so that they will have to follow him blindly.

There are only two ways of liquidating a Communist party. (1) The dissolution of the organization. (2) Robbing the organizations of its functions and thus condemning it to a slow and certain death.

We, who as a group have done the bulk of the work in building the Communist movement and in organizing the Workers Party, not only do not propose to liquidate the Workers Party but are pledged to fight tooth and toenail every attempt to liquidate the Workers Party regardless of how subtle, hidden, or unconscious (at best) the scheme may be. We have in mind particularly the second method of dissolving the Workers Party. We consider that the attempt of the Cannon group to bury the farmer-labor united front slogan is an attempt in this direction. The C. P. has emphatically declared that the Workers Party has elevated itself during the last two years from a state of sectarian barrenness to one of political activities. Back to the woods! That's the majority slogan. The Cannon group is attempting to lead our party or rather mislead our party back to its sectarian days. It is trying