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JUN 27 1940

--- INTERNAL BULLETIN ---No.1---

Communist League of America (Opposition)

---Issued by the National Committee---

For Members Only

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INTERNAL BULLETIN

Discussion Material of National Committee Plenum, held June 10-11-12-13, 1932.

1932.

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I.

STATEMENT TO THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE RESULTS OF THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE PLENUM OF JUNE 10-11-12-13, 1932.

Dear Comrades:

In a previous circular the branches were informed that disputes had arisen in the Resident National Committee which would be considered at a plenary meeting of the full committee. The Plenum was held on June 10-11-12-13, and we are transmitting herewith the minutes of the sessions and the resolutions adopted.

It was clearly established at the Plenum that there were no serious differences regarding the general policy of the League as laid down by the National Conference.

The two main questions of dispute, upon which the Plenum adopted resolutions, were:

- 1) International Questions
- 2) The Situation in the New York Branch.

In addition, the Plenum considered the disputes and the disruption of the Toronto Branch and heard representatives of the two conflicting viewpoints: comrade Spector and comrade Krehm. A self-explanatory resolution on this subject was also adopted by the Plenum and is attached hereto.

On both of the important questions in dispute, the Plenum took a firm stand in support of the position which had been defended in the Resident Committee by comrades Swabeck and Cannon against the opposition and obstruction of comrades Shachtman, Abern, and Glotzer. The resolution on the situation in the International Left Opposition, which had been previously adopted by a referendum of the National Committee and sent to the branches was ratified unanimously by the Plenum. Comrade Shachtman, who up till then had opposed the resolution—which was aimed directly against the false position he had taken on the disputes in the European sections—withdraw his opposition and voted for the resolution. Likewise comrades Abern and Glotzer, who had presented separate resolutions to the branches, withdrew their resolutions and voted for the official resolution. Comrade Spector, who had withheld his vote before, also voted for the official resolution and submitted a draft of his own which was accepted as a supplement to the original resolution.

The resolution on the situation in the New York Branch also corresponds fully to the demands which had been made in the resident committee by comrades Swabeck and Cannon in respect to the Carter group with which, prior to the plenum, comrades Shachtman, Abern and Glotzer had acted in solidarity in their faction struggle. Under the pressure and insistence of the majority at the

2) Plenum comrade Shachtman submitted a political characterization of the Carter group which is incorporated in the official resolution on the question, and on the basis of which a political struggle for the isolation of this group is to proceed.

At this point, having attained the major premises for the reestablishment of the unity of the National Committee and a renewal of the collaboration which had been disrupted in the conflict, the Plenum took up for consideration the long document which had been submitted on the eve of the gathering by comrades Abern, Glotzer, and Shachtman. This document, filled with personal accusations and slanders, with elaborate discussions of outlived and secondary questions and extraneous matters--by means of which it was sought to muddle up and divert attention from the real and actual concrete questions of dispute--stood as a barrier to unity in the committee. The question was then squarely put to the three comrades mentioned: Do you wish the Plenum to reply to your document in the form of a resolution, and take it to the membership for decision, or do you wish to withdraw it from the records?

Thereupon the three comrades, after taking a recess to give the matter due consideration, announced their decision to withdraw the document. On this basis, and on the basis of the further declarations of comrades Abern, Shachtman and Glotzer that they wished to restore the unity and collaboration of the committee on the foundation of the Plenum decisions, the meeting, which up to then had been the scene of the sharpest struggle, was oriented toward a reestablishment of unity in the committee. The Plenum refrained from passing resolutions of direct condemnation of comrades Shachtman and the others for their previous false position and their indefensible methods of faction struggle. The Plenum decided to accept as sufficient their political retreat on the really important questions of the moment and to give them another opportunity to correct their course without a direct appeal to the organization against them.

In this spirit comrade Shachtman was again appointed to his post as editor of "The Militant", which he had deserted five months before as a demonstrative protest against our intervention on the international questions. It was agreed to reconsider the original determination to call a national conference and, instead of that, to submit the results of the Plenum to the membership for an objective discussion free from faction spirit or faction struggle. In order to broaden the national committee's composition and, at the same time, to bring the majority of the resident committee into consonance with the majority of the full committee, and thus guarantee the execution of its policy in the daily work, it was decided to coopt two new members with voting rights--comrades Basky and Gordon--and one candidate without voting rights--comrade Clarke. This necessary action--which is submitted to the entire membership for approval by referendum--was taken only after the alternatives of a conference, or of the reorganization of the resident committee as a political bureau reflecting the Plenum majority, had been openly considered, and after comrade Shachtman had stated that, while disagreeing with the cooption of the new members, he would accept the decision of the Plenum and would not oppose it before the membership.

Thus the Plenum adjourned on a note of unity, with a deep feeling of satisfaction on the part of the committee members,

as well as on the part of the other comrades who had attended the sessions by invitation, that the League had safely overcome the threatened crisis on a principle basis and that the fundamental political solidarity of the leadership and its capacity to solve its difficulties without a convulsion in the organization had once again been demonstrated. The nonpresident members returned home in an optimistic spirit, confident that the great danger of an unfounded faction struggle had been averted and that the League's forces could all be mobilized now for a new and broader program of constructive activity, including a more effective intervention in the class struggle of the workers than before.

These hopes, which were grounded on the unanimous adoption of the important resolutions, and the declarations made at the Plenum by comrades Shachtman, Abern, and Glotzer, soon proved to be illusory. No sooner had the resident committee come together to put the Plenum material in shape for the membership discussion, than the three comrades resumed their factional position and attempted to ignore the proceedings of the Plenum as though nothing had happened and nothing was changed. The document, which they had withdrawn from the records of the Plenum "in the interest of unity and collaboration" was again introduced in the resident committee on June 30 in a different form, with the demand that it be sent out to the membership in the discussion. In this document the Plenum, which called them to order and compelled them to retreat from their previous positions, is represented as a vindication of themselves on every point.

The resident committee, at the meeting of June 30, reacted to the new statement of the three comrades with the following motions:

"1) The document of comrades Abern, Glotzer, and Shachtman, which they demand to be sent to the membership and which they refuse to withdraw, is a factional document that falsified the decisions of the Plenum, attempts to incite the membership to overturn them, directly contradicts the action of the said comrades in withdrawing their document from the records of the Plenum and attempts to smuggle it back in a politer form, and by this means aims to give the signal for the maintenance of a faction in the organization against the line of the Plenum of the N. C.

"2) The document, moreover, represents an unprincipled and uncommunist attempt to cover up and justify the really serious mistakes, particularly by comrade Shachtman, in the international questions which brought great harm to the European sections and compromised the League by the erroneous impression that he acted in the name of the National Committee which had nothing to do with his position and did not approve of it.

"3) The action of the three comrades, in violation of the obligations they assumed at the Plenum, makes it now imperatively necessary to inform the entire membership of the complete facts and to call upon them to condemn and repudiate these unprincipled methods and this irresponsible trifling with the responsibilities of leadership.

"4) We demand of comrade Glotzer, who wrote into the minutes of the N. C. of January 13 on his return from Europe, that he disagreed with comrade Shachtman's position on the international questions. to discontinue his unprincipled attempts to promote

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Shachtman, to shield him at the expense of truth and the interests of the organization, and join the N. C. in its efforts to correct the abominable methods of comrade Shachtman—his attempts to pass off the disputes created by his own fully established errors as a "frame-up" against him by other members of the N. C. who insisted on a firm position in support of the revolutionary elements in the European sections.

"5) Comrades Cannon and Swabeck are commissioned to draw up a comprehensive statement on the whole matter. The secretary is instructed to inform the non-resident members of the N. C. of the actions of comrades Abern, Glotzer and Shachtman in violation of the Plenum decisions and propose to them the immediate decision to call a conference of the League to pass the judgment of the organization on the whole matter."

In compliance with the foregoing motions the N. C. is now preparing all the documentary material bearing on the disputes and will transmit it to the membership for information and discussion. The statement of the three comrades of the minority will be included in the forthcoming Internal Bulletin, together with the reply of the N. C. In addition to this we deem it now necessary to hand over to the membership all the essential documents which have accumulated in the records of the committee in the course of the conflict. With this material before them the members of the League will be able to gain a clear understanding of the disputes which disrupted the resident committee and to form a decisive judgment.

This is the only course open now. The National Committee has endeavored up to the last moment of the Plenum to maintain peace in the organization as long as it could be done without compromising any essential policy. It held the door open to the minority, passed no resolutions against them, and approached them in good faith on the basis of unity and collaboration the moment they complied with the minimum political demands. The minority members are trying to frustrate these designs with a double-dealing manœuvre. They retreated from their positions and spoke for peace at the Plenum, and a week later they wrote a factional appeal against the Plenum. They are trying to play hide and seek with the National Committee. They are trifling with the unity and stability of the National Committee; which is especially necessary now and which they have no principle ground to attack. The membership of the League must call a halt to this unprincipled faction game.

We are confident that the League members, with all the information before them, will firmly support the political standpoint of the Plenum and the organizational measures taken to guarantee its execution, and give a stern warning to those who are trying to sabotage and overthrow them. It is up to the League members now to demonstrate that four years of struggle under the banner of the International Left Opposition have not been in vain, that the profound internal conflicts in the European sections have not passed by without leaving deep traces in the consciousness of the American Oppositionists. Not to fly into a panic, not to be led astray by secondary and personal issues, but to examine calmly into the whole matter, to search out the important questions and decide them firmly—this is now the task of the membership of the League. We can have no doubt that such an approach to the problem will result in the categorical rejection of the irresponsible manœuvre of Shachtman, Abern and Glotzer. The safeguarding of the League against similar undertakings in the future depends on this.

II.

Minutes of the National Committee Plenum

Secretary called Plenum to order proposing the following agenda:

- 1.-Organization of the Plenum.
- 2.-Consideration of the controversy within the resident committee.
- 3.-Consideration of resolutions and organization questions.
- 4.-The situation in the Toronto Branch.

Agenda accepted as proposed and comrade Skoglund elected chairman. Swaback reported proposal by resident committee to invite one representative of the Jewish fraction committee, one of the Creek fraction committee and one of the youth together with comrade Gordon, managing editor of the Militant, to participate in the Plenum. Swaback moved that in addition the following comrades be invited: Tom Stamm, business manager of the Militant, George Clarke, field organizer, Louis Basky, formerly co-opted member of the National Committee, Herbert Capelis, secretary of the New York branch and Carl Cowl, secretary of the Minneapolis Branch.

---Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Swaback:-that the comrades who are invited participate in the Plenum, with the right to speak only when called upon by the committee.

Amendment by Shachtman:-that the invited comrades shall have the right to speak on such questions as concern their particular position.

Substitute motion by Cannon:-that only members and alternates of the National Committee participate in the discussion of the main questions, that after that is disposed of, if any of the invited comrades desire the floor, the matter be taken up for decision.

-----Substitute motion carried 5 to 4, disposing of the motion and amendment.

Swaback reported request by the New York Branch Executive Committee that it be permitted to be present at the Plenum if the New York Branch is a special point on the agenda. (In view of the fact that the New York Branch was not a special point on the agenda, that was accepted as disposing of the request.)

Motion by Swabeck: that the second point on the agenda be opened by a report by the Secretary on the organization, the origin and status of the controversy.

---Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Cannon:-that following the report of the Secretary there be a report by the comrades who have been abroad, comrades Shachtman and Glotzer.

---Motion carried unanimously.

Report made by the Secretary on the main question on the agenda, the organization status and a review of the controversy within the resident Committee after which adjournment was taken until the next morning.

Upon convening on Saturday morning, reports were made by comrades Glotzer and Shachtman on their visit to the European Section and comrade Glotzer's visit to comrade Trotsky.

After these three reports, discussion opened, embracing the general issues of controversy within the resident committee, the situation within the International Left Opposition, and the attitude toward the Carter group tendency.

During the close of the discussion, comrade Spector explained the reasons for not having voted on the drafts presented for resolution on the international question of the National Committee because of not having considered either draft fully adequate. He thereupon introduced the following resolution:

----RESOLUTION ON THE INTERNATIONAL QUESTION----

1.--The Second plenary session of the National Committee of the Communist League of America (Opposition) completely endorses the analysis, the proposals and perspectives for the International Left Opposition contained in the letter of comrade Trotsky (dated December 22, 1932) addressed to all national sections.

2.--The world crisis which has been developing in intensity for the past three years has created most favorable objective conditions for the conquest of the decisive masses for Communism. Nevertheless it has become increasingly manifest that the Comintern under the Stalin regime is incapable of utilizing the crisis for the realization of the historical tasks of the proletariat. Stalinism continues to be an organizer only of defeats. In Spain the devastating effects of the Centrist policy were manifested by the absence of a real Communist party in the revolutionary crisis, in the failure to give a Marxist appraisal of the class relations and the consequent stabilization for a certain time of a Kerenskiad. In Germany, the key to the international situation, the great social and political contradictions create the basis for a successful struggle for power by the Communist Party but the Centrist regime, by a false theory of Social Fascism / its suppression of Bolshevik party democracy, the negation of the united front policy, succeeds only in frustrating itself. In France despite the economic crisis which has set in, the Communist

Party failed to register any substantial gains in the last election and the membership of the C.G.T.U. continues to decline.

3.-The mistake, set-backs and defeats of the Communist movement in general reacts unfavorably for the growth of the Left Opposition itself. The defeat of the Opposition in the first place was due to the defeats of the revolutionary proletariat and the stabilization of capitalism. The strengthening of the Opposition and the victory of its international platform is bound up with the development of a new wave of revolutionary struggle. But in order to take advantage of such a situation it is necessary for the Opposition itself to measure up to its gigantic historical mission. It must be completely recognized that in addition to the general and objective reasons for the slow growth of the Opposition there remain the extremely important subjective and specific reasons. These are to be sought in the fact that there have existed in the Left Opposition alien tendencies which covered themselves with its banner only to compromise and discredit it and to delay the information of the genuine revolutionary cadres of the Opposition which the crisis in the Communist International has brought forward as the vanguard of the revolutionary proletariat. The work of purging the Left Opposition of these alien tendencies (Landau, Naville, Rosmer, and similar elements) was correct and fruitful; the completion of this task in the shortest possible time is an imperative need of the moment and can be accomplished not merely by the efforts of each national section by itself but by the joint efforts and contributions of the whole international Left. This imposes upon the American Opposition the need for greater attention than ever to the problems of the International Opposition for a more alert and active participation in their solution.

4.-The recent progress, growth of influence and strength of the German Opposition was made possible not merely by the accentuation of the revolutionary crisis but specifically by the liberation of the movement from the paralyzing effects of the regime of Landau which substituted for the revolutionary principles of the Left Opposition a course of intrigue, clique politics, combinationism and sterility.

In France, however, the process of clarification which was successfully completed in Germany assumes an unnecessarily retracted character. The circle spirit and syndicalistic course pursued under the Rosmer leadership was not liquidated with due rapidity and intransigence owing to the confusion produced by the vacillations of the Jewish group and comrade Mill arising from their proposal for a bloc with Rosmer in struggle against the leadership of the French Ligue. This fed the petty-bourgeois tendency of the Naville group with fuel for continuation of the ambiguous and diplomatic maneuvers with which Naville covers up his community of interest with those who are openly fighting the International Left Opposition (Rosmer, Landau). We do not mean to identify the traditions and position of the Jewish group with that of Naville with which they have nothing in common. The attempt to do this, made by comrade Treint, stands in the way of a solution of the relations between the revolutionary proletarians in the Jewish group and the leading kernel of the Ligue. Stripped

of extraneous and secondary considerations, the essence of the struggle that has been going on both inside the French and German Opposition has been one of the revolutionary selection of the genuine Opposition cadre.

5.-an obstacle in this struggle was the utilization of the International Secretariat by its former secretary, comrade Mill, in the interests of a faction fight against the leadership, not only of the French Ligue, but also of the other decisive national sections which supported it. The International Secretariat in Paris failed to give the necessary political or administrative guidance to our movement. The chief reason for the failure of the Paris Secretariat lay in the fact that it was not responsible to sections of the Opposition. We fully endorse the proposals made by comrade Trotsky in his letter to the National Sections for the reconstruction of the International Secretariat based upon the direct participation of representatives from the most important sections and responsible to them. The interests of such a Secretariat would not be subserved by the proposal of the Spanish section to delegate to it comrade Mill, whose previous course unfits him for such representation and is moreover a blow at those national sections who have repudiated him.

6.-We reject the proposal made to hold an international conference of the Left Opposition to which shall be admitted all and sundry grouplets merely upon the basis of their claims of adherence to the views of the Communist Left. We are in full accord with the three proposals made on this question by comrade Gurov in his letter of May 22, 1932.

7.-This plenum of the National Committee of the Communist League considers it necessary to recognize the defects and shortcomings of the character of its previous collaboration with and participation in the collective life of the International Opposition. For this lag in its prompt reaction to the questions in dispute in the European sections, the difficulties of distance are responsible in no small measure. Nevertheless we must strive to overcome this handicap by the closest and most prompt collaboration and by making available as quickly as possible a thorough selection of material, primarily by the systematic and undelayed publication of the International Bulletin in English.

--Maurice Spector

At the conclusion of Saturday's discussion, Swaback introduced the following motions:

1.-The Plenum reaffirms the National Committee resolution on the situation in the International Left Opposition.

2.-The Plenum requests comrades Abern and Glotzer to withdraw their resolution drafts from further discussion or consideration by the membership.

3.-The Plenum accepts the resolution on the international question presented by comrade Spector as a supplementary and further elaboration of the National Committee resolution already adopted.

4.-The Plenum requests comrade Shachtman to affirm that the

misunderstandings which arose in regard to our attitude to the International questions were created by him and due to his position held at the time, a position which he has now changed.

Voting on motions: No.1.--The National Committee resolution reaffirmed unanimously.

No.2.--Comrade Abern stated that, "Since in my opinion the original resolution drafts were basically alike, and since I am in full accord with comrade Spector's resolution and also accept the National Committee resolution, I am willing to withdraw my own draft." Comrade Glotzer stated that, "My view agrees with those of comrade Abern and I am also ready to withdraw my own draft."

No.3.--To accept comrade Spector's resolution as supplementary carried unanimously.

No.4.--Comrade Shachtman stated in reply: "I am not ready to make such a statement, since I do not believe the misunderstandings were due to my position. I do agree, however that my failure, since my return, to make myself clear, did give rise to misunderstandings."

Comrade Shachtman submitted the following statement of his position:

STATEMENT ON THE INTERNATIONAL QUESTION TO THE N.C. PLENUM

Since my views on the disputes within the International Opposition, particularly in Europe, have been called into question and been the subject of misunderstanding and misrepresentation, it is necessary that in addition to what I have already recorded in motions in the National Committee, resolutions and oral presentation, I add the following supplementary summary of my standpoint.

1.-The Left Opposition gained its greatest impetus in the past period by dissociating itself drastically from Urbahns, Paz, Souvarine, Van Overstraaten, Pollak and their similars who had nothing in common with the Left Opposition and served but to its discreditment, but the process of a revolutionary selection did not end thereby; it has not yet come to an end.

2.-The struggle which the revolutionary elements conducted against the sterile clique of Landau in Germany and Austria made possible the liberation of the German Opposition in its orientation towards the effective establishment of a genuine section of the International Left. It was only after ridding the German Opposition of the paralyzing influence of Landau's intrigues, unprincipled organizational machinations and combinations that it was able to make the forward steps our brother section has now taken in Germany.

3.-This purging of the Opposition had something of its counterpart in France, where it has been less effective because the process has been unduly protracted and impeded by the introduction of questions of second order. Here the initial demarcation from the semi-syndicalists (Rosmer), intellectualist (old Lutte de Classes group) elements, failed to deal conclusively with the remnants of the old petty bourgeois circle spirit represented by Naville, the dabblers in revolutionary politics who sabotaged the insistent struggle conducted by the progressive

kernel of the Opposition in France and Germany against the worn-out, conservative, paralyzing elements. The effective liquidation of this problem in France was impeded by the complications created by the oscillations and separatist tendencies of the Jewish group, and by the transformation of the International Secretariat by its leading officer, Will, from a guiding organ subordinate to the national sections and serving as an instrument to strengthen the revolutionary tendency, into an obstacle to the accomplishment of these objects. Within this newly complicated situation, the Neville group was able to float on the surface for a longer period. The solution was further protracted by the "experiment in collaboration" of the leading kernel of the Ligue with the Treint group which proved to be fruitless and increased the difficulties in achieving the desirable aim of drawing into the work the best revolutionary proletarian forces among the Jewish and French comrades.

The proposal made by me in my Paris letter to comrade Trotsky looking towards a solution of the sharp situation in the Ligue, were not based on fundamental considerations. I regard them as a casual, episodic opinion, which I now view as incorrect and superseded by what is said in the present statement.

4.-The internal difficulties in our Spanish section are due in large measure to its delay in clearly defining itself from the Right Wing and a failure to participate as attentively as it should in the life of the European Opposition. The personal opinions entertained on this or that comrade cannot replace a political estimate of the selective process through which most of the European sections have passed in the recent period and which has resulted in a considerable clearing of the ground, particularly in France and Germany. The persistent support for Will even after he had been repudiated by virtually all the other sections and the provocative nomination of Will to the Secretariat has compromised the Spanish section. The substitution of a personal campaign against Molinier instead of a political estimation of the Ligue situation, has had the same effect. I repudiate of course any association of my name with such a campaign.

5.-The proposal of comrade Trotsky on the re-constitution of the Secretariat must be endorsed. I need scarcely add that I have never and do not now support the absurd and sterile idea of the convocation of the international conference on a "broad basis" which would include "all groups", "claiming" to support the International Opposition, and compel the Opposition to start all over again what it has already partially finished.

6.-The laxity and delay shown in the past by the American Opposition in International questions can and should be overcome as much as possible, despite the difficulties of distance and language. These shortcomings, however, will not be effectively eliminated if the problems of the International, particularly the European Opposition, become a factional football in the League, utilized in such a manner as to prevent the genuine enlightenment of the membership.

--M. Shachtman

During the continuation of the discussion comrade Shachtman submitted the following resolution on the Carter group tendency:

RESOLUTION ON THE CARTER GROUP

1.-Our attitude on comrade Carter and his "group" has been set forth briefly in our statement on the Situation in the American Opposition. We reiterate it because of the extensive discussion which has taken place in the plenum on this point: The negative and harmful characteristics of these three or four comrades in question are their pedantic and academic approach to the problems of the League, a super-critical attitude towards the work of the organization and its leadership, intellectualist tendencies, and the tendency to set up the younger and less experienced comrades as a sort of control commission over the National Committee. They have a perniciously superior attitude towards the other youth comrades in the League and on the National Youth Committee and a decided underestimation of the leading cadres of the organization. Their persistent carping on numerous shortcomings and petty errors made in the League work and in its leading committee frequently causes them to overlook entirely the progress of the organization has made in the past period, against this bad influence exerted by these comrades, particularly upon the younger elements in the New York branch, we have always conducted sharp but comradely polemics so as to win over to maximum collaboration all those at first under their sway, without attempting to persecute them for their views or leave that impression. We believe that in so far as these comrades maintain their attitude, it is necessary to continue this enlightenment of the New York branch members in the future until such a tendency is eliminated.

2.-/At the same time, it is indisputable that these comrades have been loyal to the organization and in the very forefront of its activity. We do not attempt to challenge the fact that they have engaged in the Jimmie Higgins work of the branch, refusing no responsibilities, defending the organization, its line and leadership before the workers. This makes it both possible and desirable that we continue to afford them all the opportunities for continuing this activity. Our attitude towards these comrades is defined in large measure--although we are far from drawing a strict analogy--by what comrade Protsky writes in his recent remarks on the French League:

"With regard to certain 'doubtful' groups or groups of an alien origin, no sufficiently consistent policy has been adopted which would begin by attempts of loyal collaboration, put the doubtful elements to the test and under the control of everybody's eyes, give them the possibility of correcting themselves or of discrediting themselves, and in the latter case conclude by eliminating them from the organization."

The Carter "group" is not of course to be identified with the Neville group, and we do not consider that in spite of their attitude up to now, these comrades need in any way submitted to such a campaign as artificially inflates their importance and significance--in any direction in the branch, in which they constitute an insignificant handful of the comrades.

We do not believe that such comrades should be pushed com-

pletely to the background and isolated from the work and activity they have been conducting up to now, by an arbitrary faction combination which eliminates them from committees on a faction basis. Members of the branch executive should be selected, in our opinion, on the basis of their qualifications and activities, since our political differences are not of so clearly defined and deep a nature as to require the choosing of lower committees along faction lines, particularly where the National Committee, being in New York, has the opportunity of intervening directly for the political line of the League. The New York Committee should be selected on the basis of drawing into it new elements, more representative, so that the disproportionate influence exerted in it by the Carter "group" may be reduced to a minimum.

The National Committee does not wish to create the impression among the New York members that it is exaggerating this "group" of three or four people, inflating its importance, or persecuting it. At the same time it will jointly carry on a firm campaign against its harmful and sterile tendencies in order all the more easily to succeed in eliminating the influences exerted by these comrades upon the New York branch and in tightening its ranks for the line of the League.

Shachtman, Abern, Glotzer

Declaration made by Cannon, in agreement with Swabeck:

"While we do not consider this resolution as meeting in every particular respect with our proposals in regard to the Carter group tendency, it nevertheless provides a basis for unanimity."

Comrade Swabeck reported that on behalf of comrade Cannon and himself, he had personally asked comrade Shachtman if he wished to withdraw the latest document introduced to the National Committee by himself, Abern and Glotzer, entitled THE SITUATION IN THE AMERICAN OPPOSITION: PROSPECT AND RETROSPECT.. This question was put in view of the fact that the contents of this document, the charges made and the issue raised, had not at all been discussed or dealt with at the Plenum. Comrade Swabeck requested an answer from comrade Shachtman in regard to this, to which the reply was given that the comrades signing the document are not willing to withdraw it.

Comrade Cannon declared to the Plenum: "I have not yet at all answered a single personal accusation made in this document. I refer particularly to the charges against myself and the issues raised in connection therewith. I am ready to make such an answer to every paragraph and every line and will expect the plenum to take a position on the document and that it also go to the membership for discussion. I propose that we now take a recess for the comrades to discuss the advisability of withdrawing the document and give a final answer."

After recess, comrade Shachtman announced the withdrawal of the document in the following statement:

"Our original understanding of the proposal was that the first two documents were to be sent out to the membership without the presentation of our joint reply, signed by Abern, Glotzer, and

myself. From the clarification made by comrades Cannon and Swabock, we see that this impression was entirely unfounded.

"Since comrades Cannon and Swabock assert that if our document remains in the records, it will require a polemical reply and involve a struggle in the League, we have decided to withdraw our document from the records, without changing the opinions we expressed in it, but in the interests of unity and collaboration."---

(Signed) Shachtman, Abern, Glotzer.

Motion by Cannon:-that the comrades who have varying opinions on the question of Engels' Introduction shall, for the coming discussion, draw up in an objective manner statements of their views on the political aspects of this question.--

Motion carried unanimously.

Considering arrangements for a coming conference, the following views were expressed: Comrade Shachtman favored the idea of not having a Conference in the immediate future, believing that the Plenum had already partly served to obviate this necessity. Cannon expressed agreement, provided steps could be taken now to reconstitute the resident committee in such a way that its majority reflects the views of the full Committee, the opposite of which is now the case. He declared that it is self-evident that organizational provisions must be made to guarantee the execution of the views, sentiments and shadings represented by the majority in the daily work. This could be accomplished by the method of co-optation to broaden the Committee, such co-optation to be affirmed by the membership through a referendum. The only alternative, if this is not agreed to, would be the establishment of smaller political committee out of the present resident committee membership. Cannon suggested the following: the majority propose to the minority of the plenum that, by agreement, a co-optation to the resident committee take place, for the reasons of broadening the committee, drawing in new elements and youth elements as well as to bring the resident committee majority in harmony with the majority view of the Plenum. Shachtman on behalf of the minority expressed disagreement with this proposal in the following statement:

STATEMENT ON THE PROPOSAL FOR CO-OPTATION TO THE N.C.

We are against the proposal to add comrades Gordon and Basky to the National Committee with full voice and vote, and comrade Clarke as candidate, for the following reasons:

1.-The Plenum revealed that no fundamental political differences exist in the National Committee. On those questions which became a subject of dispute in the Committee (International question and the "Carter group") we were able to adopt a unanimous resolutions and arrive at a virtually united standpoint. Such a situation does not warrant the artificial introduction of three comrades into the Committee for the purpose of giving one side a factional organizational predominance over the other.

2.-The selections are not made for the purpose of broadening the Committee in general and drawing new elements into its work--a step which we have advocated and which the next national conference must certainly accomplish--but in order to guarantee an automatic and arbitrary factional majority in spite of the non-existence of any clear political differences in the Committee and regardless of what questions may arise.

3.-The introduction of the proposed comrades for the express purpose of guaranteeing a sure voting majority for one side under all circumstances, will not serve to eliminate the friction in the National Committee but only to perpetuate artificially a rigid line of faction division inside the leading committee.

4.-The selections are not made upon the basis of merit, thus helping to enhance the authority and effectiveness of the Committee, but along the lines of factional support, in one case requiring the suspension of the constitutional provision so seriously, and correctly, adopted by the last national conference.

5.-Without making this proposal a subject for sharp factional dispute in the League, which is equally unwarranted by the substantial unity on question on which the plenum adopted resolutions, we nevertheless wish to register our categorical opposition to it.

M. Shachtman, M. Abern, A. Glotzer

Motion by Cannon: (1) that for the reasons already given and after an exchange of opinion of the comrades, the Plenum decides to co-optate unto the National Committee, comrades Basky and Gordon as voting members and comrade Clarke as a Candidate. This to be submitted to the membership for ratification, meanwhile, however, the comrades to function in this capacity immediately.

(2) That we inform the membership of comrade Gordon's limitations on the constitutional requirement and ask for their ratification with full knowledge of this fact (the Constitution requirement is "Article 9. Section 3--Members of the National Committee must have been active members of the Communist political movement for at least four years, at least two years of which have been in the Communist League at the time of election." Comrade Gordon's limitations in regard to the constitution refer to the first part of this requirement. he has been only two years a member of the Communist League.)

Comrade Spector recorded himself as opposed to disregarding the constitutional provisions which we adopted after such serious reflections.

Voting on the motion for co-optation: in favor: Skoglund, Cannon, Swabeck, Dunne and Oehler; voting against: Shachtman, Abern, Glotzer. Abstaining, Spector.

Voting on Gordon: in favor: Skoglund, Cannon, Swabeck, Dunne and Oehler; against: Shachtman, Abern, Glotzer; Abstaining; Spector referring to statement above.

Voting on members proposed for the committee: in favor of Basky: Cannon, Swabeck, Dunne, Skoglund and Oehler; against, Shachtman, Abern and Glotzer; Abstaining, Spector.

Voting on Clarke: infavor: Cannon, Swabeck, Dunne, Gehler and Skoglund; against: Shachtman, Abern, Glotzer; Abstaining: Spector.

Motion by Abern: that comrade Shachtman take up the post formerly occupied by him as editor of The Militant.

Motion by Swabeck: that the present arrangement stand. That comrade Cannon remain the politically responsible editor, that comrade Shachtman, as a member of the editorial board collaborate fully in the editorial work of The Militant and the editorial board take charge more directly and assume more complete responsibility for the editorial work and the make-up of The Militant.

Voting on the motion: in favor of Abern's motion: Abern, Glotzer, Shachtman and Spector.

In favor of Swabeck's motion: Cannon, Swabeck, Dunne, Skoglund and Gehler.

Statement by comrade Spector: "Does comrade Cannon still hold as valid his statement (at the committee meeting, January 13th) when proposing comrade Shachtman that nobody has advanced any personal or political objections to Shachtman as editor of The Militant and comrade Trotsky's proposal that comrade Shachtman resume his post?"

Reply by Cannon: "Yes, in general, I think it is still valid. After the agreement we have arrived at here, I would not raise any political or personal objections to comrade Shachtman. However, I am under the impression that all the circumstances are not exactly the same as they were five months ago. Since then we have organized the staff on a more collective basis, we have entrusted the responsibility of actually getting out the paper to comrade Gordon and in my opinion he has carried out his responsibility very satisfactorily. I do not think we should return to the old method but rather should go forward toward a further development of the collective principle. I also think it unwise to establish the idea that we call in comrades in responsible functions when we need them in an emergency and then dismiss them when the emergency is over."

Motion by Swabeck: that the resident committee be authorized to finally elaborate the resolutions for which we have here drafts accepted as a basis, together with a resolution summarizing the work of the plenum as well as to prepare the material for the coming membership discussion. (2) that the Secretary prepare a report of the plenum with the approval of the resident committee for the International Secretariat and comrade Trotsky.

---motions carried unanimously.

At the conclusion of this discussion the following statement was submitted to the plenum by comrade Carter:

"We the undersigned, recognizing that one of the most important disputed questions in the National Committee and the Plenum is the problem of the New York Branch and the purported domination of its Executive Committee by the so-called Carter group.

while decisively rejecting any charge of the existence of a political tendency called "Carterism" understand that the dissension on the question interferes with harmonious collaboration in the National Committee. We firmly believe that the utmost collaboration and collective leadership is a dire need in the National Committee and the League.

"We believe that rather than permit the question of our re-elections to the N.Y. Branch Executive Committee hinder the necessary collaboration in our National Committee and harmonious and comradely relations in the New York Branch we will, and at the present time wish to state so, not accept nominations for the coming elections to the New York Executive Committee.

"We take this step for one reason--a sincere attempt to secure as much as possible united functioning of the entire organization and particularly its leading body, the National Committee. This does not mean that we will decrease our activity, in the New York Branch. On the contrary, we intend to continue our active functioning in the branch and the League as a whole.

H. Stone, George Ray, J. Carter

The Situation in the Toronto Branch

Comrade Spector reported on MacDonald's adherence to the Left Opposition and on the controversy within the branch and on proposals for the future. Comrade Krehm, who had been invited to the plenum for this particular discussion, presented the views of the other side of the controversy. Krehm proposed the following conditions to heal the breach with Spector and comrades who agreed with him: 1. A clear explanation from Spector on his position on the delegation to Prime minister Henry.--2. Repudiation by Spector on his position of his act in splitting the Toronto group.--3. Spector to enter a mass organization.--4. Spector to substantiate his accusations against other comrades by actual facts or else withdraw them.

Comrade Spector made the following proposals: 1. That the Canadian organization be established as an autonomous section of the Left Opposition, with a provisional center to be created.-- 2. That it establish direct relations with the International Secretariat and function under the name of Marxian-Leninist League of Canada (Opposition).--3. That it publish a monthly organ.--4. That it prepare a national organ. That for the time being the Toronto membership function in two branches on the basis of the present division.

After a discussion on the controversy and the various proposals Swaback made the following motions:

1.-That we make another effort for comradely collaboration with recrimination, of the Toronto membership within one branch, including all of those who are now members.

2.-That the National Committee supports fully the political tendency represented by comrade Spector and consider it as the basis for united collaboration.

3.-The National Committee demands from the Toronto membership that this be adhered to on penalty of measures to be taken against those who fail.

4.-That we accept as a perspective the proposals made by comrade Spector for an autonomous Canadian section of the Left Opposition in the sense that the first practical steps in that direction, such as the launching of a paper, establishment of an editorial board, etc., to be taken as soon as the branch has reached a sufficient degree of collaboration and stability.

Motion by Cannon:--That the resident committee be instructed to draw up a resolution which will elaborate on this basis.

--Motions by Swabeck and Cannon carried unanimously, Spector adding that an elaborated resolution should include a characterization of the group.

Motion by Cannon:--In view of further consideration by the comrades, the plenum decides that comrade Shachtman return to his post as editor of The Militant with comrade Gordon remaining in his present position on the editorial staff.

--Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Glotzer: that consideration of the unemployment resolutions together with organizational questions, and the question of Weisbord (since added to the agenda) be referred to the resident committee and plenum now adjourns.

--Motion unanimously carried.

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STATEMENT ON THE SITUATION IN THE INTERNATIONAL LEFT OPPOSITION

(Printed in The Militant of April 23, 1932)

The National Committee, having considered and discussed the most important parts of the material bearing on the present situation in the International Left Opposition, and the French section in particular, has come to the following conclusions:

1. The most important feature in the internal life of the International Opposition in the past two years, has been the struggle to free the movement from the influence of alien elements who paralyzed its activities by sterile intrigues, distorted its principles and practical application, and hampered its development as the driving force of the proletarian vanguard. We are and have been fully convinced of the progressive and revolutionary quality of the struggle for these ends which has been led by comrade Trotsky. It has been an unavoidable and necessary stage in the preparation of the International Left Opposition to fulfill its great historic tasks. The National Committee is in full solidarity with the estimate of this struggle and the perspectives of the International Left Opposition outlined in the circular letter of comrade Trotsky under date of December 22, 1931.

2. The correctness and necessity of this struggle to purge the movement of alien elements is demonstrated, among other things, among the positive results in the German section after the liquidation of the worthless intrigues of Landau and the freeing of the section for its actual revolutionary tasks. The

leadership of the German section, which has taken shape in the struggle against Landau and his sterile factional regime, must be given all possible international assistance and support in its tremendous responsibilities and opportunities: The necessity of the struggle for internal renovation is shown with no less force—although in a negative manner—by the present state of affairs in France. The demoralization there ensues directly from the fact that the two-year struggle has not been brought to a conclusion.

3. In our opinion the present situation in the French League... which ought to be a matter of grave concern to the entire International Opposition—is not a new one. We regard it rather as the rear-end of the struggle to clear the section of the influence of unassimilable and careerist elements, which has been unduly prolonged. The task there, as we see it, is not to seek a solution of the crisis from the standpoint of the episodic questions and differences. This only blurs the real issue. What is necessary is a decisive course toward the liquidation of the crisis by a firm stand against the representatives of the disintegrating tendencies. Among these we count the leaders of the Jewish group, and we particularly condemn their attempt to set up a nationality group as a faction within the League and their resignation from the National Committee in the name of such a group. Such methods and practices are incompatible with Communist organization. No less harmful, in the drawn-out internal crisis of the League, have been the ambiguous and diplomatic maneuvers of Naville, against which we have recorded ourselves in our previous resolution. In our opinion it is most necessary for the French League to bring the internal controversy to a conclusion, to draw clear and precise lines and make a selection on that basis.

4. The proposal of com. Trotsky for the reorganization of the International Secretariat, by constituting it out of representatives of the most important sections who will be responsible to their sections, is the most feasible plan under the circumstances. As the experience of the past few years has shown, the International Opposition has not yet developed to the point where a secretariat based on the selection of persons—free from accountability to the respective sections—could fulfill the office. The secretariat must become a responsible body standing above the intrigues and helping to liquidate them. We are of the opinion that comrade Mill misused the office of International Secretary and erred fatally by identifying himself with the factional struggle in the French League against the leadership. Thereby he helped to negate the whole progressive struggle against Landau-Naville-Rosmer and, at the same time, undermined the authority and discredited the International Secretariat. The reorganization of the Secretariat as a responsible body will help to shield it against such a fate by rendering it less susceptible to personal moods and vacillations.

5. The difficulties of distance, etc., make a timely and effective participation of the American League in the internal questions of the European sections extremely difficult, and preclude altogether any pretensions on our part to play a leading role in their solution. We must not undertake that; nevertheless we consider it desirable to participate more directly in the work of the International Secretariat through an elected representative and the National Committee will propose to select such a

representative of the American League as soon as possible. It is necessary to acknowledge a slackness in our international activities and duties, the nature of which and its basic causes have been accurately described in com. Trotsky's circular letter. In order for our League to be useful in the solution of the internal problems of the European sections, and to educate itself in internationalism in the process, it must firmly organize a collective participation. The National Committee as a whole must familiarize itself with the international questions and bring a collective judgment to bear upon them. The most important material must be translated and supplied to the League membership for information and discussion. The progressive elements in all sections, which are struggling for the liquidation of circle psychology, sterile intellectualism and worthless factional intrigues, and for the consolidation of genuinely revolutionary cadres, must be assured at every step that they have a conscious and resolute ally in the American League.

NATIONAL COMMITTEE COMMUNIST LEAGUE OF
AMERICA (OPPOSITION)

NOTICE TO ALL BRANCHES

Upon receipt of the plenum discussion material contained in Internal Bulletin No. 2, discussion should proceed immediately and terminate within one month. All members should be properly notified and enabled to participate in the discussion which could preferably take place at a specially arranged meeting.

The branches are asked to record the votes of each member on all of the various resolutions and the decision of co-optation, tabulate the results and send it to the National Office. In addition to this the branches can, if they so desire, formulate and vote upon their own resolution on the results of the plenum, the issues of dispute and the general situation of the League.

The National Committee
Communist League of America (Opposition)

IV.

RESOLUTION ON THE SITUATION IN THE NEW YORK BRANCH

1.--The Situation in the New York Branch now presents itself as one of the main problems in the internal consolidation of the League to which the National Committee must devote special attention. The key importance of this branch in all plans for an expansion of the activities and influence of the League--which is self-evident--necessitates now the adoption of a precise attitude toward the negative aspects of the branch and a conscious and resolute struggle to overcome them under the leadership of the National Committee. Alongside of a considerable increase in membership and a fair improvement in activity during the past year and a half the branch nevertheless has revealed the presence of serious defects and of elements of obstruction to a further revolution which cannot be overcome without conscious and persistent efforts on the part of the League leadership. The radical improvement of the situation in the New York branch is one of the prime conditions for a real advance of the League as a whole in the coming period.

2.--The main weaknesses of the branch since its inception derives from its heterogeneous composition and the absence within it of any firm group capable of working consistently and deliberately along the line of the N.C. and upon which the N.C. could rely. The branch did not come out of the Party in a group as a result of the struggle and the expulsion campaign of 1928. On the contrary it was built up in a process of individual recruitment from the most diverse sources, it had from the beginning a heterogeneous character, and still retains it to a considerable degree. The non-party origin of some of its members and the lack of party tradition and party concepts of others, determined the more or less continuous internal conflicts which have marked the life of the branch. The great majority of the struggles which the N.C. has been obliged to conduct against groupings and individuals in the branch have, been at bottom, struggles over the elementary principles of Communism in fields of theory, tactics and organization.

3.--Having eliminated some (though not all) of the crudest and most obvious non-Communist and even anti-Communist tendencies and their representatives--in every case, without exception, by the direct intervention and pressure of the N.C.--it is decisively necessary now to take further and more resolute steps to overcome the political formlessness of the branch and bring it into line with the requirements of a vanguard Communist organization. The basic factor militating against this course, or at any rate, the chief reason for the slow progress with it--consists in the fact that the branch, up till now, did not succeed in creating, the nucleus of a firm, political group within the branch which could work deliberately in this direction--hand in hand with the National Committee--and lead the branch on the same path. On the contrary, the most pronounced and definite political grouping which took place in the branch consists of elements of the scholastic student youth type, the Carter group, who gained a predominance in the leadership of the branch, made a caricature of revolutionary conceptions, stubbornly resisted correction, and thus paralyzed the revolutionary development of

the branch and the political education of its members.

4.--The negative and harmful characteristics of the comrades in question are their political sterility, their pedantic and academic approach to problems of the League, a supercritical attitude toward the work of the organization and its leadership, intellectualistic tendencies, and the tendency to set up the younger and less experienced comrades as a sort of control commission over the National Committee. They have a perniciously superior attitude towards the other youth comrades in the League and on the National Youth Committee and a decided under-estimation of the leading cadres of the organization. Their persistent carping on the numerous shortcomings and petty errors made in the League work and in its leading committee frequently causes them to overlook entirely the progress the organization has made in the past period. Against this bad influence, exerted by these comrades, particularly upon the younger elements in the New York branch, we have always conducted sharp, but comradely polemics, so as to win over the maximum collaboration all those at first under their sway, without attempting to persecute them for their views or to leave that impression.

5.--But experience has demonstrated that the political liquidation of this group--which is a condition for the healthy development of the branch and a radical improvement of its internal life and general activity--requires a more deliberate, systematic and resolute struggle than has been waged up till now. It is necessary to explain more thoroughly, more concretely and in more detail the complete falsity of the attitude of the Carter group and its harmfulness to the organization, and to deprive it of a predominating position in the branch leadership. In the ideological struggle against this grouping--which must now be conducted more resolutely and more systematically than before--the N. C. must aim at the crystallization of a definite political nucleus which will be able to work consistently for the Communist development of the branch in harmony with the N.C. and take into its hands the branch leadership. It is the duty of the N. C. to assist the formation of such a political nucleus and support it openly as against the Carter grouping and the various non-descript individualistic elements who resist such a concentration.

6.--The task now is to awaken the branch to the harmful tendency represented by this grouping, to isolate it politically and to give the individual comrades of the grouping a final opportunity to correct themselves. In favor of such an eventuality, at least for some time, it must be noted that comrades Carter, Ray, and Stone presented a declaration to the Plenum in which they declared their readiness to support the unity of the N.C. and their willingness to sacrifice, if necessary, their positions on the local executive committee to that end. It must also be acknowledged that the comrades of this grouping have been active in the work of the branch and loyal to the organization in its struggles including physical conflicts with its enemies. These facts give a certain ground to hope that the aims of this resolution can be accomplished by means of a militant but comradely, political struggle, without drastic organization measures. The National Committee ask for the clear and unequivocal support of the branch in the fight for this result. Once this is firmly attained

the question of further developments can answered by the conduct of the Carter group.

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RESOLUTION ON THE TORONTO BRANCH SITUATION

1.--The stagnant condition in the Toronto Branch, and the factors of disintegration which lately became predominant and culminated in the disruption of the Branch have primarily been a reflection of the heavy defeats suffered by the Canadian Communist movement as a whole, by the isolation of the Branch and its failure to secure a national basis of the Left Opposition in Canada.

2.-- In this situation the internal life of the branch was spoiled by acrimonious personal quarrels, by exaggerations of small and episodic differences, by pessimistic moods and by attempts to fix the blame on individuals for what was essentially a condition imposed upon the branch by external circumstances. The heterogeneous composition of the branch at its inception, and the failure to weld together a more or less homogeneous working group within it, contributed heavily to the disintegration-process and led it to the culminating disruption.

3.--In recent months--since the Second Conference--the disputes which appeared at first to have purely personal character began to acquire a political content, to lead toward group formation and a split. The inability of the Branch as a whole to find a way out on its own resources, and the failure to seek the intervention of the National Committee, was leading the branch to a fatal disruption which would have compromised the Left Opposition in Canada for a long time. The intervention of the N.C. Plenum occurs at a moment when further delay would entail the most serious consequences.

4.--Within the branch there occurred the gradual crystallization of a grouping of young comrades somewhat similar in composition and tendency to the Carter grouping in the New York branch. These comrades, commencing with a criticism of comrade Spector's inactivity in leading the branch at one time--a criticism which was not without a certain justification--began to develop along the line of a political opposition to him, and eventually toward the N. C. also. This led them, and the branch in which they constitute a majority, into a number of mistakes which only set the branch still farther back and helped to sharpen its internal crisis. The outstanding error in this line was the failure of the branch to send official delegates to the united front conference against the sedition laws in order to avoid a conflict with the Stalinists, and the sending instead of an unofficial delegate through other organizations. The stubborn refusal to recognize the correctness of comrade Spector's contrary proposals, and along with that the careless "filing" of the National Committee's letters of advice containing the most deliberate opinion of all of its resident members, was the danger signal of future difficulties with this group. Just at the moment of the persecutions, when the Opposition should have shown its face boldly, the branch allowed the Stalinists to admit them to

the conference shamefacedly, through the back door--so to speak-- and under some other name.

5.--This incident, which in itself need not be exaggerated, is mentioned because of its symptomatic character. The political error itself, taken together with others more or less serious; the light-hearted manner in which it was made and the failure up till now to recognize its seriousness; the resistance to attempts at correction, first by comrade Spector and later by the National Committee--from these circumstances only one deduction is possible: this group, by itself, lacks political stability and is not sufficiently serious in its attitude toward the League as a whole and its National Committee, selected by the conference. Left to itself, such a group would be capable of compromising the Left Opposition in a comparatively short time.

6.--Having studied the material and heard the oral explanation of the representatives of both sides, the Plenum has a fairly clear picture of the situation and finds it possible to take a definite stand on the essential questions in dispute. In general, and in the specific disputes that have a political character, the Plenum supports the tendency of comrade Spector and recommends to the branch the creation of an atmosphere which will make it possible for his proposal to be given more serious consideration in the future.

7.--But comrade Spector's organization policy cannot be supported. "We do not recognize the split as necessary and already accomplished, and are in no way willing at the present time to break off relations with the majority of the branch as it has existed uptill now, or to recognize the existence of two branches. Both groups, and the individuals in each, must be given a further opportunity to prove themselves as members of one united branch. Even if it subsequently transpires that some elements cannot be assimilated and have to be cast aside, it cannot be taken for granted now that a split must ensue along the present group lines. We must strive in every way to save the nucleus we now have, and to limit the losses, if any become unavoidable, to individuals. The youth and inexperience of the majority grouping, which militates against its capacities to lead and direct the movement, entitle one to the hope that they can yet learn and develop. What they need is the will to do so. To those who show a readiness now to play a responsible part in the solution of the crisis and the unfolding of the Canadian oppositional work on a new and higher basis will receive the full comradely assistance of the National Committee and, we are confident, of comrade Spector also.

8.--The organizational connection of the Toronto Branch with the League in the United States is obviously a transitional state of affairs. It is necessary to keep in mind the aim of creating an autonomous Canadian movement of the Opposition on a national scale in the shortest possible time, and to accelerate the steps toward it. But it would be a crime for the National Committee of the League to throw off its responsibility to the Toronto branch in the midst of its present crisis and leave it to face the prospect of a split without a direct and peremptory intervention. On the contrary, the National Committee feels bound

to assume the full authority provided by the constitution and to present this resolution for the unification of the branch as absolutely binding, on every member.

Comrade Krehm, in the name of the group he represented, submitted a number of demands:

9.--(1) A clear explanation by comrade Spector of his failure to speak as a member of the delegation to Premier Henry. This, as we understand it, was a nondescript delegation organized by the I.L.D. to protest to the Premier of a province against the Federal Sedition Law, etc. Comrade Spector explained that he went along on the delegation without feeling convinced either of its efficacy or its political correctness. His failure to speak, as he explained it to the Plenum, was not so much design as it was indecision as to its appropriateness under all the circumstances.

10.--It appears that the incident has been unduly magnified. It would be a really serious question, like several others of a similar character which have been raised in the dispute, if comrade Spector's integrity or courage as a revolutionist were challenged. But in reply to straight questions whether anything of this kind were intended or implied in regard to comrade Spector, comrade Krehm answered that they were not. Eliminating this implication, which, it goes without saying, the National Committee considers absolutely groundless--there remains only the political or tactical wisdom of the whole paltry affair of the Henry delegation. The delegation itself, in our opinion, was a dubious enterprise and the advisability of the Left Opposition participating in it is also questionable. Having become a member of the delegation--willingly or unwillingly--comrade Spector should have taken an opportunity to speak, if for no other reason than to distinguish the Left Opposition from the cringing, liberalistic program of the organizers of the delegation, had the circumstances made this possible. By these opinions we do not wish in any way to support those who may elevate this episode into a "principle issue" to be harped on continually. It is our impression that the affair has already been given more importance than it deserves. Comrade Spector's revolutionary qualities have been demonstrated on numerous other occasions and the future will present its tests to him as well as to others. The affair of the Henry delegation signifies nothing, in our opinion, except a possible tactical error which in itself is quite understandable under the circumstances.

11.--(2) A repudiation of comrade Spector's action in splitting the group. The Plenum does not hold comrade Spector solely responsible for the split of the group. The matter has to be considered in the light of all the circumstances, and especially in the light of the attitude which the various comrades take toward the demand of the Plenum that the "split" be liquidated forthwith and the branch be reunited on the basis of this resolution. Comrade Spector certainly deserves criticism for allowing matters to come to such a point without appealing for the intervention of the National Committee. But it is far more important now to fix the responsibility for the future unification than to determine who shall be blamed for the disruption of the past.

12.--(3) Comrade Spector must enter the mass organizations.

This, to our mind, is a practical question which has to be determined on the ground. The work to be undertaken by comrades, especially by the experienced and highly qualified comrades, has to be considered from the standpoint of the various demands made upon them, the relative importance of the tasks, the time at their disposal, special fitness, etc. We propose that this and similar questions, which require a calm atmosphere and an objective approach, be laid aside for the time being, and in no case be made the basis for the factional agitation in the next period. Once the unity of the organization is restored and the new uprising of activity reflects itself in the revival of enthusiasm, the growth of the branch, and the improvement of personal relations, such questions will solve themselves without serious difficulty.

13.--The National Committee has no objections to the proposal made by comrade Spector that the Canadian comrades orient towards the publication of a Canadian Opposition organ on a modest scale, at the outset. But the preliminary condition for such an organ, which is a step in the direction of developing an autonomous national section, must be the re-establishment of normal conditions in the Toronto branch and the solidification of all the comrades on the basis of the views outlined in the present resolution.

14.--The futility and the danger of artificially stimulating and prolonging personal antagonisms, of perpetual recriminations over more or less outlived incidents and personal derelictions of the past, must now be clear to all the comrades of the Branch. This road led the Branch to the very brink of disaster, and will do so every time. On this road we can go no further. The prospect of a fatal disruption at the very moment when vast new perspectives are opening up before the Opposition in Canada, and new forces of great significance (MacDonald) are being attracted to our banner, is a warning of the imperative necessity for a decisive new turn in the internal life of the Branch. The Branch must unconditionally stop the personal recriminations on all sides and make a new start on a new foundation. To assist the Branch on this path is the aim of the present resolution.

15.--The Branch must be re-united at once. Comrades Spector and Krehm who presented the two viewpoints at the Plenum and pledged themselves to support the decisions, have the special responsibility of cementing the Branch together again on the basis of this resolution. We earnestly appeal to all the loyal Communists of the Toronto Branch to support this work of unification with all their strength and without delaying for another day.

NATIONAL COMMITTEE
COMMUNIST LEAGUE OF AMERICA (OPPOSITION)

-----VI-----

REFERENDUM ON THE COOPTION OF TWO MEMBERS AND
ONE CANDIDATE TO THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE

The decision of the Plenum to coopt two new members and one candidate (without vote) into the National Committee--subject to a referendum vote of the membership--was taken for the following:

reasons:

1.--To guarantee the policy of the Plenum in the daily work. The full National Committee includes several comrades of recognized ability and influence, who live at far distances from the Center, and this prevents their functioning in the daily work of the committee. The committee directing the League from day to day, therefore, has up till now been arbitrarily composed of the comrades living in New York. The situation in this resident committee, prior to the Plenum, presented an anomaly. The majority in the resident, and vice versa, committee represented in fact a minority in the full committee and it required frequent recourse to the cumbersome and delaying method of the committee referendum in order to pass the necessary decisions on the most important questions. Thus the International resolution was delayed for months. Thus, likewise, the political fight against the demoralizing influence of the Carter group in the New York branch could not be organized under the leadership of the N.C.

In addition to that, the main responsibilities of the daily administration of the League devolved upon the minority of the resident committee, which could not conduct the work, even in small practical questions, without the agreement of the majority or through an appeal by referendum to the full committee. Such a state of affairs is incompatible with Communist organization principles; it had to be ended one way or another. Moreover, it must be recognized that the resident committee of five had come to a stalemate and that personal relations within it had served to accentuate the general difficulties.

The attitude taken soon after the adjournment of the Plenum by comrades Shachtman, Abern and Glotzer is proof enough in itself--if further proof were needed--of the wisdom of the decision to increase the size of the resident committee by the addition of comrades who consciously supported the line adopted at the Plenum. If the Plenum had not insisted on this guarantee of its policy it would not be possible now to take a single step to carry out and explain the plenum proceedings without a referendum vote on each motion. To support such a state of affairs is to sow demoralization in the League.

2.--To broaden the committee by the inclusion of qualified new forces, and especially youth forces. At the Plenum, and prior to it, arguments were heard about an alleged conservative organizational policy on the part of the original Party group which has held the leadership of the League since its inception, and also about an alleged hostility to the youth. The contention is false, through and through. The N.C. fully recognizes the necessity of assisting the development of the new forces which are being trained up in the League and of giving qualified representatives of the new forces their rightful place in the leadership. Here it is a question, first of the political qualification and, second, of the personal merit of the people to be chosen. The same applies to older, more experienced, comrades whose origin was somewhat different from that of the National Committee group.

The selection of the three comrades chosen--comrades Basky and Gordon as members, and comrade Clarke as candidate--is intended

as a demonstration of the attitude of the Plenum in favor of a deliberate broadening of the National Committee, without, however, upsetting the decisive leading role of the present kernel. The Plenum considered the three comrades selected to be the most qualified, from a political and personal standpoint, of those available in New York for daily participation in the work and responsibilities of the committee. The Plenum takes full responsibility for this action and asks the membership to support it as the necessary complement to the political decisions of the Plenum.

Comrade Basky is a veteran of the American Communist movement, a foundation member of the Party and also a foundation member of the Left Opposition. Before the expulsions in 1928 comrade Basky was the leader of the Hungarian group standing on the platform of the Left Opposition and the editor of its paper.

Comrade Gordon is one of the younger generation of American Communists whose whole experience has been gained in the Left Opposition. He identified himself with the Left Opposition while in Europe in 1929 and from there wrote correspondence to The Militant. He was formally admitted into the New York Branch of the League two years ago. Despite the constitutional limitation in the case of comrade Gordon (which requires four years of membership in the Communist political movement, of which, two years shall be in the League), the Plenum decided to recommend him for the N.C. on the following grounds: In our opinion he is one of the most qualified and most responsible of the younger comrades in the League. He has served as field organizer in Boston, and for the past six months has been one of the mainstays of the N.C. in keeping the National Office apparatus in functioning order. His efficient and faithful work on the Militant has been responsible in a large measure for its regular appearance throughout the whole period since the first of the year. The N.C. considers his collaboration as a member highly desirable.

Comrade Clarke, who is recommended as a candidate to the National Committee, is also a youth comrade who has belonged to the Opposition since its inception, and prior to that was a member of the Y.C.L. He has served as field organizer in Cleveland in 1931 and in the mid-west in 1931-32.

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