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THE TOILER

Vol. IV.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 1, 1921

No. 190

The Labor Movement in France

No. 190-207

Impressions of the Struggle in the French Trade Unions

William Z. Foster

Oct 1, 1921 -
Jan. 28, 1922

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- Unemployment *Juliet Stuart Poyntz*
- The Negro Convention *C. B. Valentine*
- The Miners at the Crossroads . . *Walter T. Johnson*

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Editorials — Books — Documents

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No Playing with the Russian Famine!

As soon as the calamity was realized the Soviet Government of Russia, unlike the former Tsarist government, stated the facts in full and sounded the alarm to arouse the full energy of the Russian people.

It authorized the organization of a "non-partisan" relief committee, composed to a great extent of members of the bourgeois parties, because it wished to enable all Russians to join in the relief activities.

The White Guard press abroad and part of the foreign capitalist press treated the formation of this committee as a sign of weakness on the part of the Workers' Government of Russia and began suggesting this "non-partisan" relief committee as the nucleus of a bourgeois government to take the place of the Soviet Government.

The reactionaries on the "non-partisan" relief committee could not apply themselves to relief work. Insead they began to organize a campaign to overthrow Soviet Russia, abusing the privileges granted for relief activities. Negotiations began with counter-revolutionaries in other countries.

And so the Workers' Government of Russia ended their game. The "non-partisan" committee was abolished. "No playing with the famine!" became the slogan. There was only one way to make this possible. The Workers' Government of Russia took official charge of all famine relief.

THE FRIENDS OF SOVIET RUSSIA is not a "non-partisan" organization. It is a workers' organization calling for help for famine stricken Russia from the workers of all America.

We say to all workers: **GIVE**—not only to feed the starving but to save the Russian Workers' Revolution.

We believe in **GIVING** without imposing imperialistic and reactionary conditions, as do Hoover and others.

JOIN US in this campaign for relief. Organize a branch in your city. Hold a conference with the labor unions. Secure the support of all workers.

RUSSIA SHALL NOT BE STABBED IN THE BACK!!

Send all remittances and inquiries to

The Friends of Soviet Russia
201 West 13th Street, New York City.

The Toiler

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OUR POLICY

The Toiler appears at a most severe and trying period as a political, economic and literary organ devoted to the interests of the working class. The Toiler will attempt to interpret week by week the political, economic and social problems confronting the workers of the world and the workers of America. The Toiler will spare no effort to secure authoritative and first-hand information regarding every phase of working class thought and action. The immediate struggle and needs of labor will be kept in the foreground. Their significance and possibilities will be treated from a proletarian point of view. In this spirit we will approach the problems confronting our class brothers in other countries. We will endeavor to bring new light to every field in which the class struggle manifests itself.

We shall not be satisfied, however, with mere interpretation. We hope to assist in the formulation of policies and tactics by a conscientious study of facts. The workers must not only know but do. At all times The Toiler will fearlessly speak the minds of the workers and voice their needs and aspirations. We will unswervingly pursue this path. No mercy will be shown to the enemies of the proletariat. No ground will be given to the betrayers of the working class, regardless of the form, name, or flag in which they wrap themselves. We will be frank in the statement of our views, fearless in our analysis, and without mercy in our criticism.

We will bend all our energies to meet the need of the present crisis, clarity of purpose and unity of action for the American working class.

With the outbreak of the World War came the collapse of the Second International. For a moment it appeared as if the whole working class movement would go to the wall. Reaction was everywhere in the saddle. Then came the first ray of light. The proletarian revolution and the establishment of a Soviet Republic in Russia, the heroic battles of the German workers, the gigantic demonstrations of solidarity in France and England, the sharp struggles in Italy and the wave of strikes in the United States sounded the knell of capitalist supremacy. In the ranks of the workers of every country there began a realignment of forces, a clarification of issues. This culminated in the organization of the Third International, the vanguard of the world proletarian movement, the greatest revolutionary force that has ever existed.

In the fold of the enemy, the capitalist class, there was also feverish preparation for battle. Consternation ruled in their camp, as crown and state went to the scrap-heap. But, aided by the labor lieutenants and the social traitors, the capitalist class succeeded in weathering this storm. To-day the capitalists are on the offensive along the whole front and are driving hard. We are on the eve of great battles, and the battles to come will be decisive.

In America the realignment of forces has been going on apace for the last three years. The American Federation of Labor is in a state of ferment. The Socialist Party, having lost its revolutionary membership, is now bankrupt in every sense of the word. The Communist Party has been driven underground. Everywhere there is dissatisfaction, everywhere there is unrest, but nowhere in the country has there yet appeared a leadership sufficiently strong to direct the struggles of the American workers into revolutionary channels. America is now the citadel of world imperialism. But the American working class is politically impotent and industrially weak. The new times have brought in their wake new problems. And the new problems have as yet brought only new crises for the working class.

The proletariat is completely on the defensive in the United States. Its enemy has assumed a most vigorous offensive and is determined to crush the workers. In this struggle the contending forces are, at present, unequal in strength. On the one hand we have a splendidly organized and powerful capitalist class; on the other, we have a divided, floundering working class. In the outcome of this unequal struggle lies the key to the world situation. American capital is the hope of world imperialism. American labor must become the hope of the world revolution.

HOOVERIZING UNEMPLOYMENT

The composition of the Hoover Committee on Unemployment is precisely what we should have expected. What we expected was a replica of the National Civic Federation with a dash of the National Security League and the professors bringing up the rear. And so we have it. Our statistics indicate that 100% of the committee are representatives of the employing interests, including Mr. Samuel Gompers of the National Civic Federation, Mr. Matthew Woll, Mr. Gompers' understudy, Mr. John L. Lewis, the faithful henchman of the mine-owners, Mr. Thomas O'Connor, now in full bloom on the U. S. Shipping Board, Mr. W. S. Carter, rail-union bureaucrat, and Miss Elizabeth Cristman, secretary of the "female annex" of the A. F. L., otherwise the National Women's Trade Union League. This paltry half dozen will serve to camouflage the real powers of the conference, the two dozen full-fledged manufacturers and bankers of whom at least ten represent the railroads and the iron, steel and coal interests—a strong caucus we should say. In addition we have a small number of what we might call "public characters" for want of a better designation. There is Mary Van Kleeck, who organized the women during the war for the manufacture of bombs and shells, Colonel Arthur Woods, who used them, and Miss Ida Tarbell, who advocated their use. There is Mr. Proctor, the fallen "angel" of Leonard Wood. And Mr. William Leiserson of the clothing industry winds up the list as the champion pacifier of capital and labor.

The professors of course come trotting along behind, a baker's dozen of them on the Economic Advisory Committee, mingled with a few social workers and experts in efficiency and "labor management." Their complaisance at being assigned a place without power and vote can only be compared with that of the Gompers element in joyfully accepting the position of a hopeless minority. The professors and experts will suggest the order of business, the manufacturers will transact it, and the labor fakirs will say "Amen!"

Well done, though good and faithful Mr. Hoover!

Meanwhile, the unemployed will continue—unemployed. New York City has had her first baptism of armed suppression of the idle with the appearance of Mr. Urbain Ledoux, heralded by the American Legion as a "danger to the commonwealth." Mr. Ledoux announces his intention of establishing cobbler shops and giving away soup and buns, hardly a dangerous occupation. It is his picturesque methods of publicity apparently that the guardians of American liberty do not like. Small wonder! Mr. Ledoux's slave-auction rubs the capitalist complex on the raw. American workmen must not get this slavery idea. It spoils all the ideology of the free labor contract which it has taken a century to instil into the American mind.

Slavery, slave-markets, slave-revolts, these are uncomfortable thoughts; and any rising young Spartacus must be nipped in the bud.

The first clash has occurred in Bryant Park where the jobless gathered eager for the slave-sale, and perhaps for the hand-out of 3,000 buns. Instead they had their first taste of American White-Guardism. For some two hours hundreds of police reserves pursued the weak and hungry unemployed, valiantly clubbing and riding them down, silencing their speakers and hounding them out of the district.

The American governing class has learned much from the war. It has learned the tactics of "direct action" and learned it before the workers. A perusal of the press of the winter of 1914 shows how far we have travelled during the intervening years. The papers of that date overflow with the unemployed agitation, meetings, parades, demonstrations, organizations. It seems a different world, that liberal word of yesterday, with its universal faith in "public opinion" if only it could be reached, with its universal trust in democracy and its guarantee of fundamental rights of speaking and meeting. The masters know better now, and the slaves are learning.

THE OFFENSIVE OFFENSIVE OF THE S. P.

Abe Cahan, editor-in-chief of the *Vorwaerts* in New York, recently returned from Europe to find that "a revolution has taken place in my absence." This is not the socialist revolution, but a revolution in the socialist organization, including the sacred precincts of the *Vorwaerts* itself. The headlong move to the left in the Socialist Party has now acquired a momentum that threatens to undermine its foundations. These foundations have been firmly built and are constructed by a combination of the officialdom of the large garment unions with the machine of the *Vorwaerts* and the Socialist Party for the control of the masses of the East Side. The power of the combination rests fundamentally on the control of the workers' jobs by the International Ladies Garment Workers' Union and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers Union and lesser organizations. Insurgent rank-and-filers are thrown out of the shop and deprived of a livelihood. Insurgents in office are ousted from the organization.

These oppressive conditions have not prevented the revolution to which Cahan refers. The New York socialist and trade union leaders are becoming genuinely alarmed at the prospect of losing the docile allegiance of the masses which has so long ensured their power. Unwilling to undertake a militant policy themselves, either in industry or politics, they strive to prevent all other organizations from giving militant leadership to the masses. The Workers' League in local politics, the rank-and-file groups in the unions, and Moscow in the international field are the special objects of their hatred and apprehension.

An offensive has therefore been launched in the hope of stifling the rising young militants under a shower of abuse and vilification. Oneal of the Call is the mud-slinger in chief. "Oh, Zinoviev! Larrup these whelps as they deserve!" he exclaims. Because forsooth the Workers' League has put forth the immediate demands for relief of the workers from the evils of the open shop, reductions of wages and unemployment. How can a militant organization make immediate demands? "We hope that the supreme generalissimo of the world revolution does not see it." Mr. Oneal is evidently ignorant of the fact that it is precisely that generalissimo who started the world revolution by gathering the workers under the slogan of immediate demands. It was the revolutionary cry of "Bread and Peace!" that made the Russian revolution, not the doctrinaire socialist chant of public ownership of public utilities. At some future date we will undertake to educate Mr. Oneal and the rest of the unenlightened on this subject. For the moment we refer him to the Manifesto of the Third Congress of the Third International reprinted in this issue, which gives magnificent expression to the revolutionary policy of immediate demands: *It is not with theoretical disquisitions on democracy and dictatorship that these traitors to the working class, these agents of the bourgeoisie are to be overcome, but rather on the real issues of bread, of wages, of clothing and shelter.*

The offensive proceeds. "This aggregation will be useful to the National Security League and its allied capitalist cliques." That presumably explains why many of "this aggregation" are in prison while the socialists are outside. We read in the Call of the "drunken wanderings" of this "bunch of long-distance revolutionists," the "Neo-Marxists, Neo-Socialists and Neo-Revolutionists who are merely Neo-Nuts" according to Otto Branstetter, National Secretary of the Socialist Party. Such a vocabulary is beyond the capacities of the Toiler editorship. We cannot reply to Mr. Oneal, Mr. Erwin and Mr. Branstetter in their own terms. We would rather give them a friendly bit of admonition. Such methods of attack or defense can not long bolster up a bad case. A good case does not need them. If the Socialist Party can only preserve itself by vituperation of those who have with it a just and reasonable issue of international importance, then it cannot preserve itself at all.

THE DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE

The Disarmament Conference has been the one cheering note in a disharmonious world. Not that we expect disarmament, like the Methodists and the Presbyterians and the pacifist ladies! Not even the *New York Times* expects disarmament! There has been altogether too much talk about disarmament in connection with this Disarmament Conference, according to the Times. What's in a name! Militarism and imperialism under the name of disarmament would smell as sweet.

The government has sent out the order of business for the conference to the other countries participating. And "in this order of business," says the Times, "there is scarcely a word about limiting armaments. One of the items mentions 'fortifications' in the Pacific, but that is all. Not a line about theoretical formulas of disarmament. . . . Let the disease be removed and the question of health will take care of itself. . . . It is international policy that piles up military appropriations. Once secure sanctioned agreements between nations which make heavy armaments superfluous, and they will drop of their own weight." Secretary Hughes is working for "an international force too strong to be challenged or defied by any one country," we are told. "He has his eye upon the main thing. . . . Limiting armaments has to be, in the nature of the case, subsequent and secondary."

Washington, in other words, is to be a second Versailles, William Gamaliel Harding a second Woodrow Wilson and the new Covenant a second League of Nations. But why all this trouble repeated, the assemblings and discussings, the whispering and the haranguings, the mobilization of American morality, the political manipulation of American religiosity. It has all been done, done thoroughly and unscrupulously, done as only the great American nation can be done. Why do it again?

THE EMPIRE TOTTERS

The British Empire is in a bad way. Ireland and India together! That the situation in India is serious is indicated by the arrest of Mahatma Ghandi and his Mohammedan allies, the brothers Ali. These are the elemental forces in the popular movement, the lion and the lamb of the Indian independence movement—Mahatma Ghandi the militant non-resistant, the brothers Ali the Mohammedan militants. The British administration in India has hitherto been at particular pains to keep its hand off such exposive material as Ghandi and his colleagues. That they were finally willing to order his arrest shows how hard-pushed they are by the uprisings in Malabar and the general unrest. Ghandi is worshipped as a god by the Indian masses and his arrest will stir deep currents of popular feeling which have lain dormant under mere misery. His activities in the recent great strikes of unskilled workers and in the campaign for non-cooperation with the British and their government mark him as the most dangerous enemy the British Empire has encountered for more than a century. He hates capitalism, he hates civilization as he sees it in western Europe, and the Indian masses agree with him. Better the old language and poetry of India, the folk-songs that stir the heart, the homespun of the village loom, the traditional social grouping, than the crushing uniformity of the machine civilization and its bloody imperialism.

MINGO

In West Virginia there are about one hundred thousand miners of whom less than half are unionized. For over twenty years West Virginia has been the scene of a bitter struggle between the miners and the big business interests which periodically breaks out into open, armed conflict. The issue of the struggle is the right to organize against inhuman working conditions and torturing exploitation.

The mines, the stores, churches, schools, hospitals, homes, press, and the entire governmental machinery are owned outright by the coal barons. The salaries of deputy sheriffs are paid by the operators, and the State Constabulary is picked from lists prepared by them. All of the mining area is under the domination of the Baldwin-Felts Detective Agency's gangmen and murderers. These armed guards watch the payrolls, collect rents, evict workers, run miners out of town, and serve as general thugs and hangmen for the capitalists.

The workers are robbed going and coming. A raise in wages is immediately followed by a rise in prices at the company stores. Whatever slight improvement in their conditions of life these miners have won is due to the wholesome terror the union has struck into the hearts of the operators. The latter will therefore leave nothing undone to thwart the workers' desire for a genuine union. The mines and workers' organizations are honeycombed with spies. Under a vicious agreement, aptly called the "yellow dog contract," the corporations starve the miners into submission and terrorize them into fear of working side by side with union men. The employers use every device to insure the maintenance of this closed scab-shop system. Any defiance of this system of slavery, any sign of workers' resistance, is met with club, bayonet, and machine gun. Jails, evictions, injunctions, and murder play no small part in the enslavement of the miners.

The Struggle

The last march on Mingo is only a repetition of the 1919 episode. Time and again have the workers been driven to revolt despite their "pacifying" leaders. In the last dispute everything that could possibly have been done to secure a compromise was attempted by the miners. The Governor was asked to arrange for a conference between operators and workers. But the Governor refused to bite the hand that feeds him. Such a conference would imply, in some measure, a recognition of the union. Hence the Governor flatly rejected the miners' plea on this very ground. Then came a request for a special session of the legislature to consider the evils arising from the system of private armies. Of course this proposal was found "unnecessary and impracticable." Finally Harding was appealed to for a conference. In reply to this appeal came Federal troops, airplanes, gas bombs and machine guns to crush the workers.

The natural outcome of military intervention was the disarming and dispersal of the miners. The threat of gas bombs, airplanes, and artillery was cruelly effective. And now Justice will have her way. Hundreds of workers have been rushed to prison and indicted for murder.

Behind the Scenes

The fight at Mingo is not a mere strike. The fight at Mingo marks a crucial moment in the capitalist offensive against the American working class. Here the United Mine Workers of America, a powerful workers' organization, confronts the United States Steel Corporation, a ruthless anti-union junta, holding hundreds of thousands of workingmen in slavery. At this moment, when the entire working class is waging a panicky defensive, when the smallest gains of the workers are in danger, recognition of the miners' union even in the slightest degree, would be a victory for the whole working class. Of this the capitalists are fully aware. Hence the ferocity with which their bloodhounds were unleashed upon the workers. Hence the class solidarity of the exploiters as evidenced by the tone of their press, the swift "justice" of their courts, and the demonstration of force.

Behind the din of the battle, behind the Presidential proclamations, the real, directing forces of the capitalist tyranny are at work. Mingo affords overwhelming proof of the unity of the capitalist executive power and the stock exchange. No less illustrious figures than U. S. Solicitor General James M. Beck and Secretary of the U. S. Treasury A. W. Mellon have direct financial interests in the hell-hole of West Virginia.

An Urgent Need

There is a lull in the battle of Mingo. The opposing forces are preparing for new struggles. At the United Mine Workers' Convention Mingo will undoubtedly hold its own. But what is the way out?

The workers must challenge the vicious arrogance of the West Virginia mine owners. They must force the Government to disarm the Baldwin-Felts thugs and drive them out of the State. This can only be realized through the concerted, unified pressure of the organized worker. The trade union bureaucracy must be driven into the struggle.

The march to Mingo is a magnificent episode in the history of the miners, a remarkable evidence of their courage and solidarity. The American working class must stand by the miners of Mingo. Let every union local, every workingman, rally to the defense of the miners of West Virginia. A victory for the miners will be the signal for greater victories of the working class. A lasting defeat for the miners will pave the way for more ruthless capitalist oppression and its hideous aftermath for the whole working class.

THE WORKERS LEAGUE

A new political party of labor has recently been launched in New York City which promises a future of far-reaching significance. Under the name of the Workers League a group of militant workers and their organizations have combined for a new effort to secure forceful and uncompromising expression for the crying needs of labor. The present crisis demands action of a kind that no political party now in the field can provide.

The Workers League seeks to speak solely in the name of the workers, strives solely to promote their interests. That task at a time when capitalism has collapsed and is unable even to guarantee the means of life to the workers, is the task for a courageous and uncompromising party. Such a party must be ready to drop intellectual quibbling for militant action. It must strive to rally the masses of the workers for the expression of their sufferings and their immediate needs. It must use the present critical situation to weld together the forces which will be prepared for conflict and responsibility when the right moment arrives. Above all such a party must be animated by a truly international spirit, must be in close and fraternal touch with those workers' movements in Europe which are preparing for the liquidation of capitalist bankruptcy and malfeasance. Such a party the Workers' League shows itself to be in its organization and program.

While the Socialist Party is committed to bourgeois parliamentarism and political reform, the Workers League refuses to stimulate illusions in the minds of the workers as to the possibility of improving their lot under the present economic order and with parliamentary activity as an instrument. The Workers League enters politics to unmask it. It seeks to enter congress and other legislative bodies not to urge reform but to voice the wrath of the workers at their terrible situation. With the parliamentary tribune as a sounding board it plans to spread forth over the country the message of international solidarity, the challenge of the irreconcilable class conflict.

The Workers League realizes that the labor movement is for the toiling masses not a mere intellectual theory but a passion, and one which springs from their deepest needs, their greatest exaltation. The tactics, therefore, of any group which aspires to march with them and before them is a practical and realistic one. It must express the hunger of the masses, their love and their misery. Wherever they are the party of the masses must be with them, whatever are their urgent and immediate needs of life the party of the masses must strive for. And it is just when the necessities of the masses are unattainable, when the mere expression of them is in itself a challenge to the social order, that they must be given fearless and courageous expression.

The Workers League therefore puts forth a program of immediate demands upon the chief issues before the

American workers today. The workers must protest against the open shop and fight with every weapon this attempt at destroying their organizations; they must resist the reduction of wages which threaten to return them to a slavery worse than the worst days of early machine industry. They must have relief from unemployment. These demands the Workers' League makes in the name of the American workers knowing full well that an organized attempt to secure these demands will lead the American proletariat directly into the final conflict with capitalism.

AMERICA AND THE WORLD CRISIS

It is now clear that during the last twelve months the United States and the countries of Western Europe have become involved in an economic crisis of unparalleled extent and severity. No field of industry has been left untouched by the blight. Production has collapsed and transportation is disorganized, not only in the countries which suffered from the direct devastation of war and the exhaustion of material resources, but also in those less directly involved which profited by the distress of others to perfect their industrial equipment and vastly increase their store of wealth. Victor and vanquished, rich and poor, the flourishing and the exhausted, all are suffering from the same disease.

The period of "reconstruction" after the armistice served to delay but not to turn aside the inevitable Nemesis of the war conditions in Europe. The capitalistic governments managed to survive the period of demobilization and the vengeful wrath of the workers that flared up in widespread rebellion. Industry was able to revive somewhat, stimulated by the remnants of war collectivism and by the imperative needs of the destitute peoples.

If economists had constructed the Treaty of Versailles rather than demagogues and profiteers the life of capitalism might have been prolonged. A sharing of war burdens, an equitable distribution of raw materials, a stabilization of international money exchange, might have enabled international trade to revive. The suicidal measures of the Treaty of Versailles were accepted instead. Colonial markets and raw materials were gobbled up through the mandates. The frontier settlements fanned the flame of nationalism. New customs barriers were set up, and economic isolation replaced free trade.

The responsible leaders of capitalism gradually came to a realization of the failure of the treaty and the dangerous condition of the economic system, but apparently too late to avert the impending crisis. When the President of the National City Bank published *What Happened to Europe* shortly after the armistice, he was frowned upon as a kill-joy.

American capitalism after the war was in no mood to entertain a skeleton at its feast. The war had been

good business and its fruits were to be enjoyed, not examined. It had raised America to first place in the financial world. Wall Street replaced Lombard Street as the center of world finance, and the dollar had supplanted the pound as the international currency standard. The National Debt had increased through the Liberty Loans from one billion to twenty-five billions, most of which, including the ten billions which the American government lent to the Allies, had found its way directly or indirectly into the pockets of American bankers, manufacturers and commercial profiteers. America had become the world's creditor. In industry and agriculture she held a position similar to that of England during the Napoleonic wars. She had become the workshop and granary of the world.

This feverish economic activity had not entailed for America as for the European combatants a great destruction of material resources. On the contrary, her industrial equipment was complete and well organized, her productive capacity stimulated by the demands of warring Europe. Even demobilization and the reorganization of industry on a peace basis, which in Europe caused such chaos interfered little with American prosperity or employment. Her export trade instead of declining rose to new high levels, in spite of the fact that her customers were the ruined nations of Europe. And the domestic market flourished on the extravagance of government and profiteer.

The American warehouses in 1920 were full to overflowing with goods hoarded by speculators to be sold "at a price." Foreign trade was the watchword of business. Salesmen and government agents scurried over the world to capture the market for American goods. The munitions profiteers transferred their interest from TNT to shoes, and a great Foreign Trade Corporation was established with the backing of the Duponts, in which American competitors were to co-operate in the race for international trade against ally and enemy.

America began to export capital on a large scale and sought in South America and China a field for investment of her inflated war wealth. The extreme want and misery of Europe and her economic collapse were undoubtedly regarded with considerable satisfaction as guaranteeing an indefinite absorption of American goods in the near future, until the ugly facts were borne home to American business men that their exports could be paid for only in imports, which involved the competition in their own domestic market of goods produced on the standard of mark, franc and lire. And so the American protective tariff was maintained and gold flowed in instead of goods, until in 1921 the United States had absorbed 37% of the gold reserves of the world, \$7,000,000,000, as compared to the 22% or \$3,000,-

000,000 which she possessed in 1913. Last winter she was gathering in from foreign countries a half a billion of gold a month, a harvest ten-fold as large as that of 1914.

Then came the deluge. In the spring of 1920 the market for stocks and manufactured goods collapsed. Prices sky-rocketed down. The vast stores in the warehouses were dumped on the market for what they would bring.

The spectacular collapse of the American export trade is the best index of the present situation. In March, 1920, exports stood at their high-water mark with a value of \$819,600,000; by March, 1921 they had sunk to \$386,800,000, a decline of more than half in a single year. At the beginning of 1921 exports still exceeded imports by half a billion, four months later by 85.3 million.

Production suffered in like fashion. Only a million and a half tons of crude steel were produced in April, 1921 as compared with a monthly average of four million in 1920, and within the first four months of this year coal production was cut in two. The flourishing automobile industry has collapsed. Prices have tumbled still farther on staples and raw materials. In the richest country of the world there is a famine of capital as well as of the necessaries of life. The disorganization of money exchange has killed the hopes for foreign trade, and there can be little domestic demand in the conditions of universal unemployment and "liquidation of labor," the well-sounding capitalist term for reduction of wages.

Can American capitalism hope to extricate itself from the present crisis? Its own experts are doubtful. "There is no prospect of a marked change in business conditions in the immediate future," reports one. The new evidences of trade depression are causing "dismay and profound pessimism" throughout the business world, according to another. The problem of revival translates itself into several larger questions. Can international trade be revived? Can customs barriers be broken down? Can an international standard of value be established? Can bankrupt nations pay interest on 250 billions of war debts? Can bourgeois governments survive with millions of their population starving and destitute? Will England disgorge her mandate territories and grip on raw materials? Can blood sucking and blood transfusion be practiced together on the body of conquered Germany? Will this novel treatment make her strong enough to support western European capitalism on her shoulders? Will the capitalist countries establish free trade with Soviet Russia and with each other?

To ask these questions is to answer them.

The Labor Movement in France

By WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

Paris, Aug. 30, 1921.

In all Europe there is no more interesting labor situation than that in the French General Confederation of Labor (C. G. T.). There the conservatives and revolutionists are waging a fight to the finish against each other. The points of conflict are the classic issues of labor in Europe today: the conservatives want to keep the trade union movement in the path of class collaboration taken by it during the war, and to maintain its present affiliation with the Amsterdam International; whereas the revolutionists are striving to bring the organization back to its old-time program of class struggle, and to make it part of the Moscow International.

Both factions are highly organized and animated with a determined spirit. The conservatives are in possession of the official machinery of the C. G. T. and most of the national unions. The revolutionists, consisting of Syndicalists, Communists, and Anarchists, control most of the local and departmental labor councils, which have great influence in the French labor movement. They also control a number of national unions, most important of all the National Federation of Railwaymen.

Boring From Within

But the vital center of their organization is the Revolutionary Syndicalist Committee (C. S. R.). This is an immense machine for "boring from within," or as the French say, for conducting a campaign of *noyautage*. Mark well the word for it is destined to become famous. The organization of red-cells or *noyaux* parallels the trade union movement in all its ramifications. In every local union there is a group, or *noyau*, of revolutionists working ceaselessly to win the organization to their point of view. All these local *noyaux* in the various crafts and industries are linked together into national committees to correspond with their respective unions, and the national industrial committees are in turn united in the national body of the Revolutionary Syndicalist Committee. The latter maintains its own newspapers and headquarters from the funds contributed to it by sympathetic unions. It also holds its own national congresses, just before those of the C. G. T. Indeed it is a cardinal principle of the *noyautistes* that they always hold their meetings prior to those of their respective organizations, so that the program of the revolutionists may be clear-cut and their tactics unified.

The Revolutionary Syndicalist Committee is one

of the most remarkable and advanced types of organization yet produced by the labor movement of the world. Bodies similar to it may be expected to develop soon in all the capitalist countries now that the revolutionary elements are recovering from their childish dual unionism and are seriously mapping out the fight against conservative labor leadership.

As things now stand the force seems pretty well divided between the two factions—at the Lille Congress in July, 1921 the conservatives polled 1,556 votes, while the revolutionists got 1,348. In reality, however, the revolutionists have probably the better of it. They have the more active elements on their side, but the conservatives, through control of the C. G. T. machinery, are able to muster up many phantom organizations to swell their own vote.

Yellow Labor Leadership

Before hazarding an opinion as to the outcome of this bitter fight, it may be profitable for us to trace its origin and course. Previous to the world war the C. G. T. was controlled by the revolutionists, having been captured by them from the conservatives a number of years before. But during the war many of its leaders joined hands with the bourgeoisie and gave the organization a yellow hue. Jôuhaux, Dumoulin and Merrheim, all former left-wing militants, led in this work of reaction.

Returning from the great struggle, the revolutionists took sharp exception to the tactics of their erstwhile comrades and began to organize themselves in minority committees. Pierre Monatte, editor of *La Vie Ouvrière*, headed the revolt. Soon the rebels made their influence felt, and in the great railway strike of May, 1920 they took a very prominent part. The conservatives sabotaged this supreme effort of the workers and then blamed the revolutionists for the terrible defeat. Under the cover of the brutal Government repression and the reaction among the workers, they literally scourged them, driving them out of office in many cases in a manner hardly equalled even in American trade union history.

These events produced a profound crisis in the ranks of the revolutionists. Shocked and enraged at the white guard tactics of the conservative leaders, many of them were for quitting the old unions altogether and starting a new labor movement a la I. W. W. But the seasoned French militants were not caught in such a folly. With the conservatives so desperately anxious to get them out of the unions

they were not foolish enough to leave of their own accord. It is only in the infantile American revolutionary movement that such stupidities are committed. On the contrary, they redoubled their efforts to perfect their minority organizations, having by twenty years of experience learned the potency of such methods.

The Struggle Within the Unions

By the C. G. T. Congress in Orleans, 1920, the revolutionists had succeeded in winning to their side 658 votes against 1,485 of their opponents. But as their strength grew the conservatives intensified the war against them. Their program was to get the revolutionists out of the unions at all costs, and seeing that the latter were not prepared to quit of their own accord they decided to throw them out. Upon the motion of Dumoulin, a former revolutionist, the Executive Committee of the C. G. T. recommended to its affiliated national unions and central labor councils to expell all their local unions that were affiliated with the Revolutionary Syndicalist Committee.

Being keen labor tacticians, the revolutionists were quick to grasp the advantages this gave them. They instantly launched a great campaign to preserve the unity of the labor movement, blasting the conservatives as disruptionists, while American revolutionists have made the cardinal mistake of leaving the conservatives in the position of defending Labor's unity, while they took upon themselves the fatal onus of disruptionism. The effect was magical. The C. G. T., even though it secured a special endorsement from the Amsterdam International, did not dare enforce its famous exclusion order. Only five local unions were expelled by their national bodies—of these two by the Agricultural Workers and three by the Sanitary Employee's Union, and the revolutionists raised such a protest over these cases that the conservatives reinstated the expelled unions rather than accept the certain defeat that would have been theirs had the question come squarely before the Lille Congress. All told, the exclusion policy resulted in a great victory for the rebels.

So anxious are the conservatives to get rid of the revolutionists that they are frankly willing to split the trade union movement in order to do it. All they want is a favorable opportunity, one that will have the masses on their side and the revolutionists in some little-I. W. of their own. They openly declare in their papers that they lost such a chance at the Orleans Congress, and they intimated that the same mistake would not be made at Lille. At this historic gathering they overlooked no occasion to drive the revolutionists into secession, employing tactics that ranged all the way from violations of the constitution to the use of gunmen.

But if the conservatives were anxious to drive the revolutionists out, the latter were just as anxious to stay in. Once in the heat of the battle a group of them left the hall, but they soon perceived their error and returned. It may be set down as a certainty that if there is a split in the French movement the conservatives will have to bear the fatal burden of responsibility.

The Drift Toward Moscow

The congress marked a great victory for the revolutionists. Their vote advanced from 658 to 1,348 in one year, an increase of over 100%. And the victory is moral as well as numerical, for it shows clearly which way the wind is blowing in the French labor movement.

What the future holds is problematical. The conservatives are so badly discredited that they will probably go down fighting, risking their all on some desperate venture. Indeed since the Lille congress they have already shown this inclination. They have re-expelled the famous five locals and violated the mandates of the congress in various ways. They have also supported the pretensions of the atrocious Bidegaray, who is openly trying to demolish the railwaymen's union.

One thing is certain, however, and that is, the revolutionists no longer have serious fear of the long-threatened split. They now have the ear of the masses, and if a division must come, they are sure that the great bulk of the workers will stick with them, leaving the conservatives only a few rags. The most serious menace that confronts them is the danger of a break-up in their revolutionary bloc, because of the growing quarrel between the communists and the syndicalists over the parts to be played by the trade unions and the political party in the revolutionary struggle. But there will doubtless be enough statesmanship in Paris and Moscow to prevent these theoretical differences from wrecking the wonderful movement now being organized by the French militants. Jouhaux and the others who are working to stop the growth of radicalism in the unions will be disappointed in their hope of division in the rebel forces.

In my opinion the conservatives have two general courses open to them: first, they can engineer a split and force the masses to go with the revolutionists; or second, they can go along as they are and be voted out of power in the near future. Unless all signs fail, the revolutionists are certain to recapture the C. G. T. Then we may look for it to renew its youth and regain much of the ground it has lost in the past two years.

When will American revolutionists learn to defend their principles among the organized workers with the skill and courage of the French militants?

Unemployment : Is There a Remedy ?

By JULIET STUART POYNTZ

The consequences of the war are being felt in a state of universal industrial stagnation and unemployment without parallel in the history of industry. Since the spring of 1920, when the liquidation of the hot-house prosperity of war began, there has been a steady decline of production which has thrown more than twelve million wage-earners completely out of work in Europe and America, and placed millions of others on short time. The shock of the crisis is being felt in its worst form in the last strongholds of capitalism, Great Britain and the United States. A quarter of the workers of the United Kingdom are totally unemployed, more than two millions, and two million more are working short time, while here in the United States the chief of the Bureau of Labor Statistics recently announced to Congress that the number of totally unemployed wage-earners had reached the colossal figure of six million, with an unknown additional number on short time.

The smaller countries show similar conditions with the exception of Germany, where the highly developed industrial technique and low exchange value of the mark have reduced the population to a sort of international slavery. Only 4% of the German workers, about 400,000, were unemployed at the beginning of May. The Scandinavian workers, on the other hand, of whom only about 2% were out of work a year ago, are suffering from unprecedented unemployment, 25% of trade union members are out of work in Sweden, 15% in Norway and 22% in Denmark. In Holland a fourth of the organized workers, in Belgium a third, are unemployed. In France the information is poor, but the *Intransigent* found in an investigation made a few months ago that 30% of the automobile workers were idle, 40% of the clothing workers, and 75% of shoe and leather workers! In Canada 16% of trade union members are unemployed, as compared with 2.5% a year before.

The Crisis in America

The unemployment situation in the United States is more serious than in any other country of the world, and has been so ever since the armistice. It is difficult, however, to secure definite information on the subject, because of the fact that labor exchanges and trade union unemployed benefits, the two most reliable sources of information, are little developed in the United States. The Secretary of Labor, finally stirred to investigation by the emergency, produced the estimate of 5,735,000, of whom some four millions are industrial workers and a half million, miners. Efforts have since been made by the government and the capi-

talistic press to explain away this sensational figure as unduly alarming. Industry is reviving again, more silk stockings are worn than ever, as anybody can see. Some of the unemployed are women, and idleness is a boon for them, returning them to the sacred atmosphere of the home, where they now presumably are. Then there were the farmers' sons who insisted on staying in the city after the armistice and took to the wearing of silk shirts and other vicious habits. From a moral as well as economic standpoint they are better off on the farm, where they now presumably are. Lastly, there were the large numbers of people who were working only to help win the war (in 1920?) and these have earned a well-merited respite, which they are now presumably taking. So says James J. Davis, now Secretary of Labor, formerly Grand President of the Loyal Order of Moose!

The economist will be less impressed by these comments than the Loyal Order of Moose. The economist would, in fact, place the present unemployment considerably above the government estimate. The 5,735,000 represents the number thrown out of employment since the same month of 1920, and we know that there was a considerable degree of unemployment already at that time. Furthermore, the rural workers are not included, and that is a serious omission in the present condition of agriculture, especially in view of the failure of the cotton crop in the South, which has entailed widespread destitution. And the government figure is admittedly not complete even for the branches of production it covers. It would therefore be nearer the truth, we believe, to assume that seven or eight millions rather than six are unemployed. In New York City alone a half million are idle, more than in the whole of Germany, and the unemployed are estimated at 50% of the working population. The iron and steel and automobile industries have reduced their payrolls by 50% since last year, the leather and paper industries by 30%, and the garment industries have also suffered severely.

The unemployed in this country are probably now from 40 to 50% of the adult working population, with a large but unknown additional number on short time.

The growing power of the labor movement and its protests in parliaments after the granting of universal suffrage frightened the bourgeois governments into some appearance of concern for the unemployed. During the eighties they were included as beneficiaries in Bismarck's scheme for general social insurance, and a number of municipalities later established unemployment insurance funds, as made grants of money to those already organized by the trade unions. England,

however, though the most highly industrialized country in Europe, succeeded in ignoring the misery of her reserve army of labor until the crisis of 1908 and the pressure of the powerful labor organizations forced upon the government a measure of unemployment insurance which was then limited to certain trades, but was extended after the war to 12 million workers.

Unemployment Insurance in Europe

Unemployment insurance under the English system is administered by the government largely through the trade unions and friendly societies, the funds being provided by joint weekly contributions of worker, employer and state. So great has been the pressure upon these funds recently, however, owing to the severity of unemployment, that the benefits have been decreased to some 15 shillings a week for men and 12 shillings for women, a ridiculous sum compared to the present cost of living. This has led to militant demonstrations by the unemployed, and special grants to them out of local taxes in some boroughs of London, such as Poplar. The financial pressure is thus put on the small householder, and lower middle class, who will probably respond by turning out the labor representatives from their numerous seats of authority in local government.

The European trade unions have almost universally established unemployment benefits for their members. These benefit funds received donations from the government in France and Switzerland directly after the war, while in England a special out-of-work donation amounting to about twice the present rate replaced all unemployment insurance for the period of demobilization. The amount paid out under this arrangement was as high as £5,000,000 a week and formed a serious financial embarrassment to a government which was concentrating its financial energies on imperialistic excursions in the East and military adventures against Soviet Russia.

Most of the other continental countries have made special provisions for the unemployed during the present period of industrial collapse, impelled thereto by fear of revolution. In addition to Great Britain, Belgium, Germany, Austria and Czecho-Slovakia have made large government grants to the unemployed. In Italy a new measure for state unemployment insurance has just been passed with benefits rising as high as 50% of wages. In Switzerland the benefits rise under certain conditions as high as 75% of wages.

The Liberal Socialist Program

Liberalism before the war had worked out a comprehensive program for dealing with a social evil so dangerous to bourgeois security. This program was elaborated with great scientific perfection by the International Association for the Struggle Against Unemployment, which has now been assimilated by the International Labor Office of the League of Nations. It

includes national and international organization of the labor market through government labor exchanges, and the regulation of migration between countries, unemployment insurance, regulation of public works to be undertaken in time of crisis, regularization of private unemployment and industrial training for the unemployed. The most able statement of this program as applied to English conditions is in the Minority Report of the Poor Law Commission, the work of Sidney and Beatrice Webb.

The liberal program, inadequate even in the ordinary industrial depression before the war, entirely fails when confronted with the present condition of universal and apparently irretrievable economic collapse. Labor exchanges cannot make work. Unemployment insurance makes no pretense of providing a subsistence minimum for long periods and vast numbers of workers which the present situation demands. If capitalistic governments should attempt unemployed benefits on this scale they would soon be bankrupt and be driven to confiscation and socialization. If the United States, for instance, should grant unemployment insurance to its unemployed at the rate of only \$15 a week it would pay out more than \$100,000,000 a week. To pay less than a subsistence minimum is a mere subterfuge which will soon appear as such under recent conditions, as is shown by present agitation in England against unemployment insurance.

Is There a Remedy

The regularization of industry is a mere academic question today. The manufacturer is not now striving for maximum production, but for any production at all, regular or irregular. The same may be said of public works. Governments which are utterly unable to finance small housing projects will not be able to undertake grandiose campaigns of public work. Nor would these at all meet the situation, even if conducted on a great scale, for they give employment only to migratory unskilled labor which is but a small fraction of the unemployed army.

The bankruptcy of the liberal program for dealing with unemployment is well indicated in the changed outlook of the Labor Party who were its ardent advocates before the war. They now demand not merely relief work, insurance and maintenance for the unemployed, but trade with Russia, credits for Central Europe, removal of blockades, free trade and free flow of commodities, the removal of the economic causes of unemployment. Their remaining illusion is their hope of securing these through present capitalist governments.

Is There Hope for Relief

What, then, is to be done? What will be done? Let us answer the last question first. Mr. Hoover's conference will do little for the unemployed, but will

probably furnish good publicity for the half billion subsidy to the railroads. It will give industrious advertisement to relief through public works throwing the burden on state and city authorities who will evade it except in so far as the local unemployed agitation can force them to action. Above all, Mr. Hoover's conference will be a convenient whitewash for American neglect of labor problems before the delegates of the Disarmament Conference who must be impressed with the power and prosperity of the United States and its intelligent domestic policy.

Is There Hope for Insurance

For government unemployment insurance even in its most limited form there is little prospect. The United States is incurably *laissez-faire!* So is Mr. Gompers! Furthermore, there are other gaping mouths waiting for benefits, the steel industry, the railroads, the farmers, the commercial interests. If there are to be any hand-outs they will not go to the workers. The issue cannot, however, be entirely ignored. A clever substitute is being devised by the always helpful professors. According to their plan unemployment benefits will be distributed to workers by their own employers, who will guarantee themselves against loss by private mutual insurance, similar to the workmen's compensation insurance.

This program is hardly worthy of comment. It could not seriously be suggested in any other country than the United States. It relieves the communities and the government of all responsibility toward the unemployed. It gives the employer the predominant place in the insurance scheme which in other countries is accorded to the workers and the trade unions. It makes the worker more dependent on his employer and fastens him more closely to his job, leaving him as the one hope of increasing his benefits the weapon of organization which is today proven powerless in the much clearer issue of wage reductions. On the other hand, it puts upon the workers the burden of proof that he belongs to some particular employer before he is entitled to benefit. It deprives the worker of any advantages in insurance he might gain through general agitation or political pressure, and it leaves wide open to the employer the escape from adequate provision for insurance through the argument of poverty of the industry, an argument especially strong in times of depression.

The Need for Direct Action

This situation will gradually become clear to the American worker in pain and travail. Through unemployment and the cynical indifference of the government and the middle classes he will learn better than in any other way the impossibility of remedy under the present system. The little relief that he does secure will be due entirely to his own efforts, to the

degree in which he is willing to learn and practice "direct action." For fear is the only motive which actuates American capitalism in the present situation. For the rest they are ready to repeat piously the famous words of the Rev. Dr. Malthus:

"A man who is born into a world already possessed, if he cannot get subsistence from his parents on whom he has just demand, and if society do not want his labors, has no claim of right to the smallest portion of food, and, in fact, has no business to be where he is. At Nature's mighty feast there is no vacant cover for him. She tells him to be gone, and will quickly execute her own orders if he does not work upon the compassion of some of her guests."

The Negro Convention

By C. B. VALENTINE

The Second International Convention of Negroes held at Liberty Hall, New York, during the entire month of August, was called by Marcus Garvey, President-General of the "Universal Negro Improvement Association and African Communities League" and "Provisional President of Africa," "President of the Black Star Line, etc., etc."

The convention was opened amid a wild fanfare on the first day of August. There was a parade in Harlem in the afternoon, and a mass meeting at the 69th Regiment Armory in the evening. The Metropolitan daily press was forced to sit up and notice the "doin's." The opening noise attended to that. The Potentate made the opening address. The Potentate is the Hon. Gabriel Johnson, Mayor of Monrovia, Liberia. He represents "the African Connection" of the Movement, and for that favor is paid five hundred dollars a month. All delegates who were elected by their divisions to represent them for a five-year period of conventions were given the rank of deputies and had the privilege of being addressed as the "Honorable So and So." Later on there was a Grand Court Reception in which the guests were "presented to the Potentate" and several knighthoods and one 'Ladyship' were created.

A number of negro organizations responded to the call and sent delegates to the convention. Most important among these was the African Blood Brotherhood, a radical negro organization boasting the legend "created for immediate protection and ultimate liberation of negroes everywhere," and already having on its record the accusation of having organized and directed negroes in self-defense in the Tulsa, Oklahoma, riots in June, 1921. The presence of the African Blood Brotherhood delegation made the convention a really memorable affair and of tremendous import to the radical world, for the A. B. B. delegates sternly set their faces from the start against the romantic glamour, "mock heroics and titled tom-foolery" which

Mr. Garvey was attempting to substitute for real constructive action.

The A. B. B. delegation, effectively backed by its organization which issued a manifesto at the opening of the Congress and followed up with a weekly bulletin and other literature, demanded among other things a constructive program for "the guidance of the negro race in the struggle for liberation"; and suggested and agitated before the Congress the creation of a federation of existing negro organizations "in order to present a united and formidable front to the enemy," and the adoption of a program calling for means "to raise and protect the standard of living of the negro people," to "stop the mob-murder of our people and to protect them against sinister secret societies of cracker whites, and to fight the ever expanding peonage system." They further demanded that Soviet Russia be endorsed by the congress and the real foes of the negro race be denounced.

These constructive demands, effectively presented and supported by wide-spread agitation, had the effect of a bomb upon the officials of the convention, all of whom were U. N. I. A. members, and there was immediately evident a spirit of revolt among the dissatisfied elements of the U. N. I. A. majority. This revolt the A. B. B. delegates tried skilfully to direct, but evidently found complications and adverse forces in operation, for the revolt never became very effective. To conceive of the nature of these difficulties and their causes it must be remembered that not only were the U. N. I. A. delegates in the vast majority but that among them were many who were possessed of a blind, unquestioning loyalty to Marcus Garvey as the "Moses of the Negro Race."

What is Garveyism? A shrewd mixture of racialism, religion and nationalistic fanaticism. It is without doubt an historic product, and has its roots in the past oppression of the negro. It is one of the signs of his awakening, the noisiest, though not the most effective, challenge to the white world—to the entire white world, for Garveyism looks at every white face as *per se* an enemy. Herein lies one of the chief reasons for the bitter opposition it has met from the class-conscious negro worker. It is a step in advance of his religious slavery, wherein the negro was completely dominated by his preachers and subserviently subscribed to the philosophy of giving up all the world to his exploiters so long as they would leave him "his Jesus." The day sessions of the convention did not reveal the secret of Garvey's power over the majority of the delegates and the gallery. It is only at the informal night sessions where emotionalism runs riot under the expert priest-craft of Marcus Garvey that the secret can be discovered. These night sessions were designed to flood the atmosphere with Garveyism and whip into line all recalcitrant delegates by the sheer power of fiercely concentrated fanaticism. Rituals were chanted,

hymns sung, fiery racialistic speeches made, with an almost continuous accompaniment of flag-waving (the Red, Black and Green of the U. N. I. A.) and parading of uniformed Legionaires, Black Cross nurses, and other forces of the "U. N. I. A. Government."

At first the agitation carried on by the A. B. B. delegation was quietly ignored by the officers of the convention after the first shock. But it soon began to show its effect in the growing spirit of revolt, and when, on the twenty-fifth day of the Congress, the third weekly Bulletin of the A. B. B. was distributed among the delegates with a headline declaring "Negro Congress at a Standstill—Many Delegates Dissatisfied with Failure to Produce Results," the crisis of the convention had arrived!

As to the sins of omission, the Bulletin claimed that it "had formulated no general program for the negro race and no specific program for the various sections of the negro race, the American, West Indian, etc.," it "had devised no means for the liberation of Africa and the support of the Mohammedan and Ethiopian movements, the Egyptian and Moorish struggles, as means towards that end," it "had devised no means for the protection of the lives and property of negroes in the United States," it had "taken no steps toward raising and protecting the standard of living," it "had ignored the suggestion to consolidate the strength of the negro through a federation of negro organizations," it "had refused to condemn the capitalist oppressors of the negro," it "had failed to endorse the friends and natural allies of the negro race," it "had failed to protest the rape and continued occupation of Haiti by the United States," it "had failed to repudiate the ridiculous proposition of Mr. Garvey that negroes can be loyal to the flags of the nations that oppress them and liberate themselves from that oppression at the same time, that negroes living under the French and British flags can be loyal to those flags and still effect the liberation of Africa from the domination of those flags."

Following the distribution of the Bulletin at the noon recess Mr. Garvey in a passionate outburst denounced the A. B. B. as traitors and Bolshevik agents, while one of his henchmen put forward a resolution calling for the expulsion from the convention of the A. B. B. delegates. In the absence of these delegates, objection to the resolution was made by several U. N. I. A. delegates, but the motion was passed by a majority vote, with many absentions. The A. B. B. delegates were then read out of the convention.

In answer to the action of the Garvey-controlled majority of the convention, the African Blood Brotherhood took its case to the negro masses by means of pamphlets, news releases in the negro press and mass-meetings. There the case rests for the present with the odds evidently in favor of the A. B. B. and the popularity of Marcus Garvey clearly on the wane.

The Miners at the Crossroads

Victory or Defeat for the Rank and File at the Miners' Convention

By WALTER T. JOHNSON

In the name of the miners who are working, striking, locked out, marching, fighting, in the name at least of those who are organized, there will be a convention this month at Indianapolis. The war in West Virginia is still smouldering. Miners are still working ten hours a day—eight hours on the job, and two hours going to and from work and preparing to do down. The great strike, long overdue and now promised for next spring, must be prepared for. John L. Lewis and his fellow officers will be in power when the convention opens and the rank and file will have a struggle to make their demands heard.

There are signs that this will not be an ordinary convention. The rank and file is stirring and the union bureaucrats will encounter obstacles. The indications are by no means decisive. It is not certain that the rank and file will be well represented and that their problems will be forced to the front. The growth of the rank and file movement does not guarantee victory at the coming convention. It merely indicates the spread of an understanding among the miners of the need of taking things into their own hands and of displacing the bureaucrats who have stood in their way in the smaller local problems as well as the larger issues of national importance.

The need for the rank and file of the miners to take up their own problems and the evidence that they are doing it is shown by the papers, wherever the rank and file have been able to get into print. Their articles plan for rank and file control, oppose the Lewis machine and discuss problems which must be faced before a national strike can meet with success. The mine workers, like the workers in other industries, have two tasks to perform, first, to perfect their organization, and second, to use it to better their conditions and to gain full power for themselves. These tasks are not entirely separate. Each needs the other for its accomplishment and a step towards the completion of the one is a step towards the completion of the other. There is no such thing as a perfect organization which does not work, and no such thing as a poor organization, a bureaucrat's organization, working well for the benefit of the rank and file.

The miners, among the best organized workers in the country, knowing that their organization has not worked for them as well as it should, are therefore right in examining its defects and planning to make changes at the coming convention. They will

not be satisfied in having their most pressing industrial problems discussed at the convention and handed over to convention committees for action. They will not be satisfied with victories on the floor of the convention. It is not merely a better convention they want, or a better constitution. They do not want a convention which will give a few delegates a revolutionary reputation while leaving the rank and file members without an instrument for carrying on their every-day struggle and their larger struggles for wages, hours and conditions. The rank-and-filers who have made themselves heard show that they see beyond the convention. Their idea of the convention is therefore that it should be the time and occasion for using the power which they are now developing, first to control the convention and second, to extend the opportunities for rank and file control and action afterwards.

So true is this, and so well known is it to the bureaucrats, that it is possible to make a general forecast with regard to the coming convention, which is based on a knowledge of the general nature of bureaucracies. It is that every real fight in the convention will be an attempt to keep the bureaucracy in existence, and there will be many attempts to prevent a real fight and to waste time so that too much cannot be accomplished in the way of exposing and curbing the bureaucrats.

What then is the general character of the Lewis bureaucracy?

Lewis believes in peace between capital and labor. He favors long-term agreements, amiable arrangements with employers. He trades in workers. He agrees that they will not strike for a certain period. He guarantees the employers a stable labor market. Though the employers cannot be bound, because they realize the importance of every strike, every lockout, every dispute as factors in the larger struggle, yet Lewis binds the workers and supports the government against them, as in the case of their challenge to the Industrial Court of Kansas.

Robert Smillie, leader of the British miners, during the war opposed conscription of men because property was not conscripted—because it was a rich man's war and a poor man's fight. Lewis made peace with the government without the workers' demands being met. British miners raised their standard of living. Those of the American miners were lowered.

How then does Lewis stay in office? In much the same way that President Harding was elected. He stays in by the use of herd or mass democracy. He is elected by referendum. The ballots give the names of the candidates, but it is obvious that only a candidate with a national reputation can be elected. Hence the number of re-elections. It is also obvious that whoever is elected by such means can only be known to the rank and file by repute, in much the same way that we know a president through the papers.

The delegate system furnishes a means whereby this referendum system of electing officials may be eliminated. Also it is the means for substituting continuous and permanent rank and file control of officers and policies for the present periodic expression of disapproval.

A step will be made in the right direction if all power is vested in the miners' executive committee. All officials and administrative employees must be appointed by the various executive committees and controlled by them. The National Executive Committee should be elected by the convention. Every official, every appointee must be subject to recall at any moment. The convention must settle this. It must not be referred to the standing committees or strung over to the next convention by means of the referendum system. The bureaucrats must not be allowed to extend their reign by appealing to the democratic virtues of the referendum.

The bureaucrats will oppose any such system of election. They will oppose it particularly if it carries with it a provision for cutting officials' salaries to a level nearer the average wage of a mine worker. Mine workers should not hesitate to do this. If they cannot fight their battles under the leadership of officials who have the same standard of living, and the same interests as themselves, and who are under the control of the workers, they cannot fight them at all. A group of officials permanently removed from the working class, with middle-class tastes and point of view cannot represent as a group those who work in the mines. Officials must be of the workers, paid as workers, controlled by workers. The question of officials' salaries is important. It must not be whittled down to a question of a few cents per capita each year. It is not what it does to the miners' pocketbooks, but what it does to the official. It puts them in a class apart from those whom they should represent.

The mine workers are progressive. Their form of organization is superior to that in most industries. All the workers in a mine form a local. Where that is carried out it is much better than the old craft system. On the other hand, the constitution does not permit the locals in a given region to combine. There should be no such restriction. The workers

in the same region have problems essentially their own and should be allowed to combine to deal with them. Furthermore, a joint board made up of delegates from neighboring mines could meet oftener than the sub-district and could interpret and give form to rank and file demands which, after further discussion and approval by the rank and file, could be carried to the convention with a united backing. Also the joint board would be a useful instrument with which to face employers in the locality on small matters which are not taken up nationally. Such a combination of locals would be the beginning of a delegate system, not alone for electing officials, but for initiating and carrying out all the rank and file policies of the union.

The delegate system will be resisted by the bureaucratic machine because it means the end of the bureaucracy. Anything which gives more power, initiative and control to the rank and file builds a machine from the bottom up and pulls down the machine which works from above. The delegate system does just that.

The rank and file movement among the miners is spontaneous. No one knows its extent. It is not certain that the steps already mentioned will be taken at the convention. Until these steps are taken and until the delegate system of union control is constitutionally established and working nationally, other means must be adopted of placing power in the hands of the rank and file. Rank and file committees must be formed. These committees will be unofficial and will represent the rank and file.

These committees will also watch the convention. Rank and file delegates at the convention must be subject to rank and file committees. Every step these delegates take must be for the rank and file and against the machine. At the same time the rank and file committees outside the convention will support these delegates by the evidence of an awakened membership standing behind them.

The rank and file delegates themselves will also organize. Those elected by the militant element must get together and caucus for the convention. They must present a united front on all resolutions, on all points of procedure. They must take the initiative in the convention, standing for the program of the delegate system of union control and for every part of it. They must rely not only on their own votes, but on the votes which can be gained by stating the issues so clearly that every vote becomes a vote for or against the machine, for or against the rank and file. There will be delegates who would not fight the machine but who dare not support it if the issue is made clear and forced upon them.

The methods of rank and file control used for forcing constitutional reforms must also be used for

other matters. There will be general problems affecting the whole working class. These will include the workers' attitude towards the Red Trade International, toward trade with Soviet Russia, relief of Russian workers, the Saccho-Vanzetti case, criminal anarchy cases, unemployment, other matters of a political nature. Also there will be the special problem of the miners, all of which can best be faced if the delegate system of control is established, but must be faced in any case. The most important of these problems is the coming strike.

The strike which is due next spring presents serious difficulties. The mines in the south controlled chiefly by the steel trust are not organized. While production continues in the south a real victory, which can only come through a general stoppage, is out of the question. The quickest way to organize the unorganized is by a combination with the Railroad Brotherhoods. They could refuse to transport coal from the day the strike commenced, thus making the strike effective from the first instead of after all supplies have been used up. This action would also serve to keep back coal for consumption from the unorganized mines. Then would be the favorable moment for organizing the unorganized, and showing them the cause of the stoppage and how to take advantage of it. Until the south is organized, higher wages and shorter hours can never be effectively established throughout the rest of the country.

Mine workers and railroad workers together can in the same way exert the necessary pressure to organize the steel workers. When these three industries are organized the workers will have some power. Until they are organized the three must help each other to organize. There are enough railroad and mine workers organized to take the next step of organizing the steel workers and thus building up a new ally. The alliance can only be made by the rank and file. The Brotherhood leaders and the Lewis machine belong to another age. They will not unite. They do not have the working class point of view. No longer able to serve the workers in their own industries, they cannot serve the working class as a whole. They prefer arbitration boards and industrial courts rather than action by the workers. They are ready for injunctions and wage-cuts rather than solidarity. They sabotage strikes by declaring them outlaw, and otherwise crippling them. Such methods enable them to remain in power and out of jail and win recognition from employers and judges as sane labor leaders.

The next strike, the miners' strike in the Spring, should therefore be a step towards a more complete organization of workers and a combination with the railwaymen. It will be this if the rank and file control the convention and follow up that victory. It is rank and file victory at Indianapolis this fall or a crushing defeat in the spring.

BOOKS

FROM MARX TO HILLQUIT

MORRIS HILLQUIT: From Marx to Lenin—Harcourt Press, 1921.

This book is not from the pen of the social scientist or social philosopher concerned with positive truth, nor from that of a political leader making a straight-forward argument for a clear program. Its author appears rather as the spinner of sophistries, the clever lawyer whose business is the justification of the national and international program of the American Socialist Party. We have here, in a word, a legal brief for the defense in the case of the *Third International vs. American Socialism*.

A close study of Mr. Hillquit's arguments fails to reveal any clear, logical and definite position on the matters at issue. It is a bad case, to be sure. Here the defense must be an alibi, there an evasion, here a technicality, there a sophism. On questions of such importance as the methods of the Russian revolution and the international labor movement, Mr. Hillquit's pronouncement call to mind the innkeeper in *Silas Marner*, who wound up every dispute of good customers with the declaration, "You're both right and you're both wrong."

The author musters an inspiring array of evidence to show that "according to all accepted Marxian tests Russia was entirely unprepared for a Socialist revolution." But he admits later that Marx, Engels and even Plekhanoff thought such a revolution possible when Russia was much less developed industrially than she is to-day. The Paris Commune, too, he states, was not entirely orthodox, and he finishes, strangely enough, by handing over the whole case to the opposition in his final statement:

"The 'aberration' of the Russian revolution from the prescribed Marxian path of social development merely proves that Marx and his followers in the Socialist movement before the war failed to take into account the possibility of a world catastrophe of such unprecedented and unimaginable magnitude as the recent war and the cataclysmic political effects of the incidental breakdown of the international capitalist order." The Russian revolution apparently was wrong and yet it was right.

Even the special measures and concessions which the Soviet Government was forced to make because of the failure of proletarian uprisings in other countries were "inevitable and wise under the circumstances"

and will lead to a re-orientation in Russia which "is in the long run bound to reflect itself upon the international Socialist movement." In what way, we ask. Mr. Hillquit does not deign to inform us. By purging that movement of the compromisers in other countries who foiled the international revolution and forced Russia to compromise with their capitalism, the Russians themselves tell us.

What of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat?

"It is of the utmost importance to the international Socialist movement to ascertain, if possible, to what extent these forms and policies were necessitated by conditions peculiar to Russia and to what they are inherent in every regime of proletarian dictatorship."

Surely Mr. Hillquit is aware that this important question has already been before the world for four years; is, in fact, the central issue which has rent the old world of socialism in twain.

The period of "ascertaining" is past. Now for the line-up! But Mr. Hillquit does not line up. Soviet or Parliament, what does it matter? They're both right and they're both wrong. To put it with scientific impartiality:

"To countries of western civilization, in which the proletariat has grown to large numerical strength and the whole population, including the rural, has attained a higher degree of political maturity, the form of government of the Socialist state will be determined by the circumstances under which the revolution will occur, the extent to which it will be influenced by the Russian example and the strength of the parliamentary tradition in the country."

For bourgeois democracy and parliamentarism, however, Mr. Hillquit has no good word. It is indeed a tool well-fashioned for class domination.

"Parliament as it exists to-day is entirely unsuitable as an instrument for the transformation of the capitalist state into a Social Commonwealth . . . the modern parliamentary regime serves primarily to defend and perpetuate the rule of the bourgeoisie." And in no country is this more true than in United States of America, where the senatorial Upper House, the executive veto and the Supreme Court effectively operate to defeat the efforts at political change.

"The system of checks and balances which is the pride of parliamentary institutions, particularly in the countries of Anglo-Saxon civilization, is a cunningly devised scheme to check the will and power of the masses, i. e., the working class, and to throw the political balance in favor of the classes in power."

But all this does not signify, as it might seem, that Mr. Hillquit has been won over to anti-parliamentarism. On the contrary, "all Socialists," including particularly such a well-known advocate of evolution through parliament as Sidney Webb, recognize the bourgeois parliament as unfit for a Socialist state. But they do recognize it, as Mr. Hillquit fails to remind us, as pre-eminently fit for the approach to Socialism, and to them, in the words of Bernstein, the approach

is everything, the end nothing. And so the author has worked his way through a mass of revolutionary verbiage that is useful only for confusing the issue, back to the old parliamentary position of the Kautskys, Longuets and Ramsay MacDonalds. And after all, why be so hard on the word democracy? "It will presumably not matter much" to the members of the future society "whether their commonwealth will be technically styled a democracy or not."

There is the question of force, so embarrassing to Socialist pacifists, patriots and parliamentarians. Must the revolution really use force? Not at all, Mr. Hillquit reassures us. The infant Socialism may be delivered without instruments. Look at Germany! The "short episode of Socialist power" began "with almost bureaucratic formality." And ended similarly, we might add. And there was Finland, where the Red government was established with little physical violence, though not long after, Mr. Hillquit admits, through insufficient use of force on the part of the workers the counter-revolution was in full swing and had imprisoned 100,000 workers, executed 15,000 and starved another 15,000. The transition to the Austrian Social Democracy was bloodless. But what of the transition to Socialism? The Soviet Republic of Hungary was established without bloodshed, as was the Paris Commune itself. Although it must be admitted that in the days following the Commune, 20,000 were executed and 14,000 later sent to prison or death. In spite of this bloody experience of counter-revolution, Mr. Hillquit believes

"It may be safely said that while a longer or shorter period of terror may become necessary under certain conditions of proletarian revolutions, the terroristic method is no more an inseparable feature of the proletarian dictatorship than the Soviet is its inevitable form." Right and wrong again!

The Socialist movement may thus proceed with and without force, with and without parliamentarism, with and without the dictatorship of the proletariat. Each national movement shall be free to prepare the Socialist pudding according to its own recipe, and together they shall spread the international banquet. Indeed, Mr. Hillquit whispers to us in his last sentence, "the revival of the Socialist International may be nearer than outward appearances indicate."

It will be an international of "action," but also of "harmony." It will "support" Soviet Russia, but will retain independence for national Socialist movements. It will resist the dictatorship of the Communist International which "may be justly defined as the instrument with which Soviet Russia frustrates its own effectiveness as a factor in the proletarian world revolution." Its "iron discipline," which has deprived Mr. Hillquit of his leadership of American Socialism, recall to him that of the Jesuits, as does Lenin his great prototype, S. Ignatius Loyola.

Long live the International of Socialist Liberalism!

Documents

Manifesto of the Executive of the Communist International

PREPARE FOR NEW WORK, NEW CONFLICTS!

To the Working Men and Women of All Countries!

The Third Congress of the Communist International is at an end. It has completed a survey of the situation of the communist working class of all countries which has shown that in a number of countries where communism had hitherto been little developed, it has become in the course of the past year a movement of the masses whose power threatens the very existence of capitalism.

The Communist International at its first congress represented but small groups of comrades outside of Russia. At its second congress last year it sought to establish mass parties. At this Congress it included parties in Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Italy, France, Norway, Jugo-Slavia and Bulgaria which are rallying great masses to their standards. The Third Congress turns to the communists of all countries with the appeal to continue farther on the road on which they have started and to use every means to gather more millions and tens of millions of workers into the ranks of the Communist International. For the power of capital can only be broken when the idea of communism is embodied in the irresistible advance of the great majority of the proletariat, led by communist mass parties which will form the weapon of the fighting working class. To the Masses! That is the first call to battle which the Third Congress addresses to the communists of all countries.

On the Eve of Great New Struggles

The masses are coming to us, flocking to us. For world capitalism itself is showing them with ever greater clearness and precision that it can only continue its existence by consuming the resources of the whole world with ever greater recklessness, by intensifying the poverty, slavery and chaos in which the masses live. In the face of the world crisis which is throwing millions of workers on to the street, the social-democratic lackeys of capitalism and the bourgeoisie have stilled the cry which for years they have been shouting at the worker: "Produce! Produce!" For the call to produce is now the battle-cry of the working-class and can only be realized upon the ruins of the capitalist system, when the workers take under their control the means of production which they themselves have constructed.

The Imperialist Conflict

The capitalist world finds itself upon the threshold of new wars. The conflicts of interest between America and Japan, England and America, England and France, France and Germany, Germany and Poland, the conflicts in the Near East and the Far East, are driving the capitalists to increase their preparations. They are asking anxiously: "Shall Europe travel again the road to world war?" It is not the slaughter of millions that the capitalists fear. For immediately after the war through their policy of the blockade in Russia they delivered over millions to death from starvation in cold blood. What they do fear is that a new war will drive the masses into the arms of world revolution, that a new war would mean the final uprising of the workers of the world. They endeavor therefore, as they did before the war, to mitigate the situation through diplomatic hocus pocus. But mitigation on one point involves intensification on another. The negotiations between England and America over the limitation of naval armaments

necessarily involve a united front against Japan. The Franco-English *rapprochement* delivers Germany to France and Turkey to England.

No Reconstruction Under Capitalism

Not peace but growing unrest, increasing enslavement of the conquered peoples by the capitalism of the conquerors, that is the result of the efforts of capitalism to introduce some sort of order into the growing world chaos. The press of world capitalism speaks now of relaxation and quiescence in world politics, because the bourgeoisie of Germany has surrendered to the dictatorship of the Allies, and to secure its own power has delivered over the German people to the hyenas of the Paris and London stock-exchanges.

At the same time this stock-exchange press is filled with news of the economic collapse in Germany, of the enormous taxes which in the autumn will fall like hail upon the masses condemned to unemployment, increasing immeasurably the price of every bit of food or article of clothing.

The Communist International bases its policy on a calm and realistic examination of the world situation, for it is only through a careful survey of the field of battle and a clear recognition of the facts of the situation that the proletariat can win the victory. And it declares to the proletariat of all countries: Capitalism has demonstrated its incapacity up to the present time to insure to the world even the degree of security that existed before the war. For its present undertakings can bring *no reconstruction, no new social order*, but only the prolongation of your sufferings, the continuation of the process of disintegration of the capitalist system.

The world revolution is marching forward! Everywhere the foundations of world capitalism are tottering. The second call that the World Congress of the Communist International sends forth to the workers of all countries is: "*We are approaching great new conflicts. Prepare yourselves for new struggles! Draw up the general battle front of the proletariat!*"

The world bourgeoisie is incapable of insuring to the workers bread and work, shelter and clothing, but it shows great capacity in organizing the war against the workers. The bourgeoisie survived its first moment of confusion after the war. It overcame its terror before the masses returning from battle. It discovered how to chase the workers back into the factories, to crush their uprisings, and to continue after the war the alliance with the traitors of social-democracy and trade-unionism, thus splitting the forces of the proletariat. Having achieved so much the bourgeoisie applied all its resources to the organization and arming of White Guards against the proletariat.

The White Guards and Yellow Socialism

The world bourgeoisie stands armed to the teeth prepared not only to fall with armed force upon every uprising of the workers, but also if necessary, to provoke premature uprisings of the workers and to crush them before they can organize a universal, invincible front. This strategy of the world bourgeoisie must be opposed with the strategy of the Communist International. Against the treasuries of world capital which send armed bandits against the proletariat, the Communist International has an infallible weapon—the masses of the workers, the unified, closed front of the proletariat.

When millions and tens of millions enter into battle, then the devices of the bourgeoisie miss their aim, their power is set at naught. The trains on which the bourgeoisie moves her white guard troops against the proletariat are stalled. Terror blanches the faces of the White Guard. The proletariat snatches their weapons from them, to use them in the struggle against other white guards. If the proletariat is fortunate enough to enter the struggle with its ranks unified, then the world bourgeoisie loses its most important preliminary condition of victory, which is faith in victory, that faith which has only been restored for the time being by the treason of social democracy and the splitting of the masses of the workers.

The victory over world capitalism, the road to victory over world capital lies through the capture of the hearts of the majority of the working class. The Third World Congress of the Communist International calls upon the communist parties of all countries, calls upon the communists in the trade unions to use all their strength and energy to win the broad masses of the worker from the influence of the social-democratic parties and the traitorous trade union bureaucracy.

The Immediate Struggle

That end can be achieved only if the communists of all countries in this serious period, when every day brings new deprivations to the masses, shall appear as the champion of the working class in all its daily needs, if they lead them in the struggle for the lightening of the intolerable burdens which capitalism lays upon them.

Such action serves to show the widest masses of the workers that only the communists are struggling for the betterment of their conditions, while the social democrats and the reactionary trade union bureaucracy are willing to leave the workers to perish of hunger if only they can avoid the conflict. *It is not with theoretical disquisitions on democracy and dictatorship that these traitors to the working-class, these agents of the bourgeoisie are to be overcome but rather on the real issues of bread, of wages, of clothing and shelter.*

Moscow and Amsterdam

The first and most important field of conflict is the trade union movement, the struggle against the yellow Amsterdam Trade-Union International, the struggle for the Red Trade Union International. That is the conflict over the question of capturing the strongholds of the enemy in our own camp, the question of organizing a battle-front which must stand against the capitalism of the world. *Keep your organizations clear of centrist tendencies, strengthen their fighting spirit!*

Only in the struggle for the simplest aims of the working masses can we construct a united front against the bourgeoisie and make an end of the division of the workers which alone makes possible the continued existence of the bourgeoisie. But the proletarian front can only become really strong and eager for the fray when it is held together by communist parties whose spirit is strong and unified, whose discipline is of iron. Therefore the Third World Congress of the Communist International at the same time that it sends forth to the communists of all countries the call, "To the masses!" "Set up the unified front of the proletariat!" also cries: *"Keep your ranks clear of elements which are ready to destroy the fighting morale and discipline of the shock troops of the world proletariat!"*

Exclude the Reformers

The Congress of the Communist International confirms the exclusion of the Socialist Party of Italy until it is ready to break with the reformers, and excludes that party from its ranks. This decision expresses the conviction of the Congress that the Communist International which is to lead millions and

tens of millions of workers into battle can have no reformists in its ranks, whose aim is not the victorious revolution of the proletariat but the reconciliation with capitalism and its reforms. Armies which tolerated at their head leaders who planned a compromise with the enemy would be betrayed by these leaders and sold to the enemy.

The Communist International has also given attention to the fact that in a number of parties, although the reformers have been excluded, there persist certain groups that have not decisively overcome the spirit of reformism. These groups, even if they do not work towards reconciliation with the enemy, yet are not preparing for the battle against capitalism with sufficient energy in their agitation and propaganda, and do not conduct the work of revolutionizing the masses with sufficient force and decision. Parties which are not in a position to give revolutionary inspiration of the masses in their daily work, to throw themselves passionately into the task of strengthening the fighting spirit of the awakened masses day by day, these parties must lose many favorable opportunities, and will hinder the great spontaneous struggles of the proletariat, as was the case in the occupation of the factories in Italy and the December strike in Czecho-Slovakia.

Prepare to Lead the Battle!

The communist parties must strengthen the fighting spirit in their own ranks. They must organize themselves into a military staff that is prepared to seize rapidly upon favorable situations for fighting and to realize every possibility in spontaneous movements of the proletariat by wise and courageous leadership. *Become the vanguard of the awakening masses of the workers, be their heart and head!* This is the appeal of the Third Congress of the Communist International to the communist parties. And to be the vanguard signifies to march at the head of the masses, as their bravest, clearest and wisest sections! Only when the communist parties become such a vanguard will they be in a position to erect the unified front of the proletariat to lead it, and to conquer the enemy.

Confront the strategy of capital with the strategy of the proletariat, draw up your plan of battle and make ready!

The enemy is strong because he has centuries of power behind him. This way he has acquired the consciousness of power and the will to retain power. The enemy is strong because he has learned from centuries of experience how the masses of the workers may be divided, kept down and conquered. The enemy knows how to fight the bourgeois war and win the victory. Therefore the Third World Congress of the Communist International warns the communist parties of all countries of the danger that lies in the well worked out strategy of the ruling and possessing class and in the imperfect and immature strategy of the working class in its first approaches toward power.

All Together in the Fight!

The March episode in Germany showed the great danger that the front ranks of the working class, the Communist vanguard of the proletariat, may be forced into battle with the enemy before the great masses of the proletarians have marched forward to their places in the line of battle. The Communist International greeted with joy the hundreds of thousands of workers throughout Germany who hastened to the assistance of the workers of central Germany when they were threatened with attack. In this spirit of solidarity, in the rising of the workers of the whole country, even of the whole world, for the protection of a part of the proletariat which is in danger, the Communist International sees the way to victory. She rejoices that the Unified Communist Party of Germany placed itself at the head of the masses of the workers who rushed to

the defence of their brothers. Nevertheless, the Communist International considers itself in duty bound to say clearly and openly to the workers of all countries: When the vanguard is not in a position to avoid conflicts, when these conflicts are such as to hasten the mobilization of the entire working class, the vanguard must not forget that it should not enter into any decisive struggles alone and isolated, that if forced into a position of isolation the vanguard of the proletarian army must avoid a pitched battle with the enemy, for the condition of victory for the proletariat over the armed white guards is their numbers. If it does not advance as an overwhelming mass, then the vanguard should not confront the armed enemy as an unarmed minority.

Plan a Mobile Strategy!

Still another lesson may be drawn from the experience of the March struggle which the Communist International calls to the attention of the proletarians of all countries. It is necessary to prepare the widest masses of the workers for the coming conflict by persistent, continually intensified and extended revolutionary agitation, and it is necessary to enter the struggle with slogans which are clear and comprehensible to the widest masses of the proletariat. To the strategy of the enemy must be opposed a superior strategy of the proletariat. The fighting spirit of the front ranks, their courage and determination are not sufficient. The struggle must be so prepared for and so organized that it draws with it the broadest masses, that it appears to them as the struggle for their vital interests and mobilizes them for action.

As the situation of world capitalism becomes more perilous, it will make greater efforts to prevent the victory of the Communist International by isolating its advance ranks from the great masses and crushing them. This plan and this danger must be met by a universal, stirring agitation among the masses by the communist parties, by the most energetic work of organization, which will secure its influence over the masses and make possible a cool examination of the field of struggle, a superior policy of giving way when the enemy forces are overwhelming and taking the offensive when the enemy is divided and the mass united.

The Third World Congress of the Communist International realizes that only through actual experience in the struggle will the working class be able to construct communist parties capable of falling upon the enemy with lightning rapidity when he is hard-pressed and giving way before him when he appears in superior force. Therefore it is the duty of the workers of all countries to understand and make use of every experience which the working class of any country gains through great sacrifices.

Preserve Your Fighting Discipline

Preserve your fighting discipline! The working class and the Communist parties of all countries cannot look forward to a period of peaceful agitation and organization. Rather, they must gird their loins for the great conflicts which capitalism will launch upon the proletariat in order to crush it and heap upon it all the disastrous consequences of its own policy. In the coming conflict the Communist parties must employ the strongest military discipline. Their leading organs must consider all the lessons of the struggle with coolness and wisdom, and work out the general plan of campaign with the greatest discretion. They must forge their tactics and their line of struggle, after full discussion and reflection by the whole membership, with consideration for the criticism of the entire party. But all party organizations must carry out the policy of the party without delay. To this end every word and every step of the organization must be subordinated. The parliamentary fractions, the party press, the party organi-

zations must unflinchingly carry out the behests of the party leadership.

The world meeting of the Communist vanguard is at an end. It has revealed communism as a world power. It has shown that the Communist International must still organize great proletarian armies, that great conflicts await these armies. It has shown the will to victory. It has demonstrated to the workers of the world how to prepare and win the victory. It rests now with the Communist parties of all countries to bring the decisions of the Congress which have grown out of the experiences of the world proletariat to the attention of the communists of all countries, so that all communist workingmen and women may become the leaders of hundreds of non-communist workers in the coming conflicts.

Hail to the Communist International!

Hail to the world revolution!

To work! Prepare and organize the victory!

THE EXECUTIVE OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

Germany, Heckert, Frolich; France, Souvarine; Czechoslovakia, Burian, Kreibich; Italy, Terracini, Gennari; Russia, Zinoviev, Bucharin, Radek, Lenin, Trotsky, Ukraine, Schumski; Poland, Warski; Bulgaria, Papon; Jugoslavia, Markovicz; Norway, Schlettlo; England, Bell; America, Baldwin; Spain, Merino, Gracia; Finland, Sirola; Holland, Jansen; Belgium, Van Overstraaten; Sweden, Kilbum; Lettland, Stutschka; Switzerland, Arnhold; Austria, Koritzschoner; Hungary, Bela Kun; International League of Youth.

(Adopted at the Session of July 17, 1921)

Moscow or Amsterdam

THE RED TRADE UNION INTERNATIONAL
By G. ZINOVIEV

The Fallacy of Trade Union Neutrality

The bourgeoisie is holding the working class in subjection, not only by means of violence but also by the most refined deception. The school, the church, parliament, art, literature, the daily press—all of them represent powerful means of deceiving the working masses, and of imbuing the proletariat with the ideas of the bourgeoisie.

One of the bourgeois ideas, which the ruling classes have succeeded in inculcating among the working masses, is the idea of trade union neutrality, that is, the idea of the non-political and non-party character of the trade-unions.

For the last decades of modern history, and especially after the close of the imperialist war, the trade-unions throughout Europe and in America have become the largest proletarian organizations, in some countries embracing the entire working class.

The bourgeoisie is fully aware that the near future of the capitalist system depends on the extent to which the trade unions are going to free themselves from bourgeois influences. Hence, the frantic efforts of the bourgeoisie and their myrmidons, the social-democrats throughout the world, to keep the trade unions at any price in the thralldom of bourgeois social-democratic ideas.

The bourgeoisie cannot very well invite the trade unions quite openly to support the bourgeois parties. It is, therefore,

urging them not to support any party, the revolutionary communist party included, but in reality the bourgeoisie means that the trade-unions must not support the party advocating communism.

The doctrine of neutrality, of the non-political and non-party character of the trade-unions is not of recent growth. For decades this bourgeois idea has been inculcated in the trade-unions of Great Britain, Germany, America and other countries by the representatives of the priest-ridden Christian trade unions, as well as by the leaders of the bourgeois Hirsch-Duncker trade-unions, the leaders of the pacific, old British trade-unions, the representatives of the so-called free trade-unions of Germany, and by many representatives of syndicalism, Legien, Gompers, Jouhaux, Sidney, Webb, who have been preaching neutrality to the trade-unions for decades. But in reality the trade-unions have never been and could never be neutral. Not only is neutrality harmful to the trade-unions, it cannot positively be maintained. In the struggle between capital and labour no mass organization of workers can remain neutral. Consequently, it is impossible for the trade-unions to remain neutral in their relations to the bourgeois parties and to the party of the proletariat. This the leaders of the bourgeois know full well. But just as it is imperative for the bourgeoisie that the masses should believe in the after life, it is imperative for them that the trade-unions should maintain neutrality with regard to politics and with regard to the workmen's Communist Party. For the mastery over the workers the bourgeoisie needs not only the priest, the policemen and the general, but also the trade-union bureaucrats, the "leaders" who preach to the workers neutrality and non-participation in political struggles.

The fallacy of the neutrality idea had become more and more apparent to the advanced proletariat of Europe and America even before the imperialist war. This fallacy became still more apparent as the class contrasts became more acute. When the imperialist mass-murders began in good earnest, the old trade-union leaders were obliged to drop the mask of neutrality and to side quite openly with the bourgeoisie of their respective countries.

During the imperialist war those social-democrats and trade-unionists who had been preaching neutrality to the trade-unionists for many years, while driving the workers into the service of the most dastardly murder policy, these recent advocates of neutrality, unblushingly assumed the role of agents for certain political parties, not for the parties of the working class but for those of the bourgeoisie.

After the imperialist war these same social-democratic and trade-union leaders have again been trying to put on the mask of trade-union neutrality. Now that the abnormal war conditions are at an end, these agents of the bourgeoisie are trying to adapt themselves to the new circumstances and want to lure away the workers from the path of revolution to the only path which is profitable for the bourgeoisie.

Economics and politics are closely connected. This connection becomes especially evident in such epochs as the present. There is not a single important question of political life which does not concern not only the labor party, but also the trade-unions, and vice versa. If the French imperialistic government orders the mobilization of a certain class for the occupation of the Ruhr basin and for the strangulation of Germany in general, can it be stated that this purely political question does not concern the French trade-unions? Can a truly revolutionary French trade-unionist remain neutral, and take up a non-political attitude on such a question? Or to use another illustration, if there is in England a purely economic struggle such as the present lockout of the miners, can the Communist party declare that this does not concern it, that it is a purely trade-union question? At a time when the struggle against

misery and poverty is the order of the day for millions of workers, when the requisitioning of bourgeois houses is imperative for the solution of the housing problem of the proletariat, when the practical experiences of life force the workers to interest themselves in the question of the arming of the working class, when the seizure of factories by the workers is taking place in various countries, can it be asserted that in such a period the trade-unions must not take part in such a struggle and must remain neutral, which really means that they must serve the bourgeoisie?

With all the wealth of nomenclature of the political parties in Europe and America, these parties are to be divided into three groups with regard to their nature:

1) Parties of the bourgeoisie. 2) Parties of the petty bourgeoisie, chiefly of the social-democrats, and 3) The party of the proletariat. All trade unions, which proclaim themselves to be non-party and declare their neutrality with regard to the above mentioned party groups, are practically supporting the parties of the petty-bourgeoisie and bourgeoisie.

II.

The Amsterdam International

The International Trade Union Association of Amsterdam represents the organization in which the Second International and the Second-and-a-Half International met each other and joined hands. The whole international bourgeoisie looks upon this organization with assurance and confidence. The principal idea of the International Trade Union Association is the idea of the neutrality of trade unions. It is not mere chance that this watchword is used by the bourgeoisie and their lackeys, the social democrats, as well as the Right trade-unionists to unite the wide masses of workers in Western Europe and America. While the political Second International that openly took the side of the bourgeoisie experienced a complete collapse, a certain success may be noted in the case of the International Trade Union Association of Amsterdam that wants to act under cover of the idea of neutrality.

Under the flag of neutrality the Amsterdam Trade Union Association undertakes the execution of the dirtiest and most difficult commission of the bourgeoisie, the strangling of the miners' strike in England. This task was fulfilled by the well-known Thomas, who is at the same time president of the Second International and one of the best known leaders of the Amsterdam Yellow Trade Union Association. Noske and Hoersing, Albert Thomas and Jouhaux, Thomas and Wissel, Bauer and Robert Schmidt—they are all leaders of the Amsterdam International Trade Union Association, they all manage to proclaim at the same breath the neutrality of the trade unions in the political struggle and at the same time act as ministers of the bourgeois government.

At the present moment the Amsterdam International Trade Union Association represents the chief support of international capital. Whoever does not fully understand the necessity of the fight against the wrong idea of non-political and non-party character of the Trade Unions cannot fight successfully against this capitalist fortress. In order to decide upon the most efficient fighting methods to be used against the yellow Amsterdam International it will be necessary to clearly and definitely ascertain the mutual relations between the Communist Party and the trade unions of each country.

(To be continued)

To the Fellow Workers of the Needle Industry.

GREETINGS!

Fellow Toilers:

No more land-lords, money-lords, and their agents in Russia to rule the country and extort profits from the sweat of the toilers! The whole people of Russia, who toil in the shops, fields, and mines, have taken the power into their own hands and are now hard at work to rebuild the country's industries and organize them so as to produce all the necessaries and comforts of life for the workers without any profits to the idlers.

We, the workers of the needle industry, have lined up with all the rest of the Russian workers both at the barricade and at the industrial front. But our share in the work of rebuilding industry is much harder and more complicated. Before the war the clothing industry was carried in a great number of shops, but during the imperialistic war this industry broke down completely. And so after the November Revolution we in the needle industry were left empty-handed, without any equipment and supplies to start work on the new basis. What we took over from the former owners of the shops was even less than the very poor equipment that fell into the hands of the workers in other branches of industry. In spite of this great drawback, we had to work very hard during the civil war to carry out a double task. First, it was up to us to overhaul and rebuild our industry as a whole. At the same time our Red Army was fighting on all the battle fronts, to repel the onslaughts of our enemies in their attempts to overthrow the power of the factory, mine and field workers, and so we had to clothe the Army.

How did we go to work to accomplish all this? The Central Committee of the All Russian Union of the Workers of the Needle Industry together with the Clothing Department of the Soviet Republic have worked out the following policy along which we, the needle workers, are now organizing and carrying on the work in this industry.

We have started large clothing shops where all the work in this line is concentrated. But in order to obtain the greatest possible efficiency and success so as to satisfy all the needs of our vast country with its hundred millions of toilers, these big centralized shops must be fitted up with the best up-to-date machinery and other necessary equipment. And right here we are quite handicapped, since we are hard pinched in the matter of machinery and all other technical equipment. Prior to the

war all our machines and their parts were imported from foreign countries, principally from Germany and America. But during the war all this equipment was worn out, while the Allies kept us closed in by their marine blockade so effectively that we could not import any new equipment to replace the old worn-out stock. This total lack of adequate machinery is all the more acutely felt just now when all our energy and attention is engaged in the work of rebuilding our needle industry.

Our own efforts are very far from sufficient to accomplish the above task. We must get outside help, and so our fellow workers of the needle industry in America can render us immense service in this field.

The Central Committee appeals to the needle workers of the United States to come to our aid in the up-hill and responsible work which we have to carry out.

Needle Workers of America, do not forget that we, the needle workers of Russia, toil in order to clothe our Red Army boys and our comrades and fellow workers in all other branches of industry, in factory, mine, and field; but we do not toil in order to satisfy the needs of idlers and exploiters or to pamper the whims and fancies of society ladies with their craze for style and luxury in their gowns.

Fellow Toilers, remember that to rebuild and strengthen Soviet Russia and develop its industries is the duty and interest not only of Russian workers, but of the toilers all over the world.

Fellow Workers of America, you have always responded when appealed to by all those who toil and suffer in all parts of the globe. And so we call upon you to remain true to your noble traditions and give us a strong lift in the tremendous work which is now before us. This you can do most effectively by sending us machines, machine parts and other articles indispensable for equipping large shops in which all branches of needle work are carried on.

The Central Committee feels confident that you will warmly respond to its appeal in the name of the solidarity binding all the workers of the world into one fraternal family.

Thanking you in advance in the name of the Russian proletariat, we remain,

Yours fraternally,

THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE ALL-RUSSIAN UNION OF THE WORKERS OF THE NEEDLE INDUSTRY.

ATTENTION! BUNDLE AGENTS!

Beginning with this issue, The Toiler will be published in New York City. The Workers Challenge has ceased publication.

All Workers Challenge bundle agents will, from now on, remit all money received from the sale of THE TOILER to the address of this periodical, 208 East 12th Street, New York City. All money you may still receive from the sale of the former Workers Challenge and all money you may have on hand from the sale of this paper, must also be sent to THE TOILER at the above address.

All agents for THE TOILER will remit for all previous issues to the former address of THE TOILER, 3207 Clark Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio. Beginning with this issue, all agents will make re-

mittance for copies sold, direct to 208 East 12th Street, New York City.

ALL AGENTS MUST NOTIFY THE MANAGEMENT AT ONCE THE NUMBER OF COPIES OF THE TOILER DESIRED WEEKLY.

ALL AGENTS SHOULD MAKE A SERIOUS ATTEMPT TO SECURE ADDITIONAL AGENTS IN TERRITORY NOT YET COVERED. Every subscriber should become an agent.

Write THE TOILER frequently. The management desires contact, as personal as communication permits, with every subscriber and agent. If THE TOILER is to be THE BEST working class weekly, enjoying the widest influence possible, we must work TOGETHER.

The Management.

WE NEED \$10.000

We have moved **THE TOILER** to New York City. The Workers' Challenge has been discontinued. **THE TOILER** will fill all unexpired Workers' Challenge subscriptions.

We have increased our editorial staff. And we have added to our list of contributors until we can well say that in no other workers' paper will such excellent talent appear.

And we speak right out and say—**GIVE US \$10,000.**

It costs money to move. Many dollars will have to be spent to reorganize our forces, to establish the machinery which will provide **THE TOILER** with an income sufficiently large to cover expenses.

Our aim is a **FIRST CLASS** workers' class weekly. A first class workers' class weekly is needed and wanted. Workers in shop and union, everywhere, must learn to know **THE TOILER**.

A publicity campaign, a subscription campaign—these must be launched at once. And it takes money to do it.

The world is full of workers who live from day to day and still are **DEAD!**

ARE YOU DEAD? Do you think your duty done when you have subscribed for **THE TOILER**, or bought a copy from a news agent at five cents?

We want readers, yes. But our readers' obligation does not end with a weekly perusal of these pages. If every worker in the United States read **THE TOILER** and did nothing else but that, we'd never bury capitalism.

The reading of these pages marks the **BEGINNING** of your obligation to the workers' cause. The contents of **THE TOILER** should spur you on to its support. We have the right to demand your interest in our success.

TO ASSURE CONTINUOUS PUBLICATION WE MUST HAVE \$10,000.

We have 15,000 readers. And 15,000 readers can give us \$10,000 and not miss the money.

We are about to face one of the hardest winters workers have ever experienced. Nearly six million are unemployed now. Night after night the public parks in the large cities are packed with brain and brawn for which there is no market. What will these thousands of workers who now live in the public parks do, when the snow begins to fall?

Then **THE TOILER WILL BE NEEDED.** It will take the lead. It will help marshal the army of unemployed so that they will hit where the blows will count.

For the steady fight for workers' supremacy and for special skirmishes, **THE TOILER** will always be found in the vanguard.

SEND YOUR CONTRIBUTION TODAY.
MAKE IT AS LARGE AS YOU CAN, FOR MANY ARE OUT OF WORK AND CAN NOT GIVE.

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