

# Statement to the Political Committee of the Workers [Communist] Party of America

By James P. Cannon, Martin Abern, Max Shachtman

**EDITOR'S NOTE**—By instruction of the Central Executive Committee of the Workers (Communist) Party, the Daily Worker prints herewith a statement made by three former members of the Party, J. P. Cannon, formerly a member of the Political Committee, Martin Abern, formerly a member of the Central Executive Committee, and Max Shachtman, formerly an alternate of the Central Executive Committee. The document, in which the three signers attack the Communist International and the Workers (Communist) Party under cover of the worn-out phrases employed by Trotsky, Ruth Fischer, Maslow and other renegades from the Communist movement, is published for the information of the members of the Party. The attitude of the Committee in condemnation of the document and its signers is expressed in the statement of the Central Executive Committee, published in this same issue under the title: "The Struggle Against Trotskyism and the Right Danger."

(1) In view of the necessity of concentrating the full attention of the Party on the election campaign, we have refrained up till now from any statement or step calculated to open a Party discussion on disputed questions until the election campaign will have ended and the pre-convention discussion opened.

(2) We have definite views on a series of fundamental questions vitally affecting the whole future of the Party and the Comintern which it was our intention to bring before the Party in the pre-convention discussion period.

(3) The "discussion" of these questions conducted up till now has not been a real discussion, since many of the documents—in our opinion some of the most important political documents of our time—have been suppressed and concealed from the Parties of the Comintern or presented to them in garbled form. The opportunity which has come to us in the recent period to read a number of these documents, dealing with some of the most disputed problems of the Comintern in the past five years, together with the rapid confirmation of their correctness by the whole course of events, have shaped our views and convictions. We consider it our revolutionary duty to defend these views before the Party.

(4) We had intended to undertake this task at the opening of the Party discussion after the election campaign. However, the arbitrary actions already taken against us (our removal from our positions in the I. L. D. on Oct. 16) and the plain indications shown in the present hearing of the intention to take further organizational measures and to begin a public campaign against us in the Party press, make it necessary to state our position without further delay. It must be made clear to the Party that the measures are being taken against us solely because of our political views. These views must be presented to the Party as they really are.

(5) We present them here in outline form and will elaborate on them more fully in our appeal to the Plenum of the Central Executive Committee against the actions taken by the Polcom.

(6) We stand on the main line of the document entitled "The Right Danger in the American Party" (excepting certain erroneous formulations dealing with the world position and role of American imperialism), presented to the Sixth World Congress of the Comintern by the delegation of the opposition, in the drafting of which we actively participated. As set forth in this document, we believe that the present leadership of the Party, mechanically imposed upon the Party by the E. C. C. I. against the will of the membership, is a consciously developing right wing, whose course and actions are all in the direction of undermining the position of the Party in the class struggle. Its activities since the presentation of our document on "The Right Danger in the American Party" to the World Congress, have confirmed and not refuted this estimate. The irresponsible adventurism, the factional degeneration and bureaucratic corruption of the Lovestone group leadership are an organic part of its fundamental opportunist character.

(7) The latest decision of the secretariat of the E. C. C. I., which undertakes to dismiss a whole series of principle questions raised in our indictment of the Party leadership with a formal motion, giving no answer whatsoever to the burning questions of the Party in all fields of the class struggle, serves only to strengthen the mechanical stranglehold of the right wing lead-

ership upon our Party. This bureaucratic secretariat method of dealing with disputed principle questions must be emphatically rejected by the Party both in form and content, since they have nothing in common with Lenin's teaching regarding the ideological leadership of all Communist Parties by the Comintern and the unremitting struggle against opportunism on all fronts.

(8) The present attempt of some of the leaders of the Foster-Bittelman group who signed the document on the "Right Danger" to abandon that platform, to moderate the struggle against the Lovestone-Pepper right wing, and to effect a political coalescence with them in order to direct their attack against those who remain true to that platform and develop its logical and inevitable international implications, in no way alters the fundamental correctness of the document. It merely demonstrates the political instability of these leaders which hampers the process of developing an opposition to the present right wing leadership and line of the Party on a principle basis. We have no doubt that the supporters of the opposition who have regarded the struggle against the right wing leadership as a principle question will continue to adhere to this position despite the vacillations and maneuvers of a section of the leaders.

(9) The problems of the American Party are organically bound up with the fundamental questions confronting the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Comintern and cannot be solved separately from them. The left wing of the American Party, taking shape in the principle struggle against the right wing leadership of the Party (Lovestone-Pepper group) will go forward only insofar as it recognizes the necessity of a struggle against the right danger on an international scale and links up its fight in the American Party with the Bolshevik fight for the fundamental tenets of Leninism in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and in the Comintern.

(10) The opposition in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, led by L. D. Trotsky, has been fighting for the unity of the Comintern and all its sections on the basis of the victory of Leninism. The correctness of the position taken by the Russian opposition over a period of five years of struggle has been fully confirmed by events.

(a) The struggle led by Trotsky since 1923 for Party democracy and against bureaucratism as the pressure of another class upon the Party of the proletariat, was absolutely correct then and is even more so now. The adoption of this position by Zinoviev, Kamenev, and others in 1926, and the attempt of Stalin to adopt it now, demonstrates the tremendous pressure of class forces which impel the Communist Party of the Soviet Union to this platform. The struggle for Party democracy, against bureaucratism and for a regime of genuine Leninist self-criticism are burning questions now for every Party and for the Comintern as a whole.

(b) The necessity for a more relentless struggle against the Kulak and the Nepman—for an orientation exclusively upon the workers and hired hands, united with the village poor and lower peasantry and in alliance with the middle peasantry—proclaimed by the opposition, becomes clearer every day. The trend of events and the irresistible pressure of class forces is already driving a deep cleavage in the leadership of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and is forcing the

Stalin group to struggle against the right wing (Rykov, etc.) with other elements (Bukharin) vacillating between the two. The platform of the Russian opposition, prepared for the Fifteenth Congress of the C. P. S. U., indicates the revolutionary policy of the present situation in the Soviet Union. The prediction and warning contained in this platform against the inevitable growth and aggression of a genuine right wing in the Party (Rykov, Tomsky, etc.) has been precisely confirmed in the intervening period, particularly in recent months. The activities of this right wing, which have already necessitated organizational measures in the Moscow and other organizations of the Party, is a proof of the awakening of the proletarian masses of the Party to this danger. The "left" course of the Stalin group in the direction of a struggle against the right dangers, for Party democracy and self-criticism, against the bureaucrats, the Nepmen and the Kulaks, can become a real left course only insofar as it abandons zig-zag movements, adopts the whole platform of the opposition, and reinstates the tested Bolshevik fighters, who have been expelled, to their rightful places in the Party.

(c) The attempts to revise the basic Marxist-Leninist doctrine with the spurious theory of "Socialism in one country" have been rightly resisted by the opposition led by Trotsky. A number of revisionist and opportunist errors in various fields of Comintern activity and its ideological life in general have proceeded from this false theory. To this in part at least can be traced the false line of the Chinese revolution, the debacle of the Anglo-Russian Committee, the alarming and unprecedented growth of bureaucratism in the Comintern, an incorrect attitude and policy in the Soviet Union, etc. This new "theory" is bound up with an over-emphasis on the power and duration of the temporary stabilization of capitalism. Herein lies the true source of pessimism regarding the development of the proletarian world revolution. One of the principal duties of every Communist in every Party of the Comintern is to fight along with the opposition for the teachings of Marx, Engels and Lenin on this basic question.

(d) The opposition was absolutely correct when it demanded the immediate rupture of the Anglo-Russian Committee and the concentration of all the fire of the Comintern and the British Party upon the leaders of the British Trade Union General Council (Purcell, Hicks and Co.) immediately after the betrayal of the General Strike. The maintenance of the Anglo-Russian Committee after that event did not serve as a bridge to the British masses, but as a partial shield of the traitorous leaders from the fire of the Communists.

(e) Rarely before in history has a Marxist-Leninist appraisal and forecast been so completely and swiftly confirmed as in the case of the opposition theses and proposals (Trotsky, Zinoviev) on the problems and tasks of the Chinese revolution. The line of the E. C. C. I., formulated by Stalin, Bukharin, Martynov, etc., and the rejection of the proposals of the opposition, which were suppressed and concealed from the Parties of the Comintern, have brought catastrophic results and hampered the genuine development of the Communist Party of China and the revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the workers and peasants. In view of its world historical importance, a real discussion of the problems of the Chinese revolution, with all the documents being made available, is imperative for all Parties of the Comintern. The prohibition of this discussion must be broken down, the truth must be told and the enormous errors exposed down to their roots. Only in this way can the great lessons of the Chinese revolution be learned by the Parties of the Comintern.

(11) We demand the publication of all the documents of the Russian opposition without which the Party members do not and cannot know the essential issues of the struggle and cannot form intelligent opinions in regard to them. The discussion of these issues heretofore has been conducted in an atmosphere of prejudice, misrepresentation, terrorism, outlawing of all thought and inquiry, the substitution of official say-so for the study of documents and facts on disputed questions. All this has been part of a campaign of unparalleled slander against Trotsky who, after Lenin, was the outstanding leader of the Russian revolution and the Comintern, and was accompanied by the falsification of the history of the revolution itself.

(12) We intend, at the coming Plenum of the Central Executive Committee, to propose that our Party shall take the initiative in demanding the return from exile and the reinstatement into the Communist Party of the Soviet Union with full rights, of Trotsky and the other imprisoned and exiled members of the Russian opposition. Violence and persecution against counter-revolutionaries is a revolutionary duty; violence and persecution against tried and loyal Bolsheviks is a crime.

(13) The consolidation of the opposition in the American Party, which logically and inevitably merges with the part of the opposition in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union led by Trotsky, has developed in the struggle against the right danger. The pitiful attempt to characterize this opposition as a "right" tendency, related to non-Communist elements such as Lore who have been fighting the Party from the right, and anti-Communist elements like Salutsky, who have gone completely over to the side of the labor lieutenants of capitalism, does not in the least correspond with political reality and is designed to cover the progressive drift of the Party leadership to the right. On the contrary, the attempts to exclude us from responsible Party work, and even from the Party itself, along with the proletarian Communists who support us, while at the same time the control of the Party apparatus and the Party leadership in such unions as the needle trades consolidates more firmly in the hands of the opportunists, who fight their Communist-worker critics with expulsion and physical violence—all this can only accelerate the rapprochement between the right wing leadership of the Party and right wing and petty bourgeois elements now outside the Party.

(14) The Lovestone group leadership, by its opportunist political outlook, its petty bourgeois origin, its corrupt factionalism, its careerism and adventurism in the class struggle, is the greatest menace to the Party. Its mechanical grip on the apparatus of the Party grows steadily tighter and chokes out its inner life. Capable, experienced and trustworthy comrades are one by one removed from responsible posts and replaced by faction agents, incompetents, upstarts, unknown and inexperienced in any serious work in the class struggle. The Party itself, the mass work and the mass organizations under the influence and direction of the Party, are thereby undermined.

(15) The action of the Polcom in arbitrarily removing us from our positions in the I. L. D. where we have worked loyally and effectively for the building of this mass organization, for our political views alone, is a most ill-considered and dangerous step, fraught with the gravest consequences to the future of the I. L. D. There has never been any criticism of our work in the I. L. D. by the political committee of the Party, the executive committee of the I. L. D. or by any of the three national conferences of the I. L. D. All of these bodies have uniformly endorsed and commended our activity in this capacity. The disruption of the work which will be caused by our unjustified removal and the certainty that we will be replaced by incompetent faction agents, in no way interested in this work or qualified to perform it, cannot but bring the most harmful results. Such actions demonstrate again the reckless irresponsibility of the present Party

leadership in relation to all mass organizations and mass work.

(16) By its whole character the Lovestone leadership is the "logical" American banner-bearer of the demagogic and unscrupulous international campaign against the leaders of the Russian opposition. The aspirations of certain former leaders of the opposition in the American Party to grasp this banner for themselves are pathetically futile. The hopes of the Foster group to escape thereby the factional persecution of the Lovestone group and to secure their organizational positions can only succeed insofar as they surrender their former opposition standpoint. The whole course of the Lovestone group, which has no roots in the labor movement, is toward a monopoly of the Party apparatus and cannot be otherwise.

(17) We declare our intention to appeal to the plenum of the central executive committee to reverse the action of the Polcom against us,

which is motivated by neither principle foundation nor Party interest, and is the result purely of factional considerations and bureaucratic fear of discussion and criticism.

(18) The arbitrary decisions made against us cannot in the slightest degree change our position as Communists, since the Party we helped to found and build is our Party. Reserving the right to express our viewpoint and opinion on these disputed questions, we will continue to adhere to the discipline and decisions of the Party as heretofore. Under all circumstances we will continue to live with the Party and work for its future.

(19) We demand that simultaneously with the announcement of the decision of the Polcom on the outcome of this hearing, our statement shall be given to the Party in the same manner.

(Signed) J. P. CANNON

(Signed) MARTIN ABERN.

(Signed) MAX SHACHTMAN.

## HILFERS SELLS OUT TIRE STRIKE

### Rubber Workers Bitter in Denouncing Faker

Continued from Page One

do not like it can get out and stay out," the superintendent is telling the workers. Hilfers fought against the organization of a Rubber Workers' Union and the men and women workers now have no strong organization to support their demands or to protect them from the brutal conditions Michelin imposes on them.

As a result the pitiful wages in the Michelin plant will be cut from three and one-half cents to five and one-half cents per hour.

The Michelin bosses have utilized their opportunity to abolish the three shift system and will change to one shift. Michelin has used this change for a pretext to discharge many workers known to have been active in the strike. The head of the first strike committee formed when the walkout was decided on was among the first to be fired.

The bosses and their agent Hilfers have no intention of letting the workers slip from their grasp again. Together they are backing the proposal for a school where the foreign-born workers will be taught English, they claim. The real purpose of the school, however, is to spread propaganda for the Michelin bosses. The author of this scheme to control the workers further is said to be the diminutive "reporter from a local paper," who was constantly observed by the strikers hovering furtively around Hilfers and his meetings during the strike.

### Workers Back Militants.

Denouncing Hilfers, many of the workers today expressed bitter regret that they had not more consistently followed the lead of the militants who urged mass picketing, a wage increase, and the formation of a strong rubber workers' organization which would be able to support the workers' demands against the Michelin.

"We have learned a lesson," one of a group of workers told G. Signor, militant organizer, today. "We know you and we are with you from now on."

Widespread discontent prevails in the Michelin plant today and bitter resentment against the betrayal of Hilfers, which many of the rubber workers now understand.

## Gold Moves Here From England, Allowing Big Extension of Credit

The heaviest gold imports from London to New York is taking place, with an estimated sum of \$40,876,000 arriving since the middle of September. It is expected that this will allow for easier money rates in New York, and the movement may continue until \$100,000,000 has arrived.

Ordinarily \$40,000,000 more gold will allow for \$400,000,000 more credit, and whatever use the gold is put to by members of the federal reserve, credit tends to expand in that proportion. Even if the federal reserve should advance money rates, it is not expected to check the present wild stock market which has gone on in the face of high money rates and rapidly mounting brokers' loans.

Pressure against sterling continues with sterling going at its low point for the year, \$4.84%, and more large buying of gold in London is forecast. The Bank of England could stop it by advancing money rates in London, but that would hurt British business.

## SHAW'S 'MAJOR BARBARA' OPENS MONDAY NIGHT

The production of Bernard Shaw's "Major Barbara" will open at the Guild Theatre on Monday evening. This is the second offering of the Theatre Guild's season.

The cast is headed by Winifred Lenihan, Dudley Digges, Elliot Cabot, Helen Westley, A. P. Kaye, Edgar Kent, Philip Moeller directed the play and the settings are by Redington Sharpe, a designer new to Broadway.

The cast for "The Age of Innocence," adapted from Edith Wharton's novel, is headed by Katharine Cornell, and includes: Arnold Korff, Eden Gray, Katharine Stewart, Isabel Irving and Franchot Tone.

With his latest work, "The Squealer," under way at the Forest Theatre, Mark Linder has begun writing on a new play, a comedy to be called "The Montana Hermit."

## GALE DAMAGES CROPS

MONTEVIDEO, Uruguay, Nov. 15 (UP).—Fruit and grain crops in the vicinity of Salto were damaged in a hurricane last night. Losses are estimated at 500,000 pesos.

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