

# Cult of Leadership, Zig-Zags And Turns Mark C.I. Policy

By JOSEPH ZACK

An analysis of the Comintern and its national sections would not be complete without mentioning the peculiar leadership cult introduced by Stalin. First it was, "Comrade Stalin, secretary of Central Committee". Then it became, "our Central Committee led by Comrade Stalin". Now already for some time it is, "the Central Committee under the leadership of Comrade Stalin".

The same practice has been introduced in the other parties. In Germany it reads "the C. P. of Germany under the leadership of Comrade Thaelmann". Perhaps it is better to say it that way, for the Central Committees have long ago been reduced to a consultative capacity; under Stalin's regime they become assistants to the secretary. This runs to such extremes that even when the bulk of the party is in jail in Germany the demand is made for "the release of Comrade Thaelmann" as if the others did not matter. Stalin's idea of centralism is the one man principle. The rest must be subordinated, chosen by The One under the camouflage of nominating committees and "ratified" by the body having formal jurisdiction. Each new leadership glorifies itself through articles, pictures, folders, anniversaries, etc. The whole system is so arranged that it is exceedingly difficult to have any of these people ever "promoted" out of office through pressure from below, let alone removed. Thus firm leadership is established in the Communist parties.

Naturally, such a leadership, freed from any control by the party masses, are at liberty to change the policy at will without consulting the membership. The policy swings from one extreme to another. The party membership learns about the

latest "turn" after it is already in effect.

## Right-Left Turns

Between 1923 and 1928, a period of high prosperity in this country, we had two basic changes in policy. First, in line with the Kuomintang experiment in China and similar policies in India, we in this country were organizing the Farmer-Labor Party and seeking alliance with LaFollette.

This outright opportunist policy reduced the Communists to the function of organizers of reformist parties. Lenin untiringly preached against such policies.

At the same time we echoed the theory of the A. F. of L. bureaucrats on the trade union field, namely, "No Dual Unionism". This slogan was originated by Samuel Gompers, late president of the A. F. of L. It meant that the workers had no right to organize outside the A. F. of L.

This opportunist policy created a sharp division into right and left in the Communist parties. The Comintern leadership (Stalin) got panicky, made a sudden, sharp turn to the left and got from under by unloading the whole thing on Bucharin and denouncing the Right as the main danger.

While "prosperity" was still at its height (1928) a totally new set of theories were promulgated without any connection with objective conditions. The new theories rested on the conception that everyone else except the followers of Stalinism are direct or potential enemies. These enemies were divided into categories such as "Social Fascists", or "Left Social Fascists". The panic found its most profound expression however in the excommunication of the genuine left wing of the Comintern as "counter-revolutionists" In this characteriza-

tion, incidentally, Stalin revealed the true character of his own policy and the tremendous falsification perpetrated on the international proletariat by the pseudo-left policy of the "Third Period"

Naturally with such a policy there could be no united front, not only with other classes as before but not even with groupings and organizations of the working class. The workers were simply invited to support the C. P. and this was called "the united front from below". If, before that, the Communist Party was hidden under the bloc of classes, farmer-labor parties etc., now everything was to be subordinated to the C. P.

## Red Unions Period

A corresponding change was affected on the trade union field. No more of Gompers' slogan of "No Dual Unionism". Now there was to be not only new unions everywhere, whether they had a base for existence or not, but they were to be "red" unions, unions that must acknowledge the C.P. as their official leader and endorse its program. As to the left and progressive minorities in the reformist unions, they were to be called upon to leave those unions double quick and go into "red" unions.

The evil fruits of the theory of "Social Fascism", "Red Unions", the "United Front from Below", and the rest of the "Third Period" rigmorale, are well known. Thanks to them, when the day came in Germany Hitler was able to shove aside the best organized working class and the strongest Communist Party in any capitalist country. Defeats and isolation everywhere resulted from the "Third Period" of "left" adventurism in the Comintern. A new "prescription" was needed. It came, eventually, in full force. Without any discussion of the past errors, to say nothing of a recognition of them, a new swing to the Right is now under way.

No more is heard of "Social Fascism" This theory is sunk without a trace. The conflict with Social Democracy is now softened down to a dispute with "class brothers" and proposals are made to end the dispute altogether. The first step in the direction is the signing—or proposals to sign—"non-aggression pacts" Under these pacts the two parties—C.P. and S.P.—agree not to criticize each other inside or outside party meetings (France).

On the trade union field there are to be no more "Red" unions. More, there are to be no new unions generally. Stachel, trade union expert of the C. P. now declares that "we never believed in dual unionism" (November issue of Communist). This new swing to the right is only in its inception. Resistance to it inside and outside the Soviet Union has retarded its rate of development, but the swing to opportunism is well under way. If Brandler and Lovestone have not yet returned to the fold it is not any more because of serious differences of policy but out of the difficulties of face-saving on both sides.

## Why the Zig-Zags?

Thus we have seen three basic changes in policy back and forth within ten years. Did these swings have anything to do with the objective situation? Not at all! They were the results of defeat after defeat. What we strove to do one year we had to undo the next year. Did these policies have anything to do with Marxism or Leninism? Nothing whatever! Exactly the contrary, as Trotsky shows with crystal clearness in his numerous pamphlets. Did the movement grow stronger at each turn? Just the contrary. The desire to overthrow capitalism on the part of the workers is undoubtedly stronger than ever before, but Communism as an organized force was never as shattered as now.

Stalinism has not only disorganized the international movement of the workers' vanguard. It has also weakened and undermined the position of the Soviet Union. The task of the international proletariat now is to reorganize its ranks, prepare for revolutionary struggles and thereby, also, provide the necessary defense—the only real defense—of the Soviet Union. In order to accomplish this historic task the vanguard of the international proletariat must free itself from the blighting influence of Stalinism. The Workers' Party and the movement for the Fourth International are leading the way to the revival of the revolutionary movement on the basis of Marx and Lenin.

## MUSTE CANNON TOUR

Buffalo, January 13-14—Muste and Cannon.  
Youngstown, O., Jan. 15—Cannon.  
Newcastle, Pa., Jan. 15—Muste.  
Cleveland, Jan. 16—Muste and Cannon.  
Toledo, Jan. 17—Muste, Cannon.  
Detroit, Jan. 17—Muste, Cannon.  
Chicago, Jan. 19-20-21—Muste, Cannon.  
Waukegan, Ill., Jan. 22—Cannon.  
Madison, Wis., Jan. 22—Muste.  
Minneapolis, Jan. 23-24-25—Cannon.  
St. Paul, Jan. 23-24-25-26-27—Muste.  
Kansas City, Jan. 26-27-28-29-30

—Cannon.  
Davenport, Ia., Jan. 28-29—Muste  
St. Louis, Mo., Jan. 30-31—Muste  
St. Louis, Mo., Jan. 31—Cannon.  
Illinois Mine Fields: Staunton, Gillespie, Springfield, etc. Feb. 1-2-3—Muste and Cannon.  
Columbus, Ohio, Feb. 4-5—Muste and Cannon.  
Charleston, W. Va., Feb. 6—Muste and Cannon.  
Pittsburgh Feb. 7-8—Muste and Cannon.  
Pittsburgh, Feb. 7-8—Muste and Cannon.  
New York City, Feb. 10—Muste and Cannon.

## F. D. R. Deals With Relief

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PWA for the last eighteen months only \$146,000,000 has gone for housing, out of which only a few millions have been used. Almost three times the amount went to the army and navy to build its machine of destruction.

Now that we have seen what will happen to three and one-half million of the unemployed what about the other 1,500,000. These, Roosevelt calls "unemployables" How he arrived at this figure is not disclosed but it looks very suspicious. It is more than one-fourth of the total under consideration, which means that in the eventuality that Roosevelt has underestimated the number of unemployed—and he certainly has—this one-fourth will be turned over to local relief.

And how will the cities carry on this relief when most of them are

flat broke? New York City has a deficit of \$4,000,000. Chicago \$125,240,000. Philadelphia \$9,000,000. All these cities have cut the salaries of city employees during the last year. Some have restored the cuts but most of them have not. Many of these cities have introduced sales taxes. Now consider the situation of the smaller cities, towns and counties if such a deplorable situation prevails in the metropolitan centers.

After a short burst of enthusiasm the local agencies will turn their back on these 5,000,000 men, women and children and claim that they are financially unable to assist them. Furniture of evicted families will clutter the streets. The mile-long bread line will return. Roosevelt towns instead of Hoovervilles will become standing institutions. Into this breach Roosevelt will step and through his "own personal efforts and the influence of the office" that he holds, the "unemployables" will be taken care of. Hoover did the identical thing. He made radio speeches and his heart bled for the destitute. Then the hat was passed. Result: starvation and suffering everywhere.

After laying out this black tomorrow Roosevelt turns to God: "In the face of these spiritual impulses," he prays in conclusion, "we are sensible of the Divine Providence to which nations turn now, as always, for guidance and fostering care".

Yes! Roosevelt may turn to God for consolation after damning the unemployed. But the jobless worker will have to take care of himself.

## Sacramento Case

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of Norman Mini's case.

At this conference the prisoners unanimously adopted a resolution calling on all workers and sympathetic organizations to send de-

## Draft of AFSW No Good, Giordano Says

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vision in the draft which specifies that representation to the District Convention be "one to each 500 members . . . and no less than two delegates from each branch". The aim of this clause is all the more evident since representation to our National Convention is on the basis of one to 200. The only proper and democratic basis of representation to the District Convention is one delegate to each one hundred members.

## Limits Democratic Rights

The draft also makes inadequate provisions for trials and for nominations to office. It would leave trials entirely to the Branch Executive Boards and to the Joint Board; and gives nominating committees the final say on nominations. Both of these provisions limit the democratic rights of the members, who are entitled to be guaranteed the right of trial by