

# THE FIGHTING WORKER

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## INDIAN REVOLUTION SHAKES IMPERIALISTS

### Editorial

The revolution in India has reached a new stage of development, with the "civil disobedience" campaign that has broken out in open violence. The workers and city population have again taken the initiative, and as the struggle gets under way it will involve the vast peasantry which comprise over 70% of the population.

India is a backward colonial country. It has not yet achieved any of the important tasks of the Bourgeois revolution. The 290 million peasants continue to live under feudal land conditions. The average peasant family in Poonā, for instance, owned only 7 acres of land in 1915. A handful of princes and capitalist landlords own millions of acres; the average peasant owns only 2 to

7 acres. Suffrage is limited to approximately 100,000 people out of a total population of 352 million. The various Princes, working in cahoots with British Imperialism, still enjoy enormous Feudal privileges.

#### WORKERS THE DRIVING FORCE

The Ghandi forces could no longer hold off the "campaign against British imperialism, due to the pressure from below. The lack of a proletarian leadership thrust them to the foreground. What we are witnessing, however, is merely the Bourgeois PHASE of a **Social Revolution**. It is noteworthy that even at this early stage it is the proletariat in the city that is the driving force; the strikes at the cotton and steel mills are the heart of the revolt.

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### AUTO WORKERS CONVENTION SHOWS MASS DISCONTENT

Summed up in a few words, the message of the auto workers convention in Chicago, August 3rd to 9th, was: "we're beginning to get tired of the sell-out of Thomas, Murray and Company."

No **organized** caucus opposed to the leadership of the UAW-CIO existed, but the sentiment of the rank and file was unmistakable. Reports from the home front showed conclusively what the loss of the Right to Strike meant in terms of bread and butter.

In one aircraft plant, thirty-one workers had been fired for Union activity. The case was kicked around in the War Labor Board for

months and the membership fell from 13,000 to 3,000. In 6 plants the UAW-CIO lost Labor Board elections because they had given up Premium Pay for working Saturday, Sunday and Holidays.

Delegates from the militant General Motor Locals in Flint, as well as many others stated that "There has been no collective bargaining since we gave up the Right to Strike". This statement was met with a wave of sympathetic applause. Fired workers are not reinstated; wage discussions have bogged hopelessly; grievance procedure is an empty

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August 12—The Indian Revolution is now entering a new stage. The crisis in the war, the critical situation of the "democratic" imperialists has sharpened the internal situation in India, and broken the uneasy peace which followed the collapse of Cripps negotiations with the Indian bourgeoisie last Spring. Altho it was the action of the Indian Congress Party in initiating a campaign of "non-violent non-cooperation" which apparently started the new round of open conflict between the masses and the imperialists' armed force, actually the real force which caused it was the pressure of the broad masses of discontented toilers. Price rises, economic dislocation, the demand of the imperialists for cannon fodder, etc., forced the hands of the Congress Party, altho they tried to delay any action as long as possible.

#### CONGRESS PARTY PLEADS

The Congress Party passed the resolution on August seventh, confirming the Wardha resolution of the Working Committee which authorized Ghandi to begin the "greatest effort so far", of a "non-violent" civil disobedience campaign, only after the greatest misgivings, and pleading and half-hearted threats to British imperialism to grant them concessions. The cold firm stand of Churchill, Amery & Co., with the "left" Socialist Cripps also warning about "law and order", refusing to go beyond the offer of last Spring, left the Congress no alternative.

As soon as the demonstrations began, the "great leaders", Ghandi, and 149 Congress heads al-

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# Indian Masses Act

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 allowed themselves to be clapped into jail, with apparently no effort to avoid this danger. Caught between their fear of independent action of the masses and the iron hand of the imperialists, the Indian bourgeoisie's political leadership took no adequate steps to protect themselves against the ruthless grip of the imperialists.

Nevertheless, the masses began to find their own methods of struggle, and work out the answers to their own problems, despite the disruptive influence of the Indian bourgeoisie's program and "plan of action."

## MASSES ACT

Already, despite the fact that the petty-bourgeois revolutionary students are reported to be the first to act, and the workers have just begun to move it is the weight of the proletariat which is the driving force of the struggle. Tens of thousands of workers in Bombay, from the cotton mills, from the American-owned General Motors plant which produces trucks, and from Indian-owned establishments have already come out in the streets.

Demonstrations, attempts to stop production, attacks on private and government property, to lesser or greater degree have occurred from one end of the vast sub-continent of India to the other. Bombay on the west coast, Warda, Delhi, in the North, Bengal province on the Burma border, Madras in the south-east, have seen mass actions, and serious signs of mass unrest. In Lucknow police have repeatedly fired on demonstrators shouting "Inqilab Zindabab!" (revolution forever).

Altho the movement has not yet brought into direct action the really broad masses, the working class and especially the great mass of peasantry, it has already alarmed the imperialists, shaken the native bourgeoisie and set every political group in motion.

Significantly, most of the actions have occurred in the larger cities, where the presence of well-disciplined police and large numbers of troops makes the ground less fertile for chaos (sic!) than in rural India, where the bulk of the population lives and where the movement is just beginning to be felt."

## EXPLOITERS WORRIED

Neither the imperialists nor the native exploiters know what to expect next. The movement has already overstepped the "non-violent" bounds set by the Ghandists, and the class struggle as expressed by walkouts in native-owned as well as foreign-owned factories has shown startling possibilities. The class instincts of the workers have clashed with the narrow program of the little and big exploiters, but are so far still largely held in check.

Almost all the Indian "leaders" including those who disapproved the initiating of the "civil disobedience" campaign, now criticize the British imperialists' action as well as the Congress Party. The flame of the mass pressure burns even the pants of the recently-legalized Stalinist Party to protest. In different tones, but one voice, they all demand that the British imperialists re-open negotiations with the Indian bourgeoisie. "Grant them a provisional All-Indian government, with an Indian defense minister, while leaving British military forces on Indian soil, as the price of supporting the imperialist war. This is the only way the masses can be won to support the war," is the essence of their cry.

The Moslem League alone, case hardened tool of British capital, representing feudal elements who fear loss of their position under independence, unconditionally condemns the movement. . . . and the imperialists howl about "religious differences."

# Garment Workers Face Wage-Cut

NEW YORK: If the proposed agreement between needlework unions here and army authorities goes through, as seems very likely at the present writing, garment workers will have their wages neatly sliced in half to make profits out of war work for the manufacturers, according to the Daily Mirror.

Col. Thomas W. Jones, director of procurement for the Quartermaster Depot at Philadelphia, says the Mirror, announced he would hold up bids on orders for 400,000 raincoats, to permit New York manufacturers to enter their estimates "under such new wage scales as may be determined." The union, meanwhile, is reported as being willing to accept up to 50 per cent wage cuts, which would bring their wages down somewhere near the \$16.00 minimum required by the Wage-Hour law.

In consideration of this very generous offer, the union has "asked" the Army to "guarantee enough work for the area so that union members could be busy at least 40 weeks a year." Forty weeks per year, in case our readers' arithmetic is getting rusty, would net the workers the princely sum of \$640 per year, minimum.

Pending contracts would mean more than \$6,000,000 worth of business to New York manufacturers, and we will leave to our readers' imagination how much of this amount would be paid out to workers — at \$640 per worker.

The British imperialists thus far brush aside all nationalist, liberal and "labor" "public opinion." The so-called left, Socialist Cripps united with the Tory Churchill and Amery in taking a firm stand, for "law and order", stern police and even military action to "suppress anarchy." Their conditions, of post-war dominion status, a

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## EDITORIAL

**INDIA**

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There can be little doubt that the Gandhists (and the Nehrus) will not support the attempts by the working class to seize the factories and the government offices, and the seizure of the land by the peasants. It is no accident that Gandhi preaches non-violence. We shall no doubt soon witness his fanatical opposition to the PROLETARIAN PHASE of the Revolution and his complete solidarity with the Imperialists in trying to smash this move.

Gandhi and Nehru, like Krensky and Miliukov in 1917, have become the Saints of the liberals, reformists, and even many centrists. To the Marxists, however, these gentlemen must be taken for what they are worth — representatives of Indian capital, and agents of other imperialist groups in United States and England, an-

xious to gain a greater share of the surplus value of the Indian proletariat and peasantry. They can not and must not be trusted to carry on the Revolution. They cannot play any independent role, and are reactionary. They can not and will not achieve a single progressive change, because in this period the tasks of the bourgeois revolution can be accomplished only through the Proletarian Revolution.

**THE REAL ISSUE**

The issue is STATE POWER. Only by smashing the capitalist state will the Indian masses gain land, bread and freedom.

The land must be taken IMMEDIATELY by armed militias of the peasantry and 38 million agricultural workers, who will no doubt give leadership to the movement. To wait for legislative action or for Gandhist "non-violence" to achieve this aim is self-delusion and suicide. Bread can be gained only through seizure of factories, banks, rail-

roads and above all the reins of the State. For that local and national Councils of Workers and Soldiers are needed, together with Workers and Peasants militias, and Armed Guards.

Above all the Indian masses need a Revolutionary Marxian Party to guide the masses away from the pitfalls of Gandhism, Stalinism and the centrist movements in India. A Marxian Party is needed so that the masses will not be misled into giving up their Revolution for a Bourgeois Constituent Assembly, which can only be empty and meaningless and incapable of solving anything.

**FOR NEW COMMUNIST PARTY**

The intensification of the Indian Revolution is the most heartening sign in the imperialist war. A victory in that revolution would bring world peace in the earliest possible time. Proletarians the world over look forward to that victory. The growth of a Marxian Party is the greatest need of the moment.

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phrase because the companies just dare and dare the workers to strike; and the negotiations for new contracts lacks any punch. The Union, delegates reported, has become a side-show for economic bargaining; the government War Labor Board is the real show and it is taking its good sweet time in settling anything.

Under this pressure, the Thomas-Addes leadership (with the aid of the Stalinists) was forced to shift slightly to the left. A resolution demanding that the "equality of sacrifice" program be accepted universally or the UAW-CIO will no longer adhere to its pledge of

**AUTO**

giving up Premium Pay, time and a half for Saturdays and double time for Sundays, was introduced by Secretary - Treasurer George Addes and passed. But the delegates were hardly satisfied. They forced the resolution back to committee once and almost defeated it the second time because it asked for 30 days time before executing this move, instead of doing it immediately.

In the face of the spirited attitude of the membership, Walter Reuther, R. J. Thomas, and the others had to use militant language and severely criticize the "dollar a year men", the "brass hats", the slowness of the War Labor Board, and other such things. But the program of the leadership remained thoroughly tied to the war chariot. Instead of an independent class struggle policy, Reuther demanded more War Labor Board panels to hear more cases. The Convention went on record against the Little Steel

decision of a 5½c an hour wage increase; it went on record against the present use of the maintenance of membership clauses and other such points. But even in these weak and dilatory proposals it put no teeth. It merely asked that the government please take care of everything.

**DELEGATES OPPOSE BUROCRACY**

The UAW-CIO convention was a very serious affair throughout, despite the fact that at times it became very unruly. The 1640 delegates sat through all the sessions and deliberated. But they showed an intense dislike and suspicion of the leadership. The International President Thomas was booed on at least a dozen occasions. The Rules Committee was shouted down when it proposed the election of International officers take place on the third day of the convention, instead of at the end. Proposals to raise dues from \$1.00 to \$1.50 were howled down. Attempts to stop holding conventions " for the duration" (Continued on page 4)

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# U.A.W. CONFAB

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ation" were almost unanimously defeated, despite the fact that the leadership was unanimously for it. The same unanimous opinion of the leadership in doubling salaries "swindle sheets" (expense accounts), and many other such points were overwhelmingly rejected by the delegates.

All these things, mainly secondary points in themselves, are symptomatic of the general mood of the auto workers.

Basically the dispute at the 7th Convention of the UAW-CIO resolved itself into this:

1—That the leadership attempted to sidetrack all economic issues and all serious consideration of post war unemployment, the right to strike, etc., and that it concentrated solely on perfecting a bureaucratic machine against the rank and file.

2—That the membership was totally opposed to this program, that it was interested solely in solving its pressing economic problems and the breakdown of collective bargaining, but that being without leadership it was not fully conscious of the real meaning of its opposition.

Put still differently the dispute was over full and unconditional support to the imperialist war and the yielding of labor's rights, OR uncompromising struggle to enforce those rights and to fight for more.

No sane person who viewed the convention went away with the idea that the membership trusted the leadership, even though Thomas, Addes, and Reuther and Richard Frankenstein were elected unanimously to the 4 posts of leadership. Frankenstein was booed for fully 15 minutes at one point in the convention. Reuther and Frankenstein were booed even after they had been elected unanimously to the post of Vice-Presidents. Thomas was booed down at least four or five times a day.

Delegates by the dozen rose up to speak against the program of their leaders. But no one organized an opposition caucus. McGill of Flint, the two Mazey brothers, Case, and many others rose constantly in opposition. But they sat by idly and permitted the leadership to take over the reins again.

Two bulletins, one issued from Chicago, and the other from Detroit, were distributed at the convention calling for the establishment of a shop steward movement to take over major responsibility for running the Union in opposition to the leadership; and the establishment of a National Progressive Group of class struggle Unionists. The group obviously did not have enough strength to put up any challenge, although it presented, by and large, a correct program.

The two Trotskyite organizations distributed their own papers, but their appeal to the convention ended in the lame demand for a "Labor Party", which could obviously gain no great support since the delegates understood that the building of a Labor Party would merely make it necessary to defeat the same bureau-

crats twice — once in the Union, and once in the Labor Party

The UAW-CIO convention shows a beginning in the disillusionment of the masses with the war propaganda and social-patriotism. There is no doubt that strike sentiment is gaining momentum among these delegates, representing the major section of war production workers. For those who think the masses will kowtow to the war chariot forever this convention was a rude awakening.

The main missing link to start the ball rolling was and is a leadership based on class struggle policies.

## NEED PROGRESSIVE GROUP

A Shop Steward movement, similar to the great movement in England and Germany during and after the World War, would bring the trade unions back to the rank and file, instead of the capitalist-minded labor fakers. The unification of the best elements in the Shop Steward movement, whether in the AFL, CIO, independents, into a National progressive movement similar to the Trade Union Educational League of the 1920's, would be a big step toward undermining the class - collaboration leadership, and advancing the interests of the working class against the bosses profiteering drive.

# INDIA

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present provisional government in which a British official shall hold defense post, etc., are the maximum they now offer.

They refuse to grant further concessions now because they fear the American as well as Japanese imperialists. A weak stand might encourage the U. S. to arbitrate, between the British and Indians, with the U. S. maneuvering into a key position to get control of India. The pro-American stand of Nehru is well understood by London. (They do not fear Stalin; the 20-year pact is sufficient assurance that he seeks only a "second

front" of imperialist carnage, not the colonial peoples, to aid the hardpressed U. S. S. R.)

Above all, they fear the spectre that gives sleepless nights to all exploiters, whether they be the feudal princes, landowners, usurers and native capitalists of India, or the powerful imperialists of London or Berlin, Tokyo or Wall Street,— the independent action of the toiling masses, the workers and peasants of India marching toward successful Indian proletarian revolution, to do away with all imperialists and their oppression and wars forever.

For a Federation of Far Eastern Soviet Republics.