

WORKERS OF THE WORLD UNITE

# FIGHT

FOR THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL  
ORGAN OF THE MARXIST GROUP (TROTSKYISTS)

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## EDITORIAL

### MAY DAY 1937

THE First (Paris) Congress of the Second International in 1889 passed a resolution that by direct action the international working class should make May the First a paid annual holiday, on which in every town and city in every country in the world the workers would demonstrate for their demands. The first May Day took place in 1890 under the banner of the Second International with the eight-hour day as the general slogan. Since then, there have been many historic May Days, red letter days in the fight of the workers against their oppressors. In 1916, in Berlin, thousands answered the illegal call of Karl Liebknecht to demonstrate against the war, being fought on the German side against the barbarism of Czarism, on the Allies' side for "Democracy." In 1917, in Russia, with the Czar just overthrown and the days of the revolution young, there was a tremendous national celebration of the 1st of May. The liberal bourgeoisie hastily took over a red tinge and even unremoved czarist generals marched under the workers' banners. But at those demonstrations there also appeared for the first time bold red streamers with the words: "Long Live the Third International." The revolutionary banner of October had been raised. The 1st of May in 1926 saw the beginning of the splendid fight of the British workers in the General Strike, which was sold in the end by the Labour leaders. And now 1937. How does the international working class stand this May Day? In many countries the new revolu-

tionary banner for the Fourth International will be borne, to strike alarm alike in the hearts of the bourgeoisie and the working class betrayers of the Second and Third Internationals.

In Spain, the challenge of the workers will re-echo to the roar of guns: and the challenge will be heard not only by Franco, but by Caballero and Azana, the Spanish equivalents of Kerensky, and by all the other Labour and Liberal agents of the bourgeoisie, whose job is a rear-guard one to trick the masses out of victory. The May Day banners raised "For a Soviet Spain" will further undermine the self-confidence of these gentlemen, as they loudly shout of the necessity for suppressing the "extremist" elements.

The boom of the workers' challenge in France also vibrates throughout Europe this May Day. On the buildings of the Paris Exhibition the Red Flag has been daily hoisted, to the great irritation of the authorities, trying to impress foreign visitors with the spectacle of national unity. The workers have forced from the Popular Front government, increase in wages, the forty hour week, and holidays with pay, but the government has been endeavouring to take back with the left hand what it gives with the right. Such a state of affairs cannot exist for any length of time. The capitalists cannot afford to grant concessions. The showy façade of the Popular Front government will be broken down soon either by the work-

ers themselves or by the capitalists. The French workers have a revolutionary tradition. Their spirit is high. This May Day there will be tremendous demonstrations. Before another May Day arrives, there are likely to be barricades in the Paris streets.

In Germany and the other Fascist countries, May Day has become a farce for the workers. The demonstrations are not a voluntary action of the masses showing their strength, but an enforced parade of salutation to The Leader of the bourgeoisie. Nevertheless, the workers marching in the streets to mock their own weakness, must remember the other days when they walked proudly, and clench their fists and vow that given the opportunity they will so march again. Their chance will come, if not before, then with the war, when they have arms in their hands. But it will then be necessary for the workers in the rest of Europe to show their internationalism and class solidarity, by striking a blow at the class enemy in their own countries, refusing to stand behind their various national capitalists in a new war for "Democracy" against Fascism.

In Russia, May Day has of recent years been celebrated by a display of military strength. The workers in the Soviet Union are suffering under the tyranny and despotism of a huge and powerful bureaucracy. The workers cannot deal with that bureaucracy with the danger outside from Germany and Japan. In the coming war, the First Workers' State will be well defended, and part of that defence will have to include getting rid of the burden of the bureaucracy. The Moscow Trials, the downfall of Yagoda, the recent purges, are signs that with the approaching war, the bureaucracy is already cracking.

In Britain, the mass demonstrations of the workers takes place on the first Sunday in May, because the Labour leaders in this country have always tried to avoid any conflict with the employing class. This year these Labour

leaders have been much more concerned with the national pageantry of the Coronation of May 12, than with the workers' demonstrations ten days earlier.

The Communist Party calls the workers out on May 1st. But it is those who seem to stand most to the left who can the most easily betray. At this time, when the most vital issue facing the workers is the issue of war, the May Day slogan issued by the Communist Party is the slogan of Imperialist Britain during the last war, "Unite For Democracy." A pamphlet issued under that title ends with these words: "Let every supporter of Peace, Democracy and Social Advance march with us from the Embankment at 2.30 p.m. on May 1st." Peace, Democracy and Social Advance as a slogan for International Working Class Day! Even Baldwin could mouth such a slogan. In 1917 in Russia, the Czarist Generals marched in the May Day demonstrations. What heterogeneous class elements now unite under the banner of a party calling itself "Communist"?

The interests of the workers and the interests of the capitalists are opposed and can never be reconciled. The slogans under which the workers come out into the streets should be as sharp as the class division itself. Neither the capitalist class as a whole, nor any section of it, could ever play about with Lenin's war slogan: "Turn Imperialist War into Civil War," nor with Marx's international slogan: "Workers of the World, Unite!"

It is the duty of every revolutionary to be out in both the May Day marches. The streets are the battle grounds of the class struggle. It is in demonstrations that the masses gain confidence, feeling something of their untapped strength. Revolutionaries raise and popularise class slogans in demonstrations. The Marxist Group this May Day repeats the calls of Marx and Lenin, and raises the new call of "A Workers Party" under the untarnished revolutionary banner of "The Fourth International."

## WHAT WE STAND FOR.

### 7 Points of the Marxist Group.

1. *For a new Revolutionary Party.*
2. *Opposition to all who betray the October Revolution under the slogan of "Socialism in One Country." Recognition of the international, i.e. permanent character of the proletarian revolution.*
3. *Defence of the Soviet Union against Imperialism and against internal counter-revolution for the restoration of capitalism.*
4. *Against Imperialist War, support for colonial and oppressed peoples, against subjecting the revolutionary movement to support of League of Nations. Against all who advocate National Unity with the capitalist class. For independent working class action behind the Revolutionary Party to turn Imperialist War into civil war, and to abolish war by the overthrow of Capitalism.*
5. *To participate in the working class struggle for immediate demands. For united action with other sections of the working class movement on specific issues, maintaining organisational independence and right of criticism.*
6. *Recognition that the Second and Third Internationals are politically bankrupt and impossible of being reformed.*
7. *For international working class solidarity under the leadership of the Fourth International.*

## THEY CROWN THEIR KING

ON the twelfth of this month the Archbishop of Canterbury, chief medicine man of the bourgeois state, will crown George Windsor in the presence of a host of coroneted parasites. Every form of barbaric pageantry and all the latest scientific achievements—television, films, etc.—will be used to impress and bemuse the working masses.

Let us look behind the stage-setting of this coronation show, let us get behind the flags and bunting and see what it all means. Since the monarchy ceased to play a progressive role in the forging of a national state out of the clans and territories of the lesser rulers, the monarchy and the church have been but the twin servants of the ruling class; from the feudal lords to the modern capitalist bourgeoisie. When the feudal church—Roman Catholic—and the feudal monarchy became a brake on the progress of the rising bourgeoisie, both were overthrown. The monarch lost his head and the church its lands. When the new ruling class had established its political power the monarchy was restored and, with the church—now protestant,—allowed to exist as a means for doping and keeping servile the working class (they had yet no yellow press, cinemas and wireless!).

To those who understand that all history is a record of the development of the means of production and the struggle for power of the classes owning those means of production, the recent events in connection with the monarchy are but another confirmation of Marx's analysis of the bourgeois state.

"King and Country." You remember that call, fellow workers? And now they crown their new king to 'rule' over their country and their empire. King and Emperor—by the grace of God and the executive committee of their state, parliament.

When we are wanted to fight their wars the monarchy and the church are there, ready to supply the necessary wave of unreasoning emotion which makes men forget their own needs and the struggle of their own class, and sends them out to fight the battles of their masters for markets and profits.

Workers, proletarians, you who own no part of the land nor the means of production; you who can live only by selling your labour to those who own these things, the ruling class; do not be deceived by the pomp and show put on to distract you from the real issues facing our class. You, middle aged ones, who fought for their "King and Country," for homes fit for heroes and the rest of their lies, what have your children been doing these last few years? Lining up at the Labour Exchanges, pale and undernourished, with worried faces because they knew what a struggle you and your wife were having to keep your home together while the rich got richer. Workers! remember and do not let the tawdry pageantry of their coronation make you forget for one moment the plight of your class.

Where are the working class leaders in all this? How is it that not a single voice has been raised by the leader-

ship of any working class party against this coronation, this mockery of the poverty of the masses? Are our so called socialist and communist leaders so anxious not to offend the sentiments of their middle class and liberal supporters that they are afraid to speak the truth and issue a call for a working class protest? These leaders will tell you perhaps that they fight capitalism and that with the ending of capitalism, a republic will be born. But fellow workers, capitalism cannot ever be overthrown whilst the masses continue to be deceived by such mumbo-jumbo as coronation shows. Particularly at this moment, when the whole capitalist world is arming for the next imperialist war, when they are preparing the new generation—our children—for cannon fodder, it is necessary to warn our class and tear away from the bourgeoisie their mask of 'patriotism' and 'loyalty.' It is more than ever necessary for every advanced class conscious worker to show up the bourgeois state for what it is; a machine for securing by persuasion or by force a servile acceptance of exploitation and poverty by the masses.

In this present moment the ruling class needs 'national unity,' for only by working class agreement can it pursue its imperialist aims and maintain its position of exploiter of its own workers and the colonial peoples. There is no "national unity"; there can be no unity between the owners of the means of production and the working class. We have no single interest in common.

Those 'Socialists' and 'Communists' who keep silent now are by their silence agreeing with and assisting our masters in their campaign for 'national unity' in which the coronation is being made to play no small rôle.

Let them crown their King. Let them have their show, we workers are not deceived. The yellow press would like an "incident" but the working class must keep away from all coronation celebrations. Let us show our contempt for those who insult our poverty with their pageantry by ignoring it. Provocateurs they have in plenty. Class-conscious workers will refuse to become involved in "incidents" of any kind. Our task, fellow workers, is to patiently explain to our less class-conscious workmates the role of the monarchy, the meaning of the coronation and the way it is being used as a means for restraining our class from the pursuit of our goal. We will tell our children the story of the struggle of our class, how generation after generation we have been their exploited slaves, the source of their wealth and their cannon fodder. Our goal, a new life and a new world for our children. Our goal, the overthrow of the rule of the capitalist class and the establishment of the rule of those who throughout history have been the exploited slaves of those who own the very means by which alone we can produce the things necessary for life; the land, the factories, the mines, the railways, the machinery.

They crown their king. Let them. We march forward to the day when we shall crown the age long struggle of our class with the victory which alone can bring peace and happiness to all men.

G.W.

## SOVIETS IN FRANCE OR DE LA ROCQUE?

THE eyes of all world revolutionaries are turned on France. Now that the Russian proletariat has proved itself unable to overthrow the Stalinist bureaucracy which is feeding itself on its back, and the German proletariat and the Chinese workers and peasants are suffering under a period of repression, thanks to the false policies of the Russianised Moscow International, the hope of the world proletariat and the Spanish revolution lies in the hands of the French Revolution. Yet in the face of this huge responsibility the Popular Front Government allows Chiappe, the Fascist ex head of police, illegally elected for Ajaccio, then re-elected for Passy, to go on a propaganda tour to Morocco as the representative of the Paris Country Council in the face of the Tetuan revolt.

At Clichy, the Parisian workers came off work an hour early and went gloriously into the fray. A small meeting of the Parti Social Français (Fascist) was to see an imperialist film of Claude Farrere; some sixty people including women and children were already in their seats, when the crowd which had been invited to keep the Fascists out of Clichy, attacked the Fascists and a general mêlée ensued. Barricades were set up and shots exchanged. Thorez, the Communist leader, came to the Town Hall and refused to address the crowd. He retired after promising to demand the resignation of the Minister of the Interior. The local communists called for discipline. Some of the workers pulled down the barricades and were greeted with a volley from the Guard Mobile. A member of the Blum Cabinet was shot while interceding between the workers and the Guard Mobile. 200 were injured and 5 killed. 100 arrests were made.

The next day the workers of the Exhibition who had been urged by Blum to complete their work quickly as a "triumph against Fascism," went on strike as a protest. While all this was going on, M. Blum had been sitting at the Opera with Lebrun, listening to the delicate strains of Haydn under the baton of Sir Thomas Beecham—a United Front of French Labour and English Conservatism. The C.G.T. (French Trades Union Council) called for a general half day strike. The manifesto read: "In the presence of spontaneous strike movements which have broken out on Wednesday in the shops and factories as a natural reaction to the abominable provocation of Clichy, we, the interpreters of the wish expressed by the unions call for a General Strike. . . ."

This is a clear admission that Jouhaux and Co. were forced into declaring the strike by spontaneous mass action. Had they been sincere interpreters, they would have called for the arming of Workers' Militias to carry on the fray and disarm the Fascists and clap the leaders into La Santé instead of organising a "calm demonstration as a warning to obtain the dissolution of the Fascist Leagues, the purification of the police, etc."

An assembly of the Popular Front deputies merely demanded that the country should preserve the peace and sent messages of condolence to the bereaved and wounded. Vaillant Couturier and Thorez, the leaders of the Communist Party, claim to have made strong representations

to Blum, who however emphatically denies this. Certainly the Communist deputies did not demand the resignation of the Minister of the Interior as they promised the wounded at Clichy. What is more than likely is that they did nothing, but frightened by the mass unrest, tried to cover themselves up with the usual muscovite "left" phraseology.

In the Chamber of Deputies, Ybanagaray of the Parti Social Français mentioned the provocative poster of the 4th International inciting the masses to action. But undoubtedly the masses went into action spontaneously and set up barricades. At first they thought the police were on their side, but on being fired on they demanded the resignation of Blum and Dormoy, the Minister of Interior, and only the intervention of known Communist agitators prevented their action from assuming far greater proportions.

In St. Denis, the workers prepared to assault Doriot's meeting, but the government prohibited the meeting at the last minute. The Radical Socialist leader came out with a statement of the typical two-faced hypocrisy of the party of seducers of the working class vote. "If the Social Party was the re-constituted Croix de Feu, then"—he stated—"it should never have been allowed to function, but if it was a legally constituted party, then it should enjoy the same rights as other parties and it was intolerable that a section of the community should interfere with its meetings." The Radicals needed the Fascists to balance the Communists. Blum should read a severe moral lesson to the workers. Ybanagaray took the hint; he pleaded that his party believed in democratic-republicanism of the "right."

*L'Humanité* (Daily Worker of the French C.P.) came out with the usual Fascist-Trotskyist provocateurs tale and the *Populaire* (paper of the Socialists) with an ingenious story that disguised Fascists had provoked the crowd. The Radical *Aube* was far more outspoken. For once it could tell the truth. "The crowd seemed to have got out of the hands of the local elected and of the militants of the extreme left. For some time past the old Blanquism seems to have been growing in spite of the knowledge of the Socialists and Communists. Trotskyism and Anarcho-Syndicalism are not a myth and it seems in these quarters we must seek those responsible for the abominable night outrage." The Radicals delightedly tell the truth in order to get their most deadly enemies on the left thrown into jail.

Both the *News Chronicle* and the *New Statesman* hoped that De La Rocque would not be prosecuted as it would give him "publicity." *Le Temps* considered the Trotskyist "menace" so deadly that it has recently devoted five articles to this subject from the pen of Raymond Miller, the biographer of Doriot (March 28th, 31st, April 2nd, 6th, 8th) under the head of "Is an Extreme Left Springing Up Again in France?" Miller gives a brilliant analysis of the Trotskyist movement, its theory and organisation. His article on Mar. 31st ends menacingly: "Who, in Paris, in the very midst of the war, when peaceful bourgeois began

to venture into the cafés of Monparnasse to see the little groups of Russian émigrés, who around Trotsky, Martov, Radek, Rakovsky and Chicherin were writing and reading the articles of *Nashe Slovo*, imagined that soon the Third International would reign in Russia and shake the whole world?"

The Comité des Forges' organ employs writers who are profound students of history: they know the historical correctness of Lenin and Trotsky and how dangerous it can be in practice; they cannot afford to waste their type nor their readers' time, but they will do their best to save the property of both. Doriot said that the Clichy "riots" took the form of a civil war manoeuvre, yet Blum still tried to tread water in the rising sea of revolution until the C.G.T. forced him to prosecute de la Roque.

At Oreil, the Socialist Seine Youths demonstration was a refreshing counterbalance to the behaviour of the older members. 6,000 marched in perfect formation past ministers of the Popular Front shouting, "Down with the Two Years," "Soldiers never, Militiamen ever," "Carry on the agitation in the barracks." The Seine youth is partly under the influence of Fred Zeller, its ex-leader, now a prominent Trotskyist, who will play an important role in the coming revolution. The Socialist Youth paper, the *Jeune Garde* (Young Guard), is likely to be suppressed for its anti-military, pro militia propaganda, and 22 members of the Seine Youth have been excluded. The Communist Party of France accused the youth of giving the Fascists a justification for their semi military organisation, but the *Populaire* adopted the attitude of "these dear children." The age of the children ranges from 18 to 30 years. Zeller may well find space under glass for these old men in a Reformist Museum one day.

The reactionaries have been publishing a series of anti-democratic books. Leon Daudet's brilliant polemical *Panorama of the Third Republic*, Tardieu's *Twenty Years*, Guarez' *Our Lords and Masters*, Bernards' *Three Angry Years*. Maurras, the theoretician of the Action Française, now serving a term in prison for inciting to murder the 140 deputies in case of war with Italy, has a book tracing absolute monarchy from Jean d'Arc to Napoleon. Marcel Cachin and Couturier may well read Maurras' book and cross themselves before their icons of Stalin, when they read Maurras, quoting Louis, "I am dying but the State remains, gentlemen, serve it well." They are to-day prepared to serve well the French bourgeois state.

On the other side there has been a regular bevy of books exposing the Communist bureaucracy in Russia from the Left. Andre Gide's *Return from the Soviets* (published in English this month by Secker and Warbury at 2/6d) exposes the general ignorance and nationalist tendencies of the intelligentsia, the inane new worship of Stalin, the inability of the officials to act spontaneously and the inequality of wages. Céline has also attacked the Trade Union leaders, has also exposed wage inequality and has told the French women that in Russia they are all considered prostitutes. Then there is Ivon's *What is Happening to the Russian Revolution?* Souvarine's masterly *Staline* and Victor Serge's brilliant analysis of the G.P.U. *Destruction of the Revolution* (Grasset), *Les Seize Fusilles* (Humbles) and his article in *Crapuillot*. Andrew Smith, an ex-American C.P. er, has articles on life in the U.S.S.R. and finally there is Trotsky's fine book on Soviet politics, economy and sociology, *La Revolution Trahie* (The Revolution Betrayed), published by Grasset. Literature plays

a great part in the revolutionary movement in France where there is a bookshop for every 730 people as compared with one for every 4,300 in Great Britain.

The bankruptcy of the Popular Front government becomes daily more manifest. Thorez has said living costs are up by 40.4% and unemployment remains almost at the same level as last year. The building industry represents only 61% of the 1928 figure. For coal production there are 45 millions of tons in 1936 as compared with 55 in 1935. The production of electricity up 7.6% in Belgium, 10% in Great Britain and 22% in Germany, is down 1.3% in France. The cost of sugar has gone up by over 50%. The country is menaced by new cessations of work. There is no real means of economic recovery under the present conditions. A state paralysis brought on by "discouragement and defiance," says *L'Ere Nouvelle*, Herriot's paper. At Toulouse, the workers by their action succeeded in getting industry placed partly under their control. In Africa, the troops of the Popular Front are fighting the people. 25 have been killed since February:

READ!

## "WORLD REVOLUTION"

By C. L. R. JAMES (SECKER & WARBURG, 12/6d)

The C.N.T. Barcelona station repeatedly calls upon the French workers to overthrow the government. The workers of Lyons struck against the orders of the C.G.T. The workers of Bordeaux seized the ships and blockaded the harbour to enforce a rise in wages. "It is impossible to carry on the economy of a revolution without civil war," said the bureaucrat Zyromski, and for once he was right. The local Socialist cells in the 5, 13, 15, 17, 19 and 20th arrondissements (localities) of Paris have passed motions of censure on Blum. The 17th section is in open revolt. The Student Socialist Conference had to close its sitting owing to the sympathy shown for the extreme left. Marceau Pivert has once more let down the left in the S.F.I.O. (the Socialist Party) in an article in *Populaire* on "Discipline and Democracy." He justifies his action by stating that socialisation of the means of production is on the S.F.I.O. party programme and that the time is not ripe to revolt. The Right wing press are trying, he says, to get him excluded, but he will not be provoked. His action is that of a starving man who will die of hunger rather than trespass on his neighbour's property to steal an apple. Pivert resigned from the Radio (he was in the Prime Minister's Department as controller of broadcasting) as a left move after the Right had won all the radio elections except in the case of Toulouse. Vaillant Couturier was defeated by all the Right representatives in these elections.

On the 18th of April the S.F.I.O. held their annual conference to discuss fusion with the Communist Party. The C.P.F. is straying further and further to the right, even the left phrases of the leaders in speeches are sub-edited when reported in *L'Humanité*. The masses are finding it confusing to distinguish between the socialist tendencies of Doriot's Parti Populaire Fascism and the nationalist tendencies of Cachin's Balalaika Bolshevism. The French Trotskyists (International Workers' Party) P.O.I. are bringing out splendid directives in their paper, "*Workers Struggle*" (*La Lutte Ouvriere*). Stalin may believe in

Socialism in One Country but his heresy hunt is rapidly building up Trotskyism. Instead of concentrating on De la Roque, *L'Humanité* comes out with huge headlines "Smash Trotskyism."

Rosmer, the ex-C.P. trade union leader has written a very fine analysis of the workers in France before the war, which should serve as a warning against the tricks of Blum, Daladier and Cachin (Librairie du Travail, 17 Rue Sambre et Meuse, X).

The Fascist party are at present badly disorganised. De la Rocque, a mediocre figure, has neither the demagogy nor the proletarian origin or the experience necessary to win over a strata of the proletariat. But his followers are bristling with arms, ready to be rushed into Paris. The Action Française can never hope to win power with its monarchists' programme but the polemical pens of Daudet, Maurras and Larpent and its 10,000 maimed shock troops are dangerous, together with Renaud's Solidarité Française (French Solidarity) and also the Jeunesse Patriotes (Young Patriots). Norgeles peasant fascists are dangerous

in the country and so are the Nationalists of Alsace and Lorraine. And there is Doriot, ex-member of the Executive of the Communist Party of France, Mayor of St. Denis, whose Parti Populaire Français thrives in the middle of the working class suburb belt round Paris. This dangerous demagogue, as would be French Mussolini, is being used to deceive the workers. He has arrived late but he plays on the anti-Russian character of the French masses.

The French workers have a straight path to tread. Thorez may call for one party, one class, before the seizure of power. Let him sit in his embroidered Russian shirt and entertain Lebrun in his top hat and Blum in his sombrero. The workers must call for armed militias. Trotsky's *Whither France* shows them the way, under the leadership of the P.O.L., to the seizure of power. The fine strikers showed what the workers can do. A general strike is the last step to the civil war. Down with the Kerensky-Blum government! Free determination for Tunis, Morocco and Indo China! The revolution will produce its Blanquis and Babeufs. Now is the time to prepare for the cry "Soviets Everywhere"

## THE SPANISH STRUGGLE

EVERY revolutionary worker will welcome the recent victories of the Loyalists on the Madrid, Cordoba, and other fronts. Despite the repeated forecasts by the reactionaries of the defeat of the Loyalists, the workers have shown that they possess the courage and determination to carry forward the struggle to a victorious conclusion.

On the Aragon Front also certain small successes have been achieved. It is on the Aragon Front that the workers' militias, who demonstrated their courage and heroism in the early days of the civil war, are mainly concentrated. As we have pointed out before it was here that an offensive could have been undertaken against Franco if the comrades on the Aragon Front had been supplied with arms and other necessary equipment. An offensive could have been undertaken that would have made it impossible for Franco to concentrate the bulk of his foreign troops on the Madrid front.

The Stalinists have attempted to cover up this sabotage by attributing this inaction either to cowardice of the workers' militia or as Mr. Campbell asserts in his pamphlet *Spain's Left Critics*, to the crippling activity of the POUM, who have put forward the slogan of a "Revolutionary forces" see the salvation to the whole Spanish question in a "regular people's army; a unified command; only one flag" (i.e. republican flag) policy.

The fall of Malaga demonstrated what this "people's army," this unified command was worth. The forces at Malaga were under the control of a commander who was appointed by the War Minister of the central Government and who received his orders from that Minister. The danger is seen here of leaving the command and conduct of the war in the hands of people who are incapable of taking the most elementary precautions for the defence of the town.

The POUM, while calling for a revolutionary army as against a people's i.e. neutral army, is not opposed to a unified command; but it insists that it be controlled by the workers' organisations. A unified command exists on the Aragon Front—but everybody knows that the reason no effective advance has been made is due to the non-supply of arms from the central Government and not the cowardice of the workers.

"The POUM states that the present army cannot be a politically neutral army but must be based on the revolutionary class struggle and in the service of the working and exploited population, an army which must be the guarantee of victory now and the defender to-morrow of the revolutionary conquests of the new revolutionary society"

### ATTACKS ON POUM CONTINUE!

Further to the attacks on POUM and other revolutionary sections of the working class, is the recent suspension of *La Battalla* by the Government of the Generality. This action was also taken against *Nosotros*, the Anarchist paper. Under pressure of the workers they were forced to lift the suspension after two days. Of the many resolutions passed by the workers protesting against this attempt to silence a revolutionary workers' newspaper the following is from the militia on the Huesca front:

"The thousands of fighters of the POUM militia demand the cancellation of the suspension of *La Battalla*. While the men of the POUM militia fall fighting against fascism, behind the lines they are insulted and their sacrifices are mocked. The suspension of *La Battalla* is a proof of it."

The C.P.G.B. attack the POUM because it opposed compensation for certain dispossessed owners—is comment necessary? Mr. Campbell also objects to the POUM drawing the analogy between the Popular Front Government

and the Kerensky Government. Will Mr. Campbell deny that we have in Spain a "bourgeois democratic Government?" It is for that reason that the revolutionaries say it is necessary to win the war and make the revolution. Both are inseparable. We should like to know from these Stalinists why the workers should "spread the democratic republic of a new type (whatever that may mean) throughout Spain" as against carrying forward the war to a victorious conclusion and establishing Workers' Power.

Then Mr. Bishop of the *Daily Worker* comes in with: "POUM, whose treacherous record has been so thoroughly exposed." It has now become necessary to call it treachery to advocate the need for the social revolution.

The Kerensky Government was in essence a People's Front Government. In it were all the parties of the workers and peasants—except the Bolsheviks. It stood for democracy. In August 1917 it was attacked by Kornilov—equal to a Fascist nowadays. Nevertheless, Lenin never politically supported the Kerensky Government. Lenin based his policy on transfer of State Power to the Soviets—this was obtained not through but against the Kerensky Government. When Kornilov attacked Kerensky, Lenin pursued an independent class policy. While fighting with Kerensky against Kornilov, he and the Bolshevik Party kept the workers and soldiers under their influence because they knew that Kerensky would ultimately betray the revolution. "Use Kerensky as a gun rest to shoot Kornilov—afterwards we shall deal with Kerensky."

Therein lies the analogy between Russia in 1917 and Spain in 1937.

#### "NON INTERVENTION"

The tragedy of non-intervention continues—in the meantime Italian Fascism continues to send men and arms to assist Franco—while the capitalist states, through the London Committee, appoint numerous sub-committees to deal with matters on which they will never reach agreement. How long will the rank and file of the Labour Party and Trade Union movement tolerate a leadership which supports such a policy? The recent happenings at Bilbao demonstrates how British Imperialism is able to

utilise the policy of non intervention to aid Franco. While the people of Northern Spain starve, the Popular Front Government of France ruthlessly operate the non-intervention policy, while the leaders of social-democracy in this country sit round on their behinds moving votes of censure on the Government.

The workers *must act*. Smash the blockade of revolutionary Spain! For arms and food for the Spanish workers!

We Fourth Internationalists in exposing the betrayals of the Second and Third Internations raise the call in Britain for support for the Spanish Revolution and the fighters of the POUM and CNT, who despite the attacks of Fascism and Stalinism, stand to-day in Spain as the vanguard of the workers' revolution.

#### THE MARXIST GROUP STANDS FOR THE CRITICAL SUPPORT OF POUM

We regret the refusal of the I.L.P. comrades to cooperate with other Groups in this country for a united campaign in support of POUM. POUM itself has welcomed the assistance of all sections of the working class movement who have rallied to its support. It is necessary then in this urgent situation to call for a united front in Britain of all genuinely revolutionary elements to give practical assistance to the Spanish Revolution and to defend POUM against the attacks of Stalinism. Only in this way shall we be able to rally support for the future struggle which will come after the defeat of Franco, i.e. *Workers' Power* or a "Democratic Republic of a new type."

A.A.B.

#### CORRECTION, APRIL ISSUE.

In the paragraph headed "Stop Press" it was asserted that the I.L.P. representative opposed the formation of a soldiers' committee. We have since received information that this is an incorrect formulation of the actual position and the I.L.P. did not oppose this. We hope in the next issue of FIGHT to print an article from our comrade in Spain dealing with the question of Soldiers' Committees in the various militias.

## THE SECOND MOSCOW TRIAL

[CONCLUDED]

WHILE one must not ignore the judicial aspects of these trials, yet the political aspects are the side which concern us most. First, therefore, the significance of the trial for the internal position of the Soviet Union. The distinguishing characteristic of the Soviet Union is a huge bureaucracy which swallows up a large share of the economic gains of the revolution, cruelly, mercilessly suppressing the attempts of the workers to lessen this inequality. It controls the country through the party which Stalin dominates and as long as Stalin protects the privileges of the bureaucracy, the bureaucracy is solidly pro-Stalin and supports this uncontrolled despot. But the pressure of the masses is continually forcing itself into the party, and year after year, Stalin purges the party only to find the discontent pushing its way through. The

war danger has demanded a yearly expenditure of over a thousand million pounds. This expenditure falls heavily upon the workers. To keep them down the party has had to increase even its former bureaucratic tyranny. But this process could not go on forever. An explosion was inevitable. Stalin, the most astute and relentless bureaucrat who ever lived, tried to forestall it by these trials.

What is the evidence for all this? Stalin himself gives it to us. In the *International Press Correspondence* of April 10th, 1937, appears a speech by him delivered some weeks ago to the Central Committee. Stalin is there pointing out the new road for the party. He says:

"Another example! I have in mind the example of Comrade Nikolayenko. Who is Nikolayenko? Nikolayenko is a rank and file member of the Party, she is an ordinary

"little person." For a whole year she had signalled about a wrong situation in the Party organisation in Kiev, exposing the nepotism, philistine approach to workers, gagging of self-criticism, high-handed action by the Trotskyist wreckers. She was shunned like a bothersome fly. At last in order to get rid of her, they expelled her from the Party. Neither the Kiev organisation, nor the C.C. of the C.P. of the Ukraine helped her to obtain justice. It was only the intervention of the C.C. of the Party, which helped to disentangle that twisted knot. And what was revealed by an examination of the case? It was revealed that Nikolayenko was right, while the Kiev organisation was wrong."

For years we have pointed out the rotten condition of the C.P.S.U. We were called anti-Soviet. Now comes this damning confession from Stalin, and another report by Zhdanov which shows that this state of affairs is wide-spread. Something had to be done. Stalin staged his trials, called the Trotskyists wreckers and terrorists and threw all the blame on them; both for the rottenness of the party regime and for the thousands of accidents, due to the reckless speeding-up called the Stakhanovite movement. Conscious of the wide-spread discontent, he proclaims a new policy, self-criticism, but at the same time he has prepared the way for the judicial assassination of every one of the old Bolsheviks, who could form a rallying point for the opposition. The speech just quoted, later gives warning of a terror to be unloosed, which is enough to freeze the bones of all those who live in that land of terror. Crush Trotskyism is the command. There are not many, only a handful, but crush them, crush them, and so on, page after page, we find in the report. But what is perfectly clear from the speech is that the Party does not believe Stalin. How could it?

If all this wrecking was going on and Piatakov, Assistant Commissar of Heavy Industry was responsible for it, what was Ordjonokidze, his chief, doing? Was he a Trotskyist? Stalin dared not say that. But Ordjonokidze "died" providentially just when the questions were being asked. And if all the Trotskyists were about wrecking and conspiring, what was Yagoda, head of the G.P.U., doing? Yagoda has been arrested. For Trotskyism? Not yet. But for drunkenness, debauchery, bribery, and stealing from the till like a dishonest shop assistant.

What a dirty, bloody mess of lies, deceptions and murder, open and secret. We, the Trotskyists, know what the Soviet Union means to Socialism. If it were to get back to Capitalism, to private property, then all the work and hopes of the last twenty years will be blasted, and the international working class movement will have to begin all over again. But never shall we identify the corrupt, cruel, and depraved Stalinist regime with Socialism. And the Third International, the Independent Labour Party, the Left Book Club, the Friends of the Soviet Union, and all these hangers-on of the Soviet Union who will not face the truth, and who either by their sycophancy or silence protect the Stalinist regime from the consequences of its crimes, these bear a responsibility only less heavy than the criminals themselves.

In this speech, Stalin, after two years of lying about the classless society, now tells us that the class struggle must be less society, now tells us that the class-struggle must be fought out still both outside and inside the Soviet Union. But the class-struggle he is fighting is not against Kulaks

## They need your help!

*We receive the following from the British Section of POUM.*

*"... We were just having a conversation with these comrades (POUM Red Aid) and they have impressed upon us the urgent need for medical supplies and also tobacco for the troops. It may not appear at first sight how important cigarettes are, but there are very small quantities of cigarettes in Spain now and the boys look forward to receiving them more eagerly than anything else.*

*We know your sympathy with the Spanish workers and your desire to help, and therefore we make an urgent appeal to you to undertake a campaign immediately with the object of obtaining these supplies for our Spanish comrades."*

*We appeal to all our readers and friends to send immediately to us any sum—large or small—to help us respond to this appeal. We have a quantity of POUM Red Aid stamps which we shall be pleased to send you to assist in the raising of cash amongst your friends. Send to us immediately, 25 Aubert Park, London, N.5.*

and capitalists, but on behalf of the bureaucracy against those who try to express the desires of the suffering workers. That battle has gone on for years and the trials show that a climax is approaching.

So much for the internal situation. But the trials too, as everything in the modern world, have an international significance. It is reported and probably with truth that there is a conflict in the bureaucracy between those who wish the Franco-Soviet pact to continue, and those who wish an entente with Germany. The vital issue, however, is: are the workers of the world to trail behind Soviet Union foreign policy and join up with their bourgeoisies in those countries which have the alliance with the Soviet Union, or are they, as Lenin always insisted, to carry on the class-struggle and try to turn the Imperialist War into Civil War? The Third International has been driven by Stalin to adopt the first position. But in Europe and America a Fourth International headed by the hated name of Trotsky is growing. This for Stalin and the Stalinists in Russia would be a disaster. They cannot let the revolutionary movement in Europe get out of their control. Hence their persecution of the revolutionary P.O.U.M. in Spain, and Stalin's bitter attack in this recent speech against the Fourth International.

National Defence or Turn Imperialist War into Civil War? That is the question, and Radek's last speech gives us an astonishing indication that, deep dyed Stalinist as he became, yet in the mind of even that corrupt old Bolshevik, the old Leninist slogan still remained paramount, and in his own crooked way he remains faithful at heart to the revolution as he sees it. In his last statement he is lying and, given the inherent absurdity of his premise, he lies about his psychological reactions at different times, convincingly to some, simply because he is a trained writer and man of letters. (If Gorki had decided to



confess, does anyone doubt that wherever he didn't have to deal with facts, his analysis of his motives would have been moving?)

But Radek tells us on page 542 that he admits his guilt "from motives of the general benefit that this truth must bring." He knows that the Stalinists need this confession in their desperate effort (vain) to restore confidence of the politically minded masses in their regime. But on the question of Turning Imperialist War into Civil War, Radek uses his last utterance to condemn subtly, but as clearly as he can, the counter-revolutionary policy of Stalin and the Third International. On page 543, he says: "And we must also tell the world what Lenin—I tremble to mention his name from this dock—said in the letter in the directions he gave to the delegation that was about to leave for The Hague about the secret of war."

Every educated revolutionary knows that document. It is perhaps the most famous of Lenin's writings on war, and is a merciless condemnation of every other policy except Turn the Imperialist War into Civil War.\*)

Stalin seeks by the trials not only to deflect unrest at home but prove to the international bourgeoisie that he can be trusted to collaborate with them. But collaboration with the bourgeoisie means the ruin of the workers, and that is why Stalinism outside Russia as inside is a cancer to be

Why should Radek choose to remind the world of this at that moment. The answer seems to me clear. He is saying to those who can understand: "Rally round Stalin in Russia, defend the Socialist Fatherland," but to those outside, even while he is cursing Trotsky he is saying: "Do not be seduced by that lying policy of the Third International. Stick to Lenin's instructions to the Hague delegation."

\*) We reprint this document of Lenin's below.

## LENIN

### Notes for the Hague Conference

ON the question of the struggle against the danger of war in connection with the Hague Conference I believe that the greatest difficulty consists in overcoming the prejudice that this is an easy, obvious and relatively easy question.

All the prominent reformist leaders usually say to the working class: Let us reply to war by a strike or a revolution. And very often the seeming revolutionariness of these replies satisfies and reassures the workers and peasants.

Perhaps the most correct method would be to begin by sharply refuting such an opinion—by declaring that, especially now, after the recent war, only the most stupid or those hopelessly false can assert that such a reply to the question of fighting against war is of any use whatever. We must declare, that to "reply" to war by a strike is impossible just as it is impossible to "reply to war" by revolution in the simple and literal sense of these words.

It is necessary to explain to people the real circumstances—the secrecy—under which war is prepared, and how helpless an ordinary organisation of the workers—even though it calls itself revolutionary—is in face of an actually imminent war.

It is necessary to explain to people over and over again and as concretely as possible how things stood at the time of the last war and why it could not have been otherwise.

It is necessary especially to explain the significance of the circumstance that the "defence of the fatherland" becomes in-

evitably a question which an overwhelming majority of the toilers will decide in favour of their own bourgeoisie. Therefore, first of all, it is necessary to explain the question of the "defence of the fatherland"; and in the second place, it is necessary to explain in this connection the question of "defeatism";\* and, finally, to explain the only possible method of fighting against war, namely, to preserve and form illegal organisations for prolonged work against war on the part of all revolutionaries who take part in the war—all this must be put in the forefront. Boycott the war is a stupid phrase—Communists must go to any reactionary war.

It is desirable to show with special concreteness by the example of the literature published in Germany before the war and particularly by the example of the Basle Congress of 1912, that the theoretical recognition of the fact that "war is a crime," that "socialists cannot tolerate war," etc., turns out to be mere empty phrase-making: for there is no concreteness in such presentations of the question. We are not giving the masses any really life-like idea of how war can and does come on. On the contrary the dominant press glosses over this question every day in an innumerable number of ways and spreads such a web of lies around this question that the weak Socialist press is powerless to combat it; the more so since even in peace time its point of view on this question is radically wrong. The Communist press in most countries will disgrace itself too.

LONG LIVE THE SOVIET UNION  
DOWN WITH THE STALINIST BUREAUCRACY  
FOR THE WORKERS' PARTY  
FOR THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL.

C.L.R.J.

I think that our delegates at the international congress of co-operators and trade unionists should divide the work among themselves and analyse in a most detailed fashion all the sophistries that are advanced to justify war at the present time. Perhaps the principal means for attracting the masses to war are precisely the sophistries which the bourgeois press advances, and the most important reason why we are helpless against war is either that we do not analyse these sophistries in advance, or, what is worse, we dismiss them with cheap, braggart, and utterly empty phrases—that we “shall not permit war to break out” that we “fully understand that war is criminal,” etc., in the spirit of the Basle manifesto of 1912.

It seems to me that if at the Hague Conference we have a few persons capable of making an anti-war speech in any of the languages, it would be most important to refute the opinion that those present are enemies of war, that they understand how war can and must come on them at the most unexpected moment, that they are in any way aware of the methods that have to be used in the struggle against war, that they are in any way capable of adopting a reasonable and efficient method of struggle against war.

In connection with the recent experience of war we must explain what a vast number of theoretical and practical questions will arise the very next day after war is declared, which will make it utterly impossible for the enormous majority of recruits to examine them with anything like a clear head or with anything like conscientious impartiality.

My opinion is that this question must be explained in a particularly detailed fashion, and it should be explained in two ways:

In the first place by relating and analysing what took place during the last war and by declaring to all those present that they do not know this, that they only pretend to know it, while in fact they are shutting their eyes to what is the crux of the matter, and that without knowing what the crux of the matter is it is futile to talk about fighting against war. On this point I believe it is necessary to examine all the shades of all the opinions about the war which arose at that time among the Russian socialists. It is necessary to prove that these shades of opinion did not arise casually, but were generated by the very character of modern wars in general. It is necessary to prove that without an analysis of these opinions and without explaining that they arise inevitably and are of decisive importance in the question of fighting against war—without such an analysis, there can be no preparation for war or even a class-conscious attitude towards it.

In the second place it is necessary to quote instances of present-day conflicts and to explain by their example how war can break out any day as a result of a dispute between England and France over some detail in the treaty with Turkey; or

between America and Japan over some trilling dispute over any question referring to the Pacific; or between any of the big Powers over colonial questions; or over disputes about their policies in regard to customs duties; or generally speaking about trade, etc. It seems to me that if the least doubt arises about our being able to say freely all we want to say against war at the Hague, it will be necessary to consider a number of stratagems by which we will be able, at any rate, to state the principal points, and then to publish in pamphlet form what we were not able to state at the Hague. We must take the risk of the chairman cutting our speakers short.

I think that for the same purpose, in addition to speakers who can and will deliver speeches against war as a whole—i.e. develop all the principal arguments and state all the conditions of struggle against war—the delegation should consist also of people speaking the three principal foreign languages, who would devote their time to conversations with delegates and to finding out how far these delegates grasp the main arguments, and how far it is necessary to reinforce any particular argument or to quote any particular example.

Perhaps, as regards a number of questions, only the citation of actual cases in connection with the last war would have any serious effect. Perhaps as regards a number of other questions only an explanation of the present conflict (between states and their connection with a possible armed conflict) will have serious effect.

It occurs to me that very many declarations have been made by our Communist deputies on the question of the struggle against war, declarations both in parliament and in speeches outside of parliament, which contain monstrously incorrect and monstrously frivolous statements about the struggle against war. I think such statements, especially if they had been made after the war, should be emphatically repudiated and we must quote the name of every person who has made such statements. Criticism of such a speaker may be toned down as one pleases, especially if that is necessary, but we must not ignore such cases, for a frivolous attitude towards this question is an evil which outweighs all the others and it is absolutely impossible to treat it leniently.

There are many decisions passed by labour congresses which are intolerably stupid and frivolous. It is necessary immediately to collect all the material and discuss in detail the various parts, the various points of the theme, as well as the entire “strategy” to be pursued at the congress.

A mistake on our part on this question or even a failure to deal with it fully and in all its essentials would be intolerable.  
*December 4th, 1922.*

\*) ‘Defeatism’ is the policy of defeat of one’s own country during war, i.e. turning imperialist war into civil war.

## The Colonial Question

# STRIKES IN SOUTH AFRICA

*From a Comrade in Johannesburg*

REVOLUTIONARY activity amongst the masses of South Africa is centred in Johannesburg, the largest city. Here there have recently been two strikes, both held by purely native trade unions and in both the Workers’ Party of South Africa (Trotskyist) has played its part.

The first strike was called on December the 2nd last by the natives employed in the Laundry industry in Johannesburg. Of the 2,000 workers in this industry, approximately 1,100 had joined together and formed the African Laundry Workers’ Union, which after trying patiently for nearly two years through the Department of Labour and other official channels to have their grievances remedied, finally took a strike ballot. As a result when the strike was called about 800 of the workers came out in the morning and during the day other workers stopped work. The

effect on the employers was instantaneous and by nightfall they had concluded a provisional agreement with the Union leaders that if the workers called off the strike certain of their demands would be granted. During the day, however, 22 strikers were arrested, and despite the success of the Union in obtaining a substantial portion of its demands, particularly a general increase in wages, the arrested strikers were prosecuted for various contraventions of the Riotous Assembly Act. Eighteen, however, were discharged and the remaining four were fined ten shillings each, the fines being paid by the Union, who had also arranged for the legal defence of the workers. The Workers’ Party came on to the scene after the strike broke out, and they gave their wholehearted support until its settlement. The effect of the strike was excellent, as when the

other non-union workers saw that as a result of the strike a rise in wages had been obtained, and that even the arrested strikers got off almost scot free, a number rushed to join the Union, whose membership has now increased substantially.

During January, the Workers' Party were responsible for the formation of the African Metal Workers' Union amongst the native employees at the Scaw works in Johannesburg. Of the 150 native workers here 140 joined the Union during the months of January and February, and conditions were such that it was not long before matters came to a head. On Saturday, 21st February, two members of the Union were suspended by the bosses on some trivial excuse, but obviously because of their Union activities. A mass meeting of the Union was called for the same afternoon, and at a strike ballot taken the vote was unanimous for coming out on Monday. It should be noted here that the Workers' Party representatives at this meeting pointed out to the workers that such a strike was most unlikely to succeed, but once the decision was taken to come out on strike, the W.P. gave its heartiest support. The workers had decided, that was sufficient for the W.P.

On the Monday at 7.15 a.m. the Union gave the bosses one hour's notice and at 8.15 a.m. the first 40 workers came out and then the rest. The workers formed a procession and marched along Eloff Street, the main street of Johannesburg, carrying banners such as "African Metal Trades Union," "For the Fourth International," "The Workers Party of South Africa," etc. From the first day the Union was formed political issues were clearly introduced and the effect was now to be seen. At the strike headquarters strike committees were formed and

the S.A. Trades and Labour Council were approached for help. The Communist Party of South Africa were also approached but stated that they would have nothing to do with the matter as Trotskyists were concerned in it; the fact that it was *workers* out on strike made no difference to them.

Of the strikers, sixteen were arrested on the Wednesday, but on the Friday fifteen were released and the other charged under the Riotous Assembly Act. It should be pointed out here that in South Africa it is illegal for native workers to strike in any form at all, thus all the strikers were liable to arrest, but so far the attitude of the authorities has been to arrest only the leaders and, where they can find them, the shop stewards. In regard to funds the Workers Party working with the strike committees were able to raise sufficient to pay a quarter wages on the Saturday, but during the week the bosses were engaging new workers and the strike was petering out. The Union had a meteoric rise but it has had its effect, as thanks to the policy of the Workers Party the workers had an excellent lesson in comradeship, unity and revolutionary trade unionism. A number of the workers returned to work, but despite the result of the strike the Union has not been broken up and there is still a strong nucleus at the works. It has also given an upsurge to the movement amongst the natives with the result that there will be a struggle between the Workers Party, the Communist Party, and various other native organisations to lead this movement. Having, however, stood at the head of the strike, the Workers Party's prestige is highest and many workers look to them for a lead.

LOS.

## THE INDIAN ELECTIONS

WHILE Europe has been enjoying the pronouncements of Hitler and Mussolini on one side and the nincompoops of the Non-Intervention Committee on the other, India, that country of 550 million people, has passed through a historic phase without giving rise to a single headline in the "Nationalist" press.

The Indian National Congress, unlike the Communists and Socialists of Europe, has affirmed with a loud and powerful voice that it will not participate in the coming Imperialist war, on whatever side the masters of India might decide to fight. Not only that: Nehru has been touring India asking the people not to have anything to do with the war of the masters.

Close on the heels of the first assembly of the National Congress in a village, where a hundred thousand people collected from all over the country and showed the might and strength of the anti-Imperialist organisation in India, have come the elections to the provincial Assemblies under the New Constitution. Though the franchise is still very restricted and there are only 30 to 35 million voters, a bare 10% of the population, and the Constituencies have been devised to the disadvantage of the mass forces, yet the Congress Party, which stands for anti-Imperialism

in the eyes of the masses, has won such a victory that even the Baldwin landslide of 1931 pales into insignificance beside it. In 1931 the Labour Party still secured one third of the votes. In the Indian elections the combined groups of the reactionaries have secured only 13% of the votes. In many constituencies the henchmen of the British Government, with titles and medals to decorate them, forfeited their deposits in spite of police protection. In one constituency an ex-Minister did not poll a single vote—a record in the history of all elections.

These results are surprising not only to the Government, but to many a political prophet. The illiterate Indian voter, trudging for miles to reach the polling booth, had found the right coloured box and put the Congress Party in a majority in six Provinces, and made them the largest single Party in three others. In only two Provinces have the Congress Party not had very great success. In these Provinces the franchise is very small and does not reach to the masses but only to the small and newly educated Mohammedan classes in the towns. Even in one of these Provinces, the Punjab, a Marxist, and for a long time a guest in one of His Majesty's Prisons in India, has defeated a prominent Government supporter, and that in a com-

(continued at bottom of next page)

## YOU SHOULD READ!

"I Stake My Life," 1d. Leon Trotsky. British Committee for the Defence of Leon Trotsky.

This is the complete text of the speech read to a meeting of 7,000 workers assembled in New York under the auspices of the American Committee for the Defence of Leon Trotsky. He offers to supply evidence of his innocence to a Commission of Enquiry and is prepared to stake his life and surrender himself to the Soviet authorities if found guilty. A Commission under the presidency of Professor Dewey has already left New York for Mexico City to open the investigation. The Mexican Stalinists have already threatened Trotsky with violence if he appears in public to state his case. This pamphlet should be read by every worker who really wants to understand what is behind the Trial.

"Third International After Lenin." Leon Trotsky, 357 pp. 7/6.

This is Trotsky's criticism of the programme of the C.I. adopted at its 6th World Congress. It was around the counter programme that the Opposition rallied. It is impossible to understand the question of the split in the C.I. and the subsequent exile of Trotsky and imprisonment of the Opposition without reading this book.

"World Revolution." C. L. R. James, (Secker & Warburg). 12/6.

Here in one volume is a survey of the Communist movement since 1917. The book is written in a language which any worker can understand and for that reason is worthy of recommendation. Not only this, for the book presents to you a bird's eye view of the whole development of the Comintern since Lenin's death and the mistakes committed by the Stalinist bureaucracy based on the theory of "Socialism in a single country." This is the first book to be published in this country which places our programme before the British workers. Although the price is prohibitive for the average worker, every comrade should endeavour to obtain a copy in the local library.

"Lessons of October." L. Trotsky, 125pp. 2/3.

This is a new American edition of the work published in this country in 1925, with a new introduction by Maurice Spector. In view of the Stalinist falsifications of the happenings during the revolution it is opportune that we receive this edition from America. Trotsky presents to us

a concise exposition of the strategy adopted during the Bolshevik revolution of 1917 and of the opposition it encountered among other leading Bolsheviks.

"Behind the Moscow Trial." Max Shachtman, 142 pp. 1/3.

A critical analysis of the first Moscow Trial. This pamphlet has had a phenomenal sale in this country. No worker can read this analysis without realising that the question at issue is one of fundamental importance to the whole working class movement.

"Whither France." L. Trotsky, 160 pp. 2/3.

For an understanding of the background of the coming French crisis it is necessary to read this book. This review covers the period from February 1934 to the last elections and strikes. It includes the article which appeared in the journal of our French section, calling for the formation of Committees of action, which was suppressed by the Blum Government. In view of the recent happenings at Clichy and the reported split in the French Communist Party it is necessary to have a thorough grasp of the French political background. This book is important for that reason.

### FOR AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE SITUATION IN SPAIN READ—

- "Civil War in Spain," by Felix Morrow. 9d.
- "Spanish Revolution," monthly bulletin POUM, 2d.
- "War and the Workers," John West. 5d.
- "War and the 4th International." 5d.

### OF SPECIAL INTEREST TO YOUTH—

- "Road for Revolutionary Socialists," Zeller. 3d.
- "Suppressed Testament of Lenin." 5d.
- "First Two Moscow Trials," American S.P. 1/3.
- "World Voices on the Moscow Trials." 9d. A selection from the Liberal and Labour press on the Trials.
- "The Witchcraft Trial in Moscow," Adler. 2d.
- "Defence of Terrorism," L. Trotsky. New ed. 3/6.
- "What Next in Germany," L. Trotsky. 1/6.
- "History of the Russian Revolution," L. Trotsky. 10/6.

Any publication including the works of Marx and Lenin can be obtained from the Marxist Group. Send cash with order.

### THE INDIAN ELECTIONS (continued)

community which is supposed to be loyalist and supplies a large number of recruits to the Indian Army. That betokens woe to Imperialism in the next war.

Now, how are these victories going to affect the struggle of the masses? The issue of whether to accept office has come to the fore. The right wing Nationalist elements are determined to form a government wherever the Congress Party has a majority, while the rising Socialists are trying to dissuade the mass organisation from taking this fatal step. Anyway, whether the Congress Party accepts office or not, they are not going to become the instruments of British repression. Many of the new Legislators have had their political education in the prisons, and are going to resist to the utmost the efforts of the Governors, with their special powers, to bow them down and make them Little Ramsays, respectable and courtly. Already the Coronation Durbar has been cancelled because of the Con-

gress boycott, in spite of all assertions from the India Office to the contrary, and on the first of April, the Congress Party observed a day's General Strike. The repressive machinery of the Government is going to flout the popular feeling of India and perhaps enact measures for which they are condemning the Italians in Abyssinia. Whether it is going to be better or worse than Congo, nobody knows, but India is entering a phase of struggle where beatings and shootings are going to be more commonplace and on a much larger scale. The war preparations of the Government might make them a bit cautious and conciliatory at first, but ultimately there can be no question of compromise where two opposites meet. The Socialists are going to gain a prestige and influence in India which will test their leadership to the uttermost. For a Marxist, Nehru has still to earn his spurs in real political class action.

SINGH

# THE CLASS STRUGGLE

## The Glasgow Engineers

**A**T Parkhead Forge, famous for wartime militancy, 1500 men have struck for 1d. per hour increase. The strike is supported by the Glasgow District Committee representing 12,000 workers, while the National Executive, at first refused recognition and instructed the men to return to work. Beardmores, the owners, only joined the Employers Federation after the dispute started, and now claim the operation of the pernicious York procedure.

At the same time 6,000 (now increased to 12,500) apprentices struck at various Clydeside firms, including John Browns. They demanded wage increases. Although not members of Unions, they were supported by the Glasgow Trade Unions. On Friday, 16th April, a general strike was held; this was not completely successful owing to organisational faults. The struggle is assuming a national importance, and indicates the rising tide of militancy.

## Scottish Transport Workers

**W**ORKERS employed by the Scottish Motor Traction Co. struck during March, about 10,000 being involved. Once again the T.G.W.U. would not recognise the strike. The issue was an increase of wages and standardisation of rate.

## Kent Busmen

**A**BOUT 2,000 men employed by the Maidstone and District Motor Co. and the Chatham Traction Co. struck work on the 14th April for an increase of 2d. per hour and improvement of working conditions. The TGWU as yet will not recognise the strike and have urged the men to return. The dispute, however, is spreading, and 350 busmen have struck in Essex. The militancy of the workers has caused attempts to run a scab service to be abandoned. Four members were arrested on the 16th April, and generally there is a welcome sign that the men are prepared for militant action.

In addition to the above disputes the London Busmen have given notice to terminate their agreement with the London Transport Board; the Railway Unions have presented claims for wage increases; the London District Committee of the A.E.U. is preparing a drive for 2d. per hour increase. The distributive workers are stirring to the need for action and the N.U.D.A.W. and Shop Assistants are to ballot their membership on amalgamation.

## Harworth Strike

**T**HIS dispute involving 1000 men still continues. As we explained in January, the issue is Trade Union organisation versus Company Unionism (Spencer Union). The meeting in February between the Miners Federation and the "scab" Union with an "impartial" Government representative in attendance, produced a scheme for amalgamation which was submitted to the Notts Miners for ratification. The proposals involved the retaining of Mr. Spencer in the new leadership and would in practice mean

a revival of "non political" Unionism. As was to be expected the Notts Miners E.C. turned the scheme down. During further attempts at negotiations the Miners Federation on March 12th announced that they would not proceed further until the dispute at Harworth was settled, and on April 2nd arranged to hold a ballot nationally on the question of a general miners strike to defend the principle of the Harworth strike. The vote has taken place. There was no doubt that there would be a big majority for strike action. The Harworth employers have countered by issuing a reactionary statement, and have "re-organised" their methods, so that they now claim that only 350 men will be required. Also Mr. Spencer holds forth in the Capitalist press on the joys of working in the "most peaceful and contented coalfield in Britain." Apparently they earn £10 per week up there and will soon be running their own cars. In reality, of course, the "scabs" are putting in a bit of overtime, while 1000 men are striking. This sort of peace and contentment comes to the willing slaves of capitalism. A well beaten dog soon becomes unconscious!

The Scottish and Welsh Miners Executives have recommended a strike vote and we are likely to see a critical situation arise. However, there are the usual signs that the leadership is seeking to avoid a clash. Sir Walter Citrine is prepared to be "reasonable" if the Harworth employers will promise no victimisation. An industrial correspondent writing in the *Daily Telegraph*, 14th April, states, "Leaders of the Miners Federation are anxious to secure the moral victory of a large majority for strike action, but I am informed that they have agreed with prominent members of the T.U.C. and even higher authority that a strike would be unwise." In other words, the Government has given them the tip to avoid trouble, the coronation and re-armament, etc. etc.

Meanwhile, 1000 men are still "on the stones" and it is our duty to back them to the utmost. The Miners are extremely militant and must be supported.

The above notes on the present workers' struggles should provide food for thought for all militants. It appears that, in cases where the strike is for Union recognition the Union Leaders will support it. But where the issue is the betterment of conditions and wages, "unofficial" is the rule. This arises out of the T.U. leadership's relations with the Government and the ruling class. The latter want workers in Unions, provided they are there as docile class collaborationists. The carrying forward of the class struggle by the rank and file upsets this policy, and the Trade Union Leaders get the hint to crush these "irresponsible" outbreaks. Mr. Little of the A.E.U. executive has written against unofficial strikes in the "Daily Mail," and the "Herald" has attacked them.

The militants have the responsibility of ensuring the workers' victory against this triple alliance, the Employers, the Capitalist State and often their own Leaders. Each of the above strikes has been marked by the militancy of the demonstrations, picketing and of the Strike Committees. It is therefore the immediate task of Revolutionaries and advanced workers to bend every energy to the dual job

of fighting the Reactionary Leadership within the Unions, and building up of the shop or Factory Committees on the job. To the extent that we can link up the various Unions serving a particular enterprise by means of a development of the Shop Movement so will a strong rank and file force be created. District Committees should

lead in this work and join up with the other areas in revolt against the Leadership. This difficult task is vital, both for the immediate situation and for the future of the British Working Class.

*M.G. Industrial Organiser.*

## THE LEADERSHIP OF THE A.E.U.

ANYONE who has followed the recent affairs of the A.E.U. must have noticed a surprising paradox. The membership of the Union is increasing rapidly and has been involved in the growing unrest all over the country, culminating in strikes, some serious and some of a minor character, but almost invariably strikes which the Executive Committee have done all in their power to break. That is, we have on the one hand, the officials of the Union acting in direct opposition to the will of large groups of the members, and on the other, the fact that in spite of this the membership itself has gone up to record heights and now stands around the 300,000 figure.

Before attempting to explain this let us examine some of the recent strikes and the treatment meted out to them by the E.C. Twelve months ago, Parnells' of Yate, Glos. struck against the introduction of three dilutees. The strike was not 'recognised' by the A.E.U. At the Annual A.E.U. Conference at Morecombe it was agreed that the Union would fight against diluted labour, yet when, during the Conference, Little (the President) was handed a telegram from the Parnell Strike Committee, he refused to read it! The strikers won, but received no strike pay. About the same time De Havillands struck at Hatfield. The Stag Lane men came out in sympathy and to prevent the Hatfield work being done there. Tremendous pressure forced the E.C. to recognise the Hatfield strike, but they stood out against recognising the Stag Lane one.

More recently there was the strike at Armstrong Vickers which culminated in the suspension of the Barrow District Committee by the E.C. for supporting the strikers in a ban on overtime, at the very moment when a member of the E.C. was preaching a sermon on the shorter working week at a town not many miles from Barrow. Also the strike at Derby, where 300 grinders struck for an increase in pay after waiting patiently while the whole of the Rules of Procedure, as laid down by the York Agreement, were gone through. They too were ordered back to work by the E.C., who took the opportunity to expel Berridge, Chairman of the London District Committee, for giving personal advice to the strikers. Finally, at the moment of writing, 9,000 men are out at Glasgow, and so far, the E.C. has 'advised' them to return to work.

These strikes are but a few of many that have taken place in the last few months, but they illustrate that, not only are the engineers bitterly dissatisfied with their present conditions, but that the bureaucratic leadership is using all its strength to curb its members, and to keep their individual (in a factory sense) successes to a minimum.

Why then, in face of the well-demonstrated policy of the leadership, do members continue to pour in? The

reasons are twofold. One, the widespread discontent itself is causing men to unite together in an organisation which has been constructed for the purpose of helping them; two, the rearmament programme has caused an extremely large and rapid increase in all engineering branches, so much so in fact, that it is rapidly accelerating the change from craft Unionism to Industrial Unionism. This, affecting the internal structure of the Union as it does, is of great importance, but is outside the scope of the present article.

The next question which arises is, what is the reason for the leaders' policy and what can the membership do to alter it?

The Executive Council, which virtually rules the Union, is composed of full time, paid officials. The salaries paid to them, while not excessively generous, are considerably more than the average wage of the ordinary member. To put it plainly, they are better off than the class they are supposed to serve. Further, their duties bring them into contact with influential people in the financial and 'social' world, whose aim is to be on the friendliest possible terms with the men who have the power to restrain the masses below. Thus, physically and psychologically, the leaders are subject to constant pressure *in favour* of the status quo. The present system suits them and therefore they are not likely to give genuine support to a policy that aims at disrupting that system. They fight the class struggle only so far as will allow the Capitalist system to win. Their real policy is class-collaboration and they will only show just sufficient fighting spirit as they judge necessary to retain their offices.

To replace these leaders with others of a more militant character is obviously the first task before the members of the A.E.U., and one they can tackle at once. The term of office for the Executive Council men for Divisions 2, 4, 6 & 7 expires on August 31st, together with that of the Presidency. If militant men are elected to all these positions they will form a majority on the E.C. and members can then go forward knowing that they will have the backing of the leaders. But care must be taken not to follow the example of our French comrades, who after the recent strike wave swept out the reactionary T.U. leadership but replaced them by Stalinist 'militants,' who use revolutionary-sounding phrases, but continue to hold the workers in check.

This, then, is the most immediate and important task which faces the membership. At the same time, pressure must be brought to bear on the National Committee-men, who are *not* full-time paid officials, but who, *when they*

are called together can constitutionally over-rule the E.C. They must be instructed to demand the immediate repeal of the York Memorandum, behind which the present reactionary E.C. shelters, excusing its treacherous policy with explanations about 'Rules of Procedure.'

At the same time the rank and file members must consolidate their position so as to prevent a repetition of present conditions. This can only be done by rank and file A.E.U. members uniting with members of allied Unions as solid factory units, to form Factory Committees. These Factory Committees should form local or district

Councils, acting where possible in conjunction with existing Trades Councils. From these a regional and national network can be built up. We should thus have an organisation, virtually based on Industrial Unionism, with tremendous power and with leaders in close contact with their fellow workers, leaders who could be recalled and replaced at the first sign of weakness. By taking the factory as the unit an organisation can be built up, using the existing T.U. machinery and led without danger of insidious Capitalist poisoning.

T.G.

## THE LABOUR PARTY & VOTES

### THE FARNHAM BY-ELECTION

It has been said many times in defence of the timidity of Social Democracy that the Labour Party cannot adopt a revolutionary programme because it is necessary to win the rural and middle class voters on a moderate programme of reform.

Both rural voters and the professional strata are to be found in the Farnham Division, where at the recent By-Election, Labour had its grand chance. The Tory ranks were split. Their candidate was without any local influence. Real bourgeois support went to the unofficial Tory, which weakened the Government candidate's position in finance and transport on Polling Day.

The Labour candidate was young and his family were influential in the district. The Labour Party had had a full time organiser and a paid secretary for over a year. They had had for years their own hall and officers and a printing machine. They seemed to be quite unstinted financially and were able to hold meetings in every village, print a large Election Special (20,000 copies), giant election posters and all the usual trappings. Beside the usual officials, the Labour Party had two paid sub-agents, a paid messenger, and a full-time distribution agent. In no possible way could it be said that the Labour candidate was hampered financially.

The Labour candidate believed himself to be of the Left, and was certainly influenced by Stalinism to some degree. He entered the campaign determined to resist the dead hand of the Labour Party bureaucracy. He won the first round by writing his own Election Address. Then Kneeshaw, of the Head Office, decided to keep an eye on things and turned up at a meeting at which the candidate addressed his helpers. After that the Left position of the candidate vanished, the menace of re-armament and Spain disappeared from his speeches and everything in the Labour Party was dandy.

Then the rot in the Labour Election Campaign set in. "There might be a chance of getting in on the split Tory vote" . . . first as a hint, then as a theme song. Votes must be obtained, anybody's votes, anyhow. No longer was the fight a propaganda fight to make Socialists, but a vote scramble. Liberals and League of Nations Union people were brought together in drawing-room meetings and all pretence of "Leftism" was dropped from the campaign.

Despite a Labour Party membership of approximately 200 in Woking the number of helpers from that source was extremely small. Much more consistent support came from militants outside the Labour Party. The Labour Party machine itself was lifeless, only the small women's section showing any signs of organised activity.

Polling in the working class districts was exceptionally low, as Marxist Groupers active in the area had predicted. An examination of the Election literature will show why. On no single issue was a clear lead given to the workers.

On *Armaments* the Election Address says, "We have no guarantee that it (the Government) will use them in defence of Peace against aggression." On the National Government, "I do not merely wish to criticise the National Government. I believe its faults are the outcome of the Capitalist System." But what alternative is proposed? (1) A "reformed" Capitalist System; (2) Social services! For the rural workers—*nothing*. On the strike wave—silence. On the need for T.U. and Co-op organisation—not a word. On the Army (an important factor in Farnham division), no demand for Army Councils, abolition of autocratic discipline, equality of pay and conditions, nothing but better opportunities for becoming officers.

The whole issue of the class war was covered up in the interests of the Liberal vote. The masses are asked to rouse themselves to vote because "Labour has a Plan," but since Labour cannot possibly apply its plan until the end of the term of office of the present Government, what is to be done in the meantime? Not a suggestion. Not the trace of a lead.

So Labour's grand opportunity was frittered away, the chance to educate the masses sacrificed to the Liberal vote. And lastly, the demonstrative significance of the campaign lost because the workers were asked to endorse a plan that could not be applied for at least four years, instead of being invited to deliver a smashing blow by every form of action known to them against re-armament and rising prices—the twin issues of the moment.

This failure is not peculiar of the Farnham Division; it is typical of the general demoralisation of the bureaucratized Labour vote machine. So long as Labour substitutes plans for reform of Capitalism for genuine assistance to the rural workers in building their organs of struggle, the rural areas will remain "backward" and Atlee and Co. will remain proudly "His Majesty's Official (if ineffectual) Opposition."

K.W.

# WORLD REVOLUTION

## A Review of C. L. R. James' book on the Rise and Fall of the Communist International

**T**HIS year marks the twentieth anniversary of the Russian Revolution. It is a decided advantage that at a time when every politically conscious worker is being compelled to review the influence of the Russian revolution on the world's workers movement, C. L. R. James' book comes to hand. It is a book that every socialist should read and every revolutionary possess. (Secker and Warburg 12/6d.)

Stalin, speaking at a recent meeting of the Central Committee of the Russian party reminded his hearers that Russia was still living in a hostile world surrounded by hostile imperialist powers. This, it seems, is the outstanding contradiction of the Russian Revolution. That as yet the workers in no other country have been able to conquer power and to hold it; electoral successes there have been: Labour governments have come and gone, but the sweeping changes in the property relationships introduced by the Russian October have so far remained confined to the limits of U.S.S.R. James in his book shows that there has been no absence of revolutionary situations. Since 1917 almost every country in Europe has been engulfed in revolutionary crisis. Why the proletarian revolution has failed to appear, despite the fact that the Third International was founded to give impetus and leadership to these revolutionary movements, is the subject of James' brilliant study.

The pre war movement of the workers is shown to have been castrated by the limited objectives given to the movement by revisionist socialism, which was then in the ascendancy. The reformist conception of the steady improvement of the living standards of the workers, the identification of the workers' movement in the different countries with the national aims and aspirations of their national bourgeoisie, led inevitably to the break up of the Second International in the crisis of 1914.

Emerging clearly from the crisis in the Socialist International was the party of Lenin, which carried on an uncompromising fight against any conception of national defence, and postulated the need to utilise the difficulties of the war situation to sharpen the class struggle, with the objective of establishing Workers' Power. With this bold programme Lenin attracted to his side all the best currents in the International Socialist movement. With these cadres and a distinctly Internationalist Programme, Lenin in the years of the Imperialist war laid the foundations of the new Third International. The subsequent history of this International has in the past received very little attention. The struggles in the different countries, the successes and failures are spread over a wide literature mostly today inaccessible. The discussions, decisions, speeches and pamphlets of the early years of the Third Communist International are now out of circulation. To circulate them today would only serve to show how far the present leaders of the Third International have travelled away from the conceptions of its founders, and rein-

force the thesis of James that this movement has succumbed to the very disease which it set out to cleanse the workers' movement of, namely, National Socialism.

The importance of this book, however, lies in its exposure of the theoretical revisionism which made its appearance in Russia in the last period of Lenin's life. The existence of an isolated Workers' State, which remained unrelieved from Imperialist pressure, by the negative results of the post war revolutions in Western Europe, nourished the new revisionism; national exclusiveness. This in turn has had a decisive and disastrous influence on the second post war wave of revolutionary struggles.

The struggle in the Russian Communist Party around the theory of Socialism in One Country, was, until recent years, treated as an abstract disputation between two irreconcilable personalities. Hitler's conquest of power without a defensive blow struck by the powerful German proletariat, served to shake that former conception. The new betrayals which the various Communist Parties are actively preparing on the cardinal question of war and national defence will shatter it.

The imprint this theory has left on the international movement since it was coined, is traced in the various countries by James. Those who are concerned with preparing the new generation, the cadres for a new resurgence of international socialism must do everything possible to get this book into the hands of young workers, to theoretically prepare them for the struggles ahead.

H.W.

Send to The Marxist Group, 25 Aubert Park, N.5, for books and other requirements for your Marxist library.

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