



## Lenin on the Paris Commune

We reprint below an article by Lenin on the significance of the Paris Commune to the international working class. Lenin and the Bolsheviks absorbed the lessons taught by Marx and Engels on the Commune and found these invaluable in their struggle for the Russian Revolution. On the sixty-first anniversary of the Paris Commune it is fitting for us to reprint this brief writing penned by one who helped carry out the tasks the heroic Parisian Communards set themselves, continued their work, and began the class revenge of the world proletariat against the bloody suppression of the Commune by leading the Russian workers to the victorious Red October.—Ed.

Forty years have passed since the proclamation of the Paris Commune. According to their custom, the French proletariat are honouring the memory of the revolutionary workers of March 18, 1871, by meetings and demonstrations. At the end of May they will again bring wreaths to the tombs of the Communards who were shot, the victims of the fearful "May Week", and over their graves they will once more take the oath to fight untiringly until their ideas have conquered, until their cause has been completely victorious.

Why do the proletariat, not only in France but throughout the entire world, honour the workers of the Paris Commune as their forerunners? What was the heritage of the Commune?

The Commune broke out spontaneously. No one consciously prepared it in an organized way. The unsuccessful war with Germany, privations during the siege, unemployment among the proletariat and ruin among the petty-bourgeoisie; the indignation of the masses against the upper classes and against the authorities who had displayed their complete incapacity, an indefinable fermentation among the working class, which was discontented with its lot and was striving towards a different social system; the reactionary make-up of the National Assembly, which roused fears as to the fate of the republic—all this and many other things combined to drive the population of Paris to revolution on March 18, which unexpectedly placed power in the hands of the National Guard, in the hands of the working class and the petty-bourgeoisie which had joined in with it.

This was an event unprecedented in history. Up to that time power had customarily been in the hands of landlords and capitalists, i. e., in the hands of their trusted agents who made up the so-called Government. After the revolution of March 18, when the Thiers Government fled from Paris with its troops, its police and its officials, the people remained masters of the situation and power passed into the hands of the proletariat. But in modern society, enslaved economically by capital, the proletariat cannot dominate politically unless it breaks the chains which fetter it to capital. This is why the movement of the Commune inevitably had to take on a Socialist colouring, i. e., to begin striving for the overthrow of the power of the bourgeoisie, the power of capital, to destroy the very foundations of the present social order.

At first this movement was extremely indefinite and confused. It was joined by patriots who hoped that the Commune would renew the war with the Germans and bring it to a successful conclusion. It was supported by the small shopkeepers who were threatened with ruin unless there was a postponement of payments on debts and rent (the Government did not want to give them such a postponement but the Commune gave it). Finally, it had, at first, the sympathy of the bourgeois republicans, who feared that the reactionary National Assembly (the "backwoodsmen", ignorant landlords) would restore the monarchy. But the chief role in this movement was of course played by the workers (especially the artisans of Paris), among whom Socialist propaganda had been energetically carried on during the last years of the Second Empire and many of whom even belonged to the First International.

Only the workers remained loyal to the Commune to the end. The bourgeois republicans and the petty-bourgeoisie soon broke away from it, the former afraid of the revolutionary Socialist proletarian character of the movement, and the others dropping out when they saw that it was doomed to inevitable defeat. Only the French proletariat supported their Government fearlessly and untiringly, they alone fought and died for it, for the cause of the emancipation of the working class, for a better future for all toilers.

Deserted by their allies of yesterday and supported by no one, the Commune was doomed to inevitable defeat. The entire bourgeoisie of France, all the landlords, the stockbrokers, the factory owners, all the great and small robbers, all the exploiters, combined against it. This bourgeois coalition, supported by Bismarck (who released a hundred thousand French soldiers who had been

taken prisoner to put down revolutionary Paris), succeeded in rousing the backward peasants and the petty bourgeoisie of the provinces against the proletariat of Paris, and in surrounding half of Paris with a ring of steel (the other half was held by the German army). In some of the larger cities in France (Marseilles, Lyons, St. Etienne, Dijon, etc.) the workers also attempted to seize power, to proclaim the Commune, and come to the help of Paris, but these attempts soon failed. Paris, which had first raised the flag of proletarian revolt, was left to its own resources and doomed to certain destruction.

For the victory of the social revolution, at least two conditions are necessary: a high development of productive forces and the preparedness of the proletariat. But in 1871 neither of these conditions was present. French capitalism was still only slightly developed, and France was at that time mainly a country of petty-bourgeoisie (artisans, peasants, shopkeepers, etc.). On the other hand there was no workers' party, the working class, which in the mass was unprepared and untrained, did not even clearly visualize its tasks and the methods of fulfilling them. There were no serious political organizations of the proletariat, no strong trade unions and co-operative societies.

But the chief thing which the Commune lacked was the time to think out and undertake the fulfillment of its programme. It hardly had time to start working, when the Versailles government, supported by the entire bourgeoisie, opened military operations against Paris. The Commune had to think first of all of defence. Right up to the very end, May 21-23, it had no time to think seriously of anything else.

In spite of these unfavorable conditions, in spite of the brevity of its existence, the Commune found time to carry out some measures which sufficiently characterize its real significance and aims. The Commune replaced the standing army, that blind weapon in the hands of the ruling classes, by the armed people. It proclaimed the separation of church from State, abolished the State support of religious bodies (i. e., State salaries for priests), gave popular education a purely secular character, and in this way struck a severe blow at the gendarmes in priestly robes. In the purely social sphere the Commune could do very little, but this little nevertheless clearly shows its character as a popular workers' Government. Night work in bakeries was forbidden, the system of fines, this system of legalized robbery of the workers, was abolished. Finally, the famous decree was issued according to which all factories, works and workshops which had been abandoned or stopped by their owners, were to be handed over to associations of workers in order to resume production. And, as if to emphasize its character as a truly democratic proletarian Government, the Commune decreed that the salaries of all ranks in the administration and the government should not exceed the normal wages of a worker, and in no case should exceed 6,000 francs per year.

All these measures showed with sufficient clearness that the Commune was a deadly menace to the old world, founded on slavery and exploitation. Therefore bourgeois society could not sleep peacefully so long as the Red Flag of the proletariat waved over the Paris City Hall. When at last the organized force of the Government had managed to defeat the poorly organized forces of the revolution, the Bonapartist generals who had been beaten by the Germans and who were brave only when fighting their defeated countrymen, these French Rennekampfs and Meller-Sakomelskys, organized such a slaughter as Paris had never known. About 30,000 Parisians were killed by the ferocious soldiery, about 45,000 were arrested and many of these were afterwards executed, thousands were imprisoned or exiled. In all, Paris lost about 100,000 of its sons, including the best workers of all trades.

The bourgeoisie were satisfied. "Now we have finished with Socialism for a long time," said their leader, the bloodthirsty dwarf, Thiers, after the blood-bath which he and his generals had arranged for the proletariat of Paris. But these bourgeois crows cawed in vain. Six years after the suppression of the Commune, when many of its fighters were still pining in prison or in exile, a new workers' movement rose in France. A new Socialist generation, enriched by the experience of their predecessors and no whit discouraged by their defeat, picked up the flag which had dropped from the hands of the fighters of the Commune and bore it boldly and confidently forward, with cries of: "Long live the social revolution! Long live the Commune!" And a few years after that, the new workers' party and the agitation raised by it throughout the country, compelled the ruling classes to release the imprisoned Communards, who were still in the hands of the government.

The memory of the fighters of the Commune is not only honoured by the

## New Trotsky Series on Germany Starts Next Week

Beginning with the next issue, *The Militant* will print extracts from comrade Trotsky's new book on Germany. The book has just arrived and is being translated into English. The table of contents are: **Democracy and Fascism; The Social Democracy and the Policy of the Lesser Evil; The Italian Experience; The Communist Party and the Working Class; The United Front Policy (Fundamental Principles); The Soviets as Organs of the United Front; The Russian Experience; What Is Centristism; Bureaucratic Centristism (The International Stalin Faction); The S. A. P. and Its Future; Brandlfr, Urbans and Others; Economic Struggles and Trade Union Unity; The Political Mass Strike, Workers' Control of Production; From Defensive to Offensive.**

workers of France but by the proletariat of the whole world, for the Commune did not fight for any local or narrow national aim, but for the freedom of tolling humanity, of all the downtrodden and oppressed. As the foremost fighter for the social revolution, the Commune has won sympathy wherever there is a proletariat struggling and suffering. The picture of its life and death, the sight of a workers' government which seized the capital of the world and kept it in its hands for over two months, the spectacle of the heroic struggle of the proletariat and its sufferings after defeat—all this has raised the spirit of millions of workers, aroused their hopes and attracted their sympathies to the side of socialism. The thunder of the cannon in Paris awakened the most backward strata of the proletariat from deep slumber, and everywhere gave impetus to the growth of revolutionary Socialist propaganda. This is why the cause of the Commune did not die. It lives to the present day in every one of us.

The cause of the Commune is the social revolution, the cause of the complete political and economic emancipation of the toilers. It is the cause of the proletariat of the whole world. And in this sense it is immortal.

*Rabochaya Gazeta*, No. 4-5, April 28 (15), 1911.)

## After the Massacre in Detroit

The militant mass funeral of the Ford massacre victims registered the angry answer of the Detroit workers to the wanton murder of last week. The victims were laid to rest with full proletarian honors. The imposing funeral march lent further emphasis to the growing working class demand for unemployment relief.

In this automobile capital the curse of unemployment has become particularly acute. It is openly admitted by the city authorities that the jobless ranks are growing. In this respect the index prepared by the Detroit Board of Commerce gives illuminating figures. It records a recent drop to a present low of 68.6 per cent of what was considered a normal monthly employment average of 100 in 1923-1925 for the whole working population. In the month of February this year there were 50,000 less employed in Detroit than the same month a year ago. With no unemployment relief, save for the scant charity crumbs, the workers' conditions have become ever more desperate. Stark misery and starvation

## Remember Our Prisoners

One of the surest tests of the revolutionary qualities of a workers' organization is its attitude toward the working class fighters in the prisons of the class enemy. Remembrance of the class war prisoners must take a practical form—unceasing struggle for their liberation and material provision for their prison needs.

Comrade Morgenstern and Goodman have a special claim on us because they are our own people who have been victimized for their fight for our cause. Their claim on the members and supporters of the Communist League is all the stronger because they have been deserted by the defense organizations maintained by the workers for the benefit of all class war prisoners—the I. L. D. Therefore, let us take care of our own! The Militant deems it a duty to open a prison relief fund for the benefit of our comrades. Our readers are requested to send contributions to this fund—*The Militant*, 84 East 10th St., New York City. Itemized reports of all receipts of this fund will be printed regularly and the proceeds forwarded to the comrades in prison.

**Friday, March 18!**  
**"THE GERMAN ELECTIONS"**  
Lecture by  
**SAM GORDON**  
at the LABOR TEMPLE

## Results of the German Elections

### Gains of Reaction Serious Warning against Stalinist Policy

Last Sunday's presidential elections in Germany were breathlessly watched by a world torn by economic crisis and apprehensive of social convulsions. For the bourgeois philistine, for the addict of parliamentary cretinism, the elections constitute a fait accompli, an established fact. Thus, for instance, the American press, in its comment on the results of Sunday's poll, sees a decisive repulsion of Fascism and a permanent victory for the "inherently conservative character" of the German people. Hitler's inability to muster a larger vote than Hindenburg to them spells Hitler's defeat. For the revolutionary, for the Marxist, the elections constitute merely a gauge of social and political developments. It is therefore only natural for us to regard the bourgeois press comment with a grain of skepticism. With them, it is a case of the wish being the father of the thought. The American bourgeoisie fears social unrest, abroad as well as at home, worse than the pest. An advance of Fascism can only mean an outbreak of civil war in Germany. To hush away the chimera of such a civil war, its press prefers to overlook the facts.

To be sure, Hitler only rallied 11,500,000 votes to Hindenburg's 18,000,000. But when we consider that the Fascist gain amounted to some 5,000,000 votes more than the 6,400,000 they received in the Reichstag elections in 1930, and when we look at this fact objectively, dispassionately, we cannot fail to come to the conclusion that the elections reflected a tremendous and absolutely menacing advance on part of the Fascists. To be sure, it appears that the Fascists have very little resources left for further progress by purely legal means. The percentage of their vote is considerably lower than in the partial elections in 1931. But that only increases the probability of a forceful attempt at the seizure of power by the Hitlerites. The very character of the social composition of the Hitler camp, the fact that it is subject to violent fluctuations in political sentiment makes the thought of a "peaceful" growing into power of the National Socialists improbable. No one knows this better than Hitler himself. It is

only natural to assume that Hitler will act accordingly. The menace of Fascism hangs more heavily over the head of the German working class than ever.

How did the working class forces fare in the elections? The only working class candidate in the field, the candidate of the Communist Party, Ernst Thaelmann, received a total of 4,900,000 out of the 37,000,000 votes cast. All in all, a gain of some 350,000 over the 4,587,000 votes the Communist Party received in 1930. When we compare this gain with the 5,000,000 gain of the Fascists, when we keep in mind the fact that Thaelmann was the only working class candidate in the field—the social democrats renounced a candidacy of their own in favor of the Hohenzollern Field Marshall—and finally when we consider the sharpness of the economic situation, we can only admit that the Communist candidate suffered a disastrous defeat in Sunday's elections. That is the bare fact. The entire import of this fact must be realized by every Communist fighter, by every sincere revolutionist. The lesson of the election must be brought home to the class conscious workers: the conclusions must be drawn from it before it is too late before the decisive blow has been struck.

The election defeat of Thaelmann does not mean a defeat for the working class, a defeat for Communism. That is not decided by election, that is decided in open struggle, in the factories, in the streets. It does mean a debacle for the Stalinist policy of the German party leadership. It should serve as a warning to all serious and devoted workers—Communists in the ranks of the official party. Let us review the facts. The Hindenburg - Bruening - Groener regime has been represented in the eyes of all German workers, the social democratic as well as the Communist workers, as the dictatorship by emergency decree, as the government of increasing misery, of wage-cuts carried out by cabinet order; of the reduction of unemployed insurance to the point of starvation; of the abrogation of the most elementary working class rights; of the introduction of National Socialists into the army. No worker could possibly overlook these facts.

The Social democracy, versed in the ways of working class betrayal, called upon its followers to vote for this regime in the presidential elections, nevertheless. More than that, it was actually able to rally its followers behind this hunger-regime almost to a man. That is astonishing at first, but it must be understood. Why did the social democratic workers vote for Hindenburg? The social democratic misleaders called upon their worker-followers to vote for Hindenburg as the "lesser evil" against Fascism. Did the social democratic workers actually believe that this regime of hunger and starvation for the working class will fight against Fascism? Hardly. Why, then did they nevertheless vote for Hindenburg? They voted for Hindenburg because the situation seemed hopeless to them, because it was the only choice left to them outside of the united front of the working class.

Whose fault is it that the proletarian united front was not established? Can the social democratic leaders be expected to establish the united front. Never. Their entire composition, their character as lackeys of the capitalist class, as agents of the capitalists within the ranks of labor, makes such a step on their part unthinkable. Yet, what all the workers really desired was a fighting

united front against the menace that was directly threatening them, against Fascism. Both social democratic and Communist workers had fallen in the slaughter brought about by the Nazis in their punitive expeditions into Brunswick, both reformist and revolutionary workers were victimized in the daily attacks made upon working class meetings, groups and colonies. It was only natural for the workers to feel the necessity of fighting first and foremost against this danger.

The task of creating a united front of active struggle against Fascism could only be carried out by the Communists, by the revolutionary party. It was the duty of the Communists to force the social democratic leaders, already under pressure from their rank and file, into this united front, to put them to the test before their own followers. That was duty clearly devolving upon the revolutionary party from the general situation. What did the Stalinist leadership do instead. It rejected any united front whatsoever with the "social Fascists" and called upon the social democratic workers to join the "Red united front under the leadership of the Communist party". By the rejection of the Leninist conception of the united front, the Stalinist Central Committee of the German party repelled the reformist workers, left them helpless in the face of the treacherous machinations of their leadership. It was in this manner that the social reformists were able to swing the bulk of the German proletariat behind the candidacy of the Bruening hunger regime.

The result of the German presidential elections is a warning against the nefarious tactic of the German Stalinites. If it is not heeded, the working class of Germany faces disaster. If it is taken into account, the tactic must be changed immediately. More than that, the theory of "social Fascism" which is the source of all these disastrous developments, must be uprooted. It is this theory, which throws all opponents of the revolutionary party into one pot, without distinguishing between them and without exploiting the various conflicts among them; which bears all the earmarks of the Lassalleian theory of the "single reactionary mass" condemned and refuted by Marx in his "Criticism of the Gotha Program"; it is this theory that has left a trail of confusion in the minds of the Communist militants and one of disaster in the development of the class struggle.

The main danger seen clearly by every worker in Germany today is the Fascist danger, is the Hitlerite danger. Every worker regards this question as one of life and death. The Communist party of Germany must realize this fact, if it is not to pursue its road to destruction, if the working class of Germany is to avoid extermination at the hands of Hitler's butchers.

The tremendous vote rolled up by the Fascists last Sunday, far from being a setback for the Nazi forces, is only a step in their march toward the seizure of power, toward the open attack against the proletariat. The coming weeks and months will no doubt witness more daring and more impudent assaults upon the workers' organizations by the Fascists than ever before. The workers are bound to feel the Hitlerite edgel even more sharply than before. Their reactions toward the threat and their feeling for the need of working class unity are going to be much more profound in the future. The tactic of the united front will be on the order of the day more than ever. —SAM GORDON.

## New York Marine Workers Go to Trial

The three marine workers, who have been confined in Tombs jail since last November in the New York "Dynamite Plot", went to trial Monday in the court of General Sessions, Division 1. The first three days were consumed in the examination of prospective jurors. As the *Militant* went to press, eleven jurors had been selected and the defense, conducted by Peter L. F. Sabbatino and Jacob Fishman, had exhausted nineteen of its twenty peremptory challenges.

The prosecution concentrated its objections, in the selection of the jury, on all who had been connected with the labor movement in any way or who were readers of labor or liberal publications. The plan to put the dynamiting charges over on a wave of red baiting was indicated in the detailed questioning of every one called for jury service as to his acquaintance with or knowledge of the various radical labor organizations or the individual members of the Marine Workers' Defense Committee, which is conducting the defense movement in behalf of the prisoners.

The defendants are members of the Independent Tidewater Boatmen's Union. The charges against them have been exposed as a conspiracy against union organization in the New York har-

bor, and a number of workers' organizations, including the Communist League of America, joined forces in the Marine Workers' Defense Committee to provide their defense. On Saturday the defense Committee issued a new appeal for the solidarity and support of the workers on the eve of the trial and emphasized the need of funds for the legal expenses. All readers of the *Militant* are urged to respond to this appeal and to send funds to the Marine Workers' Defense Committee, 82 East Tenth Street, New York.

## Next Week's Forum

On Friday, March 25 at 8 P. M. comrade Cannon will speak at the N. Y. open forum at the Labor Temple on **Marxist History and Bourgeois Criticism—The History of the Russian Revolution and Its Critics.** The lecture will be an oral review of comrade Trotsky's work and reviews of it which have appeared in the press.

**NOTE TO OUR READERS**  
For technical reasons, we have been forced to postpone the final installment of Rakovsky's article on the Five Year Plan until next week.

—THE MILITANT.



## The Communists and the Agrarian Crisis

(Continued from last issue)

In America the problem of city and country has taken on new dimensions. The 1930 census reports a 68,954,823 urban population and a 53,820,223 rural population. The majority are urban, the overwhelming majority are proletarian while, in the country where we seized power first, the overwhelming majority were peasants. Rural, in no sense means farmers. For example of the rural only 30,447,229 make up the farm population. In other words the farm population is only 36% of the rural and only 24.8% of the total population. The bourgeois economist presents the problem as though it is about 50-50 for town and country, for "farmers and city people" and the average worker has accepted this trash. The farm population as 24.8% of the total population are by no means farmers. This means all persons living on farms without regard to occupation.

Taking this 24.8% and seeing what makes it up we find it is further narrowed by analysis. Under occupations, gainfully employed, the census lists (1920 figures—the 1930 figures not available, are even more in our favor) as dairy farmers, farmers and stock raisers; 6,201,261, and for dairy farm, farm and stock, laborers; 3,041,627. This means 6 million farmers and 4 million as agricultural workers. But of these 6 million farmers we find (1920 figures) 2,454,804 as tenant farmers, 1,461,306 as mortgaged farmers and 2,074,325 as farmers owning their farms. However, I am sure the 1930 figures, when published, will show even less farm owners today.

The big agricultural population in the last analysis boils down considerably, and the farmer as an ally does not lose any of his significance but he does lose much of his specific weight for America. The farm population as 24% of the total (1920) is composed of about 40% agricultural workers, 25% tenant farmers, 15% mortgaged farmers and 20% farm owners. This does not settle the problem and does not prove that the majority are revolutionary. One knows the majority of the American industrial workers are not revolutionary. However, once we obtain a proper perspective it shows the relation of the workers and farmers in the coming revolution.

This block of agricultural workers on cattle raising and dairy farms are not approached as farmers, but are won as workers. They are not allies, they are ours as a class. The varied forms of cropper dirt farmer and tenant farmer which make up the poor and middle farmer are our allies. As for the owners, yes even some of them will make good allies. As for the capitalist farmer—they are not allies, they are enemies and will be treated as such. We will waste no time in winning them over. Our allies lie in the percentage between the agrarian workers and the capitalist farmers. These must be won. Their relation to the workers in the problem of the American revolution is the most "insignificant" any proletariat in any advanced country has to contend with, maybe with the exception of England. In the Russian revolution, the minority, the proletariat, was the decisive force over the overwhelming majority of peasantry. In America, a revolution which will release the energies of the American proletariat, who stand as the vast majority will call forth proletarian energy unknown in the past.

America has developed its wheat belt, corn belt, cotton belt and has its agricultural states and its industrial states, but as its stands today, it is of no value for analysis of class forces in the revolution. The line of demarcation between industrial and agricultural states is of little value, because the most important industrial states are also the most important agricultural producers, too. Agricultural states as such, only have a meaning when the problem is confined within the states, and we show that the products from agriculture are of greater value than the products from industry, etc. But when one compares the amount and value of the products from agriculture with the agricultural products of the leading industrial states, one finds that the industrial states in many cases are more productive in agricultural products than the agricultural states, and where there is a close margin the industrial states make a good showing for themselves. New York, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Ohio and the other important industrial states are also states producing more foodstuffs than the majority of the so-called agricultural states.

The industrial centers where the proletariat, the decisive force of revolution, resides, also has in its immediate vicinity the production of the food supply of first importance for short periods. It is not an easy matter to bottle up a proletariat in an industrial center if power is in their hands, with all the avenues of modern transportation to nearby food supplies. The agricultural worker will do his share and the poor and middle farmer must be won over.

The tremendous grain elevators, meat and food storage plants for the products of the country are controlled by the city and who controls the city controls this supply. American capitalism does not worry about peasant economy holding back on it as do some other capitalist nations with carry overs of natural economy where the rural population can hold without the city. The American development and its use on machine farms in a lesser or greater degree forces the agricultural economy to rest upon the industrial city. The methods of farming, storing, transportation, selling, etc., all bring capitalist agricultural relations under the indus-

trial city to which it is bound and from which American agriculture cannot escape, not retreat, not to mention the financial network that encompasses agriculture and ties it, binds it to the city.

In capitalist countries with feudal carry-overs, with peasant economy still lingering, we have a far more difficult problem. Although at that level, capital has already shown itself to be master of the house, it by no means has a free reign. The peasant economy weighs heavy upon capital and its development, but nevertheless, capital, and in turn the proletarian class is the decisive force in the relationship of the class struggle. What is true in these backward sections, where the country can eke out an existence even if the city goes to hell, but where in the city cannot continue without the country; is more so true, in developed capitalist countries like America. In fact, however, the problem is turned around. The city needs the country and has safe-guarded this need by a thousand and one ties that bind the country to the city, but the country on the other hand cannot exist without the city,—not in advanced America. Not on the present mode of production. That is only possible by stepping back a stage or two and this is not an overnight step but one which would follow a chaos, when neither capitalist nor proletarian rules.

The very connections of city and countries under developed capitalism, gives the American proletariat the advantage of the problem of revolution once this is concretely put on the agenda for the seizure of power. The very relation of forces with the overwhelming majority of the population being proletarian and the "farmers" divided into agrarian workers, tenant farmer, mortgaged farmer and capitalist farmer, with a section of the owner-farmer as allies, makes the problem different and in our favor.

The Farmer-Labor Party is reactionary and will only lead the proletariat into the swamp of opportunism, this even Centrism understands now after years of blunders; but the idea of a "Workers and Farmers Government" and the slogan for it that Centrism still peddles, is just as reactionary, and can lead to nothing but national reformism.

The agrarian workers must be won as workers, the middle and poor farmers as allies according to the form of the problem. Negro and white, share cropper, contract farmer, dirt farmer, etc., and the capitalist farmer should not bother us. The agrarian crisis will not let up, even though there will be ebbs and flows, its basic effects will not be remedied through agrarian reforms. For the capitalist system, the remedy is greater concentration and pulling agriculture more into the orbit of capitalist production, putting agriculture more on the basis of an industry of capitalism—but this lets loose dynamic, which has its most deadly explosive effects not in the country but in the city. For the agrarian worker and our allies, the poor and middle farmers, the remedy is nothing short of the Proletarian Revolution and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. This is the means of transforming of the negative base of the agriculture industry into an industry of the socialist mode of production, completing the cycle agriculture has passed through—and opening the door to a new positive cycle of its development.

—HUGO OEHLER.

## Drug Clerks Organize

NEW YORK.

The present chaotic condition prevailing in the pharmaceutical industry, which is merely a photostatic copy of the existing chaos in the decaying capitalist structure as a whole, and the intense, almost inhuman exploitation of the drug clerk by a degenerate middle class of independent drug shop retailers, by the ever growing chain store magnates and the rich independent "cut-rate" parasites, are threatening to reduce the standard of living of the drug clerks to the lowest level of existence—to that of the Chinese coolie.

The incurable cancer of capitalism—unemployment—has greatly augmented the misery of the drug clerks and turned two thousand licensed and junior pharmacists of this city into the streets. Some of them have already taken their places on the breadlines. Others are still clinging to the last line of defense, their savings, which they were able to build up during the so-called "prosperity" period thanks to the dreadfully long hours of work which made expenditures other than the mere necessities—impossible.

The legendary professional status of the pharmacist in our capitalist society has acted as an emollient to his sore human pride and lulled in him the rebellion against the degrading conditions under which he is working. The sharpening and protraction of the present crisis has dealt a shattering blow to his legendary status and made him realize his true status, that of the wage earner, subject to all the laws governing wage labor under this decaying capitalist system.

The drug clerk has arisen and begun to move. He is moving in the direction of the trade union front.

His vanguard, leaderless, without experience and program, but in excellent fighting morale, has been intercepted by the A. F. of L. bureaucracy and has definitely landed in the right flank of the labor camp.

On March 8, the Drug Clerks' Union was officially christened by Mr. Collins, national officer of the A. F. of L. and chartered as the Drug Clerks' Union of Greater New York, Local 581 of the Retail Clerks International Protective Association.

A brief account of the installation meeting will sufficiently describe the condition of this new-born babe.

The meeting was opened by Mr. Feinstein, president of the union, who introduced Dr. Linville, president of the Teachers' Union. Dr. Linville spoke at great length of the trade union movement, but as he is a president of an A. F. of L. local, he distorted the revolutionary concept of trade unionism and reduced it to the ideological level of his class, namely the middle class. He finished his oration wishing them success and rightly pointed out the need of a program, which he, of course, hoped that the leaders of the union, with the advice of the national office, will be able to formulate.

Next spoke president Feinstein, whose physiognomy is a true reflection of his intellect and vice versa. He delivered a "speech" of about twenty to thirty words, nine tenths of which he devoted to impress upon the members that he

will not tolerate radicals in "his" union. This antiquated mass of stupidity in human form has spent over forty years of his life in the darkest corner of the world, the back of a drugstore, which fully explains his idiotic appearance and low cultural level.

Last spoke Collins of the A. F. of L. This typical labor bureaucrat, in a typical A. F. of L. dialogue, as he himself termed his manner of speech, harangued the young recruits yet untainted by the A. F. of L. philosophy and manifesting a good fighting vitality, and urged them to "hang on" and not to fight.

Here is one of his gems: "Folks, times are bad. Now is not the time to fight. Hang on to your job. Don't fight. Wait."

Immediately after the close of the meeting, the more articulate element came up to the secretary and voiced their disapproval with the president's attitude toward radicals and the "don't fight, wait" idea.

"We came here to do work, not to wait," the cry of one of the militants resounded.

Here we see a familiar scene, so frequently enacted in the labor movement. The rank and file seething with revolt, ready to strike the enemy; the leaders holding them back, telling them that the hour has not yet struck and thus breaking their morale.

Upon the revolutionary drug clerk develops a great task and great responsibility. He must, in the words of Lenin, "brave all difficulties, attacks, insults and persecutions at the hands of the leaders" to gain an opportunity to come forward with a clear program of action which, we believe, will cause a differentiation in the ranks and in this manner render the formation of a strong Left wing possible.

—I. D.

## The Dress Strike in Boston

BOSTON.

The cloakmakers under the leadership of the "United Front Committee" went back to work already in some cases under somewhat improved conditions. The cloakmakers under the leadership of the International went back to work with no wage cut.

Wages were cut plenty in the past two years. The International did not make an effort to get anything back. Now an agreement is being made for the dressmakers with no improved working conditions.

The desire for unity among the workers was great. When we came on the picket line it was a united mass picket line. The bitterness the workers felt to each other for the past two or three years on account of the divided struggles disappeared from their faces. Right wing workers and Left wing workers walked arm in arm, discussed plans of taking down shops and other plans. Every one looked brighter, had a smile on their face. The International was desperate to see such friendship among the workers and looked for ways and means to divide them. When the police captain complained to Philip Kramer, the International business agent who came on the picket line with the police captain, about too many pickets, he said, "What can I do? They are from the United Front" and promised that the next day there will be a distinction between our pickets and his pickets.

The next morning they wanted to put arm bands with the A. F. of L. initials on the arms of the International workers, but to their great disappointment the workers refused to wear the bands and be divided. "Unity, Yes, unity! The desire to be united is felt by all the workers. You can see it in their eyes. Why didn't they come to the meeting of the Left wing? We called them, we agitated them, we had conferences. Very few came. Those who have no jobs and are not afraid to lose them are disgusted with the International. Just as many workers are. The others did not come, they were afraid of losing their jobs. What was left for the Industrial Union to do to get these workers? We should have called the International leaders as well as the workers to unite on the basis of one united strike with one set of demands.

This should have been done at least a couple of months before the strike. So the workers of the International would have had time to demand of their leaders to have one united struggle for better conditions.

I feel quite sure the International leaders would refuse such unity. Then we would be able to tell the workers and they would see it clearly themselves, that their leaders are not interested in unity and we could expose them to the root.

Now the strike is at an end. The workers are coming back to work with no retrieval of the slashed wages, no improvements, and the International had a hard time to get an agreement altogether because bosses are interested in signing agreements only on two occasions: when they are forced by the unity of the workers and when they can get something from the union.

Two years ago, the International got agreements by just calling a stoppage and giving the bosses all the concessions for the privilege to collect dues. This year there was not much to be given as the bosses took everything anyway. Naturally, the shops that were called out by the united front and the Industrial Union could not get much either because they control only a small minority and those that went back did not get as much as are still out on strike I can not say now. What they will get when they go back, we will report later.

—J. C.

## Stalinist Flattery or Marxist Education

NEW YORK.

It is mildly entertaining to behold Sam Don, the well-known "anti-war expert" come out in the *Daily Worker* (Feb. 20, 1932) and say that "The Five Year Plan has demonstrated beyond a shadow of a doubt that Socialism can be built in one country", a statement which corresponds only too well with the utterings of his comrade-in-arms, the eminent Israel Amter, who only a week previous to that explained that same theory of Socialism in one country at an Open Forum of the new "Water Front Section of the C. P. U. S." in the following way:

"The average rank and file worker of the Soviet Union knows more about the theory of Socialism in one country than Trotsky or Cannon, for neither of these men has recently been there. Is it surprising that he should know more about it than some expelled leaders who have even attempted to study the theory? The rank and file worker accepts nothing as final until it has been given actual trial. Trotsky rejects the theory without any effort to demonstrate it."

Now, let us grant that the "average" rank and file worker of the Soviet Union "knows more about the interior of the new 'Palace of Soviets' than Trotsky or Cannon. But, does an average rank and file member of the U. S. party know more about it than Trotsky or Cannon? Or does an average rank and file worker of the U. S. party know more about the revolutionary movement in America than Trotsky or Cannon? And what is there to indicate that an average member of the U. S. party knows more about the theory of Socialism in one country than Trotsky or Cannon? After all, the Sam Dons and the Amters must admit that he U. S. party member generally has not seen the Soviet Union and has not lived in a Socialist commonwealth so that he can be said to have any special familiarity with the nature, the problems and the difficulties of such a commodity. The theory of Socialism in one country is to the average worker only an idea, in the U. S. or elsewhere—and certainly, leaders who have given their lives to the study of scientific socialism are far more capable of judging these ideas than the glorified "average" worker. Amter's queer logic, to put it in another way, is equivalent to saying that because the janitor of the *Daily Worker* building is more familiar with that structure than, let us say, Earl Browder, who appears to spend most of his time dining with Kuo Min Tang generals and otherwise revolutionizing the Far East, he knows more about the American revolutionary movement than the latter.

Again, Amter suggested that a rank and file worker in the Soviet Union has studied the theory of Socialism in one country and has learned a great deal more about its correctness than "some expelled leaders who never attempted to study it." We are not old, however, how the average rank and file knows the correctness of this theory—nor how the expelled leaders could attempt to know it, save by comparing the assumption of the theory in question and the fundamental principles of revolutionary internationalism, scientifically. The difference is that the "average rank and file party member" simply believe in a Stalinist theory without much effort at critical thought, while the "expelled leaders"—who have given much thought to the question—have discovered the fallacy of national Socialism inherent in it.

Not long ago, an "average type" got up in our Open Forum and sprang a surprise by saying—quite innocently—that the Communist International—if translated into plain American language, would mean—the Russian Patriotic Society! We corrected him at that time by explaining clearly that this is not the case. But we do feel a little bit uncomfortable to have him come around and put up such embarrassing questions again.

If Trotsky and Cannon have never tried to demonstrate the theory of Socialism in one country—and we must give them credit for never having been so foolish—that is because they have shrewdly observed the absurdities of such a theory, because they have a realistic attitude toward the world's revolutionary developments and because they are not the least inclined to mumble nonsense. I do not suppose that any of the leaders of the Left Opposition has ever carried a horse-shoe to bring him luck, but their common sense has made it unnecessary for them to support such foolishness. One glance at Don's and Amter's logic is enough to show it is not worth trying.

—PAUL SCHWALBE.

## Another Expulsion from the I. L. D.

On Thursday, March 10th, I was formally expelled from the Yorkville English Branch of the I. L. D. The main charge was that I was a "Trotskyist"; and therefore my criticism of the so-called "united front from below" policy of the I. L. D. was incompatible with membership any longer.

In opening the attack, the organizer of the branch went to some length to state my "disruptive" activities; i. e., I had committed the audacious crime of speaking with members of the branch about the differences between the Left Opposition and the leadership of the official Party, and criticized the policies of the leadership.

No attempt was made to center the charge on inactivity, as my activity in the branch will attest to the fact that I have always volunteered for work and accepted all the tasks assigned to me. It is interesting to note that previous to the horrible discovery that I was a "counter-revolutionary, enemy of the working class", my activity and membership had been considered wholly satisfactory. Comrade Hacker himself, personally asked me to preside as chairman at the second Scottsboro Conference held a few months ago at a large downtown hall. Evidently, the stamp of "renegade" had not yet materialized before his eyes.

The chairman last night, a new member of the branch and, I think, a party member purposely assigned to the branch—since he does not live in our district—refused to permit me the final say. He insisted on his formal right as chairman to be the last speaker. He emitted a long harangue on Trotsky's "menshevism" of 1903, adding incidentally that Trotsky from the time of the revolution until 1923, had done good work, "when he was under the thumb of Lenin" (!) A long attack on Trotsky, not permitting me to answer.

There were seven comrades present. The vote was called for. The chairman, organizer, and *Labor Defender* agent immediately responded. One young comrade who works for the district and is also a new member of our branch, also voted for my expulsion—because he considered Trotsky an enemy of the working class, although he admitted he had never read a single document of the Opposition! When I explained to him that it was the policy of the I. L. D. to permit workers of any organization to enter the I. L. D. and work for it, he appeared puzzled, but voted for the expulsion, nevertheless. My vote was the only recorded against, the two remaining comrades were for abstaining, admitting that they were not acquainted with the questions—but decided to vote for the expulsion provided that it was to come to the District Committee and that I would be given a chance to appear. Comrade Tschinder, *Labor Defender* agent, assured the comrades that I would be given a chance to appear. I hold him to his word, as he is a member of the Section Executive Committee, and am only afraid that his confidence in the "workers' democracy" of Hacker and company will not be sustained.

I was accused of being the cause of the failure of the branch to grow. Any comrade who is acquainted with the Yorkville English Branch knows that the reason for the failure to grow has been the lack of consistent, regular activities. I fought continually for a systematic plan of meetings, house to house canvassing, educational lectures, distribution of *Labor Defenders* before unions, open air meetings, etc. I myself held several open air meetings alone when the district failed to supply speakers. I was suddenly thrown off the list of speakers, and since that time we never held them regularly. I advanced a plan for regular educational meetings every other week: it was accepted—I carried out my share of the work. In all activities, I can say that I did all required of any member of the organization. These things I state, not to gain reward for, but to outline for the comrades the only way that I see to build the branch. If they plan their work thus, the branch will grow—if not, it will remain stagnant as before.

The decision of expulsion is pending before the District Executive Committee. The policy of the I. L. D. is to admit all workers into its ranks, so long as they carry on the work of the organization under its discipline. I claim that I have proved that I have done so and can continue to do so. The only charge is "Trotskyism", which is no valid charge according to the ruling of the I. L. D. itself. I sincerely hope the District Executive will reverse the obviously unfounded expulsion of myself from the Yorkville English Branch of the I. L. D.

—HERBERT CAPELIS.

## ATTENTION, GREEK WORKERS

In New York City two daily Greek bourgeois newspapers are published, the "*National Herald*" which supports the present "democratic" regime of Greece while the other the "*Atlantis*" represents the Royalist party of Greece and lately takes a pseudo-labor attitude.

The "*Emporos*" undertook a one sided struggle against the *National Herald* overlooking any kind of attack against the "*Atlantis*" which is more dangerous because it appears with the cloak of liberalism and therefore the "*Communist*" our Greek organ attacked this criminal neglect of the Greek Stalinism vigorously.

In the next issue of *The Militant* the Greek Bureau will write extensively upon this serious question which requires a correct and thorough discussion for the enlightenment not only of the Greek speaking Communists but of all Communists as well.

## ST. LOUIS WORKERS, ATTENTION!

At a recent Left Opposition forum meeting two members of the official Communist Party during the discussion accepted a challenge to debate the Platform of the Left Opposition. The debate will take place Friday evening, March 25, at the Public Library, 14th St., and Cass Ave.

For the Left Opposition: John Scott  
For the Communist Party: ?

## Our Subscription Drive

After a long and hard struggle *The Militant* became a weekly. The apparatus of its production, so to speak, has been built up step by step by much sacrifice. Now it is necessary to build on a firm foundation its distribution apparatus.

During the period of the present drive, March 1st to June 1st, this effort should take an intensive form. First of all we must get new subs. Friends and sympathizers must be canvassed. Wherever possible whole days should be set aside for the carrying out of this task. This drive for new subs must be geared to a high pitch. It must be sustained at that pitch for the duration of the drive.

The literature premium announced in recent issues should be utilized to their full value. We give them again. For the period of the drive we will give with each one year \$2.00 sub (52 issues) a free paper bound copy of comrade Trotsky's *The Permanent Revolution*; with each half year \$1.00 sub (26 issues) a copy of the *Strategy of the World Revolution*; with each trial 50c sub (13 issues) any one of our 10c pamphlets. This premium applies to renewals as well as the new subs. During the period of the drive comrades may offer a combined \$2.00 rate for a year's subscription to *The Militant* and *Young Spartacus*. There is no literature premium with combined subs.

At the same time we are getting new subs we must see to the renewal of expired and expiring subs, or the gains of new subs will be offset by the losses of these old ones. In the execution of this task the national center is co-operating by systematic notification of the subscriber. If these notices are acted on promptly, the solution of the problem will be fairly easy.

At the present time the results in new and renewed subs are: New York—11; Minneapolis—2; Chicago—1; St. Louis—1; Miscellaneous—10. The increase in bundle orders stands at one in Chicago as reported in the last issue.

Another important method of raising the circulation of *The Militant* and building up its distribution is the expansion and extension of "mass" distribution.

Newsstands and bookstores which will carry *The Militant* must be found. They exist. The terms are liberal. *The Militant* gives credit for each unsold copy. All that the stand keeper has to do is clip the date line of each unsold copy and sent it in for credit. The profit to the dealer on each copy is 2c. The paper appears regularly. The posters we have prepared should help to sell the paper from the stand.

A second and auxiliary method of increasing the circulation is the mass distribution of free copies at workers' meetings, demonstrations, on the street, wherever workers can be reached. We have on hand a number of recent back issues. There are all stamped "sample copy". Upon request for them, we will mail them free of charge. They are for distribution. In ordering such bundles it is necessary to specify the amount and it is advisable to specify for what meeting or group they are intended, so that we can pick out appropriate issues. The number ordered should be limited to what can actually be distributed.

These free distributions should be followed by up by sales of the current issues of *The Militant*. If this is done systematically the sale of *The Militant* can be increased. It is our experience that such free distributions of old copies on issues which interest workers do not diminish the sale of current issues of *The Militant*, but on the contrary increase it. We have no doubt that this will continue to be the case.

All of this activity should be conducted with the aim of crystallizing a permanent distribution apparatus. It is not enough to print *The Militant*. IT MUST BE CIRCULATED. What we want is a staff of *Militant* builders. Beginning with the next issue we will give a standing of subscription getters and continue it from week to week. We will do the same with new bundle orders, and renewals.

For a larger *Militant* circulation! Get subs for *The Militant*! Get renewals of expired subs! Get newsstand and bookstore bundle orders! Crystallize a staff of *Militant* builders! Every comrade's and sympathizer's shoulder to the wheel!



# IN THE INTERNATIONAL OF LABOR

## Reviews and News of the Working Class and Revolutionary Movements

### A Shanghai View on Chinese Events

SHANGHAI, CHINA

February 16, 1932

While the principal scene of Japanese military activities in China has shifted, at least temporarily, from Manchuria to Shanghai, Manchuria remains the focusing point of Japan's colonial ambitions on the Asiatic mainland.

The current happenings in Shanghai, where major Japanese naval and military forces are endeavoring to defeat the Chinese 19th Route Army and oust it from Chapei, can be understood only in relation to the immediate pre-eminent political aim of Japanese imperialism, which is to expand its colonial possessions by the annexation of Manchuria and meanwhile, as a first step, to secure treaty recognition of the position it has taken there. Japanese imperialism hopes, by a display of its naval and military might, and by wreaking havoc and destruction to terrorize the yellow politicians and militarists of Nanking (now Loyang) into signing such a treaty.

The political and military spokesmen of imperial Nippon have declared ad nauseam, their intention to respect China's territorial and administrative integrity, guaranteed by the Nine-Power Treaty, and to maintain the policy of the "open door" in Manchuria. A month of journeying through the three Eastern provinces has satisfied the writer—as it would all others with sound eyes and ears—that Manchuria has virtually ceased to be a part of China, and that the policy of the "open door" scarcely continues to exist except in the utterances of Japanese diplomats at Geneva, Washington and elsewhere.

Quite aside from the actual evidence, however, only a dullard could ever have imagined that the military campaigns of the Japanese in Manchuria were undertaken in any other interests than those of Japanese imperialism. Has British imperialism ever shared the spoils of its colonial wars with its trade rivals? Have the imperialists of France, of the United States, of Italy, of Spain ever done so? Has Japan done it in the case of Korea? What basis exists, then, for supposing that Manchuria will prove an exception to the general rule? None whatever.

Since September 18, when the troops of the Japanese garrison at Kwantung marched out of the South Manchuria Railway zone and occupied Mukden and other strategic points, the war of conquest, practically unresisted, has proceeded steadily. Fresh troops and munitions have poured into Manchuria as required. With the taking of Harbin, Japanese control of Manchuria is practically complete, for the retaking of strategic points in Heilungkiang province can be accomplished at any time. General Ma Chan-shan, erstwhile Chinese national hero, has been bargaining with the Japanese military at his headquarters in Hailun for some two months or more, and is now reported to have apologized to his former opponents for obstructing them at the Nonni River. He is clearly ready to strike a bargain on what he may consider favorable terms.

When I arrived at Shankaikuan, the evacuation of Chang Hsueh-liang's armies from Manchuria had been completed. Forty-five trainloads of his troops had passed within the Great Wall during the preceding three or four days, without firing a single shot at the Japanese invaders. Thus was completed another chapter in the record of shameful capitulation of the Nanking government and its miserable Manchurian ally. The Japanese forces, having taken Chinchow, were advancing rapidly westward. It remained for them to ride triumphantly into Shankaikuan on the iron road of the Peiping-Mukden Railway to round out what has proved to be, initially, the easiest colonial conquest on record.

As an example of the cowardly refusal of those in power to even attempt to defend China's soil, of their abject surrender to Japanese aggression, I might record that on the day prior to the arrival of the Japanese forces at Shankaikuan, a staff officer attached to the Chinese Garrison Headquarters rode out to meet the invaders, to inform them that they would meet with no resistance in the event that they desired to occupy the town. And Shankaikuan, lying immediately south of the Great Wall is outside Manchuria. One cannot doubt that they will prove equally obliging and accommodating should the hungry maw of Japanese imperialism demand the rest of China too. The freshest example is Shanghai (Chapei) where the 19th Route Army is stubbornly resisting the Japanese forces despite the receipt of orders from Nanking to withdraw and surrender the ground without fighting.

Shankaikuan apparently forms no part of the immediate objectives of the Japanese Army, belonging geographically to the Tientsin-Peiping area. Thus after a perfunctory inspection of the railway station and environs, the Japanese soldiery withdrew. From that station to Mukden, the whole railway line was in their hands. Before the advance westward, the staffs of all stations had fled and had been replaced by the officials and workers drawn from the South Manchuria Railway, Japanese-owned. All normal traffic on the section was obstructed and stopped and the line en-

tirely given over to the transportation of Japanese troops and military supplies. Within a fortnight, the Japanese headquarters at Mukden announced the "independence" of the section and re-named it the Shenyang-Shankaikuan Railway, at the same time guaranteeing the interest due British bondholders.

With this important railway line under their control, together with all branch and feeder lines, and now, lately, the partial seizure of the Chinese Eastern Railway, jointly owned and operated by China and Soviet China with the disbanding of all Chinese administrative organs which made the slightest show of opposition and their replacement by puppet governments; with all activities, governmental and economic, supervised and controlled by the paid servants of Japanese imperialism; with all opposition stifled by military terror, what more is required to complete the picture of Manchuria as Japan's newest colonial possession? It is needless to add that the Japanese drive against Chinchow and points further west was accompanied by those acts of wanton destruction and brutality that are customarily associated with wars of colonial subjugation. Railway stations at places where positively no resistance was encountered by the Japanese troops were wantonly wrecked, and such members of the station staff as remained at their posts were brutally beaten up, in some instances seriously maimed and even killed.

In their triumphant invasion of Manchuria, the Japanese imperialists have not had things entirely their own way. First, they have been obliged to take some steps to allay the "misgivings" of their imperialist rivals, notably the United States, a task which, in the nature of the case, called for not a little ingenuity. In this field, since no other course was apparently open, they have confined themselves to hypocritical denials of any intention to annex Manchuria and to renewed pledges to maintain there, the "open door". The factual answer to the first has already been given above. Manchuria has been annexed *de facto* if not *de jure*.

As to the maintenance of the "open door" it is commonly known that at

three of the principal ports through which Manchuria's import trade flows, via: Dairen, Antung and Yinkow, goods of Japanese origin are permitted to enter at reduced tariff rates, in some cases duty free, while other foreign goods pay the officially levied duties. With the extension of Japanese control throughout Manchuria it can be expected that this system of preference, which is carried out *sub rosa*, will likewise be extended to all Manchurian ports of entry, to the ultimate severe handicapping of trade of Japan's commercial rivals. This is but one example of Manchuria's gradually closing door. The preference enjoyed by Japanese products is at present surreptitious, but the exigencies of the economic crisis, which demands ever new trade outlets, will compel, ultimately, the official and formal sealing of a door which today stands only slightly ajar.

The second difficulty encountered one which grows constantly, is the opposition of the people over whom it seeks to become the overlord. Betrayed and deserted by the armies paid (ostensibly at any rate) to defend them, the peoples of Manchuria have been seemingly slow in developing opposition to the foreign imperialist invaders. In early January, however, the first substantial signs of an energetic partisan movement showed themselves. The remnants of the disbanded Chinese soldiery, mostly of peasant origin, discarded their uniforms and merged themselves with their compatriots in the villages to escape detection by Japanese troops intent on their extermination as "hunchdzes" (bandits).

Forming themselves into small, mobile bands, reinforced by members of the village poor, they swooped down on Japanese outposts under cover of darkness, engaged the defenders in sharp battle, often annihilating them completely, and then retreated into the night richer in arms and ammunition. In this way tremendous losses were sustained by the Japanese forces, especially those guarding small stations on the railway line between Mukden and Chinchow. Japanese reinforcements would endeavor to locate and round up the raiders as soon as it got light, but by then they had melted away into the neighboring vil-

lages from which they came, arms concealed, unidentifiable, awaiting their next opportunity.

Realizing the impossibility of tracing these annoying challengers of their might, and seriously perturbed by the losses in men and guns, the Japanese military command in Mukden have been considering punitive expeditions into the villages that flank the railway. It was proposed that in the village closest to the scene of the raid by a partisan band one adult male out of every ten should be taken out and shot as an example of others, and that this measure should be repeated after each raid. So far there have been no reports that such action has been instituted, although partisan activities increasingly harass the Japanese forces and hinder the consolidation of their initial conquest. Were such action taken it would only have the effect of strengthening and intensifying the spontaneous opposition it would aim to crush.

The growth of the partisan movement in Manchuria has had repercussions in Korea, where the movement for independence has been visibly stimulated. The Korean people have never been persuaded of the benevolence of Japanese imperialism, less so today than ever with the fresh example of Manchuria before them. At the same time the Japanese workers at home are voicing strong opposition to their masters' doings in Manchuria, and numerous huge protest demonstrations have been held in leading cities.

All these movements bid fair to hinder, possibly defeat, the realization of Japan's colonial ambitions, and all the scorpions of repression will be released to subdue them.

To counteract the growing opposition of the United States, Japan will seek to embroil the Soviet Union in war, assured that this will draw to her side all the imperialist powers, including the United States. It is plain that the continued "misgivings" of the State Department will shortly find expression in more concrete form than diplomatic notes of protest. Not for much longer will Japan's hollow declarations concerning her aims in Manchuria satisfy her powerful rival.

The final word, however, will rest with the revolutionary masses of the Far East, in alliance with the workers of the Soviet Union and of the whole world.

—C. FRANK GLASS.

### «Stalin and His Creatures» -- The New Anti-Trotsky Campaign

The *Daily Worker* of March 1 presents us with a new candidate for the profitable honor of flinging mud at Trotsky. This time it is "Bill" Dunne who seeks to climb out of a recent obscurity on a mudpile of his own heaping. Whatever one may think of the suitability of the candidate, one cannot deny him a certain eagerness to earn his spurs no matter how deeply he must sink to find them.

This is not the first time Dunne has joined in the "final" burial of "Trotskyism". When we were first expelled from the American party, Dunne hastened to cable from Moscow a statesman-like protest against our alleged "use of his name", apparently under the flattering illusion that the "use" of his name would be profitable to anybody. Now, laboring under the same illusion, Dunne appears to believe that if he adds his little share of abuse and calumny to the mountains of filth reared by his equally willing colleagues, Trotsky and the whole Opposition will collapse under the strain, to be "deserted by the honest workers still among its crew", those honest, but apparently stupid and "misled" workers for whom every Stalinist functionary sheds tears of commiseration.

What is the occasion for this new outburst which "proves" that Trotsky "has finally joined" the counter-revolution? The interview granted by comrade Trotsky to the bourgeois press in which the views of the Opposition on the shakiness of the Stalin regime are briefly outlined, and the newspaper rumor that Trotsky is to be allowed into Czechoslovakia for three months. At least this is the formal occasion. In reality, the Stalinists are deeply troubled and dismayed. After years of the most venomous persecution, with all the resources of the Soviet power and the Comintern at their disposal, after periodical funerals for the Opposition, the corpse turns out to be more robust and vigorous than ever, while the ground trembles under the feet of the grave-diggers. Nothing else can explain the hysterical and brutal letter of Stalin against Slutsky and the other "Trotskyist smugglers", a letter which breaks a silence on the part of "the greatest disciple of Lenin" which the revolutionary events in Spain, the turbulent situation in Germany, and the world crisis in general have up to now sought in vain to pierce. And like the candle which splutters violently before dying out, the Stalinists have now launched a more than usually poisonous campaign against our great comrade. But like the dying candle, the odor of this campaign can already be smelled and properly classified. Dunne's splutterings are part of this campaign. He fits with admirable accuracy into the category to which comrade Trotsky referred in his interview and which makes Dunne blue in the face: "Stalin and his creatures".

What is the content (by your leave) of Dunne's abuse? Trotsky is "counter-revolution's outpost in Prinkipo". The "precise moment when the Soviet Union is faced with the sharpest offensive in the present drive of world imperialism", is chosen by Trotsky "to place himself with added venom in the imperialist camp". And, adds Dunne, for whom no secret is inviolate and nothing is obscure, "it is no mere coincidence" that France's puppet government of Czechoslovakia "grants Trotsky permission for a three-months' stay at the very moment he is preparing his counter-revolutionary statement". But here, we regret to report, Dunne's courage fails him. If not his courage, then his inventive imagination. Why does he not conclude boldly that Trotsky is preparing to lead against the Soviet Union the same imperialist troops of Czechoslovakia whom he was driving out of Russia at the head of the Red Army at about the same time that Dunne was publishing Robert Minor's counter-revolutionary anarchist drivel about how Lenin and Trotsky were cruelly and despotically strangling the "genuine Russian revolution" of Minor's petty bourgeois friends in Moscow? Only in this manner, we submit, would the article be properly rounded off.

We have another mild criticism to make of Dunne's article. He grows indignant over the fact that Trotsky gave his interview to the Associated Press, "one of the most useful agencies of American imperialism". Dunne is right, only he does not go far enough. He should point out that Trotsky is wrong in trying to break into a monopoly contractually owned by Stalin. We refer to the fact that TASS, the official Soviet telegraphic press agency, has an exclusive reciprocity contract with the Associated Press in this country, so that the correspondents of the former can usually be found in the offices of the latter, and the falsehoods manufactured against Trotsky, in the Stalinist forgery factory at Moscow are promptly transmitted to the American reading public by "one of the most useful agencies of American imperialism". The broadcasting of Trotsky's interview by the A. P. is really a breach of contract with Stalin, and we know of no worthier cause for which Dunne should take up his hollow cudgels.

Still another suggestion: Why should Dunne get so frightened at the prospect of Trotsky coming to Czechoslovakia? Where is Smeral? Is he doing nothing? When it was expected two years ago that Trotsky might get a visa to France, that sterling old French patriot, Marcel Cachin, came running to Bessedovsky, yes, Bessedovsky, the man who was acting as Soviet ambassador in France after the "counter-revolutionist" Rakovsky had been expelled by Briand and Stalin. Cachin begged Bessedovsky with tears in his eyes to see Briand immediately so as to prevent the issuance of

a visa to Trotsky. We have no doubt that the Soviet ambassadors and the creatures of Stalin in England, Germany and elsewhere, did the same thing when the proposal came up there for a Trotsky visa. As is known, the social democratic governments of England and Germany, like the reactionary governments of France and Belgium, and the republican-socialist coalition of Spain, all accommodated Stalin and refused a visa. Why should Czechoslovakia prove to be less amenable to Stalin's request? Where is Smeral? He is no novice at negotiating with bourgeois governments on a friendly—Oh, on a most friendly—basis.

There finally remains to attempt an explanation of Dunne's terrific howling. Nobody would conceivably make such a deafening noise, even in so "noble" a cause, if there were not some other sound that had to be drowned out. For example, it is because of his past "noises" that I dare now shout so lustily against Trotsky. Or, if you want another example, Engdahl's or Bedacht's clamor against Lovestone. As even the uninitiated will suspect, the rule holds good in the present case too. In 1926, Dunne wrote back to the United States from one of his periodic trips to Moscow, and was foolish enough to express himself plainly on the internal Russian party conflict. Our readers will remember the period just after Stalin's break with Zinoviev and before the formation of the Opposition bloc. At that time there was an "interlude" in the Stalinist struggle against Trotsky and the Opposition, based upon Stalin's aspiration to bloc with the latter against Zinoviev and Kamenev. It was at this epoch that Dunne wrote with unconstrained joy: "Trotsky is back with a vengeance. His pictures and busts are displayed everywhere next to Lenin's" etc., etc. Elementary compassion for a man caught short dictates that we resist the temptation to publish in full the hymn of rejoicing Dunne penned at that time to the prospect of Trotsky coming "back with a vengeance".

The point is that this letter was always pretty much of an open secret in the party. Its existence is known to the stern party elders who never forget and rarely forgive. When Dunne's advancement to a higher rung in the hierarchical ladder is discussed in the sacred councils, some defender of the faith (a Browder, let us say, or a Hathaway) will say: "Yes, yes, but what about that letter?" There lies the secret of the terrific noise Dunne makes—not, to be sure, of the shameless vilification, because that is a commonplace with every Stalinist creature who ekes out his place in the party today, but of the unusual loudness. Dunne is simply trying to drown out the haunting echo of his 1926 letter. Sincerely, we wish him the luck his labors merit.

### The German Opposition at Work

This is the first of a series of articles on the current activities of the German Left Opposition.—Ed.

BERLIN.—

The tremendous sharpening of class conflicts in Germany, the dictatorship policy of the Brüning government, the Fascist danger on the one hand, the treacherous policy of the social democracy on the other, and finally, the false policy and helplessness of the C. P. G. have produced a powerful process of fermentation within the best sections of the C. P. G. and in the ranks of the proletariat as a whole. This process finds its partial expression in a search for a correct line of struggle. The call for a united front of the entire proletarian class in a defense against Fascism is the strongest factor in the German labor movement today.

The Communist party remains impotent in this situation. The present leadership of the party actually declines, by its false policy, to take into account the most important factor, the crisis of the proletarian class for a united front. The C. P. G. has succeeded, to be sure, in rallying large masses about it, but it has not succeeded in breaking down the decisive influence of the S. P. G. in the factories, in the trade unions and in the proletarian mass organizations. Thanks to the false policy of the party leadership a centrist party, the Socialist Labor Party, has been able to raise its head. For the moment, the prospect of a change in the line of the party is rather slim ("Social Fascism must first be defeated if Fascism is to be vanquished").

What did the Left Opposition do in this situation? Do the German comrades know how to intervene in the events, despite their numerical weakness? In order to evaluate the work of the

Dunne has his competitors, not very menacing once, but at least just as anxious and willing. In the new-born (or still-born?) *Workers Age* of March 5, 1932, another Trotsky-killing knight sallies forth with a wooden sword, Herbert Zam. The Lovestoneites, after the collapse of their attempt to argue us out of existence with blackjacks, burglars and daggers, have retired to the "ideological front". After their representatives in the Comintern and here voted with every available limb to expel Trotsky from the party and to exile him to Alma-Ata, and plumed the lowest depths of disloyalty and baseness to besmirch and calumniate the great revolutionist, they now find, with an indignation surpassing Dunne's, that "it is an act of shameful factional vengeance" for Stalin . . . to deprive Trotsky of his citizenship! Like the righteous burglar in the melodrama, they cry out to the villain: "You have shot my son. You have raped my daughter. You have shamed my spouse. You have stolen my household goods. You have burned down the roof over my head. But have a care, Sir Marmalade, some day you shall go too far!"

But this editorial comment is only put in to make Zam's revelations about "Trotsky and the Far East Crisis" more palatable. But it does not help one to digest Zam's re-warmed chopped straw, and we will not attempt, to offer any of it to our readers. The "three serious errors of comrade (Ahem! Comrade!) Trotsky" are three feeble straw men laboriously fabricated by Zam and triumphantly cut down at one blow. In this Zam is only following the established tradition of his kidney. It will be recalled how Zam's elderly colleague wrote a whole booklet, a veritable American textbook against Trotskyism, to prove what unvarnished scoundrels were all the allies of Trotsky in the United States. Since Trotsky had no allies in this country at that time, Wolfe, nothing put out, simply invented them for Trotsky, he proceeded, a few years later, after his expulsion with Lovestone and Co., to make the best of these inventions by uniting with them at the first opportunity! In this way, all were pleased: Trotsky had his revenge for Wolfe's fabrications, and Wolfe made a good profit out of Trotsky's "allies". Maybe there is something in the blood of the Lovestoneites that gives them a kick out of this way of conducting polemics. Apparently there are such people.

Zam, by the way, is not at an end. There is more to come. He concludes his breathless battle by writing: "Perhaps a closer investigation will disclose that the Trotsky Thermidor theory . . . and the Trotsky theory of Japan's peacefulness are not entirely unrelated." Bah! We are ashamed of such hesitancy. Why "perhaps"? People who "related" Trotsky to a Wrangel officer, and the Left Opposition to Chamberlain and Hoover, should have no difficulty in "relating" any two things. Stalin's creatures are not only to be found inside Stalin's party. Plenty can still be found among those eternally hopeful who aspire, on the outside, to the comforts of their lost home.

—MONYAK.

German Opposition objectively, its past development must be taken into consideration. The complete bankruptcy of the Maslov-Itzh-Fischer Opposition greatly compromised the ideas of the Left in the C. P. G. The policy conducted by Urbahn contributed its share to the estrangement of the Left Opposition from the cadres of the party. The intrigues of Landau contributed the rest and only helped to make the Left Opposition ridiculous in the eyes of the best sections of the German working class. It was upon such premises that the Left Opposition had to resume its work in Germany. And in this work, it must be remembered, it was faced with a struggle not only against the strongest Stalinist party in Western Europe, but against the strongest Right wing group in the world, the Brandler group, as well.

#### Political and Organizational Activity

The German Opposition has taken a position on the most important political events in so far as it lay within the realm of its ability. Before the Referendum in Prussia, it took a unequivocal position against the "Red" Referendum of the Communist party (carried on in common with the Fascists) in its paper, the *Permanente Revolution*. In its Open Letter to the party it posed, on the basis of an analysis of the situation in Germany, the question of the united front as the central political problem of the C. P. G. Finally, the Left Opposition took a position toward the new centrist party, the Socialist Labor Party, in the form of theses. Within this party, which is centrist in its policy, there are many youths who have placed themselves on the ground of Communism. They reject entrance into the C. P. G. on account of its false policy. At the plenum of the National Committee, a resolution "On the Situation" was adopted.

Lately, the political influence of the Left Opposition has grown appreciably in Germany. The entire press, and especially the central organ of the Communist party, *Die Rote Fahne*, is forced to take a position toward the policy of the Left Opposition. The campaign against comrade Trotsky is carried on in full swing.

Still, it must be emphasized that the organic growth of the Opposition does not at all measure up to this political influence. That is due, in large part, to the immense objective difficulties, and in part also to the subjective difficulties: the material poverty of the organization in relationship to the necessary work; a hard-felt lack of forces and others.

The first few months after the elimination of Landau and his meagre following were occupied with a tightening of the organization and with the resumption of regular activities by the various local groups. That was a period of internal consolidation for the organization. The next step was the formation of active cadres, the winning over of new members and the reconstruction of our faction inside the party. In this field, the Berlin organization, despite its relative weakness has been able to register good progress. The membership figures rose and in several districts party factions were created. Despite the enormously difficult objective conditions, the group went ahead with the preparation of open discussion meetings, at which new members were enrolled. Numerous speakers were sent out to represent our organization at various discussion meetings.

The Saxon and Hamburg groups have likewise carried on good propagandistic activity, especially of late. There too, we have been able to register an increase in membership. Especially instructive are the experiences of the Bruchsal group. In Bruchsal, there is only our organization in the field; there is no party organization. Through the application of the Leninist united front tactic, our Bruchsal comrades succeeded in establishing a proletarian class front, in which the social democratic party organization, the trade unions and all the other proletarian organizations participated. The result of this policy was that the local group was able to more than double its membership (more than a hundred); aside from this, several new local groups have been founded in the vicinity. Furthermore, new groups have been established in the following places: Beuthen, Goerlitz, Breslau, Frankfurt on the Main, the Ruhr, Orlanburg, Magdeburg, Erfurt, etc.

#### Literature and Press

The organization has from its inception made many efforts toward the creation of an Opposition literature. The material means did not suffice for a regularly appearing newspaper. All efforts were concentrated on the publication of inexpensive pamphlets, in order to carry on our propaganda on the broadest basis. All the writings of comrade Trotsky were published in pamphlet form. From time to time, the circulation of the publications continued to grow. Several mistakes were committed in this field (the issuance of too limited a number of pamphlets, which are today entirely out of print and which cannot be re-

(Continued on page 4)



## EDITORIAL NOTES

### THE THREAT OF ILLEGALITY

American capitalism is already giving advance notice of the bloody answer it is preparing to the slaves whom it denies a living within their slavery. In the roar of gunfire at Detroit it said to the workers whom it has thrown onto the streets: "We cannot employ you and we will not provide for you, and if you protest we will shoot you." The massacre at Detroit was followed a few days later by the murderous attack on the Chicago demonstration of the Communists before the Japanese Consulate. Here, as in Detroit, the police were clearly the aggressors. The demonstration was designed as a peaceful one, with Communist direction it could not be otherwise under the given conditions, for it is no part of Communist policy to substitute the futile violence of an individual or of a small group for the intervention of the masses who are not yet active.

We do not credit the story, by means of which the police-murderers are attempting to cover themselves, that the first shots were fired from the crowd, and by a "Communist agitator" at that. Such individual reactions to the regime of brutal repression are of course possible; one may say inevitable. Even if that had been the case in Chicago, the police who forcibly deprived the manifestants of their rights would bear the whole responsibility. But their attempt to pin the accusation on a "known" Communista discredits their story from the start. It is a transparent subterfuge to justify themselves and to frame-up the party.

They are proceeding in the same way at Detroit. The four victims of their gunmen had not been laid away before they began a wild man-hunt for Communist leaders and set the legal machinery in motion to grind out wholesale indictments. They are drawing the noose tighter around the workers' vanguard. They are starting to isolate it from the great mass of discontented workers and to outlaw its activities. The labor passivity that has attended the Kentucky prosecutions and convictions only encourages a similar procedure after every skirmish in other places. The ruling capitalists and their Governmental hirelings, shivering in fear at the coming storm of labor rebellion, would like to cut off and proscriber the conscious and articulate section of the class and deprive the germinating mass movement of legal spokesmen and organizers.

The menace of illegality for the Communist movement is undoubtedly growing, and it calls for the most serious and all-sided consideration. There is no prescription by the aid of which the Party can be guaranteed a legal existence. With the present weakness and isolation of the Party, with the intensification of war danger increasing, and with a powerful ruling class panic-stricken at the prospect of a workers' mass movement come, but not yet matured, and merged with the vanguard, the revolutionary wing may be driven underground in spite of anything it can do.

There is no prescription that will guarantee legality. But within certain limits it can be safeguarded and strengthened by a correct policy. The experience of 1919-21 must be recalled and its lessons assimilated by those militants who have been drawn into the movement, under legal conditions, since that time. The first of these lessons is to value legality; and, without surrendering a single point of revolutionary doctrine or evading a single duty, to fight for it to the end. A retreat into illegality under the present conditions, or even under much more aggravated ones, would signify a retreat from the coming class battles.

### THE SITUATION AND ITS TASK

One of the most important problems of American Communist tactics is to maintain an open legal, or at least semi-legal, position until a significant workers' mass movement has caught up with the conscious vanguard and joined with it in a common struggle on the concrete questions of the day. Then the suppression of the Party will be a thousand times more difficult. The numerically weak Party, isolated and fighting virtually alone, is only a threat. The Party supported by a Workers' mass movement is a power.

If we are going to find our way in the charged social atmosphere of these days, the first obligation laid upon us is to see things as they are. History assigns an enormous role to the conscious revolutionaries who foresee the line of march theoretically, but it does not allow us to force events by our own wishes. Marxism is no doctrine of social miracles wrought by small minorities. It has nothing in common with putschism. Even if one is convinced—as we are convinced—that we are near the threshold of great events and great

changes in the life of the American working class, it is not permissible to forget for a moment that we alone will not and cannot be the authors of these changes and these events. The future of American Communism is bright with promise, but we will move toward that great future only in so far as the working masses move with us at every step. The material conditions are long ripe for a tremendous upsurge of militant labor. This we know and this is the foundation of our perspective. But the workers do not react automatically to the material pressure upon them, and there is no rule by which to foretell the extent and tempo of their movement in advance. That must be judged and estimated as it actually unfolds or, at least, as it is clearly intimated. A clear-sighted study of the mood and temper of the workers must precede and regulate the daily tactics and working methods of the revolutionary Party if it really aims to accelerate and influence the collisions of class forces.

Unemployment on the one side and wage reductions on the other are weighing down upon virtually the whole working class of America and ruthlessly changing all the accustomed conditions and standards of life. But in spite of that—and this is the most singular and inescapable fact in the situation—the workers have not yet begun the inevitable movement of revolt. Under pressure of conditions that become more and more intolerable the workers are undergoing a profound mental change. But the outward signs of this change are not yet manifest to any appreciable extent. It is like the slow accumulation of steam in a sealed boiler that has not yet reached the explosive point. The explosion will come, and it may come unannounced; but it is not storm, but rather the dead calm before storm, that characterizes the present situation.

The sporadic movements which flare up here and there are organized by the small Communist vanguard and, for the most part, carried through by them in almost every case. In these actions the Communist workers are distinguishing themselves by their courage and resolution. They are storing up capital and prestige for the future. But the masses are not moving with the Communists. In this disparity there is a great danger that the vanguard will become exhausted and demoralized and unable to handle the real movement when it breaks.

The Communist workers are not the working class. They are only its conscious section, and at present in America they are a small and numerically insignificant section. The Communist workers alone cannot fight real class battles. Their function is to fight with the workers and in their front ranks. The task of the Communists at the moment is to prepare the workers for the coming struggles. The center of this task is the "patient work of explanation"; of agitation and propaganda to win the workers over to a course of struggle. There is no substitute for this prosaic task and there is no way to leap over it. A renovation of the Party's tactics in this sense is an absolute necessity. Only in this way can it prepare the coming workers' movement and entrench itself within it.

### A FALSE SLOGAN

"The revolutionary fighting spirit of the Communist workers who demonstrated before the Japanese consulates last Saturday is not to be questioned. The firm will to fight against the imperialist war mongers was their animating impulse. And that is all the greater reason for protest against the manner in which the energies of the militants are being misdirected by the false tactics of the Party leaders. It is a cruel irony that the brave demonstration of the Chicago revolutionists, inspired by a hatred of 'their own' imperialists, could give the outward appearance of an 'anti-Japanese demonstration', and be so described by the capitalist press. Such a direction of the struggle does not in the least hamper the war plans of American imperialism. On the contrary it gives them unwitting support.

Of course we support the Chinese people; we ought to expose and denounce the Japanese militarists in our general edly wrong to concentrate the anti-war campaign in America against the government of Japan. And this is precisely the impression that, in the present situation, the demonstrations before the Japanese consulates are bound to create in the minds of the masses. In actions of this kind only the salient facts stand out. The subsidiary slogans, the other issues which are "linked up" with the main event, are lost in the shuffle. How quickly wrongly formulated slogans exact their penalty! The popular impression of the Saturday demonstrations as an "anti-Japanese" affair is the price already paid for the asinine slogan of the Party leadership: "Drive the Japanese diplomats from the country!"

In this slogan there is the basis for a complete disorientation of the proletarian struggle around the question of the coming war. It fits in with the pseudo-pacifist policy of American imperialism in the East and facilitates its work of delusion at home. "The Japanese are mad with militarism; they are provoking a world war; but our own government strives for peace, and if it is finally forced into war it will be the fault of Japan"—this is the imperialist propaganda for the coming year which is seeping into the minds of the American people day by day. Does the "Anti-Japanese" agitation of the Party counteract this poisonous delusion or does

It is the aim of the present lines to indicate—if only in its general outlines—the composition of the political world situation today, as it has resulted from the fundamental contradictions of decay capitalism, complicated and sharpened by the severe commercial, industrial and financial crisis. The following, hastily sketched reflections, far from embracing all countries and all questions, are to be the subject of serious further, collective treatment.

1. The Spanish Revolution has created the general political premises for the immediate struggle for power of the proletariat. The syndicalist traditions of the Spanish proletariat have at once revealed themselves as one of the most important obstacles in the way of the development of the revolution. The Comintern was caught unawares by the events. The Communist party, totally impotent at the beginning of the revolution, occupied a false position on all the fundamental questions. The Spanish experiences have shown—let it be recalled once more—what a frightful instrument of the disorganization of the revolutionary consciousness of the advanced workers, the present Comintern leadership represents! The extraordinary delay of the proletarian vanguard lagging behind the events, the politically dispersed character of the heroic struggles of the laboring masses, the actual assurances of reciprocity between anarchy-syndicalism and social democracy—these are the fundamental political conditions that made it possible for the republican bourgeoisie, in league with the social democracy, to establish an apparatus of repression, and by dealing the insurgent masses blow for blow, to concentrate a considerable amount of political power in the hands of the government.

By this example, we see that Fascism does not at all represent the only means of the bourgeoisie in its struggle against the revolutionary masses. The regime existing in Spain today corresponds best to the conception of the Kerenskiad, that is, the last or "the one before the last" "left" government, which the bourgeoisie can only set up in its struggle against the revolution. But this kind of government does not necessarily signify weakness and prostration. In the absence of a strong revolutionary party of the proletariat, a combination of semi-reforms, left phrases and gestures still more to the left, and of reprisals can prove to be of much more effective service to the bourgeoisie than Fascism.

Needless to say, the Spanish revolution has not yet concluded. It has not solved its most elementary tasks (the agrarian, the church and the national questions) and is still far from having exhausted the revolutionary resources of the masses. More than it has already given, the bourgeois revolution will not be able to give. With regard to the proletarian revolution, however, the present international situation in Spain may be characterized as pre-revolutionary, but scarcely more than that. It is quite probable that the offensive development of the Spanish revolution will take on a more or less protracted character. In this manner, the historical process opens up, as it were, a new credit account for Spanish Communism.

2. The situation in England can likewise be termed with a certain degree of justification, as pre-revolutionary, provided it is strictly agreed, that a period covering several years of partial ebbs and tides can elapse between the pre-revolutionary and the immediately revolutionary situation. The economic situation in England has reached extreme acuteness. Still, the political super-structure of this arch-conservative country extraordinary lags behind the changes in the economic basis. Before taking recourse to new political forms and methods, all the classes of the English nation are attempting time and again to ransack the old store-rooms, to turn the old clothes of their grandfathers and greatmothers inside out. The fact remains, that despite the dreadful national decline there does not exist in England as yet, either a revolutionary party of any significance or its antipode—the Fascist party. Thanks to these circumstances, the bourgeoisie has had the opportunity of mobilizing the majority of the people under the "national" banner, that is, under the most hollow of all possible slogans.

It contribute to it? In the event of war with Japan the Communists will be disarmed if the American imperialists can say: "You were more eager than we were; you demanded the expulsion of the Japanese diplomats while we were still striving for peace."

"The enemy is in our own country!"—this is the revolutionary slogan of Liebknecht and Lenin, the guiding line of the proletarian struggle against imperialist war. Those who forget this for one moment are already on the toboggan to social patriotism. The proletariat in every country has to wage its own specific fight against its own imperialists and work for their defeat. The central task of the American Communists in the question of war is the systematic exposure of the policy of America which masks the most monstrous imperialism designs with the phrases of pacifism. The fire of the Communists must be concentrated mainly on this Hoover policy if it is to serve the interests of the proletariat. The anti-Japanese slogan contradicts this task, confuses and disorganizes the struggle and even contains the germ of chauvinist deviations. The slogan should be withdrawn before it does further harm.

—J. P. C.

### By LEON TROTSKY

In the pre-revolutionary situation, the most dull-witted of conservatism had acquired tremendous political predominance. It will in all probability take more than one month, perhaps more than one year, for the political super-structure to become adapted to the real economic and international situation of the country.

There is no ground for assuming that the collapse of the "national" bloc—and such a collapse is inevitable in the relatively near future—will lead directly to the proletarian revolution (it is a matter of course, that there can be no other revolution in England) or to the triumph of "Fascism". On the contrary, it may be asmed with much greater probability that on her path to the revolutionary solution, England will go through a lengthy period of the radical democratic and social-pacifist demagoguery of the Lloyd-Georgiad and of Labourism. These can therefore be no doubt that England's historical development will grant British Communism ample time to transform itself into the genuine party of the proletariat at the moment it will be confronted with the solution. From this, however, it does not at all follow that we can afford to continue losing time with disastrous experiments and Centrist zig-zags. In the present world situation, time is the most precious of raw materials.

3. France, which the sages of the Comintern had placed a year and a half or two years ago in the foremost ranks of the revolutionary "upsurge", is in actuality the most conservative country, not only of Europe, but perhaps of the entire world. The relative stability of the capitalist regime in France has its roots, to a large extent, in its backwardness. The crisis has less telling effects on it than on other countries. On the financial field, Paris even attempts to vie with New York. The present financial "prosperity" of the French bourgeoisie has its direct source in the robbery of Versailles. But it is precisely the Versailles peace itself that contains the chief threat to the entire regime of the French republic. Between the size of the population, the productive forces and the national income of France on the one hand, and her present international position on the other, there is a crying contradiction which must inevitably lead to an explosion. To maintain her short-lived hegemony, "nationalist" as well as radical-socialist France is forced to depend upon the support in the entire world, of the most reactionary forces, of the most archaic forms of exploitation, of the abominable Rumanian clique, of the decadent Pilsudski regime, of the dictatorship of the Jugoslavians military; to uphold the dismemberment of the German nation (Germany and Austria), to defend the Polish corridor in East Prussia, to aid Japanese intervention in Manchuria, to spur the Japanese military clique against the U. S. S. R., to come forward as the chief enemy of the liberation movement of the colonial peoples, etc. The contradiction between France's secondary role in world economy and her immense privileges and pretensions in world politics will become more distinct every month, will heap dangers upon dangers, upset her internal stability, promote restlessness and discontent among the masses of the people and create ever deeper political rearrangements. These processes will undoubtedly become manifest as early as the next parliamentary elections.

On the other hand, however, all indications compel us to assume that, if no great events take place outside of the country (the victory of the revolution in Germany or the reverse: the victory of Fascism), the development of the internal relationships in France itself will, in the next period, take a relatively "normal" course which will open up for Communism the opportunity of utilizing a considerable period of preparation in order to consolidate itself prior to the advent of the pre-revolutionary and revolutionary situation.

4. In the United States, the most powerful country of capital, the present crisis has laid bare frightful social contradictions with striking forcefulness. After an unprecedented period of prosperity which amazed the whole world with its fireworks of millions and billions, the United States at once entered a period of unemployment for millions of people, of the most appalling physical destitution for the toilers. Such a gigantic social convulsion cannot fail to leave its traces on the political development of the country. Today it is still hard to ascertain, at least from the distance, any measure of important radicalization in the American working masses. It may be assumed that the masses themselves have been so startled by the catastrophic upheaval in the conjuncture, so stunned and crushed by unemployment or by the fear of unemployment, that they have not as yet been able to draw even the most elementary political conclusions from the calamity that has befallen them. This requires a certain amount of time. But the conclusions will be drawn. The tremendous economic crisis, which has taken on the character of a social crisis, will inevitably be converted into a crisis of the political consciousness of the American working class. It is quite possible that the revolutionary radicalization of the broadest layers of workers will reveal itself, not in the period of the greatest decline in the conjuncture, but on the contrary, during the turn toward revival and upswing. In either case, the present crisis will open up a new epoch in the life of the American proletariat and of the people as a whole. Serious regroupments and clashes among the ruling

parties are to be expected, as well as new attempts to create a third party, etc. With the first signs of a rise in the conjuncture, the trade union movement will acutely sense the necessity of tearing itself loose from the claws of the despicable A. F. of L. bureaucracy. At the same time, unlimited possibilities will unfold themselves for Communism.

In the past, America has known more than one stormy outburst of revolutionary or semi-revolutionary mass movements. Every time they died out quickly, because America at every time entered a new phase of economic upswing and also because the movements themselves were characterized by crass empiricism and theoretical helplessness. These two conditions belong to the past. A new economic upswing (and one cannot consider it excluded in advance) will have to be based, not on the internal "equilibrium", but on the present chaos of world economy. American capitalism will enter an epoch of monstrous imperialism, of an uninterrupted growth of armaments, of intervention in the affairs of the entire world, of military conflicts and convulsions. On the other hand, in the form of Communism the masses of the American proletariat possess—rather, could possess, provided with a correct policy—no longer the old mangle of empiricism, mysticism and quackery, but a scientifically grounded, up-to-date doctrine. These radical changes permit us to predict with certainty that the inevitable and relatively rapid, revolutionary transformation of the American proletariat will no more to be the former, easily extinguishable "bonfire", but the beginning of a veritable revolutionary conflagration. In America, Communism can face its great future with confidence.

5. The Czarist adventure in Manchuria led to the Russo-Japanese war; the war—to the 1905 revolution. The present Japanese adventure in Manchuria can lead to revolution in Japan.

At the beginning of the century, the feudal-military regime of that country could still successfully serve the interests of the young Japanese capitalism. But in the course of the last quarter of a century, capitalist development has brought extraordinary decomposition in to the old social and political forms. Since that time, Japan has more than once been on the brink of revolution. But the latter lacked a strong revolutionary class to fulfill the tasks imposed on it by the developments. The Manchurian adventure may accelerate the revolutionary catastrophe of the Japanese regime.

Present day China, no matter how enfeebled it may be by the dictatorship of the Kuo Min Tang cliques, greatly differs from the China which Japan, following the European powers, despoiled in the past. China has not the strength to drive out the Japanese expeditionary forces immediately, but the national consciousness and activity of the Chinese people have grown enormously. Hundreds of thousands, millions of Chinese have gone through military training. The Chinese will always improvise new armies. The Japanese will feel themselves besieged. The railroads will be of far greater service for war than for economic purposes. More and more new troops will have to be sent out. The Manchurian expedition spreading out will begin to exhaust Japan's economic organism, increase the discontent inside the country, sharpen the contradictions and thereby, accelerate the revolutionary crisis.

6. In China, the necessity of a determined defense against the imperialist invasion will also bring with it serious internal, political consequences. The Kuo Min Tang regime arose out of the national revolutionary mass movement, which was exploited and strangled by the bourgeois militarists (with the aid of the Stalinist bureaucracy). Precisely for this reason, the present regime, shaky and full of contradictions, is incapable of initiating a revolutionary war. The necessity of a defense against the Japanese invaders will turn more and more against the Kuo Min Tang regime and nourish the revolutionary sentiments of the masses. With a correct policy, the proletarian vanguard can, under these conditions, make up for all that was so tragically lost in the course of the years 1924-1927.

7. The present events in Manchuria prove particularly how naive those gentlemen were, who demanded of the Soviet Union the simple return of the Chinese Eastern Railroad to China. That would have meant surrendering it voluntarily to Japan, in whose hands the railroad would have become a weapon against China as well as against the U. S. S. R. If anything at all had hitherto prevented the Japanese military cliques from intervention in Manchuria and if anything may still hold them within the boundaries of caution today, it is the fact that the Chinese Eastern Railroad is the property of the Soviets.

8. Cannot the Manchurian adventure of the Japanese, nevertheless, lead to war with the U. S. S. R.? It is understood, this is not excluded even with the wisest and most cautious policy on the part of the Soviet government. The internal contradictions of feudal-capitalist Japan have obviously unbalanced her government. There is no lack of instigators (France). And from the historical experiences of Czarism in the Far East, we know what an unbalanced military-bureaucratic monarchy is capable of.

The struggle unfolding in the Far East, it is understood, carried on not for the sake of the railroads, but over

the fate of all of China. In this gigantic historical struggle, the Soviet government cannot be neutral, take the same position with regard to China as to Japan. It is duty-bound to stand completely and fully on the side of the Chinese people. Only the unflinching loyalty of the Soviet government to the struggle for the liberation of the oppressed peoples can really protect the Soviet Union on the Eastern frontier against Japan, England, France, the United States.

Under what forms the Soviet government will support the struggle of the Chinese people in the coming period, depends upon the concrete historical circumstances. If it had been insane to surrender the Chinese Eastern Railroad voluntarily to Japan before, then it would be just as insane to subordinate the entire policy in the Far East to the problem of the Chinese Eastern Railroad. There are many indications that the behavior of the Japanese military clique in this question bears a consciously provocative character. Directly behind this provocation, stands ruling France. The aim of the provocation is to tie the hands of the Soviet Union in the East. All the more firmness and far-sightedness is required on the part of the Soviet government.

The fundamental conditions of the East: its immense expanse, its countless human masses, its economic backwardness—give these processes their slow, their drawn out and crawling character. In any case, there is no threat of an immediate and acute danger to the existence of the Soviet Union from the Far East. During the coming period, the main events will develop in Europe. Here, great opportunities may arise, but from the same source also, great dangers threaten. For the present, only Japan has tied its hands in the Far East. The Soviet Union must, for the present, keep its hands free.

—L. TROTSKY.  
From ("Germany—the Key to the International Situation.")

### German Opposition at Work

(Continued from page 3)

issued now for material reasons). The pamphlets "Against National Communism", "Shall Fascism Really Be Victorious?" and "How Can National Socialism Be Defeated?" have all appeared in a second edition. The latest pamphlets have all appeared editions of 15,000 and have been completely sold out. The present sphere of influence of the Left Opposition will allow us to advance to editions of 25,000. This is a significant step forward.

Due to the reasons mentioned above, the Permanent Revolution could not, at first, appear more than once a month. We had to overcome certain pessimistic sentiments against a more regular appearance. Nevertheless, we have succeeded in issuing the paper as a semi-monthly ever since January 1. That is an unquestionable success for the organization, although this result is by no means up to the mark of political necessity. We are campaigning for a weekly at present.

The successes achieved are the fruits of a systematic work of preparation, which brought about the most effective utilization and application of the forces of which we disposed. We must emphasize that all our work was carried on without any material assistance from the outside. In view of the fact that there are more than 6,000,000 unemployed in Germany today, these material efforts are even worthy of a much higher evaluation. Without overlooking any of the shortcomings that still persist, it is, nevertheless, undeniable, that the German Opposition has overcome the stage of sectarianism and that it is on the road to becoming one of the most active sections in the International Left Opposition.

—R. WELL.

### CLASS IN MARXISM

It is not yet too late to join the class in Marxism taught by comrade Swaback every Thursday evening at eight o'clock, at our headquarters, 84 E. 10th St. Comrades and sympathizers are invited to attend. The subject matter already covered included discussion of Class Struggles in France, the 18th Brumaire, the Communist Manifesto, the Gotha Program.

Some of the remaining sessions, and they are more than half, will be devoted to analysis and discussion of the dispute with the anarchists, the dispute with the Utopians, historical materialism, and dialectics. We repeat: it is not yet too late to join this class. The fee is small. The next session is Thursday, March 24th.

### BACK NUMBERS OF "MILITANT" WANTED

We are preparing files of the Militant for binding. We plan to bind in one volume all the issues from Vol. 1, No. 1 to Volume IV No. 12, the last issue of the semi-monthly Militant. We are missing the following numbers: Vol. 1, No. 1, November 15, 1928. Vol. 2, No. 4, Feb. 18th 1929; Vol. 3, No. 31; Oct. 1, 1930; Vol. 4, No. 2, January 15th, 1931. Vol. 4, No. 4, February 15th 1931. Vol. 4, No. 10, May 15th, 1931. Just as soon as we receive these numbers we will be able to proceed with our binding plans and offer the bound volumes for sale.

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