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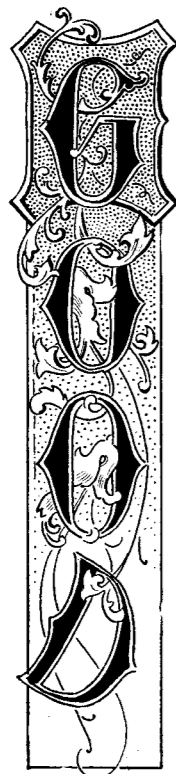


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AUGUST, 1926

No. 10.

The Lessons of the British General Strike

*Theses of the Executive Committee of the
Communist International*

1. THE CRISIS OF BRITISH CAPITALISM.

a. The general position of British national economy in the world economic system and at the same time the general position of Great Britain as an imperialist state may be characterized as that of a steady process of decline. Even before the war the competition of a number of countries, above all Germany and U. S. A., threatened the monopolist position of Great Britain and gradually relegated her to a secondary position. The war and the post-war development greatly intensified this basic tendency, complicating and partly changing its forms. The growth of the U. S. A.; the economic and political strengthening of France and of Japan to a certain extent; the industrialization of the British colonies and dominions, with an increase in their centrifugal tendencies; the National Debt with all the consequences arising therefrom; the limitation of the purchasing capacity of the markets still within the purview of Great Britain; the partial withdrawal of Russia from the former trading system; the growth of the revolutionary movement in the colonial and dependent countries (such as China); finally, the relative technical and organizational backwardness as compared with the U. S. A. and Germany, due to the parasitic manifestations accruing from Great Britain's monopolist position in the world market,—all these factors are summed up in the chronic crisis of British capitalism. Great Britain can no longer be spoken of as the "workshop of the world." Her role as "monopoly ruler of the waves" is steadily disappearing.

b. A most important component part of the general decline of British capitalism is the chronic and increasingly acute crisis in the British mining industry. This branch of industry, which is directly connected with about 8½% of the British population, with a yearly output of £250,000,000 and exports equaling 10% of the entire British exports, was the basis of British economic power. Thus, the decline of the coal industry is a decisive indication of the general decay of British capitalism. The output of coal shows a steady fall (270 million tons in 1909-13, 267 million tons in 1924, and

244 million tons in 1925.) Home consumption from 1909 to 1925 inclusive decreased from 182 million tons to 175 million tons, particularly due to the decreased demands on the part of the metal industry. Exports of British coal have been and are being reduced most of all; in 1903-13 they comprised 88 million tons; in 1924, 82, and in 1925 only 69 million tons (see Report of the Royal Commission on the Coal Industry p. 4.). British coal is being systematically ousted from a number of markets: in Germany, Italy, Poland, Spain, Belgium, in the South African and South American countries, in the East, in the British dominions, etc. This descending curve of the coal industry has both general and specific causes: the competition of other forms of fuel in connection with technical progress (electricity and "white coal," oil, progress in fuel technique); the technical backwardness of the British mining industry and the relative exhaustion of the coal mines, backward organizational forms of mining management; decreased purchasing power of the coal consumers; the competition of other countries including the Dominions, due to the development of their own industry and regrouping of markets.

c. From the point of view of the main perspective of development, the profound crisis in the British coal industry connected with the general crisis of British economy and tremendous chronic unemployment will lead to a radical change in the method of production, i. e., to the basic task of the proletarian revolution. For the radical way out of the blind alley is to destroy the relics of feudalism (absolute rent burdening industry); the abolition of private property which is the only way of obtaining the necessary planned production and definite technical reorganization; real guarantee of peace and collaboration in the field of international relations, including the "colonies," which is inconceivable on a capitalist basis; and finally to get the proletariat itself profoundly interested in the process of production, which is only possible under the victorious dictatorship of the working class. The schemes for emerging from the cul-de-sac put forward by the bourgeois and social reformist ideologists in present conditions



AMERICAN CAPITAL (to his hired man): "You just go right on! When the time comes I'll call in the big fellow there to back you up!"

are partly utopian (for instance, the plans for an international export cartel proposed by Messrs. Mond, Keynes, Brailsford, Hodges & Co.), partly propose pressure on the working class which will inevitably lead sooner or later to the revolt of the proletariat and raise the fundamental question of power in the country. The coal crisis is thus the barometer of the social revolution.

2. THE DECLINE OF GREAT BRITAIN AND THE BRITISH LABOR MOVEMENT.

a. In line with the former long sustained power of Great Britain and her ruling position on the world market, a historically evolved type of labor movement developed. British capitalism of its classic period also begot the classic type of British trade unionism. Its social-economic bases were the surplus profits received by the British bourgeoisie from all corners of the globe and partially transformed into a component element of the British workers' wages. On this basis the proletariat raised its standard of living and its conditions of production. The British proletariat, therefore, became a specially privileged section of the international army of labor, a labor aristocracy, to a certain extent economically bound up with the general interest of their masters. This "bourgeoisified proletariat" (Engels) had the most skilled section of the workers in its midst, a 100% aristocracy which proved to be a purveyor of trained servants of capital, "the labor lieutenants of the capitalist class." This social condition of the British proletariat also created its opportunist social-consciousness: craft outlook, indifference to politics together with the fetish of legality, parliament, king and church; "Fabian Socialism" with admiration for gradualness and disgust for revolutionary violence; finally "Guild" Socialism, and the "constructive" Socialism of Mr. MacDonald which in substance denies the class struggle of the proletariat all along the line. It is on this basis that the open corruption in the upper sections of the labor bureaucracy arose.

b. The commencement of the decline of British capitalism and the accompanying process of decrease in the imperialist surplus profits of the British bourgeoisie produced a radical change in relations between classes and within the working class itself. The increase of class antagonisms led to a sharp decrease in the political importance of traditional British liberalism, which had been the prevailing ideology of the bourgeoisie and had systematically extended bourgeois influence over the proletariat. The strengthening of the Conservatives on the one hand, and the growth of the labor movement on the other; the general leftward trend of the working class, the increased strike struggle (railwaymen's strike in 1911, general strike of miners in 1912, strike wave in 1913, railwaymen's strike in 1919, strike of miners in 1921); the appearance of factory committees, committees of action, the formation of the Communist Party and the birth of the "Minority Movement," the campaign for rapprochement with the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics, the constitution of the Anglo-Russian committee under pressure of the masses, the general strike and the present miners' strike—all these are links in the same chain of development.

c. The process of liberating the British working class from influence of opportunism does not proceed uniformly. The process of revolutionary development within the proletariat is not uniform because of the difference between the tremendous army of unemployed which is becoming a chronic phenomenon in Great Britain and the employed workers; the distinction between skilled and unskilled labor; the distinction between the workers of various trades in connection with the non-uniform development of the crisis; and finally the distinction between the organized mass and the bureaucratic official staffs.

The greatest hindrance to revolutionary ripening is the hierarchy of trade union and Labor Party officials with their leaders, who developed on the basis of former relations. The great majority of these are either conscious allies of the bourgeoisie and conscious enemies of a class labor movement, or else "Left Wingers" ("Centrists") who, thanks to their ambiguous attitude, political cowardice and policy of capitulation inevitably arising therefrom, go over to the side of the enemy at times of crisis. The so-called "leaders of the working class" maneuver against the growth of the revolutionary activity of the masses, both in their tactics and in their ideology. The ideology of "constructive Socialism" as a means of preventative war against Communism, has widespread popularity amongst the higher political and trade union officials, while the development of the mass movement, despite vacillations and zig-zags, brings the masses more and more under the banner of fighting revolutionary Marxism, i. e., Leninism.

3. THE COAL CRISIS AND PREPARATION FOR THE STRIKE.

a. The postponement of the conflict between the miners and the mine owners in July of last year is explained by the fact that the government did not feel sufficiently prepared: the mine owners had not the necessary reserve of coal, the state authorities had not yet mustered all the forces necessary for a final fight. The main strategic policy of the bourgeoisie was determined by the desire to gain time, to reform the ranks and enter the fight with the aim of smashing the main position of the working class and the subsequent carrying out of the "reorganization of the industry" by bringing further pressure to bear on the working class and by increased exploitation. Hence the subsidies to the coal owners and postponement of a decision until May of the present year. The preparations of the bourgeoisie proceeded in various directions; these include: (1) measures of a military and police nature (special district civil commissioners, organization of a special constabulary force, organization of scabs thruout the whole country, getting the army and navy into fighting order; (2) measures for organizing a central governmental "fist," division of labor between the "Diehards" and Baldwin who was to play the role of a mediator and conciliator "above classes"; (3) measures for organizing so-called "public opinion" (the Samuel Commission, reasons for the necessity of lowering wages, the frightening of the petty-bourgeois elements with the "terrible" consequences of "violence" on the part of the miners, the appeal to parliamentary and

constitutional modes of thought on the part of the general public, etc.); (4) measures for organizing spying and treachery among the labor leaders (arrangements with Thomas, MacDonald, & Co.).

b. Whereas the bourgeoisie did everything possible to mobilize its forces and disintegrate the forces of its opponent, the official labor "leaders" did everything possible to facilitate the work of the bourgeoisie and demobilize the forces of the proletariat. The Home Secretary, Joynson Hicks, stated on April 5th, that "the Cabinet was now more anxious than during the war." Meanwhile, the official trade union leaders as far back as August were "convinced" that it was "impossible" to make preparations in time (See article by Brailsford in "New Leader" of May 21, 1926). The main strategic policy of the Right wing leaders of the General Council (Thomas) and of the Labour Party (MacDonald) who were giving the tone to the movement consisted in holding on to the leadership in order to avert an acute development of the class struggle and in order to wreck the strike. Hence: permanent "contact" with the government and the mine owners, i. e., an open plot against the workers, a whole gamut of acts disorganizing the proletariat as a whole, commencing with the demonstrative "threats" to the government and ending with simultaneous opposition both to the miners' strike and to the contemplated general strike. (Compare for instance the estimation of the Report of the Royal Commission given by the Communist Party which stated that the report is "a declaration of war against the whole working class" with the opinion of MacDonald that this report is our "triumph" and Hodges who proposed "accepting" this report; also compare the speech of the Labour Party member, Wedgewood, in reply to Joynson Hicks' injunction about "keeping the Labour Party pure and chaste"; also the continual pressure exercised on the miners with simultaneous promise of "fraternal aid, etc."). The Right leaders thus had their strategy, while the "Left Wingers" were in continual fear, had absolutely no independent position and were thereby doomed to be pulled along by the leading strings of the Right Wingers.

c. The working masses in general understood that the owners and the state were preparing a decisive attack on the working class. The lowering of the miner's standard of living was connected in the consciousness of the masses with the inevitable reduction of the standard of living for the workers of other trades. The masses, some consciously and other spontaneously, were all for extending the struggle. The "Minority Movement" and the Communist Party consciously expressed this process. Already immediately after the appearance of the Coal Commission Report the Communist Party estimated it as a "declaration of war" (see above); on April 9th, at the Miners' Conference it issued the slogan for "mobilizing the whole working class"; on April 23rd, it issued the slogan for a general strike in support of the miners and slogans for supporting them internationally, for the organization of "Committees of Action," etc, developing these slogans still further (Workers' Defence Corps, leaflets to be issued to soldiers, agreement with the cooperatives, closing down of capitalist press, etc.)

and warning the workers as to possible treachery on the part of the heroes of "Black Friday" (Thomas & Co.). In the same manner the National Conference of the "Minority Movement" and the conference of miners belonging to that movement put forward a number of slogans in the direction of preparing a general strike and developing the struggle.

4. THE TREND OF THE GENERAL STRIKE AND ITS FINISH.

a. The trend of the general strike and its liquidation are a tremendous lesson for the entire international proletariat. On April 30th, the mine owners presented the miners with an ultimatum (reduction of wages, extension of hours, agreements according to district and not on a national scale). With the refusal of the miners the lockout commenced. Under pressure of the masses the General Council decided for a strike, postponing its commencement until May 1st. On the First of May the workers demonstrated their mood in tremendous processions. In the interval the Government was taking energetic steps for suppressing the workers. On May 1st, martial law was declared throughout the entire country, troops were sent to Lancashire, Scotland and Wales and all the forces of counter-revolution were mobilized. At the same time Messrs. Thomas, MacDonald and Co. took command in the General Council and the "Left Wingers" pitifully retreated to the background. Thomas & Co. "pleaded" on their knees with the government but in reality were already at one with it in its struggle against the approaching revolutionary crisis. In the words of Lansbury (article of May 22nd) "a fever of anxiety and even of fear" (fear of the masses above all) prevailed in the General Council. Whereas the strategy of the Thomases was to head the strike in order to smash it (see Thomas' statement in Court after the 1921 strike, where as a King's Privy Councillor he spoke of readiness to smash the strike when it might serve the ends of a "revolutionary party"), had its corresponding tactics which all the time were the tactics of smashing the strike which commenced against the will of the Thomases. The fear of events and preparations for liquidating the strike were above all to be seen in the announcement of the "purely economic" nature of the struggle. Under this pretext the "mobilization" proceeded in such a way that the General Council did not decide to publish its own paper, not issuing it until the governmental strikebreakers' paper appeared; under this pretext the "politicians" were instructed not to take any action (which did not prevent them acting in the opposite direction); under this pretext the masses were not summoned to persistent systematic organizational work, or, what is more, to the conquest of the streets, but were called upon to engage in peaceful games of football; under this pretext a struggle was conducted against those revolutionarily inclined workers who entered the struggle without waiting for the orders of the General Council; for instance the General Council even feared bringing into the strike the workers of the vitally necessary branches of industry (electricity, gas, etc.) The leaders of the Labour Party and its parliamentary fraction behaved no less shamefully. As a matter of

fact the strike developed not thanks to the leaders but against their will.

b. Whereas the labor leaders pretended they did not understand the political nature of the strike the government and bourgeoisie saw this clearly and acted accordingly. The "Manchester Guardian" defined the government policy as "a struggle for a victorious finish." To smash the trade union movement, the basic form of the British labor movement, was at the same time put forward as the main task of the day. The "Times" wrote of the necessity of "breaking the dictatorship of the trade unions." The "Daily Telegraph" (May 3rd) characterized the struggle as a fight between the General Council and the "constitutional government of the country." "The memorandum issued on Saturday night," the paper wrote, "announcing the decision of the Executive Committees to call a general strike, is in fact the proclamation of a usurping authority. The fact is that the General Council is a usurping body, and there is no room for usurpers in our constitutional system . . ." In accordance with this the bourgeoisie acted with all the necessary energy. The more the "labor leaders" entreated and raved, the more energetically did the government conduct its policy of a "firm hand" (note, for instance the contemptuous kicks that Baldwin gave Thomas & Co.)

c. The "Left" leaders of the General Council who have the majority on it not only offered absolutely no resistance whatsoever to the conscious betrayal of the Thomas type, but all the time marched under the orders of the Right Wing. As a matter of fact Thomas & Co. led the General Council throughout the whole length of the strike. At the commencement certain "Left" leaders were openly against it. In the middle of the strike they almost entirely departed from the scene putting themselves at the disposition of Thomas' clique; at turning points in the strike they sometimes acted no less shamefully than Thomas (for instance Hicks and the "cursed Russian money"). They absolutely disintegrated the main force of the movement (the miners) exhorting them to surrender. Only the tremendous pressure of the mass movement compelled them to trail at its tail. Thus the "Left Wingers" objectively played a still more criminal role, for they had the majority and bore the direct responsibility for leadership of the strike.

6) The mass movement developed with unprecedented force. All information decisively refutes the talks about any considerable or supposed growing number of strikebreakers. This legend was set going by the trade union "leaders" and afterward "worked up" by Otto Bauer in the Vienna "Arbeiter-Zeitung" and in reality is a shameful slander against the British proletariat, a slander all the more revolting as it served as a screen for real traitors. The evidence of such witnesses as Lansbury, Brailsford and other shows the growing enthusiasm of the masses everywhere, criticism of the leaders from the left, workers coming out in support of the miners even independently of the General Council, the creation of a number of mass organizations, etc. In some places the masses even spontaneously came out

onto the streets and resorted to methods of revolutionary violence so hateful to the reformists (destruction of scab motor-busses, closing down of bourgeois papers, calling upon soldiers not to obey orders, etc.). The organization of Committees of Action from below, the commencement of an ostensible spontaneous seizure of certain socially-important functions in various places (distribution of electric power, food, etc.) urged the development of the strike more and more towards higher forms of the movement.

e. The Second International and Amsterdam actually supported the policy of the Right Wing leaders of the general council, i. e., sabotaged the strike. The Social Democratic press systematically kept silent as to the dimensions of the strike, supported in advance a "compromise issue," raised scares about the difficulties of the strike, emphasized the "merely economic" nature of the strike, talked about the tremendous number of strikebreakers (Oudegeest in "Het Volk" wrote of 50% of the unorganized providing strikebreakers), hurled invective not at the British bourgeoisie, but at the Communists (against their "superfluous efforts"; compare with the "strike gambling" of the Liquidators); "Vorwaerts" conducted a campaign against "Moscow" and demanded a general strike in the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics. The Amsterdam International turned down the united front with the Red International of Labor Unions sabotaged its own meetings devoted to the British strike. The Transport Workers' International rejected the proposal of Fimmen "not to export coal through Rotterdam," the German trade unions helped so long as it was not disadvantageous to the German bourgeoisie, etc. Only under pressure of the masses did the Second and Amsterdam Internationals decide on certain minimum steps by way of aiding the strikers. From the viewpoint of the development of the movement the policy of these organizations was a policy of sabotage.

f. The strike was liquidated because it was growing, for its leaders feared this very growth more than anything else. Brailsford wrote that "the pressure (of the masses) was so strong, that it was not a question of the difficulty of mobilizing them but of the difficulty of holding them back from the strike." The strike could only survive and win by developing further, i. e., with a further sharpening of the class struggle. The decisive turning point was already clear when the "leaders" refused to accept monetary aid from the Soviet unions with whom they had jointly formed the Anglo-Russian Committee, giving as a motive of their refusal the fact they would be badly understood and the acceptance wrongly interpreted. Subsequently covering up this refusal by a refusal of foreign aid in general, they thereby isolated the British workers from the international proletariat. And no sooner did rumors circulate as to new attacks from the government being prepared (arrest of general council, calling up of the reserves, law against the trade unions, confiscation of trade union funds), the "leaders," utilizing the second appearance of Mr. Samuel, betrayed the strike. With the exception of the miners and certain sections of the labor movement, the working masses, who had already entered on the revolutionary path, did not expect such

treachery and returned to work at the call of the general council, which they still trusted. This trust turned into a wave of indignation. The most shameful, insulting agreements of the railwaymen and others were concluded under the direct "guidance" of Thomas & Co. The treacherous role of Thomas and others, is officially documented in the British bourgeois press. For instance, the most serious bourgeois journal, the "Economist" (May 15, 1926) writes: "The strike failed because most of its organizers did not want it and did not believe that it could succeed. The chairman of the general council is a man of peace . . ." The former Stinnes organ "Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung" described the railwaymen's agreement as the "most astonishing capitulation of the trade unions conceivable after such a strike." The tactics of the government and bourgeoisie were tactics of a determined and calculated offensive. The tactics of the trade union "leaders" were tactics of treachery and capitulation. The refusal to turn the strike into political channels really amounted to a blow at the internal mobilization of forces. The refusal of international aid was a blow against the mobilization of the external forces of the proletariat. The order for liquidation of the strike put the finishing touch to the business. The working class demobilized by its leaders, lost the first great fight in its history.

5. THE MINERS' STRIKE AND SUBSEQUENT PERSPECTIVES.

a. The present situation (end of May, 1926) is characterized by a relative strengthening of the position of the bourgeoisie, a temporary disintegration within a considerable section of the working class, and the rallying of the revolutionary forces of the working class around the miners' strike with a simultaneous move of the bourgeoisie to further offensive. The bourgeois press is conducting an unprecedentedly rabid campaign against the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics. Together with some of the trade union leaders it is conducting the same hue and cry against the miners. The mine owners are making attempts to conclude agreements with the miners in separate districts. A bill is being introduced into the House of Commons for changing the law on trade unions and the limitation of their rights is in preparation. The employers are endeavoring to utilize the defeat to tighten the screw still more. Under such conditions the miners' strike, its progress and its outcome have decisive significance for the entire coming period in the development of the British (and not only of the British) labor movement. First, the possibility of a victory of the miners of a subsequent growth of the movement on a new basis, of new sections of the working class joining in the strike is by no means excluded. On the other hand, the possibility of a defeat or compromise must also be taken into consideration, which would be followed by a frontal attack of the united forces of the government, bourgeoisie and the Right "labor" leaders against the proletariat with all the consequences arising therefrom: A policy of isolation, pushing out and exclusion of Communists and supporters of the "Minority Movement" from the trade unions, a decisive swing round of certain groups of trade union

leaders towards the American Federation of Labor and Amsterdam, a rupture with the trade unions of the U. S. S. R., etc., etc.

b. Therefore at the present time all efforts of the real friends of the British workers should be directed towards energetic support of the miners. The tactics of the Communist Party, the Minority Movement, the Red International of Labor Unions, etc. should be based upon the most courageous and determined support of the miners both in Great Britain itself and on an international scale. Double attention should be paid to the work of jointly collecting funds in aid of the miners, boycotting coal cargoes, the extension of sympathetic strikes, etc. The widest possible mobilization of the proletarian masses must be organized around the miners' strike. The Communists (with the exception of the unemployed) of all countries are in duty bound to make regular contributions in aid of the miners. Without this most energetic intervention and without this aid the miners' strike may be lost, this will mean a great blow for the entire revolutionary-proletarian movement. All sections of the Comintern are obliged to take a number of most extraordinary measures in order to ensure the carrying out of this lead.

c. In the present condition of struggle, the most determined resistance must be offered in all cases and in all circumstances to all attempts of the Right Wingers to push supporters of the Minority Movement and Communists out of the positions they occupy in the trade union movement. On the other hand, the tendency which has already become fairly sharply manifest amongst the British working class—the tendency to leave the trade unions—should be recognized as one of extreme danger. (See "Workers' Weekly," May 21, article by A. MacManus against leaving the unions). While the rage of the most advanced workers can be very well understood, and while we can quite understand their just indignation at the treachery and scabbing of the official trade union leaders, on the other hand from the point of view of political expediency, there should be the most determined condemnation of tactics of leaving the unions, no matter in which alluring and quasi-revolutionary phrases about "new organizations," etc., they be arrayed. (See Lenin: "Infantile Sickness of Left Wing Communism.") The experience of the world labor movement, in particular the experience of the German movement during the last few years, has shown with surprising clearness that the tactics of "self-exclusion" objectively supports the plans drawn up by the Right Wing leaders with the full approval of the bourgeoisie. These tactics lead to the loss of connection with the masses, isolation of the revolutionary elements of the movement and renders a solution of the fundamental problem—the problem of winning the masses—impossible. In the event of the victorious development of the strike, the tactics of leaving the unions would greatly retard the process of conquering the trade unions; in the event of victorious reaction, they would lead to the isolation of the best sections of the working class.

d. The main result of the general strike and the complex of phenomena connected therewith will be a process of accelerating the differentiation within the

working class. Whereas it is extremely probable, even inevitable, that there will be a definite Rightward process on the part of the upper groups of leaders (both in the trade unions and in the Labor Party), on the other hand equally inevitable is the process of further revolutionizing of the masses. The economic basis of reformism in Great Britain has disappeared for ever. The shedding of parliamentary and constitutional illusions, the disclosure of the state as a class force, the inevitable disappointment in the old reformist leaders and reformist methods, the ever clearer presentation of the question of power, these factors are bound to lead to a growth of class consciousness of the workers. On the background of the fatal decline of the capitalist system in Great Britain, this in turn will lead to subsequent inevitable revolutionary struggles. Therefore the immediate task of the Communist Party of Great Britain is the energetic continuation of the policy of rallying forces and the policy of the united front preparing the working class for resistance to the inevitable capitalist offensive and the transforming this resistance into a wide revolutionary offensive movement of the proletariat.

6. THE LESSONS OF THE STRIKE.

a. The great British strike completely confirmed the Comintern estimation of the general world situation as a period of relative and temporary stabilization of capitalism, as opposed to the social democratic appreciation. The latter affirms that capitalism has already rid itself of the consequences of the war period, has secured new organizational forms for its international relations (League of Nations, etc.), while within various countries it has entered a phase of stable civil peace. Just as the colonial wars, the national revolution in China, the collapse of the Locarno Agreement, etc., display the whole precedented baseness of socialist "pacifism," the civil war in Poland and the strike of millions of British workers, reveal the pitiful reformist Utopianism of social democracy on questions of the class struggle. These events very sharply emphasize the entirely relative nature of stabilization. The contradictions of capitalism have become unmasked (and therein lies the specific peculiarity of the present moment), but the sharpening of the crisis has not yet led to a European revolutionary situation and even in Great Britain there is not yet a revolutionary situation in the narrow sense of the word. However, with a favorable trend of events, such a situation might arise. This would ensue in the event of the defeat of the British workers through the development of the miners' strike, or any other cause, being followed by a phase of new powerful revolutionary elan.

b. The strike of British workers has once more raised with tremendous force the question of general strike as a method of struggle. The history of the labor movement has not yet known a strike of the proletariat conducted in an industrial country in such dimensions and with such volume (The "Economist" of May 15 considers that about 5 million workers were drawn into the strike movement). The experience of the British strike has shown, despite all assertions of the bourgeoisie and

renegades of the labor movement, that a strike is possible, that it can win, if it be developed. The main contradiction of this strike arising from its reformist leadership is the fact that the strike having brought out millions of workers and brought them in collision with the entire concerted apparatus of state power, i. e., being in the essential, a political strike, was conducted as a "purely economic" strike. This led it into a blind alley, the issue of which should have been to turn the strike into political channels, i. e., to transfer the struggle onto the highest phase of its development. The reformist leaders not only did not steer a course for revolution, but, terrified by the revolutionary perspective, they did not even utilize the strength of the masses to bring pressure to bear on the government and bourgeoisie in order to gain concessions of an economic order. They capitulated absolutely unconditionally, completely delivering up, not only the miners, not only the workers of the rest of the branches of industry which took part in the strike, but the entire working class. The reformist leaders capitulated because they could not emerge from the confines of their reformism, because they dared not and could not consciously continue the main tendency of the strike: the change of economics into politics. The liquidation of the strike is not bankruptcy of the strike as a method of struggle; it is the bankruptcy of its reformist leadership.

c. In this bankruptcy is revealed the bankruptcy of both wings of opportunism: both of Right Wing opportunism, brazen, openly-treacherous, consciously serving the demands of the bourgeoisie, and of the hidden capitulative opportunism (Purcell) who, thanks to his petty bourgeois political lack of character and cowardice, showed himself to be with the Right flank of opportunism at the moment of crisis. Therefore the position of the Communist Party of Great Britain adopted in its manifesto is absolutely correct. This manifesto states that "most of the so-called Left Wing have been no better than the Right. By a policy of timid silence, by using the false pretext of loyalty to colleagues to cover up breaches of loyalty to workers, they have left a free hand to the Right Wing and thus helped to play the employers' game". (Manifesto of Central Committee of Communist Party of Great Britain). A necessary prerequisite for further success of the labor movement is a ruthless criticism and ruthless denunciation, not only of the Right traitors, but also of the "Left" capitulators of the general council. Without smashing opportunism in the labor movement it is impossible to smash the capitalist regime.

d. One of the most important lessons of the general strike in England consists in the conclusions on the question of the role of the trade unions in this country. The original feature of the situation does not merely consist in the fact that the overwhelming majority of the population is comprised of industrial workers, but also in the fact that the Labor Party is entirely based on the trade unions, the process of the masses towards the Left has its direct reflection above all in the trade unions, and also the fact that the Communist Party is still young and numerically weak. The experience of the strike has clearly shown that the role of the

trade unions in it was tremendous; the Committees of Action organized by the trade unions actually developed into district Soviets. The departments organized by the general council already resembled in their structure and functions the departments of the Petersburg Soviet in the period of the so-called "dual power." The slogan first issued by the Communist Party—"all power to the General Council" in the given situation, together with the slogan "Down with the Baldwin Government, defender of the owners' interests" was quite correct and acquired most important political significance. With the victorious development of the strike it would indeed be the general council that would find itself in the role of a commander in chief and leading force. Comrade Lenin more than once said that the revolution in England might take different forms just because the trade unions are the main organizational basis of the British labor movement. Therefore a tendency to leave the trade unions and their organs instead of conquering them is specially harmful. Such a policy objectively would only profit the opportunists of the Amsterdam International and American Federation of Labor, giving the reformists a monopoly and thus isolating the Communist Party from the masses.

e. The general strike in Great Britain has emphasized with particular force the correctness of the course steered by the Comintern and Red International of Labor Unions for unity of the trade union movement and the formation of a united fighting international of trade unions. It is only the split nature of the world trade union movement and the hopeless opportunism of the Amsterdam leaders that can explain the inadequate aid rendered to the British proletariat during the strike. The struggle against national narrowness and opportunism is brought to the forefront. The attitude of the Second and Amsterdam "Internationals" to the strike should serve as a starting point for a long and energetic campaign for the formation of a trade union international and industrial internationals such as could organize real joint parallel activities of the workers of all countries for rendering real aid to a struggling section.

f. In this connection the exit of the Soviet trade unions from the Anglo-Russian Committee should be considered absolutely inexpedient. The workers of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics sent their representatives to the Anglo-Russian Committee, not by any means because they hoped by negotiations with the higher opportunist leaders to substitute the task of revolutionary transformation of capitalist countries. Whoever has nourished such illusions has had to suffer cruel disappointment. But the trade unions of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics which have not had such illusions for a single moment entered the Anglo-Russian Committee for the sake of connections with the masses under whose pressure the trade union leaders turn to the Left. They entered the Anglo-Russian Committee in order to strengthen the fraternal connection between the working class of Great Britain and the working class of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics, in order to map out a path to restore the unity of the interna-

tional trade union movement, just as in the most critical and counter-revolutionary periods of the Russian revolution (for instance July, 1917) the Bolsheviks by no means left the Soviets and their organs, did not even leave them when the Soviets disarmed the workers. The Bolsheviks ruthlessly exposed the Soviet leaders, but had the courage and patience to work systematically for the conquest of the Soviets, not by leaving them, for this would have shut them off from the section of the masses which "erred in good faith," which still followed the Socialist Revolution and Menshevik leaders of the Soviets. The trade union leaders of Great Britain agreed to enter the Anglo-Russian Committee under the pressure of the masses. If now—and this is not only possible but very probable—they turn round to the Right and, once more bringing about a rapprochement with Amsterdam, they themselves will endeavor to break up the Anglo-Russian Committee or to take it by siege, this will be a new self-denunciation, it will bring them up against that section of the masses which still follows them. Particularly now, when the British government, entering the attack against the workers is inspiring a campaign of abuse against the proletarian republic for the aid rendered by the trade unions of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics to the British miners, abuse which by its dimensions recalls the time of the Curzon ultimatum; when on the other hand the British government is striving with all its strength to isolate the workers of Great Britain from the workers of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics—the break-up of the Anglo-Russian Committee on the part of the leaders of British trade unions would be a demonstration against the workers which would considerably push forward the process of revolutionizing the British working masses. Under such conditions the initiative for exit on the part of the trade unions of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics despite the fact that the general council refused to accept the money of the Soviet workers, would mean a blow to the cause of international unity and to the Anglo-Russian Committee, would be a very "heroic" gesture, but politically childish and inexpedient.

g. The experience of the international struggle for trade union unity which was the basic and direct object of organizing the Anglo-Russian Committee shows that this step was absolutely correct. The accusations that the trade unions of Union of Socialist Soviet Republics took the initiative in this act out of national-state considerations have been smashed into pieces by actual facts and frequently decisively condemned by the Comintern. The return once more to these accusations hashed up by the petty bourgeois "revolutionaries" particularly in Germany, reflects the general attack upon the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics and the Communist Party of Soviet Union waged by the bourgeoisie. The trade unions of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics entered the Anglo-Russian Committee not in any way tying themselves in the field of criticism, just in the same way as the Communists of Great Britain, working in the trade unions or putting forward the slogans for entering the Labor Party, do not for one moment bind themselves in the field of criticism and denunciation of the reformists. A consistent pursual of the tactics

of leaving the Anglo-Russian Committee would lead to the withdrawal of the slogan for the entry of Communists in the Labor Party and to the tactics of leaving the trade unions. The task of the Leninists is not exit from the Anglo-Russian Committee but a struggle to change its composition as well as a struggle to change the composition of all leading organs of the general council and local trade union bodies.

h. The general strike, as a method of struggle, will play a proportionally greater role in England than in any other country. This is explained not only by the fact that for the entire economy with its sharply expressed industrial nature, the stoppage of work in industry and transport has a decisive significance, but also by the fact that Great Britain has a much smaller army. The main fighting force of Great Britain is the navy. The main composition of the population is proletarian; the peasantry constitutes absolutely insignificant dimensions as compared with the proletariat. All these circumstances make the method of the general strike of decisive importance. The general strike is not here an adequate condition for victory (it must be combined with still higher methods for the class struggle), but it is an essential pre-requisite of victory, a pre-requisite of extremely great importance especially in Great Britain.

i. The experience of the British strike has also given great prominence to the question of international aid on the part of the workers of the other countries. Real aid on the part of the trade unions of the proletarian republics has played and is playing an important role in the development of international solidarity. The workers of all countries can clearly see that the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics is in the foremost ranks of those who are giving active help to the struggling working class of Great Britain. Just as the attitude of the Communist Party of Soviet Union and the Russian trade unions in 1923 on the eve of the German events, so the present attitude of the revolutionary proletarian organizations of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics and its proletarian masses exposes the utter futility of the ridiculous talk about the "degeneration," the "kulakization", etc. of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks), talk indulged in by the open enemies of proletarian dictatorship and also by such "ultra-Left" elements as Korsch and others. The enormous importance of international aid must be specially emphasized. It is essential to point out that the Communist Parties of other countries have not exhausted by far all the possibilities for giving aid. The lesson taught by the actions in connection with the British strike is that mobilization on a much larger scale than before of all the forces and means is essential.

j. The experience of the general strike divulges to the British working class and also to the working class of other countries the meaning, the role and the class character of reformism, as well as of the state power. The traditional attitude to the democratic state, as a power above classes, will inevitably undergo a radical revision on the part of the masses in spite of all the

*Kulak is a rich peasant.

clever maneuvers of Mr. Baldwin, the Prince of Wales, etc. The British bourgeoisie, more than the bourgeoisie of any other country, maintained its power by bribing the masses (excess profits!) and receiving them ("glorious traditions of the British Constitution"). The possibility to bribe no longer exists. The power of deception however, is still great. The masses have no longer a blind belief in the reformist leaders, as was formerly the case, but they have not quite lost faith in them. Once all the lessons of the strike have been digested, reformist illusions will collapse. Exposure of these specifically British "constitutional illusions" must be one of our foremost tasks of the present day.

k. To win the masses remains the main task of the Communists. The mood of the masses in connection with the treachery of the general council points to differences within the working class. In spite of the decisions of the general council the strikers represent the most developed section of the British proletariat. They have already partly emancipated themselves and are, through the experience of the struggle, emancipating themselves more and more from the influence of the reformist leaders. The number of voluntary strike-breakers and of those bought by the bourgeoisie is miserably small. Very considerable numbers of workers returned to work at the bidding of the general council, but their composition is certainly far from uniform: All the information received goes to show that many of those who resumed work did it against their will and good judgment and are painfully digesting the experience of the strike from the point of view of its general issue as well as from the point of view of its leadership. As all the actions were under the leadership of the trade unions, the Minority Movement was bound to assume considerable importance. But it should be borne in mind that a considerable number of proletarians "are genuinely misled" which particularly applies to the workers behind the so-called "Left Wing" (Purcell & Co.). Relentless criticism of the leaders should by no means be accompanied by a closing of the ranks of the "Minority Movement." On the contrary, those who form part of the "Minority Movement" and also all Communists must now more than ever penetrate right into the thick of the masses in order to reap a rich harvest of followers through a careful examination of the strike and its lessons.

l. The Minority Movement, which during the preparations for the general strike, during the strike itself and after its liquidation, worked hand in hand with the Communist Party of Great Britain, has proved itself to be a truly revolutionary force. Already a long time before the strike, the Minority Movement demanded the mobilization of all the forces for the pending May Day conflict. It issued the slogan: "Summoning of a special Trade Union Congress of Action to ensure full national support for the miners to achieve a victory over the mine owners" and proceeded to form committees of action in all localities. It brought pressure to bear on the general council, with respect to the miners' question, carrying on the struggle under the slogan: "Mobilize all forces behind the miners". Right at the beginning of the strike the Minority Movement warned against the danger of

limiting the strike by purely defensive slogans. "In order to be victorious"—wrote the executive of the Minority Movement—"it is essential to take up the offensive and to deal the capitalists a severe blow." When the strike was at its height, the Minority Movement endeavored to give the movement a political course, it organized committees of action, anti-strike-breaking corps and workers' defense corps, it warned the masses against negotiations by the leaders behind the scenes, declaring them to be fraught with the danger of betrayal, it issued the slogan of most control over negotiations, it vigorously opposed the capitulation of the general council and called upon the workers not to forego the miners, to refuse to have anything to do with the shameful bargain, to refuse to resume work. The Minority Movement issued at that moment a slogan which gained great popularity among the masses: "Summoning of an emergency conference of strike committees and councils of action," in order to compel the leaders to continue the struggle. By its determined tactics the Minority Movement brought over to its side that section of workers who formerly followed the so-called "Left" leaders.

m. The Communist Party of Great Britain has, on the whole, stood the test of political ripeness. The attempts to include the Communist Party of Great Britain in the arsenal of "brakes on the revolution" do not bear criticism. The executive committee of the Communist International was quite right when it unanimously approved the position of the Communist Party of Great Britain. The latter foretold the struggle and prepared for it. From the very beginning it drove the masses towards the general strike, it issued the demand "all power to the general council," pointing out the danger of isolating the miners. It demanded that the defensive should give place to the offensive, at the very start it issued the slogan of the overthrow of "the Baldwin government which is defending the capitalists," the slogan of the "Workers' Government" and the slogans on power in the various localities being transferred to the Committees of Action (see for instance the Liverpool "Workers' Gazette"). The Communist Party was quite right in its estimation of the liquidation of the strike as a "terrible crime," it led a vigorous attack on the "Left," urged the continuation of the strike in spite of the order of the general council, etc. Perfectly correct also were such slogans as nationalization of the mines without compensation, full pay for the duration of the strike, suppression of the capitalist press, organization of workers' defense corps, etc. Under the existing circumstances the Communist Party of Great Britain must continue to support the miners, must expose the treachery of the leaders, must help the Minority Movement in every possible way and must do its utmost to transform the party into a mass party of the Communist Workers of Great Britain, consolidating its position in the trade unions, in all their lower units, and recruiting more and more followers. The Communist Party was the only consistently revolutionary force following a correct course. The treachery of the leaders and the enormous re-valuation of values on the part of the mass of the workers create a basis for the development of a mass Communist Party in Great Britain.

n. The general strike brought the British proletariat face to face with the problem of power. It placed the proletariat before the necessity to set revolutionary methods against the capitalist methods, providing a way out of the capitalist chaos. Capitalism is endeavoring to save its life by condemning millions of people to war and unemployment and is systematically lowering the standard of life of the working class. The British Communist Party must give prominence to its revolutionary program. It must show to the British workers that the victory of the working class is the only way out of the present blind alley. It must show that at the time of its struggle for power and after its seizure of power, the British proletariat will have a solid rear—the continental proletariat, that the Soviet Union would throw open its enormous markets to British Socialist industry, that the British proletariat would find allies and collaborators for the economic regeneration of Great Britain on a Socialist basis, such allies being countries at present struggling desperately against British imperialism.

7. OUR IMMEDIATE TASKS.

A. The Immediate Tasks of the British Communist Party.

1. The most energetic support for the miners on strike.
2. Organization of anti-strike breaking corps and workers' defense corps.
3. Support for the slogan "nationalization of mines without compensation and workers' control over them."
4. Campaign for the election of new trade union organs, including the general council. **Workers' control over the leaders.**
5. Exposure of Right trade union leaders and Labor Party leaders as avowed traitors.
6. Exposure of the Left as people who capitulated in spite of their majority, and who carried on a Right policy, being thereby mainly responsible for the defeat.
7. Struggle against any attempt to condone and obscure the role of the so-called Left in this strike, and severe criticism of their attempts at self-justification.
8. Exposures of the treacherous role of the parliamentary fraction of the Labor Party in this strike.
9. Promotion of new trade union leaders from the ranks. Struggle under the slogan "make way for the new leaders."
10. Propagation of the idea of the general strike as a method of struggle.
11. Struggle against separation of economics and politics.
12. Struggle for the industrial type of federations, abolition of the relics of the craft spirit in the trade unions.
13. Increased attention to committees of action and factory and workshop committees.
14. Drawing unorganized workers into trade unions and carrying on ideological propaganda among them.
15. Work among unemployed, drawing the unemployed into active struggle, organizing them, etc.
16. Struggle against dismissals because of participation in the May strike.

17. Struggle that the decision about expulsion of Communists from the Labor Party be rescinded.

18. Consolidation and extension of the Minority Movement and concentration of all the forces on the capture of the most important branches of industry (mining, railway and sea transport, electricity, etc.).

19. It is essential to pay special attention to the preparations for the next Trade Union Congress. This campaign should be conducted under the slogan: "Down with traitors and capitulators, elect to the congress those who favored the continuation of the struggle."

20. Establishment of a Communist daily and also of wall newspapers, publication of leaflets, etc. Struggle against the bourgeois press and campaign in support of the revolutionary press.

21. In view of the growing sympathy for the revolutionary tactics of the Communist Party, organization of recruiting of new members, especially in the industrial districts and in the most important branches of industry.

22. Struggle for amnesty for all those sentenced for participation in or support of the strike.

23. Propaganda of the slogan in regard to power—down with Baldwin, defender of the capitalists, long live the real workers' government.

A. The Tasks of the Comintern and Its Sections.

1. Determined and unconditional support of the British miners' strike under the slogan: "The miners' cause is our cause."

2. Study and explanation to the masses of the trend, issue and causes of the defeat of the general strike in Great Britain.

3. Explanation to the masses of the role of the Amsterdam International, the Miners' International and the international Social Democracy who practically undermined and sabotaged the strike.

4. Exposure of the treacherous role of the Right and so-called "Left" leaders of the general council and the Labor Party.

5. More intensive struggle for the unity of the national and international trade union movement and for the workers' united front.

6. Struggle against the disruption and desertion of the trade unions. Struggle for the organization of the unorganized.

7. Special attention to the preparation of the masses for the impending social conflicts and to the establishment of autonomous organizations (committees of action, strike committees, factory and workshop committees, etc.) in the course of the strike.

8. Intensification of Communist activity in the trade unions. Formation of revolutionary minorities and consolidation of the Profintern and all organizations affiliated to it.

9. Special attention should be paid to support for the British Minority Movement on the part of the Comintern, the Profintern and all Communist Parties.

THE characteristic feature of the present world situation is the position of the three main component parts of the world economy: the position in the U. S. A.—still a progressive stronghold of the capitalist order, the position in the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics—for the time being the main foundation of the growing forces of the international proletariat, and the position in the countries of the old capitalism, the classical representative of which is the imperialist and colonial British Empire with the whole complex of its dominions and dependencies, from London to Peking and Calcutta.

The most characteristic feature of the present moment is: the classical state of old capitalism par excellence is becoming disrupted from two directions: from the East (China) and from the direction of the proletariat of the mother country (the strike). The national-revolutionary actions in China and the action of the British proletariat emphasized still more the utter relativity of capitalist stabilization. And this is something new which is paramount importance for the correct appraisal of the international situation. But to appreciate this situation on the strength of a definite historical period, one must take into consideration that in China and also in Great Britain we have to reckon with the fact of a temporary defeat of the revolutionary forces. A definite revolutionary situation does not yet exist. Therefore, the declaration of the Communist International with respect to two possible perspectives for the near future remains in the main correct. British events have lent emphasis to the perspective of a revolutionary elan. Communist Parties must do their utmost in the struggle for the realization of this actual perspective, and it is from this world point of view that the Communist International has to perform its duty towards the struggling British proletarians. Unified front tactics, the capture of the masses—as the main task—remain as before the foundation of the tactics of the Communist International. Vacillations within it are inevitable. Inevitable and essential is also the struggle against the Right as well as against the Left—the struggle for a correct Leninist policy. But the formula about the struggle against the Right and the Left (this Leninist formula was on the strength of historical reasons and in connection with specific conditions in Germany substituted by the formula of struggle against the Right and ultra-Left) must not be applied eclectically and not from the viewpoint of all round justice, it must be concretely deciphered and the main blow must be directed towards the place where this or that peril is particularly great. Only such a method—Lenin's method—guarantees unity of the revolutionary will. It has stood the test of practical experience and is continually tested by the consolidation of proletarian dictatorship in the Soviet country where the proletariat has given one more proof of its internationalism, a country which in spite of all the attacks of the international bourgeoisie, the reformists and the infuriated petty-bourgeois "revolutionaries," remains in the stronghold of the international proletarian revolution and of the vanguard of the Communist International.

American Imperialism's Black Mass

By William F. Dunne

CHICAGO is the second largest city in the United States.

In and around Chicago, into which run every important railway in America, making it the greatest rail-transportation center in the world, are steel mills, meat packing plants, finished metal factories of all kinds, the Pullman car works; down Lake Michigan, thru the rivers and canals which make of Chicago a checker-board, come the steamers loaded with iron and lumber for the hungry factories and mills; to the south are the great bituminous coal mines.

All these huge industrial plants are filled with workers of foreign birth and extraction—Poles, Italians, South Slavs, Hungarians, Lithuanians, Germans, Bohemians, Irish.

For the most part they come from peasant stock and the Catholic religion is the traditional religion of their fathers and forefathers. Here was to be found in the greatest quantities in America the human material for the tremendous political demonstration which delights the Vatican and its legates and which the Eucharistic Congress was.

To try to minimize the gigantic character of the Eucharist would be foolish and futile. To its sponsors must be given credit for organizational and political ability which puts far in the shade the obscene posturings and gibberings of the Ku Klux Klan. America is not a Catholic but Protestant country, yet the most powerful and influential capitalist papers such as the New York Times, the Chicago Tribune, the Chicago Daily News grovelled and kowtowed to the papal delegates.

As for the Hearst press, it laid down on its collective belly and wriggled in a masochistic ecstasy.

Not even during the period of American participation in the World War, when patriotic fervor was at its height and the possession of an army uniform a sure entree to the pictorial sections of the capitalist press, were such strenuous efforts made to give the readers elaborate illustrations. Cardinals, archbishops, bishops, papal nuncios, priests, arrayed in all the glory of a religious institution which understands the tremendous emotional appeal of regal vestments, passed in review—not by ones and twos, or in single and double column array, but by tens and scores, in single and double pages.

The minutest detail of the pagan-feudal ceremonials of the Catholic church was featured. A prominent politician kissing the ring of Cardinal Mundelein was good for a half-page. The ritual of the various ceremonies was published both in Latin and in English. Special articles by the papal publicists, explaining the history and symbolism of the ceremonies were featured.

The capitalist press of Chicago was turned over to the Catholic church. No such widespread and well-organized propaganda has been displayed in this country since the great Wilsonian uplift.

And like the entry of America into the war the Eucharist Congress was used to plunge it further into reaction.

For the Catholic church is reaction personified. In the countries, and those sections of countries, which it controls, peasant Poland, peasant Bavaria, peasant Spain and Italy, peasant Ireland, peasant France, it builds on abysmal ignorance and maintains its supremacy by maintaining ignorance.

It is inevitable that in every agricultural country where a movement of the masses against feudal-capitalist oppression occurs it encounters the uncompromising opposition of the Catholic church and, if it is successful, has to smash the church control of the schools and government while smashing the allies of the church.

It is no accidental occurrence, therefore, that in Italy, Spain, and Mexico, where the Catholic church has retained political power even in recent times that the mass movements take on a definite anti-church character.

Even in Ireland the Vatican came to the rescue of British imperialism and denounced and excommunicated the most militant groups of the republican movement.

The fall of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, the general collapse of monarchy in Europe since the world war, the rising tide of workers' and peasants' revolutions, the establishment of more or less "democratic" republics, has been a terrible blow to the power and prestige of catholicism.

The rise of the left bloc in France and the abolition of the concordat which the church believed was a prelude to the re-establishment of its power was another blow. Its position in Italy, somewhat improved under Mussolini, does not compensate it for the loss of its political base in central Europe. Spain remains the only government which recognizes the sovereignty of the Vatican.

The Vatican had high hopes of building a new Catholic bloc, but the warring nationalisms in Europe and the upward surge of the masses has made this reactionary task extremely difficult.

The present pope, formerly Cardinal Ratti, is a "French" pope—that is, he came to power on the program of support of French ambitions in eastern and central Europe. He was instrumental in organizing the Poles against Soviet Russia and for a united front with French imperialism.

Poland, Austria, Hungary and Bavaria—this was to be the new Catholic center. But in supporting the German royal family against the German masses in the expropriation issue the Vatican has given expression to its enmity for the interests of the workers and peasants and even in Catholic Bavaria there has been much criticism of and some open opposition to this policy. Poland and Lithuania are prevented from uniting under the Vatican by their quarrel over Vilna. Simi-

lar nationalist rivalries are rife in Austria, Czecho-Slovakia and Hungary.

The Vatican needs support from other quarters.

Where can it get it except from the most powerful imperialist nation in the world, having an estimated population of 18,000,000 Catholics, and which is extending its hegemony over all Europe, outside of Soviet Russia, at a rapid rate?

Like the kings whose thrones are trembling and the still more luckless royalties whose thrones have been kicked from under them, the Vatican comes to America and, like the kings and princes, it receives a warm welcome and unlimited publicity—publicity which is of far more value in Europe than it is here.

It is not to be sniffed at, this thunderous acclaim accorded the princes of the church in Chicago and elsewhere. The homage and adoration of the foreign-born in the United States, when properly transmitted and interpreted, is of immense value to the Vatican in the districts where millions of peasants are beginning to doubt the wisdom of its doctrine of submissiveness to the landowners on earth and "pie in the sky" afterwards.

Secretary of Labor James J. Davis, representing President Coolidge, addressed the Eucharist Congress. Perhaps the high pitch of enthusiasm for the entire congress was reached when, obviously referring to Mexico, he said that the United States would tolerate no interference with religious liberty. The Chicago Tribune, in reporting this gladsome spectacle, remarked that the assembled prelates "exchanged joyful smiles."

This incident, when related in the clerical journals of Europe, will do much to strengthen the Vatican.

Just as in Europe, the Vatican has fallen on evil days in Mexico. Once the largest single landholder in Mexico, the revolution has stripped it of its landed property. Recognized as the strongest supporter of reaction, the Catholic church in Mexico has been separated from the state and, as are other religious denominations, is prevented from carrying on the "educational activities" which the Mexican masses have come to understand are nothing more or less than propaganda and organization for the return of landlordism.

The Catholic church can be forged into a powerful weapon for American imperialism—not only in Mexico but in all Latin-America and the Philippines where it held undisputed sway for centuries under Spanish rule.

The leadership of many powerful unions is Catholic and already, in the protest sent by John Fitzpatrick of the Chicago Federation of Labor against the expulsion of certain Catholic dignitaries from Mexico, and the welcome to the Eucharist Congress voted by that body at his request, we have an inkling of the forces which are at work to line up the Vatican, the Catholic church in America, sections of labor officialdom and American imperialism for a new drive on Mexico.

Triumphant reaction is the only phrase which describes the Eucharist Congress. The disappearance of the Ku Klux Klan while the congress was capturing Chicago is significant in that it indicates that the klan as such is no powerful political influence in the United States. It was told to shut up and keep out of sight and it did so.

American reaction had more important business in

hand. It was busy making a united front with the best organized and most militant religious institution in the world—one which holds in ignorance and superstition millions of workers and peasants and which American imperialism believes it can use to good advantage. The Vatican is willing to be used because it too needs a powerful ally.

Each party to the alliance has something to contribute which the other can use.

The Vatican wants:

1. Support in Europe for the building of a new Catholic bloc.
2. Support in Mexico to re-establish itself as a political factor and regain its landed property.
3. Sympathetic support in other Latin-American countries.
4. Full freedom for its supporters to engage in political campaigns for the highest government offices. (Al Smith of New York, potential candidate for the presidency; George Brennan of Illinois, candidate for United States senator.)

American imperialism wants:

1. Support in Europe for its financial and industrial enterprises.
2. The complete subjugation of Mexico, its reduction to the status of a colony.
3. A minimum of resistance to its plans for the conquest of all Latin-America.
4. Strengthening of the influence of an organizationally competent religion among the workers in basic industry which will make more difficult the task of building powerful unions.

Both want to crush the Communist International and its sections because both understand that the working class under Communist leadership is their only dangerous enemy.

It may be that the alliance of the two most reactionary forces in the world was not perfected during the Eucharist Congress but all the evidence points to the fact that a fairly good understanding was reached.

"Religion," said Marx, "is the opium of the people." Opium poisoning can be counteracted only by prolonged exercise. The poison of the Eucharist Congress, the danger of the alliance of American imperialism with the Vatican, can be overcome only by an intensification of working class activity and struggle—struggle centering around the daily needs and demands of workers in basic industry during the process of which they can see who supports them and who, and what forces, are found in the ranks of the enemy.

In the coming struggles whose faint signs can be seen in the American economic and political arena, in the struggles in the colonial and semi-colonial countries, where the Catholic church and American imperialism are and will be found together against the masses, both will be exposed in a much more convincing manner than that in which the Eucharist, "the body and blood of Christ," exposed on the Catholic altar, in a ritual originating in the pagan sacrifice of the god, brings conviction of the certainty of heavenly joys to those too meek to fight the lords of finance and industry.

The thin, unleavened wafer that is the Eucharist cannot satisfy the hunger of millions.

The Split in the English Liberal Party

By John Pepper

THE process of split in the Liberal Party of Great Britain has now reached one of its last stages. The sessions of the parliamentary fraction of this party gave twenty votes to Lloyd George, ten votes to Asquith, with four abstentions. At the same time a severe resolution was adopted against Asquith. This session signified a victory for Lloyd George and a split within the Liberal Party.

These events are no more than the climax of the decline of the once so mighty Liberal Party, a decline that has been going on regularly for many years.

Great historical traditions were once embodied in the Liberal Party. Once it was the party of the progressive bourgeoisie. In the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries it was a model for the liberals of the whole world. Free trade and toleration, compromise and magnanimity of the British bourgeoisie, rich and wise (wise because rich)—such was the ideology of Liberalism. Manchesterism was its political-economic doctrine. Or in other words: a free road for the "efficient" capitalists, free starvation for the "inefficient" millions of workers; free trade on the broad seas that were "free" because they were protected by the English fleet.

The industrial revolution, the stormy development of capitalism, raised the Liberal Party to its greatness. In no country of the world did Liberalism develop so completely, so elaborately, in such purity. But the god Chronos devours his own children. The further development of capitalism has now destroyed the Liberal Party. The Liberal Party was a party of the bourgeoisie during the period of individual capitalists, of captains of industry, of independent industrialists, of proud commercial lords, in a word, of the world of free competition. But even in Great Britain free competition is no more. The period of monopoly has burst in, and with it the decline of Liberalism. Even in industrial England, slowly but certainly growing more backward, trusts and cartels arise. Finance capital becomes ever mightier; the last decade in particular has seen a stormy development of monopoly in banks, in shipping, in ship-building and in railroad transportation. The powerful new industrial and financial monopolies no longer look upon the Liberal Party with its antiquated free trade ideology, with its doctrines on toleration and compromise, as their own party.

With the development of the imperialist stage of British capitalism the Conservative Party became more and more the official Party of the great bourgeoisie. There was no end to the desertions of the representatives of the capitalists from the Liberal Party. The Liberal Party began to transform itself into a party of the petty bourgeoisie, of the broad strata of the technical and other intellectuals, and of many sections of the working

class. Simultaneously, the representatives of the big bourgeoisie seized the leadership of the Conservative Party. The "Die-hards," the representatives of aristocratic landlordism, still play a large role in the Conservative Party, but the real leaders of this party in recent times have been the industrialists, Bonar Law and Baldwin.

The last decade was already marked by continuous crackings within the Liberal Party. Splits and reunions were on the order of the day as everyday events. Lloyd George split the party and formed the coalition cabinet with the Conservatives during the war while Asquith managed even in such hard times to hold aloft the banner of "free liberalism." As soon as the Conservatives began to feel strong enough to take over the leadership without the petty bourgeois-demagogic Lloyd George, they expelled him from the cabinet and for a time two Liberal fractions dragged out a miserable existence. Then came the reunion of Lloyd George and Asquith. They embraced each other, but the gentlemanly Asquith held the dagger ready in his right hand and the plebian Lloyd George was ready with his knife. The collapse of the Liberal Party in the elections in 1924 let loose a period of endless fractional struggles and discussions. The discussion raged particularly about the "Coal Plan" of Lloyd George who—with demagogic phrases—began to assail the capitalists. Another center of discussion was Lloyd George's land scheme which demanded the "nationalization" of the great estates. But every discussion came back to the fundamental question: What should be the attitude of the liberal Party in the question of private property and its relation to the labor movement?

Already earlier in the year the disintegration began. Sir Alfred Mond, an influential capitalist, left the Liberal Party and joined the Conservatives. In his letter to Lord Oxford he gave the basis for his resignation as follows: the only question of importance today is Socialism versus Individualism and the Conservative Party is the better instrument for the struggle against Socialism. The general strike greatly hastened the collapse of the Liberal Party. The petty bourgeois wing under the leadership of Lloyd George vacillated between the working class and the government. Lloyd George wrote:

"I see no possibility of agreeing with the declarations that condemn the general strike, because these declarations say nothing in criticism of the government which is as responsible if not more so." (Retranslated)

The big bourgeois wing of the Party under the leadership of Lord Grey completely identified itself, during the general strike, with the Conservative government, with the introduction of the Emergency Powers Act, with the

persecution of the working class. Lord Oxford declared that the conduct of Lloyd George, particularly in regard to the fact that in the American press he described the course of the general strike as a great paralysis of entire British industry and transport, was unloyal and treasonable and could in no way be associated with the leading positions in the Liberal Party. Lloyd George accepted this declaration of war. In the sessions of the Party leadership, the so-called "Shadow Cabinet," Lloyd George remained in the minority. But the praliamentary fraction gave him a majority.

What will happen now? For a time of course, there will be two small Liberal fractions in parliament, but even these tiny remnants of the once so mighty English Liberalism, will hardly be able to maintain their existence. **The general strike split the Liberal Party and the sharper the class antagonisms become, the less room there is for the mediating and tolerance-preaching Liberalism.** More and more clearly do the two great basic classes of modern society face each other. To a greater and greater degree is the bourgeoisie represented through the Conservative Party and the proletariat through the Labor Party. Between the two of these millstones Liberalism is ground to pieces.

This situation is characterized most bluntly in a statement of Hilton Young who has left the Liberal Party and joined the Conservatives. He writes in a letter to Prime Minister Baldwin:

"I SEE ONLY ONE CHASM in our contemporary politics. On the one side is individual freedom and prosperity based on constitutional methods, on the other side is Socialism and rebellion that depend

more and more openly on unconstitutional methods. The general strike has convinced me that in the face of this situation the maintenance of petty political differences is no longer compatible with duty to society." (Retranslated)

Capitalism or Socialism—this is now the great question . . . and the "petty political differences" are beginning to vanish. Yesterday it was Sir Alfred Mond, today it is Hilton Young and tomorrow it will be Lord Grey and Lord Asquith who will be in the same dilemma. The development of great monopolies, the sharpening of class contradictions, the growth of political independence of the working class, the decline of British imperialism divide all England ever more clearly into two camps: into the camp of the bourgeoisie and into the camp of the proletariat. The more conscious bourgeois elements of the Liberal Party have already drawn the conclusion from the situation and have openly gone over to the Conservatives.

Lloyd George attempts to impede this great historical process and is now trying to form an alliance with the Labor Party just as during the war he made his alliance with the Conservatives. He fails, however, to take into consideration the great fact that not only are ever greater masses of workers leaving the old historical parties and joining the Labor Party, as the series of by-elections shows, but that within the Labor Party itself there is a growing differentiation between those who betray their class and those who fight for it. The collapse of the Liberal Party must of necessity come, and it is good that it should come. With the disappearance of Liberalism there disappears also one of the most important hindrances in the revolutionization of England.

The Railroad Employees' Department Convention

By Wm. Z. Foster

IN order to understand the convention of the Railway Employees' Department of the American Federation of Labor, which took place in Chicago, from June 23 to July 2, it is necessary to trace the evolution of the trade unions on the railroads during the past few years.

A Period of Growth.

During the war and immediately afterwards the 16 principal railroad unions made great progress in many ways. First, they became enormous numerically. Previously, most of them were merely skeleton organizations, but in the war situation they rapidly expanded until they included about 1,800,000 railroad workers. The railroad unions also tended radically to depart from their old policy of isolation from each other and to unite for common action. A new spirit of solidarity developed, which was manifested through an intricate network of national and local federations. The get-together movement culminated in all 16 unions, in active co-operation together, securing a single national agreement with the government which then controlled the railroads. The railroad unions also became very active politically. About this time they laid the basis for the Conference for Progressive Political Action, which for a time promised to develop into a Labor Party. These unions also began to radicalize their program. They adopted the principle of nationalization of the railroads, in the form of the so-called Plumb Plan, which proposed that the government, the unions, and the railroad technicians should operate the railroads. Gompers violently opposed the Plumb Plan, with the result that the railroad unions forced its adoption by the A. F. of L. Convention in 1920, thus giving Gompers the greatest defeat in his career. Enormously strong numerically, with a developing solidarity amongst themselves, very active politically, and with a growing radicalism, the railroad unions at this period formed the progressive wing of the A. F. of L. and were infusing the whole labor movement with a new spirit.

The Decline of the Railroad Unions.

This promising development of the railroad unions has collapsed utterly in the face of the employers' offensive, which began to take shape shortly after the close of the war. The first step of the employers was to transfer the railroads back from government to private control. Then came the establishment of the Railroad Labor Board, which, entirely controlled by the companies, immediately began a war against the unions and wage standards of the workers. The national agreement was abrogated. By making concessions to the more aristocratic unions, the Four Brotherhoods, the Railroad Labor Board broke them away from the other unions, thus deal-

ing a fatal blow to the railroad federations. In all these moves the unions were on the retreat. This retreat became an utter rout in and after the Shopmen's strike of 1922. While seven of the unions struck, nine remained at work, flagrantly betraying the strike and disrupting the solidarity of the workers. The strike was lost after a long and heroic struggle.

The after-effects of this defeat, the worst ever suffered by American railroad workers, were devastating. The shop unions were almost wiped out, as were the big unions of trackmen, clerks, etc., which were demoralized by their leaders' treachery in the strike. The total loss of members amounted to 600,000 or more. The railroads established company unions everywhere. The weakened unions lost enormously in morale and fighting spirit. In an effort to stem the defeat and flight of the unions, the left wing in and around the Workers Party and the Trade Union Educational League, militantly proposed that the crisis be met by amalgamating the fragmentary unions and by an active campaign for the reorganizaion of the demoralized masses.

Intensified Class Collaboraiton.

Rejecting categorically the militant demands of the left wing, the railroad trade union bureaucrats outlined a program of abject surrender to the railroad companies by plunging into various schemes of intensified class collaboration. They introduced the so-called Baltimore and Ohio Plan, which causes the degeneration of the trade unions in the direction of company unions. They abandoned all idea of struggle against the companies. They gave up the project of nationalizing the railroads. The Plumb Plan, which five years ago had the united endorsement of the 16 unions, is now completely discarded and almost forgotten. The bureaucrats also gutted the C. P. P. A., which at one time had the affiliation of about 2,500,000 workers and farmers, and reasserted their allegiance to the old Gompers policy of supporting the two capitalist parties. The crowning policy of this general program of retreat and reaction, which began after the close of the war, is the infamous Watson-Parker Railroad Law. This law practically provides for compulsory arbitration, outlawing of strikes, recognition of company unionism, throwing of labor disputes into the civil courts, and various other anti-labor features. The promising railroad unions of a few years ago have suffered a debacle through the retreat policy of the bureaucracy.

A Class Collaboration Convention.

The situation for railroad unionism is serious. The unions have been tremendously weakened. Their morale is at a low ebb. Except in the case of the Brother-

hoods, their membership has been shattered. They have to confront company unions on many roads. They are saturated with enervating class collaboration propaganda. In the 1922 Convention of the Railway Employees' Department, there were over 600 delegates representing every railroad in the country. In the 1926 convention, there were only a bare 100 delegates representing only a few railroad systems. The present convention comprised not over 25 per cent as many workers as were represented at the previous one in 1922.

In the face of this difficult situation, the tasks of the convention were manifestly those indicated by the International Railroad Amalgamation Committee in its statement to the railroad workers, including the development of campaigns for a general wage demand for all railroad workers, for the organization of the unorganized, against the Watson-Parker Law, the B. & O. Plan, and other manifestations of class collaboration, and for amalgamation. But the convention neither understood its tasks nor took any definite steps for their solution. It called no halt to the retreat of the railroad unions. On the contrary it supported aggressively the retreat policy of the railroad trade union bureaucracy in all its phases. "Labor," official organ of the Department, hailed the convention joyfully as "declaring a policy of industrial peace."

As to Wage Demands.

According to the figures presented by the Railway Amalgamation Committee, the average year's pay of a railroad employee in 1920 was \$1,820.00, while in 1925 it was reduced to \$1,570.00, or a loss of \$250.00 per year. For the year 1925, 523,000 railroad workers averaged less than \$1,200.00; over 400,000 approximately \$1,000.00; and 202,920 section laborers only \$877.00. Meanwhile the cost of living steadily advances, and the prosperity of the railroad companies increases. In 1925 the profits of the roads amounted to \$1,136,984,234 which is a clear gain of \$150,006,000 over 1924, and the year bids fair to smash all previous records.

Manifestly in such a situation conditions are ripe for a general wage demands by all railroad workers. But the bureaucrats controlling the Railway Employees' Department failed to rise to the necessities of the workers. Instead of galvanizing the vast masses of unorganized workers into hope and enthusiasm by announcing a general move for better wages, thus laying the basis for the organization of these workers, the convention soft-pedalled the whole question of wage demands. A resolution demanding a general wage increase was got rid of by referring it to the Executive Council of the Department. The conservative officials were afraid to alarm their "friends," the companies, by such a "rash" move.

Organization of the Unorganized.

The supreme task confronting the railroad unions is the organization of the million or more unorganized railroad workers. The drawing in of these masses to the unions is vital. The situation is rendered more acute by the Watson-Parker Law. This law provides in a general way for the organization of the workers, but it does not specify whether they shall be organized into

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trade unions or company unions. The situation is so that if the trade unions do not organize the masses rapidly the companies will undertake to do the job through their company unions.

The convention showed only a faint appreciation of the great problem of organizing the unorganized. The bureaucrats complained about the company unions and listed 60 of the big railroads which have such organizations; but they developed no plans to capture or destroy the existing company unions and to prevent the spread of this menace by the inauguration of a militant campaign of trade union organization. Instead of proposing an aggressive campaign for the mobilization of the workers and for the destruction of the company unions, they contented themselves with a weak resolution calling for an organization campaign by the unions affiliated to the Department. No program was worked out to combat the company unions. Weak as the stand of the convention was on the question of organization of the unorganized, it was the only matter handled in a manner that could even remotely be called progressive. Everything else was sheer reaction.

The Watson-Parker Law.

The convention, which was made up practically 100% of paid officials of the unions, hailed the new Watson-Parker Railroad Law as a life-saver for railroad labor unions. The leaders claimed it as a great victory for the workers. Blissfully ignoring the compulsory arbitration, outlawing of strikes, and other anti-labor features of this nefarious piece of legislation, they argued that its great benefit was that it would permit the workers to organize in their craft unions and to secure concessions from the companies without recourse to that hated weapon, the strike. They failed to state, however, how Mr. Atterbury, president of the Pennsylvania Railroad and chief enemy of the railroad workers in the great strike of 1922, who refused to recognize any of the heads of the railroad shop unions in the negotiations for the drafting of the Watson-Parker Law, is by some mysterious working out of this law going to become friendly to the unions and to permit their organization on his and other railroads. They also ignored the fact that Mr. Atterbury and his colleagues are claiming the law as a victory for company unionism and the "open shop" policy.

The Executive Council of the Railway Employees Department endorses the law thus:

"With the enactment of the Railroad Labor Bill, and a manifest desire on the part of the carriers and employees to strictly adhere to the provisions of the law, its spirit and intent, we believe that a great forward step has been made towards harmonious relations on the railroads of this country."

The convention was altogether uncritical of the law. The delegate officials swallowed it whole. Afraid to fight the companies, they hoped that this law would enable them to avoid the struggle and to maintain some semblance of organization. The railroad workers are in for bitter experiences under the new law. This convention of the Railway Employees' Department endorses

it almost unanimously; the next convention, more than likely, will reject it. Many of the delegates although they supported the law, already manifest doubts about it.

The B. & O. Plan.

The convention supported the B. & O. Plan even more enthusiastically than it did the Watson-Parker Law. The report of the Executive Council was full of glowing claims of the benefits achieved under this plan of "co-operation" with the companies. It attempts to strike a blow against strike action generally by laying the blame for the ill-fated 1922 strike upon the lower officialdom and rank and file of the unions. Nothing is said of the gross betrayal of the strike by the heads of the union non-striking unions. It whitewashes the executives of the shop unions from responsibility, saying:

"The records of the 1922 convention are replete with persuasive argument by the Chief Executives in their efforts to avoid drastic action; however, desirous of carrying out to the utmost the will of the membership after exhausting all means within their power to avoid the inevitable conflict, realizing as they did the consequent suffering and sacrifice that had followed in the wake of all our struggles in the past."

The report declares that the officials of the unions had begun to elaborate the B. & O. Plan about the close of the war, but its application was interrupted by the 1922 strike. The whole burden of the officials' song was, on the one hand, that if the B. & O. Plan policy had been followed, the strike would have been avoided and the unions saved, and, on the other, that the only way out of the present difficult situation is by applying the B. & O. Plan and abandoning all program of struggle against the companies. The B. & O. Plan was advocated as the means of applying in a practical way the "new wage principle" recently announced by the American Federation of Labor. The Executive Council's report, which was supported by the convention, summarizes the results secured through the B. & O. Plan as follows:

"1. That co-operation had resulted in a decided improvement in the relationship between management and men, (2) that substantial improvements in tools and working conditions had been effected, (3) that considerable progress had been made in stabilizing employment, (4) that satisfactory progress had been made in developing a sound understanding of the co-operative idea among employees and officers, (5) that causes ordinarily making for grievances had been reduced, while the settlement of grievances which did arise had been expedited, (6) that where the opportunities presented by the co-operative program are properly grasped, it has been possible to increase our membership and greatly strengthen our unions."

The extension of the B. & O. Plan was proposed on the basis that it "gives us economically the most sound claim which has yet been devised for a better and fairer share of the financial income of industry." The new

Watson-Parker Law is viewed as offering an especially favorable opportunity for spreading the B. & O. Plan on to the other railroads. No voice was raised in the convention against the B. & O. Plan, nor against the Watson-Parker Law, despite the manifest evils of these two propositions. The bureaucratic convention delegates were practically 100% for a straight-out class collaboration policy.

Amalgamation

In the 1922 convention of the Railway Employees' Department, which reflected something of the militancy and progressiveness then prevalent among the railroad unions, the question of amalgamation was a burning one. Undoubtedly a majority of the delegates, although by far the greater portion were paid officials, supported in a general way the rank and file proposition of consolidating the many unions into one solid organization to include all railroad workers. It was only by clever maneuvering that the heads of the International Unions were able to prevent the convention from supporting amalgamation. But in the 1926 convention of the Department there was no sentiment expressed for amalgamation. Amalgamation and class collaboration fit poorly together. When workers actively demand the consolidation of their unions it indicates that they have some conception of utilizing them as fighting organizations. But the railroad union leaders, including the general run of officials comprising the convention, have no such fighting conception. Their aim is merely to "co-operate" with the companies, by increasing the efficiency of the workers and by inducing them to forego demands for better conditions.

The convention took no steps to consolidate the many scattered railroad unions. On the contrary, the only important organizational changes made tended to still further remove the convention from rank and file control. As at present comprised, the convention is made up almost entirely of highly paid officials, but bearing in mind the situation in 1922, when the body of delegates practically forced the upper officialdom to call the national strike of shopmen, these upper officials have reduced the decisive vote of the convention at large and have reserved it for themselves. This reactionary proposition caused the only serious fight in the convention. On this issue the few progressives present, who had unprotestingly swallowed the nauseous dose of the B. & O. Plan and the Watson-Parker Law, raised their voices in protest. But they were overwhelmed by the general reactionary spirit of the convention. An attempt of the officials to abolish the two-year convention rule and to establish a four-year rule was defeated. The convention concluded its work by electing, with congratulations, the reactionary, Jewell, as president of the Department.

The Tasks of the Left Wing.

The railroad union bureaucracy is slipping deeper into the swamp of class collaboration. The Railway Employees' Department Convention demonstrates this fact. The convention failed completely to mark out a line of policy leading the workers to effective struggle against

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The Watson-Parker Act

By Jack Kennedy

TWO million railroad workers have been snatched from the red-eyed devil of the Railroad Labor Board only to be flung into the bottomless sea of the treacherous Parker-Watson Railroad Labor Act. Intelligent workers who regard the devil as a mere figment of theology will unhesitatingly declare that the railroad men have been the victims of a shameless deception on the part of their "grand officers" and stand in immediate peril of drowning in a sea which may extinguish spirit and militancy. Aggressive railroad workers, however, have no intention of drowning their militancy in class collaboration; rather they will rally their forces and throw those officers who "framed up" the Parker-Watson anti-strike law into the sea themselves.

Why Was the Bill Passed?

WHY the indecent haste on the part of the labor officialdom in concocting this sorry mess of pottage rushed thru the railroads' congress and signed by the railroads' president in the White House so quickly that executives of the roads and unions could dance together around the May pole of brotherly love and sweetness before astonished union members could catch their breath? The Howell-Barkley bill cooled its heels before the halls of congress for two years and then expired wearily in the arms of the union executives. But the Parker-Watson bill, sired by General Atterbury of the notorious company union Pennsylvania and demanded by a few union presidents in secret sessions, no sooner was born than it received the imprimatur of the cautious Cal Coolidge and the slobbery greetings of America's most notable reactionaries. Why? Before entering into an analysis of the act itself, this question should be cleared up.

The immediate reason for the haste in passing the anti-strike law for the railroads lies in the wage increases asked by the Big Four Brotherhoods. These increases have been estimated to total from \$150,000,000 to \$500,000,000 a year, if extended to all ranks of railroad labor. The latter figure represents one-half the profits in the industry.

It was to prevent the workers from cutting into railroad profits and realizing a decent wage for themselves that the union executives conspired with the railroad executives to rush the bill thru congress.

First, let us hear from Ralph M. Easley, of the National Civic Federation, whose fame is so malodorous

that even the *Locomotive Engineers' Journal* has denounced him in biting terms. Easley, in reporting to his precious federation on the Parker-Watson bill, lets the cat out of the bag. In discussing Brotherhood wage tactics, he writes:

"I asked an eastern railroad official in charge of labor what would happen if a strike vote were taken on a wage increase and it proved to be in favor of a strike. 'Why,' said he, 'the railroads would sign on the dotted line.' And that is exactly where they did sign in the fall of 1924. By taking one road at a time, the Engineers and Firemen soon had all the roads 'on the dotted line.' They take the roads one at a time. Thus, they 'last longer' so to speak, but they get them, and that, in my opinion, is what is ahead of the railroads in this country, should this legislation (Parker-Watson bill) not be passed."

RAILROAD FACTS.

Average wage 1920.....	\$1,818
Average wage 1925.....	\$1,639
Labor costs 1920.....	55%
Labor costs 1925.....	43%
Percentage of net income to gross income:	
In 1920.....	0.3%
In 1925.....	18.3%
Profits, 1925.....	\$1,137,000,000
Profits, 1926 (est.).....	\$1,400,000,000
Big Four Wage Demand.....	\$150,000,000

to an inner clique of employers, but to an organization on which Robertson, L. E. Sheppard of the Railroad Conductors and Dan Cease, editor of the *Railroad Trainmen* hold "honorable" positions. These men, according to the words of Easley himself, have led their men into a trap which means no strikes and niggardly wage increases, if any at all.

Is it any wonder that General Atterbury, who scourged the shop craft unions off the Pennsylvania and stands forth as organized labor's worst enemy, told the House committee considering the Parker-Watson bill that the union officials "have been perfectly splendid in their position." That quotation should be engraved as an epitaph on the official graves of those labor leaders who helped to bind their own men in the chains of an anti-strike law.

Let me reinforce this description of the Parker-Watson Act as a measure rushed thru to kill the pending wage increases. Quoting again from Ralph Easley:

"Should this measure fail to pass, the railroad workers, being organized, could go ahead without restraint and get a wage increase There

could be but one answer, acceptance of their demands inasmuch as the alternative of a strike would be so expensive and calamitous to the country that it could not be seriously considered."

The abyss of betrayal is even blacker and deeper than portrayed by Easley but an analysis of the act must preface a further consideration of its infamies.

What Does the Law Mean?

THE wording of the new act has been published in full in most of the union magazines. But to the worker the intricate legal phraseology, the twistings and turnings of lawyer's English are as incomprehensible as Greek. To give their members the 27 pages of the Parker-Watson bill verbatim in lieu of a brief and cogent explanation of its salient points is in itself testimony to the desire of many of the executives to hood-wink or confuse their per capita payers. Just what are these salient points?

They are three in number, and each one is a spike to tear the heart out of militant labor. Like a polar bear in a cage, the workers on the railroads can but pace the floor of their slave pen, forbidden by these bars to engage in a stand-up fight with their exploiters. The hell of it all is that the bars were soldered into position by the workers' own officers.

After a good deal of folderol over the adjustment of petty disputes and applications of agreements, the Parker-Watson Act comes to a head in the first provision for a board of mediation to pass on major disputes such as wages which the roads and unions have been unable to settle themselves. If mediation fails, the unions may agree to arbitration with binding awards. Or if mediation is not resorted to, the president may appoint a special board which will review the points at issue and report to the White House. These are the three major points to the Parker-Watson Act. Jot them down in your mental notebook, and bear them ever in mind in all discussions of the new law. Now to analyze these provisions:

1. The Board of Mediation.

Five men named by the president are to pass upon all major disputes. These members of the Board of Mediation must represent only the "public," and not the railroads or unions. It is not necessary in the *Workers' Monthly* to point out the glaring fallacy of representation from the "public." In crucial clashes of groups and classes, there can be no neutral public, but only the workers on one side, the employers on the other. And just so it is with the actual Board of Mediation as appointed by the employers' puppet in the White House—all five of them are enemies of the workers and allied to the business elements.

Two of the most vicious members of the old labor board were given a new lease of anti-labor life on the mediation board. Two other open enemies of unionism were appointed while of the fifth man nothing more could be claimed by apologists than that he hasn't had an opportunity yet to display his true colors. Who are these anti-labor mediators who have loaded the dice

against labor in its perilous game under the rules of this new labor act? Let me introduce to you—

Samuel E. Winslow, \$12,000 chairman of the mediation board and former chairman of the house interstate commerce committee who fought the old Howell-Barkley bill tooth and toe nail. He refused even to let the committee report the bill out one way or another to the House. The chairman of the "neutral and impartial" board to pass on major disputes is president of the Winslow Skate Manufacturing Co. of Worcester, Mass.; and director of the U. S. Envelope Co., the State Mutual Life Insurance Co. and of the Mechanical National Bank of his home town. He is a colonel by virtue of "service" on the governor's staff years ago, a typical Massachusetts politician of the Coolidge type and an ardent big navy and army man. In other words, he assays as unmistakably 100 per cent pro-employer as any man in America.

E. P. Morrow, a bitterly anti-labor member of the old rail labor board. Morrow as governor of Kentucky used machine guns and militia against strikers in Covington and the Kentucky coal fields. He was a corporation attorney. He also is "neutral and impartial."

G. Wallace W. Hanger, a colorless, cheap "economist" who participated in the anti-labor decision of the late rail labor board and attached himself at all times to the coat tails of the railroads. Most of his life has been spent in the obscure shadows of an unimportant office in the Department of Labor.

Carl Williams, editor of the *Oklahoma Farmer-Stockman* and representative of the rich stock growers. He is supposed to represent the farmers' interests, but the Farm-Labor Union, representing the small farmers and tenants of the southwest, says that he doesn't represent them. And this is the fellow who is the most "neutral" of the bunch!

Hywel Davies, whose claim to impartiality in labor disputes lies in his having been president of the Kentucky Coal Operators' Association, in the most viciously anti-union coal district of America.

Well, fellow-workers, what do you think of your chances before this gang of employers' pets? How would you like to entrust your vital interests to these machine gun experts and bank directors? But that is exactly what your own union officials have done. The demand of 500,000 railroad workers for wage increases averaging \$1 a day for each man is in the hands of this board.

Do you feel now that the *Workers' Monthly* and the *Workers' (Communist) Party*, which have been arousing you to the betrayal of your interests by your own union officials, have exaggerated in the least? Was ratty Ralph Easley wrong when he said that this board would take the teeth out of the railroad unions and prevent a substantial wage increase?

The proof of the pudding is in the eating, and 2,000,000 railroad workers are starting in right now testing the bitter pudding which their "executives" and those of the railroads have concocted for them.

This mediation board will take your plea for a \$1 a day increase and cut it down to about 2 cents a day. The press will applaud the board's decision and tell the rank and file of the workers that this is the judgment of the public. Many of the railroad workers themselves

will undoubtedly feel cowed by the uselessness, the futility of fighting for better things under such a set-up and will weakly submit. Others—and they will be the majority before long—won't stand for it. They'll fight this damned outrage of a packed board by defying it. But first they'll have to clean out the cowards and traitors in their own unions who attempted to crush their spirits in the vice of class collaboration.

2. The Board of Arbitration.

There is a vicious circle in the railroad unions. The officials for five years have been shushing the mild progressives and kicking out the militants. Consequently their own cowardly tactics of yielding to the bosses on crucial issues, of accepting 2-cent wage increases when 20 cents should have been a minimum, of collaborating in framing up such legislation as the Parker-Watson Act, have met with little resistance from the rank and file. Encouraged by this seeming apathy, they have been emboldened to go on to still more atrocious deals. So the chances are ten to one that when the Board of Mediation gets the railroad officials to offer a measly wage rise, the union officials will gladly accept it. Anything to avoid a fight. And the rank and file will have to fight their own officers as well as the railroads if they are to resist. That's why the Mediation Board is so important.

But say the officials decide that their members won't stand for the compromise devised by the mediators. Then they can invoke the arbitration machinery. But in so doing, they bind the unions to accept the award of this board. Just how, then, is this board composed?

Each side names one or two men, and these name one or two "impartial" members. Thus the board will consist of either three or six members, as desired. Need we discuss again the qualities of "impartial" men? Even when two parties have to agree on such a person, the probability is always that he will not have escaped the class influences of school, religion, the press and all the other avenues of propaganda controlled exclusively by the employing class.

And if they can't agree? Why, then, God bless you, the "impartial" Mediation Board, which we were discussing a few paragraphs ago, steps in and names the "impartial" member. And this fellow—as in all arbitration decisions—delivers the award which is entered in federal court as binding. The bosses' man writes the award and the bosses' court records it and makes it binding on all workers affected. Violation of the award then becomes contempt of court, with no jury trial or other meagre safeguards against the ferocious bigwigs on the bench.

This, workers, is the railroad capitalists' second line of defense against the railroad unions. How do you like it? And what are your chances, do you believe,

when the "impartial" third arbitrator decides on your case and then turns his decision over to the court, to be enforced by the combined power of the capitalist state? If you would feel comfortable in a dark room, blindfolded and gagged, with a blackjack artist about to separate you from your weekly pay, then you'll like the board of arbitration.

No strike for you, after this board has decided against you, unless you are willing to run the line of the police, the militia, the deputy marshals and the United States army. The award is binding and you can't strike unless you challenge the authority of the state.

And they tell you that this isn't an anti-strike law.

3. President's Reviewing Board.

This is the place where you can crack a bitter smile. Just think of the thoughtfulness of your officials in allowing Cal Coolidge, as a court of last resort, to pass personally on your fight with the railroad companies. It takes a bitter, sardonic sense of humor not to burst

out at this point in an unmeasured denunciation of the faithless men who have bound you and delivered you over helpless to the courts of your masters. But on with the analysis.

Your officers don't have to appeal from the Board of Mediation to the Arbitration Board. Although there is every chance that they will, yet another avenue has been left open. In effect your officers have two choices

after the Mediation Board has finished with you: They can resort to arbitration with its binding anti-strike award or they can ask the cautious, silent little servant of the employers in the White House to appoint a board to rule against you.

If they don't, Cal will step in any way and name the reviewing board. For 60 days, according to the law, they can forbid you from striking if there is the slightest chance left that you might do such a thing. For 30 days after the board has been named, you can't strike, because the law says no. And for 30 days after the board has reported, you can't strike. If there is any strike spirit left after the board has held you up two months and reported to the president that your demands are against the "public interest," then go ahead. In these two months the railroads will have been working night and day to recruit an army of scabs against you and in that same period your own officers, in all probability, will have been sing-singing in your ears, "Don't strike, don't strike."

Does anyone doubt now that the Parker-Watson Act is an anti-strike law? To the one or two Doubting Thomases still left in the audience, let me offer a few quotations:

"A strike on the railroads is now inconceivable."—New York Times editorial, June 5.

"This law is a guarantee against strikes."—Herbert Hoover.

"The Locarno of the railroad industry."—New Leader, a socialist paper in New York. (These are the words also used by General Atterbury of the Pennsylvania, by Ivy Lee, press agent par excellence of the railroad interests, and many of financial and commercial journals. But what a mess Locarno is now!)

The Legalization of Company Unions.

The Parker-Watson Act is a diamond of great brilliance for the railroads. I have revealed but a few of its gleaming facets, but there are more. If space permitted, I would dissect Senator Watson, the Republican gang leader of Indiana, and Congressman Parker, the railroad bond owner, who steered the bill through congress. "By their friends ye shall know them." The criminal sacrifice of the shop crafts in the supposed selfish interests of the Big Four Brotherhoods needs examination. Even the conservative *Machinists' Journal* declares that the new law is in effect a betrayal of the shop men. Then there is the legalization of the company unions on the Pennsylvania. This is an especially grave aspect of the law, for it immeasurably strengthens the bosses' pets and gives them the status of a real union. Now the Pennsylvania can take a wage dispute, via the company route, in an arbitration board, make the award binding through the courts and then proceed to have real unionists jailed for contempt of court. Let there be no mistake about this company union angle. General Atterbury, president of the Pennsylvania, is the father of both the company unions and the Parker-Watson Act. To say that he has been "fooled" by his own act is merely foolish in itself. General Atterbury fights more ably and more honestly for the interests of his company than do the railroad union officials in the interests of their rank and file.

But the most ludicrous aspect of the law I have purposely left to the last. That is the betrayal of the union officials by the clever railroad lawyers. The union officials thought that the roads were sincere in helping them to put down the militancy of the rank and file. They believed and hoped that the railroads and Cal Coolidge would yield just enough in the administration of the new law to allow them to convince the workers that they had achieved a great victory. They had hoped to add to their own prestige.

Instead Coolidge has slapped them in the face by appointing such reactionary members to the Board of Mediation that even the labor leaders have had to protest. And now the railroads are rubbing it in by obstructing the appointment of boards of adjustment to care for minor disputes.

The labor leaders thrive by settling minor disputes

"in conference." A grievance settled here, a dispute ended there are the beggar's pence which they throw their members to keep them contented. But the new law has necessitated the creation of new adjustment machinery and the railroads have refused to go ahead with the creation business. Scores, hundreds and soon thousands of minor disputes and grievances will be lying unsettled while the clever railroad attorneys advise the roads how to obstruct and delay the creation of the adjustment machinery.

And so the betrayers have been betrayed! The Judases find that the 30 pieces of silver are counterfeits. Soon they will come whining and whimpering to the rank and file about the lack of "good faith" in the bosses. They will be seeking a "united front" with their own members instead of the employers. They will be cringing before the wrath of the membership.

But they have dug their own graves. To the railroad workers will be left only the pleasant job of throwing in the dirt after the coffins have been lowered. After the unions have been through the "impartial" board of mediation, through the capitalist courts, through the President's Board of Review with its mobilization of "public opinion" against the workers—then they will be ready to throw overboard every official who had anything to do with the creation of the Parker-Watson Act.

The Immediate Tasks of the Left Wing.

WHAT is the immediate job for the Left Wing in the railroad unions in this unmasking of the Parker-Watson Act and the union officials who made it? Briefly, this:

1. Creation or strengthening of Left Wing conferences to take over the leadership of the unions. The infamy of the new law will soon become so noisome that even the slowest worker can smell it afar.

2. Explanation of the three odious anti-worker provisions of the act. After that the best single argument against the law is the composition of the Board of Mediation, but others just as good will come as soon as other sections of the act begin to function.

3. Fight for the repeal of the Parker-Watson Act. Repeal of the Anti-Strike Law must become the slogan of the Left Wing.

4. The company unions have been given a new lease of life. Intensify the struggle against them both directly and by demanding repeal of the Parker-Watson Act.

5. The million unorganized are utterly betrayed—sold out—by the new law. On with the campaign to organize the unorganized, both by direct means and by demanding that the Brotherhoods say the word which brings them unionization.

What's Happening in Poland?

By B. K. Gebert

THE basis of Poland's "great power" ambitions in the East was the antagonism of the capitalist world toward the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics; in the West it was the defense and inviolability of the Versailles Treaty. With the steady consolidation of the Soviet Union, however, and with the decreased importance from the viewpoint of an ally of Poland of France which is itself undergoing a terrific financial crisis, a deep pessimism and a lack of faith in the future of the country enveloped the parties of the Polish bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie. Particularly clear was this after Locarno where the "compromise" of France and Germany gave the latter high hopes of achieving its first aim, the abolition of the Gdansk passage. In its antagonism towards France and in pursuance of its policy of trying to get around the Soviet Union, England staked everything on Germany, whom it upheld in its endeavors to seize a water passage from Poland. This policy of England has met with the support of American capital which has millions invested in German industries and banks and therefore has, to a certain extent, made the recuperation of Germany as one of its most important interests.

Poland is thus at the mercy of England. From the vassal of France, stern necessity has forced it into servility to England which in turn is ready to support Germany even against Poland. After Locarno the Polish nationalist press proclaimed this state of affairs as nothing short of a threat of a new division of Poland.

The Collapse of Poland.

But an even greater danger to the economic independence of Poland is threatened by the every growing disintegration of its own economic life. Towards the end of last year the representatives of big capital, banks, commerce and agriculture addressed a very significant memorial to the president of Poland. In this memorial we read:

"The economic life of the Republic is dying. Its decline can be observed hourly. Industrial unemployment is still on the increase and at present there are 213,000 unemployed, that is, 30% of the total industrial population—a number unheard of anywhere else in Western Europe. (At present this army of unemployed reaches the appalling figure of nearly 400,000—B. K. G.) Those who are employed frequently work no more than three, four or five days a week. As a result, for every six men employed there are four without work. This ratio is growing worse every day. It is to be expected that very soon a minority will be forced to feed a majority. Such a task can hardly be accomplished.

"Industry has come to a standstill for there are no buyers. The poor farmers—an immensely vital

factor in the capacity of the market for industrial product—have no purchasing power. The bigger land owners, pressed by the high interest rates of the short term obligations, are of even lesser importance in regards to the consumption of industrial products. The workers, due to the present stage of expiring industrial life, have also stopped being consumers. The petty officials are not buying Commerce was never in such a deplorable situation as at present.

"Mr. President! The entire productivity of Poland is sinking. Many workshops have collapsed with no prospect for a revival. There is no time to be lost."

To "save the country" the bourgeois authors of this memorial offer the following proposals: the abolition of the eight-hour day, the reduction of wages, the cutting down of governmental expenses, a statement by the Minister of Finance in the Diet to the effect that the state treasury is empty and that there is a critical lack of confidence towards the government within Poland and without.

In connection with the above we must draw attention the only solution lay, on the one hand, in depriving the bureaucratic apparatus, plainly visible in the open looting of the State's resources, in the wholesale graft and bribery of the members of the Diet and in their participation in speculations along with the higher government and bureaucracy, frequently assisted by the ministers themselves.

In the eyes of the capitalists and large land owners the only solution lay, on the one hand, in depriving the workers of what they had gained through long struggles, in increasing the exploitation and taxation of the lower classes, in cutting down state expenses to the detriment of the workers, petty officials and teachers, thus contributing to the growth of unemployment; and, on the other hand, in surrendering Poland's economic independence, selling the country out and turning the workers and farmers of Poland into slaves of foreign capital. Such is the price of American loans. In this way the Polish ruling classes hoped to save themselves temporarily from total bankruptcy.

In the letter dated October 19, 1921 and addressed to a group of his Polish friends Lenin thus characterizes the near future of Poland:

"Poland is facing an inevitable financial crisis. The total bankruptcy of Polish bourgeois democracy (and the petty bourgeois) in regards to its policy of agrarian reform, a bankruptcy that is ripe, inevitable, will necessarily turn the majority of the farming population, the whole of the poor peasants, towards the Communists. In connection with the fi-

nancial crisis there also arises the dissolution of the nationalistic and 'great power' illusions, a dissolution that, arising from actual practice, will open the eyes of the masses, of the average worker and the common peasant—a dissolution that is self-evident and now unavoidable."

The great mind of Lenin saw four years ago what is now being translated into actual fact.

From all of the above facts it is no wonder that the masses of workers and peasants of Poland have been becoming more and more radical and that the revolutionary conditions have been growing riper and riper. Comrade Zinoviev described the situation in the Spring of this year in the following way:

"At present the Communist Party of Poland finds itself in a very difficult and responsible situation. If there is a country where, in the not distant future, an indirect revolutionary situation may arise, that country is Poland, where unemployment increases steadily, where the acts of despair of the rebellious masses of the unemployed not only show no sign of decreasing, but are actually on the increase. That is why our Polish section holds so responsible a position

"This perspective is unquestionably of great importance for the international revolution, for Poland is a center where the influences of England, France and America cross each other—a point that, to a certain extent, influences the destiny of events in Germany and Russia."

Under such conditions the reign of the coalition government of bourgeoisie, big landowners, and yellow socialists was the reign of the White Terror. Particularly did the White Terror rage against the national minorities—Ukrainians, White Russians, Lithuanians, Germans, and Jews, constituting all around over 40% of the entire population. Simultaneously, fascist and monarchial organizations began springing up like mushrooms under the protection of the coalition government. They frankly proclaimed the necessity of a governmental coup and the establishment of a dictatorship. Everywhere they sought for a "Polish Mussolini." The labor organizations were crushed, prisons were filled with thousands of political prisoners, the Communist Party was illegal under a penalty of four years hard labor simply for membership in the Party. After five months of the reign of this "great national coalition," a reign drenched in blood, the coalition collapsed. Forced to leave the coalition the Socialists contented themselves with a statement thru the mouth of their leader Daszynski that in the future "the bourgeoisie would not be permitted to have a Minister of Finance." This was the whole lesson they had learned from their experiences in "co-operation." They had to leave the coalition, however, because the hatred and opposition of the masses was accumulating against it. When the Socialists left, V. Witos, the leader of the rich peasants (kulaks), formed a new government of the bourgeoisie and the rich land owners, a plainly reactionary government, a very evident dictatorship of big capital.

Pilsudski's "Revolution."

This government was a challenge not only to the workers and poor farmers but also to the petty bourgeoisie and the intelligentsia. Joseph Pilsudski, whose influence in army circles is very great, soon made known his active opposition to the government of Witos. Supported by the great part of the Polish army, loyal to him, as well as by large sections of the Polish toilers and petty bourgeoisie, he captured Warsaw and established his rule. His coup d'etat Pilsudski described in the following words: "I have made a sort of revolution without any revolutionary consequences." This "sort of revolution" was later called a "moral revolution," a "revolution" putting forth as its task the expulsion of the thieves from the state machine.

Tactics of the Communist Party of Poland.

Apparently Pilsudski profited from the discontent and unrest spread far and wide among the broad masses of the Polish toilers and petty bourgeoisie. But where was the Communist Party of Poland? "How could it happen that the revolutionary discontent of a considerable portion of the workers and peasants in Poland brought grist to the mill of Pilsudski and not to that of the Communist Party of the Poland? This happened, among other reasons, because the Communist Party of Poland is weak, exceedingly weak, and has become still more weak in the past struggle thru its incorrect attitude toward Pilsudski's troops. In view of all this it could not take its place at the head of the revolutionary masses." (Stalin).

At the very beginning of the struggle between the forces of Pilsudski and Witos the Communist Party of Poland issued the following appeal:

"Workers! Attention! The very next hours may bring with them the struggle between the forces of the coalition backed by the Fascisti, the greatest enemies of the working masses, and the soldiers who rebelled against this tyranny and rallied to Pilsudski. Workers! You know that our aims go much further than those of Pilsudski and his followers. But in this struggle the duty of the revolutionary workers is to fight the coalition government and the fascisti. Prepare for the struggle! Our slogan: DOWN WITH THE COALITION GOVERNMENT! LONG LIVE THE RULE OF THE WORKERS AND FARMERS!"

The mistake here evident of the Polish Party in its estimation of the role of Pilsudski was a serious one and influenced its entire participation in the events that followed. It conceived that it was the duty of the Party to call upon the workers "to support Pilsudski's followers in their fight against the big agrarians and reaction and to bring the broadest masses of the workers and peasants into the movement." What does this mean? "This amounts to recognizing the military clique of Pilsudski as the real opponents of the Polish capitalists. It means distorting the main issue in the Polish events." (Thaelmann). Instead of fighting against the reaction,

aries but at the same time refusing to support Pilsudski and on the contrary exposing him, the Communist Party of Poland conceived that its task was to "influence" and to "stimulate" and to "sharpen" the struggle of Pilsudski "against reaction."

This attitude of the Polish Party was sharply criticized in many quarters of the International. It was pointed out that it was practically supporting the illusion that Pilsudski represented democracy, that he was the leader in a struggle against reaction while in reality Pilsudski was the representative of the petty bourgeoisie and of Bonapartism, the "last of the Mohicans of Polish romanticism" as Radek has called him . . .

In truth the Polish Party failed to take a sufficiently independent stand. It failed to separate itself sufficiently from Pilsudski and the Pilsudskites. It limited itself to the task of "influencing" Pilsudski's struggle. Ernst Thaelman (on the Tactics of the C. P. of Poland, International Press Correspondence, vol. 6, No. 46) has well described the situation and the tactical errors of the Communist Party of Poland.

"What is the significance of this so-called fight of Pilsudski against reaction? It is clear to every Marxist that the recent upheaval was caused by two divergent and opposing elements: on the one side the working class and the working peasantry, the impoverished middle class and the suppressed national minorities; on the other hand, however, the military clique in the person of Pilsudski, whose aims are in no way revolutionary, but reactionary, who has set himself the task not of emancipating the proletariat from the yoke of the fascists and the bourgeoisie, but of betraying all sections of the working population in the name of law and order, in the name of the bourgeois constitution, in the name of the bloc with the counter-revolution, in the name of lackey service to English imperialism. It is precisely in connecting this counter-revolutionary role with the simultaneous exploitation of the illusions of the broad masses, in hoisting the democratic flag over the white bayonets, that there consists the peculiar bonapartist character of Pilsudskism. It is here that is to be seen its fundamental class contradiction.

"In these circumstances it was the task of the Communist Party first to destroy the illusions of the masses regarding Pilsudski's fight against reaction, and secondly, to organize the independent ruthless fight of the masses against Pilsudski and against the open reaction.

"But if one speaks of a 'fight of Pilsudski against reaction,' then it is impossible to destroy the illusions of the masses with regard to Pilsudski; in fact one only increases them. If one speaks of the Communist Party 'supporting' this alleged fight of Pilsudski against reaction, then one can neither organize the independent action of the proletariat against its enemies nor the fight against the Bonapartist, treacherous Pilsudski band. On the contrary, in this way one can only paralyze the class activity of the proletariat, prevent it from freeing itself from its illusions and thereby in practice, even if unconsciously, improve the situation of Pilsudski."

Further Developments.

Later events showed how correct was this estimate. All illusions as to Pilsudski's "democracy" and all hopes of improving the conditions of the working masses burst like soap bubbles. Once Pilsudski took the reins of government into his hands he showed himself to be a representative of the petty bourgeoisie, and at this moment he is already aligned with the most reactionary elements. Internationally he is no more than the tool of English imperialism. Now that he has gained power, Pilsudski intends to maintain it as long as possible. His government, the government of Bartel, is now no longer anything more than an open dictatorship of that group of the Polish bourgeoisie that came to power on May 12.

Today the Communist Party of Poland is denouncing the government of Pilsudski as a government of the bourgeoisie, as a tool of English imperialism, and as the enemy of the Soviet Union. The victorious bourgeoisie and landowners, frightened at the recent manifestations of mass action, are organizing and mobilizing their forces under the banner of the "League for the Defense of Law and Order" to fight, as they point out in their manifesto, against the "internal enemy"—the revolutionary workers and peasants.

Pilsudski's rise to power has caused to vanish the last illusions so carefully cultivated in the masses of the Socialist and "left wing" peasant parties that Pilsudski is their emancipator from slavery. Today this illusion exists no longer and even Socialists are forced to come out in opposition to Pilsudski in order to save whatever influence they have.

Had the Communist Party of Poland taken, in the days of May, a Leninist position and had it analyzed the events in a Leninist manner, it could have strengthened its authority and influence. Its incorrect tactical line forced it to lose many of the advantages the situation offered. Now, under the direction of the Communist International, it is correcting its errors and endeavoring to make up for its mistakes in the task of assuming the leadership of the working masses and the national minorities in the struggle for a Polish Soviet Republic. At the present, Poland is still in the midst of a smoldering revolutionary fire, for Pilsudski's reign has brought no economic relief whatsoever—rather has it tightened the noose of slavery about the necks of the toiling masses.

The N.A.A.C.P. Takes a Step Backward

By William F. Dunne

IT is a long way from Florida, where Negroes are tortured before they are murdered, to Illinois where the huge Negro population has been able to force some measure of safety from the rope and stake of the white mob.

But the distance between Florida and Illinois is no greater than the gap between the Philadelphia conference of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People held in 1924 and the Chicago conference held June, 1926.

In Philadelphia the N. A. A. C. P. for the first time made clear its position on the organization of the Negro workers. It called upon the American Federation of Labor and its affiliated unions to drop all bars excluding Negro workers and begin a campaign to bring them into its ranks with full rights. Furthermore, the conference raised the question of the necessity for the formation of Negro unions if certain A. F. of L. unions continued their policy of discrimination.

Wide publicity was given to this statement and the A. F. of L. was compelled to make a gesture towards the Negro workers to save its face. But its resolution on organization of the Negro workers has remained on paper. The constitutional and tacit exclusion of Negro workers from skilled and semi-skilled unions like the International Association of Machinists, Electrical Workers, etc., is still in force.

Only from a few progressive officials such as Jacob Uhlmann of the Chicago District Council of Machinists has there come any demand for real organization work among the Negro masses.

Meanwhile, Negroes have been coming into industry in ever larger numbers.

The problem is more acute than it was a year ago.

There has been a recrudescence of lynching in horrible forms in Florida and Mississippi. And where the state governments have acted to prevent mob action it has been only to send the accused Negro before a jury anxious and ready to pacify the mob-spirit by a speedy sentence to death. In states like Kentucky, legalized lynching has taken the place of the former spontaneous method.

The Dyer anti-lynching bill was defeated by a coalition of republican and democrat legislators as Negroes were being burned at the stake and were dangling from trees with ropes around their necks in Dixieland.

The attempted mobbing followed by a trial for murder of Doctor Sweet of Detroit, when he defended himself and his family, and the legal

proceedings designed to oust Negro residents from certain districts in Washington, D. C., the recent court decision of a Michigan judge that Negroes may own but not inhabit property in restricted subdivisions, all indicate a sharpening of the racial struggle even in middle class circles.

Not all but most of the above is admitted by the address adopted for publication by the recent conference of the N. A. A. C. P. It refers, in addition to the dangers of "financial imperialism" in Haiti, Liberia, Central and South America and Africa in general. It recites also the well-known fact that Negroes in the south are forcibly prevented from exercising the franchise.

The address is an admission that the social, economic and political status of the Negro race in the United States is improving almost imperceptibly if at all.

The improvement that has taken place can be ascribed to the influx of Negroes into northern industrial centers—the need for their labor-power under modern industrial conditions making necessary a larger number of concessions than in the semi-feudal south.

The Negro masses are unorganized except in churches and fraternal societies. The N. A. A. C. P. itself has no mass character. It is composed of lawyers, doctors, writers, teachers, etc. Its strength, such as it has, is purely of a moral character. It has to make its appeal on the basis of constitutional rights, democracy, humanitarianism, justice, and only in cases of flagrant violations of these abstract principles can it make a successful appeal.

The great mass of misery of its own race it is unable even to alleviate as long as it follows its present policy.

It is a different and delicate matter, particularly in the United States where such complete reaction rules in every sphere of life—social, labor, politics, culture—to criticize an organization which is even making an attempt, although an ineffective one, to raise the subject Negro race to a higher level.

But the work of the N. A. A. C. P. is political work and, as a rather well-known Communist once said: "politics is not delicatessen." The first requirement of an individual or an organization acquiring a certain amount of leadership in the political sphere is to be able to estimate a given situation, and adopt a strategy and tactics which will bring the maximum results.

Judged by this standard the recent conference of the N. A. A. C. P. registered a complete fail-

ure and its "address to the country" is a confession of failure.

The reason for this is to be found in the social composition of the conference—middle class intelligentsia for the most part who are unable or unwilling to see that the strength and driving power of the Negro race in America is its working class—the only class among the Negroes which possesses great numerical strength and economic power.

With these two qualities, a correct program and militant leadership, the American Negroes can smash the prison walls with which American capitalism has encircled them. Their race cannot be freed by one, or a dozen or a hundred thousand, making their escape and leaving the rest behind.

Not the white race, not even the white working class, can or will free the Negro masses. Together it can be done—black and white workers together with the sympathetic and militant intelligentsia of the Negro race giving what aid they can.

As for the Negro middle class as a whole it will stop far short of militant struggle as it did in New Orleans and an organization which bases itself as does the N. A. A. C. P., on the middle class, is led into making such childish statements as:

"We are astonished to note under President Coolidge and the republican administration a continuation of that segregation of colored employes in the department at Washington which was begun under President Wilson. We have repeatedly appealed for redress against this grievance and we appeal again to the sense of decency and honor which should exist at the capital of the nation and which should save from insult persons who are serving their country in the organized civil service." (From the N. A. A. C. P. address).

Any group of people which can be astonished to find that "honor and decency" are lacking in the national capital certainly lack the qualifications to lead their race in what of necessity must be a terrible struggle. One who has illusions about the enemy is apt to be defeated.

Similarly on the issue of imperialism. The address states:

"Particularly is it possible and right for American Negro voters so to cast their ballots as to restrain financial imperialism which has throttled Haiti and threatened Liberia and Central and South America and which is still using slavery and forced labor to heap up profits in Africa."

Just how far the casting of ballots will restrain financial imperialism under any circumstances is a debatable question but in this instance it is worthless because the above recommendation is preceded by the statement that:

"Our political salvation and social survival lie in our absolute independence of party allegiance in politics and casting our vote for our friends and against our enemies whoever they may be and whatever party label they carry."

Whom will the N. A. A. C. P. urge its followers to vote for to "restrain financial imperialism" in Haiti for instance?

For a democrat candidate whose honored party chief, Woodrow Wilson, sent the marines to Haiti, or—

A candidate of the republican party whose chief, Calvin Coolidge, keeps the marines there?

The N. A. A. C. P. seems to have doubted somewhat the efficiency of the policy it recommends for it says in the next breath:

"This may at present give us sorry choice between twin evils but eventually and soon there must come in this land such political reform as will give the honest independent voter, black and white, a chance to cast his ballot for law, decency and democracy."

The formulation is ambiguous, the confusion very apparent, but the conference seems to have had a labor party, or farmer-labor party, in mind.

Then why not say so?

If one believes in a certain method of procedure in racial and class struggles one fights for it if one is honest and courageous.

But having accepted the aid of white middle class intelligentsia who oppose a labor party, not wishing to offend the A. F. of L. officialdom which also fights a labor party, the N. A. A. C. P. twists and turns and finally falls between two stools.

The same can be said of its stand on the question of organizing the Negro workers. It is afraid to speak out what it knows to be the truth because this involves danger—internal and external. Not all leaders of the N. A. A. C. P. are in favor of organizing Negro workers in unions and the American Federation of Labor officialdom is a powerful enemy whom it might not be wise to offend by frank speaking.

So instead of the ringing Philadelphia declaration we get the following:

"For several years the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People has tried on one hand to show white labor of the United States that it must recognize colored labor, bring them into the union ranks and affirm the unity of all laborers in the fight for industrial democracy. On the other hand this Association has sought to impress upon Negro labor its duty to leave no stone unturned in an attempt to co-operate with organized labor and to maintain and advance the standards for which organized labor has so long fought. We are glad to

note in the unionization of the Pullman porters a great step toward both these objects. We regret that white union labor is still disappointingly laggard in taking active steps toward organizing black labor."

The above statement represents a retreat from the position taken in 1924 and it, like the adoption of the futile "nonpartisan" method of conducting election campaigns, is in effect placing the whole struggle of the Negro masses at the mercy of the A. F. of L. officialdom, whose policy is taken as the model, an officialdom whose complete failure to face the Negro problem in any other way than that adopted by the democrat and republican parties is notorious.

The N. A. A. C. P. conference cannot be excused on the ground that no alternative policy for the organization of Negro workers was proposed. The conference had before it a very detailed program for this vitally important work in the resolution presented by James Ford, a delegate from the American Negro Labor Congress.

We quote the following proposals from this resolution:

"The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People again proposes to all national labor bodies, to all state labor bodies, all city central labor bodies, and to individual trade unions, that . . . an inter-racial commission be formed by representatives of the N. A. A. C. P., of the American Federation of Labor, of the Railroad Brotherhoods, including the new Brotherhood of Pullman Porters, and other labor bodies willing to participate, as well as other Negro organizations. It is also proposed that for each large city or industrial center in which there are Negro wage earners, local inter-racial labor commissions should likewise be formed. We propose that with the co-operation thus established, a definite campaign be carried thru for the organization of the Negro wage earners in industrial pursuits, to be brought into the existing unions on an exact basis of equality without distinction of race or color either in the union or in the workshop in regard to the choice of employment, wages and conditions. . . .

"The services of the officers of the National Asso-

ciation for the Advancement of Colored People will be proffered to assist the trade union movement in such a campaign.

"The officers of the Association are instructed to send all international unions and all other labor bodies within the United States, Canada, Mexico, the Philippine Islands, and the West Indies, a questionnaire which shall be formulated with the purpose of establishing the actual conditions of labor and the race relationships between colored and white labor, and especially covering the matter of discrimination, either thru constitutional provisions forbidding the membership of certain races in trade unions, or by the tacit practice of discrimination. . . .

"The N. A. A. C. P. will establish in each community a department for relief and legal aid for Negro workers in industrial plants."

Here are four proposals which certainly cannot be attacked on the ground of impracticability. They are clear and workable and offer at least a basis for action.

But precisely the fact on which these proposals are based—the fact that some ninety per cent of the American Negroes belong to the working class—is probably the reason why these measures were sidestepped by the N. A. A. C. P. conference, further proof that the fighting leadership of the American Negroes must come from the toiling masses of the race.

The Negro workers—industrial and agricultural—stand in the greatest need of organization—both because of their economic oppression and because social tyranny bears heaviest upon them.

If the existing labor organizations will not make the cause of the Negro workers their own, then the Negro workers will have to organize in spite of them.

This is the fact which the last conference of the N. A. A. C. P. was afraid to face. It is significant that the practical proposals for organization of the Negro masses did not come from the intelligentsia who dominate the N. A. A. C. P. but from the representative of a Negro organization composed of workers and farmers—the American Negro Labor Congress.

The Great People's Referendum

By Alexander Bittelman

"The people's referendum will only be a prelude to forthcoming struggles."—From a statement by the Communist Party of Germany.

THE great people's referendum of June 20, which brought forward fifteen million votes in favor of expropriating the property of the former kaiser and kaiserlings of Germany, stands out as the most substantial achievement of the toiling masses of Germany in recent years. It also reflects great credit upon the ability and competency of the German Communist Party!

It was a great mass movement. Millions upon millions of workers, farmers, and the poorer sections of the middle classes were drawn into the struggle on the side of the Communist proposal and against the monarchists and big capitalists. And altho it was technically defeated, receiving only fifteen of the required twenty million votes, the revolutionary significance of the referendum is tremendous. It has proven to be a most imposing prelude to the forthcoming struggles for power which will establish a Workers' and Peasants' government in Germany.

A Brief History of the Confiscation Proposal.

It was in December of 1925, that the Communist Party of Germany first issued the slogan for the confiscation of the property of the former royal houses. The proposal involved the taking over by the government of "Royal" capital and property amounting in the aggregate to nearly 3 billion marks (about \$750,000,000) and to utilize this tremendous sum to alleviate the sufferings of the large masses of war invalids and of the growing army of unemployed.

This proposal of the Communist Party of Germany met the unanimous opposition of all the other political parties, beginning with the extreme fascist wing of the monarchists and including the social-democrats. In fact, the social-democrats at first carried on their opposition against the confiscation proposal even more energetically and bitterly than the monarchists. And altho the leaders of the social-democratic party of Germany were compelled later on, by the pressure of the rank and file, to change their official attitude, yet they continued their sabotage to the last minute of the referendum.

Communists Propose United Front.

On December 2, 1925, the Rote Fahne, official organ of the German Communist Party, for the first time carried the slogan:

"Expropriate the Princes. Help the Unemployed."

This followed the introduction of a confiscation bill into the Reichstag by the Communist fraction. And on December 4, 1925, the central committee of the Communist Party addressed an open letter to the central

committee of the social-democratic party, to the General Federation of the Trade Unions, to the Red Front Fighters' League and to the Reichsbanner, a Republican defense organization controlled by the social-democrats and the liberal petty-bourgeoisie. In this open letter the Communists proposed the organization of a United Front for the joint carrying out of a referendum to expropriate the princes, without compensation. The main slogan, as suggested in the letter, was to be: Not a Penny to the Princes.

The first reply to the United Front proposal of the Communists was a flat rejection. It appeared in the "Vorwaerts," official organ of the social-democratic party, on December 4, 1925. It says in part: "The proposal (of the Communists) is not meant seriously. . . . A referendum is an exceptionally complicated affair and those who undertake it would have to spend very large sums." The next day, December 5, the "Vorwaerts" writes again:

"The central committee of the social-democratic party once more states that it refuses to participate in the comedies proposed from time to time by the German Communist Party. We are willing to continue this open discussion. Therefore, we ask the Rote Fahne the question whether the central committee of the Communist Party is ready to advance the two million gold marks which are necessary to finance its proposal."

Great financiers, these social-democratic leaders are. They had figured it out to a penny how much it would cost to expropriate the kaiser and the kaiserlings and decided that they couldn't bear the expense. Wilhelm Dittman, one of the leading lights of the social-democracy, expresses himself thus in the "Vorwaerts" of January 6, 1926. He says: "It is no accident that the biggest political parties, right and left, the German Nationalists and the social-democrats, have thus far refused to agree to the referendum proposal. It is because they know that the carrying out of a referendum is a much more difficult thing than is generally considered by public opinion."

The Masses Begin to Move.

The expropriation slogan thrown out by the Communists immediately took root among the masses. Why? The answer is found in the very critical situation of the toiling masses of Germany.

Many causes have contributed to the crisis. On the one hand the results of the Versailles peace treaty and the Dawes' Plan which, while severely restricting the export facilities of Germany, at the same time compelled her to increase production in order to realize the means for reparation payments. To overcome this contradiction the German capitalists have launched an inten-

sive campaign of reorganization of industry. They are closing down less profitable factories. They are perfecting all kinds of speed-up schemes to increase the efficiency of labor, they are reducing their working staffs, they are cutting wages and lengthening hours, and are generally concentrating and trustifying production.

The result of all these so-called sanitation moves was further to impoverish the masses, to swell the ranks of the unemployed and sharpen still more the economic crisis. And as a reflex of this we see general political instability: frequent change of government and intensified struggles between the political parties.

It was in this situation that the German Communist Party launched the campaign for the expropriation of the princes. The masses took to it instantly. The slogan spread like wildfire. And before the social-democratic leaders had time to complete their calculations as to how much it would cost to carry the referendum, the rank and file of the social-democratic party and its supporters among the ruined and bankrupt petty bourgeoisie were already clamoring for a United Front with the Communists and for the expropriation of the princes.

The expropriation campaign conducted by the Communist Party was very effectively linked up with all the burning needs of the masses at the moment. Thus, for example, we find the following slogans employed in the campaign.

For the expropriation of the princes and the overthrow of the Luther government.

Against the capitalist offensive. Against wage cuts and longer hours.

Against the shutting down of factories and against part-time work.

Work for the unemployed.

Dissolution of the Reichstag and for a Workers' and Farmers' government.

Among the followers of the social-democratic party, workers as well as petty bourgeois elements who were hopelessly ruined by inflation and heavy taxation, the Communist slogan for expropriation without compensation had a magic effect. Within a few days the slogan was picked up and adopted by most of the social-democratic trade union and petty bourgeois organization. And the more the social-democratic leaders combated the slogan the more heartily the masses took to it.

But the most significant feature of this campaign was the effect that the Communist slogan had upon many of the followers of the bourgeois parties. Already in January of this year the Communist demand made its way into the ranks of the Democrats and Centrists. The catholic workers of the Center party and the petty bourgeoisie of the Democratic party began to exert pressure upon their leaders in favor of confiscatory legislation. So much so that the three "republican" parties (social-democratic, Democratic and Centrist) began negotiations for the joint introduction into the Reichstag of a bill calling for the confiscation of the former royal houses but with "just compensation." The leaders of

the social-democratic party, instead of accepting the Communist proposal to form a United Front of workers and toilers generally and to fight for expropriation without compensation, began to negotiate with the bourgeois parties for an "equitable" adjustment of the princes' grievances.

The Communists Move for a People's Referendum.

Around February, 1926, the sentiment of the masses became so pronounced in favor of confiscation that the Communist Party found it possible to propose a plebiscite. The government challenged the proposal on the ground that it was doubtful whether the Communist Party had 20,000 members, which is the lawfully required number to give legal force to the proposal for a plebiscite. The government's challenge was ridiculous, of course, and sheer sabotage, it being known to everyone that the membership of the Communist Party was over 200,000. But the objection had to be met by the required number of certified signatures, which was done.

Within three hours the Communists secured, in the province of Berlin alone, 20,000 signatures certified by the authorities. This tremendous success had a wonderful effect upon the social-democratic following. They forced their leaders to call into session an enlarged plenum of the central committee of the social-democratic party at which meeting the central committee suffered a complete defeat. A substantial majority of the plenum decided that the central committee should join the Communist campaign for a plebiscite, and proposed that the general council of the trade unions become the mediator between the central committee of the Communist Party and the central committee of the social-democratic party.

Thus for the first time since the assassination of Rathenau in 1922, negotiations for united front action were again on foot between the social-democracy, trade unions and the Communist Party. At these negotiations it was decided that the social-democrats would support the plebiscite confiscation bill introduced by the Communists, and that both parties would jointly cover the expenses involved in the referendum campaign.

This proposal of the Communists for a plebiscite proved to be a brilliant piece of working-class revolutionary strategy. Its immediate effect was to set large masses of toilers into active motion, thus bringing tremendous pressure to bear upon the reformist leaders of the social-democracy and the trade unions, compelling them to render at least lip-service to the referendum. It also created a practical basis for united front organizations and action from below by supplying concrete activity for the masses themselves. And what is still more important from the point of view of the future struggle for power, the proposal for a referendum immediately transferred the struggle for the expropriation of the princes from the quiet parliament onto the stormy streets. The fight was thereby lifted from the plain of mere parliamentary politics to the higher basis of mass action.

Here is the slogan used by the Communist Party in favor of the plebiscite:

"The Law Expropriating the Princes will be Given to us by a People's Referendum and Not by the Corrupt Parliament."

Even taken by itself this slogan precipitates the big political issue of the will of the toiling masses versus the will of the bourgeoisie which controls the German Reichstag (Parliament). It deepens the expropriation struggle into a fight against the government. And not only against the particular capitalist government that happens to hold office at the moment—Luther or Marx—but against the whole institution of capitalist government as embodied in the Reichstag and all its related institutions.

The value of this slogan lies not only in the revolutionary propaganda that it develops but also in the revolutionary momentum that it adds, and in the greater swing that it gives to the direct struggle of the masses for the immediate objective. It makes the masses feel and also understand that in the confiscation struggle there is something bigger involved than only expropriating the princes. In fact, that the complete success of the expropriation struggle involves a revolutionary change in the holding of governmental power. Thus the question of power was brought to the forefront in the referendum campaign, making the slogan For a Workers' and Farmers' Government a dynamic factor in the struggle.

The United Front From Below.

In the negotiations between the Communist and social-democrats on united front action for the expropriation bill, in which the trade unions were the mediators, the representatives of the social-democrats insisted categorically that the propaganda be carried on by each party separately. What they meant by it was that there be no common organs of organization in the ranks of the two parties to carry on the struggle jointly.

By this the social-democratic leaders clearly exposed their fear of the effectiveness of Communist propaganda. These leaders wouldn't let their membership and followers come in contact with the membership and followers of the Communist Party lest the former become infected with the Communist "virus."

The inevitable, however, happened. Despite the objections and sabotage of the social-democratic leaders, Communist workers, and non-party workers co-operated joint committees in which social-democratic workers, harmoniously in the prosecution of the campaign for there sprang up in all parts of Germany all kinds of the plebiscite. In some localities these committees were known as Committees of Action, in others they functioned under the name of Unity Committees, but everywhere they consisted of representatives of the local trade unions, representatives of City Central Labor Bodies, and representatives of the Communist and social-democratic parties respectively.

The fears of the social-democratic leaders justified themselves in a large measure. The actual leadership of the campaign was all the time in the hands of the Communists. Comrade Remmele, member of the central committee of the German party writes about it as follows:

"The central committee of the Communist Party was giving directions and issuing slogans on all occasions. A large number of special instructors of the central committee were travelling around the country to supervise and assist in the campaign. All instructions, slogans and directions of the Communists were carried into effect by the Committees of Action and by the Unity Committees the same as by the social-democratic and non-party workers. Thruout the country it was felt that the campaign was being led by a strong hand and a hard will that knows what it wants. Thus, despite the fact that the social-democratic party was officially a partner in the campaign, the actual direction and work was in the hands of the Communist Party."

The result of the preliminary referendum, which was to decide on the desirability of a plebiscite on the expropriation proposal itself, proved an astounding revelation even to optimists. Twelve and a half million signatures were secured in favor of a plebiscite instead of the four million required. The campaign was clearly assuming the proportions of a mass movement of the German people.

The Monarchists Are Coming Into Action.

Until about this time the monarchists were comparatively quiet. Their public opposition to the expropriation campaign confined itself to ridiculing it and minimizing its importance. But this happy-go-lucky attitude of the monarchists changed instantly into the most aggressive and militant offensive the moment it became known that 12½ million people had voted in favor of the plebiscite. From that time on all the resources unofficial, private and public were mobilized against the of monarchy and reaction, open and secret, official and plebiscite and against the republic itself.

The monarchists immediately began preparations for the restoration of the monarchy by means of armed force. The secret fascist organizations, which had been greatly demoralized during the trials and exposure of last year, were again mobilized and strengthened. The monarchist nuclei in the Reichswehr (republican army) began to develop intensive activities. The entire tone of the monarchist press became defiant and provocative. A veritable reign of terror was instituted by the monarchists in collusion with the Luther government to defeat the plebiscite. The material that was confiscated and later published by the Berlin police shows definitely the preparations that were on foot for a military "putch" to restore the monarchy. The Luther government was well informed of all these preparations.

It would seem, however, from later developments, that the prevailing opinion in capitalist circles was inclined to be opposed to a monarchist "putsch" at that time. With the president of the republic, the majority of the Reichstag and the armed forces of the government practically in the hands of the monarchist bourgeoisie and the junkers, the dominant feeling among the capitalists was that there was no immediate need for such a risky step as a military "putsch". The policy adopted was therefore, one of watchful waiting. But in order to placate somewhat the more rabid monarchists and violent fas-

cists, the Luther government had passed a number of decrees which would facilitate a monarchist restoration when the time comes about, one of these being the order to the German embassies and consulates abroad to exhibit the old kaiser flag (Black-White-Red) along with the republican flag of Black-Red-Gold. As will be remembered, this incident precipitated the War of the Flags and the fall of the Luther government.

The fall of Luther and the coming again into power of Marx considerably strengthened the Communist campaign inasmuch as the incident exposed the hands of the capitalist parties showing the lengths to which they would go to defeat the legally expressed will of the people. But the terror and sabotage of the monarchists diminished very little.

In order to pacify their followers, the bourgeois parties represented in the Marx government made an attempt to fix up a compromise bill on the expropriation issue which was to be submitted to the plebiscite along with the Communist bill for expropriation without compensation. Curiously enough, the social-democratic leaders were also trying to join the compromise bill altho they were officially committed to the support of the Communist proposition. This double-faced game so enraged the rank and file of the social-democratic party that the attempt had to be given up. The same revulsion to the machinations of their leaders came from the ranks of the Democratic and Centrist parties. With the result that the "compromise" attempts of Marx came to naught.

Bourgeois Republican Parties Disintegrating.

The general disintegration of the republican bourgeois parties in Germany, notably the Democratic and Centrist parties, has been going on for quite some time. This process was being generated by the fundamental economic crisis which underlies the post-war situation in Germany. Its immediate cause is the attempt to create a solid block of the big capitalists and the big agrarians to insure the carrying out of the so-called rationalization program of industry, the chief aim of which is to make the workers, the farmers and the city petty bourgeois pay the expense of the late imperialist war, the Versailles peace treaty and the Dawes' plan.

It is the intention to create a block of parties to extend from the German Nationalists to the Center. The consummation of this plan means a compromise between the German Nationalists and the People's Party on the one hand (the two representing big industry, large land-holdings and junkerism, and the Democratic and Center Party on the other hand (these two representing finance capital, the catholic church, rich peasants and petty bourgeoisie). A compromise between these two groups of political parties would describe a political line somewhere in between an open monarch-

ist restoration and secret sabotage of the republic. Economically, such a compromise would mean a complete shifting of the burden of war consequences to the shoulders of the workers, farmers and petty bourgeois. The late government of Luther and the present one of Marx are carrying out the above policies and represent, in

But the so-called "republican" parties in the proposal block, the Democrats and Centrists, having considerable following and deriving much of their support from workers and petty-bourgeois elements, are confronting great difficulties. The petty bourgeoisie of the Democratic party and the catholic workers of the Centrists party are becoming disillusioned in their old leaders as a result of the latter's alliance with the monarchists and reactionaries. Hence, the dissatisfaction of these masses and the disintegration of the Democratic and Center parties.

The expropriation campaign still more intensified the disintegrating process. Large numbers of catholic workers and a considerable portion of the petty bourgeoisie proved to be militantly in favor of the Communist proposals for a plebiscite and for the expropriation of the princes despite the strenuous opposition of the Democratic and Centrist leaders.

When the results of the preliminary referendum become known, showing 12½ million votes in favor of the plebiscite, the official organ of the Center party, the "Germania", wrote the following on the 21st of March: "In spite of the counter-propaganda of all the bourgeois parties, broad sections of bourgeois electors have taken part in the referendum." And then the paper asks: "How far does the moral authority of our party (Center) still reach today, how far do the masses of our electors follow the official party slogan?"

It goes without saying that the Communist Party of Germany took proper account of the general dissatisfaction of the petty bourgeois elements and of the catholic workers, and by its agitation among these elements contributed greatly toward the further disintegration of the bourgeois "republican" parties. In the Communist campaign literature great attention is devoted to the small peasants and city petty bourgeoisie. The following are some of the slogans employed:

"Small peasants, middle class people, fight with us!"

"The Monarchists Are Lying About the Expropriation of the Toiling Middle Class Elements."

"Learn the Truth—Vote Yes on June 20th.—Join Hands with the Workers."

The result of the preliminary referendum showed that the Communist agitation among these elements was very successful.

(Concluded next month.)

The Red Army--Fighter and Educator

By Jack Herbert

THE Red Army—what worker does not feel a thrill when he pronounces these words. For in the past eight years, the Red Army has been the living symbol of the struggle for a new life. And just as to the worker the Red Army is a force of hope and struggle, so to the bourgeois the Red Army is a sign of his own speedy downfall. The Red Army has entrenched itself in the hearts of the working class thru its heroic deeds in defence of the first Workers' Republic. These same Reds have implanted fear in the hearts of the bourgeoisie. Such deeds as the Red Army has performed have very seldom been equalled and never surpassed in the history of mankind. Fighting with the poorest of weapons against powerful opponents supplied with all the instruments of war that capitalism could devise; fighting on a dozen fronts at one time, the Red Army has emerged triumphant in spite of all these tremendous difficulties. It has successfully defended the Workers' Republic against all enemies, whether they came in the uniform of Deniken, or in the uniform of the American army. The working class will never forget such heroic courage as was displayed by the Red Army at Perekop, in the Crimea, where they accomplished what all experts had termed the impossible and drove Wrangel and the British capitalists into the Black Sea. Nor will the working class forget the five thousand mile struggle against Kolchak which resulted in clearing Siberia of all counter-revolutionists. The Red Army fired the working class of the entire world to renewed hope and renewed struggle.

The Red Army Shows How to Win Power.

But the Red Army has a still further significance than the defender of the proletarian revolution in Russia. It demonstrated to the working class better than a thousand propaganda speeches could how to win the power from the bourgeoisie. All the pacifist rhetoric of the McDonalds, Longuets and other "leaders" of the workers crumbled into dust before the living achievements of the Red soldiers of the Workers' State. The class-conscious working class now knows that the way to meet the armed forces of the bourgeoisie is with the armed forces of the proletariat; that against the white army of the capitalists must be mobilized the Red Army of the workers. And the working class not only knows this, but is preparing to utilize this knowledge for the same purpose that the Russian workers did.

What Is the Red Army?

Thus the working class of the entire world is concerned with the answer to the question "How did the Red Army succeed against such great odds?" A week spent with the Red Army will go a long way toward answering that question. The answer is that the Red Army is not a mere fighting machine. It is an advanced section of the toiling masses, which makes decisions, educates its members and spreads the political doctrines for which it is fighting to all with whom it comes into contact—both friends and enemies. In short, it is a conscious, well-organized, well-trained organ of the working class. It succeeds where the armies of the bourgeoisie fail—because these latter are simply so many automatons carrying out orders, many times against their will. The slogan in the capitalist armies is: "His is not to reason why. His is but to do and die." In the Red Army, the soldiers know what they are fighting for, and they are just as ready to give their lives for that cause outside the army. Such an army is unconquerable.

The Red Army and the World's Workers.

Its members know the international significance of the Red Army and are therefore very interested followers of international events and are very anxious to maintain contact with the revolutionary movement of other countries. And when it was learned that someone from the American Young Workers (Communist) League was in Moscow, I was immediately invited to pay them a visit and to exchange experiences, as well as to establish closer contact with the League. Here it must be explained that the Young Communist International is the "chief," the patron of the Budenny Army and the American League is the patron of the Artillery Division. I gladly accepted the invitation and a more interesting and educational week I never spent in my life.

The Red Army as an Educational Organ.

The first thing that impresses one about the Red Army is not its martial display, but rather its educational display. And precisely this is the outstanding feature of the Red Army. It is as much an educational organization as a military force. The barracks are furnished and decorated as no barracks in America are. Every battery has its Lenin room, which is a reading room, library, etc. On the table are newspapers and magazines. On shelves along the wall

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are neatly piled books. The walls are covered with all kinds of posters, pictures and the various issues of the wall newspaper. The room is most comfortable and attractive and provides means which had hitherto been inaccessible to most of the men.

The Elimination of Illiteracy.

Since 80 per cent of the soldiers in the Red Army come from the peasant class, it is natural that one of the most important tasks from an educational standpoint is the elimination of illiteracy. And this is done in a thoro and efficient manner. No soldier who leaves the Red Army is unable to read and write. He further has some knowledge of the other subjects. While I was with them, graduation exercises were held for 55 men who were graduating from the illiteracy class. They were peasants who had joined the army some five months previously and were now already able to read and write. This speedy education in the elements is a tribute to the officers (commanders, they are called) who are many times more capable of performing this task than the average village schoolmaster.

Science and Politics.

The education of the soldiers is not discontinued when they have learned the three R's. It is continued even more extensively, since now they are much more capable of learning. The Red Army soldiers are also given a thoro political and scientific education. I have heard them discuss "evolution" for instance (somebody please page Dayton), in a more intelligent manner than many American college students I have have met. They are taught economics, politics and even international affairs. They display a keen interest in the doings of the rest of the world. They never tired of asking questions about America—about the condition of the working class, the work of the party and of the League and the prospects of the revolutionary movement. Particularly did they ask questions about the Passaic strike. Was it true that the police were clubbing men, women and children, throwing strikers into jail, and even using tear bombs to break up the picket line? Just as it did with these men, so the Passaic strike has gone a long way toward destroying the illusion of democratic America among the European workers.

Vocational Training.

There are also classes in vocational subjects, especially in agriculture. Most of the soldiers come from farms where only the most primitive machinery had ever been used and where there was absolutely no application of scientific farming—where the peasants did what their forefathers had done before them for a hundred years back. And the returning Red soldiers,

bringing back with them knowledge of agriculture never dreamed of by their primitive elders, will be a revolutionary factor in increasing the productivity of the Russian land and changing the methods of living.

Voluntary Education.

All this learning is compulsory. It is just as much part of the Red Army program as learning to shoot, to ride a horse and to operate a battery. A greater amount of time is devoted to this, indeed, than to the purely military aspects of soldiering. In addition, however, there are voluntary groups, study circles, which, on their own initiative, take up more than is required—and they do it in their spare time. Thus on Sundays and holidays, instead of gambling, hunting women or simply wasting time—the usual diversion in bourgeois armies—most of the men are engaged in some form of activity that will enhance their knowledge and their usefulness in a workers' society. There are political circles which study more advanced subjects—Imperialism, Capital, etc. There are circles which specialize in literature, drama. There is even a dramatic group which has already produced several plays—and most of its members have never been inside of a theatre. There are also quite a number who are interested in more advanced military problems. Thus one group is making a special study of military photography and another of field telephoning. And all these activities are purely voluntary. The men are not required to engage in them. They follow these pursuits in their spare time. Is there another army in the world where these things are done? Assuredly not. And it is precisely for these reasons that the Red Army is able to conquer stronger and better equipped forces.

The Red Soldier and the Village.

What effect this educational activity of the Red Army has on the country can be readily conceived. The soldiers returning to their little villages in turn become teachers. They bring the spirit of the regeneration of the world thru the power of the working class into the most remote and backward parts of the vast territory of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics. As a factor for the elimination of illiteracy, it is at least equal to the best schools that could be established. As an enlightening force in town and village it has no rival. And as the builder of a new Russia it is making great strides forward.

Relations Within the Red Army.

Like its activities, the man-to-man relations, the discipline in the Red Army are different. There is none of that iron, machine-like, un-

questioning discipline that we have in the bourgeois armies. The relation between commanders and men is the relation between workers and the committees they have selected to direct and manage the tasks that they must fulfill. It is a comrade-to-comrade relation. The discipline in the Red Army is firmer, stronger than in any bourgeois army. But it is entirely different. Here the discipline is voluntary and self-imposed. Take the salute for instance. In the American Army, a soldier or officer must salute his superior under any circumstances, whether on K. P. duty or walking along 5th Ave. with his sweetheart. To the soldier it is degrading and humiliating, a reminder of his inferior condition and of the power of the ones above him to do with him as they will. In the Red Army, the salute is required between one soldier and another only when some official duty is being transacted. When off duty, or even when on duty, no salute is required. It is purely voluntary. When one Red Army man salutes another, whether officer or private, it is merely the equivalent of "hello." So it is with other formalities which in bourgeois armies exists simply to create a chasm between officers and men and preserve the "caste" system.

The personal relations are just as simple. There is absolutely no distinction drawn between commanders and privates. Both are in the same study circles. Both participate in the same extra-army activity. Commanders and men live in the same barracks and use the same study-room, library and books. Many a time we have all sat on the bare ground outside the barracks discussing every problem under the sun. And the commander of the division sat side by side with a private, a peasant from Georgia or a meal worker from Leningrad, discussing with them, arguing—learning.

Red Army and Civilian Population.

Just as the relations within the Red Army are different, so are the relations between the Red Army and the population in the neighborhood of the barracks different. Not merely the official relations, but the personal relations, the social relations. The children from the village run freely about the barracks and play with the soldiers. During parades and manoeuvres, the entire village turns out to the parade ground to review the exercises. The Red Army Club (housed in what was formerly a church attached to the barracks—in the days of the czar) is used just as much by the population for meetings, theaters, affairs, etc. And during every affair given by the soldiers there are always more civilians present. (Admission is always free). At the celebration of the 6th Anniversary of the Budenny Army, there were speakers representing the town Soviet, the village Soviet, the rail-

way workers, C. P. and Y. C. L. Officially, relations are just as cordial. The Red Army is not entirely cut off from the life of the region, as is the case with bourgeois armies. On the contrary, the army, thru its representatives participates in the government of the town and county. It sends representatives to the semi-annual Congress of Soviets and there are frequent joint meetings between the Bureau of the Division and the Executive Committee of the Soviet to take up problems which concern both.

Do the Soldiers Like the Red Army?

Do the soldiers like the Red Army. Of the 6000 men in the division, there was not one who answer that question in the negative. A typical answer was given by one peasant from the Caucasus. "Before I came to the Red Army I could neither read nor write. I had never been outside of my native village. I had never met anybody from another country, and never heard from the outside world. The Red Army has changed all that for me. Yes, I am going back to work on the farm. I like that work. But the first thing I do when I get back is subscribe to the "Pravda" (official organ of the Communist Party.) I will have books sent to me. I will use the knowledge I have acquired here and I will teach others what I myself have learned. And I am going to organize a unit of the Communist Party in my village." And the many others who stood around while he spoke were unanimous in their agreement with him. There can be no doubt that to the soldiers the Red Army is a wonderful place, and they would not willingly miss their two years of service. This in spite of the fact that their pay is only one rouble and 20 kopecks per month. (They receive cigarettes and tobacco and such things free). They laughed when I told them that in America they pay the soldiers \$30.00 per month. "Why, that is a professional army," they said, "and it must be a pretty rotten life if it is necessary to pay the soldiers so high." This is the spirit of the Red Army soldiers. And this spirit dominates their work and finds vocal expression. If one is anywhere within hearing distance of the barracks, he can always hear the soldiers singing—from the Budenny March to the native Georgian or Ukrainian folk-songs.

So the Red Army works and studies, always ready to shed its blood in defense of the workers' revolution. The American League should be very proud of being the chief of part of the Red Army—of the Budenny Army which destroyed Denikin, smashed Polish militarism, drove Wrangel into the sea and annihilated Makhno. It made history in these glorious victories over the enemies of the Soviets. And today it is making history no less in the rebuilding of new Russia—the Russia of the workers and peasants.

The Youth of the Russian Trade Unions

By Gertrude Brown

THE Russian labor movement has indeed achieved a miracle! It is today the most advanced in the world yet trade unionism as such had no existence in Russia until more than a century after their organization in the western countries—that is until 1905. Up to that time there were many desperate collisions between the workers and the employers, in Russia, but every attempt at organization and concerted action was ruthlessly suppressed. Not until the 1905 revolution did organization on a large scale take place, and then only to be wiped out again during the reaction.

Belated Industrialism of Russia.

Besides the rigid oppressive policy of the governmental bureaucracy, the backwardness of industrial development of Russia must be taken into consideration to explain the lack of trade unions. During the nineteenth century factories employing more than a thousand workers were few and far between, the urban population was small, and a large percentage of these city workers were legally still under the restrictions applying to the village peasant. In fact, the worker was in many cases a fifty-fifty factory hand and agriculturist.

But with the latter part of the nineteenth century the industrial spirit begins to pervade the country. By 1900, industry forms 21% of the national economy. Large factories become more numerous. It is estimated that there were three million workers employed in manufacture, mining and transportation. There is a large increase in the city population engaged in the building of railroads, development of the textile industry, the oil industry, with large mechanical and chemical plants. Correspondingly there takes place a boom in the building trades. And we now get a working population totally dependent on factory employment.

Labor Conditions.

The government recognized no labor problem. Yet the working conditions were miserable in the extreme. The hours were usually twelve or more. The wages were unspeakably low, with no regular pay-day on which payment was required. In many cases as high as forty per cent of what was due the workmen was deducted in fines imposed at the discretion of the employer. The rest might be paid in kind from company-owned stores. Collective bargaining was prohibited by law. Sanitary conditions in the factories were appalling. The living quarters of the workers defy description—mere barracks, "wooden benches instead beds, gloomy low ceilings, sooty gray walls, stale air, dirty floors, filthy little pillows on the benches and the odor of sweat and unclean lavatories. When it rains, the water covers the floors two inches deep. Or workers might have to sleep in

the factories themselves, men, women and children side by side on wooden benches. Employers were required to furnish some medical aid and were subject to fine for breaking a contract with a worker. But who would enforce the laws? The authorities were by no means anxious to do so.

If a worker broke a contract with an employer, he was subject to imprisonment. Agitation in favor of strikes was severely punished. The criminal code of 1874 stated:

"Persons accused of belonging to societies having the aims of rousing hostility between employers and workers as well as provoking strikes are liable to imprisonment for eight months with deprivation of rights and property and exile to Siberia." And this law was most rigidly enforced.

Strike and Labor Disturbances—Factory Legislation.

Under these conditions clashes between the workers on the one side and the employers and government authorities on the other were frequent and bitter. Moreover, much to the advantage of the Russian labor movement, the open, legal hostility of the government served to make every economic demonstration a political offense. There were great waves of strikes in the seventies, in the eighties, and again in the nineties. These resulted in some remedial legislation—a law prohibiting the employment of children under twelve, another limiting the imposition of fines, regulating the hiring of workers, and prohibiting night work for women in some industries. The great strike of 35,000 textile workers in 1896 resulted in the first limitation of hours for adult factory workers to 11¼ hours by day, and ten at night.

It is apparent that every improvement obtained was wrested from the government bureaucracy through courageous and bitter struggle. The disturbances of 1899-1900 were widespread and caused untold suffering among the workers. As a result they were granted the right to elect "monitors" in the factories to deal with the employers. But this could only be done where the employer consented and the latter was quite free to discharge the workers' representatives. The effect of this concession was therefore nugatory as was that of many others.

It strikes one with surprise to note that during the ten years between 1895-1904 Russia had more labor disturbances than any other country except England, as the following figures suggest:

	Number of disturbances	Workers involved
England	4,533	1,270,864
France	1,998	301,456
Russia	1,765	431,254

Yet all this resulted in no permanent trade unions. It is instructive to contrast this with the situation in

the western countries, America for example. During the nineteenth century the labor movement passed through a tremendous development in the United States. It is estimated that in the twenties there were labor parties in at least fifteen states, with about fifty labor papers; in 1836 there were almost 200 trade unions in the five largest cities, with a total membership of 300,000 in the seaboard states. During this year and the next at least five separate trades held national conventions. By 1868 the eight-hour day was granted to government employees and, in 1872, to a portion of the building trades after a successful strike. During the eighties the trade union membership was swelled to over a million. There was subsequently a fall in the number, but since the Civil War the trade unions in America have been an established fact.

Early Russian Labor Organization.

Although, as has been stated, bona fide, class-conscious trade unions came into existence in Russia only with the removal of the legal restrictions during the 1905 revolution—the gigantic labor struggles which took place during the nineteenth century would not have been possible without organizations of workmen in some form. For, while some of them, it is true, were elemental outbursts, spontaneous in origin, others were well organized strikes, with careful secret previous preparation. The chief organs to take active part in this work were the economic committees of the social-democratic party, which devoted a great deal of its energy and time to the economic struggle, and which, it has well been said, "stood at the cradle of the trade union movement."

Other groups were organizations in the form of benefis societies, mutual aid and death and burial societies, which included chiefly members of the working class, but also small employers, and other petty-bourgeois elements. These societies were particularly numerous in Poland and the Baltic provinces. Their purpose was to render assistance to its members in the form of medical care for the sick, financial assistance to widows and orphans, funeral benefits, loans, etc. . . . As early as 1838 the Petrograd compositors, printers, and lithographers founded their benefit societies. In Moscow they came somewhat later. It is estimated that in the nineties there were 11 printers' mutual aid societies in a number of towns, 15 craftsmen societies, 54 burial societies including all classes, and some shop assistants' societies with employers as honorary members. At the same time there were, in the Baltic provinces, 98 working men's benefit societies, and 113 burial societies including all classes. government permitted these organizations to exist but took care that they restricted their activities to those of the mutual aid type. Any tendency towards class-conscious economic action was quickly and effectively suppressed. Moreover, the funds of these societies were under the supervision of the finance minister. This in itself was a sufficient safeguard in a large number of cases.

Of more importance than those mentioned above were the strike funds and embryonic trade unions organized by the social-democrats which carried on, illegally perforce, the activities of organizing strikes, establishing

libraries among workmen, and also some mutual aid. The earliest strike fund society was formed in Vilna in 1888 among stocking knitters, tailors and workers of the paper and boot trades. In 1894 the Jewish Workers' Federation of Warsaw, organized such funds for several trades.

These methods proved quite successful. Thus, in Minsk four illegal "trade unions" existed with 220 members, in Vilna 12 funds were established representing 850 workers of 27 different trades. In 1900, of the total number of Jewish workers in Bielostock 20% were organized in these societies, in Gomel near 40%, and in Minsk 35-40%. Attempts to crush these organizations proved unsuccessful, others soon arising in place of those persecuted. The government became alarmed at this close union of the workers with the social-democrats and decided that some "legitimate" outlet had to be provided for discontented workers.

"Legal" (Yellow) Unions.

Yellow, or "legal" unions were the attempted solution. Trepov, the chief of police in Moscow, evolved a scheme by which the workers were to be permitted, under government supervision, to organize "unions," and discuss their grievances. This was to do away with the "dangerous" situation which he well describes in his report: "success in the struggle rouses a confidence in their (workers') strength . . . trains and brings to the front able leaders . . . and develops a consciousness for the necessity of the class struggle." The yellow unions, on the other hand, were to "care for the interests of labor." But improvements were to be obtained by grace of the bureaucracy, political questions were to be scrupulously eschewed, and the vicious bureaucracy was to be assumed to be the permanent and very best possible government. Such unions were established in 1902 in Moscow, and somewhat later in Minsk and Odessa. But how disappointing were the results!

The bureaucrats found that it was easy enough to get the workers into these organizations—many were unaware the government was backing them—but once having set the masses into motion, it was much more difficult to hold them in check. The workers proceeded to turn these yellow unions into real fighting organizations. Olgin quotes the following plaint of a government inspector: "The result of the establishment of the new organization was a series of strikes far greater in number than any experienced before, together with a tremendous, unprecedented influx of complaints." Moreover, the employers bitterly resented the granting of even this concession to the workers and demanded dissolution of the unions. This was done—the "legal" unions were disbanded.

But the labor movement kept growing. It was evident even to the obtuse Russian bureaucracy that the workers were in a mood to act on their own initiative. So a second attempt was made to organize government unions in 1904, and these proved even more "unsuccessful" for the bureaucracy than the previous one.

For, though organized under the protection of the minister of the interior, von Plehve, with pious bureaucratic intentions, they became the center of the labor

movement in Petrograd in 1905. To go back, they were organized with the object of "arousing and strengthening national consciousness among the workers." Father Gapon (whose original intentions are not clearly known) was put at the head of the eleven branches formed. The story of the tremendous strike which developed out of objections of some employers to their workers joining these unions is well known. Sympathetic walk-outs followed, until 140,000 workers in Petrograd were out on strike. As attempts at settlement failed, Father Gapon conceived the idea of direct appeal to the czar. The shambles that followed as a result of this misplaced confidence of the workers in the "Little Father" have gone down in history as Bloody Sunday, January 22, 1905, (old date), and is the first act in the drama of the momentous revolution of 1905, which is a milestone in the history of labor organization.

Trade Unions in 1905-1907.

During the stormy days of January-December, 1905, when one wave of strikes followed the other, the organization of trade unions proceeded at a rapid tempo.

Organization. The first to be formed was a large printers' union. Then followed the organization of clerks and bookkeepers, watchmakers, tailors, tanners and boot and shoe workers at a secret meeting in Moscow. In September, during a printers' strike in the same city, a council of delegates was formed which later became a bona fide trade union. In the spring of 1905, the Bolsheviks had organized a bakers' union whose founders became leaders in the labor movement. These efforts were duplicated all over Russia, strenuous attempts being made to utilize every demonstration for organizational effects, until by the beginning of 1906 every large town in the country had its trade union, the total membership being 200,000.

Attempt at a national center. The organizations formed in haste, spontaneously, during great upheaval, were of diverse structure and little connected. In order that permanent gains be achieved a national connecting center was seen to be indispensable, and at a meeting of trade union representatives in Kharkoff the call was sent out for a national conference. The delegates met in Moscow a little later, but as only ten representatives were present from outside of the city, a second call for a national conference was decided upon. In the meantime careful preparatory work for this was to be done. The second conference again emphasized the need of a national center. It furthermore decided to continue to organize trade unions in the face of the government prohibition, and to establish connections with European labor organizations. It is significant to note the clear class-conscious note displayed in the call issued for these

conferences. They invited "such mutual aid societies and trade unions which were composed of wage workers of all trades of a proletarian character and which are directly or indirectly aiming at fighting capital." The Zubatov (yellow) unions were excluded, and in the case of mixed unions, only the proletarian sections could participate.

Results. Besides the incalculable value of the demonstration of the workers' solidarity and remarkable organizing ability displayed in 1905, there was, concretely, as a result a trade union in every industrial center, with the total membership about 200,000, the peak of organization up to that time.

1907—1917.

But the defeat of the revolution meant also the defeat of the trade unions. The government initiated a policy of ruthless oppression in 1907, with the purpose of completely destroying the unions. The law passed at the time prohibited them from aiding strikers or intervening in the strike movement in any way. Police sat in at all meetings, and on the slightest pretexts the organizations were disrupted, their treasuries looted, books destroyed, executives exiled to Siberia. A police report for 1907 states that during that year alone 104 trade unions were "closed down." The reasons assigned for this persecution run anywhere from participating in revolutionary propaganda to criticizing the unfair discharge of some worker, opening a library without permission, taking part in the campaign for the election of some member to the Duma, or simply for unknown reasons.

Some unions managed to persist, reorganizing after being disrupted. But in the main there were no live unions from the end of the 1905 revolution till the March revolution of 1917. During the industrial revival of 1912-13 some promise of increased union activity was shown, but before this could be realized, the war came and wiped out practically the entire movement, so that in the first part of 1917 there were three trade unions with a total membership of 1500. The significant development of the Russian trade union movement took place after the overthrow of the monarchy and particularly after the November (Bolshevik) revolution. This period will be dealt with in a subsequent article.

The following comparative table for Russia and America is appended as suggestive:

	RUSSIA	AMERICA
1836	small numbers not	300,000
1886	strictly trade unions	1,000,000
1905	200,000	1,050,000 A. F. of L. only
1917, June	1,500,000	3,050,000
1926	7,000,000	4,000,000 (total)

Agrarian Relations in America

By N. Ossinsky

(Continued from last month.)

6. Is the "Climbing" Becoming More Difficult and Why?

THE question is not whether the "ladder" exists. No one can deny this. The question is whether it is "used" as frequently as formerly. If we examine the farmers according to their age, it becomes apparent that the number of young people has diminished among the owners and increased among the tenants. In other words, it is becoming more difficult for young people to enter the "sacred temple of property" and, in general, it is becoming more difficult to "climb," even for old people. If we take farmers of over 53, we find that in 1890 only 14.7 per cent of them were tenants, while in 1920 the proportion was 19.4 per cent. The war has slowed-up this process, but the tendency is clear.

On the basis of such observations the official census report comes to the conclusion that "permanent tenancy" is on the increase in the United States and that tenancy in the corn belt is growing in every way.

Why is the "climbing" growing more difficult? We find this question answered in the material supplied by the Department of Agriculture (Year Book, 1923) concerning the farmers of twenty-five states. The official investigations include: (1) the average prices of farms in 25 states; (2) the average yield of the farms; (3) the per cent of mortgages in these states.

As to the conditions of the farmer who bought his farm on instalments and has mortgaged it, the Department of Agriculture has the following to say: "In none of the investigated regions, except in the Pennsylvania district, is the farmer in the position to spend six hundred dollars a year for himself and expect at the same time to liquidate his mortgage in ten years—that is, unless his original payment was large, much larger than usual." In Illinois, in the heart of the good agricultural territory, it takes **twenty years** for a farmer to complete the payments on his farm if his initial payment is one-third or less. To complete payments sooner means to cut deep into the income of his family.

As to the conditions of the tenant who aims at accumulating enough money to become an "owner," the Department of Agriculture gives an even sadder picture. "How much time is needed to accumulate the first payment for the rest to be paid off in twenty years?" (Here it is already 20 and not 10 years.) "Figures show that only in Pennsylvania is it possible to accumulate anything under such conditions. In all other regions it is impossible. Counting \$600 for his own expenses and those of his family and deducting the interest on the mortgage for the whole farm, he will be left with a yearly deficit of from \$13 to \$1,132."

The Department of Agriculture maintains that if the tenant wants to become a proprietor in spite of everything he must do one of the following five things: (1)

increase the yield of the farm; (2) pay rent lower than the interest on the mortgage; (3) obtain the initial capital from the outside and not as a result of his labor and frugality; (4) spend less than \$600 a year for living expenses; or (5) utilize the labor of his family "without wages."

All this, of course, is possible to a greater or lesser extent. But does it not prove, first, that the "ladder" is here entirely broken down and, secondly, that the American farmer is approaching very close to the European peasant with his stinting his own family for the benefit of the land monopolist? The discussion of the Department of Agriculture concludes: "Thru one of these means a great number of tenants succeed . . . making their first payments. . . . On the other hand, the analysis of the figures shows that under average conditions this process has become very difficult in many parts of the United States."

What is responsible for this breaking down of the "ladder"? More than everything else the **increase in the price of land**. In general, it can be said that the dearer land is the fewer chances has the tenant of becoming full proprietor.

Two forces operate in this direction.

a. If prices rise quickly, then the proprietor wants to keep his land and, if he does not work on it himself, he rents it out to a tenant (for a short term—as we have seen). If the prices rise quickly the proprietor incorporates future **increases** in the price of his land, and so the price becomes ever more inflated. There therefore arises a great difference between the yield that the proprietor could get from the soil by **working on it** and the "value" that arises from **speculation** on the general increase in land prices. The produce that the tenants obtain comes from only one source: **his labor on the land**. But the rent he pays is of a **double nature**: (1) "production rent" and (2) "speculation rent." It is evident that from **production** alone the tenant can never accumulate enough capital to buy land at its **speculative price**. (This is especially noticeable in Iowa, where the increase in land prices has taken place with unusual rapidity.)

b. More important, however, is another factor. The **absolute price of a farm** is becoming so high that it becomes impossible to buy any land. According to the census of 1920 the average price of a farm in the United States is \$12,084 (soil and buildings amount to 85 per cent). In the best agricultural areas the price of a farm is \$25,517; in second class sections the price is \$15,898. In 9 per cent of the counties of the United States a farm cannot be obtained under \$85,000 and in 3 per cent under \$50,000. Of course the inflation of prices was partly due to the war and now they are relatively lower, but it is clear why it is ever more difficult for a tenant to mount the "ladder."

7. Growth of Tenancy According to Time and Place.

The following table (Table 5) gives a picture of this development.

Table V.

	(in thousands)				
	1880	1890	1900	1910	1920
All farmers	4,009	4,565	5,737	6,362	6,448
Tenants	1,025	1,295	2,025	2,355	2,455
Tenants (%)	25.6%	28.4%	35.3%	37.0%	38.1%

This table shows that in forty years the percentage of tenancy has risen greatly: it was 25% in the year 1880, 38.1% in 1920. At this time the percentage must certainly be still higher. Especially great was the rise of tenancy between the years 1890 and 1900 because that decade was marked by a fall in the price of land owing to the general over-production then beginning to be felt in the United States.

The growth of tenancy according to place is expressed in Table 6.

Table VI.

	(in thousands)				
	1880	1890	1900	1910	1920
Atlantic Coast	112	121	141	119	100
No. and Cen. Regions	347	450	612	647	679
South	554	706	1,232	1,537	1,591
West	12	18	40	53	84

In the **Atlantic States** the price of land has recently fallen quite a good deal (competition of the more favorable regions in the North Central States and the West). For this reason it has become much easier there to purchase a farm. In general farming plays an ever smaller role in that industrial section. The number of tenants has fallen. In the **North Central States** (wheat and corn belt) tenancy has shown a rise both absolute and relative—until now it takes in one-third of all the farmers. In the **South**, where a portion of the former slave plantations had been divided up into smaller portions and rented to the Negroes, tenancy had reached fifty percent. In the decade from 1910 to 1920 the growth of tenancy abated owing to the exodus of Negroes to the northern industrial centers.

This development becomes especially clear when it is compared with that of Canada, so close a neighbor of the United States. There the proportion of tenancy has kept falling regularly: in 1891—15.4 per cent; in 1901—12.9 per cent; in 1911—11.4 per cent; in 1921—7.9 per cent. Canada still has great land reserves—and the "rent sharks" have not succeeded as yet in laying their claws on them.

8. Tenants Paying in Kind.

If we want to understand the agricultural conditions of the generality of tenants, if we want to understand the significance of the domination of the land owner over the land worker, we must realize that there are various groups of tenants. Chief among these groups are: **tenants paying a definite money rent, and tenants**

paying a share of the produce ("share-tenants"). The first class own their own tools, machines, horses, seeds, etc. The farmer who belongs to this class is entirely independent of the land owner; therefore his risk is greater (in case of bad crops or low prices) and he pays less in rent than the share-tenant. The latter does not own his own means of production—he receives all of them from the owner who also keep his eye out that the farm should be worked in the proper way. In such a case the owner generally receives two-thirds of the produce, the share tenant one-third. Of course, in the case where the share tenant has his own tools and seeds he pays less, usually one-third.

Croppers are that type of share tenants in the South (usually Negroes) who receive everything from the owner, often even food. As a result, they are practically the slaves of the planters and yield up to them the greatest part of the cotton. In 1920, the number of these croppers was 561,000—that is, almost a third of all the tenants in the South and approximately 23% of all the tenants in the country. The farms of the croppers are very small: altho they make up 23% of all the tenants they own no more than 8.5% of all the tenant land. Their farms are on the average 40.2 acres. They are in fact the serfs of the southern lords altho nominally they are free.

If we exclude the South and consider the share tenancy in the northern agricultural areas we get the following facts:

Table VII.

	(in thousands.)				
	1880	1890	1900	1910	1920
All Tenants	159	571	753	765	779
Share Tenants and Mixed Tenants	321	371	479	482	526
Share and Mixed Tenants (%)	69.9%	65.0%	63.6%	63.0%	67.5%
Share Tenants only				395	423
Share Tenants only (%)				51.6%	54.3%

This table shows: (1) that share tenancy, pure and mixed, occupies the greatest place in the northern agricultural center (approximately two-thirds); (2) that from 1890 to 1910 the percentage of share tenancy was on the decrease; afterwards, after 1910, it began to grow again and reached a higher level than in 1890; (3) that the amount of pure share tenancy has also grown. Share tenancy as a whole occupied in 1920 about 72.2% of all the lands held in tenancy in that region.

What do these figures show? They show that between 1910 and 1920 it became particularly difficult for the tenant to rise on the agricultural "ladder," that he was more and more compelled to fall back on share tenancy, that he became more and more dependent on the owner, developing into nothing more than an official of his, in the best of cases—his partner. A large part of this was the result of the war-time high prices of agricultural machinery, but even more was this a result of the war time growth in land prices which forced up rent to a higher degree.

9. Various Groups of Tenants.

The lowest rank among tenants is occupied by the croppers who are hardly any freer than the slaves of the old times and whose wages are much smaller than the wages of ordinary hired labor. Such croppers are also found in the North. They pay two-thirds or a third of the produce.

The next group are the average tenants who no longer hope to become owners and who aspire only to have enough to eat for themselves and the family. These might be called the professional tenants on the type of the European peasant . . .

The third group is the middle peasant who hopes to become an owner, who is "climbing the ladder." He has a little capital that he brought in when he became a tenant. He frequently changes his farms, always looking for larger and better ones. He absolutely refuses to remain a permanent tenant. Whether he pays cash or a portion of his produce—he always is "climbing."

The fourth group is made of middle and large enterprisers. A member of this group does not as a rule work himself. He manages a large agricultural enterprise in which he has invested his capital. The land is hired because he has not enough capital to buy land and because he finds it more profitable to invest his capital in machines, cattle and other stock. Naturally, a member of the third group aspires to reach the fourth in which we find cash tenants as well as share tenants.

The fifth group is at the opposite pole of the cropper. They are the partial tenants who themselves own land; only they hire more land to increase their economy. They are largely capitalists, middle and large. Their tenancy is no sign of dependence; it is a result of their

desire to broaden their own capitalist enterprises.

These are the facts. What is their social and political significance?

In recent years the farmer movement has grown in America. If we want to understand its roots, its character and its necessary aims as well as the prospects for an alliance between this movement and the struggle of the industrial proletariat, we must investigate basically the relations of production in modern American agriculture. This also gives us the possibility of seeing the class divisions among the American farmers. We also come to see clearly the role that the various strata can play not only now but also in the whole of the future. The work necessary in this direction was begun by Lenin in his work: "New Data on the Laws of Capitalist Development in Agriculture." We have attempted to go a little further in the direction he has pointed out. We have given our attention exclusively to only one field of the relations of production, the land relations. But this is an exceedingly important field, the land question in the country districts being that question about which the class struggle breaks out first of all. In this connection the United States is no exception. Hitherto, the chief characteristic of the struggle has been the fact that the growing class of "rent takers" kept on grabbing the land at the expense of the direct agricultural producers or the direct managers of the agricultural process. Now the struggle is taking on the character of an outspoken struggle of the direct producers and partly of the direct managers of the agricultural process (that is, tenants of a petty bourgeois and bourgeois type) for the return of the soil and for the removal of rent which acts as a fetter on the forces of production.

The Railroad Employees' Department Convention

(Continued from page 451)

the employers. It is now the task of the left wing to endeavor to bring about such a policy through mass pressure of the rank and file against the leadership.

The railroad workers must be stimulated and organized to voice their demands for a general increase in wages. The effective promulgation of this slogan will put heart and life into the whole railroad labor movement. Then the campaign to organize the unorganized must be seriously taken in hand, by demanding the formation of a national organizing committee of all trades and by setting up local and system organizing committees to push forward with the work. The special task of the T. U. E. L. at this time is to mobilize the left wing and progressive forces around the central struggle for better wages and substantial trade union organization.

Meanwhile, a developing fight must be organized against the entire class collaboration program of the bureaucrats, manifested by the Watson-Parker Law, B. & O. Plan, trade union capitalism, etc. The passage of the Watson-Parker Law increases the menace of class collaboration. No doubt the tendency will be strengthened for the trade union bureaucrats and the companies to agree upon a degenerated form of trade unionism based primarily upon the principles of company unionism. It is the great task of the left wing to defeat this joint program of the bureaucrats and employers by mobilizing the masses in the unions for a militant struggle against the employers, for the organization of the unorganized, for the amalgamation of the trade unions, and for the formation of a Labor Party.

Reviews

MEHRING ON MARX.

"Karl Marx. Geschichte seines Lebens" von Franz Mehring. Vierte Auflage. Leipzig, 1923. xvi plus 544 p.

By AVROM LANDY.

THE biography of Karl Marx is the biography of a scientist and revolutionary, a man, as Kurt Eisner said, who thought in order to fight. "The philosophers," he once wrote, "have merely variously interpreted the world; the point, however, is to change it." That was the essential lesson of dialectics and the principle underlying the greater part of Marx's life. And therein lies the grandeur of the Marxian world-view, which, resting on the basis of scientific analysis, is a revolutionary theory for the purpose of revolutionary action.

Marx was the first of a type, iterated in Vladimir Ilyitch Lenin and Rosa Luxemburg, that has become the present representative of the historical future, namely, the Marxian revolutionary. And to the Marxian viewing the dynamics of society with the aid of Marxism, the dialectic process—and consequently the revolution—embodies the highest poetry of life. It is not hard to understand the comrade who said that to read a page of Capital was, for him, to experience a real esthetic emotion.

Irrespective of Marx's evergrowing historical significance, there is still no scientific Marx biography. Volume one of the Marx-Engels Archive, which devotes sixty pages to a bibliography of Marxism during and after the war, not including material published in Russian, mentions only about six larger biographies, one of which only, Franz Mehring's "Karl Marx," approximates an actual scientific biography. It is undoubtedly the best biography of Marx at present, but it is not yet the Marx biography. Kurt Eisner, it is true, claimed that in Franz Mehring's work "the world now has the first scientific biography of Karl Marx." But, in spite of the fact that Mehring knew Marx as few did, the basis for a scientific biography can only be a scientific edition of Marx's complete works, an edition which Mehring never lived to see and which we may not expect completed for almost another decade. In addition, Mehring's volume is deficient in many important respects.

Franz Mehring was the historian of the German Social Democracy, editor of the Marx-Engels Nachlass, co-editor of the Neue Zeit, author of many important studies, and a socialist of international repute. He died not long after the news of one of the most shameful crimes of world history, as he called the murder of his friends, Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg. His nerves were shattered and his health was undermined by the fact "that the greatest and most dauntless revolutionary energy of Germany, and the keenest woman's head together with the most gifted brain of the International, two of the noblest people, had fallen a prey to the unscrupulous blood orgies of a so-called socialist government."

Mehring's "Marx" is being translated or has already been translated into Dutch, Danish, Swedish, and Rus-



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sian. And according to the author of the preface to the second German edition, the Russian Soviet Government, which had appointed Mehring as a member of the Moscow Scientific Academy, and which, on the news of his death, had all the flags of the country lowered to half-mast, has undertaken the publication of a huge edition of the biography to be placed in every public library of Russia, now numbering more than ten thousand.

"Karl Marx: Story of His Life," dedicated to Klara Zetkin, "heirress of the Marxian spirit," was written with the advanced worker in view. As a result of this external pressure, as Mehring himself admitted, the analysis of Marx's scientific writings suffered. From the point of view of the worker, Mehring's analysis, including Rosa Luxemburg's analysis of the second and third volumes of Capital, which form the third section of Mehring's twelfth chapter, could not be better. They are written as only Mehring—and Rosa Luxemburg—could write. In fact, this analysis, published in a separate little volume, would make an excellent introduction to the various writings of Marx. But from the point of view of a scientific biography, the need for keeping a certain class of readers in view proved to be a defect.

The Marx of Mehring is Marx the man, the active revolutionary. It is not hard to see why Mehring would be attracted by this aspect of Marx. For Mehring, the Mehring who deprecated all slavish, Duntzer-like scholarship—in spite of the fact that his own work is the result of detailed investigation—and spoke with scorn of those Marx scholars who brooded for three or four decades over every comma in Marx—which we are to take as a stab at Riazanov—Mehring felt with Lassalle that he would be only too eager to leave unwritten what he knew if only the hour of practical action would strike. As Riazanov once pointed out, Mehring was never really the scientific investigator, never more than a Marxian publicist and "Politiker." Thus, one fails to find any adequate discussion of Marx's scientific theories, without which no scientific Marx biography can be complete.

And yet Mehring offers a fascinating portrait of Marx. A child of fortune, born at Trier in 1818, Marx's youth is spent in a carefree environment. As a youngster he falls in love with Jenny von Westphalen who very soon became his life companion. His parents send him to school and university, where, like Engels, he learns that he was not born for the muse; and the young Karl manifests an immense capacity and desire for work. He has little inclination for law, the profession of his father. Of forceful personality and biting tongue, of poetic fancy and the depth of a creative thinker, Marx breaks through his bourgeois environment, transcends his Young-Hegelian days, and, driven into exile, enters the path of the revolutionary, the herald of proletarian emancipation. Exile becomes his fate: from Paris to Brussels, from Brussels to London, where he remained for the rest of his life.

His position as editor of the Rheinische Zeitung leads him to a study of economics at the age of twenty-two. He proves himself to be a person of profound sincerity and iron conviction, unable to write the most insigni-

ficant thing without going thoroly into his subject. Later, when he came to write his "Capital," it was with the feeling that he ought not put pen to paper without having gone thru the last book of importance on the subject. And the three volumes of "Capital" are adequate testimony of the painstaking detail and encyclopedic thoroughness with which he worked.

Together with his wife, Marx experiences poverty and persecution, suffering hunger, disease and death, without ever being able to free himself from debt. Marx could have followed a profession and saved himself and his family from the fate of his London exile. And had it not been for his miserable handwriting, which kept him from receiving a position in some office, the proletariat would have been robbed of its only scientific weapon. Both Marx and Engels felt that Marx's place was in the British Museum where he labored at his life work for nearly eighteen years.

The death of a little son finds the family without the necessary burial money. A letter written on the 28th of July, 1855, reveals Marx's character as a father. "Bacon," he writes, "says that really significant people have so many connections with nature and the world, so many objects of interest, that they can easily stand every loss. I do not belong to these significant people. The death of my child has deeply shattered me in heart and brain, and I shall feel the loss as freshly as on the first day." Wilhelm Liebknecht's Reminiscences and Paul Lafargue's description of Marx published in the Neue Zeit, the former for the sixties, and the latter for the Marx of the seventies and early eighties, are very revealing in this respect.

Marx becomes a regular habitue of the pawnshop. On taking the family silver to be pawned, he is even arrested as a suspicious character and kept in jail over night. Care and creditors drive him to the restful quiet of the British Museum which becomes his asylum of freedom. For years he is submerged in studies, working day and night, reading literature in five or six different languages and studying mathematics as a diversion. Marx was not only widely read in all the great literatures of Europe, knowing whole passages of Shakespeare, Dante and Goethe by heart. Together with Engels, he was a superb linguist, learning Russian at fifty, and compelling all his friends to acquire as many languages as possible. Marx's letters, Capital, and especially Herr Vogt are evidence of Marx's profound knowledge of literature, ancient and modern.

He tries to eke out a living by writing for the press, in which Engels is of great help to him, as is shown by the many technical articles on military science published in the New American Cyclopaedia. He is forced to spend time and energy carrying on costly and aggravating politico-literary feuds. And he devotes ten of his best years to the International Workingmen's Association, which he helped to found in 1864. Towards the end his pecuniary position improves. Wilhelm Wolff, to whom Marx dedicated the first volume of Capital, leaves him a small legacy. Nevertheless, without the friendship and financial aid of Engels, who, because of Marx, gave some of his finest years to commerce, renouncing the claim to his own productive work that

Marx be allowed to work, Marx's life work would never have been accomplished.

In addition, the profoundest genius of the nineteenth century has the greatest difficulty in finding publishers for his work. What Marx said of science on the whole is certainly true of his own scientific efforts. "The product of intellectual labor—science—" he wrote in his "Theories of Surplus Value," "is, in fact, always greatly beneath its value, because the labor-time necessary to reproduce it is entirely out of proportion to the labor-time necessary for its original production; for example, the binomial theorem can be learned by a school-boy in an hour." Furthermore, so little of what is published is sold that it brings him but little financial remuneration. His work is ignored by the insignificant nonentities in the universities, only to be met by an avalanche of confused refutation and misrepresentation when these bourgeois mediocrities are finally forced to take notice of him. A glance at Werner Sombart's bibliography of Marxism, covering three hundred titles, reveals the quantity of anti-Marxian literature before the beginning of the present century. Persistent night work proves too much for Marx's health, and not long after the death of his wife, he passes away, only to live anew in every Marxian revolutionist. As Engels wrote to Sorge the day after Marx's death: "Humanity has been reduced a head and indeed, by the most significant head it has had today."

WE in America would do well to render Mehring's book into English. The few biographies of Marx we do possess are all short, aside from a translation of Max Beer's "Life and Teachings of Karl Marx," which, like the other biographies, is based on Mehring's earlier biographical introductions to the manuscripts published in his edition of Marx's Nachlass, as well as upon the work of other Marx investigators. Spargo's Marx, which was published in 1910, was called by Mehring "a worthless compilation," having taken his material from Mehring in such a manner as to make it even unreliable. The International Publishers have taken the praiseworthy step of having D. Riazanov's volume, "Marx and Engels" translated from the Russian, and it will probably appear in the Fall.

But Mehring's Marx should be in the possession of every comrade in the country. For not only is the biography of Marx of immense historical interest, but it also possesses a definite revolutionary value. Biography belongs to the youth, whether in age or spirit. And the biography of Marx will communicate the fire and the energy, the intensity and perseverance without which we cannot carry on the struggle to which he has given its scientific weapon. Marx was the greatest genius of the nineteenth century and to come in contact with an intellect and spirit of his magnitude, is not only to come in contact with the driving force of modern history, but to experience the meaning of human life.

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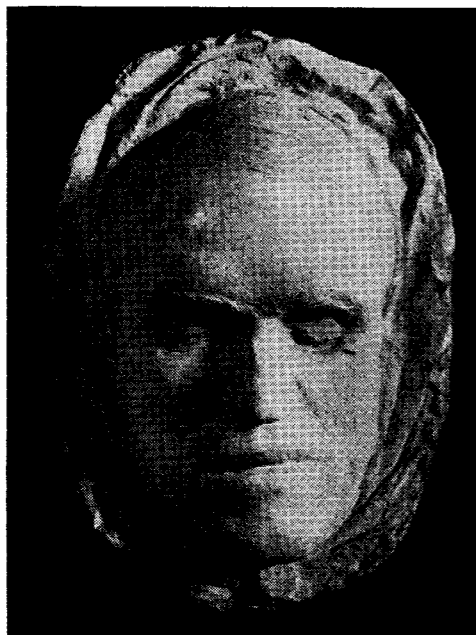
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ing both ignored and smothered. It is being ignored by the great mass of workers because they are not aware of its existence and it is being smothered by those who are filled with a fear of struggle. Heroic traditions are among the beacon lights of struggle.

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International Labor Defense, an organization whose interest in workers who fight the battles of their class passes over differences that divide them amongst themselves, has given the labor movement of this country a gift of great value. It has gotten out a special number of its organ, the "Labor Defender" and devoted it to the memory of Frank Little.

The cover-piece is a work of art. On a black background lays the death-mask of Frank Little. It is a

photograph of the actual cast. It is a thing of great beauty—the twisted mouth, the drooping left eye-lid, the projecting jaw signifying bravery to the very end of the horrible death inflicted upon him.


William F. Dunne was one of the leaders of the 3,000 metal miners in whose struggle in 1917 in Butte, Montana, Frank Little fell at the murderous hands of thugs of the Anaconda Copper Mining Company. Dunne himself was a marked man and worked hand in hand with Little before his death. His story, titled, "August, 1917, in Butte," published in the Frank Little memorial edition of the Labor Defender, is a stirring account of an episode that will stand out as one of the greatest skirmishes in the annals of American working class battles preparatory to the last great drive.

Ralph Chaplin writes of Frank Little as of a pal. Chaplin knew him well and tells in brief Little's biography in the revolutionary movement and the part played in the fight against the war.

James P. Cannon, the secretary of the International Labor Defense also contributes some reminiscences at the same time he imparts to his working class readers the value of Frank Little as a martyr and a tradition to the revolutionary workers' movement.

It was meant that one of the greatest of working class poems ever written, "When the Cock Crows," by Arturo Giovanitti, should have been written about Frank Little. This is reprinted in the Labor Defender. An impressive and masterfully written appeal by Bartolomeo Vanzetti who may yet be added to the growing list of working class martyrs is a fitting part of a Frank Little memorial number.

The August issue of the "Labor Defender" is a landmark in working class magazines. There will be more special numbers of which the Frank Little issue is a good portent. It can be bought for 10c from International Labor Defense branches or from the National office of I. L. D., 19 S. Lincoln St., Chicago, Ill.



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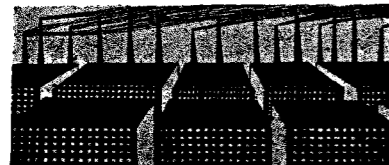


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