

Labor Research Ass'n.  
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# The COMMUNIST

**VOL. VIII**

**AUGUST, 1929**

**NO. 8**



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*Spectator*
- Japan As a Military and Naval Power  
*Nemo*
- The Sharpening Class Struggle in Latin  
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*Wm. Simons*
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# THE COMMUNIST

A Magazine of the Theory and Practise of  
Marxism-Leninism

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MAX BEDACHT, *Editor*

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THE SEPTEMBER ISSUE OF

# THE COMMUNIST

WILL BE SPECIALLY DEVOTED TO THE

## Tenth Anniversary of the Communist Party of the U. S. A.

TEN YEARS OF AMERICAN COMMUNISM.  
*Max Bedacht.*

TEN YEARS OF THE AMERICAN LABOR  
MOVEMENT. *William Z. Foster.*

AMERICAN CAPITALISM IN THE LAST  
DECADE. *H. M. Wicks.*

THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL AND THE  
AMERICAN PARTY. *Robert Minor.*

THE AMERICAN COMMUNISTS AND THE  
STRUGGLE AGAINST WAR. *William  
Weinstone.*

*and a number of other important articles,  
reviews, etc.*

was the union of all Arabians, today England applies reverse methods. In both of the Arabian lands practically simultaneous "revolts" have broken out, with the obvious objective of replacing the rulers who were not sufficiently pro-British with others who would be more satisfactory to the Foreign Office. It is reported that the attack against Ibn Saud was very carefully prepared in order to provide "unrest" in Arabia and to enable British imperialism to step in.

#### PERSIA

In Persia also we hear about "unrest" bearing a similar character. The reporter for the *London Times* notes (May 24): "In the territory of the Kasgai tribe disturbances have broken out because this tribe resists the authority of the government. Negotiations are taking place, but the tribe refuses any sort of compromise, and the situation is grave. In the Shiraz region troops are being concentrated and military supplies are being rushed to Teheran. The road between Shiraz and Bushrie is unsafe."

Until recently the relations between Persia and the Soviet Union were extraordinarily friendly. Formally, relations remain unchanged, but there are sufficient indications to prove that British imperialism—and above all the Anglo-Persian Oil Company—is bending all its energies to integrate Persia into the world front against the Soviet Union.

#### AFGHANISTAN

The extraordinary achievements of British imperialism in Afghanistan are well-known. The fruits of the work of Captain Lawrence are unmistakable. The present situation in Afghanistan is greatly confused, but this very confusion is a British achievement. The most essential point in the situation seems to be the fact that the pro-Soviet King Amanullah who was recently overthrown by a reactionary rebellion has now given up hope and left the country. Afghanistan itself is in a state of complete disintegration. Habibullah has strengthened his position in Kabul, while in the Turkestan region, particularly in the north, Amanullah still has considerable following in spite of his flight. In the eastern provinces bordering upon British India, whose capital city is Jalalabad, the situation is extremely favorable to England. Voices are openly heard urging the transformation of Afghanistan into a British colony. In the southern provinces Nadir Kahn has proclaimed himself Emir. That Nadir Kahn as well as Habibullah are open English agents is shown by the fact that Nadir Kahn emerged upon his adventure straight from India. According to latest reports, the position of Hamibullah is being considerably strengthened. This open paid agent of British imperial declares that Afghanistan will have no

diplomatic relations with anybody except Great Britain. It is clear that Afghanistan, torn apart by these disturbances and ruled largely by British agents, will offer no resistance whatever in an attack against the Soviet Union through its territory.

#### INDIA

This attack will of course, come from India. In the last few years British imperialism has spent untold millions in strengthening its armed forces in the North, and especially in building a whole network of military roads. A glance at the map will show that these roads are intended to make it possible to transport huge masses of troops through the rough mountainous country when the hour for an attack against the Soviet Union comes.

The roads are frankly military roads and are so constructed as to be suitable for modern tanks and armored cars. The Indian Army is being mechanized at a feverish rate for it is realized that the lighter tanks and air craft will play a tremendous role. English military science is concentrated upon the problems involved in an attack on the Soviet Union through India. Here we can only note the article by Major L. V. Stewart Blacker "*Mechanized Warfare in Asia*," and in the February 1929 number of the *Journal of the Royal United Service Institution*.

#### BURMA

The attack against the Soviet Union is also planned through Burma. This eastern province occupies a peculiar position politically and strategically, for whereas the attack on the Soviet Union by way of India involves passage over rough mountain territory and through the great plateau of Tibet, the attack can be carried through from Burma with far fewer natural difficulties. The military occupation of Burma was completed about two years ago when the Chinese revolution was at its height. At that time large numbers of troops and technical auxiliaries were sent to Burma. The excuse for these troop movements is quite characteristic of British imperialism. It was reported the vestiges of slavery had been discovered in Burma and that troops were being sent to put an end to this shameful condition. Of course, it is quite possible that slavery still exists in Burma as it exists in the other British colonies, either openly or in the form of compulsory labor, but it is clear that the troop movements had quite other motives.

#### CHINA

In China British imperialism can boast of further achievements. In the last period of time it has succeeded in practically winning over to its side General Chang Kai-Shek who previously had been

wavering between the influence of U.S.A. and Great Britain Chang-Kai-Shek, who has already deserted even the bourgeois liberation movement, is in substantial agreement with the reactionary military clique of the North, with the son of General Chang Tso-Lin. The total of the numberless provocations suffered by the Soviet Union in China grows rapidly day by day. The murder of the Soviet envoy in Canton, the arrests in Shanghai, the violation of the embassy in Peking—to these provocations, there has been added in the last few days, the arrest of the Russian Consul in Harbin and of the head of the East Manchurian Railway. The note of protest of the Soviet Union was rejected in the sharpest manner by Chang Kai-Shek, quite obviously upon the suggestion of British imperialism. The relations that exist at the present time between the Soviet Union and the Nanking government can no longer be called peaceful relations. The desire for peace on the part of the Soviet Union is the chief obstacle to war, but it is clear that in the end the assaults can reach such a point that the Soviet Union will be forced to defend itself. We have every reason to believe that British imperialism will drive its agents in China to further attacks.

In connection with the events in Shanghai and Harbin, there are taking place throughout China, mass arrests and mass executions of Russian citizens. Particularly in Peking is the condition of the Russians arrested very serious. Here executions already began in the first days of June.

The extraordinary sharpness of these provocations can be explained through the fact that in China British imperialism is not alone. It must reckon with the rivalry of American and Japanese imperialism, yet of course when it comes to a war against the Soviet Union, it can count upon making common cause with these powers.

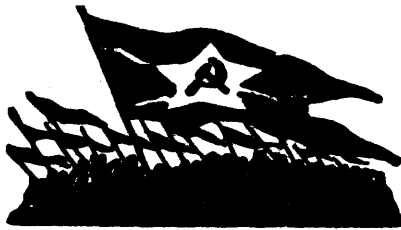
#### WHAT ABOUT MACDONALD?

In these few lines we have indicated the monstrous chain that is being fastened in the form of a semi-circle around one half of the Soviet Union. This chain supplements an equally strong bloc in Europe, in the West and in the North. All of this was achieved by the old Tory government of England, which, in spite of certain difficulties, accomplished a great deal in preparing for the attack on the Soviet Union. It is now clear that MacDonalld is continuing this work. Of course, the "Labor" Government will resume diplomatic relations with the U.S.S.R. But this will not prevent it from elaborating and preparing, perhaps in a more effective and clever manner, the long standing plans for an attack on the First Workers Republic. As to MacDonalld's love for peace, the colonial peoples



in the British Empire can bear witness. The bloody struggles in Egypt, the air attacks in Arabia, etc., were the accompaniments of the first MacDonald government. Nor has India forgotten the Labor Government of a few years ago. In 1924, Lord Oliver, the Secretary of State for India, ordered the arrest of a great number of revolutionary workers in the province on Bengal, many of whom are still in prison, although there has been no trial at all. These arrests in Bengal were the starting point for accelerated war preparations against the Soviet Union in India.

It would therefore, be a very serious mistake to believe that under MacDonald, the war preparations against the Soviet Union will be interrupted or even diminished. On the contrary, everything points in the direction that the danger of a united imperialist offensive against the Soviet Union is growing more serious every day.



# Japan as a Military and Naval Power

BY NEMO

UP to the Russo-Japanese war the center of the war strength of Japan rested upon its armies; in the period since, however, the center of gravity has passed to the navy so that Japan now ranks as the third greatest naval power in the world. Nevertheless the Japanese land forces still remain very formidable and worthy of the greatest attention. The gigantic reorganization that took place in 1925 showed what interest the Japanese imperialists place in their armies. The essence of this reorganization was an improvement in quality at the expense of quantity, a slogan that found its expression on the one hand in the reduction of the army by four divisions and on the other in the creation of new formations, in the increase of the technical auxiliaries and in great improvement in training and equipment. In the summer of 1925 over 1,000 officers were released from active service and transferred to duty in the military education of the civilian population especially the youth. At the same time construction was begun on ten aircraft companies, six anti-aircraft corps with equipment, and two tank corps with forty tanks.

## THE JAPANESE ARMY

The Japanese army now consists of 17 divisions altogether with a strength of 17,000 officers and 200,000 men, to which 3,000 military police are to be added. The army is divided into 68 infantry regiments with 68 machine gun companies, 17 divisions of cavalry, and 17 field artillery regiments, 4 brigades heavy field artillery, a number of units of artillery of various sorts, as well as a whole series of other important formations. Universal service of two years is provided for. Aside from the strict training given in the army itself there are about 25 institutions for military training.

On the European model the greatest attention is devoted to the construction of tanks, to the development of chemical and air warfare. At the end of 1927 the Japanese air force consisted of eight aircraft regiments and a balloon corps, altogether with 9,000 men. The army controls 600 airplanes the navy 300, and 2 airships as well as 4 aircraft carriers. There are seven air training schools, 23 air fields and airports, and a strong aircraft industry with over 30

factories. The air budget amounted in 1928-29 to \$27,000,000.

Military-economic preparations always play a big role with Japan since it is poor in raw materials and agricultural products. There is a great lack of coal, iron, copper, petroleum, manganese, even rice, wheat, and proper cattle feed; it is clear that the problem of raw materials and food can be of catastrophical significance for Japan in case of war. For this reason Japan has found it necessary to ensure for itself nearby easily defended regions rich in raw materials and food stuffs.

The total expenditures of Japan for its army in the post-war period amounted to:

1921	.....	\$125,959,000
1922	.....	128,994,000
1923	.....	114,203,000
1924	.....	88,564,000
1925	.....	85,742,000
1926	.....	99,396,000
1927	.....	105,841,000

In percentage of total expenditure the money spent by Japan for its army and navy amounted to 35.6 per cent in 1926, as against 20.3 per cent in 1913. In the U.S.A. this percentage amounted to (1926) 19.1 per cent, in England to 16.6 per cent. Whereas in 1914, Japanese military expenditures amounted to \$0.88 per capita population, in 1917 this already rose to \$1.61.

THE JAPANESE NAVY

As we have already indicated the emphasis of the military strength of Japan rests upon its fleet. Towards the beginning of the Washington Conference this fleet consisted of: 15 battle cruisers, 7 armored cruisers, over 50 cruisers and similar vessels, 130 destroyers and 30 submarines. (*The Japan Year Book*, 1929). After the Washington Conference Japan had to scrap 10 ships out of a total tonnage of 159,828. The great general increase in the Japanese navy is shown relatively and absolutely in the following figures (Voitinski) of the displacements of the fleets of the most important countries (Great Britain is 100):

Great Britain	100	100
U. S. A.	41	92
Japan	27	56

Since the Washington Conference the Japanese Admiralty has devoted itself to the building of modern cruisers, torpedo boats, and

submarines, as well as to the training of the personnel and to the improvement of weapons. Towards the end of 1927 the Japanese fleet already consisted of the following units: 6 battle ships, 4 battle cruisers, 3 aircraft carriers, 50 cruisers of all sorts (4 new 10,000-ton cruisers provided for in addition), 126 torpedo boats (15 new ones of 1800 tons provided for in addition) and 80 submarines (4 new 1000-ton subs in addition). The personnel consisted of 8,000 officers and 68,000 men.

The expenditures for the Japanese fleet since the Washington "Disarmament" Conference are to be seen from this table.

1921	\$246,631,000
1922	199,699,000
1923	140,323,000
1924	106,571,000
1925	97,768,000
1926	118,305,000
1927	127,522,000

These figures show that over one billion dollars was officially spent in these seven years for the Japanese fleet. An imposing picture of the great improvement in quality of the Japanese fleet was shown in the latest naval maneuvers and described in the *Tokyo Naval Review*.

#### NAVAL BASES

The large number of well-located naval bases greatly increases the value of the Japanese battle fleet. Like England, Japan is also dependent upon overseas possessions but it has the advantage that these regions are not far distant. Since the penetration of the USA in the Pacific and the liquidation of the Anglo-Japanese alliance, Japan has created a continuous chain of fortified harbors and bases. The construction of coast defences was taken in hand at the end of the World War and has already reached the furthest islands. These fortifications are so arranged as to make it extremely difficult even to approach any of the Japanese islands. The Japan sea (between Japan, Korea and the Russian province of Sakhalin) is protected at its southern entrance by fortifications on the island Kiu-Shiu, by the forts at the southern point of Japan (Shimonoseki and Kure), by the defences on the island of Sushima and by Fusen at the eastern end of Korea. The entrance to the East is protected by the defences at Hakodate at the southern point of the island Yesso. Then there are the great defences Tokio and Yokohama and upon the island Shikoku. As an outpost the Bonin islands are strongly fortified. These islands constitute an extremely important flank position for the advance upon Hawai-Guam-Philippines. The Yellow Sea is

enclosed by forts on the Pescadores, Formosa, the Liu-Kiu islands and the Korean defences already mentioned to Port Arthur.

Japan's naval strategic system has been quite aptly compared to a gigantic fortress to force which would require maximum exertions. It is obvious that the Japanese archipelago from the Kuvile and Bonin islands up to the Mariana islands to the South provides the Japanese naval forces with an innumerable amount of bases and points of support whereby they are able greatly to extend their radius of action because of the constant proximity of a home base.

Article 19 of the Washington Agreement has played a big role in the development of the Japanese system of naval bases. At the close of this conference the differences between Japan, the U.S.A. and Great Britain appeared so deep that armed conflict seemed inevitable. However, the economic and financial weakness of Japan, the disturbances in the British colonial empire and the inferiority of the American fleet compared to the British forced upon the great powers armistice for a decade. On the basis of Article 19, Great Britain, the USA, and Japan retreated a few steps. Thus, England had to renounce Hong-Kong as a naval base and withdraw to Singapore, because the first was too dangerously near Japan. For the same reason the USA had to give up the *further* fortification of the Philippines and the Aleutian islands. On the other hand Japan pledged itself to maintain the status quo in regard to naval fortifications and bases, particularly on the Kurile and Bonin islands, on Amami-Oshima, Formosa, the Pescadores, and Loo-Choo islands. According to Article 19 the status quo means:

“that no new fortifications or naval bases shall be established in the territories and possessions specified; that no measures shall be taken to increase the existing naval facilities for the repair and maintenance of naval forces and that no increase shall be made in the coast defenses of the territories and possessions above specified.”

It is clear therefore that altho Japan is prevented from developing new points of support in these regions, yet those that already exist may be maintained. And as we know Japan has perfected its system of naval bases into a veritable fortress. As F. Mohr writes in *Geopolitik* (II, 1925):

“In view of their importance in defense Japan—as soon as the war was over—began to pay close attention to the modernization of its fortifications and defenses. With a foreboding of what the Disarmament Conference would bring, all energies were thrown into the work on the Bonin Islands and elsewhere and such speed was achieved that when the Disarmament Conference did come the *status quo* already represented the highest point of modernization.”

Resting upon such a well developed and completely modern system of naval bases Japan can well utilize the period of the Wash-

ington Conference Agreement in order to devote itself to the strategic entrenchment of its position upon the Asiatic Continent. Since Manchuria is quite connectly, declared to be the "basis of Japan as a great power" Japan naturally strives above all to ensure its communications with Manchuria. According to the conclusions of Admiral Sakomoto:

"The most important overseas lines of communications in the Pacific, so absolutely necessary for the transportation of raw materials and food stuffs to Japan, will be threatened by submarines in case of war. Japan will therefore have to depend upon Mongolia and Manchuria. Therefore the Japan Sea must be converted into a Japanese lake by the closing of all entrances to it."

It cannot be denied that Japan has already achieved this aim and has transformed the Japan Sea into a Japanese lake. Having ensured its lines of communications and protected its rear Japan can now proceed to establish military bases upon the Asiatic mainland itself. It is sufficient to call attention to the two strategic railways in South Manchuria as well as to the naval harbor, Dairen, threatening Mongolia and Siberia, in order to recognize against whom the Japanese plans in North China are directed.

# The Sharpening Class Struggle In Latin America

*A Tale of Two Conferences: Montevideo and Buenos Aires*

By WILLIAM SIMONS

THE Montevideo Congress where the revolutionary Latin American Confederation of Labor was founded, and the Buenos Aires Conference of Communist Parties of Latin America, held between May 18 and June 12, have done much to equip the revolutionary movement of Latin America for the present campaign to defend the Soviet Union from imperialist attack, and for a struggle against imperialism, especially United States imperialism.

These Conferences are landmarks in the revolutionary development of the Latin American workers and peasants. Both were held for the first time on Latin American soil, and were much larger than the groups of Latin American delegates who attended either the Fourth R. I. L. U. or the VI Comintern Congress. The Montevideo Congress was attended by 56 delegates from 15 of the most important countries and by representatives of the R. I. L. U., the French C. G. T. U., and the T. U. E. L. of the U. S. A. The Buenos Aires Conference had 37 delegates from 14 countries, and also a representative of the Communist Party of the U. S. A.

The tasks of the Conferences were: at Montevideo, to forge a strong, revolutionary trade union continental center of industrial and agricultural workers, for the improvement of their miserable living conditions, and for a struggle against imperialism and the danger of war; at Buenos Aires, to lay down the revolutionary perspective, a tactical line, and plans for the organization and consolidation of the Communist Parties.

## INTENSIFIED IMPERIALIST RIVALRY

The dominant note in the Latin American situation is the sharpening of the rivalry between Great Britain and America, a worsening of the miserable conditions of the working masses, and a leftward drift of these masses. Latin America is becoming ever more important in the world rivalry between the two outstanding imperialist countries. The Draft Thesis presented to the Buenos Aires Conference states: "Latin America is one of

the most important battle grounds of British and American imperialism. . . . Latin America is of the greatest importance as one of the sources of conflicts and of new imperialist wars." Furthermore, there is considerable sentiment among the Latin American masses for the Soviet Union, which will undoubtedly express itself in demonstrations and strikes for the defense of the Soviet Union.

The relation of British to American imperialism is not one of subordination, but of struggle. Her loss of position after position only steels her determination to fight. British imperialism is still powerful. As the VI Congress Thesis puts it: "The rapid expansion of the United States inevitably brings her interests into conflict with the interests of decaying, but still extremely powerful British imperialism." Struggle is the keynote of the relation of imperialist forces. The VI Congress Thesis correctly states: "As a result of the squeezing out of British capital, South America is gradually becoming an enormous 'sphere of influence' of the United States." To affirm that the process is completed means to underestimate the strength of British imperialism, to underestimate Latin-America as a source of imperialist conflict and consequently to underestimate the danger of imperialist war.

#### THE SITUATION IN LATIN AMERICA

As a result of imperialist competition there is a constant drive to lower the miserable wages of the Latin American workers, while the cost of living increases. The workers have engaged in a series of strikes for betterment of conditions; the Colombian banana workers strike of 1928; the two strikes on the Ford rubber plantations, in Amazonia, Brazil of 6,000 workers, in November, 1928 and February, 1929, crushed by machine guns and troops; illegal strike of 6,000 printers in Sao Paolo, Brazil, April-May, 1929. The militancy of the workers is shown by the disarming of eighty company police (killing ten of them) in the Colombian banana strikers. Native reaction is completely in the service of the imperialist powers, most of the countries being under the heel of American imperialism. The Pan-American Federation of Labor and Amsterdam have their agents in the labor movement of Latin-America, usually weak, but still a source of danger; the P.A.F. of L. generally where American influence exists, Amsterdam where European powers are influential, as in Argentine. The countries of Latin America are colonial or semi-colonial, depending generally on one or two industries either directly owned or whose market is controlled by imperialist powers, which ties them to imperialism's apron strings. Heavy industry is not developed, these products



being imported from imperialist countries. There is a crisis in several countries; in oil and copper in Mexico; in sugar in Cuba; in meat in Argentine, and in coffee and public works in Colombia. This crisis, the result of imperialist relations with these countries, a part of the world crisis, will grow in intensity. To sum up, the situation in Latin America is marked by a growing crisis, sharpening of the class struggle, and increasing militancy of the working masses.

#### MONTEVIDEO FOLLOWS A CLASS LINE

The Montevideo Trade Union Congress adopted the following program of action: (1) a struggle for improvement of conditions of the industrial and agricultural workers, which is a struggle against imperialism, primarily American imperialism; (2) a struggle against the war danger arising from the rivalry between Great Britain and America, and reflected in the Tacna-Arica and Bolivia-Paraguay clashes, and for the defense of the Soviet Union; (3) a fight against the reformists—against the P. A. F. of L., Amsterdam and the anarchists; (4) a struggle against native reaction, tool of the imperialist powers (5) the organization of the agricultural workers, who play an important role in Latin America; (6) the organization of the Indians who in some countries (Peru, Bolivia) are a majority of the population—an All-Indian Latin American Conference is contemplated; (7) propaganda among the Negroes of Haiti and Jamaica to discourage their influx into Central America where the United Fruit Company uses them against the natives (this is our task primarily); fraternization of the Negroes and natives on the plantations; (8) more attention to the youth and women problems; (9) activity among immigrant workers; (10) a drive to organize the workers of Latin America (percentage of organization being low), and to put the movement on a dues-paying basis; (11) a struggle for national and international unity; (12) the establishment of closer relations with the revolutionary workers of the U. S. A.; signing of the Solidarity Pact with the T. U. E. L. of the U. S. A.

This is a class struggle line. No wonder the Montevideo Conference was attacked bitterly by sectarian, anarchist elements, by Amsterdam, by the P. A. F. of L. Montevideo saw the birth of a powerful revolutionary trade union organization, a mighty weapon in the anti-imperialist struggle.

#### BUENOS AIRES PLUMBS DEEPER

The Buenos Aires Communist Conference dealt with the basic, fundamental problems of Latin America, as the perspective for

revolution, the bourgeois-democratic revolution and the workers and peasants blocs. This Conference made the following estimate: (1) The U. S. A. controls a whole series of countries, and even where Great Britain is still dominant (Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay) the U. S. A. is fortifying its position. (2) The dominant class in almost all countries of Latin America, whatever their political form, is the class of the large landowning proprietors in the service of, and in close relation with British or American imperialism. (3) The exploitation of the natural resources of Latin America by the United States accelerates its industrial development, and thereby increases the number, concentration, class consciousness and the role of the industrial proletariat. But this industrial development of Latin America is one sided, is the expression of its colonization, of its more rapid transformation into a vast colonial dominion, and not of its independent capitalist development of its decolonization. (4) This proves that the national bourgeoisie arising in some countries cannot develop except in close dependence upon foreign capital, and that like the large landowning class, it cannot be a revolutionary factor in the struggle against imperialism. (5) The revolutionary movement in Latin America can be characterized in general as the bourgeois-democratic type in semi-colonial countries where the agrarian and anti-imperialist problems dominate. (6) The perspective is of the growth of the working class, and its influence, weakening of the influence of the petty bourgeoisie; crisis in agriculture, more violent struggles of the agricultural workers; strengthening of the dictatorial and fascist character of the local governments, backed by American imperialists. (7) A swift transformation is possible from the bourgeois democratic revolution to the proletarian revolution.

#### COMMUNIST PARTIES TASKS AND TACTICS

The general tasks and tactics of the Communist Parties were indicated as follows: (1) the formation and consolidation of Communist Parties, strengthening their base in imperialist concerns, mines, factories, railways, plantations; (2) active participation in all revolutionary movements of the masses against imperialism and the large landowners, even though these movements should be led for the moment by the petty bourgeoisie; (3) the organization of the agricultural masses, and the establishment of close relations with the Peasants Leagues; (4) the petty bourgeoisie resorts to coup d'etats, using the masses to get themselves into power, after which they compromise with imperialism; to them action of the army is the decisive factor—but under the hegemony of the working class, the arming and organization of

the masses of workers and peasants is the important factor; (5) during the agricultural uprisings and revolutionary movements, the Communists must not only put forward the question of arming of the workers and peasants, but also the creation of bodies elected by the workers and peasants, capable of directing the struggle and which will be transformed from directing bodies of the insurrection into organs of the workers and peasants government after victory—the slogan for the creation of agricultural soviets on the farms, and of workers' and soldiers' soviets in the cities, should be put forward in the course of every insurrectional movement of the working masses and peasants; (6) only a workers' and peasants' government can carry through the historic tasks of the democratic bourgeois government with the following program: a. confiscation without compensation of land and minerals; b. confiscation and nationalization of foreign enterprises (mines, etc.); c. repudiation of foreign debts and all forms of imperialist control; d. an 8-hour day and the abolition of semi-slave conditions of work; social insurance; e. arming of the workers and peasants; creation of a workers' and peasants' militia; f. abolition of power of the large landowners and of the church; and the establishment of the power of soviets of workers', peasants' and soldiers' representatives; (7) the slogan for Latin America must be the Federated Union of the Workers' and Peasants' Republics of Latin America; (8) the Communist Parties of Latin America are ideologically and organizationally weak—they must be strengthened; (9) parties which are based on membership of affiliated unions, etc. (Colombia) must be changed to individual membership base; (10) the idea of workers' and peasants' parties must be rejected—workers' and peasants' blocs can be used as a close alliance of the proletariat and peasants, by which our Parties lead backward masses to revolutionary struggle.

#### A NUMBER OF SPECIFIC PROBLEMS

The Buenos Aires Conference laid down a line of action for revolution in any country of Latin-America. No Communist can argue that a revolution is impossible in view of probable intervention by American imperialism. Sandino showed the possibility of keeping the revolutionary fires burning for several years. Had the Colombian Party established a Soviet during the banana plantation strike, even if it were suppressed, it would have been a beacon light, an example of revolutionary courage, of inspiration for the working masses of Latin America.

A series of resolutions were worked out by small commissions, editing. These included questions of race, agriculture, organization,

which were submitted to the South American Secretariat for final youth, women, struggle against war, and on the Argentine question. Progress was made on the race question, it being generally admitted at this Conference that there was a Negro and an Indian question in Latin-America. At the VI Congress of the Comintern, many Latin American delegates denied this. No final decision was taken on the Indian question, the commission's resolution and that of the Peruvian comrades passing to the E. C. C. I. for final solution.

While the agricultural question is of the utmost importance, there has generally been little study of it by the Communist Parties of Latin-America. The line laid down for this work was for concentration on the organization of the workers in coffee, fruit, sugar plantations and among the forest workers.

On organization, the Conference agreed that the base of the Party must be among the workers in imperialist factories, plantations, etc. Emphasis was placed on the building of shop and farm committees. It was decided that there would be no affiliation of individuals to the workers' and peasants' blocs. Membership in the Communist Parties must be on an individual basis. The discussion of the youth question disclosed the prominent role the young workers play in production, and the weakness of the Youth Leagues, not concentrated among the exploited youth, not given sufficient support by the Communist Parties. The Resolution Against War declared that "Latin America will be an object and probably a seat of war," and outlined the specific tasks of the Parties in connection with fighting war. The increasing role of women in industry was noted, and the necessity of more attention by the various Parties to this problem. The work of the Anti-Imperialist Leagues in Latin America was discussed from a theoretical and organizational angle. The trade union work was reviewed, and tasks laid down. The international situation, and the danger of war was presented as the first order of business by the South American Secretariat.

Our Parties in Latin America are in the main ideologically and organizationally weak. In Colombia, the Party did not link up the banana strike with the possibility of armed uprising, because it had the conception of co-operation in an armed revolution under the leadership of the liberals. In Brazil, the C. P. was completely submerged in the Workers' and Peasants' Bloc, an error which was only recently corrected. In Mexico, the C. P. failed to pursue sufficiently an independent role within the Workers and Peasants Bloc. The parties are generally indifferent to the danger of war. In Peru, the Communist group created the Socialist Party, with a program different from the Comintern pro-

gram, since "the masses would not join a Communist Party now." But one must never forget the heroic struggle of the Colombian workers, under the leadership of the Colombian Party, nor the splendid anti-Hoover demonstration in Argentine and Uruguay. Most of the Latin American Parties are young, but they are worthy allies for the struggle against imperialism.

#### AN ESTIMATE OF THE BUENOS AIRES CONFERENCE

The Buenos Aires Conference did valiant service in clarifying the tactics of the Parties. The Conference approved the line of the draft thesis. It approved of the action of the Argentine Party and condemned those elements expelled from the Party who were trying to undermine the Argentine Party in the eyes of the other parties.

The Buenos Aires Conference did valiant service, but in one important respect it was lacking. It failed to draw the lessons from or even discuss the right danger in Germany, Czech-Slovakia and the United States. It failed to characterize the right danger in Latin America as marked by the May First Manifesto of the Brazilian Party, which called upon the trade union workers to put pressure upon their leaders to follow a revolutionary line, or else, "let them give up their posts," by the failure of the Uruguay General Confederation of Labor to adopt an independent line in the meat packing strike conducted by anarchists, by the failure of our comrades to call out the overwhelming mass of workers, with demands for all, and to lead the strike.

There must be no exceptionalism for Latin America. The Conference rightly treated Latin America as a part of the whole world scheme, but the lessons of the international Communist movement must be learned by the Communist Parties of Latin America if they are to measure up to their tasks.

#### OUR DUTY TO THE COLONIAL MOVEMENTS

The VI Congress Thesis of the Comintern declared: "The C. P. of the U. S. A. fails to carry on a sufficiently impressionable struggle against the predatory policy of the United States in Latin America." The Thesis on Latin America presented to the Buenos Aires Conference by the E. C. C. I. confirms this:

"The oppressed peoples of Latin America should find an ally in the revolutionary proletariat of the United States, which should support the anti-imperialist struggle of the peoples of Latin America. This solidarity has not yet been displayed with sufficient force either toward the oppressed proletariat of the colonies under American imperialism, as Cuba; or toward the valiant defenders of the independence of Nicaragua; or with respect to Mexico."

*This is a true indictment of our Party* and efforts must now be made to live up to our responsibilities toward the Latin American workers and peasants.

The presence of a T. U. E. L. delegation to the Montevideo Congress, the signing of the Solidarity Pact between the Latin American Confederation of Labor and the Trade Union Educational League, the presence of a delegate of the Communist Party of the U. S. A. to the Buenos Aires Conference, and of a representative of the All-American Anti-Imperialist League (U. S. Section) to the Argentine National Anti-Imperialist Congress have helped bring these movements together. The Solidarity Pact must be popularized, and carried out. (The Solidarity Pact with Mexico has remained a scrap of paper.) The organizations in the various fields of work, Party, trade union, anti-Imperialist, labor defense, relief, etc. must establish regular correspondence, exchange of newspapers, must make their membership understand the situation in Latin America, and the necessity of joint struggles in imperialist enterprises (Ford, General Motors, Armour, Swift, etc.). Especially must we support the strikes in Latin America in American owned factories or plantations. This is our special duty, because Latin America is particularly exploited by American imperialism. Oil plays such an important part in Latin-America, that we must make efforts to establish a base among the workers of this industry in the U. S. A., and establish relations with the oil workers of Latin-America.

#### ORGANIZATION OF THE LATIN AMERICAN WORKERS IN THE U. S. A.

It is the duty of the revolutionary movement of each country to see that emigrant workers adopt a class attitude in the country to which they go. The revolutionary Parties and trade unions of Latin America are therefore keenly interested in the organization of the four million Latin American workers in the U. S. A. We must plead guilty to the charge of failing to do our duty, despite a provision in the Organization Resolution of the Third Conference of the T. U. E. L. in December, 1927, about the importance of this task. The Latin American workers here are a link with the revolutionary movement of Latin America; their organization will facilitate our gathering support for the revolutionary struggles of the workers in Latin America. We must begin to include work among the Latin Americans as one of the major tasks of the Party; it must be added to "work among youth, women and Negroes" and then must be actually carried out in practice.

There must be an ideological campaign among the membership of the Party and other working class organizations concerning

Latin America. Our press must reflect the struggle of Latin American workers and peasants against imperialism. Pamphlets and leaflets must be issued. Our apparatus for contact with Latin America and for work among Latin Americans in the U. S. A. must be strengthened.

# Some Notes on the Socialist Party

BY MAX SALZMAN

THE Socialist Party of America is a party of class struggle. It is a party on the side of the bourgeoisie against the proletariat. The class role of the S P is proved not only by its deeds but even by its own words.

Even a superficial reading of the Socialist press will indicate at least five main forms in which the S P has in recent times displayed its true class role:

- 1.—It accepts the outlook of bourgeois propaganda in denying the existence of a class struggle in the United States.
- 2.—It consists mainly of non-proletarian elements and of skilled highly-paid aristocrats of labor.
- 3.—It is helping the American imperialists prepare for the coming war.
- 4.—It endorses the murder of the German workers last May Day in Berlin.
- 5.—It supports the use of police terror against the workers.

## THE DENIAL OF THE CLASS STRUGGLE

In the May 25 issue of the *New Leader*, Mr. Joseph A. Weil, referred to in another part of the paper as one of the oldest socialists in New York, has an article entitled: "American Socialists and the Class Struggle." Here he raises some important points in the orientation of the S P.

"There is no class struggle in the United States," he declares. "Class struggle presupposes class consciousness and class consciousness presupposes class feeling, class pride and class solidarity. All this is lacking among the workers in this country."

Mr. Weil of course has to explain away the facts that so flagrantly contradict his "theory".

"Of course there are struggles, strikes, lockouts, etc., but these are group struggles for individual gain, just as there are struggles among groups of capitalists and business men. They are without class consciousness, without class purpose or class idealism. . . Socially and politically everybody is equal in this country. John the street cleaner is Mr. John and John D. is Mr. John. John D. has millions of course, but it's America, and John the street cleaner has his hopes of getting there and if a boy born and raised in the slums of the East Side can become the governor of the richest state in the Union, and come fairly near being President of the richest



country in the world, why cannot everybody hope to become somebody?"

And then referring to the tasks of the Socialist Party he says:

"Well, then, what is to be done? Must we build our party on the class struggle theory? Must we single out the proletariat as God's chosen people for whom and through whom Socialism will be brought about? Nonsense! There is a social-consciousness dormant in every human being which can be awakened with the proper kind of literature. The constant repetition of 'class-struggle' is monotonous, repulsive and harmful to our propaganda."

Lest the reader get the idea that only Mr. Weil expresses such theories let me refer to the more clever and therefore more dangerous method in which Mr. Thomas puts the question. In an address before a so-called Socialist discussion group on the topic "Is Marxian Socialism Abreast With the Times?" Mr. Thomas demands a revision of Marxism. In his lecture he develops the idea that Marxism is "outworn" in all fields, that it must be "supplemented in the light of our own times." What Mr. Thomas proposes, Mr. Weil does. The "modernization" of Marxism by eliminating the class struggle is strictly in line with the decision of the last Convention of the S P to exclude the "class struggle" from its membership pledge.

#### THE COMPOSITION OF THE S P

The class role of the S P reflects its social composition. We must remember that the dropping of the "class struggle" from the membership pledge opened the doors of the party even wider to all non-proletarian elements and made it far more possible for them to become more active in determining the policies of the party. The Socialist Party actually consists to a great extent of capitalists, small business men, professionals. The bulk of the workers in the S P are highly-paid skilled workers, the aristocracy of labor, bribed by the super-profits extracted from the colonial and semi-colonial countries, completely dominated the reactionary ideology of imperialism.

Let us permit the *New Leader*, the central organ of the S P, to speak for itself. In a letter sent out to advertisers this "working class" paper declares:

"A large percentage of *New Leader* readers own their own homes, have automobiles, make trips to Europe and are generally liberal in their vacation expenditures. Many of them go away for the entire summer.

"The average income of the readers of the *New Leader* is perhaps on the whole higher than the income of the readers of other newspapers. The *New Leader* appeals to people, who either because of

their profession or their association in unions of skilled workers are usually well paid.

"The *New Leader* appeals to many heads of financial institutions, well-known members of the legal profession, a surprising number of very prosperous business men, authors, artists, doctors of medicine, dentists, educators and others interested in the socialist, liberal and labor movements.

"The backbone of the *New Leader* circulations is found amongst the highly paid, well organized skilled workers. . . ."

The composition of the S P is well characterized in these lines: "heads of financial institutions, members of the legal profession, a surprising number of very prosperous business men, artists, doctors, dentists, educators, . . . highly paid, well organized skilled workers!" A real working class party!

#### PREPARING FOR IMPERIALIST WAR

The chief characteristic of the present situation is the intensified antagonism between the United States and Great Britain. This finds its expression in every part of the world. In the Near East, in Persia, Irak, Egypt and Afghanistan, the United States has been making increasing inroads on British trade. In the British colonies, India, Africa, in Canada and Australia, American investments are growing very rapidly in some cases (Canada) almost challenging the control of the mother country. In Latin-America this antagonism assumed its sharpest expression in the Bolivia-Paraguay conflict and in the recent reactionary revolt in Mexico. But nowhere is the antagonism so great as in China. Here the United States has acquired a position stronger than that of any other power.

The feverish search of these two great imperialist rivals for markets for their goods and capital serves to intensify these antagonisms. The solution can only be found in a war which will decide which of these two imperialist giants shall be the victor.

In the face of such a situation, the Socialist Party, so far from striving to awaken the masses to the necessity of a struggle against the coming war, actually helps to produce a smoke screen under the cover of which the war preparations can be made.

The Socialist Party endorses the "Labor" government in Great Britain. It refers to the victory of the Labor Party as the political emancipation of British Labor. It estimates the establishment of a Labor government as a step toward peace. In face of the growing contradictions between Great Britain and the United States an editorial in the *New Leader* of June 8, declares that "the Labor government improves the relations between the two nations." A meeting is proposed between Hoover and MacDonald to allay the fears of the workers of both countries of a new world war. The So-

cialist Party hails this meeting as a step toward peace. Hoover has proposed a fake reduction of the navies as a cover for his preparations for war. Dawes meets with McDonald to discuss this. Mr. Thomas in his "Timely Topics" in the *New Leader* of June 15, says he hopes Dawes will "continue in this courteous and pacific vein." Thomas, the socialist, talks of the "pacific vein" of the war monger Dawes. The thing is quite clear. Thomas and the Socialist Party meet on the same ground as Dawes and Hoover. They both support the policy of talking about peace while preparing for war. The struggle between American and British imperialism intensifies and the armament race speeds up. But Thomas says: "We hope for real reduction of naval armament and in the atmosphere of reduction of armament we may also hope for progress in other questions in which American and British interests clash."

The enthusiasm of the Socialist Party for the meeting between Hoover and McDonald becomes even more significant when we note that this meeting is to consider the attitude of both governments to the Soviet Union as well. The Soviet Union is in imminent danger of an attack by the imperialist powers, among which the leaders will be the USA and Great Britain. The meeting of the representatives of these two powers has as its purpose the preparation of this attack on the USSR, preparation which implies rather than excludes the recognition of the Soviet republics.

It would be a grave error to say that the Socialist Party is "being fooled" by the "pacific vein" of Dawes, that "it wants peace but does not know how to fight for it," on the contrary, every fact points in the opposite direction: the S P is an active and conscious agent in helping the imperialists prepare for the next world war.

#### RED MAY DAY IN BERLIN

The Socialist Party of America endorses the bloody murder of 29 German workers in connection with the May Day events in Berlin. And why not? Were they not murdered by a Social-Democratic Police Chief?

What was the situation in Germany? The German Social-Democratic Party is rapidly changing from a party of social-reformism into a party of social-fascism. Germany is traveling towards a fascist dictatorship. The German Social-Democratic Party is trying to lead the German workers into this dictatorship just as it lead them into the service of the Kaiser during the world war.

But there are obstacles to the establishment of fascism in Germany. These obstacles are the Communist Party, the Young Communist League and the Red Front Fighters. The Socialists enter-

ed into a conspiracy with the other sections of the German bourgeoisie to remove these obstacles.

The plan was to forbid the May Day demonstrations on the grounds that there was a danger of conflict between the fascists and the workers. The very people preparing the fascist coup talked in this way in order to deceive the workers. All the reactionary labor leaders agreed not to demonstrate on May Day. And the workers did demonstrate under the leadership of the Communists, much to the dismay of the social-fascists. The Socialist chief of police laid careful plans to provoke the German workers into an inopportune insurrection in which it would be possible to murder off the best fighters of the German working class and destroy its ability to resist the fascist dictatorship. There was also the aim to drive the Communists organizations into illegality.

While the police succeeded in declaring the Red Front Fighters illegal, yet it did not prove possible—much to the credit of the heroic German working class—to provoke an insurrection for which the time was not ripe. The workers heroically defended themselves for four days. The Communist Party issued a manifesto containing the following words:

“The bourgeoisie and their police socialists want to provoke you to take up a murderous battle, they want to provoke you to armed insurrection. The murderous plans have been prepared in cold blood for months previously. They want to entice you before the barrels of their machine guns in order to be able to mow down hundreds of the best workers and thus drown the Berlin revolutionary movement in blood. The revolutionary proletariat will, however, not let itself be provoked. The revolutionary proletariat will choose the moment for an armed insurrection which it considers favorable, and in this moment they will take up arms to repay the police murderers.”

The situation is clear. The attitude of any honest worker would be to defend the German proletariat. The Socialist press of all countries, including the *New Leader* in New York, however, applauded the German police for their murderous assault on the German workers and concentrated the attack on the Communists who stood in the front rank of the struggle.

Norman Thomas in the *New Leader* of May 25 tries to make it appear that the police allowed themselves to be provoked by the Communists. The placing of the question in this manner shows that between Mr. Thomas and his social-fascist friends in Germany there was a deep affinity.

#### THE S P AND POLICE BRUTALITY

The Socialist Party does not fight police brutality. Instead it attacks the Communists for resisting the attempts of the police to

club the workers. The American police are no less brutal against the workers than the police of any other country. In every part of the country the worker has felt the policeman's club. In New York, police brutality has become an everyday matter. The recent cloak strike, the strike of the iron and bronze workers, the food workers and the present fur strike have all been met with the policeman's club.

During the police parade some time ago, the Communists hung a banner from the *Daily Worker* building on which was inscribed "Down With Walker's Police Brutality." The police became enraged at this and brutally slugged the workers and the children around the building and tore the banner down. Twenty-nine workers were arrested including nine children.

On May 25, the *New Leader* published an editorial treating the whole matter as follows:

"The parade of the New York police on Saturday was the occasion for an asinine demonstration on the part of the Communists. A huge provocative banner displayed from their building carried an inscription calculated to enrage the marching men. In the disturbance which accompanied the removal of the banner by the police, a few Communists were clubbed and some wholesale arrests made. . . . This policy (fighting police brutality, M. S.) is all the more inexcusable considering that police commissioner Whalen is running amuck. Moreover, a sweeping attack which includes all men in the service is absurd and unjust. There are patrolmen who have not lost their sympathy for the workers and a policy of baiting them displays a bovine intelligence. Police commissioner Whalen's disregard of civil rights does not justify provocative and futile methods of retaliation."

To make the picture of this socialist endorsement of the police force complete, let me quote that arch "pacifist" the Reverend Mr. Thomas:

"Down with Mayor Walker's Police Brutality! read the Communist banners which confronted the police parade in New York. So the police proved there was no brutality by acting brutal. They arrested a lot of kids, in order, as one of the cops put it, to show them they live in the United States. Now unquestionably the Communists do not come to court with clean hands in pleading for civil liberties. Unquestionably they want to stir up trouble and get a certain rather cheap martyrdom even if they have to use school children to do it. But the very proof of the superiority of tolerance to intolerance and freedom to despotism lies in dealing with different cases and refusing to be stampeded into repression or brutality. Doubtless there is a point where any police force under any sort of government will have to go into action. That point was not reached on Union Square on the day of the police parade. I suspect that that point might have been avoided by wiser action in the far more difficult case presented by Communists on May Day in Berlin to police who because they were under Socialist control were

under peculiar obligations to show all possible forbearance and skill in handling such situations.”

Let us draw a few conclusions from these quotations. First, the Socialist Party ignores the fact that police brutality against the workers exists, and thereby approves the statements often made by Whalen that there is no such thing as police brutality. It is not an accident that the Socialist election platform for the mayoralty campaign does not raise the question of a struggle against police brutality.

Secondly, The S. P. charges those who mobilize the workers for a struggle against police brutality with provoking the police. By this the defenders of the police hope to prevent a struggle against the use of force by the police against the workers. The police tore down the sign “Down With Walker’s Police Brutality” because they did not want this slogan to be placed before the workers. The Socialist Party proves itself the aid and ally of the police.

Thirdly, the S. P. tries to divide the police force between “good” and “bad” policeman. What nonsense! The 18,000 men are on the New York police force to defend the interests of the capitalists against the workers. How do these policemen who “have not lost their sympathy for the workers” display this. Does this sympathy make the blows they rain on the heads of the workers any lighter? It is an elementary Marxian principle that the state (and the police department is a part of the state apparatus) is an organ of suppression. By talking of good and bad policeman the Socialists hope to blind the workers as to the nature of their struggle.

Fourthly, The Socialist Party tries to create illusions about “civil liberties” for the workers and the “tolerance” of the police force. Thomas attacks the Communists for not having clean hands about civil liberties. By this he means that the Communists fight for free speech, for the workers and not for the Ku Klux Klan and other organizations as Mr. Thomas does. Thomas then proceeds to attack the police for not being more efficient in dealing with the Communists. What does he mean when he says: “Doubtless there is a point where the police force under any sort of government will have to go into action.” He means that the police did not choose the proper time for their attacks on the Communists. Naturally! Mr. Thomas and the Socialist Party, you see, are preparing for the time when they will head the police force in this country in the interest of the American capitalists. They are envious of their brother betrayers in Germany and England.

# Sixth Convention of the Communist Party of Canada

BY JOHN WILLIAMSON

**T**HE economic and political relationship of Canada to Great Britain and United States, in view of the intensification of world rivalry, leading directly to imperialist war between the U. S. and Britain, makes the deliberations and decisions of the Sixth Convention of the Communist Party of Canada of importance for the working class of the world and specifically important for the Communist Parties of the United States and Great Britain.

Canada occupies a peculiar status—being nominally a dominion of Great Britain, but having actually outgrown its semi-colonial status and having developed a definite capitalist economy of its own. Canada is a capitalist state in the full sense of the word, both in the class relationship inside the country and its foreign policies on a world scale.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF CANADA

Since the close of the world war, industrial and agricultural production have grown at a more rapid tempo than in any other country. From a total gross industrial production of approximately 2½ billion dollars in 1922, this has grown to 4 billion dollars in 1928. Utilizing the six year period of 1919-25 as an index basis of 100, we see the following:

ALL INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION		
1926	1927	1928
149.0	156.2	173.4
143.6	MANUFACTURING 150.1	172.0
117.7	CARLOADING 124.1	135.6
161.4	AUTO PRODUCTION 169.7	236.0
88.0	STEEL PRODUCTION 114.1	158.0
102.0	PIG IRON PRODUCTION 101.3	144.2
191.0	NEWS PRINT 200.0	229.5

In the agricultural field the same growth is in evidence, the total grain crops of Canada having nearly doubled since 1914.

In world trade Canada occupies an important place. It occupies first place in per capita trade balance; second in per capita export; third place in absolute trade balance; and fifth in total exports. Her trade is growing annually, amounting in 1928 to \$2,572,069,319. Of major importance is the fact that Canadian trade grows in the direction of the U. S. A. and away from Great Britain, both in regard to favorable trade balances and to the composition of trade—increased export of raw materials to Britain and finished products to America. Due to this industrial growth Canada is today an exporter of manufactured commodities in excess of her imports. An examination of every field of industry, trade or banking all show the same general strength.

In the field of investments we see America advancing and Britain lagging far behind, while Canadian capital (this many times is actually controlled by either British or American) is dominant. In 1928 the U. S. A. had 3½ billion dollars invested in Canada as against 2 billion invested by Great Britain. Of the total foreign investments in Canada 57 per cent are American and 39 per cent British.

#### POLITICAL ROLE OF CANADA

The political implications of this situation are far reaching. Today Canada is an arena of struggle between the two powerful imperialist contenders for complete world hegemony—U. S. A. and Great Britain. This is evident in the capital investment race going on in Canada. At this moment another reflection is the nationwide political struggle being waged in regard to the attitude of the respective sections of the Canadian bourgeoisie towards the proposed increased American tariff and its effect on Canada. Despite the strong ideological influence thru traditional Empire ties of Great Britain, American imperialism is advancing economically.

The Canadian bourgeoisie, while playing a much more independent role, especially in relation to Britain (demand for independent representation at international conferences, establishment of independent embassies in U. S. A., France and Japan, independent trade treaties, opposition to British foreign policy in Egypt, Chanak, etc.) is, nevertheless, hopelessly divided, some sections being under the hegemony of American imperialism, others of British imperialism, and still others trying to maintain an independent position. At the same time Canada takes her place in the international united front against the Soviet Union and simultaneously is increasing her armaments (building two new cruisers, 38 new army planes, hangars, 20 per cent increase in military budget this year, etc.).



The present situation can only become more complicated and the friction more intensified as the struggle between the two imperialist powers goes on, until at the outbreak of war between the U. S. A. and Great Britain, it will in all probability lead to civil war in Canada. The Ottawa government could never be maintained in such circumstances. There will then exist the basis for a revolutionary situation, in which the Communist Party must become the leader of the workers in alliance with the farmers against both imperialisms and against the Canadian bourgeoisie in a struggle for the establishment of a workers and farmers' government.

#### PERSPECTIVES

This present so-called "prosperity" of Canadian industry, is bound to be short lived, due to its development in the midst of sharpened world contradictions and due to developing contradictions within Canadian economy itself, such as:

1. Rationalization in agriculture and introduction of improved machinery is creating a sharp class differentiation process (with all its results) among the farmers, resulting in the impoverishment of large sections of the farmers and definitely creating an agricultural proletariat. At the same time there is an overproduction of wheat and Canada's elevators are glutted, with a resulting impending crisis in agrarian economy.

2. While there is an actual growth of the working class, this developing economy in the midst of such intense competition results in rationalization being applied in intensity second to no country. Productivity per worker increased between 1917-1928 nearly 50%. If we contrast 1925 and 1928 we see that while the increase of total production has been 36% the increase of workers has only been 18%. Examination of each industry separately shows similar enlightening results. The general condition of the Canadian worker is very poor. The money wage rate has been at a standstill since 1925; today the average wage of adult workers is \$19.00 per week and the average work day is 10 hours. Against these conditions, especially the increased rationalization, the workers have begun to strike (York Knitting Mills, Dominion Rubber, Canadian Woolens, General Motors, etc.) In every one of these strikes the central issue has been against the speed-up and other phases of rationalization.

3. While great financial and industrial mergers are occurring, which in turn results in greater centralization and productivity, there is already taking place overproduction in such industries as pulp and paper, automobile, etc. This great productive increase clashes with the market possibilities and in turn creates crisis within Canadian economy.

An examination of the internal and external contradictions—the definite leftward trend and radicalization process amongst the workers, especially young workers and women—leaves no doubt as the

temporary character of the present "prosperity" and indicates that all these factors are leading towards a crisis in Canadian economy.

#### SOCIAL REFORMISM IN CANADA

Social reformism in Canada is strong. Relatively speaking the Canadian workers are much better organized in trade unions than anywhere else in the western hemisphere. The bulk of them are divided between the A. F. of L. unions and the Canadian National Union. A small number are organized in the industrial unions established thru the efforts of the C. P. and the T. U. E. L.

The A. F. of L. unions play their usual role of class collaboration and class peace. The A. C. C. L. while paying lip service to industrial unionism and even using revolutionary phrases is little different than the A. F. of L.—endorsing Mondism, striving with the A. F. of L. to have representatives sent to the International Labor Office of the League of Nations, etc.

The Canadian Labor Party is practically non-existent, except in one or two provinces, where our Party capitulated and handed the leadership over to the reformists; in other provinces where the Communist Party waged a struggle, the fakers were able to have the big bulk of the unions withdraw. Social-reformist influence is very strong—most of the trade union leaders and parliamentary representatives (Woodsworth, etc) using "left" phrases to fool the workers and at all times trying to paralyze their struggles. Insufficient trade union work with many right errors and a totally wrong attitude towards the Labor Party by our Party, has prevented an effective struggle being waged against the reformists to date.

#### THE FRENCH CANADIAN QUESTION

When dealing with Canada the French Canadian question must be seriously considered. Numbering one-third of the total population, forming a compact mass with a common language, traditions, etc., having anti-imperialist traditions, recently drawn into industry at rapid rate and even participating in strikes, the bulk, however being small peasants, under the complete domination of the Catholic Church, they form a most important problem for the Party which has not even been approached as yet. Without the support of the French-Canadian masses our Party can never be successful.

#### STATUS OF OUR PARTY AND ITS POLICY

In this situation the Canadian Communist Party found itself in no way prepared for the tremendous tasks and possibilities before it. The Party is made up 95 per cent of three language groups, (Finnish 65 per cent, Ukrainian 25 per cent, Jewish 5 per cent.) It

is thus isolated from the basic sections of the workers—the Anglo-Saxons and French Canadians. Furthermore, it is isolated from whole industrial areas, such as Nova Scotia, where there is not a single Party group to-day, altho a few years ago, the Party was the recognized leader of thousands of miners in their struggle against the bosses and the state. In connection with strikes the Party was always at the tail end and we saw evidence of the complete subordination of the CP to the Canadian Labor Party (Alberta). Organizationally the Party has had an actual loss of 400 members in the past two years. All of this was further accentuated by the existence of a federated language structure—with the bulk of the membership limited to language clubs and fraternal organizations.

The background of the entire leadership of the Party showed lack of understanding of the CI line. The fact that Spector—now a counter-revolutionary Trotskyist was the undisputed political leader for many years, altho his reservations were known, is proof of this.

In the pre-convention discussion, the majority of the Central Committee, headed by Comrade McDonald, brought forward a thesis that was not in line with the line of the VI Congress of the CI. In brief, it overestimated the present “prosperity”, ignored the immediate and growing possibilities for sharpened class struggles under Party leadership, saw no contradictions leading to crisis, ignored radicalization and declared there was no leftward drift of the workers, believed the CLP could still be an instrument of struggle for the workers, neglected the agrarian question, and completely underestimated the right danger as the main danger in the Party.

The entire Party leadership, including those who were more correct in their approach to the above questions, underestimated the war danger and believed the “independence” slogan to have a revolutionary value. Much unclarity was also evident on the trade union question, the majority orientating completely on the skilled sections of the workers in the AFL unions and the Buck-Smith resolutions showing a decided tendency to uncritically accept the All Canadian Congress of Labor, as against the AFL, instead of waging a sharp struggle against the social reformists of both and organizing new unions, especially in the basic industries which are largely unorganized.

#### THE SIXTH CONVENTION—ITS TASK

This was the situation and the status of the Canadian Party at its Sixth Convention. The Comintern addressed a special letter to the Convention, sharply criticizing and correcting the line of the thesis and resolutions presented and giving the Party a proper line

on all political and organizational problems, in line with the decisions of the VI Congress. To carry out this line meant sharp break with the past and a sharp turn in all its work. While the CI Letter was unanimously endorsed thru adoption of a resolution, the Convention and the preceding Plenum were the scenes of sharp struggle, which indicated that this Convention was only the first to shake up the CPC and that the new line is not understood fully as yet and the right danger is deep-rooted and much idealogical clarity is still needed.

The Convention and Plenum were divided into three tendencies: (1) those who declared their acceptance of the CI Letter (Buck-Smith) and made efforts to correct their own mistakes (the tendency to see possibility for increased class struggle only in developing crisis, right errors in trade union work, uncritical attitude towards ACCL), altho displaying a factional approach at times; (2) those who resisted the CI line like M. Buhay, Moriarty, etc.,—associates of McDonald, (The following are some of Bahay's remarks, in discussing the C. I. Letter; "The entire Letter is confusing," "Its criticism is hazy," "Some sections deal with crisis, others emphasize prosperity, so there is no clear line," "The C. I. criticizes us because we did not emphasize radicalization—the C. I. exaggerates radicalization," etc.) and (3) McDonald, who, while declaring he accepted the CI Letter and admitting his own mistakes, in his report repeated his basic errors and categorically refused to attack and disassociate himself from Buhay, etc., but declared, "I won't throw Buhay overboard, but would rather throw overboard some of the champions of the new line." The first sign of organized factionalism took place at the Convention under the leadership of McDonald, and was defended by him as necessary to "save the Party." The respective tendencies in the Canadian Party reflected to some extent the struggle going on in the American Party prior to the American Party Convention.

The Convention was the most successful in the history of the Party, insofar as it definitely discussed in a thorough-going manner basic political problems, altho the Convention did not fully understand the CI line—many comrades actually resisting it—and no political thesis was adopted applying the line of the CI Letter to the tasks and problems of the Party. This Convention actually shook the Party out of its smug complacency which it had got itself into for the last number of years and was the starting point for a thorough beginning in ideological clarification and activation. Resolutions were adopted on the Trade Union Question, Inner Organizational Problems, Women's Work and Youth. Another basic weakness of the convention was the lack of any French-Can-

dian delegates and the lack of discussion and failure to adopt a resolution and policy on this all-important question.

#### THE RIGHT DANGER IN THE C. P. C.

The right danger has deep roots in the C. P. C. The thesis of the McDonald leadership and the attitude of some comrades of all shades of opinion in the convention discussion, show that there was complete lack of understanding of the situation in Canada and its relation to the international situation. As a result, mistaken policies followed on all fields of practical work. This situation is accentuated by a series of secondary factors, such as: (1) general passivity and existence of language blocs which are not linked up actively in class struggle; (2) low ideological level (3) isolation of the Party from basic sections of the working class, and (4) social democratic structure of the Party.

The basis of the right danger in the Canadian Party is the overestimation of the Canadian "prosperity" and underestimation of the growing radicalization of the working class. How deep-rooted and what crass expressions of right errors have been committed in the practical work of the Party, flowing from the wrong analysis, can be seen from the following few examples.

An article in the *Women Worker* written by Comrade Custance, a member of the Polcom, states:

"Aside from the persecution of the Reds, another important question presents itself. We can see great danger ahead of us if we are to be governed and controlled by 'police edicts.' This means the beginning of the end of responsible government.

"It is the boast of those who acclaim British justice that it is the outcome of the principle of self-government by—the rule of law. This means that the rights of the community rest with individuals who are responsible to the people and whose actions are themselves governed by law.

"This *sound* principle has been violated by Chief Draper, because as yet Parliament has not made a law prohibiting the use of any language other than English at public meetings.

"No section of the community will fight harder for the principle of government by law than the Communists themselves. . . ."

"It will be our duty to uphold the cause of responsible government, free speech and freedom of assembly."

In Vancouver, two Party members, who were members of the CLP Executive, did not oppose this Executive invitation to Ramsay McDonald to speak in Vancouver. These same two comrades agreed in this CLP Executive not to fight for the Oriental franchise and at other times fought against selling the *Worker* at united front mass meetings.

In Sudbury, the Party under threat of an injunction by the courts, turned over to the courts the subscription lists of the Party,

Finnish daily, *Vaupus*. At this time in the *Sudbury Worker*, a Party paper, Comrade Moriarty, a Polcom member, writes: "So exhibit number three (the sub lists) was gratefully received by the Crown. It contains particulars, which *in different hands* (my emphasis, JW) might be used as a handy blacklist.

Similar cases could be cited without end.

#### THE OUTBREAK FOR THE PARTY

The right danger in the Communist Party of Canada was not liquidated at this Convention. The struggle was only started. Like all sections of the CI, the CPC faces great responsibilities and tasks in this period. The opportunities for developing mass activity are in existence everywhere if the Party makes the sharp turn.

Canada is a powder magazine in connection with the imperialist war between America and Britain. Canada is the weakest link in the situation and great responsibilities are placed on the CPC, which demand a Bolshevized, well disciplined, energetic mass political Party. The VI Convention was the first step in that direction.



# The Negro Press as a Class Weapon

By CYRIL BRIGGS

**I**N our general underestimation of the revolutionary role of the Negro workers, we are inclined to overlook the importance of the Negro press. This would be one of the worst blunders we could commit.

In order to win the Negro masses for the revolutionary overthrow of the vicious system under which they are lynched and jim-crowded and victimized in a thousand ways, it is necessary that the Communist Party should have a full appreciation and understanding of the various factors influencing the Negro masses today. Some of these influences, like religion, we will have to fight without quarter. Others, like the Negro press, we will be able to utilize in our campaigns against lynching and other forms of white ruling class terrorism, segregation and high rents, disfranchisement, discrimination in the A. F. of L. unions and on the jobs, and for the full political, social and racial equality of the Negro.

Until recently the existence of an influential Negro press was virtually unknown to both the white ruling class and the white masses. Manifestly the existence of a powerful Negro press, uninfluenced and uncensored, unknown to the capitalist class, was of the utmost danger to that class and Ray Stannard Baker, writing in *World's Work* some years ago, obligingly warned of this danger:

*"Few people realize that there are more than 450 newspapers and other publications in America devoted exclusively to the interests of the colored people, nearly all edited by Negroes. . . . The utter ignorance of the great mass of white Americans as to what is really going on among the colored people of the country is appalling—and dangerous."\**

These periodicals are published throughout the country—nearly every Negro urban center has one or more. Of the 450, 83 are religious, official organs of some denomination, or private organs of ambitious peddlars of religious bunk, 45 are accredited as journals of fraternal orders; 80 are school and college periodicals, 31 are magazines, and something like 250 are general newspapers. Most of the newspapers are weekly. There are no dailies, although there have been some attempts to publish daily papers. Marcus

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\*Italics mine—C. B.

Garvey a few years ago tried publishing a daily. There was also a more ambitious attempt in Baltimore where a daily paper, the *Daily Herald*, was actually published for over two years. The Negro press has an estimated circulation of over 1,500,000. As each copy of a newspaper or magazine is read by more than one person the influence of the Negro Press is greater than indicated by mere figures of circulation. In some parts of the South and the West Indies, the more militant papers and magazines published in the North are passed around until each copy is read by twenty or more persons. Especially is this so where the paper in question has been barred by the local authorities and has to be smuggled in. In one instance on record, one copy had been read by over one hundred workers.

In seeking to evaluate the circulation and influence of the Negro press it would be useless to make comparisons with any other section of the American press, although the language press would come nearest to affording a comparison, but even here it would not be altogether fair, since the latter has a monopoly in its field not enjoyed by the Negro press. Moreover, it must be remembered the foreign-born groups are large, compact masses of city dwellers while the Negroes are distributed over a wide geographical area, and are handicapped by poverty, rural isolation and illiteracy. Compared with the press of a minority group, however, the result is illuminating—the Negro press must, as a rule, get along without being subsidized. It is only recently that national advertisers have begun to use its columns and this only to a small extent since, significantly, the Negro press is still regarded by the capitalists as too much of a *class* press. Recently, too, the power of the rising Negro bourgeoisie has begun to make itself felt in the policies and management of the Negro press. So far, this latter influence is mostly confined to the papers in such large cities as New York, Chicago, Pittsburgh. It is no accident that such papers as the *Chicago Defender*, the *New York Amsterdam News*, the *New York Age*, the *Pittsburgh Courier*, the *Baltimore Afro-American*, the *Atlanta Independent*, etc., are the first to give expression to the growing power of the Negro bourgeoisie. These papers are published in the big industrial and mercantile centers where the Negro bourgeoisie is concentrated. However, while tending toward economic conservatism these papers, with the exception of the *New York Age*, and the *Atlanta Independent*, which are hopelessly reactionary, still retain a large measure of militancy on racial demands. Of this group, which accounts for probably one-third of the circulation of the Negro press and is the most powerful, the *Baltimore Afro-American* is the least reactionary.



Less important in power and influence is the numerically larger group of small town papers scattered throughout the country, especially throughout the South. This group carries on a precarious existence and its editors are closer to the economic struggles of the masses. While not clearly realizing the class implications of the Negro liberation struggle, the editors of this group are much more open to revolutionary ideas than are those of the first group. They also reach a larger mass of readers. However, it is the first and smaller group that reaches and influences the Negro proletariat in the large northern industrial centers, and therein lies its importance for us.

That the white ruling class of the South fears the influence of the Negro press on the oppressed Negro masses is evident by its bitter hostility to Negro newspapers, and particularly to those published in the North. In many sections of the South, the harshest measures have been adopted against Negro papers and those who circulate them. Negroes known to be agents of Northern Negro papers have been actually lynched in many parts of the South. The more outspoken periodicals are heartily execrated among the white ruling class.

In 1919 the same fear gripped the Federal Department of Justice when the Attorney-General included the Negro magazines and newspapers in his investigation. "Neither is the influence of the Negro Press in general to be reckoned with lightly," he warned the Senate.

Phenomenal progress in news getting, in make-up, in quality of articles and editorials, has featured the history of the Negro press within recent years. From a group of poorly made-up, atrociously edited periodicals, the Negro press has improved so greatly that today it stands comparison with any other group of periodicals. It is served by several efficient news services, including the Associated Negro Press, the Preston News, the Capital News Service, and the radical Crusader News Service. In addition, several of the bigger papers have their own correspondents in the large cities. Articles range from local to national politics, and frequently there are articles on Africa, the West Indies, Brazil, etc. Occasionally there is a good cartoon, though generally the Negro press lags in this department. An analysis of forty typical periodicals revealed that three-fifths of the articles are devoted to the characteristic struggles of the race, the fight against lynching, against disfranchisement, segregation, etc. The space devoted to news and opinion approximated 60 per cent., with only those papers published in the big cities carrying sport and theatrical departments and magazine features.

While the tone of the Negro press in general is one of struggle,

there exists great confusion as to the methods of prosecuting that struggle, arising out of the failure to understand the class basis of Negro oppression. Take for instance the following example of failure to understand the rôle of the capitalist state as an instrument of oppression against both the white and the black workers.. It is from the *Mobile Weekly Press*:

“ . . . and we reassert that the government is all right, but the people are wrong, and cause the world oftentimes to denounce our form of government for its failure to protect its citizens at home. . . . Our government is all right, but the people are wrong, and we speak of the people and not of the government.”

This quotation is typical of the confused attitude of the bulk of the Negro press on the source and causes of Negro oppression in America and elsewhere. Of the several hundred newspapers only one, the *Negro Champion*, correctly points out the source and causes of Negro oppression and militantly calls the Negro workers to effective means of struggle. Of the several news services, the Crusader News Service is the only one interested in presenting the news from a labor point of view and in educating the Negro masses on the source of their oppression. The Crusader News Service has a wide influence, particularly among the small town newspapers.

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The Negro press has a revolutionary past which still, in large measure, motivates its present. Taking its start from a situation of conflict, it has carried through its entire history the motive of the fight for liberation.

Even while sunk in slavery the Negro realized the need for a press to agitate his wrongs. That militant and fearless opponent of the slave power, Frederick Douglas, with other free Negroes responded to this need—Douglas with the *North Star*, later changed to *Frederick Douglas Paper*; Samuel Cornish and John B. Russwun with *Freedom's Journal*. This latter was the first Negro periodical to appear in the United States. Its name was later changed to *Rights to All*. Then there were others, their titles expressive for the most part of the struggle they waged against the monstrous system of chattel slavery; *Mirror of Liberty*, the *Elevator*, the *Clarion*, the *Genius of Freedom*, the *Alienated American*, the *Ram's Horn*, the *Colored American*, etc.

That even in those dark days of human slavery the influence of the reformist was present in the ranks of the oppressed is gathered from the declaration of objects of the *Colored American*:

“Its objects are . . . the moral, social and political elevation and improvement of the free colored people; and the peaceful emancipation of the enslaved.”

On the other hand, it was the Negro press of that period which paved the way for the bold attempts of Nat Turner, Denmark Vesey and other Negro revolutionaries who, inspired by the daring deeds of Toussaint L'Ouverture and the revolutionary ideas of the French Revolution, organized the many slave insurrections which gave so much concern to the slave power, several times bringing it to the verge of complete demoralization.

The reaction of the slave-holding South to the influence of the Negro press was one of brutal terrorism against any person caught with copies of these papers. Even in the North there was brutal hounding and repression of Negro editors. Douglas' home was burned to the ground, following the suggestion by the *New York Herald* that that fearless Negro agitator should be exiled to Canada and his printing presses dumped in the lake.

However, no Negro publication in those dark days of slavery came in for so much execration on the part of the slave-holding South and its sympathizers in the North as Walker's famous *Appeal*—not a newspaper but a pamphlet that appeared in several editions. Walker was a free Negro from North Carolina, who, in 1827, opened a second-hand clothing store in Boston which he used as a blind for his revolutionary activities. The reaction of the slave holders to Walker's pamphlet is the best tribute to the ability and fearlessness of the writer. As far South as Louisiana men were imprisoned for having it in their possession; the mayor of Savannah demanded of the Mayor of Boston that he punish the author, to which the latter flunked replied expressing regret and disapproval of the work.

The close of the Civil War saw a flood of pamphlet literature and new newspapers.

That the Negro press has brought down to the present period its tradition of struggle is seen in the demand, almost general up to a few years ago and still sufficiently widespread to be of tremendous import, for *armed resistance* to lynching.

The Negro press was a constant source of annoyance and concern to the white ruling class during the World War. Bearing in mind the brutal system of exploitation and terrorism to which this class has submitted the Negro masses it was no wonder that the white ruling class saw the specter of revolution lurking behind the demands of the Negro press for the abolition of lynching, discrimination, etc. The usual trick of buying up the leaders was resorted to. Emmet J. Scott was made special assistant to the secretary of War in "the matter of the welfare and morale of the colored people", conferences of editors were held in Washington; war propaganda was mailed regularly to the Negro press; a Speak-

ers Committee of one hundred was organized; Du Bois, until then one of the most outspoken critics of America's treatment of the Negro, was promised a captaincy and betrayed the Negro masses with his infamous "Close Ranks" editorial, in which he called upon the Negroes to forget their grievances, and unite with their oppressors against the latter's enemies. Scott, later had the temerity to boast of his work in lining up the Negro editors for the betrayal of their race:

"Our editors were conservative on all current questions, at no sacrifice of courage (sic) and absolute frankness in the upholding of principles. . . ."

That there were editors who found it impossible to be "conservative on current questions," in which was included the burning question of the lynching of black men and women (during the war there was one particularly revolting case of the lynching of a pregnant woman and the ripping from her womb of the unborn babe which was immediately stamped to death under the feet of her brutal murderers) by the bestial southern white ruling class at the very moment when black soldiers were fighting on the western front, that there were such editors is evident from the proposal of the Attorney-General to suppress the *Chicago Defender*, and the *Crusader*—a proposal which was abandoned by reason of the fear of the reaction of the Negro masses. There were other papers, too, that caused grave concern to the government.

The *Amsterdam News* of February 27, 1918, commenting editorially on the lynching by a Tennessee mob of Jim McIlherron on February 22, for the "crime" of self-defense, said in part.

"And 'tis to protect these fiends of hell that thousands of our best blood have been sent to France! This is our reward! Our taste of democracy! Relic of the Past and earnest of the Future!"

The question of self-determination for the American Negro was raised by this paper during the World War:

". . . have we not as much right as the Poles and Slavs to aspire to a free independent existence under which can be guaranteed and enjoyed 'security of life,' equal opportunities and unhampered development. And where are our leaders? Are their mouths stopped with the white man's gold that they can do nothing but mumble out advice to be patient and await a crazily conceived, absolutely unprecedented 'peaceful solution.' . . .? Are they traitors or fools? Bought or untaught?"

And again on January 2, 1918, in an editorial "Democracy and the Colored Race: the Case for Autonomy", this paper agitated for a free Africa and for self-determination in the Southern United States, pointedly asking:

"Can America demand that Germany give up her Poles, and Austria her slavs, while America still holds in the harshest possible bondage a nation of over ten million people, who occupy in the majority several of the Southern States and to whose industry is solely due the prosperity of the Gulf States and the fact that they are today prosperous and productive communities and not roaring wildernesses."

With the return of the Negro soldiers and the occurrence of race riots in Washington, in Chicago, in Knoxville, etc., the attitude of the Negro press became so aggressive and potentially revolutionary that the government again experienced serious concern, and at least one Congressman voiced the opinion that certain Negro editors should be hung because of the open encouragement they gave to the spirit of armed resistance with which the Negro soldiers returned to their homes. Not only radical publications like the *Crusader* and the *Messenger* gave open encouragement to this spirit of armed resistance, but papers like the *Cleveland Gazette* carried articles with headlines like the following (from the *Cleveland Gazette*): Springfield Riot Truth—the first time given to the Public by any Publication—Veterans of the World War were on the Job and Our People Were Ready—Chicago and Washington Their Precedent."

As and when the Communist Party of the U. S. A. carries out the decisions of the Comintern in reference to leading the struggles of the Negro masses against lynching and other forms of white ruling class terrorism, against jim-crowism, against segregation and its resultant high rents, against discrimination in the old trade unions, etc., we will find very little difficulty in getting our activities chronicled in the columns of the majority of Negro periodicals, providing, of course, we have an alert and up-to-date press service. As the Sixth World Congress Resolution on the Negro Question points out the oppressed, Negro masses are naturally skeptical of all white people. It is the task of the Communist Party of the U. S. A. to prove effectively to the Negro masses that the Communist Party is the party of *all* the workers, of black and white alike. This we can do only by increasingly participating in the racial struggles of the Negro masses as well as in their economic struggles, and by obeying the decisions of the Comintern to push the Negro workers forward, both in the Party and in the unions we control.

In our work among the Negro masses, we must at all times have effective contact with the Negro press, which, by the nature of its own struggle must be more or less sympathetic to us. For this purpose we need an up-to-date press service. The present press service, while exercising a wide influence, is not good enough. We are under the necessity of working fast, as with the growth of the Negro

bourgeoisie more and more papers will come under its control with the result that their columns will be closed to our propaganda. We must immediately increase the effectiveness of our press service. At present, the work of preparing the weekly releases is left to one comrade, who has many other duties, and is forced to handle the service as a mere side issue. The Negro comrades and such white comrades as are familiar with Negro work must be drawn into this work. At present, the service not only sends out news on Party and auxiliary activities, but handles general news as well. This is necessary, but such general news should carry our point of view. Under the present conditions this is not always possible. There should also be more feature articles. In this respect, the Negro students in Russia have greatly helped, but very little aid has been given one way or the other by most of the Negro comrades on the American scene.

It has been pointed out in this article that the very papers to which we have least access are the ones covering the industrial centers and influencing the thoughts and reactions of the Negro proletariat. This means that the Party must make every effort to revive the *Negro Champion* and to establish that paper as a regular weekly whereby to combat the reactionary influences of the Negro bourgeois press. At the same time we must seek to extend the influence of the *Daily Worker* among the Negro masses by making that paper a real leader in the fight of the Negro masses against the influence of the ideology of imperialism which expresses itself, in white chauvinism, in terroristic acts against the Negro workers and farmers, in discrimination, in jim-crowism, in racial hostility and separation, etc. The *Daily Worker* and the rest of the Party press must carry on a persistent campaign against white chauvinism. Only by convincing the Negro masses that we are in earnest will we win their confidence. But we must not only be active in the Negro struggle against white ruling class terrorism, which is part of the world-wide struggle of the proletariat; we must have means of broadcasting to the Negro masses the news of our activities.

# The Fight Against Philosophical Revisionism

In What Sense Ought Lenin's "Materialism and Empirio-Criticism" to be Studied

By A. FRIED

*(Translated from the German by Gertrude Haessler)*

## INTRODUCTION

While the author of this review has applied his criticism to the experiences of the German labor movement, his criticism can apply with even greater force for the American proletariat. Lenin's refutation of the idealistic bourgeois thinking, written in 1907 in Russia, is not limited to the time nor to the country; it is a criticism of bourgeois thought in general and applies particularly to the American philosophical school. In America, bourgeois idealistic philosophy penetrates the entire system. It is at work in the labor movement, where the Socialists and labor bureaucrats, the liberals and liberal professors are the vehicles of the idealistic attitude to the problems of the class struggle, and thus carry over the degenerating and corrupting philosophy of the bourgeoisie into the ranks of the working class.

Voluntaristic idealism, which the author of this review mentions, is particularly prevalent within the labor movement and inevitably affects section of the periphery of the communist movement and even within it, as we have recently witnessed in the Party discussions. This view approaches political and economic problems from the standpoint of the role of the individual alone, in place of seeing the individual in relation to the class and political party, and the whole social economic forces in which he works.

Those who followed the Trotsky discussion and those who participate in the struggle from day to day, are keenly aware of the influence of this idealistic philosophy within the labor movement. But not until the Comintern Address to our membership was published, did any of us realize to what extent it had penetrated into the ranks of our own Party. Not only Professor Carver, whom Lenin analyzes in this book, not only the Muste Group of social reformists, but even certain of the leaders of our own Party became carriers of this bourgeois method of thinking. And the very insidiousness of

this influence can be seen from the fact that our Party was little conscious of its presence until the Communist International itself pointed it out.

As Lenin disposes of the revisionism of the Marxist theory of the state with crushing force, so he disposes of the attempts of revisionism of the Marxist theory of knowledge. American readers will do well to study carefully the work of Lenin, and this able review by a German comrade will be of assistance in the understanding of the subject.

GERTRUDE HAESSLER.

**A**FTER years of preparation, Lenin's work, "*Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*"<sup>1</sup> has appeared in the German language. Since two contributions have already appeared in the Party press, which give the train of thought of this work in an excellent manner,<sup>2</sup> it remains to describe the contents once more by way of summing up. It seems to us of utmost importance to realize clearly what the significance of this book is from the standpoint of the revolutionary class struggle at the present time, and from what viewpoints this work should not only be read but also made use of within the revolutionary labor movement. Lenin's work is not a "purely" philosophical work written for philosophy's sake, but a product of the politico-ideological fight against *philosophical revisionism*, against the attempt to merge bolshevism with the idealistic theory of knowledge, and thus it is part of the fight against revisionism in general. It is therefore worth examining the situation in which the revolutionary labor movement finds itself today, and to stimulate a *systematic study* of Lenin's work from this standpoint. The following remarks are intended to serve this purpose.

1. A superficial observation might easily lead to the conclusion that the revolutionary labor movement in Germany has little or absolutely nothing to do with philosophical problems in the narrower sense of the term. There are no differences of opinion within the Communist movement on dialectic materialism. This is also characteristic of our fraternal parties in Great Britain, France and in Czecho-Slovakia (and America—Ed.). Insofar as individual comrades prepare and publish articles in this sphere, their activity does not go beyond the Marxist research work of the Soviet Union.

We wish to state quite frankly, that this lack of interest toward fundamental theoretical problems reveals a weakness of our movement and at the same time conceals a danger. We can combat

<sup>1</sup>English Edition, Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. XIII, *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*. Critical Notes Concerning a Reactionary Philosophy. International Publishers, New York.

<sup>2</sup>Fritz Rueck ("Rote Fahne" No. 289, 1927) and Julius Wertheim (Inprecorr No. 118, 1927).



such ideological dangers to the international labor movement as the ultraleft and opportunist currents, as the Trotsky neo-Menshevism only (if we wish to succeed not only temporarily but permanently) in exposing the farthestmost roots of these deviations, *the inability to think dialectically*. This obliges us, however, to train ourselves consciously to dialectical thinking, and this revolutionary educational work demands a combination of the practical political work with the living all-embracing study of the problems of materialistic dialectics. The infinitely low political level of the ultraleft attacks on the Communist Party in Germany raises the doubt whether there is any connection whatever in this tendency with any sort of philosophical and theoretical views. But the "classical" form of ultraleft thought, as expressed in Bordiga's political activity, reveals in full clearness the features of a *voluntaristic idealism*. And, though their hair stood on end, were any of our RFB comrades to be told that they tend toward "voluntary idealism,"<sup>1</sup> that would not alter the fact that they actually look upon the will to revolution as the unique factor and that they cannot grasp the dialectical relationship between reality, knowledge, will and action.

#### STRUGGLE AGAINST SCEPTICISM, AGNOSTICISM AND RELATIVISM

2. From another standpoint also the relationship between philosophical problems and the revolutionary class struggle must just as sharply be worked out. The proletariat is constantly subjected to the degenerating influence of bourgeois thought. Scepticism, agnosticism, and relativism are gaining ground in the ideology of the broadest sections of the working class. This terminology is strange to the worker, as the case of a petty-bourgeois, athirst for knowledge, who did not know that he spoke prose each day until he was told so by his teacher. Nevertheless the worker is subjected to the influence of scepticism, agnosticism and relativism in a thousand ways. It is the task of the Communists to guide the proletariat as a class to that standpoint which the interests of the proletariat and its historic mission demand, and which alone forms the basis for materialism. That is the standpoint which dialectic materialism assumes in the question of truth and the perceptibility of truth. What is expressed in the most complicated forms of the relativistic theory of knowledge, appears in practical political life in such remarks as: "Who can get wise out of this whether the Communists or the Social-democrats are right.—One of them says this and the other that." "What is truth?" despairingly asks the modern Pontius

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<sup>1</sup>Voluntaristic idealism—the theory which holds that will is the ultimate principle, both in experience and development of the individual and in the constitution and evolution of the universe.—Trans.

Pilate, the indifferent proletarian, while, in face of the contradictory representations, he abandons his conviction that truth actually exists.

The Communists can help the proletariat out of this acute crisis of relativism only if they themselves have a theoretically firm and clear outlook on the nature of truth, the knowledge of truth. That requires that they know the bourgeois origin of the relativist philosophy and that they themselves can find the path from relativism, liquidationism and disintegration, to dialectics, and point it out to the proletariat.

#### PHILOSOPHY A WEAPON OF CLASS STRUGGLE

3. Lenin's "*Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*" offers us the basis for giving an ideological firmness and depth to the revolutionary labor movement in Western Europe; it hands us weapons for combatting the above dangers. But we must be able to use these weapons correctly. Without speaking metaphorically, this means that we must show that Lenin's fight was necessary not only against Bogdanov, Mach and the Russian Machists and other sponsors of the idealistic theory of knowledge. It means that the philosophy of dialectic materialism must be represented as separate from polemic, and that it must be shown how this philosophy is a weapon of the practical class struggle. From such an application, our functionaries, who have had little or no training in philosophy, will have much more benefit than if they begin to read Lenin's book without the preliminary preparation required for a fruitful study.

#### COMMUNISTS MUST UNDERSTAND THE THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE

In this book Lenin has devoted the greatest part of his critical analysis to the exposition of the fundamental thesis of materialistic philosophy. There is an objective reality, independent of consciousness, existing prior to consciousness. This thesis is the *basis* of the philosophy of living active mankind, man living in reality, of the historico-social man, and thus the basis of the philosophy of the proletariat. In this work Lenin laid the greatest emphasis on dialectical materialism, because he had the definite object of combatting the falsification of Marxism by a "synthesis" of Marxism and the subjective theory of knowledge. In all of Lenin's life work—and this cannot be emphasized too strongly—he concentrated his energies, just as Marx and Engels did, in working out materialistic *dialectics*: here lay the *new* tasks; here the materialistic principle had to be applied to the knowledge of social-economic reality. Lenin's life work is the sole explanation and application of dialectics to society in the epoch of imperialism.

## FINAL REFUTATION OF IDEALISTIC BOURGEOIS PHILOSOPHY

"Dialectics is the theory of knowledge of Marxism", says Lenin in the extremely important remarks "On Dialectics," happily appended in the volume under review. The book "*Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*" must also not be regarded as an exhaustive explanation of the materialistic theory of knowledge, for from the Marxist standpoint this is merely dialectics in general. The theory of knowledge as such is a narrowly limited, arbitrary mental discipline, separated from the general concept of reality, one of the forms of expression of bourgeois ideology. If one evaluates the various tendencies of the theory of knowledge with the narrow measure of this bourgeois conception of thought, one will find Lenin's criticism of the various tendencies of the idealistic theory of knowledge one-sided, "superficial," "primitive," and "vulgar." This is how the official University philosophy will doubtlessly react to this work of Lenin. The liberating creative act of Lenin consists, however, in the very fact that it does away with the whole idealistic formulation of the question of the theory of knowledge.

In place of speculations on the theory of knowledge in general, which are condemned from the very outset to unfruitfulness, dialectics sets the task of pointing out *the unity in the laws of nature, society and thought*. This is a problem which Lenin did not undertake to solve in this book. In his remarks "On Dialectics", however, he places this as the *central problem* of materialistic dialectics.

Lenin was not acquainted with Engel's manuscripts on the dialectics of nature; but the complete agreement which we now know of in the concepts of both of these great dialecticians, since the publication of Engel's works, is therefore so much more important.

4. While the criticism of Machism and its variations must be prized in this way as a preparation to the development of dialectics itself, Lenin's work also contains a great number of *positive* contributions to dialectics. In the fight against agnosticism, which denies perception of the outside world, Lenin develops the attitude of dialectics to relativism, the attitude of the revolutionary proletariat to the problem of truth and knowledge. Communism, as practical materialism, rests on the conception that truth is independent of consciousness and perceptible through consciousness, and thus, acting on the basis of the knowledge of truth, we can affect the course of development. We have already mentioned what a decisive role these questions play in the class struggle, and how, appearing in the simplest forms, they become of decisive significance for the standpoint of the proletariat toward revolution. Let us emphasize once more—what Lenin develops in connection with the crisis in modern physics, applies as well for ideology generally. The crises arising

from the disintegration of the old firmly-established ideas and judgments, leads inevitably to relativism, to the disintegration of the concept of truth in general, if the path to dialectics is not taken. At present broad sections of the working class and of the intelligentsia, and urban petty-bourgeoisie are undergoing this crisis in a political connection.

#### DIALECTIC MATERIALISM A GUIDE TO THE PROLETARIAT

Lenin's analysis of objective truth can be used to explain the stand of communism toward the problem of truth beyond the framework of the questions dealt with by him. Unconsciously and unformed they are alive in the thought of every revolutionist. But as the fundamental conditions at the basis of the stand of the revolutionary proletariat are raised to the level of consciousness, a stabilization of thought and a methodological depth in general is attained. The unconscious dialectic lying at the basis of the activity of the revolutionary class, is thus transformed into conscious dialectical thought and action.

And what is this standpoint? Lenin, the soberest of all thinkers, proclaims the *power of knowledge* with feeling and exultation. He speaks of "*the living tree of living, prolific, true, powerful, omnipotent, objective and absolute human knowledge.*" This splendid picture contains the true philosophy of bolshevism, the philosophy of the revolutionary proletariat! It breathes the spirit of the positive, creative *building of socialism!*

# Bolivar

By KARL MARX

*EDITOR'S NOTE: The article on Bolivar which we reprint here was written by Marx for the New American Cyclopaedia. According to Marx's own testimony it was more than an ordinary encyclopedia article. In a letter to Engels he tells how he "fell out of the encyclopedia style" and how Dana (the editor of the New American Cyclopaedia) wrote back stating that the article manifested a partisan spirit which he could not accept without proof. Marx then sent him the necessary bibliographical references and the article was printed, apparently as Marx first wrote it. The article was written originally in English.*

**B**OLIVAR Y PONTE, SIMON, the "liberator" of Colombia, was born at Caracas, July 24, 1783, died at San Pedro, near Santa Maratha, December 17, 1830. He was the son of one of the *familias Mantuanas*, which, at the time of the Spanish supremacy, constituted the creole nobility in Venezuela. In compliance with the custom of wealthy Americans of those times, at the early age of fourteen he was sent to Europe. From Spain he passed to France, and resided for some years in Paris. In 1802 he married in Madrid, and returned to Venezuela, where his wife died suddenly of yellow fever. After this he visited Europe a second time, and was present at Napoleon's coronation as emperor, in 1804, and at his assumption of the iron crown of Lombardy, in 1805. In 1809 he returned home, and despite the importunities of Joseph Felix Ribas, his cousin, he declined to join in the revolution which broke out at Caracas, April 19, 1810; but, after the event, he accepted a mission to London to purchase arms and solicit the protection of the English government. Apparently well received by the marquis of Wellesley, then secretary for foreign affairs, he obtained nothing beyond the liberty to export arms for ready cash with the payment of heavy duties upon them. On his return from London, he again withdrew to private life, until, September, 1811, he was prevailed upon by General Miranda, then commander-in-chief of the insurgent land and sea forces, to accept the rank of lieutenant-colonel in the staff, and the command of Puerto Cabello, the strongest fortress in Venezuela. The Spanish prisoners of war, whom Miranda used regularly to send to Puerto Cabello, to be confined in the citadel, having succeeded in over-

coming their guards by surprise, and in seizing the citadel, Bolivar, although they were unarmed, while he had a numerous garrison and large magazine, embarked precipitately in the night, with eight of his officers, without giving notice to his own troops, arrived at daybreak at La Guayra, and retired to his estate at San Mateo. Becoming aware of their commander's flight, the garrison retired in good order from the place, which was immediately occupied by the Spaniards under Monteverde. This event turned the scale in favor of Spain, and obliged Miranda, on the authority of the congress, to sign the treaty of Vittoria, July 26, 1812, which restored Venezuela to the Spanish rule. On July 30 Miranda arrived at La Guayra, where he intended to embark on board an English vessel. On his visit to the commander of the place, Colonel Manuel Maria Casas, he met with a numerous company, among whom were Don Miguel Pena and Simon Bolivar, who persuaded him to stay, for one night at least, in Casas's house. At two o'clock in the morning, when Miranda was soundly sleeping, Casas, Pena, and Bolivar entered his room, with four armed soldiers, cautiously seized his sword and pistol, then awakened him, abruptly told him to rise and dress himself, put him into irons, and had him finally surrendered to Monteverde, who dispatched him to Cadiz, where, after some years' captivity, he died in irons. This act, committed on the pretext that Miranda had betrayed his country by the capitulation of Vittoria, procured for Bolivar Monteverde's peculiar favor, so that when he demanded his passport, Monteverde declared "Colonel Bolivar's request should be complied with, as a reward for his having served the King of Spain by delivering up Miranda." He was thus allowed to sail for Curacoa, where he spent six weeks, and proceeded, in company with his cousin Ribas, to the little republic of Carthagen. Previous to their arrival, a great number of soldiers, who had served under General Miranda, had fled to Carthagen. Ribas proposed to them to undertake an expedition against the Spaniards in Venezuela, and to accept Bolivar as their commander-in-chief. The former proposition they embraced eagerly; to the latter they demurred, but at last yielded, on the condition of Ribas being the second in command. Manuel Rodriguez Torrices, the president of the republic of Carthagen, added to the 300 soldiers thus enlisted under Bolivar, 500 men under the command of his cousin, Manuel Castillo. The expedition started in the beginning of January, 1813. Dissensions as to the supreme command breaking out between Bolivar and Castillo, the latter suddenly decamped with his grenadiers. Bolivar, on his part, proposed to follow Castillo's example, and return to Carthagen, but Ribas persuaded him

at length to pursue his course at least as far as Bogota, at that time the seat of the congress of New Granada.

They were well received, supported in every way, and were both made generals by the congress, and, after having divided their little army into two columns, they marched by different routes upon Caracas. The further they advanced, the stronger grew their resources; the cruel excesses of the Spaniards acting everywhere as the recruiting sergeants for the army of the independents. The power of resistance on the part of the Spaniards was broken, partly by the circumstance of three-quarters of their army being composed of natives, who bolted on every encounter to the opposite ranks, partly by the cowardice of such generals as Tiscar, Cagigal, and Fierro, who, on every occasion, deserted their own troops. Thus it happened that San Iago Marino, an ignorant youth, had contrived to dislodge the Spaniards from the provinces of Cumana and Barcelona, at the very time that Bolivar was advancing through the western provinces. The only serious resistance, on the part of the Spaniards, was directed against the column of Ribas, who, however, routed General Monteverde at Lostaguanes, and forced him to shut himself up in Puerto Cabello with the remainder of his troops. On hearing of Bolivar's approach, General Fierro, the governor of Caracas, sent deputies to propose a capitulation, which was concluded at Vittoria; but Fierro, struck by a sudden panic, secretly decamped in the night, leaving more than 1,500 Spaniards at the discretion of the enemy. Bolivar was now honored with a public triumph. Standing in a triumphal car, drawn by twelve young ladies, dressed in white, adorned with the national colors, and all selected from the first families of Caracas, Bolivar, bareheaded, in full uniform, and wielding a small baton in his hand, was, in about half an hour, dragged from the entrance of the city to his residence. Having proclaimed himself "dictator and liberator of the western provinces of Venezuela"—Marina had assumed the title of "dictator of the eastern provinces"—he created "the order of the liberator," established a choice corps of troops under the name of his body-guard, and surrounded himself with the show of a court. But, like most of his countrymen, he was averse to any prolonged exertion, and his dictatorship soon proved a military anarchy, leaving the most important affairs in the hands of favorites, who squandered the finances of the country, and then resorted to odious means in order to restore them. The new enthusiasm of the people was thus turned to dissatisfaction, and the scattered forces of the enemy were allowed to recover. While, in the beginning of August, 1813, Monteverde was shut up in the fortress of Puerto Cabello, and the

Spanish army reduced to the possession of a small strip of land in the northwestern part of Venezuela, three months later, in December, the liberator's prestige was gone, and Caracas itself threatened, by the sudden appearance in its neighborhood of the victorious Spaniards under Boves. To strengthen his tottering power, Bolivar assembled January 1, 1814, a junta of the most influential inhabitants of Caracas, declaring himself unwilling any longer to bear the burden of dictatorship. Hurtado Mendoza, on the other hand, argued, in a long oration, "the necessity of leaving the supreme power in the hands of General Bolivar, until the congress of New Granada could meet, and Venezuela be united under one government." This proposal was accepted, and the dictatorship was thus invested with some sort of legal sanction. The war with the Spaniards was, for some time, carried on in a series of small actions, with no decisive advantage to either of the contending parties. In June, 1814, Boves marched with his united forces from Calabozo on La Puerta, where the two dictators, Bolivar and Marino, had formed a junction, met them, and ordered an immediate attack. After some resistance, Bolivar fled toward Caracas, while Marino disappeared in the direction of Cumana. Puerto Cabello and Valencia fell into the hands of Boves, who then detached two columns (one of them under the command of Colonel Gonzales), by different roads, upon Caracas. Ribas tried in vain to oppose the advance of Gonzales. On the surrender of Caracas to Gonzales, July 17, 1814, Bolivar evacuated La Guayra, ordered the vessels lying in the harbor of that town to sail for Cumana, and retreated with the remainder of his troops upon Barcelona. After a defeat inflicted on the insurgents by Boves, August 8, 1814, at Anguita, Bolivar left his troops the same night secretly to hasten, through by-roads, to Cumana, where, despite the angry protests of Ribas, he at once embarked on board the Bianchi, together with Marino and some other officers. If Ribas, Paez, and other generals had followed the dictators in their flight, everything would have been lost. Treated by General Arismendi, on their arrival at Juan Griego, in the island of Margarita, as deserters, and ordered to depart, they sailed for Carupano, whence, meeting with a similar reception on the part of Colonel Bermudez, they steered toward Carthagena. There, to palliate their flight, they published a justificatory memoir in high-sounding phraseology. Having joined a plot for the overthrow of the government of Carthagena, Bolivar had to leave that little republic, and proceeded to Tunja, where the congress of the federalist republic of New Granada was sitting. At that time the province of Cundinamarca stood at the head of the independent provinces which



refused to adopt the Granadian federal compact, while Quito, Pasto, Santa Martha, and other provinces, still remained in the power of the Spaniards. Bolivar, who arrived at Tunja November 22, 1814, was created by the congress commander-in-chief of the federalist forces, and received the double mission of forcing the president of the province of Cudinamarca to acknowledge the authority of the congress, and then marching against Santa Martha, the only fortified seaport the Spaniards still retained in New Granada. The first point was easily carried, Bogota, the capital of the disaffected province, being a defenseless town. In spite of its capitulation, Bolivar allowed it to be sacked during forty-eight hours by his troops. At Santa Martha, the Spanish general Montavo, having a feeble garrison of less than 200 men, and a fortress in a miserable state of defense, had already bespoken a French vessel in order to secure his own flight, while the inhabitants of the town sent word to Bolivar that on his appearance they would open the gates and drive out the garrison. But instead of marching, as he was ordered by the congress, against the Spaniards at Santa Martha, he indulged his rancor against Castillo, the commander of Carthagena, took upon himself to lead his troops against the latter, which constituted an integral part of the federal republic. Beaten back, he encamped upon La Papa, a large hill, about gun-shot distance from Carthagena, and established a single small cannon as a battery against a place provided with about eighty guns. He afterward converted the siege into a blockade, which lasted till the beginning of May without any other result than that of reducing his army, by desertion and malady, from 2,400 men to about 700. Meanwhile a great Spanish expedition from Cadiz arrived, March 25, 1815, under General Morillo, at the island of Margarita, and had been able to throw powerful reinforcements into Santa Martha, and soon after to take Carthagena itself. Previously, however, Bolivar had embarked for Jamaica, May 10, 1815, with about a dozen of his officers, on an armed English brig. Having arrived at the place of refuge, he again published a proclamation, representing himself as the victim of some secret enemy or faction, and defending his flight before the approaching Spaniards as a resignation of command out of deference for the public peace. During his eight months' stay at Kingston, the generals he had left in Venezuela, and General Arismendi in the island of Margarita, staunchly held their ground against the Spanish arms. But Ribas, from whom Bolivar had derived his reputation, having been shot by the Spaniards after the capture of Maturin, there appeared in his stead another man on the stage, of still greater abilities, who, being a foreigner un-

able to play an independent part in the South American revolution, finally resolved to act under Bolivar. This was Louis Brion. To bring aid to the revolutionists, he had sailed from London for Carthagena with a corvette of 24 guns, equipped in great part at his own expense, with 14,000 stand of arms and a great quantity of military stores. Arriving too late to be useful in that quarter, he reembarked for Cayes, in Haiti, whither many emigrant patriots had repaired after the surrender of Carthagena. Bolivar, meanwhile, had also departed from Kingston to Port-au-Prince, where, on his promise of emancipating the slaves, Pétion, the president of Haiti, offered him large supplies for a new expedition against the Spaniards in Venezuela. At Cayes he met Brion and the other emigrants, and in a general meeting proposed himself as the chief of the new expedition, on the condition of uniting the civil and military power in his person until the assembling of a general congress. The majority accepting his terms, the expedition sailed April 16, 1816, with him as its commander and Brion as its admiral. At Margarita the former succeeded in winning over Arismendi, the commander of the island, in which he had reduced the Spaniards to the single spot of Pampatar.

# Capitalism and Agriculture in America

By V. I. LENIN

(Continued from last issue)

## 5. THE CAPITALIST CHARACTER OF FARMING

USUALLY capitalism in agriculture is judged by the size of farms or by the number and importance of the large farms. We have already partly considered such data and we shall continue to do so, but it must be said that such data are all indirect because the amount of land neither always nor directly indicates the real extent of agricultural *economy* or its capitalist character.

Data on hired labor are incomparably more demonstrative and convincing in this respect. The recent agricultural censuses, for instance, the Austrian of 1902 and the German of 1907, which we shall analyze on another occasion, have shown that the application of hired labor in modern agriculture, particularly in small scale farming, is by far more general than it is usually supposed. Nothing can so unconditionally and so decidedly refute the widespread petty bourgeois myth about the small scale "working" farm as these data.

Exhaustive material has been collected on the subject by American statisticians. The census questionnaires filled out by the farmers contained questions concerning employment of hired labor and the expenditures for this. In contradistinction to European statistics, for instance of the two countries just mentioned, the American statistics have not registered the number of hired workers each employer had at the given time, a thing which could easily have been done; the scientific value of such data would have been exceedingly great. But what is even still worse is the poorly elaborated and good for nothing material on this subject in the 1910 census which generally is far worse than that of 1900. In the 1910 census all farms have been classed according to their acreage (as was also done in 1900), but in contrast to the 1900 census, the 1910 census does not give any figures concerning the employment of hired labor in the various groups. We are thereby deprived of the possibility of comparing the small and large farms, according to the amount of land, and to see to what extent they employ hired labor. We have at our disposal only average figures by the states and divisions, i. e., data in which capitalist and non-capitalist farms are blended.

We shall analyze later on, separately, the more complete figures given in the 1900 census; now we shall present the 1919 figures. They cover the period 1899—1900.

Sections.	Percentage of farms employing labor.		Increased expenditure for hired labor.	Expenditure on hired labor per acre of cultivated land.
	1909	1899-1909 in %		
North	55.1	70.8	1.26	0.82
South	36.6	87.1	1.07	0.69
West	52.5	119.0	3.25	2.07
<u>Average</u>	<u>45.9</u>	<u>82.3</u>	<u>1.36</u>	<u>0.86</u>

From this table it becomes clear that agriculture in the North has the most capitalistic character (55.1% of farms employing hired labor); next comes the West (52.5%), while the South has the least (36.6%). These actual proportions between the populated and industrialised divisions, the division only in process of colonization and the share-cropping division are just as they should be. Figures on the percentage of farms employing hired labor are more suitable for exact comparison of the different divisions than figures on the expenditures on hired labor per acre of cultivated land. To compare the latter kind of figures it would require that the rate of wages in the various divisions be uniform. We have no data concerning wages in agriculture in the United States but it is very unlikely that there is a uniform level in those various districts so radically different from each other.

Thus, in the North and in the West, the two sections in which 2/3 of the entire cultivated land is concentrated and also 2/3 of the cattle, *more than one-half* of the farmers employ hired labor. This share is smaller in the South because semi-slavery in the form of share-cropping is still prominent there. There is no doubt that in America, as in all other countries, some of the poor farmers often hire themselves out for wages. It is to be regretted that American statistics, in contradistinction to German statistics of 1907 where considerable data have been accumulated and elaborated, give no information whatsoever on this subject. According to German figures, 1,940,867 owners of agricultural enterprises out of a total of 5,736,082 (here are included all large and small "land owners,") i. e., over 37%, making their living *chiefly* by selling their labor power. Of course the mass of these agricultural laborers and day workers belong to the group of small farmers.

Suppose that in America, where small farms (those possessing less than 3 acres) have as a general rule not been registered at all, only 10% of the farmers resort to the sale of their labor power. In that case the result will be that the farmers *directly* exploited by landlords and capitalists form over  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the total (24% of share-tenants, i. e., those exploited by the former slave-holders on a feudal or semi-feudal basis, and 10% exploited by capitalists, give a total of 34%). From the total number of farmers, therefore, only a *minority*, hardly more than *one-fifth or one-fourth*, do not employ hired labor and do not hire themselves out or enslave themselves.

Such is the real state of affairs in a country of "model and progressive" capitalism, in a country where millions of acres of land have been distributed gratis. The much talked of "working" non-capitalist small farmer is here also no more than a myth.

How great is the number of hired agricultural workers in America? And does this number increase or decrease in relation to the number of farmers and the whole rural population?

Unfortunately, American statistics do not give a direct reply to these important questions. Let us try to find approximate answers.

In the first place, an approximate answer may be found in the statistics of occupations (Vol. IV of the census). The Americans were "not quite successful" in the compilation of these statistics. They have been arranged so officially and with so much routine and absurdity that they do not even indicate the particular position occupied by the various people in their callings; thus they do not differentiate between the employers, the workers on home farms and the hired laborers. Instead of giving correct information as to these different groups they have satisfied themselves with the use of the current phrase which puts under one heading "farm workers" and farmers, their families and their hired workers. As is well known, it is not only in American statistics that complete chaos prevails on this question.

In the 1910 census, an attempt has been made to bring some order into this chaos and to separate at least some of the hired workers from those working on the home farms. After making a number of deductions, the statisticians sum up the number of people actually occupied with farming as 468,100 less than the number given (Vol. IV, p. 27). Further they find that the number of hired *women* was in 1900—220,048 and in 1910—337,522 (an increase of 53%). The number of hired men in 1910 was 2,299,444. If the percentage of hired men in agriculture in 1900 was the same as in 1910 then their number was 1,798,165. This would give us the following picture:

	1900	1910	plus in %
Total number of people occupied in farming . . .	10,381,765	12,099,825	16
Number of independent farmers . . . . .	5,674,875	5,981,522	5
Number of hired laborers	2,018,213	2,566,966	27

We see then that the relative increase in the number of hired laborers is more than five times as great as in the number of independent farmers (27%: 5%). The percentage of farmers in relation to the total number of the rural population has *decreased*, whereas the percentage of hired laborers has *increased*. The number of independent farmers has decreased in relation to the rest of the rural population; the number of dependent and exploited has increased.

The number of hired agricultural laborers in Germany in 1907 was 4½ million out of a total of 15 million of those working on home farms and for wages. This is 30% hired laborers. In America, according to approximate figures, they were 2½ out of 12 millions, i. e. 21%. It is possible that the presence of free land which is being granted gratis and the enormous percentage of share-tenants tend to hold down the percentage of hired laborers in America.

Secondly, an approximate answer may be obtained from the figures given on expenditures made for hired labor in the years 1899 and 1909. The number of industrial wage workers in the course of that period increased from 4,700,000 to 6,600,000, i. e. 40%; their wages rose from \$2,008,000 to \$3,427,000, i. e. 70%. (It must be borne in mind that the increased cost of living reduced this nominal wage increase to naught.)

Judging by these figures, we may surmise that the increased expenditure of 82% for hired labor in agriculture has a corresponding increase of about 48% in the number of hired laborers. Applying these suppositions to the three main sections we get the following results:

INCREASE IN PERCENT IN THE DECADE OF 1900—1910			
Sections	Rural Population	Indep. farmers	Hired farmers
North . . . . .	3.9%	0.6%	40%
South . . . . .	14.8%	18.2%	15%
West . . . . .	49.7%	53.7%	66%
.....			
Average . . . . .	11.2%	10.9%	48%

These figures show us that the increase in the number of independent farmers, in the country as a whole, lags behind the growth

of the whole rural population while the number of hired laborers runs ahead. In other words: the relative number of independent farmers is falling while the relative number of hire laborers is increasing.

It should be noted that the enormous discrepancy between the increase of 27% in the first calculation and that of 48% in the second calculation is quite possible, because in the first instance only *professional* hired laborers are dealt with while in the second instance *all casual* employment of hired labor power is included. The episodic employment of hired labor in agriculture is very significant and it is therefore always necessary not to content oneself with the mere classification of permanent and temporary workers; the total expenditure for hired labor must be reckoned with as far as possible.

In either event, both calculations conclusively demonstrate that the *growth* of capitalism in agriculture in America and the *growth* of the application of hired labor in its agriculture is more rapid than the growth of the whole rural population and the number of independent farmers.

*(Continued in next issue)*

# BOOKS



**SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS**, by J. O. Hertzler. 1929. The McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York City.

Nothing shows more clearly the low estate to which science has fallen in its transformation into bourgeois apologetics than the current condition of the so-called science of sociology. An orthodox work on sociology must make a really amusing impression upon the uninitiated reader. Such oceans of words, such high-sounding terminology, such imposing scientific precision in definition and formulation, such learned controversies, such refined reasonings—all dealing with “society.” But what sort of “society”? Perhaps, the everyday commonplace human society in which real men work and live? Certainly not! No breath of the sullied atmosphere of reality is permitted to contaminate the pure academic vistas of the social science texts. The society with which these learned tomes deal is the society whose existence is limited to these tomes themselves. It is the artificial construction of sociology made to suit its pre-suppositions, its definitions, its conclusions.

Herein lies the key to the inner nature of modern sociology. For we must not presume that the sociologists have created an imaginary society because they are “idealists,” visionaries, mystics, or what not. On the contrary, they are usually very practical gentlemen. There is method in their madness. They have created their constructed society—identified, of course, with the real society—because it yields them certain conclusions which they immediately apply to real society, conclusions very conveniently adapted to explain away, justify and maintain the capitalist system and the bourgeois class domination. This is the secret of the sometimes mysterious methodology of modern sociology.

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Professor Hertzler's book, *SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS*, is in many respects a superior work, from its own viewpoint it is an extremely competent production. It is a concise, carefully organized if dully written summary of what bourgeois sociology has to say on the matter of institutions. But there is considerable unevenness in the work. The chapters on the “*Relations of Institutions and Environments*,” “*The Institution and the Individual*,” etc., contain a number of suggestive ideas and show a hint of realism in their approach to the problem. On the other hand, the early chapters dealing with the nature, origin, causes and functions of institutions are shallow and eclectic to a degree, while the concluding chapters on “*Change and Institutions*” and “*The Future of Institutions*” are very masterpieces of empty and superficial trivialities imposingly arrayed.

At no point is essential contact made with reality. Professor Hertzler does not find it necessary even to refer to the role of technology and the forces of production, to the form of production and the economic relations, to the absolutely fundamental fact for all social science: *the class differentiation of society*. In spite of a promising sign here and there the author cannot break through the iron bonds of his class ideology; in its method, form and content, the work remains bourgeois apologetics.



It is characteristic that the only occasion upon which Professor Hertzler permits himself to break through the dull and plodding objectivity of his style is his somewhat unrestrained declaration of the eternal character of the State and of private property, in fact of all modern capitalist institutions. "The oft-found notion of the lack of political system among primitives is sheer fiction" (p. 78)—"The classical dogma of universal primitive communism is an absurdity" (p. 85)—"Modern anthropology shows that primitive peoples . . . possess in some form every basic institution of civilized society. . . The evidences, tho inaduate, of the social life of the later prehistoric peoples, especially the Cromagnons and the Neolithic races, point to the same conclusions" (pp. 110-111). But why the note of querulousness, of anxiety? Is not the sudden dropping of the familiar pose of high "scientific" calm when such "delicate" matters are touched upon rather symptomatic of the hidden "complex," of the underlying motivation of bourgeois sociology?

\* \* \* \*

Social institutions are based upon social relations; in fact they are *established complexes of social relations*. The problem therefore reduces itself to the genesis of social relations and the forms of their inner self-organization. The main outlines for the solution of this question were laid down already seventy years ago in classical form by Marx:

"In the social production which men carry on they enter upon certain necessary relations independent of their will; these relations of production correspond to a definite stage in the development of the forces of production. The entirety of these relations of production constitute the economic structure of society—the real foundation on which rise legal and political superstructures and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production in material life determines the general character of the social, political and spiritual processes of life."

The astonishing fertility of this master concept is evidenced not only by the achievements of the Marxian writers themselves but also by the works of a number of non-Marxian sociologists and historians (Veblen, Parrington, Beard) whose outstanding success is to be traced to the coincidence—partial and often merely superficial—of their methods with the method of historic materialism. But Professor Hertzler's work is innocent of any such contamination and therefore it remains from beginning to end mere bourgeois apologetics.

—Apex

RELIGION IN SOVIET RUSSIA, by W. C. Emhardt. 1929. Morehouse Publishing Co., Milwaukee, Wis.

This is an absurd book.

It pretends to discuss "Religion in Soviet Russia" but it really deals only with some of the more obvious phases of the disintegration of the Russian Orthodox Church under the impetus of the Revolution—and it deals with them from the viewpoint of the threadbare legalisms of canon law. The author's outlook is so narrowly sectarian that his hostility extends even to the pious activities of the Baptists and the Roman Catholics. The peculiar traditional solidarity between the Anglican-Episcopalians (Mr. Emhardt is an Episcopalian) and the Greek Church is amusingly displayed at every turn.

The style of this book is crabbed to the point of unintelligibility. In structure it is a confused mass—whole arguments, sections, and even docu-

ments are thrown together without system and repeated without reason. The scholarship is execrable. The book is full of the most ridiculous errors in quotation, translation and reference. It is often hard to believe that the book was written by a literate person.

Yet there is some reward in reading these dull and plodding pages. In the first place the dirty counter-revolutionary part played by the Russian Orthodox clergy is told in their own words. It makes you regret that the whole filthy crew weren't somehow done away with in the early days of the Revolution. In the second place, this book gives you a glimpse into a type of mind (not peculiarly the author's but common to all religious institutionalists) that is really revealing in its grubbing superstition and murky ignorance. It is a worth-while cultural study if you have a strong intellectual stomach.

—Apex.

## How Lenin Should Not Be Translated

In the Tenth Anniversary number of the *Communist International* we find in Comrade E. Yaroslavsky's article the following Lenin quotation:

"The general course of the Russian Revolution after October and the sequences of events in Moscow in the December days have strikingly confirmed one of the most profound principles of Marx: The revolution goes ahead of *that* which the strong concentrated counter-revolution *is able to create*, i. e., forces the enemy to recourse to constantly *diminishing* means of defence and creates therefore constantly *increasing* means of attack" (p. 321; emphasis ours).

A very "profound" principle, perhaps, but it sounds like "profane" nonsense. Naturally we compared the above quotation with the German text of the same Tenth Anniversary number of the *Communist International*. We found quite another version:

"Sowohl der allgemeine Verlauf der russischen Revolution nach dem Oktober als auch die Folgerichtigkeit der Ereignisse in den Dezembertagen bestaetigen in wunderbarer Weise einen der tiefsten Sactze van Marx: Die Revolution schreitet dadurch vorwaerts, dass sie eine geschlossene, starke Konterrevolution *schaftz*, d.h. den Feind zu den *scharfsten Mitteln der Verteidigung* Zufucht zu nehmen, und arbeitet dadurch immer schaeferere Mittel *des Angriffes* heraus" (emphasis ours).

Accurately translated into English this becomes:

"The general course of the Russian Revolution after October as well as the sequence of events in the December days confirmed in the most remarkable way one of the most profound statements of Marx: The revolution advances thru the fact that *it creates* a strong consolidated counter-revolution, i.e., it compells the enemy to resort to the *sharpest means of defence*, and therefore develops *ever sharper means of attack*." (emphasis ours).

This formulation is intelligible and is dialectically formulated. But such a "profound" translation as given in the English edition amounts to a direct falsification because the meaning that emerges—in so far as it has any meaning—is precisely the reverse of the meaning of the original. It seems that the editorial board of the *Communist International* should see to it that at least the Marx and Lenin quotations in its English edition are translated correctly. We believe that the Lenin Institute would be interested in adding this curious translation to its collection of Marxian "Believe It or Not." . . .

—P. S.



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