

A FRENCH MUSSOLINI

By JAY LOVESTONE.

THAT the class struggle today is international in its fundamental features is clearly evidenced by the historical events that are taking place in the conflict between the employers and the workers in the various countries of the world.

In Russia, in Italy, in Spain, in Germany, the social-patriots, the renegade socialists, had at one time or other been fighting the communists because, we were asked to believe, that the proponents of the Soviet system were opposed to "pure" democracy without which the working and farming masses could never get along. Yet it was invariably found that these renegade socialists always lined up solidly for an iron capitalist dictatorship over the workers when the latter made any attempt to assert their political power to check the aggression of their exploiters.

In France we are about to be treated to a Fascist escapade in order to save "pure" democracy of capitalism. A dictatorship unlimited in ruthlessness is proposed. The Comité des Forges, representing the powerful iron and steel ring that has been throttling France, is the dynamic force behind this move. M. Laurent, a former ambassador to Berlin, one of its members, declares that the safety of France lies only in "suspending constitutional rights and establishing a dictatorship in the Italian manner." "Reforms" are being demanded which in effect mean a dictatorship of the banks over the workers and lower middle class.

The usual preliminary steps to an open attempt at the establishment of this dictatorship are now being taken. Gustave Herve, the ex-socialist, who, during and since the war, has become afflicted with a hatred of the working class and its aspira-

tions for freedom comparable only to his love for unrestrained capitalist tyranny under the guise of "pure" democracy, has come forward with the probable program of the French Fascists. Herve, who has fought with assault and battery, with lies and calumny, the Workers and Farmers' Republic of Russia because it denies the exploiters of labor the right to decide the fate of the poor workingmen and farmers, is now, a la Mussolini, coming forward with a program of Fascist "reconstruction" aiming to chain the masses like gallery slaves to be ores of their imperialist masters, the capitalists of France.

Mr. Herve's plan for a capitalist dictatorship in France demands that there be levied a tax on bread and sugar; there be issued bread cards; that the government monopoly on matches, tobacco, railways, telegraphs and telephones be relinquished and that these industries be turned over to private capitalist exploiters. Mr. Herve advocates the immediate abolition of the eight-hour working day in order to help the French capitalists tow over the critical period in which they now find themselves financially. Mr. Herve demands the organization of a cabinet consisting solely of capitalist experts, business specialists, who will be able to rule the country with an iron hand.

In short, Mr. Herve who was so much in love with democracy when the interests of the capitalists were endangered by the rising power of the workers is now the first one to throw overboard the most elementary principles of his much-beloved democracy when these interests can best be served by a capitalist regime of construction offered by Herve is the most dangerous program of enslavement of the workers that any imperialist has dared propose in France to date.

Mr. Herve is acting true to the policies that the socialist renegades of all countries must logically follow once they fight the attempts of the workers to become the ruling class in society. The form in which Mr. Herve's Fascism manifests itself may be somewhat different from the form it has appeared in Italy in the person of Mussolini. Only the difference in the local conditions prevailing in the two countries is responsible for this outward difference. In essence Mussolinism and Herveism are the same. They both arise out of the policies of socialist betrayal pursued by the apostles of the Second International. In times of stress the capitalists of every country have called on these socialist renegades to save their political and financial necks, to save them from the wrath of the revolutionary oppressed and exploited masses.

Gustave Herve may not be the one to be chosen the French Mussolini but it will be the program of Herve and the spirit of Herveism, at its worst, that will be the driving force in a French Fascist government once it is established.

The workers of the world have a miserable object lesson in the development of Herve and those who stand with him. Mr. Herve has rendered considerable injury to the working class of France and at least as much service to the French imperialist plunderers. But if the workingmen of France and the other countries shall have learned from this case of high treason against the proletariat that in the final instance, in the decisive moment of struggle between the exploited and the exploiters there is no middle of the road, there can be no golden mean and that only the organization of a proletarian dictatorship can save them from the incalculable suffering and misery attendant to the only other alternative, the capitalist dictatorship of Fascism, then they shall have learned a most valuable lesson from this costly experience of theirs with the Herves, the Mussolinis, the Eberts, and the lesser lights of capitalist darkness.

"FRACTION" NOT "FACTION."

In the article "Shop Nuclei—Only Road to a Mass Communist Party, by John Edwards, appearing in Saturday's issue, March 15, 1924, the word "faction" should read fraction."

MILL DOORS

By CARL SANDBURG

You never come back.

**I say good-bye when I see you going in the doors,
The hopeless open doors that call and wait
And take you then for—how many cents a day?
How many cents for the sleepy eyes and fingers?**

**I say good-bye because I know they tap your wrists,
In the dark, in the silence, day by day,
And all the blood of you drop by drop,
And you are old before you are young.
You never come back.**