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LOVESTONE'S INTERNATIONALISM

Jay Lovestone has just returned from an international conference which decided to form a center for revolutionary socialists "who, without adopting the position and the sectarian and factional tactics of Trotskyism, stand for the principles of the proletarian class struggle."

Not very long ago, the Lovestoneites held that the Trotskyists were "counter-revolutionary": but that was at a time when they expected to reform the Comintern, when they endorsed the first two Moscow Trials and considered that Stalin's blood purges were "historically progressive" because they were aimed at the "counter-revolutionary Trotskyites."

Having seen the light, Lovestone now calls "for preparation of a revolutionary Marxist International". Let us examine Lovestone's internationalism:

People's Front:

1) Lovestone and his allies condemn the People's Front. The POUM participated in a People's Front government in Catalonia - which the Workers Age endorsed: the S.A.P. of Germany "another ally) supports Peoples Frontism in Germany, the Lovestoneites supported La Guardia, the candidate of the New York Peoples Front, in the last mayoralty elections!

Collective Security: The Lovestoneites allegedly condemn collective security. Brandler openly supported collective security during the Italo-Ethiopian War; Lovestone first opposed it; then advocated "anti-imperialist sanctions", then came around to Brandler's position! Today, the Lovestoneites shamefacedly support "economic sanctions" by the United States against Japan. (See WORKERS AGE editorial, Dec. 25th, 1938)

The Lovestonites are part of the "Keep America Out of War Committee". Is this a working class set-up, organizationally and in program? Not even the WORKERS AGE can make this claim! In fact, it is a pink edition of the old American League Against and Fascism, a combination of patriots, pacifists, socialists and Lovestoneites. One of the points in the Committee's Program calls for governmental co-operation for international peace! Combine this proposal with the demand for government economic sanctions (raised by the Lovestoneites), and you get the collective security proposal of the Stalinists!!

The Soviet Union: The Paris International Conference which Lovestone attended was unable to adopt a resolution on the Soviet Union. Lovestone's somersaults on the Soviet Union are well known. However, even to-day he considers the Communist Party of the Soviet Union basically sound; that the Stalin regime can be removed by "peaceful" means, that is, without a political revolution. For years the Lovestone group has stated that a new international without the Russian C.P. could not be revolutionary. Officially, this is still their position to-day. Actually, the question should be posed: can there be a revolutionary international with the C.P.S.U!

What Kind of an International: Briefly, the platonic internationalism of Lovestone and his friends means verbal adherence to certain revolutionary ideas and complete national independence to violate them in practice; indignant condemnation of the Stalin

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regime without a clear understanding as to how it arose and how it can be defeated.

Lovestone does not want a revolutionary Marxist International - a world revolutionary socialist party - but "a world federation of parties" accepting abstract revolutionary principles "each self-reliant and independent in organization, each itself determining its policy, strategy and tactics on the basis of the needs and interests of the masses." (Workers Age, March 19, 1938)

Lest this be interpreted to mean that each national section should apply revolutionary principles and strategy in accordance with the specific conditions and needs in each country-which is an essential of true internationalism-we should recall that the problem of the Peoples Front, collective security (and attitude towards the League of Nations which it involves) are international problems. In practise, Lovestone's plea for a federation of "independent" national organizations has nothing in common with "Marxism-Leninism".

Trotskyism: Lovestone remains consistent in one respect; his anti-Trotskyism. For years in the Communist International he participated in the campaigns of slander, infamy and political frame-ups against the Trotskyites-and let us not forget that they were the political preparation for the Blood purges. Even after he was expelled from the Comintern, he continued his support of the Stalin regime, and his campaign of falsification against the Trotskyists. He mistook the counter-revolutionary Stalin "as he now calls him" for the revolutionist, and the revolutionist Trotsky for a counter-revolutionary. A slight error!

Today he borrows heavily from the Trotskyites in his criticism of Stalinism-and attacks them as sectarian and factional because they insist upon defending consistent revolutionary principles and sharply criticizing those who give mere verbal adherence to Marxism. It should be recalled that no one was attacked as sectarian and factional more often than Lenin himself. And for the same reasons: his merciless criticism of the vacillating elements in the socialist movement who supported revolutionary resolutions without taking them seriously in the class struggle itself. The Lovestoneites in trying to build their "world Federation" against the Second and Third Internat'l on the one hand and the consistent Marxists, the Trotskyites on the other hand, have adopted the program of centrism.

The revolutionary working class movement is ever self-critical: the experiences of the last twenty years are rich in tragic lessons for the revolutionary party; these must become an integral part of our program. But they by no means call for an abandonment of Lenin's teachings, for an acceptance of centrism. On the contrary, it was the rejection of Lenin's program by the Communist International of Stalin and Lovestone which has led to the catastrophic defeats of the working class, the terrorist regime in the Soviet Union, demoralization amongst large sections of class conscious workers, Lovestone does not understand this elementary truth; he jumps from Stalinism to centrism.

All the more reason why you members and sympathizers of the ICLL should examine for yourselves the history of the struggles in the CI and the Russian CP. Read the literature of the Socialist Workers Party. We are confident that many of you will reject the program of Lovestone and join us in our struggle to put into effect the principle of the Russian Revolution, the teachings of Lenin.

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