

The Struggle Against Loreism In Our Party

By MAX BEDACHT.

THE Loreist concept of party tasks proceeds on the erroneous theory, that there exists a difference between the task of building the party and that of entering political activities, and executing maneuvers. Again and again we meet the argument that we must first build our party before we can enter this or that action. This attitude is social-democratic.

The task of building the party cannot be separated from the political activities of the party. Our only source of new strength is the working class. We endeavor to set the toiling masses into motion in the direction of a decisive struggle against capitalism. Our party cannot carry on this struggle without the masses; the masses cannot carry on this decisive struggle without the Communists. We build up the party in the same degree as we succeed in identifying it with the struggles of the masses. As long as we are a small party our participation in these struggles will be one with comparatively small means. But just as the athlete gains and improves his abilities in practice so does the party build itself in action. The Communists will win leadership only if they really lead. The workers will learn to follow the Communists in final action if they see them march and fight with them and ahead of them in all preliminary actions.

WHEN Loreism expounds this theory of first building and then acting, it tries to cover up its opposition to action with a plausible formula. This formula is the more dangerous because the special regard these opportunities seem to have for our party carries an appeal to loyal and well-meaning party members. Thus the ideological influence of Loreism in the party tends to paralyze the party's activities to a much larger degree than the organized strength of the Lore group would indicate. The last party discussion, for instance, revealed to what a degree this untenable theory of a dualism of party building and party activities, is accepted even by leading members of our party who otherwise, admit the dangers of the Lore tendencies for our Party. The Comintern took cognizance of this tendency in our party when it wrote into the decision on the American question the following fundamental principle that the Communists must continually influence the workers in a revolutionary sense, and that this task cannot be accomplished by mere agitation and propaganda. Any ideological struggle against Loreism must, therefore, also uproot these tendencies where they have lost their clear identity with Loreism, and especially when they make their appearance as "pure Communist principles." Comrade Lenin called this tendency inverted opportunism.

It is evident that the opportunist tendency of Loreism had the more basis for crystallization and exposure the more the party Bolshevizes itself, the more the party becomes a party of proletarian leadership and revolutionary action. And this is just as evident that the danger of this

tendency for our party increases with this process.

TOWARD the party Loreism has always maintained an attitude of "superior" criticism. Neither the left wing, nor the party was their movement. From the Olympian heights of their "intellectual superiority," they consider the developments and the doings of our movement and pass judgment "over" it. This judgment, of course, is always against the party's and the Comintern's doings and invariably in favor of their own concept, that of Olympians. But in spite of the "serious shortcomings" of party and Comintern these Olympians condescend to place it with the honor of their membership. "Altho I am a member of it, I cannot take responsibility upon myself to advise any one else to join" declared Lore in a meeting of German-speaking comrades in New York at the time of the organization of the Communists in an underground party in the face of wholesale persecution of party members by the government. Here we have Loreism again in "Reinkultur." The party is never their party. The party is one thing; and a Loreite is another thing. Tho the two may meet, they never merge. This inability of the two to merge, demonstrated by the attitude of Loreism toward the party, must also be officially recognized by the party. The recognition of this inability to merge must in turn be demonstrated by the party in a relentless attitude toward Loreism.

IN the past the struggle against Loreism was a sporadic one. Since the tendency was not crystallized in a distinct group but manifested itself mainly in what individual party members of that tendency said or did. Comrade Lore himself was again and again the object of criticism and attack for his consistent non-Communist attitude. In the left wing movement at the time of the birth of our party Lore was the center of very justified suspicion and attack. At that time his attitude of superiority led him to a criticism of the left wing which in many points coincided with that of the right wing. In the days of the underground party the state of war of the party against Lore was a permanent one. At the time of the formation of the Workers' Party, Lore's membership in our party became so questionable that he was treated completely as an outsider.

Several times during the existence of the Workers Party we find the party in fight against Lore and Loreism. Even the walls of Sing Sing prison could not prevent Comrade Ruthenberg from taking issue with Lore because of the latter's attitude toward our underground party. Comrades Lovestone and Pepper took issue with Lore in the "Toller," in the underground "Communist," and in the "Weekly Worker."

The party took issue very decisively against Loreism when it raised its head in a dangerous form in the Jewish Federation, like it does at present in the Finnish Federation. The Central Executive Committee at that time proceeded to save the party from Loreist poison. In spite of a hesitancy on

the part of some of the members of the then C. E. C., the majority of that body proceeded firmly with its measures. It put the "reiheit" under immediate control of the C. E. C., and, finally expelled Salutsky, who had developed his non-Communist attitude quickly into an anti-Communist one.

DURING the last two years, with the slow process of Bolshevization, the Lore tendency crystallized slowly as a group. In this crystallization it was aided considerably by the fact that outstanding adherents of this tendency were not only permitted to occupy but were even appointed to im-

portant party positions.

But whatever the causes of this crystallization might have been, the fact remains unchallenged that Loreism, while in the first period of the existence of our party merely a tendency, has become a distinct group which menaces the Communist integrity of our party and tends to arrest the party's progress toward complete Bolshevization.

WHILE organizational steps, such as are proposed by the party resolution on Loreism, are absolutely necessary in our fight against Loreism, yet they will not be sufficient.

Loreism, the theory of hesitancy and inaction, must be overcome by an antidote of decisiveness and activity. Loreism must be drowned by Bolshevism. This is not merely a phrase; Bolshevization will drown Loreism—first because it will draw all Communist elements of the party away from inaction where idle speculations may make the victims of Loreism, and pulls them into the mechanism of revolutionary political action; and second, it will make existence for the unassimilable non-Communist elements within the party a physical impossibility.

Our Readers' Views

To the DAILY WORKER: I am lying on my back in the Morton Hospital, Taunton, Mass., with a broken leg (femur) and am likely to be here for some time. Am enclosing \$1.00 which is all I can raise to have the DAILY WORKER sent me for as long as that will pay for. If any local comrades or sympathizers could visit me here, welcome would be a cold word to describe my sentiments. I can see enough in the bourgeois press to convince me that the Riffs and the Chinese in two widely separated parts of the world are bothering the imperialists somewhat.

But even tho I know the lying bourgeois propaganda for what it is, I hate to have to read it alone without the Communist light rays to illumine it. Quite a tempest in a teapot this Scopes' trial seems to me. Both sides in the controversy seem to be convinced that the questions of science and religion can be fought out on their own feet without any question of their merit or demerit to a particular class. Let them go to it, tho. There is no doubt that the wide publicity given the matter will force open new though cells in the brains of the static ones. Some day before long we will get Marxian-Leninist questions attracting the attention the Darwinian ones now are.

Entering the hospital here, I was asked my religion. I answered: "No religion, I am a Communist. As such we get along very well without gods or other spooks."

There are lots of Catholics among nurses and patients here so we have plenty of beads and the poor, hurt children are told "God is punishing you. Be resigned." It makes me grind my teeth at times to keep from opening direct battle with the exponents of such a theory, but I have to lie silent. But I know the day is almost here when the working class in those of their children. The capitalist power will blow all the dark mists and terrors from their minds and lists will beat us in many a battle yet, but for all that we will win the war: the class war.—Fraternally, H. C. Fillmore, care of Morton Hospital, Taunton, Mass.

P. S. I hope that you can read this, lying on my back is not conducive to good writing.

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Repress, Cal., Folsom Prison—H. C. Duke, August 20.

San Quentin Penitentiary, San Quentin, Cal.—Roy House, No. 38535, Aug. 21; Thomas O'Mara, No. 39293, Aug. 12.

Box "A," Thomaston, Maine (State Prison)—Peter Claussen, Aug. 26.

Box 520, Walla Walla, Wash.—James Melnorny, No. 9410, Aug. 18; John Lamb, No. 9412, Aug. 26.