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WHAT'S HAPPENED TO BLUMKIN?

Let Stalin and the American Party Leaders Answer!

The Paris organ of Miliukov, Latest News prints the following telegram:

"BLUMKIN IS SHOT"

"COLOGNE, December 28.—The Moscow correspondent of the Cologne Journal telegraphs: These days, there was arrested upon the order of the G. P. U. the notorious Blumkin, murderer of Mirbach. Blumkin was accused of maintaining secret relations with Trotsky. According to the sentence of the G.P.U., Blumkin was shot."

This telegram has been reprinted in many other papers, but up to the time this is written the entire Stalinist press has maintained an ominous silence: the story has neither been denied nor affirmed.

Is this horrifying report true?

When the Bolshevik revolution broke out, Blumkin was one of the leaders of the Left Social Revolutionaries. He did indeed kill the German ambassador, Count Mirbach. But immediately thereafter he joined the Bolshevik party and played a heroic part in the civil war. For a while he worked in the military secretariat of comrade Trotsky and helped edit some of his military works. For some time, in the last period, he has been carrying on work of a highly important character, from which

he was never removed by his chiefs, Menzhinsky and Trillisser, despite the fact that they knew him to be a supporter of the Leninist Opposition from the very beginning. That he continued to maintain relations with comrades of his viewpoint was his right and duty, and a tribute to his devotion to the principles of the revolution.

Information that we have received leads us to believe now that Blumkin has simply been assassinated by Stalin for adhering to the Opposition. But the formal certainty is not yet established. We therefore demand of Foster, Bedacht and the others, of the leadership of the Communist Party of the United States, which supports the present regime in the Russian Communist Party:

If the report of Blumkin's killing is false, then make a public declaration to that effect in the Party press!

If the abominable crime has really been committed, do you take responsibility for it before the revolutionary working class together with Stalin?

If you assume joint responsibility for the assassination, will you make a corresponding statement in the Party press?

We await the reply of the leaders of the Party, for there is much to be said yet about this frightful deed!

City of Chicago Goes Bankrupt

Chicago, the "great" metropolis of the Middle West, is in a financial dilemma. Actually the city government, and the county government, too, have gone bankrupt, of course, without any official declaration being made. With thousands of workers tramping the streets in vain search for work this bankruptcy becomes but one more evidence of growing inability of capitalism to govern society.

Much excitement was stirred up throughout the city when by a majority vote the city council passed upon the 1930 budget, calling for an expenditure of \$55,000,000. This was 7 1-2 million below the last two years budget but claimed to be within the revenue of the city which has suffered an indebtedness of \$13,000,000 during these last two years. Twice the mayor, the "famous" Big Bill Thompson, vetoed this budget merely to have it pass as often in a slightly amended form. But then the cuts necessitated layoffs. The first to come under the axe were 473 policemen. The excitement became a panic among the "better" citizens. Various rescue "Citizens Committees", with which Chicago has been so much "blessed" in the past were again formed.

The "Poor Policemen"

Some of the "very best" citizens even thought it a damnable outrage that these alderman had voted a sum of \$45,000 in the budget for their own automobile maintenance but would not appropriate enough to pay these "poor" policemen and thereby deliberately throw the city into "darkness and crime". Last year by their own efforts these "best" citizens had succeeded in adding 750 huskies to the city's force, and now—that seemed to have been all in vain—that would protect their property?

Meanwhile, 40,000 city employees are running far behind in wages. County employees have been voted a cut of 10 months pay for one year's work. These are the white collar workers being hit. In addition many white collar workers and regular city and county maintenance workers have been laid-off, increasing the ranks of the unem-

ployed. The city government is short of funds because the large property owners, the big corporations have paid no taxes for 1928 and 1929, awaiting a reassessment of tax valuation. The city government in its place is peddling tax anticipation warrants to such bankers and corporations willing to take them over, receiving an interest of 6 percent. This interest paid by the city now amounts to \$36,000 per day. Even at this handsome return the corporations have been very unwilling to buy. But now a ray of "hope" appears. The Down Town Property Owners Association has declared its willingness to take over \$10,000,000 worth of such warrants, to be returned in tax payments when the reassessment some day shall be completed. Meanwhile they collect 6 percent on their own tax payments they are thus withholding.

As an example of tax valuation in Chicago, it suffices to mention a couple of instances—not, however, those of workers who happen to own a shack, and are assessed up to the hilt. The Union Stock-year company is assessed, upon its property covering 135 acres, a valuation of \$11,000 per acre, making a total of less than a million and a half for taxation. The company's own appraisals, filed by the Department of Agriculture, shows a claimed valuation of \$130,000 per acre, amounting to a total of \$18,000,000. The Stevens Hotel claimed a property valuation of thirty one million dollars for bonding purposes; on the tax books it stands at a valuation of eleven million. These are but two examples.

Tax Valuation Cut

In 1926 and 1927 a big campaign started in the city, supported by the A. F. of L., for a reassessment of tax valuation to catch these big tax dodgers. A reassessment was finally granted, and although not yet completed, has already resulted instead of catching any dodgers, in further cutting tax valuations from 1927 to 1928

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Dress Strike on Schlesinger and Bosses Cooperate

Left Wing Can Win Workers by Quitting its Isolationist Attitude

The long-awaited dressmakers' strike of the Right wing union, the International Ladies Garment Workers, has finally been called with the approval of the dress manufacturers. Thousands of workers have quit their shops. The dressmakers' strike, like that of the cloakmakers which took place last year, is pretty unique in labor history. It was not called until a virtual agreement had been reached between the Right wing union leaders and what the New York Times calls "the better element" of the manufacturers.

So far as the union leaders are concerned, the main purpose of the strike is to demonstrate to the bosses that the Right wing is able to rally the workers behind

it, and draw them into one organization freed of all militant elements. The bosses want the elimination of the Left wing from the industry because the "red trouble-makers" defend the interests of the workers and carry out a policy of class struggle instead of class collaboration. They therefore hope that the present strike of the dressmakers will isolate the Left wing and reduce it to an inconsequential factor in the industry.

Workers Need Left Wing

A weakening of the Left wing in the present struggle would be a heavy blow to the needle trades workers. It is significant that at the head of the Right wing union strike committee are to be found the same ultra-reactionary forces—Schlesinger, Nadler, Hochman, Dubinsky, etc.—that dragged the formerly powerful organization into the deepest swamps of "peace with the bosses" at the expense of the workers, of class collaboration, the lowering of living standards the abolition of union control and continual defeats. The leadership of the Right wing today is the same outfit that split the old I. L. G. W. U., expelling militant members by the thousands in order to prevent a Left wing leadership, which had the support of the mass of the membership, from directing the activities of the organization.

To place the fate of the dressmakers into the hands of this discreditable crew would be to surrender the interests of the workers into the tender mercies of the manufacturers.

The bosses realize that they have nothing to lose by a victory of Schlesinger and Co. and a lot to lose by a victory of the workers, the rank and file. The various bosses' associations have already given a virtual endorsement to the strike. They want to drive the workers into the Right wing camp, under rigid Schlesinger control, in order to wean them away from any Left wing influence, to which they correctly attribute all their "difficulties". This attitude is taken not only by the dress bosses, but by the New York employing class as a whole, which speaks of the strike through the New York Times. This paper is notoriously an enemy of the workers, and of all strikes for the improvement of their conditions. But it designates the present strike as "the second step in the reconstruction of the garment industry" (2-3-1930) and points out that "the better element among manufacturers, jobbers and contractors is in sympathy with the step taken by the garment union".

What the bosses and their press endorse, the workers must be wary of. The dressmakers must understand that the essential purpose of the strike is to wipe out the Left wing, the main defense of the workers in the trade. If the Left wing makes the mistake of isolating itself from the main mass of the workers on strike, it will only fall in unconsciously with the plans of the bosses and their union agents. That is precisely why the present policy of the Left wing is so dangerous for its future and for the interests of the workers.

Left Wing Errors

It is wrong for the Left wing union to keep its members at work during the strike in the shops where it has a "sacred contract" with a handful of cockroach manufacturers. This will only strengthen the hypocritical position of the Right wing bureaucrats. The Left wing

(Continued on Page 2)

Enormous Profits in U. S. Steel

Every possessor of \$6,000 of watered U. S. Steel stock "made" as much money through that ownership in 1929 as the average U. S. Steel worker got out of an entire year's employment. The owner of the 60 shares of golden steel stock got \$1,270.80 for the year which is the average wage the steel trust pays the producers of the basic industrial metal.

The net profits of U. S. Steel for the year were \$197,531,000, all available for dividends. Only half of the last quarter's earnings were paid out in dividends, the rest going into the surplus fund which for the year totals \$108,003,000. It is all the property however of the stockholders who have the right to vote themselves the entire sum.

The 1929 earnings were twice those of the bonanza year of 1928 and focus attention on the steel trust as a main beneficiary in this country of low wages and high tariffs. In 1927 the company made \$114,000,000 clear, turned into dividends and plant.

The traveler entering Pittsburg along the Ohio, Alleghany or Monongahela would little imagine that he was entering the territory of one of the world's wealthiest corporations. Drab, smoke-grimed shacks line the river banks for long miles. Badly clothed children play in muddy, rutted streets, their only playgrounds. Houses are long rows of dilapidated shacks and the horizon is relieved only by the tall stacks of mills and spires of Catholic churches.

The average weekly wage in these steel mill towns is \$31.63 but tens of thousands according to federal labor statistics get under \$25. Laborers' wages—and laborers are more and more typical of the steel industry as mechanization throws out skilled workers—get from \$20.38 in the puddling mills to \$27.03 in the tinplate mills. The maximum wage in the blast furnaces is \$31.90 a week.

For 273,000 workers whose earnings were tabulated by the federal bureau of labor statistics, wages averaged \$31.63. With 40 weeks work during 1929, the steel worker got \$1,264, or the same as the holders of \$6,000 stock in his company "earned" during the same period.

If a common laborer in the blast furnace could have worked the 62 hours a week he is credited with by the federal figures for 52 solid weeks of 1929, he would have earned about \$30 more than the holder of the \$6,000 U. S. Steel stock.

Dressmakers on Strike

(Continued from Page 1)

Must call down its own members in every dress shop.

It is not enough for the Left wing, which has been so seriously weakened in the last year or two to call upon the dress strikers to come to the Left wing halls. The fact is that the bulk of the striking workers are going in the other direction, and it is imperative to keep close contact with these workers so that the Left wing is not isolated. The Left wing must follow a conscious and persistent policy of mingling with the workers temporarily misled by Schlesinger and Dubinsky. It must work shoulder to shoulder with them.

Fighting side by side with the mass of the workers, gaining their confidence in struggle, the Left wing will be able to put a spike in Schlesinger's efforts to round up the workers without protest for sale to the bosses. By permeating the ranks of the Right wing workers, the Left wing will be able to reawaken their militant sentiments, and prevent a premature and treasonable conclusion of the strike.

Schlesinger has planned a parade of workers on his field in order to show the bosses that he is worthy of their hire.

The Left wing must establish fraternal contact with the strikers' ranks and turn the parade into a real struggle, prevent the dispersal of the forces of the workers. They will not win the sympathy and support of the strikers by remaining isolated in their own little Left wing halls. They will win them by fighting by their side to make Schlesinger's "strike" a real strike of the workers against the bosses and their emissaries in the labor movement.

Φ

MILWAUKEE—Wages of 32 to 42 cents an hour do not indicate "American prosperity" and constitute an indirect wage cut, contrary to the promise made by the bosses to Pres. Hoover, according to business agent Jac. Friedrich of the Milwaukee machinist union.

New men are being hired at this rate, though the previous rate was higher. This constitutes a wage cut because the ultimate effect will be to drag the other wages down to the 32-42 cents level. In spite of the low hourly rate there are up to 500 men seeking jobs at the plant every day.

Φ

NEW ORLEANS—(FP)—Bitter cold, and the hunger of the jobless, have sent a record number—100—of men, women and children daily to the Warrington House for food. At night the floors of the dormitories are covered with sleeping men and boys. Rugs and matting are used in place of beds. Early comers get chairs to sleep in.

Φ

NEW YORK OPEN FORUM
Max Schachtman will speak on the London Naval Conference at the regular Open Forum meeting of the Militant Hall, 25 Third Ave. Room 4, on Saturday, February 8, 1930, at 8 p. m. Admission is free and all workers are invited. Questions and discussion after the speaker's presentation. Bring your friends.

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Hoover and the Farmers

An intelligent member of the working class cannot help being astonished at the utter helplessness of the capitalist economists and their complete bankruptcy in ideas. Though not in so many words, they yet admit that they do not know how to solve the economic problem confronting the world today.

In the annual outlook report issued by the Bureau of Agricultural Economy of the Department of Agriculture published by the New York Times (1-27-30) farmers are warned against overproduction because of the period of industrial depression we are now experiencing. They are plainly advised not to plant too much and to economize in their expenditures. This—in the face of four to five million industrial workers unemployed or working on a part time schedule (also because of overproduction) who scarcely know where they are going to find the wherewithal to live from one day to the next.

The Capitalist "Solution"

The only solution, judging by this report, that the capitalist economists have to offer to the tremendous problems raised by this situation is for the proletariat to starve for want of surplus of food products in the farmers' warehouses, and for the farmer to economize on clothes, shoes, farm machinery, and other necessities of which the industrial proletariat in its turn has produced a surplus. Both are expected to continue in the hope that the almighty will find a way out that has so far escaped the attention of his apologists.

The farmer himself is certainly in a sad fix. "The world do move"; technical changes are going on, even in the most backward of industries, and with the introduction of power machinery in agriculture, and large scale farming, the farm hand and the small farmer have no alternative but to go to the city and join the ranks of the harrassed proletariat. Here again they are confronted with the ever increasing productivity of machinery, this time industrial, which has already made superfluous large sections of the working class.

The report from Washington at first raises the slight hope that conditions abroad will improve at a point somewhere between 1930 and 1931 and provide a market for the American farmer's surplus but immediately shatters the hope by announcing that export will be met by keen competition from Argentina and Canada and possibly Russia. This is bad news. But what can a poor economist—a capitalist economist—do about that? "Lie low and get along the best way you can. In a couple of years things may brighten up. May, mind you." That is the essence of what Hoover's economists have to tell a few million cultivators of the soil in the early moments of this era of "prosperity".

In other words, a bona fide capitalist document once more offers a proof of the Communist contention that the private-property system is obsolete, that it has served its historic function and the day is not far distant when it must give way to a cooperative commonwealth. Capitalist economists may issue reports and serve the interests of their masters in many a learned volume wherein they prove that Marx was wrong, but the accusing finger of the Communist will always point to the capitalist class and will say:

The Communist Answer

"You can't solve your own national or the world's economic problem, and sooner or later the millions of unemployed proletarians and the expropriated farmers as well will realize your failure. They are slowly learning that the Russian workers and peasants have managed to do without

you. They will ask themselves, 'Why is it that in this country, though we have an abundance of fertile land, raw material of all descriptions, the most highly developed industrial and transportation systems in fact, everything to satisfy human needs, yet millions of industrial workers are denied the right to produce the things of which the farmers are in want, and at the same time, the farmers must let their land lie idle while millions in the cities starve?'

"And the Communist's answer to their question will be: 'The capitalist system can only allow industry to run when there is profit in it for the capitalist; his only interests are rent from the land and dividends from the factory—human beings don't count, for, under capitalism, property rights precede human rights.'"

Day by day the proletariat learns by experience that the Communists are right. The time will come when it will challenge the rule of the working class and the poison gas of the capitalist press will be but a puff of wind in its face.

Neither their paid intellectuals nor their armed strength will be able to save the capitalists' state. For the proletariat has the power and will know how to use it. Russia has taught us how.

—PETER HANSEN

Chicago Is Bankrupt

Continued from Page 1

by over \$400,000,000. The big down town properties alone cut over \$300,000,000 with none of these taxes paid as yet. Injunctions, suits and political manoeuvring keep this money in the pockets of the exploiters. As one City Hall authority stated significantly to a newspaper reporter in regards to the fight stirred up over the budget: "The finance committee group (who fought for the cut) will win a victory or two. The mayor will save his face. The appropriations may be a million or two above the estimated revenue, but no more. The battle was decided in advance by the bankers."

Oscar Nelson, the alderman who carries a union card, vice President of the Chicago Federation of Labor and floor leader for the Big Bill Thompson administration in the city council, has voiced aspirations to become candidate for mayor in the Spring elections. But such change of personality would mean not the slightest break in the continuity of capitalist politics. The Chicago workers are, of course, not so much stirred by the budget fight, one way or the other. While they could, by acting politically in their own name and using their own mass power, easily catch some of these big thieves and tax dodgers, their real task will still remain ahead until they chase all the capitalist politicians out.

—A. S.

Help Us to Sustain The Militant

A labor paper, particularly a revolutionary organ, does not receive the big advertisements and subsidies, without which a capitalist paper is unthinkable. The Militant is no exception to this rule. It must depend entirely upon readers and supporters for its existence and growth.

The Militant was founded because it fills a special and urgent need in the labor and revolutionary movements. It has been maintained by a group of devoted workers, who understand the value of adherence to the fundamental teachings of the great leaders of our movement, Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky. These teachings are not strong if they are limited to small groups; they become a powerful weapon for labor's liberation when they are made known to the whole working class—honestly and truthfully. This is the task set itself by the Militant.

This great work can be carried out effectively only if the existence of the Militant is secured. For this purpose, it is necessary to establish and strengthen a systematic SUSTAINING FUND. Such a fund will not only enable us to print a whole series of most valuable books and pamphlets. The Militant has on hand a number of manuscripts by L. D. Trotsky. They include: "What Is the Permanent Revolution?" "The Struggle for the Chinese Revolution", "Europe and America", "The Great Organizers of Defeat: a Record of Five Years of the Comintern", and many others. If the SUSTAINING FUND of the Militant is assured, we can proceed to the immediate publication of these Bolshevik classics.

The sooner donations accumulate for the FUND, the more rapidly can we proceed with this important job. Every dollar counts doubly now. We are depending upon all our readers and friends to act with speed. The blank below is for your use. Fill it out now!

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BOSTON—(FP)—More building trades workers are walking the streets in Boston today than at any time since the depression of 1920-21, concedes the Building Trades Employers Assn., in a public appeal for resumption of construction activities. Half the 25,000 men in the building crafts are jobless, according to the employers' figures.

Building Trade Council officers admit that the estimate is not overdrawn. The Carpenters District Council is broadcasting appeals throughout the country warning mechanics to stay away from Boston.

A Repast of Wild Beasts

A French Communist Viewpoint on the London Naval Conference

By Paul Sizoff

PARIS

On January 21, the imperialisms that divide the surface of the globe will meet in London to discuss ways and means of making war cheap. Naturally, the servile press is intoning the pacifist chorus: to believe it, the governments would ask no better than to make pickling cases with armor-plate, but there is "security" which requires or wants it, etc., there is the neighbor who has not had in its past the same traditions of "generosity" and humanity, etc.; the neighbors are responsible for everything: without them there would be no more war and the peace of the Lord would reign over the fleets... "Peace" in capitalist language means hegemony, absence of competitors, since the time when the word of the Lord was expressed in good English.

The Importance of Naval Transport

From the seventeenth century to the world war, English "peace" has actually prevailed uncontested over the expanse of the seas. First capitalist country in history, the United Kingdom has been, because of that, the first naval power of the world. Freedom of the seas plays a predominant role in commerce. Even today, when land communications are multiplied, when railroad lines are more and more contracted, maritime transportation remains the only means of access to the distant countries pounced upon by the capitalist vultures.

"Security" is needed for capital used to exploit raw materials; "security" is needed for the merchandise that the metropolitan factories throw on the market among the backward populations of the colonized lands. This "security" is demanded from the war fleets, the sharks of capital. The existence of a great imperialist country cannot then be conceived without a war-fleet in proportion to the extent of its world expansion: to that extent naval hegemony is synonymous with world hegemony.

England has had the first to the extent that she has been able to retain the second. The extraordinarily rapid growth of German imperialism having threatened her pretensions, she stopped at nothing, even war, in order to save decadent England from great peril and now, the formidable German fleet, the pride of the Kaiser, rests on a thick bed of shellfish at the bottom of a little bay of Scotland.

Despite that, the war did not save British hegemony. Before her has arisen the American colossus which little by little has forced her exhausted forces to retreat; and thus America has become the greatest imperialist power in the world. Her capital, her merchandise, her navies go everywhere. Even Europe and the Dominions, those ancient sacred shrines of British finance, are penetrated. A new star has arisen on the Far Eastern horizon, Japan, which in Asia vigorously competes with England and America. By means of her fleets she keeps watch over the Chinese ports on the Pacific. This causes grave concern to Wall Street and the White House; China, the outlet of enormous Asia, is under the Japanese menace and that makes it necessary for them to maintain a powerful fleet in the Pacific.

In Europe, France and Italy enviously spy upon each other; Italy suffocated within her national frontiers and on a poor soil requires land for colonization whereas France is firmly entrenched in the best parts of Northern Africa. Their colonial antagonism results in their naval antagonism and the victory will belong to the one that controls the Mediterranean.

Such are the naval powers which, periodically, in 1930 as in 1921 feel the need of limiting their armaments. Of course, peace serves, once again, as tinsel which functions to hide from the masses the intrigues of imperialism. On the day the naval conference at Washington decided to equalize the tonnage of British and American armament, the American Secretary of State Hughes declared that "A new era is opened for humanity." He should have been more exact and be satisfied with the statement that in actuality a new era is opened for American imperialism.

"Humanizing Warfare"

When Sir Arthur Balfour, British delegate to the conference, asked for the prohibition of submarines "in order to humanize warfare" France and Japan,

which require a submarine fleet, replied that what was more necessary to "humanize warfare" was the suppression of capital ships. The proletariat will make these scoundrels agree by suppressing them together with capitalism which they represent!

The bourgeoisie whose domination is founded on the subjection of the working class, could not, without danger, lay before the masses the contradictions that torment it. It needs a whole front of abstract phrases, such as peace, humanity, civilization, right, disarmament, behind which to conceal its appetites and the resultant antagonisms.

Just as in its colonial enterprises, it makes use of pastors and other agents of God to persuade the natives that for their own good they ought to become Christians that is, wage slaves, so, in defense of its hegemony, it utilizes pacifists, socialists, and other agents of capital to persuade people that it is capable of bringing them a ray of hope in their misery.

We saw above that a war fleet was an indispensable instrument to any self-respecting imperialism. Unfortunately for it, it is a costly instrument. An armored ship having a crew of a thousand men is worth about 800 million francs; a well placed torpedo sends it to the bottom in a few minutes. At this price, and with less risks, one can equip an army. Besides with the lightning progress of industrial technique, the completed ship whose plans date back several years is almost out of style. The rival imperialisms have already conceived of more powerful, less vulnerable ones. After twenty years, it is useless and sold as a pile of junk. This involves considerable budgets: the United States spends 10 billion francs a year for its navy; England 7 billion, France 3 billion. There are hundreds of billions in capital tied up in all the fleets of the world, producing nothing, wasting themselves in smoke.

The Washington Conference

An economic power, however weak, must therefore have a relatively satisfactory economic perspective, to keep its rank in the great naval competition. This is no longer possible for England. In other days its Admiralty set itself the task of having a fleet at least the equal of the next two smaller fleets combined. Now, it must be satisfied with equality with the United States. It was at the Washington Conference (1921) that this first stage of British decadence was, so to speak, solemnly recorded. A vast economic crisis raged throughout the world; all the industrial powers were in a weakened condition. In order to lighten the excessively burdensome budgets, rising America and declining Great Britain agreed to fix the tonnage of capital ships at the same value, while preserving their privileges as regards the smaller ships, the cruisers and the submarines. At the same time Japan, the principal opponent of the United States in the Far East, abandoned by her former ally England, had to accept, under pressure, a smaller tonnage for its effective forces. France and Italy, which cut a figure with their fireworks at the repasts of wild beasts that these "disarmament" conferences are, had to be content with very little. Finally, the ship tonnages were fixed in the proportions 5-5-3-1.75-1.75 for the five powers. Since the position of England has not been re-established, it has constantly sought to obtain new naval agreements, but has failed because of American hostility. Yankee capitalism, being in good health could permit itself the construction of a dozen cruisers, while signing Kellogg Pacts at the same time.

Today the perspective of a new economic crisis, which seems bound to hit the United States; the technical revolution performed by the Germans in the construction and use of cruisers which, from auxiliary units become battleships—all these preliminary factors are required for the two Anglo-Saxon imperialisms to seek an understanding on a formula for cruiser limitation.

That is the real cause of the new conference which will be held in London. Such is the world hegemony of these two states that the others are so to speak constrained to come and talk. The large fleets swallow the small ones as small enterprises devour weak ones. So, each country will go to

London but each will defend its own appetite; Japan wants more cruisers than the others will let it have; France develops the weapon, the submarine, and desires very much to keep that advantage; Italy, its immediate rival, seeks to come closer to America and will defend her theses: prohibition of submarines and freedom of commerce in times of war. We shall witness a great battle around the militaristic porringer, but there is no doubt about the victory of the strongest. America could, if it wished, construct a fleet capable of crushing all the others; England knows this and that is the reason which forces it to accept a formula of limitation which maintains in appearance a sort of equality between it and its rival. In appearance only; for what is decisive in a conflict is not the military power at the outset—it is the ability of a country at war to repair and construct new material. This is the "potential of war", and it requires capital, raw materials, and a highly developed capacity for production. It is for this reason that America obligingly lends itself to this disarmament comedy. With a little pacifist air, it makes sure of a superiority gotten at a bargain.

Thus, the "disarmament" conferences make ready for the war just as surely as do irrational programs of ruinous armament construction. They permit the release of non-productive capital to economic branches of construction, and force the militarists to perfect the technique of combat and to design weapons infinitely more murderous than those of the past.

That is the real, the productive side of conferences, but they also play a moral role which must not be neglected, in that they give a semblance of reality to the talk-fest at Geneva. The Socialist International avails itself of these conferences in order to spread its opium among the workers. It has formed a commission for disarmament (of the working class, we might add, through which it expresses the opinion that the London Conference will have lasting value, only "if it accomplishes its task in the general organization of peace sought at Geneva", in other words, only if the famous preparatory conference at Geneva, supposed to discuss above nations, confirms purely and simply the orders of American imperialism, which dictates them according to its momentary needs. Peace, according to our social democrats, still speaks English as it did formerly, but with a strong Yankee accent. All socialists are not Americanized. There are French ones like the social-chauvinist Paul Boncour, who worries over the limitation from "above" (at a "height" which French capitalism evidently cannot reach); he adjures the government to have "our rights" respected, to the applause of a hundred deputies of the French section of the Workers' International.

The genuine struggle against war is that of Lenin, of Rosa Luxemburg, that of the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat against capitalism. Any solution that will not exterminate capitalism, the sole cause of war, is like cauterizing a wooden leg. In order to save ailing humanity the proletariat must cast off the social democratic witch-doctors and bone-setters, together with their poisonous methods and join the school of revolutionary Communism in order to march along the sure road of the liberating revolution.

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NEW KIND OF TRADE UNION WORK

Minneapolis, Minn.

Dear Comrades:

Yesterday I attended a conference and mass meeting called ostensibly to hear Otto Wangerin of Chicago explain why new unions on the U. S. railroads were necessary.

The call was circulated among as many railroad workers as they thought safe and those who would not bother them with Trotskyism. Out of the tremendous force that the C. P. boasts, only three bona fide railroad workers were present. But this did not stop the hoodlums from expelling those who are not converted to the third period. When I arrived in the hall the giant minds were set into motion to find out who can best interpret this period. A tremendous struggle was waged amongst themselves, which took up a good portion of an hour. Finally unity was achieved and I was ordered out of the hall. Poor Otto Wangerin, his soul is not in the best of condition. But what can a poor fellow do who always bows before the almighty apparatus? After I left the hall the formulae was developed in detail and now the unity-purity squad will go on as ever before.

CARL SKOGLUND

United Front in Boston in the New Style

Boston is known as a historical city, particularly so to the working class. But unfortunately Boston can boast of a great deal more destructive work than constructive. So while this city is mentioned historically let us not forget to put in a page for January 19, 1930.

On that day a conference was called by the Needle Trades Workers Industrial Union, inviting all organizations in Boston and vicinity to build a united front of all workers for the defense of the union in the coming struggles. Two of the members of the Communist League (Opposition) branch came to 22 Harrison Avenue to participate in the conference. We came as ever before to help build the union and not to thrash out political differences.

What did we find? We found assembled in a hall a number of people most of whom were Communist Party members, each one giving his name as representative of a certain organization. Incidentally, the names of the various organizations were not disclosed to the gathering.

Everything is "Properly" Arranged

The meeting was opened by a member of the union who at once gave the chair to a man elected from the floor—not a member of the trade but a member of the party—before he had been seated as a delegate.

The same maneuver was exercised in electing a credentials committee. Here too, one of the five was not in the trade but a delegate who had not yet been seated. When the credentials committee appeared, it brought in a majority report against seating us at the conference because we were "Trotskyists". When we asked for the floor to explain our attitude towards the union, we were refused that also!

We were "cleverly" refused the floor on the ground that it is unconstitutional to grant the floor to any guest before the delegation is constituted as a body. If this is the case, I would like to ask those of the conference who are so constitutionally correct: How did it happen that the chair man was elected out of the delegation before its constitution as a body? And was there not a slight breach of good ruling when a guest from the floor was placed on the credentials committee to vote us out? What does this mean? Is this not a repetition of the expulsion policy employed by the reactionary International Ladies Garment Workers Union? How much more justified are these people in barring us than the bureaucrats of the International were in barring us? As Left wingers, we always fought and always will fight most bitterly against this policy of disruption.

I want to remind the members of the Needle Trade Workers Industrial Union—and particularly those who were so ready to expel us from the conference—to look back only a short time when the bureaucrats of the International expelled them for their political views. How bitterly we all fought against it! And when, in the summer of 1928, the call came to mobilize and build a new union of the workers and for the workers, a union that would embrace all workers regardless of their political views, we felt that this was a sacred task.

Joyous was the response of all our comrades, whether actually engaged in the needle trades or not, whether they were "Trotskyists" or Stalinists. We all took up arms to fight the bosses and their agents, the bureaucrats of the International. We took up arms to help build the Needle Trades Workers Industrial Union.

Opposition on Side of Union

From the time of its coming into existence, throughout every strike conducted by the Left wing union, our comrades stood by its side on the picket line and everywhere else. Now the few party members who came up to give the keynote to the conference, suddenly declared us to be—not workers, but bosses, shopkeepers! Is this their conception of a united front? Is this their conception of how to build?

It is painful to see such work carried on by those who themselves were born in the struggle against just this type of work, which can prove nothing but detrimental.

No, it is not by expulsion, not by trying to push away those who come in earnest with the interest of the union at heart, that the union can be built, but by a real united front of all workers regardless of their political views. Only through such a united front can we build a strong union.

—CHARLOTTE SHECHET

The «Third Period» of the Comintern's Mistakes

Where are the Symptoms of the Political Radicalization of the Masses?

The question of the radicalization of the masses is not exhausted, however, with the strike movement. How do matters stand with the political struggle? And above all: how do matters stand with the numbers and influence of the Communist Party?

It is remarkable that in speaking of radicalization the official leaders, with a striking light-mindedness, ignore the question of their own party. Meanwhile, the facts are that beginning with 1925 the membership of the party has been falling from year to year: in 1925, 83,000 members; 1926, 65,000; 1927, 56,000; 1928, 52,000; 1929, 35,000. For the past years, we use the official figures of the secretary of the Comintern, Platnitzky; for 1929, the figures of Semard. No matter how these figures are regarded, they are undoubtedly highly exaggerated. As a whole, they very vividly present the curve of the party's decline: in five years, the membership fell by more than half. It may be said that quality is more important than quantity, and that there now remain in the party only the fully reliable Communists. Let us assume that. But this is not at all the question. The process of the radicalization of the masses can by no means signify the isolation of the cadres, but on the contrary, the influx into the party of reliable and semi-reliable members and the conversion of the latter into "reliables." The political radicalization of the masses can be reconciled with the systematic decrease in party membership only if one considers the role of the party in the life of the working class the same as a fifth wheel to a wagon. Facts are stronger than words: we observe a steady decline of the party not only during the years 1925-27, when the strike wave was ebbing, but also during the last two years, when the number of strikes was beginning to grow.

At this point, the honorable Panglosses* of official Communism will interrupt, pointing to the "disproportion" between the numbers of the party and its influence. This is now generally the formula of the Comintern, created by the shrewd for the simpleton. However, the canonized formula not only fails to explain anything but in some respects even makes matters worse. The experience of the labor movement testifies that the difference between the extent of organization and the extent of the influence of the party—all other conditions being equal—is all the greater the smaller the revolutionary and the bigger the "parliamentary" character of the given party. Opportunism is a lot easier than Marxism, is based on the diffused masses. This is especially evident from the simple comparison of the socialist and Communist Party**. The systematic growth of the "disproportion," with the decline in the numbers of organized Communists could consequently mean nothing but the fact that the French Communist Party is being transformed from a revolutionary into a parliamentary and municipal party. That this process to a certain degree took place in the last years, of that the recent "municipal" scandals are incontestable witness; and it may be feared that "parliamentary" scandals will follow. Nevertheless, the difference between the Communist party in its present form, and the socialist agency of the bourgeoisie, remains enormous. The Panglosses in the leadership merely slander the French Communist Party when they discourse on some kind of a gigantic disproportion between its numbers and its influence. It is not difficult to prove that the political influence

* Pangloss is Voltaire's classic character for whom everything is at its best in this "best of all possible worlds"—Ed.

** On the eve of the legislative elections of 1924, the president of the E. C. C. I. in a special appeal to the French Communist Party pronounced the Socialist Party of France as "non-existent". The call emanated from the light-winged Lozovsky. I protested in vain, in a letter addressed to the president, against this light-minded evaluation, explaining that a reformist-parliamentary party may retain a very wide influence with a weak organization and even a weak press. This was looked upon as my "pessimism". Naturally, the results of the 1924 elections, just as the entire further course of development this time also light-mindedness of Zinoviev Lozovsky.

By L. D. Trotsky

of Communism, unfortunately, has grown very little in the last five years.

For Marxists—it is no secret that parliamentary and municipal elections sharply distort, and—always to the detriment of revolutionary tendencies—change the actual mood of the suppressed masses. Nevertheless, the dynamics of political development find their reflection in parliamentary elections: this is one of the reasons why we Marxists take an active part in parliamentary and municipal struggles. But what do the figures of the election statistics show? In the legislative elections of 1924 the Communist party polled 875,000 votes, a little less than ten percent of the total electorate. In the elections of 1928, the party polled a little more than a million votes (1,064,000), which represented eleven and one third percent of the votes cast. Thus, the specific gravity of the party in the electoral body increased by one and one-third percent. If this process were to continue further at the same tempo, then the perspective of Chambelland with regards to thirty or forty years of "social peace" would appear too . . . revolutionary.

The socialist party, already "non-existent" in 1924 (according to Zinoviev-Lozovsky) polled almost 1,700,000 votes in 1928, more than eighteen percent of the total, or more than one and a half times the Communist votes.

The results of the municipal elections change the whole picture very little. In some industrial centers (Paris, the North) the winning away, of votes from the socialists by the Communists undoubtedly took place. Thus, in Paris the specific gravity of the Communist vote increased in four years (1925-29) from 18.9 percent to 21.8 percent, that is, by three percent, at a time when the socialist vote fell from 22.4 percent to 18.1 percent, that is, by four percent. The symptomatic significance of such facts is undeniable: but so far they have only a local character, and are strongly discredited by that anti-revolutionary "municipalism" personified by Louis Sellier and ther petty bourgeois like him. Generally, the municipal elections that took place a year after the legislative elections did not bring about any real changes as a result of the Selliers.

Other indications of political life speak just as fully against, to say the least, premature parrottings on the so-called political radicalization of the masses, which is to have taken place in the last two years. The circulation of P'Humanite, to our knowledge, has not grown in the past two years. The collections of money for P'Humanite undoubtedly represent a gratifying fact. But such collections would have been considerable, in view of the demonstrative attack of reaction on the paper, a year, two and three ago as well.

On the First of August—it must not be forgotten for a minute—the party was incapable of mobilizing not only that part of the proletariat which voted for it but not even all the unionized workers. In Paris, according to the undoubtedly exaggerated accounts of P'Humanite, about fifty thousand workers participated in the First of August demonstrations. That is, less than half of the unionized. In the provinces, matters stood infinitely worse. This fact proves, be it noted in passing, that the "leading role" of the Political Bureau among the C. G. T. U. apparatus men does not at all mean the leading role of the party among the unionized workers. But the latter contain only a tiny fraction of the class. If the revolutionary rise is such an irrefutable fact then what good is a party leadership which, in the acute moment of the Soviet-Chinese conflict, could not bring out at an anti-imperialist demonstration even a quarter (more correctly stated, even a tenth) part of its electorate in the country. No one demands the impossible of the leadership of the party. A class cannot be seduced. But what gave the August First demonstration the character of a flat failure is the monstrous "disproportion" between the victorious shouts of the leadership and the real echo of the masses. So far as the trade union organizations are concerned, they went through the party's decline—judging by the official figures—after a delay of one year. In 1926, the C. G. T. U. numbered 475,000 members. In 1927, 452,000. In 1928, 375,000. The loss of 100,000 members by the trade unions at a time when the strike struggles in the country increased, represents an irrefutable proof that the C. G.

T. U. does not reflect the basic processes at work in the field of the economic struggles of the masses. As an enlarged shadow of the party, it merely experiences the decline of the latter after some delay.

The data cited in the present outline confirm with double strength the conclusions we made in a semi-priori order in the first article of the analysis of the strike movement figures. Let us recall them once more. The years 1919-20 were the culminating point of the proletarian struggle in France. After that, an ebb set in, which, in the economic field, began to change six years later by a new, but still slow tide: but in the political field the ebb-tide or stagnation continues even now, at any rate, in the main mass of the proletariat. Thus, the awakening of the activity of certain sections of the proletariat in the field of economic struggle, is irrefutable. But this process too is only passing through its first stage, when it is primarily the enterprises of light industry that are drawn into the struggle, with an evident preponderance of the unorganized workers over the organized and with a considerable specific gravity of the foreign-born workers.

The impetus to the strike struggles was the rise in the economic conjuncture, with a simultaneous rise of the cost of living. In its first stages the strengthening of economic struggles is not accompanied ordinarily with a revolutionary rise. It is not evident now either. On the contrary, the economic rise for a certain time may even weaken the political interests of the workers, at any rate, of some of its sections.

If we take further into consideration that French industry has been experiencing a stage of rise for two years now; that there is no talk of unemployment in the basic branches of industry and that in some branches there is even an acute shortage of workers, then it is not difficult to conclude that with these exceptionally favorable conditions for trade union struggle the present swing of the strike movement must be acknowledged as extremely moderate. The basic indications of this moderation are: the depression in the masses that still remains from the last period and the slowness of the industrial rise itself.

What Are the Immediate Perspectives?

Regardless of the rhythm of the conjunctural changes, it is only possible to foresee approximately the change in the phases of the cycle. What was said refers also to pre-war capitalism. But in the present epoch the difficulties of conjunctural prediction have multiplied. The world market has not attained, after the shake-up of the war, the establishment of a single conjuncture, even though it approached it appreciably compared to the first five years after the war. This is why one must now be doubly careful in attempting to determine beforehand the alternating changes in world conjuncture.

At the present moment the following basic variations appear likely:

1. The New York stock market crisis proves to be the forerunner of a commercial-industrial crisis in the United States, which reaches great depths in the very next months. United States capitalism is compelled to make a decisive turn toward the foreign market. An epoch of mad competition opens up. European goods retreat before this unrestrained attack. Europe enters a crisis later than the United States but as a result the European crisis assumes extraordinary acuteness.

2. The stock market crash does not immediately call forth a commercial-industrial crisis, but results only in a temporary depression. The blow at stock market speculation brings about better correlation between the course of paper values and commercial-industrial realities, just as between the latter and the real buying power of the market. After the depression and a period of adjustment, the commercial-industrial conjuncture rises upward once more, even though not as steeply as in the previous period. This variation is not excluded. The reserves of American capitalism are great. Not the last place among them is held by the government budget (orders, subsidies, etc.)

3. The withdrawal of funds from American speculation generates commercial and industrial activity. The further fate of

this revival will in turn depend just as much upon purely European as upon factors. Even in case of a sharp economic crisis in the United States, a rise may yet be maintained in Europe for a certain time, because it is unthinkable that capitalism in the United States will be able in the period of a few short months to reconstruct itself for a decisive attack on the world market.

4. Finally, the actual course of developments may pass between the above-outlined variations and yield an equivalent in the form of a shaky, broken curve with weak deviations upward or downward.

The development of the worker, particularly through the strike movement in the whole history of capitalism, has been closely bound with the development of the conjunctural cycle. It is not necessary, however, to conceive this connection mechanically. Under certain conditions that overflow the boundaries of the commercial-industrial cycle (sharp changes of the world economic or political environment, sharp social crises, wars and revolutions), it is not the current demands of the masses evoked by the given conjuncture that find their expression in the strike wave, but their deep historical tasks of a revolutionary character. Thus, for instance, the post-war strikes in France did not have conjunctural character but reflected the profound crisis of capitalist society as a whole. If we approach the present strike in France with this criterion, it will present itself primarily as a movement of conjunctural character; the course and tempo of the labor movement will depend in the most immediate sense on a further movement of the market, on alternating conjunctural phases, on their fullness and intensity. All the more impermissible is it, in a changeable moment such as we are now passing through, to proclaim the "third period" without any regard for the real course of economic life.

There is no need to explain that even in case of a renewal of the favorable conjuncture in America and the development of a commercial-industrial rise in Europe, the coming of a new crisis is entirely unavoidable. There is not the least doubt that when a crisis actually arrives, the present leaders will declare that their "prognosis" was fully justified, that the stabilization of capitalism proved its weakness, and that the class struggle took on a sharper character. It is clear, however, that such a "prognosis" costs very little. One who started to predict daily the eclipse of the sun would finally live to see his prediction fulfilled. But it is doubtful if we would consider such a prophet a serious astronomer. The task of the Communists is not to predict crises, revolutions and wars every single day, but to prepare for wars and revolutions, soberly evaluating the situation, the conditions which arise between wars and revolutions. It is necessary to foresee the inevitability of a crisis after a rise. It is necessary to warn the masses of the coming crisis. But to prepare them for the crisis will be more easily possible the more fully the masses under a correct leadership, utilize the period of rise. At the recent (December) Plenum of the national committee of the C.G.T.U., quite healthy thoughts were expressed. Thus, Claverl and Dorelle complained that the last C. G. T. U. congress (May 1929) evaded the question of economic demands of the working masses. The speakers, however, did not stop to think how it could happen that a trade union congress passed by that which should be its first and most urgent task. In accordance with the so-called "self-criticism", the main speakers this time condemned the C. G. T. U. leadership more thoroughly than the Opposition ever did.

However, Dorelle himself introduced not a little confusion in the name of the "third period", in connection with the question of the political character of the strikes. Dorelle demanded that the revolutionary trade unionists, that is, the Communists,—there are no other revolutionary trade unionists in existence at the present time—show the workers in every strike the dependence of isolated manifestations of exploitation upon the whole contemporary regime, and consequently the connection between the immediate demands of the workers and the task of the proletarian revolution. This is an ABC demand for Marxists. But by this is not at all determined the character of a strike as such. By a political strike

(Continued on Page 8)

Throughout the World of Labor

A Step Backward by French Syndicalism

The Revolution Proletarienne* has just changed its label. Its first number of the year calls itself revolutionary syndicalist and no longer syndicalist-Communist. That makes for clarity. The editors of the R. P. consider moreover "that there can exist no more genuine proletarian revolutionaries, no more real Communists than the genuine revolutionary syndicalists". The formula would have been correct enough had there been added: before the war. But today, the substitution of the revolutionary-syndicalist label for that of the syndicalist-Communist, implies a very plain retreat, accomplished progressively, and materializing only today.

In the first number, Loriot takes it upon himself to show us that it is not a question of an external formality but rather of a new content, of a final rupture with Communism, that is, with the revolutionary experience of the last fifteen years. The article of Loriot, entitled "The Bankruptcy of the Communist International and the Independence of the Trade Union Movement" adds nothing essential to the arguments expounded two years ago in his pamphlet on "The Problems of the Proletarian Revolution". One finds developed there the same Utopia of a single trade union gathering, one class party of the proletariat (of the type of English Laborism). One finds there the same absence of political perspectives (does Loriot trust to the wholly false analyses of Chambelland?) the same errors concerning the course of the Russian revolution and the same appeal to the "politically enlightened" elements of the proletariat opposed to the "social elements whom ignorance and misery bring to consider violence more as an end than a means". In the meantime, there are in France many C. G. T. members to whom the newly organized minority of the C. G. T. U. has just been added, there is a Communist party and there is also the Communist Opposition. But Loriot does not dwell on these details. At any rate, he does not point out by what processes, thanks to what circumstances, there will issue from all this a single mass trade unionism supplanting all the parties in the accomplishment of the revolution.

However, Loriot has added something unimportant to the role of the Left Communist faction. He does not believe that "the present position of comrade Trotsky and the small groups of the Communist Opposition, which like him, are devoted to the task of regenerating the C. I., is correct." He gives only empirical reasons: few Communists come to us, for five years no substantial Communist nucleus has been able to organize outside the C. I., no influence has been obtained over the party from the outside, etc... The healthy elements are leaving the party and will be replaced by others "only to the extent that the Opposition groups will entertain the idea of the possible regeneration of the C. I." Finally, here is the preemptory conclusion: "The French workers are not content with being liberated from the command of the bureaucrats, who do not think that the party which generates the Communist bureaucracy is capable of ridding itself of this institution, who see the salvation of the proletariat and its revolution in a class and not a sectarian trade union organization, controlling its internal political formations and independent of parties on the outside, will leave the Leninist Opposition to pursue the chimera of the resurrection of a dead past."

We think quite the contrary, because for us "the resurrection of the dead past" is the resurrection impetus of the proletarian under the new capitalist crisis—and not the perspective or thirty or forty years of relative peace between the classes. The party or the trade union are not, for us, instruments of the working class created by the whim of a few individuals; they are the result of certain class relations in struggle. They arise in certain circumstances

*Organ of the Syndicalist League of France, whose leaders include Monatte, Chambelland, Loriot, Louzon, etc., etc.

against which one cannot act, and live in the same manner. Like the trade unions, the Communist party corresponds to certain needs of the class struggle. In the present epoch, it corresponds to the necessity of accomplishing the proletarian revolution, of working immediately on the basis of the revolutionary post-war struggles in Russia, Germany, Austria and elsewhere.

We are entirely disinterested in the academic character of the discussion: which is the "better" proletarian organization to accomplish the revolution? We do not deny the importance and the role of the trade union. That would be foolish. We know that the reformist trade unions often play an important role in the orientation of the mass. But we also know that the reformist trade unions often play the role of a brake in revolutionary action. We want to base ourselves on the experience resulting from the development and the crisis of the Communist parties, that is, from the development of the class struggle itself.

The "degeneration" of the parties plays pretty nearly the same role for the petty bourgeois opportunism for the leadership of the party and the C. G. T. U. It is a hollow phrase. The Left Opposition gives it a precise and concrete sense. It designates by that a false policy. It is not a formal decrepitude, due to old age or disillusion. It is perseverance in a false political line, whose consequences can be fatal, and have in fact been fatal, notably in England and in China. Those who have only disillusion cannot profit by experience; they call everything into question again and admit having deceived themselves in the past. Those who assimilate the objective and subjective reasons that determine this false political line work to reconstitute the nuclei around which will be gathered subsequently the correctly orientated party.

Loriot and the R. P. turn their backs to Communism. That is a fact. They justify those who expelled them. Monatte has written that Sellier was right to expel him from the party. Thus, they also have no interest at all in the fate of the C. I., and consequently of the Russian revolution. It will be said that they have in mind to justify (if not to legitimize) the attacks of Monmousseau. At the same time, they abandon all political perspective, no matter how small. The speech of Chambelland at the last congress of the C. G. T. U. is lamentably weak in this respect. Louzon recommends the surrender of the Chinese Eastern Railway by Russia at the same time that he underlines the great success of Stalin in the collectivization of agriculture. Repelled by "Russian" Bolshevism, the R. P. retreats into a narrowly "French" attitude. It hardly seems to suspect the existence of millions of foreign-born workers in France and the unity of the international struggle, even with the scattered organizations.

Obviously, we fight on a different path. We do not speak of "regenerating" the C. I. as one re-infuses blood into an old organism. But we have no reason to abandon the general principles of the C. I. We want to make up for it in the revolutionary struggle which it is less and less capable of conducting properly, but which only an organization of its type can conduct. We do not prejudice its developments. It may be, and so far as France is concerned, it is probable, that the Communist organization as it exists today is incapable of recovery. But what is essential is to take a correct position under present circumstances.

The fact that the present cadres of official Communists are not susceptible to regeneration, does not at all mean that we are not capable of development. Or development is not bound to the retrogression of the party or to its regeneration. It is bound to a correct revolutionary political line, different from that of the party. We do not address ourselves only to the healthy "nuclei" still existing in the party (they are few) but also and above all to the mass that stands outside the party. Our activity is bound to that of the workers who are not satisfied by the policy of the party, but who remain Communists, inside or outside the party. Loriot and his friends bind their fate to those who cannot be satisfied by the policy of the party, but who abandon Com-

munist. There is every reason to think that their position will become still plainer in this sense.

PIERRE NAVILLE.

Paris, January 17, 1930

Φ

Lovestone's German Friends

In the years that followed the defeat of 1923, the Right wing never stood up against the policy of Zinoviev or against that of Stalin. Its leaders formulated no political judgement on the subject of international questions, even though Brandler and Thalheimer, living in Moscow, were very well informed on the internal policy of the Comintern. Today they explain their silence by the obedience to discipline.

But the real reason for their silence was their desire to "conquer" the German party by means of this same bureaucratic apparatus whose faults they refrained from disclosing. Not knowing whether it was Stalin or Bucharin who would prevail, they dared not take a position for one or the other. Today, they convert this cowardice into a theory, saying: We have no business mixing in the internal affairs of the Russian Communist Party. That is a very singular attitude for internationalist revolutionaries. Why was it necessary to observe discipline up to 1928, and why does it cease, beginning with that date? And did not Brandler say during a meeting of his faction at Leipzig that he hoped to receive the German party from the hands of Stalin? Before his departure from Moscow Stalin is said to have told him that if, in the future, the Right wing should gain sufficient influence in the German party, he would conduct his policy with it.

The Right wing views the defeat of October, 1923 as a "legend". According to its spokesmen, there was no defeat and it maintains this point of view in spite of the flat refutation produced by the years that followed, by the economic and political stability of capitalism.

That is why they are always for the tactic of the united front with the social democracy, in the manner extolled by them in 1923. And logically, one of them, Paul Boettcher, applies this tactic to England and declares that the defeat of the C. I. there is due to the fact that this kind of a united front was not sufficiently realized there.

Thalheimer is hostile to the struggle against the Kulak. But generally speaking, the Right wing does not take a position in Russian questions.

In Saxony, its faction was very strong for many years; it nevertheless suffered a heavy defeat in the elections. It received only 22,500 votes and no mandate. Immediately after the electoral results, many functionaries of the first order belonging to the Right wing faction went over to the social democratic party.

In Leipzig, it attempted to form a party grouping together the remnants of the Independent Socialist party and the Ledebour group. At a meeting of these groupings, the representatives of the Independent Socialist Democratic "party" declared that the U. S. S. R. could not be defended while Social Revolutionaries and Mensheviks were imprisoned. And he is a member of the committee for the defense of the U. S. S. R.

The Right wing boasts, in Leipzig, of being in touch with the French Opposition. The French Opposition is the Alsatian group of Hueber, which is intimately connected with the clerical autonomists. To defend themselves for this relationship the Right wing leaders declare that they are not "completely" in accord with the Alsatians, but why not make use of the Alsatian organ while they have the possibility of writing in it!

The attempt of the Right wing to found a new party of the type of the Second and a Half International, will not succeed. That period is historically passed.

Our own task, the task of the Left Opposition, is to win the workers who have gone to the Right, driven by discontentment with the bureaucratic policy of the C. P. The Leninbund, not clear on the formal questions and the work to be accomplished, has not been able to assemble the revolutionary forces of the Opposition. It

The Results of the Soviet-China Conflict

1. In its last stage, the conflict revealed as is known the complete military impotence of the present Chinese power. This shows clearer than anything that we have in China not a victorious bourgeois revolution, as Louzon, Urbahn and others think, for a victorious revolution would have consolidated the army and power. We have in China a victorious counter-revolution, directed against the overwhelming majority of the nation, and therefore incapable of creating an army.

2. At the same time, it shows in a striking manner the inconsistency of the Menshevik policy of Stalin-Martinov based since the beginning of 1924 on the assumption that the "national" Chinese bourgeoisie is capable of heading the revolution. In reality, the bourgeoisie was only capable, with the political support of the Comintern and the material aid of the imperialists, of smashing the revolution and thus reducing the Chinese state to complete impotence.

3. The Soviet-Chinese conflict, in its military stage, revealed thus the enormous preponderance of the proletarian revolution, even though weakened by the wrong policy of the leadership for the last few years, towards the bourgeois counter-revolution, which had at its disposal the substantial diplomatic and material support of imperialism.

4. The victory of the October revolution over the April counter-revolution (the overthrow by Chiang Kai-Shek in April, 1927), can in no sense be considered a victory for Stalin's policy. On the contrary, the latter has suffered a series of heavy defeats. The very seizure of the railroad was Chiang Kai-Shek's payment for the services rendered by Stalin. Stalin's subsequent gamble on Feng Yu-Hsiang was just as completely inconsistent. The Opposition warned against the adventurist combinations with Feng Yu-Hsiang against Chiang Kai-Shek after April 1927, just as energetically as it protested against the bloc of Stalin with Chiang Kai-Shek.

5. The unprincipled gamble on the Kellogg Pact suffered a no less heavy blow. The admission of the Soviet government to the pact of American imperialism was just as shameful a capitulation of the Soviet government as it was useless. By his adherence to the pact, that pretended instrument of peace, Stalin openly assisted the American government to deceive the working masses of America and Europe. What was the aim of this adherence? Evidently to gain the good will of the United States and thereby hasten diplomatic recognition. As should have been expected, this aim was not achieved, for the American government had no reason to pay in cash for what it got for nothing. New York took the first opportunity, basing itself on the Kellogg Pact, to play the role of protector of China against the Soviet republic. Moscow was obliged to reply with a sharp rebuke. That was right and inevitable. But it is perfectly clear that the compulsory demonstration against the American government's attempt to intervene disclosed the whole criminal light-mindedness with which Stalin adhered to the Kellogg Pact.

6. There still remains the question of the revolutionary Communist detachment under the leadership of Tchu-Deh. Pravda reported about it on the eve of the transition of the conflict into a military stage. After that, we hear no more about those Chinese workers and peasants whom somebody sent into armed battle under the banner of Communism. What were the aims of the struggle? What was the role of the Party in it? What was the fate of this detachment? And finally, in what mysterious kitchen are all these questions decided?

On this last point, no less important than all the rest, a final balance cannot yet be drawn. But everything speaks for the fact that bureaucratic adventurism here, like everywhere else, bears the responsibility for the weakening and exhaustion of the reserves of the Chinese Revolution. January 3, 1930 —L.TROTSKY

will be unable to do it except by remedying this grave defect. Leipzig, January 1930. —ROMAN WELL

The Proletariat and Peasantry in the Indian Revolution

By Max Shachtman

The essence of the colonial nationalist's theory is that the pressure of imperialism on the colonies has welded together a nation, all of whose native inhabitants have identical social and historical interests in a joint fight for liberation from the foreign yoke. This is a "theoretical" trait common to Chinese, Indian and all other petty bourgeois nationalist movements. According to them, the colonial domination of imperialism abolishes the class struggle in the colonies and creates a united front of all layers of the population. This conception, embodied for example in Sun Yat Senism, is the theoretical justification of the colonial bourgeoisie for its domination and suppression of the working class and peasantry in the struggle against imperialism.

It was reflected in the Communist International in the period of the Chinese revolution (1925-27) in the theory of the "national government of the bloc of four classes" (Martinov-Stalin-Bucharin-Roy), which was the "justification" for chaining the proletariat and peasants' movement to the war chariot of Chiang Kai-Shek. This theory, in any of its multitude of variations, is a gilt-edged guarantee in advance that the coming Indian revolution will be strangled in the blood of its own working class and land slaves.

In the previous article, we described the position of the Indian big bourgeoisie and feudal and monarchial lords, the full-fledged allies of British imperialism, and the petty bourgeois nationalists, at present dominating the movement and ready at any and every opportunity to make a compromise with the British in order to prevent the rise of a genuine mass movement. There remain the basic forces of the Indian revolution, the workers and peasants.

The Indian Proletariat

The Indian workers are among the most scandalously exploited in the world. The last Factory Amendment Act recognizes a maximum working week of 60 hours and an 11 hour day; needless to say, the actual working day frequently runs as high as 15 hours. Tens of thousands of women and children work not only in the light industries (textile, etc.) but in even heavy, dangerous industries, like mining. Wages are hideously low, frequently making anything but the barest existence impossible.

"Records of wages," writes Dutte in "Modern India", "show the average wage of a Bengal coal miner in 1922 as 12 annas (an anna is about 2 cents, U. S. coin) per day, of an Assam plantation laborer as 4 annas, and of Bombay skilled textile workers as 12 annas to rupees .8 (about 50 cents) per day. What these figures mean, even in the case of the better-off Bombay workers, is shown by the enquiry of the Bombay Labor Office into 2,473 working class budgets. The enquiry showed:

That no less than 56 percent of the income went on food. 2. That even so the quality of food obtained did not reach the prison standard. The general conclusion is that industrial workers consume a maximum of cereals allowed by the Famine code, but less than the diet prescribed in the 'Bombay Gaol Manual'. 3. That 97 percent of the families were living in overcrowded single rooms. 4. That 47 percent of the families were in debt."

Housing conditions in the city are frightful. "In the Bombay one-room tenements, the Medical Officer's Report for 1921 declared that 13 percent contained ten or more persons and 73 percent of the workers' children are born in these one-room tenements." (Ibid).

It is not surprising, therefore, that the profits of industrial enterprises in India rival the most gorgeous fantasies of the first conquerer of the country.

The Spoilation of the Peasantry

The conditions of the Indian peasantry are even worse if possible. The ryot (peasant) is constantly on the verge of physical annihilation. The ruthless destruction of all handicrafts, the driving of the artisan and even many thousands of industrial workers back to the land has resulted in an overcrowding of agriculture. In one section of the country, inquiry showed that the average holding had decreased from 40 to 7 acres in less than 50 years. The corollary to this situation is the immense expanse of land not placed at the service of the peasants, (in big landed estates, etc.) which is neither fallow nor cultivated, and amounts to practically 25 percent of the total cultivable and uncultivable acreage of British India. The land hunger of the Indian peasants is as acute as it is remediable.

Not only that, but the meager holdings of the 210 millions of peasants and landless laborers are usually squeezed to exhaustion by heavy rents, exorbitant taxation, and the ruthlessness of the village usurers. Any typical taxation year indicates the brutal exploitation of the peasantry. Where, in England proper, direct taxation for 1923-24 covered 54 percent of the tax revenues, it covered less than 10 percent in India. Indirect taxation in India for 1924-25 (customs, excise, stamps, salt, opium) brought in 63 percent of the whole, and taxation on land, an additional 2 percent. The results of this practical course are shown in the conclusions of a noted British investigator (Dr. Mann). In one of the first villages, he found that 81 percent of the buildings "could not under the most favorable circumstances maintain their owners." In another village, far from an industrial center, he found 85 percent of the population in literal misery. Further, the peasants are usually heavily in debt. Then they are attacked by the landlords, who frequently take half of what the cultivator is able to produce.

These are some of the reasons why the Indian masses have the highest death rate in the world. These facts account for holo-causts of famine and epidemics sweeping the country, and as in the influenza epidemic after the war, killing off 13,000,000 people at virtually a blow.

A movement in India that does not place on the agenda as one of its leading tasks the solution of the agrarian problem (the agrarian revolution) cannot be designated a revolutionary movement, or even, for that matter, a movement that conducts a genuine struggle against imperialism. But what class can lead the struggle for the agrarian revolution? In the answer to that also lies the reply to the question of the character and leadership of the Indian revolution.

What is clear from all modern history is that the peasantry itself, as a "class" (a petty bourgeois layer of society whose social and economic base tends to diminish steadily), can play no independent role in the class struggle. The "peasant" government of Stambulinsky in Bulgaria, the Croatian "peasant" movement led by Raditch, the North-Western farmers' movement in the United States which is dominated by the bourgeoisie and its social conceptions (not to speak of the Russian peasantry in the March and November revolutions)—all these demonstrated that the peasantry is either an instrument of the bourgeoisie or an ally of the proletariat; any other position is a deception and a dream.

Peasantry and National Bourgeoisie

The more than 200,000,000 Indian peasants are today principally under the command of the national bourgeoisie, for whom they are nothing else—considered essentially—than troops. The nationalist bourgeoisie of India cannot carry out the agrarian revolution, and will not carry it out, for they are joint exploiters with imperialism of the misery existing in Indian agriculture. The "national democratic revolution" carried out by the "revolutionary democratic alliance" under the leadership of the petty bourgeoisie—the program for India envisaged by Roy (Revolutionary Age, No. 7)—cannot and will not solve the problem of the peasantry by carrying out the agrarian revolution.

All recent history proves this. The Chinese revolution, in which the workers and peasants were led by Chang Kai-shek and the national bourgeoisie (assisted, alas! by the Comintern) did not solve the agrarian problem, which is just as acute today as it was before the establishment either of the Canton, Nanking or Wuhan governments. The bourgeois democratic movement of Kerensky equally failed to solve the problem of the agrarian revolution. That task was executed only after the Bolshevik revolution, during its so-called "democratic" period, (1917-18) when the land program was put through by the collaboration of the Communists and the Left Social Revolutionaries. In Russia, the agrarian revolution was accomplished only under the leadership of the proletariat. That holds true with equal force for India, despite the fact that, unlike Russia, it is a colonial country. Otherwise the whole lesson not only of the Russian revolution but also of the Chinese revolution, has passed by unobserved by the revolutionary movement.

But for the Indian proletariat to be capable of leading the peasantry behind it, it must have, as its first pre-requisite, political and economic organization, i.e., trade unions and a revolutionary proletarian party. Without these all talk of the leading role of the proletariat is just so much wind. It is precisely in this capital question that the leadership of the Communist International has shown its most catastrophic bankruptcy in the last few years, to such an extent, in fact, that the whole immediate future of the Indian revolution is imperilled. At the present moment, there is no spokesman for the Stalin faction in any C. P. that can say with authority just what is the Comintern's policy in India. The *Daily Worker* is a typical instance of hopeless confusion. Its "specialists" write on India one day that the aim of the revolution is the "democratic dictatorship of the workers and peasants", (Browder); and other day that the "Left wing" in the trade unions (!) will lead the masses of the workers and peasants to—Soviet power (J. W. Ford).

The Absence of a Communist Party

The fact is that the decisive element required for a successful revolutionary struggle is lacking in India, primarily because of the policy pursued by the Comintern in the last five years: a revolutionary proletarian (i.e., a Communist) party. For years in which splendid opportunities for the creation of such a party were at hand, the policy of the Comintern in India was in no essential different from that followed in China, that is, the creation of a Kuo Min Tang on an Indian scale. The most prominent spokesman for the C. I. policy in India was M. N. Roy, the heat of whose nationalist passion burns through the thin coat of Bolshevik veneer acquired by rubbing shoulders with Lenin while the latter was alive.

It is pitiful to read the diatribes directed against Roy today by the very same people in the International who defended his views for four or five years previous to his expulsion. The only crime of which Roy is guilty is that he is faithfully continuing the policy officially sanctioned by Stalin, Bucharin and Martinov for the Chinese revolution, and for India as well, during the whole struggle against the Russian Opposition. Roy continues this policy; Stalin has not yet entirely disassociated himself from it. And the party members have every right to ask Stalin and Co:

Why is the policy of the Comintern in the Chinese revolution, never condemned or rejected, inapplicable to a similar situation in India today? Why is Roy wrong for advocating a "revolutionary democratic alliance, which under present Indian conditions will embrace well over 80 percent of the population"—without saying a word about working class domination of the bloc—when that is what Stalin-Bucharin-Martinov carried through in the Chinese "bloc of four classes"? Why is Roy wrong for warning that the "process must proceed in stages," when it was precisely with the same "theory of stages" that Bucharin and Roy justified the suppression by the Kuo Min Tang of the agrarian revolution and workers' strikes during the Chinese revolution? Why is Roy wrong for forgetting entirely the elementary requirements of proletarian leadership of the movement, of the creation and strengthening of a Communist Party, training the young movement to regard the nationalist bourgeoisie with suspicion, when Stalin and Bucharin overlooked all these requirements in the Chinese revolution? What is wrong with Roy's completely "forgetting" the slogan of Soviets in India, when the official Comintern virtually expelled the Russian Opposition for demanding that slogan in China at the moment of a rising revolutionary tide? Finally, what is wrong with Roy's conception of providing the masses "with a program of National Democratic Revolution and (leading) them by stages in the struggle for the realization of that program"—a conception that conceals the real aim of the victory of the bourgeois counter-revolution and the subjugation of the workers and peasants—when that was precisely the conception that animated all the activity of the C. I. in the Chinese revolution?

Where Roy is Right and Wrong

Considered from the standpoint of the officially endorsed policy of Stalin in the Chinese revolution, Roy is to this day consistent and correct, while his Stalinist con-

tics are wrong. Considered from the standpoint of revolutionary Marxism, Roy remains what he has been for years; a Menshevik of the colonial type, i.e., shot through with nationalist ideology.

That the ruling regime in the C. I. has changed its position from the days of the Chinese revolution, is incontestable; that it has not, however, adopted the correct revolutionary standpoint,—which would be an acknowledgement that the whole struggle against an alleged "Trotskyist deviation" in the Chinese revolution "was a monstrous fraud—is equally true. Every possible course has been adopted by the Centrists and the Right wing in the International—except that of the burningly urgent formation of a Communist Party. The "Communist Party of India" is today a myth; it is non-existent. No serious attempt has been made by the Comintern to aid in its organization. On the contrary, it has been deliberately neglected. The policy of the C. I. in India, as expressed officially by Roy for years, has been:

"What is needed is a revolutionary People's Party which is alone capable of defending the immediate as well as the ultimate welfare (so!) of the toiling masses."

Or else: "The organization of a party of the workers and peasants has become an indispensable necessity. The Communist Party of India (?) is called upon by history (!) to play this role."

And: "We will endeavor to push the middle class nationalists forward in the struggle . . . We will force the (National) Congress to declare boldly for a Republican India."***

And more: "Where then is the 'Bolshevism' in our programme? Wherein lies its danger to the established order of capitalist society?**** (Yes, that is what we would like to know: Wherein?)

Roy's Line Was Stalin's Line

This was not Roy's line of thought and action; it was the line of the whole official Comintern (Stalin-Bucharin) applied in India and in China. Through Roy, the Comintern flirted with the national bourgeoisie for years. It proposed an alliance with the bourgeois League for Independence. It formed and assisted the hybrid caricature of Marxism, the "All-India Workers Party" to "lead" the Indian revolution, and kept it going until less than a year ago, when it died of theoretical and social mal-nutrition. It gave the clever bourgeois politicians at the head of the Indian Trade Union Congress innumerable opportunities to refresh their fading reputations at the apparently inexhaustible fountain of the so-called "League against Imperialism" in order to protect them with a "Bolshevik" coloration from the attacks of the masses. In short, every sultefuge has been tried to avoid the only possible road to revolution: the consolidation of a Communist Party which alone can lead the proletariat, and through the working class entrain the peasantry behind it and utilize the lower sections of the urban petty bourgeoisie. The absence of a Communist Party to this day is objectively the greatest obstacle in the road to a victorious advance of the Indian revolution.

But for that, there is a revival of the exploded theory—which also breaks with Bolshevism—that the trade unions or a section or wing of the unions will lead the revolution. This theory tentatively advanced in 1924 by Zinoviev, was applied to England. It is not certain, wrote Zinoviev, whether the revolutionary movement will come through MacManus (i.e., the British Communist Party) or through the General Council of the British Trade Unions. The British General Strike two years later removed even Zinoviev's doubts. . .

A variation of this theory is now being advanced in India. The Stalinist press speaks of the Left wing in the Indian Trade Union Congress as of the organizing and directing center of the proletarian revolutionary movement. The only thing that can come out of such a conception is incalculable harm. The proletarian political party can not take the place of the trade unions; but the trade unions—or any section of it—can certainly not take the place of the revolutionary party. The political party of the proletariat is its principal arm in the strug-

*"The Aftermath of Non-Cooperation" by Manabendra Nath Roy, Published by the Communist Party of Great Britain, London, 1926. Page 37.

** Ibid, Page 47.

***Ibid., Page 48

****Ibid., page 89.

Foster's Return and the «New Wind» in the Comintern

Centrism is a parasite in the revolutionary movement. Having no firm foundations in the working class, and no ideas of its own, it must perforce live alternately on the Right (reformist) wing and the Left (Bolshevik) wing, falling back in the end into the camp of reformism. The most "perfect" example of Centrism in the revolutionary movement is the Stalin faction in the Russian Communist Party and the International. That it has been conducting a pseudo-Left course for the past year or more only brings out into bolder relief the course towards Menshevism it pursued together with the Right wing (Bucharin-Tomsky-Rykov) for the four or five years previous. But just as Centrism has never been capable of conducting a consistent line, so also has it been essentially incapable of holding to a course to the Left for an extended period. The Centrist helmsman may hold the rudder to the Left under the storm of a proletarian wind but he has a fatal yearning for the reposeful shores to starboard.

Stalinist Centrism is now preparing to make the turn to the Right which has been inherent in the whole situation since the most recent course was undertaken. The first indications are already at hand. The record of Centrism in the past enables us to illuminate the factors known, to connect them, and to draw the necessary conclusions. In this manner, we will be able to observe the similarities between the present trend of events and the developments in the International and the Russian Party after the year 1923.

The fatal blunders of the leadership of the International and the German party in October of that year (Zinoviev, Stalin, Brandler, Thalheimer) ruined the revolutionary opportunities in Germany. The leaders of the Russian party, who bore the main responsibility, made first-rate scapegoats of Brandler and Thalheimer. Only later, through the work of the Opposition, was it revealed that the German leaders had merely carried out the timid, opportunist instructions of Stalin and Zinoviev who played no different role in the German revolution than did the latter and Kamenev in October 1917.

The «Leftism» of the 5th Congress

The Fifth Congress that followed inaugurated an epoch of sham Leftism in the International, remarkably similar to that instituted by the Sixth Congress and the Tenth Plenum, and causing just as much havoc in the revolutionary movement. The similarity extends even to the question of the leadership foisted on the various sections of the International: the ultra-Leftist leadership of the period of the Fifth Congress (Ruth Fischer, Maslow, Treint, Suzanne Girault, Neurath) have their replica in the creatures of the Sixth Congress and the Tenth Plenum (Thaelmann, Neumann, Monmousseau, Bonte, Gottwald, etc.) So far to the «Left» did the post-Fifth Congress regime in the International go that it chided the Bolshevik Opposition (Trot-

sky) with being to the Right (!)

gle for power. It absorbs, concentrates and crystallizes the experiences of past struggles. It illuminates the path to power with its theoretical clarity and precision. It is at once the vanguard and the directing staff of the workers. Without it, they are like a lance without a point. There is no substitute for the revolutionary party: that is one of the basic—if not the principal—distinctions between the Marxist and the syndicalist.

The failure of the Comintern under its present leadership to help establish a Communist Party—rather, the prevention of its establishment—has been one of the severest possible blows to the Indian revolution. This criminal defection must be overcome immediately. Without a Communist Party, without a revolutionary political instrument of the proletariat, the national revolutionary movement will have a «Chinese ending». Without it, it will be impossible for India to go through a «non-capitalist development», that is, to pass beyond the «democratic» revolution to the dictatorship of the Indian proletariat, which is already schooled in bitter battle. Without it, all talk of Soviets is a stupid mockery with possible reactionary consequences. Without it, the Indian revolution may have an Indian 1848—i. e., a vic- of the bourgeoisie and a set- for the working class because of its immaturity or organizational-political unpreparedness, but never an Indian 1917.

sky) with being to the Right (!)

But the Left jag did not last very long. Before they had much of a chance to warm the seats of power, the Fischers and Maslows were turned out into the cold as ultra-Leftists. In their place were injected little cliques of characterless individuals—of whom Heinz Neumann is the perfected type—who are so little encumbered by spines that they can adjust themselves to a corkscrew if the ruling regime gives the necessary orders. The brief «Left» swing was followed by a deep and lasting swing to the Right which had such catastrophic results as the policies of the C. I. in the British miners and general strikes, in the Chinese revolution, and in Russian domestic affairs. It was the hey-day of the Bucharins, Peppers, Lovestones, Smerals, Roys, Martinovs, Tascas, etc.

In this period also, however, the Right-Centre bloc (Stalin-Bucharin) had to suffer the most biting lashes of criticism from the Bolshevik Opposition. Each compromise, each step away from the revolutionary road encountered the powerful obstacle of the detested «Trotskyists». Goaded on by the equally powerful Right wing, the Center collaborated with it in the Thermidorian act of cutting the Opposition from the Party. But with this act, the «equilibrium» was rudely upset, and the Center found itself confronted by even more outspoken demands of the Right on the one hand and growing pressure from the Russian workers on the other.

The Centrists calculated: Now that the Opposition is organizationally liquidated by expulsion, a swing to the Left will not only be in harmony with the mood of the proletarian masses, and bring no credit to the Opposition, but will unleash sufficient mass force to destroy the organizational power of the Right wing. Thus, the apparatus zig-zagged to the «Left», and instituted a period of spurious «Leftism» in the International which has lasted virtually since the Sixth Congress, and particularly since the Tenth Plenum.

But Stalin's «Leftism», induced by the pressure of the Opposition and its ideas that were permeating the workers, has no more essential resemblance to the platform of the Left Opposition than a delicate operation performed by a cobbler has to one executed by a master surgeon. Just as the latter tends to discredit the very institution of genuine surgery, Stalin's debacles only tend to discredit a genuine Bolshevik course. In other words, prostrated as the whole Comintern was by the pre-Sixth Congress regime, it has only been more severely struck by what followed. Loss of influence of the Communist Parties, loss of members, decline of the press—these are but some of the results of the «new line» in little more than a year, which cannot be concealed by all the screeching proclamations of Stalinism put together.

The Change in the Russian Situation

Moreover, there has been a change in the Russian party situation. The «struggle» against the Right wing (Bucharin-Rykov-Tomsky) has been appreciably moderated since their temporarily inevitable «capitulation». The Center, which undertook the largely bureaucratic, apparatus-like, behind-the-scenes fight against the Right wing belatedly and with considerable timidity, is greatly relieved. It can now turn its attention more and more to crushing the ever-present «remnants of Trotskyism». It is, in fact, compelled to make this new turn because the necessities of the struggle against the Right wing unleashed social forces which threaten not only the Right wing but the Center itself: the most advanced sections of the working class and the basic layers of the peasantry. Thus, there is an increasing resistance among the workers to the bureaucratic measures taken by Stalin to deprive the workers' councils and the party nuclei in the factory from a decisive voice in management and the transfer of the latter prerogative to the technical and managerial staff. There is a movement among the poor peasantry for the formation of poor peasants league to combat the Kulak and «economically powerful» peasant effectively—a movement so strong that it was reflected high up in the apparatus in the demand for such organizations made months ago by Lominadze and Schatzkin, who borrowed the idea from the Opposition Platform of 1927.

All these «alarming» (for the Cen-

trist faction) symptom form the growing basis for a change in the present course in this direction. The principal, and most already enough indication to show that the dominant group is preparing to bear down in this direction, recent, is the speech of Manuilsky, the representative of the Comintern, to the Plenum of the Young Communist International. (Communist International, Vol. VI, No. 28). For the first time in almost two years, we have what amounts to a programmatic speech in which all the polemics of the speaker are directed, not against the Right, but against the «Left danger». Using the reports of the Y. C. I. itself, Manuilsky paints a picture of organizational and political decline in the International that is drearier than anything yet attempted by an Oppositionist.

«Comrade Furenberg», he says, «says that the decline is no less than 20 percent, and that these figures are a little out of date. Note that this decline is occurring in a situation of a rise in the revolutionary wave. Not in circumstances of a reaction, but in circumstances of a radicalization of the working youth. (Khitrov: The same applies in the Communist Parties.) Their turn is coming. We shall deal with the Comintern also.»

The attack is not only directed against the Y. C. I., but also against the sections (never the international leadership!) of the C. I. «On August 1st all our parties had big possibilities of showing their readiness to put this decision into force. In reality, with the exception of Greece and France, where was there any attempt to call a mass political strike on August 1st? In not one country did we see any serious attempts to carry out even a one-hour general strike.»

Manuilsky Warns the Apparatus!

Further: «We have certain parties where the Central Committee has not taken a single step towards winning the masses, and it does not enter the head of any member of the party to demand of such a C. C. why the party directed by such a C. C. does not develop... Take the imperialist war which the bourgeoisie is organizing: when any general suffers a defeat, he is replaced; but we can lose half the membership of a party and the members of the C. C. remain in their posts.» (Foster, Bedacht and Co.—take heed of the warning!)

And the conclusions: «The Y. C. I. always struggled splendidly against the right-wing deviations, no one has any right to utter a word of reproach against you in that regard. But the struggle against the «left-wing» zig-zags was not so well carried out by you.»

To whom does Manuilsky refer? To Scatzkin, who at one time leaned towards the Trotsky Opposition, and together with Lominadze put forward the idea of poor peasants' unions; to Nasanov, who was recalled from China by Stalin a few years ago for signing the famous «Letter of Three Comrades from Shanghai» which criticized the C. I.'s Menshevik policy in the revolution along the lines of the Opposition. But not even these comrades are meant primarily; they are only the whipping boys for others to come. Manuilsky's (read: Stalin's) offensive against the so-called «Left deviation» in the Y. C. I. is the direct forerunner to an even stronger attack on the various sections of the C. I., which will initiate a swing from the present ultra-Left course all the way to the Right, just as definitely as the famous «Open Letter to the German Party», directed against Fischer-Maslow in 1924, was a step on the road to the alliance with Chiang Kai-Shek and Purcell.

The slogan of the Y. C. I. Plenum, under the aegis of Stalin's spokesman, was not Fire to the Right, but Fire to the Left. Chitarov, the head of the Y. C. I. has already written a programmatic article in Pravda which declares that the «main fire in the Youth» must be directed «against the Left».

In Czecho-Slovakia, the Political Bureau has adopted a decision which for the first time in more than a year not only mentions the «Left danger» but is directed essentially against it: «It (the C. I.) has condemned all along the line the false standpoint, injurious to the party, of this group (Fried), and has set the party the task of carrying out the inner-party struggle on two fronts: against the Right danger, which remains the main danger on an international scale as well as with us, and against the Left, exaggerated and sectar-

ian tendencies, which are dangerous because they balk and frustrate the struggle against the main Right danger.» This resolution is another harbinger. There is every reason to believe that «Fried groups», that is, scape-goats for Stalin's past policy will be discovered and officially condemned in virtually every party in the C. I.

The Right Wing Approves

The central organ of the German Right wing, *Gegen den Strom*, devotes almost half of its entire issue to the «new change» and hails it as a justification of its whole line, criticizing it only because it is a «half-change» in the direction of the Brandler program. It writes: «We, the expelled «renegades», at all times adopted a standpoint in the questions touched on by Manuilsky which the Executive now suddenly claims for itself.» And, fearful of the disintegrating effects the new change will have in its ranks, it ends with the appeal: «Strengthening of the Opposition! Change from below and not command from above! A complete—and not a half change!»

That the American party will not escape the consequences of the new wind in the C. I. is to state a commonplace. Foster has just returned from across with the «new line» in his inside pocket and God knows that he feels more at home with a course to the Right than he ever did or could while he gave obedient lip-service to the «Left» jag for which—constitutionally—he had no heart at all. The Party press may soon be expected to harp on a new string, to discover—by command—the danger from the Left, whose banner bearers may be found in either Joseph Zack, or Browder, or Amter, or any other convenient victim of the latest change.

New Attitude towards Right Wing

The Party membership, which has been turned in the direction of sharp antagonism to the Lovestone faction, will be turned the other way just as arbitrarily, just as unexplained, just as mechanically and bureaucratically as it was last year when Lovestone was thrown out over night. A line of rapprochement towards the Right wing elements (ostensibly for the winning over of the rank and file) will be instituted. The first signs of this are not lacking, particularly in the needle trades where the Right wing is strong: For the first time since the official anti-Lovestone fight, the party fraction in the millinery workers' union just a few days ago nominated an expelled Lovestoneite for a position in the local—an absolutely inconceivable action two months ago!

That the whole Comintern needs a change from its present ultra-Leftist adventurism (with which Stalin is paying off his opportunist debts) to a Bolshevik line goes without saying. But Centrism cannot conduct such a change without inevitably swinging over to the camp of the Right wing. This is a fact taught every Communist by the experiences of the last six years. Unless the party membership compels a discussion of the basic causes for the present situation and adopts the proper measures for unifying the party on a correct revolutionary line, it will continue to remain bewildered by the renewed zig-zags and befuddled by its apparatus leaders who act only on command from the Stalin faction. Otherwise the newest «new line» will only worsen the chaos and disintegration of the movement.

After this article was written and just before going to press, we have been informed of even more definite steps by the American Stalinists in the direction of «conciliation» with the Lovestone group. At the last meeting of the general party fraction in the needle trades, some comrades objected to the fact that the party fraction nominated a number of expelled Lovestoneites for positions on the Executive Committee of the shop delegates Council of the N. T. W. I. U. Replying to the critics, who took seriously the diatribes of the *Daily Worker* against the «counter-revolutionary Lovestoneites», Rose Wortis and Joseph Burochovitch, leaders of the fraction declared that after the slate for the Council had been made up, Foster, «who has just returned from Moscow» instructed the fraction to put a number of Lovestoneites on the slate, which, therefore, had to be changed at the last minute. Needless to say the new line was not extended to the «Trotskyists» and our comrade Ber- man received 18 votes—practically all the non-party delegates, but not a single vote from the party fraction.

Leadership in the Coming Struggles

By Arne Swaback

That increasing working class struggles will grow out of the present advancing industrial depression is a foregone conclusion. As to their present extent and rapidity of development we might only cast a glance back at the historical tradition of struggles of the American workers, marked by their convulsive but determined expressions. This may be said to be the prospect made possibly so much more acute by the rapid violent development of industrialization, its increasing class distinctions and the sharpness of the class struggle, which today makes up a special part of the internal contradictions of American imperialism.

This was strikingly set forth in Comrade Trotsky's letter to the American Opposition:

"We must not for a minute lose sight of the fact that the might of American capitalism rests more and more upon a foundation of world economy with its contradictions and crises, military and revolutionary. This means that a social crisis in the United States may arrive a good deal sooner than many think and have a feverish development from the beginning. Hence the conclusion: It is necessary to prepare."

The Workers in the Basic Industries

The unskilled and semi-skilled workers in the basic industries compose the great majority of the working class and must naturally be the main basis of new union organization activities. Particularly during times of exceptional conditions, such as industrial crises, when many of the regulations of "normalcy" disappear, can these workers be expected to move readily into action. Their moves will not be hampered by special privileges. While today almost entirely unorganized, yet they are potentially the most revolutionary. But the American Federation of Labor and similar unions, even as now constituted, will not remain immune from changing economic conditions.

It is well to remember the widespread Left wing and progressive influence, particularly in its more elementary aspects, as represented by the movement for amalgamation, a labor party and recognition of the Soviet Union, growing out of the period of industrial depression and great strikes from 1919 to 1922. Many A. F. of L. local unions, and even higher bodies, were swept by that sentiment. The tactics pursued by the Left wing were correct. True, since then many expulsions have occurred. Yes, but is that not a certain form of proof attesting the correctness and effectiveness of the tactics of the Left at the time?

Our objects in endeavoring to arrive at a correct union building program today are mainly twofold: actually to organize the workers for the struggle and to extend Communist influence through the unions to the masses. Hence the conclusion that it is necessary to initiate organization of the unorganized, to give them fighting leadership as well as to build the Left wing movement within the existing unions in opposition to the capitalist policies of the reactionary leadership. These two tasks go hand in hand. This should be the essence of a correct Communist union building program. While this is today half-heartedly acknowledged by the Communist Party—on paper—it is entirely negated by its practice.

Just now can be noted the first effects of the pledges made to the Hoover industrial conferences. The big employers gave "promises" of extended activities and of no wage cuts. The A. F. of L. heads gave promise not to initiate any movements for wage increases, without even attempting to demand such elementary guarantees as: No further lay-offs, no further speedups and support for the unemployed. The employers naturally broke their so-called "pledges", never seriously made, and a few hours later the offensive against the workers began. It will become more intense as capitalism endeavors to overcome its economic difficulties by increased exploitation. As it proceeds, although contented swine can be moved only with a heavy stick, even the A. F. of L. "leaders" will have to answer to a rank and file becoming more critical.

Communist and Conservative Unions

The next important question then arises: Should Communists help to organize unorganized workers into the existing conservative unions? The answer must be, YES: wherever these unions can be made to move. The inevitable pressure from

below in that direction should be intensified and unorganized workers drawn into the unions on the basis of the program of the Left as an additional reservoir for the necessary struggle against the domination and ideology of the labor lieutenants of capitalism. With such activities must be combined the fight for the organizations to be transformed to an industrial basis (amalgamation), which is absolutely indispensable; the fight for ordinary trade union democracy, for divorcing them from the capitalist political parties; for militant methods, etc.

Foster argues in his book "Misleaders of Labor" (published 1927) for the organization of the unorganized into the existing unions, as well as in some cases independently of them. He states in part (page 319) as follows: "... Besides, it must not be overlooked that, with the close of the present era of industrial activity and the precipitation of the inevitable industrial crisis, the trade unions, under capitalist attacks, will despite the reactionary bureaucracy veer sharply to the left, slough off many of their present conservative aspects, and tend to become very much more proletarian fighting organizations. The arguments of Lenin, Losovsky and others in 1920-22 against dual unionism applies today. Under present conditions there is no room for a general dual union movement in the United States, reactionary and decrepit though the existing unions may be."

Here we have the matter stated, although with some exaggerations, fairly correctly. Yet the party leadership, headed by Foster, in its official policy and practice carries on the exact opposite. What has happened since to make this prediction, estimation and conclusion, in its main aspects, incorrect? Have the existing unions disappeared or become worse than stated above? That is impossible. These unions have even made, under pressure, the first slight moves toward organization of the unorganized. True, the working

class has shown unmistakable signs of radicalization; but that was implied in Foster's prediction from which the conclusion was drawn. Still it could not be claimed that in the United States, political, economic or working class developments have reached a point (or seriously approached it) where a mass basis can be secured for a (dual) independent "revolutionary union" movement. The major section of the workers have not even had actual experience in ordinary trade unionism; not to speak of being able to correctly estimate the strike-breaking role of the present trade union "leadership". What then has happened? Oh yes—we have entered the "Third Period" with its blatant drivel about social fascism.

With the Stalin leadership of the Comintern the case stands no better. The thesis of the 10th Plenum shows utter confusion particularly on this important point of conservative mass unions and "revolutionary unions". It is characterized by the complete absence of a definite line.

Problem of the United Front

The third question of importance to consider is that of the united front policy. Unity of organized and unorganized in times of struggle is always essential. Of similar importance is the need of unity of action between employed and unemployed. Carried out correctly the united front becomes an important medium in certain important stages of the class struggle. It can unquestionably become so in the organization of the unorganized and particularly where a situation exists of rival unions—new industrial unions and old conservative unions. The struggle of the textile workers in the South is about the best example. Violent assaults upon both unions as in Gastonia and Marion; the rank and file defending themselves and fighting back, in Gastonia under militant leadership, in Marion under reactionary leadership, from which a sell-out could be expected more readily than a forward move, for such was the record established.

Practical Strike Demands

A fourth question which, because of

recent experiences, requires consideration is the one of correct slogans for organization and demands in strikes, for there can be no doubt that organization of the unorganized will be closely connected with strikes. In the recent Illinois miners strike for instance, led by the N. M. U., most of the demands were entirely too general and even too abstract in character. There was little or no concentration on the simple demands most closely connected with the actual working conditions and corresponding with the most outstanding grievances. Slogans and demands must not overshoot their mark.

Perhaps the best example of such wrong direction can be found in the manifesto of the party at the time of the murder of Ella May Wiggins in Gastonia, calling upon the workers to "Prepare for a strike of protest and sympathy for the heroic fighters in Gastonia who are fighting your battles". The best test of this overshoot aim is the fact that there was no response anywhere. The workers, not even the new industrial unions, were by no means prepared for such a political strike. A far more correct way would be to stress particularly the issues of the workers in industry, the grievances at the job, to lay the proper basis for extension of strike action in order to, on that basis, impart more political content. From such experiences lessons should be learned.

Very closely connected with this also is the necessity of actually giving the new industrial unions a mass basis. Without that they will become impotent sects and will not serve the cause of the general advance of the revolutionary movement.

To conclude from the few points emphasized here that revolutionists may hold out hopes or possibilities that the existing trade unions can be captured, in so far as taking possession of the apparatus is concerned, is, of course, ridiculous. While this may or may not be accomplished in certain instances, it is not the issue. As stated at the outset, the real object is to actually organize the workers for the struggle and to extend Communist influence through the unions to the masses. And these points here emphasized, in harmony with the Communist Opposition platform, certainly go in the direction toward a correct solution of the problem.

The «Third Period» Mistakes of the Comintern - - By L. D. Trotsky

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must not be understood a strike during which the Communists carry on political agitation, but a strike in which the workers of all trades and enterprises conduct a struggle for definite political aims. Revolutionary agitation on the basis of strikes is a task of Communists under all circumstances; but the participation of workers in political, that is, revolutionary strikes, presents by itself one of the sharpest forms of struggle and occurs only under exceptional circumstances, which neither the party nor the trade unions can manufacture artificially according to their desires. To identify economic strikes with political strikes creates chaos which prevents the trade union leaders from correctly approaching economic strikes, from preparing them and working out an expedient program of workers' demands.

Matters stand still worse with the general economic orientation. The philosophy of the "third period" demands at all costs and immediately an economic crisis. Our wise trade unionists, therefore, close their eyes to the systematic improvement of the economic conjuncture in France for the past two years at a time when without a concrete estimation of the conjuncture it is impossible, in turn, to work out correct demands and to struggle for them with success. Claveri and Dorelle would do well if they would think the question through to the end. If the economic rise in France should last for another year (which is not out of the question) then primarily the development and deepening of the economic struggles would soon be on the order of the day. To be able to adapt themselves to such circumstances is a task not only of the trade unions but also of the party. It is insufficient to proclaim the abstract right of Communism to a leading role; it is necessary to conquer this by deeds, and at that not within the narrow frame of the trade union apparatus but on the whole field of the class struggle. To the anarchist and trade unionist formula of autonomy of the trade unions, the party must oppose serious theoretical and political aid to the trade unions, making it easier for them to orientate correctly in questions of economic and political developments, and con-

sequently, the elaboration of correct demands and methods of struggle.

The unavoidable change in the rise produced by a crisis will change the tasks, taking the ground from under the successful economic struggles. It has already been said above that the coming of a crisis would serve in all probability as an impetus to the political activity of the masses. The strength of this impetus depends directly on two factors: on the depth and duration of the previous rise, the sharpness of the crisis that has come. The sharper and deeper the change will turn out to be the sharper will be the action of the masses. The reason for this is not difficult to understand. By the power of inertia, strikes generally acquire the greatest impetus at the moment when the economic rise begins to pass into depression. It is as if in the heat of running, the workers encounter a solid wall. With economic strikes you can then accomplish very little. The capitalists, with the depression under way, easily utilize the lockout. It is natural if the class consciousness of the workers which has risen begins to seek other roads for itself. But which? This already depends not only upon conjunctural conditions but on the whole situation in the country.

To declare in advance that the next conjunctural crisis will create an immediate revolutionary situation in France, for that there is at present no basis. Under the juncture of a series of conditions overflowing the boundaries of conjunctural crisis, this is quite possible. On this count only theoretical suppositions are thus far possible. To put forward today the slogan of a general political strike as an actual one, on the basis that the coming crisis may push the masses on the road of revolutionary struggle, means to attempt to appease the hunger of today with the dinner of tomorrow. When Molotov stated at the Tenth Plenum that the general strike has already practically been put on the order of the day in France, then he only showed once too often that he does not know France nor the order nor the day. The anarchists and syndicalists do not a little to compromise the very idea of a general strike

in France. Official Communism apparently travels the same road, attempting to substitute goat-leaps of adventurism for systematic revolutionary work.

The tide of political activity of the masses, before it assumes a more decisive form, may, for a certain and for that matter a lengthy period, express itself in a greater attendance of meetings, in a wider distribution of Communist literature in the growth of electoral votes, increase in the number of Party members, etc. Can the leadership adopt in advance a purely a priori orientation on a stormy tempo of development at all events? No. It must have its hands united for one and for the other tempo. Only under this condition can the party, not deviating from the revolutionary direction, march in step with the class.

At the expense of the above-developed considerations I can already hear the caring voice of the tin rattle accuse me of "economism" on the one hand and capitalist optimism on the other, and of course of social democratic deviations. For the Molotovs, everything they cannot grasp, that is, a great deal, is related to the domain of social democratic deviations, just as to barbarians, ninety-nine percent of the universe is related to the domain of the activity of bad spirits. Following Molotov, Semard and Monmousseau will teach us that the question is not exhausted with shakings in conjuncture, that there are many other factors, for example, rationalization and the approaching war. These people talk about "many" factors all the more readily when they are incapable to explain a single one of them. Doubtless, we will reply to them, the war would have overthrown the whole perspective and would have opened, so to speak, a new chronology. But in the first place, we do not yet know today when the war will come, nor what gates it will come through. Secondly, in order to enter a war with open eyes, we must carefully study all the curves in the road that leads to it. War does not fall from heaven. The question of war and its date is connected most closely with the question of the processes of the world market.

Prinkipo, December 27, 1929.