

World Socialism

ORGANIC UNITY AND REALISM

By HERBERT ZAM

Not so long ago we were taken severely to task by the Lovestonites because we criticized their opposition to the movement for organic unity. Now they have issued a lengthy appeal addressed to the Socialist and Communist Parties asking for organic unity. Well, better late than ever! Even a weak push may be of value if applied at the right point in the right direction.

Nevertheless, some comments are called for. The Lovestonites have always condemned the Comintern method of changing policies without any explanations and without declaring the former policy to have been wrong. But is this

procedure any sweeter because it hails from some other camp? What changes in the objective situation have taken place in the last three or four months to justify this change by the Lovestonites? If they are serious in giving as the first reason for their new policy that an "overwhelming desire for class unity is sweeping the ranks of the workers throughout the world today," why do they not admit that they were shortsighted for not noticing this desire two years ago; that they were wrong when they condemned as opportunists those who did notice it; that they committed a blunder when they tried to check this "overwhelming desire for unity?"

An innocent reader might conclude from the appeal that the Lovestonites are the originators of the idea of organic unity and are now trying to convert other to this idea. But do not the Lovestonites know that some of the most important labor organizations throughout the world have endorsed the idea of organic unity without the benefit of the advice of the Lovestone group? Or are such organizations as the French Socialist Party, the British Independent Labor, The Revolutionary Socialists of Austria, the Norwegian Labor Party, the Communist International, to mention only a few, not worthy of the notice of the Lovestone group? Should not a group which wants to reform the entire labor movement set an example by practicing some of the proletarian virtues which it so ardently advocates?

The brightness of the appeal is still further dimmed by an examination of the conditions which are proposed as the basis for unity. For a careful comparison shows that they are virtually the same adopted by the Seventh Congress of the Communist International. Here they are:

LOVESTONITE CONDITIONS

"class independence of the proletariat. The rejection of any form of collaboration with the bourgeoisie."

"rejection of every form of class peace or support of our own imperialist bourgeoisie, direct or indirect, in any war it may wage."

"practical recognition of the necessity of the revolutionary overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of a proletarian dictatorship in the form of workers councils."

"democratic centralism as the basis of party organization."

COMINTERN CONDITIONS

"complete independence from the bourgeoisie and the complete severance of the bloc between social democracy and the bourgeoisie."

"support of one's own bourgeoisie in imperialist war be rejected."

"revolutionary overthrow of the rule of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the form of Soviets."

"the party be constructed on the basis of democratic centralism."

The Lovestone group had a fifth point, "recognition of the proletarian class character of the Soviet government as a workers' state engaging in the construction of Socialism," but Manuilsky specifically explained the Comintern did not add this demand because "a sincere recognition of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the form of Soviets" also de-

termines their position and relation to the Soviet Union."

Thus we see the Lovestone group has only borrowed the decisions of the Seventh Comintern

Its Proposals Inadequate

Congress and wants to make itself a sort of marriage broker by championing these decisions vehemently. Having failed to take the lead at a time when a lead was badly wanted, the group is now trying to make up for lost time. Again we might say, better late than never, were it not that the Lovestone group fails to contribute anything positive toward solving this problem, and merely repeats inadequate proposals of the Comintern. If these points really constitute a basis for unity, we might ask the Lovestone group why it still finds it impossible to unite with the Comintern, since both accept these points? Obviously, therefore, the mere statement of a set of proposals which on the face of them might look good enough, is not sufficient. The Lovestone group, in enumerating those changes made by the Comintern which facilitate the movement for organic unity (abandonment of the ultra-left course) fails to condemn in their appeal those policies of the Comintern which are most objectionable at least to revolutionary Socialists. Are the revolutionary Socialists waging a tireless war against social-patriotic and reformist policies in their own organizations only to permit their re-introduction through the Comintern?

Both the Comintern and the Lovestone group want the united party to be based upon "demo-

Basis

Of

Democracy

We have had ample demonstration of the true meaning of both these terms in the practice of the communist organizations. It will be necessary to be a little more explicit before such terms can be accepted for application. And if a united party is to be a result of the "overwhelming desire of the workers for unity" is it not clear that it cannot be a monolithic party? For the moment that all those who do not agree with the principles of the united party are ousted, or told politely that there is no room for them, they will promptly form a new organization and restore the old situation which organic unity is supposed to remedy. Then presumably there will begin a new drive for unity. Such a prospect is not only discouraging; it is futile.

If real unity is ever achieved, it can only be on the basis of the mutual toleration of majority and minority. If the revolutionists are in the majority, they will have to tolerate those who do not agree with the revolutionary point of view. If the revolutionists are in the minority, they will have to continue working for their views until they have won a majority by the processes of party democracy.

And while waiting for complete unity to be achieved is it not the wisest course to be in the working class party which is inclusive, which practices toleration, which bans no ideas, which does operate on the basis of internal democracy, that is, in the Socialist Party? Any group which tries to stand outside and direct the bigger movement hoping to make factional gain thereby will not get very far.