

World Socialism

THE FORWARD MARCH OF UNITY

By HERBERT ZAM

At its last session held November 16-18, the national executive committee of the Norwegian Labor Party decided to withdraw from the "International Bureau of Revolutionary Socialist Parties."

This decision has little organizational importance since the Norwegian Party did not participate in any of the activities of the "Bureau" for some time. It has very great political significance, however, as it may prove a death blow to the "Fourth International" tendency in the revolutionary movement which for a short while appeared to be playing a significant role. Simultaneously comes the news that the Austrian adherent of the "Bureau," the organization that calls itself "Red Front," has decided to rejoin the Revolutionary Socialist Party.

In its decision, the Norwegian Labor Party declares that it had originally entered the "Bureau" in order to work for the unity of the two existing Internationals, but the "Bureau" has gradually tended to become an international organization itself with its own program, directives and structure. This statement really hits at the crux of the matter. Without sufficient strength really to be able to drive the existing Internationals along its road, the "Bureau," if it is to continue its existence, must become in practice a new International — the International of the splinter groups.

Large Parties Refuse

This is what the Trotskyites demanded at the time the "Bureau" was established; but the large parties in it, the Norwegian Labor Party, the British ILP and the Swedish (Independent) Socialist Party refused to accede to this plan and so caused the withdrawal of the Trotskyites. The position of the Trotsky group was completely wrong but consistent; the parties which rejected the implication of the Trotskyite position did not oppose it with a consistently correct one. Their rejection of the demand for the immediate formation of a new International was correct, but the line they did adopt led directly toward the very thing they wanted to avoid.

The central fallacy of the Trotskyite position (aside from all other considerations) is that it ignores the instinctive desire of the working-class for unity, a desire which followed a series of defeats to which disunity was a strong contributing factor. The Trotskyite remedy for the present situation is the formation of new parties and a new International—that is, new splits on a national and international scale. But this remedy flies in the face of the desires and the interests of the workers, including the advanced workers in the Socialist and communist parties.

The Trotskyite Position

The Trotskyites cannot be anything but small isolated groups even in cases where they decide to join the Socialist Parties. For so long as they continue to advocate the formation of a new International, their tenure in the Socialist Parties is temporary—until such time as they have won sufficient support to split and set up their own party. It then becomes a matter of members with them. But even if they are highly successful, their success cannot make any substantial change. From unsuccessful sects, they will become "successful" sects—nothing more.

The ILP, rejecting this development, finds itself in a quandary, however. Continuing to exist as an independent revolutionary party, it objectively encourages the "Fourth International" tendency. It loses membership and influence in all directions. Encouraged into leaving the Labor Party and making a bloc with the CP, it is left stranded by the decision of the CP to try to become affiliated to

the Labor Party. The ILP may therefore find itself the occupant of the place the CP had warmed during the madness of the "third period"—on the outside looking in.

If the ILP wants to follow consistently its policy of International unity, it can do nothing better than follow the example of the Polish Bund and return to the LSI where, like the Bund, it can continue working for further unity. No abandonment of principle is involved. If it is principled to unite with both internationals, it is obviously just as principled to unite with one of them, especially if that one not only does not insist upon abandonment of principles but even permits agitation for different ones. The same logic demands that the ILP frankly admits its organizational break with the Labor Party and that it unite with the Socialist League, with which it agrees on all important current issues. Such a course might give an entirely new line of development for the British movement.

Working for Unity

It is futile to shout "unity" and stand aside waiting for some miraculous kind of unity to appear. It is necessary to begin at the starting-point, and the starting-point is the immediate unification of the compatible organizations. If this means the liquidation of the smaller into the larger, we must not shrink from such a course out of a false sense of pride, possession, or organizational patriotism. True that in some countries, matters are not so simple. For example, in Sweden. But even here the problem of unity is only more complicated, not impossible. But everywhere a real will to unity can overcome difficulties and complications.

Needless to say, genuine unity presupposes genuine democracy inside the organization and freedom of expression of opinion rather than uniformity of belief. Without democracy, unity is a farce and a trap. In the long run, those are genuinely for unity who will profit by it. Those who try to use unity as a maneuver, who are intolerant and dictatorial, who put the interests of a faction above the interests of the entire movement, will find themselves isolated and alone—whether they are on the extreme right, on the extreme left or somewhere in between.

Negroes in Army Do Menial Work

NEW YORK—The famous Negro 10th Cavalry, with an illustrious record running back to 1866, is no longer being used in military maneuvers. Its members are assigned to service as grooms for private polo ponies of white officers and other menial tasks, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People charges.

Three years ago the historic 10th was broken into three units, which were then assigned to Ft. Leavenworth, Kans., Ft. Myer, Va., and West Point, N. Y. Replying to an inquiry from the association, the adjutant-general's office of the war department states that it is "an honor" to care for horses used by the army war college and general staff.

BUYERS CAN'T DISTINGUISH
BERLIN — The organ of the powerful Hitler special guards vigorously objects to stores that display post cards of Herr Adolph side by side with those of Charlie Chaplin.