

International Red Day in New York on August 1

By SAM DARCY

Properly speaking it can be said the whole campaign for International Red Day in New York was confined to the latter three weeks of July. Prior to this period there had been occasional articles in the press on Red Day, which were mostly reprints of general news releases issued by the Comintern. During the three weeks prior to August 1st, however, our New York District entered upon what may be termed as the most intensive campaign our Party has ever gone through. Most other campaigns which are carried through on a large scale, especially the drive to save Sacco and Vanzetti, were several years in gaining momentum.

During the three weeks there were:

(1) A quarter of a million pieces of literature distributed which dealt specifically with August 1st.

(2) The United Front Conference Against Imperialist War and for the Defense of the Soviet Union had close to 400 delegates who came approximately 65 per cent from organizations outside the Communist Party and the Young Communist League.

(3) For about 15 days prior to August 1st, there were arranged 230 factory gate and street meetings, of which about 55 failed because of irresponsibility of certain speakers or some committees which did not carry its duties through properly. But many tens of thousands of workers were mobilized through these factory and street meetings for International Red Day.

(4) On Friday afternoon, July 26th, after a secret mobilization of several hundred of our most trusted members in the Party, we held a demonstration in front of the Chinese Consulate, which actually rallied as many as 5,000 workers who swelled the picket line as well as the bystanders who cheered the battle. This demonstration was one of the best in comparison to similar noon hour and week day demonstrations which the Party ever organized. With the use of several innovations, such as a portable platform, picket reserves, etc., six of our speakers were able to address the demonstrators before the police finally succeeded in stopping the meeting, after which the picket line, several hundred strong, fought together with a sympathetic crowd and defeated three different police assaults in attempts to break it up. The pickets marched up Broadway to the Workers' Center in demonstrative fashion, the distance of almost half a mile, during which the police again fruitlessly attacked the march.

(5) That same evening mobilization demonstrations were organized throughout the city at eight concentration points. These were the biggest meetings ever held in our sections during any campaign. The total number of workers who attended these meetings reached 25,000.

(6) The next morning, which was Saturday, witnessed the departure of several hundred Boy Scouts to the Boy Scout Jamboree in Great Britain, which is one of the biggest imperialist demonstrations of its kind ever staged. About 125 of our Young Pioneers, with the aid of about 75 Party and Young League members marched with banners on to the pier and held a demonstration against the Boy Scouts. Fighting the police for half an hour before they were forced to withdraw from the pier, our comrades formed a line of march from the waterfront to the Workers' Center singing songs, waving banners, etc.

(7) Two days later the children's delegation to the Soviet Union left, on which occasion another demon-

stration was held.

The next few days were devoted to a most intense campaign of factory and street meetings, and leaflet and shop paper distributions.

(8) On Wednesday night, the eve of August 1st, we again held large mobilization rallies throughout the city at 15 concentration points, which rallied a total of about 30,000 workers.

The demonstration on Thursday, August 1st, had been called for a little after four, the slogan being "To Down Tools at Four O'Clock." Already at three o'clock, workers were beginning to pour into the square so that by fifteen minutes after four, despite a heavy shower, a total of about 10,000 workers had been gathered. This, in face of the fact that the police had mobilized in the most threatening fashion on horseback, on foot, and in armed motorcycles surrounding the square and threatening every move of the workers, groups of workers continued to pour into the square in motor trucks and in parade demonstrations from near and far factory districts. Especially effective was the march of over 300 Young Communists and Pioneers in their new uniforms which they were wearing for the first time. By fifteen past five, a total of 20,000 workers packed the Square, with more coming continually. These were mainly workers who had "downed tools at four o'clock," or who had struck the whole day. By 5 o'clock, a fierce storm was beginning to develop. A large number of workers who did not quit at 4 o'clock, but who would have come to the demonstration on quitting at 5 o'clock, 5.30 or 6.00 o'clock, did not come because of the storm.

But the 20,000 workers who were there, who mainly consisted no doubt of the best fighters that the New York working class has produced, left no doubt as to the determination with which they pledged to carry on the struggle against imperialist war and for the Defense of the Soviet Union, and not even the fierceness of the storm was able to budge the mass of workers from the demonstration.

After the demonstration was adjourned, several hundred of the demonstrators, under the leadership of the Young Communists who were in uniform, marched to the headquarters of the socialist party, two blocks away, took possession of the front steps of the socialist party building, the Rand School, and its speakers addressed some thousands of workers who gathered there to watch the demonstration. The yellow socialists from their safe perches on the fourth, fifth and sixth floors of their buildings, threw bottles, heavy telephone books, etc., at the workers, all of which had no effect. When the demonstrators had marched away, the socialists got a hose thru which they sprayed hot water after the workers. Simultaneously the police attacked the demonstration from the front, but our comrades fought their way thru and reformed their lines and finally marched back to the Workers' Center.

By this time about 10,000 workers had gathered in front of the Workers' Center. The police drove their horses, armed mot cycles, etc., into the crowd and attempted to take away the banners from the demonstrators who were returning from the socialist party headquarters. Reinforced, our comrades continued a guerrilla warfare with the police which lasted for over an hour, before the police were finally able to establish some symptoms of control over the situation. In the evening meetings were held throughout the city, the best one of which was

held in a workers quarter in the Bronx. The police tried to stop this meeting, but the several thousand workers participating in the demonstration militantly fought back.

This gives the bare facts of the campaign for International Red Day and the demonstrations on International Red Day.

The political results of the campaign have tremendous significance for our Party.

1. The entire campaign was carried thru under the slogans of Defend the Soviet Union, Fight Against Imperialist War and Defeat the Imperialist Aims of the American Government. It is the first time in the history of our Party that we were able to rally such large masses of workers on issues of such a high political level.

2. International Red Day has been established in the New York District and the excellent united front body which was organized can now be broadened into a permanent united front organization, which shall achieve even greater results in the coming struggle against war.

3. The prestige of our Party among the working class as a fighting organization has been tremendously raised.

4. The Party apparatus, even some of its sluggish sections, were activated and built up during this campaign.

5. A considerable number of new members were won for the Party.

6. In the midst of an attempt to demoralize the Party thru internal struggle, the Party moral was raised to a very high level, so that the splitters were practically washed away by the momentum and sweep of the campaign.

7. The working class has succeeded in dealing a tremendous blow against war preparations against the Soviet Union in rallying such large masses for the Defense of the Soviet Union.

8. The splendid resistance of the workers to the police has caused the police despite their brutality to lose some of their ability to awe the workers into submission, this being a step forward in the establishment of an effective workers defense corps.

As compared to our Party's activities in previous critical moments, we can say that the events have shown the tremendous progress our Party has made. During early 1927 when the momentum for war against the Soviet Union has been highly developed with the murder of Volkov, the raids on Arcos and the Soviet Embassy, with the break in relations between the Soviet Union and several of the imperialist powers, with the masses of troops on the Polish and other borders, our Party was able to arouse barely a few thousand workers to active struggle. Only a little over two years later, we have been able to get the splendid results we achieved and though we realize that these are far from sufficient for the needs of the situation, yet the fact is that the events have proven that our Party's line as given to us by the Sixth Congress of the Communist International and subsequent decisions is correct and that following this line, we have every right to expect that our struggles for the future will develop on an increasingly large scale.

There were many difficulties and shortcomings which were brought to light in the course of our campaign.

(1) We found that there was resistance from some Party functionaries who looked upon the war danger as something foreign to the struggle of American workers.

(2) We found a certain apathy and even resistance on the part of

many of our language groups and newspapers which found expression in their failure to actively support the campaign and carry out the Party line in its political aspects.

(3) In the early part of the campaign that is, before the campaign had achieved a few successes, there was hesitation on the part of some sections of the Party which failed to respond immediately to the call for struggle. Comrades who looked upon the campaign as an over-ambitious attempt which did not take into consideration the necessities of moving slowly enough to suit the most backward sections of the Party and of the working class.

(4) We found a lack of understanding on the part of many leading functionaries in our ranks as to what constitutes demonstrations. In some places our comrades failed entirely to use mass and live forms of activity and where a demonstration even reached several thousand workers who were trying to carry on in spirited fashion, our comrades failed to prepare properly with banners, etc., and the speakers made long speeches which made actual demonstration impossible.

(5) We must also recognize a certain lack of trained forces for such a struggle.

What are the perspectives for struggle now? We have gained thru this campaign:

1. An excellent base for a mass movement in the United Front Conference Against Imperialist War and for the Defense of the Soviet Union.

2. We have gained the sympathetic and active support of many tens of thousands of workers whom we did not before reach on issues of such a high political level.

3. Both the working class and our Party gained a wealth of experience as how to conduct a struggle.

4. We improved our Party machinery, overcame much of the hesitation and resistance of sections of our Party and won many hitherto apathetic elements in our Party to active struggle.

With the new forces and new experiences gained and with the inevitable intensifying situation, the perspectives are for greater struggle, greater achievements and more favorable opportunities for building a mass Communist Party, for raising the level of the struggle of the working class and for advancing the revolutionary movement in the U. S.

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