

THE COMMUNIST

Vol. X

FEBRUARY, 1931

No. 2



CONTENTS

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- Social Demagogy
Speechmaking in London—Mass Action in India
Calverton's Fascism . . . *William Z. Foster*
- The Significance of the Bank Failures
By *Harry Gannes*
- The Revolutionary Movement in Mexico
- Our Party Organization *R. Baker*
- American Imperialism Enslaves Liberia
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CONTENTS

EDITORIALS

SOCIAL DEMAGOGY	99
SPEECHMAKING IN LONDON—MASS ACTION IN INDIA	104
CALVERTON'S FASCISM	107
<i>By WILLIAM Z. FOSTER</i>	
THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE BANK FAILURES ...	112
<i>By HARRY GANNES</i>	
THE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT IN MEXICO	119
OUR PARTY ORGANIZATION	129
<i>By R. BAKER</i>	
AMERICAN IMPERIALISM ENSLAVES LIBERIA..	133
<i>By G. PADMORE</i>	
THE TASK OF OUR PARTY IN AGRARIAN WORK	147
<i>By H. PURO</i>	
RESOLUTION ON THE NEGRO QUESTION IN THE UNITED STATES	153
SOVIETS IN CHINA	168
<i>By L. MAGYAR</i>	
THE COLLAPSE OF THE THEORY OF ORGAN- IZED CAPITALISM	179
<i>By SAM DON</i>	
BOOK REVIEWS	185

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Social Demagogy

THE capitalist system finds itself in a most serious economic crisis, which is gradually producing fundamental political changes. The most important of these political changes is the undermining in the minds of the workers of their seemingly unbounded confidence in the powers of capitalism. This undermining is the process of liquidation of capitalist illusions.

This process is so serious that it provokes even the staunchest apologists of capitalism as, for instance, the Rockefeller sky pilot retainer, Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick, into the admission that capitalism is on trial, and that in this trial Communism looms as the only possible alternative.

The present economic crisis of capitalism is not a mere cyclical crisis. The victims of this crisis, the millions of unemployed and starving workers, cannot be helped over their misery by emphasis on the temporary character of the crisis. The present economic crisis falls in a period of the general crisis of capitalism. It falls in a period in which the inner contradictions of capitalism have reached a point where the whole capitalist system comes into irreconcilable opposition to the needs of society. *It falls in the period of decaying capitalism.*

Capitalism has caused a modern industrial development producing a most efficient and technically wonderful apparatus of production. The apparatus is technically able to supply all necessities of life abundantly to every member of society, without great expenditure of labor on the part of society. Yet, in the face of this efficient and wonderful apparatus for production, we have actual starvation among millions of workers. The productive apparatus is largely idle. The producing part of society, the workers, are without work and, therefore, without food. There are the necessary tools and machines. There is the necessary raw material. There is the necessary labor. Yet the machines rust. The raw material and the food rots. And the labor starves.

We had a most profuse harvest in many sections of the world. Quantities of grain were stacked up in excess of the needs of the masses. There is too much grain, too much wheat; that should spell abundance of bread for the masses. Yet, in the face of this surplus of bread, the masses are confronted with actual starvation. Here is an abundance of grain. Here are the mills to produce flour. Here is labor to bake bread. Yet the farmers who produced the grain starve because they cannot sell it at a price covering the cost of

production; and the masses of workers starve because they cannot buy it to satisfy their hunger.

Such conditions change capitalism from a social system into a social curse. As long as capitalism was on the upward path of development, its social advantages dulled the pain caused by the social ills accompanying it. But now it has reached a point in its development where it can no longer perform a social service. The only service it could perform is the one it will never voluntarily perform, that of disappearing.

Quantity has changed into quality. The accumulated ills of capitalism have now turned capitalism itself into a social disease. The only cure for this disease is the removal of every particle of it from the body of society. There is no other remedy. And the only doctor that can perform the cure is the revolutionary proletariat. And the only instrument with which the cure can be effected is the Proletarian Revolution. That is why capitalism today cannot meet the problem of unemployment. Any possible serious remedy cuts into the flesh of capitalism itself and violates the inviolable command of the capitalist god: "Thou shalt make profit!" *Only the fighting power of the working class can force capitalism temporarily into such violations.*

The greatest problem, therefore, that capitalism sees today, is not the problem of how to feed the hungry masses with bread but how to revive and maintain in these hungry masses their capitalist illusions. Only such illusions will prevent workers from fighting. Make the workers believe that capitalism can and will relieve their misery, and they will refrain from fighting for relief. That is the conception of the capitalists. This conception becomes a policy. And the methods with which they put this policy into effect is social demagogy. Consequently, social demagogy has lately spread into a malignant growth. Some of this social demagogy is rather crude and vulgar. But some is subtle and ingenious.

The recent Congressional action for the "relief of unemployment" belongs to the class of crude social demagogy. It has ever been one of the functions of Congress to prepare, and to fill with all kinds of appropriations, a voluminous pork barrel. Out of this pork barrel the local congressmen and the U. S. senators feed and maintain their political machines. Towns and cities get federal structures out of the barrel; political friends get construction contracts out of it; and political henchmen get appointments out of it for inspectorships and the like. Now, because of the unemployment problem, Congress struck the idea of filling the barrel to the tune of \$116,000,000, and of labeling it "Unemployment

Relief." The hungry masses of unemployed are now expected to rejoice at this ingenuity.

Another rather crude piece of social demagogy is the unemployment relief administered by special mayors', governors' and presidential committees. Some of these committees try to insult the unemployed and moneyless masses with a "Buy Now" campaign. Others organize systematic deductions from the wages of the workers as contributions to unemployment relief. For this relief capitalism as a whole, and the local politicians in particular, take credit. The "relief" is nothing but charity; the conditions under which this charity is administered are most degrading to the unemployed; and the money that pays for this charity is taken out of the pockets of the workers.

Almost all of these committees are propagating the stagger system. This is a piece of more subtle social demagogy. It does not appear at first sight that the stagger system universally applied would put the working class on the basis of recipients of inadequate unemployment relief. The workers would receive about two, and at the very most, three days' wages per week. That would be just enough to emphasize their starvation conditions. The total amount of wages paid to the whole working class would not increase a cent but, on the contrary, would be decreased systematically by means of wage reductions and intensified speed up. The buying power of the whole working class would not increase one iota. The standard of living of the whole working class, on the other hand, would be cut in half, if not worse.

A crude attempt at social demagogy was made the other day by the new secretary of labor. Over the radio Mr. Doak praised President Hoover for having prevented wage cuts in America during the present crisis. The very bulletins of the Department of Labor testify against him and accuse the chief of the department of either willful perversion of the truth, or of bottomless ignorance. These bulletins report rapidly mounting numbers of wage cuts in all industries (including Mr. Doak's own sphere, the railroads).

Compared with Mr. Doak's radio address, Mr. Hoover's telephoned speech to the assembled auto manufacturers was a manifestation less of social demagogy than of capitalist arrogance. Hoover told these auto manufacturers that their business last year does not justify pessimism on their part. It is true that hundreds of thousands of auto workers are jobless and hungry. It is undeniable that wage cuts in all branches of the auto industry have been enforced up to 50 per cent. It is established even in Mr. Hoover's own report on *Recent Economic Changes* that the auto industry

has carried through the most effective rationalization and speed up, eliminating permanently a high percentage of workers from the industry. It is true that as a result of this, hundreds of thousands of auto workers despondently walk the streets of the auto manufacturing centers, wondering wherefrom and when their much needed next meal may come. But in spite of all that, the chief engineer of American capital is justified in using the occasion of a grand feast of the auto manufacturers to tell them: "Don't worry about these despondent workers. Look at your profits, and you will see that they are not at all bad. Though he starves the working masses, the god of capitalism grants golden profits to his chosen children, the capitalists. Praise to HIM!"

The field of a most subtle piece of social demagogy is that of working hours. Needless to say, the fascists and social-fascists in the American Federation of Labor are the most systematic bearers of this demagogy.

American industry is technically very highly developed. The socially necessary labor to keep this apparatus of production going surely does not exceed four hours per worker per day. The rest of the working hours of the American workers produce profit for the bosses. The rest is pure and simple exploitation. The workers begin to sense this. They face the continued speed up, accompanied by wage cuts and followed by unemployment. They see the taskmasters of capital spur them to greater and greater speed. On one hand they see that if, unprotected by a fighting, revolutionary union, they resist the speed up, they are fired. On the other hand, they also see that the products amassed through the ever-increasing speed of production come back at them as overproduction, and the result for them is the same: they are fired. Out of this dilemma they see the way through drastic reductions of working hours. The workers feel the necessity of this reduction. The workers want it.

Basing themselves on this desire of the masses, the social-fascist traitors of the American Federation of Labor bureaucracy begin to operate with social demagogic slogans about the six- and five-hour day and five-day week. But the existing working hours in American industry rise against them and accuse them of hypocrisy. Hardly a million workers in America enjoy the eight-hour day. In the basic industries the prevailing working hours are 10 and 12 per day. Every attempt of the workers to fight for a reduction of hours is betrayed by the A. F. of L. bureaucrats if possible. Every propaganda for a fighting policy in the unions to enforce a reduction of hours is denounced as Bolshevism by these fascists. Every strike of the workers is, if possible, betrayed by them. Yet, these

fascists operate with slogans of the six- and the five-hour day.

The bureaucrats of the Metal Trades Department of the American Federation of Labor play with the five-hour day slogan to indicate their readiness to betray the workers into the stagger system.

The need of the hour is a fighting organization for the workers. The program for these necessary struggles of the workers must be a serious reduction of the actual working hours without a reduction of wages. Against this program of struggle of the workers, the fascists and social-fascists in the A. F. of L. leadership follow a program of struggle for the bosses. They attempt to cover up this treachery with meaningless paper slogans of a five- and six-hour day.

The mobilization of the working class for a struggle to reduce hours has great revolutionary potentialities. In the struggle for reduction of working hours the workers will learn the extent of the exploitation they are subjected to. They will learn that the industrial development in America permits the production of the necessities of life for society in three or four hours' labor per day. They will learn that the extent of unpaid labor which they perform for the American bosses is tremendous. And finally they will learn that the real benefit from this highly developed and highly organized machinery of production can only be gotten by the workers if the capitalist class is deprived of its private control over this machinery and is deprived of the chance to exploit the masses.

All of the social demagoguery now employed by the capitalists and their henchmen has the primary object of blinding the working masses to the very experiences arising out of their misery caused by capitalism.

Speechmaking in London—Mass Action in India

THE Indian Round Table Conference auspiciously opened in London with the unanimous demand of the Indian "delegates" for dominion status. At the moment of writing (January 5) it has resolved itself into a wrangle between the various groups of the same "delegates" for favors from British imperialism. The Moslems and the Sikhs, the Brahmin Hindus and the untouchables, the Anglo-Indians and the British residents in India, the Protestants and the Catholics, all are distrustful of one another, all clamor for special rights and privileges.

Both of these phases of the Conference seem to serve well the interests of its sponsors, the British imperialists. The first phase was to show to India and to the world at large that the "delegates" appointed by the British Viceroy to "represent" the Indian people were not so wicked a lot as their adversaries depicted them to be, that they were sincere supporters of self-government for India. The second phase was to prove that the British government, "willing" as it is to concede the demand, cannot possibly do so in the face of the unsurmountable conflict of interests between the various Indian communities.

Were the objects of the Conference limited to these performances, it would be of no great value to the British imperialists. Whatever mock battles among the Indian reactionaries might be staged by the British in London, they cannot stop or even retard the revolutionary struggle in India, for the simple reason that the communal disease (mock battles) which is eating into the body of the native exploiting classes does not appreciably affect the Indian toiling masses. Whatever agreement is reached at the Conference, the British imperialists know only too well that their London guests will be unable to deliver the goods when they return to India. These delegates represent, if anybody at all, only a thin upper stratum of Indian feudal princes, landowners, and big capitalists, who, concessions or no concessions, are and will always remain the allies of British rule in India. The importance of the Conference to the British imperialists lies in another direction. Through it they hope to influence the Indian bourgeoisie of the National Congress brand, not directly represented in London. And in this they can already register a certain amount of success.

The National Congress at first took the position of hostile neu-

trality to the Conference. This means that while the Congress was opposed to it, it nevertheless considerably weakened its activities and was marking time, awaiting the results of the Conference. But in a revolutionary situation to mark time means to retreat. That the National Congress is now actually retreating is evidenced by the remarkable change in the attitude of the British press, which only recently condemned it (although quite undeservedly) as a revolutionary organization. Note for instance, the following from the *London Times* of December 16:

"It is quite evident that the Congress moderates are alive to the Indian situation, and that behind the cynical expressions of incredulity in British good faith contained in their press, there exists an increasing element of political reasonableness." It even blames the government for not taking advantage of this change. "To some government officials," proceeds the correspondent, "the Congress is anathema and everything inside its ranks must be excoriated, even the leaven of reasonableness that some of its very intelligent members are beginning to display." Now comes the news that the president of the National Congress has sent a message from prison asking that all Congress demonstrations in Bombay be abandoned for the present because they tend toward violence. If all this means anything at all, it means that the bourgeois nationalists, frightened by the growing acuteness of the revolutionary situation and lured by the discussions in London, are on their way to a compromise with the British imperialists and to the complete betrayal of the struggle for national liberation.

While thus seeing the London Conference in its proper perspective, it is infinitely more important to remember that not speechmaking in London, but action in India will decide the issue between British imperialism and the Indian people. And in India both sides act. The forces of the British "Labor" government are shooting down demonstrators and energetically filling the prisons with tens of thousands of revolutionary workers, students and peasants. The Indian masses, meanwhile, are increasing their revolutionary activities, spreading peasant revolts in the villages, and now preparing for a general strike in the cities. The decision of the All-Indian Trade Union Congress to call a general strike beginning on the railways, and the demands of the strike, which include the establishment of a Workers' and Peasants' Republic, are of the greatest moment to the revolutionary struggle, and could only be the result of the increased influence of the Indian Communists among the proletarian masses and in the trade unions.

Never has the objective situation in the country been so favorable

for decisive revolutionary action as at present. With a ruined peasantry, unable to dispose of its produce, with growing unemployment in the cities, with the whole economy of the country deteriorating at a monstrous pace, with the drifting of the national bourgeoisie more and more to a compromise with imperialism, the revolutionary temper of the masses is showing itself in increasing conflicts which are sweeping the length and breadth of the Indian continent, now reaching even the Burman jungles. The general strike, which will first of all tie up communication, will facilitate the transformation of the sporadic peasant revolts into a peasant war and will supply them with the much needed proletarian leadership in the most tangible form.

Under the present conditions the successful realization of the general strike cannot but be a prelude to real revolution in India. But exactly because of this inevitable sequence, all the forces of counter-revolution, including the national bourgeoisie, will strain every effort to resist the general strike. It is the "left" bourgeois nationalists of the young Nehru type who are particularly dangerous in this situation. Under the pressure of the masses they may even agree in words to the general strike, not only to hinder in actual organization and to stab it in the back once it has begun, just as they did in the Bombay railway strike last February. If the decision for the general strike is to be carried into practice, the first task of the revolutionary proletarian leadership is to purge the Indian trade unions of the influence of these phrase-mongers and demagogues. It is in this struggle against the most dangerous, because the least discernible, enemies of the Indian masses, that the Indian Communist Party will strengthen itself and become the true independent leader of the Indian revolution. And the leadership of the Communist Party is the main prerequisite for the successful transformation of the general strike into an armed uprising against British domination and the native exploiters.

Calverton's Fascism

A reply to V. F. Calverton's article, "Democracy vs. Dictatorship" in the current Modern Quarterly

By WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

YOU request that I express my opinion on your article in the present number of the *Modern Quarterly*, which is entitled "Democracy vs. Dictatorship." I consider the article an important one, hence I am submitting my answer through the columns of the *Communist*.

The article in question (likewise your debate with Mumford) bristles with errors, contradictions, and confusion. It is a strange medley of fascist, social-fascist and communist conceptions. Nevertheless, through it runs a pretty definite line. The article is in flat contradiction to the whole body of Marxian principles. It is an essay in fascism, not communism.

I cannot here undertake to combat all the individual mistakes of your article. The most I shall do is to indicate its main trend, its essentially fascist character.

The elementary fascist line of your article is manifest both in your analysis and your conclusions. It follows the familiar fascist theses that (1) the basic weakness of present-day society is not to be found in the fundamental economic contradiction of the capitalist system but in the bourgeois democracy which, with its parliamentarism, individualism, and "civil liberties," permits the existence of the anti-capitalist labor movement and the relative free play of the class struggle, and (2) that the solution of the capitalist crisis is to be found in the establishment of the fascist dictatorship.

The Marxian analysis, on the other hand, correctly points out that the developing capitalist crisis originates in the basic and ineradicable contradiction between the capitalist class monopolizing the means of production and the toiling masses robbed of all means of production, and between the more rapidly expanding capitalist production and the more slowly expanding capitalist markets. This contradiction is developed because the workers, robbed of their surplus value by the capitalists, are denied all opportunities to consume the mountains of commodities which they produce. This results in capitalist "over-production," with periodic economic crises, mass unemployment and starvation, imperialist wars, and growing class struggle. It must finally culminate in the proletarian revolution. This revolution will

abolish the whole capitalist system of private ownership and production for private property and will substitute therefor a system of social ownership and production for social use, thereby liquidating, with the abolition of exploitation, the present contradiction between production and consumption, and at the same time liquidating the class divisions out of which this economic contradiction arises.

But the fascists, being capitalists, will, of course, hear nothing of all this fatal analysis and revolutionary program. The worst that they find wrong with the capitalist system are certain remediable internal maladjustments. Viewing the problem from their intensely nationalistic standpoint, they see the solution of the capitalist crisis in equipping better their particular country for more effective participation in the imperialist struggle for control of the world market. For them to accomplish this they seek to intensify the exploitation of the workers and poor farmers. And to do this it is necessary to smash the labor movement and to strengthen capitalism at its "weakest" spot by abolishing the so-called democracy and setting up in its stead a despotic fascist dictatorship.

Your article dovetails with these elementary fascist conclusions. You do not challenge the economics of capitalism, but accept them. You do not raise the true issue of communism vs. capitalism, but the false issue of dictatorship vs. democracy. Thus, in substance, like the fascists, you deny the validity of the class struggle and blur it over. According to your article, what is wrong is not capitalism as such, but democracy. Your arguments echo the views of Mussolini and Hitler; they are poles apart from those of Marx and Lenin. If persisted in and logically followed up, such views would carry you definitely into the camp of fascism.

You raise the question of dictatorship on principle, as though it were the solution of capitalism's ills. Similarly, you condemn democracy on principle. You say, "Only a dictatorship can so integrate the political and economic factors, and effect the centralization of control, which are necessary to the maintenance of modern industrial life." And further: "The technological efficiency demanded by modern industry can never be adequately attained under democratic controls."

This is fascist. It is anti-communist and flatly contradictory to the Marxian conception. It is a theory of permanent capitalist dictatorship. But communist theory and practice are for the liquidation not only of the capitalist dictatorship by revolution but also of the proletarian dictatorship by the "withering away" of the state after the decisive defeat of the bourgeoisie. Lenin says (*State and Revolution*): "Only in communist society, when the resistance of the

capitalists has been finally broken, when the capitalists have disappeared, when there are no longer any classes—*only then* does the state disappear *and one can speak of freedom*. Only then will be possible and will be realized a really full democracy, a democracy without any exceptions.”

Contrary to your theses, it is only under proletarian democratic controls that modern industry can be adequately organized for modern life. This is exemplified by the living experience in the Soviet Union, where both the integration of industry and democratic controls, which are inextricably bound up with each other, are on an indisputably higher plane than in any other country. Social ownership inevitably involves social control. It is no contradiction that the country that is able to produce the Five-Year Plan has incomparably more genuine democracy than any other land in the world.

You are therefore quite wrong in so gleefully, and in typical fascist fashion, singing the requiem of democracy. While it is true that capitalist “democracy” (which is only a disguised dictatorship) is being discarded by the employers with the development of the world crisis of their system and the sharpening of the class struggle, this does not by any means indicate, as you say, that “the modern world is fast ridding itself of every vestige of democracy.” On the contrary, it is only with the development of the proletarian revolution that real democracy is being born. The *Program of the Communist International* says: “The Soviet form of state, being the highest form of democracy, namely, proletarian democracy, is the very opposite of bourgeois democracy, which is bourgeois dictatorship in a masked form.” You make a basic error in identifying democracy in principle with petty industry and capitalist competition, and in concluding that the rise of great industry and mass production of necessity requires dictatorship and autocracy. This theory is as wrong as your absurd argument that the class struggle only arises with the development of mass production and the reduction of the workers to “robots.” We are not, as you argue, going into “an era of dictatorships” as “the inevitable expression of twentieth century industrial and social life.” But what we are entering is a period of proletarian revolution which will smash the capitalist dictatorships and begin a new epoch of democracy and social advance.

You conceive of the proletarian dictatorship in the vulgar sense of the capitalists. The proletarian dictatorship means democracy within the ranks of the working class, and the suppression of the class enemies of the workers. It results, with the final defeat of the world bourgeoisie, in the establishment of an all-embracing democracy.

The essentially fascist character of your article comes out most

clearly in your quite definite acceptance of fascism as having solved the capitalist crisis in Italy. For one calling himself a Communist, you make the following astounding statement:

“To summarize, then, it is the very structure of modern society, with its disorganized production and division of classes, that makes dictatorship inevitable as the next step in the historic process. The dictatorships can take on one of two characters: Communist or Fascist—oppose private property and establish the dictatorship of the proletariat, or defend private property and establish the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. *In either case industry can be organized into a scientific unit, the present dissipation of economic energy be saved, and the friction of democratic struggle be destroyed.*” (Emphasis mine.—W. Z. F.)

To argue against this statement means to argue against fascism, against the fascist theory that through its dictatorship the ills of capitalism can be cured. Your theory here is the social-fascist conception of organized capitalism, the notion that it is possible, within the framework of the capitalist system, to overcome the basic contradictions of that system. The principal variation in your article is that, despite your communist declarations, you give this theory a more open and frankly fascist character than do the typical social-fascists.

That by the foregoing summary conclusion you actually imply that fascism can overcome capitalism's crisis, fixing the system a bit—in other words, that the proletarian revolution has no economic foundation—you make clear by your systematic lumping together of what is going on in the Soviet Union and fascist Italy. For you, as far as the economics are concerned, both are doing the same thing—eliminating the devastating contradiction between production and distribution. You say:

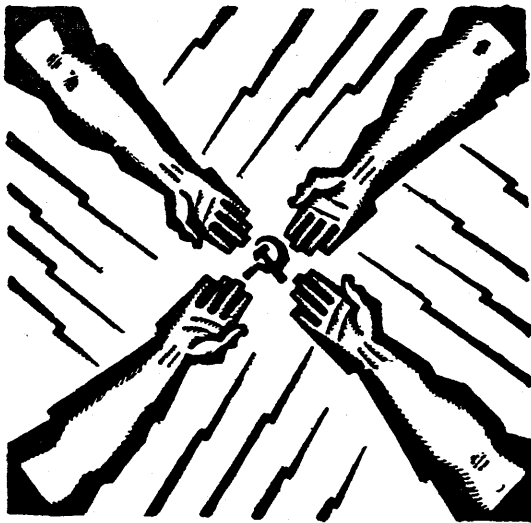
“While perfect efficiency of this kind could be best achieved by the management of technologists, social controls being as they are the best that can be done is what is being done in both Soviet Russia and Italy today, where technologists are employed by the state to carry out the plans of organization.”

So the proletarian revolution means nothing basic economically. Its new economic-political-social organism is not especially necessary. The problem economically (and thus politically) for capitalism is simply to get the technologists to work and fix up the present system, to organize capitalism. In your debate with Mumford you argue for many long pages, and often very incorrectly, for the necessity of revolution, not reform. But in the face of the fascist conclusions in your article, to which you attach the very greatest importance, all your contentions against Mumford fall to the

ground. They only serve as so many radical phrases to obscure the basically fascist content of your presentation.

So much for the article in question. Now may I say a few words on your group? I do not think it is a healthy one. The social-fascist and liberal elements whom you gathered together to debate Marxism in the columns of the *Modern Quarterly* in no sense represent the revolutionary foment now going on among the intellectuals. They are the defenders of revisionism, of capitalism. They are enemies of the revolution.

That there is a real foment among the intellectuals cannot be denied. Formerly, American intellectuals almost unanimously found an easy berth with capitalism and they were its ardent champions. When they came from the schools in great flocks they became ready parts of the vast imperialist machine. But now it becomes different. The economic crisis bears down upon the intellectuals, in school as well as outside. Many have to face even the bitterness of unemployment. So a foment develops among them. Some of this grows in a revolutionary direction. Its organization and cultivation is important. But you cannot do this, cannot win these budding elements for useful revolutionary work, by such a reactionary group as yours or with such fascist arguments as you make.



The Significance of the Bank Failures

By HARRY GANNES

THE present economic crisis which was dramatically ushered in by the stock market smash of October, 1929, is now entering a new phase far beyond the expectations of any of the capitalist economists. Production in all basic industries, which had been declining since August, 1929, dropped sharply after the stock market crash. There followed, in the spring of 1930, an uneven development of the crisis, and by the middle of 1930 it was evident that all previous low levels in the business cycles of the entire history of the United States would be passed.

Toward the end of 1930 new and, to the capitalists, very disturbing features of the crisis began to develop. These were particularly expressed in (1) a huge increase in bank failures; (2) the uninterrupted down-swing in all basic industries to the lowest levels below "normal" ever recorded; (3) sharp declines in bond prices; (4) failure of the steel, copper, and sugar trusts to keep up prices in the face of a world drop in commodity prices; and (5) greater unemployment.

By the end of 1930, 1,326 banks were reported to have closed their doors, involving close to \$1,000,000,000.* This exceeded all records in American economic history both in the number of banks failing and the amount of money involved. The banks which went to the wall before 1930 were mainly small banks in agrarian centers. But with the crash of the Bank of United States in New York City, the heart of the financial district of America, with \$265,000,000 involved, the entire financial structure of American capitalism received a severe shock.

Within two weeks of the closing of this huge bank there followed the failure of the Bankers Trust Company of Philadelphia, with \$54,000,000 in assets and deposits, and the closing of the Chelsea Bank & Trust Company of New York, involving over \$25,000,000. The entire process was speeded up. Banks began to fall in all parts of the country like houses of cards.

* Federal Reserve Board figure. In the month of December alone, from a tally of news reports, it was calculated that more than 400 banks closed with nearly \$500,000,000 involved.

The closing of the Bank of United States made the capitalists tremble. Heretofore they had announced to the world that the Federal Reserve system, in fact, the entire banking system of the United States, like Cæsar's wife, was above reproach.

After the stock market crash in October, 1929, when it became evident even to Hoover that a period of crisis was dawning, the most heartening point he could find to stress in his annual message to Congress, delivered on December 2, 1929, was that "a strong position of the banks has carried the whole credit system through the crisis without impairment."

The reaction of the capitalist press to the biggest bank failure in American history is very significant. The stock market crash was featured in the headlines. The papers vied with one another in displaying this news. But there was an agreement among all the capitalist newspapers in New York City, including the Socialist Jewish *Forward*, to "play down" all news in connection with the bank crash. The *New York Times* went to the extent of denying the failure on the very morning it occurred.

For weeks all the leading bankers in New York City had worked overtime in an effort to prevent this failure, but the condition of the bank, aggravated by a little more swindling than was possible in "normal" times, plunged it over the cliff. The inside story of the dealings of the Tammany politicians within the bank has not yet been written. Those of the capitalists who recognize the importance of this bank failure get but cold comfort from the fact that the bank was particularly rotten in its dealings. This did not make it fail. The failure was due to the fact that the crisis had developed to such an extent that the entire financial system was being shaken, and it is but normal that the rottenest branches should fall off first.

An attempt was made, some months before the crash, to merge the Bank of United States with several other large New York banks. The proposed merger would have created the fourth largest bank in the United States, with a capital of \$1,000,000,000.

For 15 months, that is, ever since the stock market crash, this bank has been teetering. The bank officials, with the aid of the state government officials, were able to keep the institution afloat. In "normal" times the inner "unsoundness" would never have shown on the surface. But it was the deadly and monotonously repeated blows of the economic crisis, which had reached the lowest levels ever known, that gave it the final shove.

No matter how loudly the combined chorus of bankers may howl, the fact is that the failure of 1,100 banks, including at least three hefty institutions in the heart of the industrial and finan-

cial East, are symptoms of the strain to which the entire banking system is put.

Before the crisis came on, a whole literature had sprung up proclaiming the end of economic crises in the United States. Hoover became the "Great Engineer" who symbolized the perfect working of the capitalist system. When the crisis broke, the capitalist economists enumerated other strong points which they thought would lessen the effects of the crisis. First was the untouchability of the banking system, which, according to Robert Lamont of the firm of Morgan & Co., was as firm as a rock. Others pointed out that there was no hoarding of money, and that the credit system was intact.

All this is as effectively wiped out as the theory of "no crisis." One week after the crash of the Bank of United States some \$130,000,000 was withdrawn from banks and hoarded, according to the most accurate calculations that could be made from available data. The *Journal of Commerce*, one of the leading Wall Street organs, which has looked critically upon the oft-repeated assurances that all was well with the banking system, fearful that a real old-fashioned hoarding was taking place, stated December 20: ". . . the large hoardings of currency indicate a lack of public confidence, which must be overcome at the earliest possible moment. What can be done to restore such confidence, end hoarding, and bring it about that bank notes and specie are either used in daily business as 'circulation' or go back into the banks as deposits? This is a question an answer to which must immediately be made."

There will be no immediate answer, as the basis of the entire matter, the continued deepening of the crisis, the extension of the world crisis, will further shake the confidence of the "public" in the banking system. But the very fact that the *Journal of Commerce*, which takes probably the most objective view of the situation of any of the capitalist sheets, cries in an alarmed way that there must be an "immediate answer," shows the seriousness of this new phase of the crisis.

The immediate effect of the huge series of bank crashes on other banks was the unloading of bonds on the market, depressing the bond prices to a tremendous degree. This in no measure alleviated the basic situation, but was an attempt to put the banks in position to meet the expected run that was actually taking place. There is little doubt that the "laws" under which the banks are supposed to operate are, during the present crisis, non-existent. A careful application of these laws at the present moment would cause the closing of more than double the number of banks already

closed. It is not until a bank is on its last pins, when it can breathe no more, that the state officials are called in to handle the remains.

It is true that the process of squeezing out the small banks during the past 10 years was highly profitable to the bigger imperialist banks. They made profits out of the wreckage, tightened their grip on agriculture and industry. Trustification was advanced and the hold of finance-capital on the productive forces was strengthened. According to charges made by various small bankers, and by the *Journal of Commerce* in a whole series of editorials during the year 1930, the Federal Reserve system, which is controlled by the leading finance-capitalists, actually aided the liquidation of the smaller and weaker banks. A director of a Federal Reserve bank in one of the western districts wrote to the *Journal of Commerce* December 15, saying:

"The Reserve bank of this district is constantly in the habit of making loans to member banks on collateral and often continues this practice until the bank fails, when it appears that most of the good assets are in the hands of the Reserve bank, the management having continued the same processes which forced the bank to borrow in the first place, until everything realizable has been disposed of, and at the time of failure the depositors are left with an empty shell." This leads the *Journal of Commerce* to ask a whole series of embarrassing questions of the Federal Reserve system:

"Is it true (1) that the Federal Reserve system has been constantly helpful, eager to avoid bank failures, or (2) that conditions in some districts are such that it can fairly be said there are no frozen or illiquid loans to give warning to examiners, or (3) that examiners do or do not ascertain or report the truth, or (4) that those who speak in the ways above quoted do not really know the true inwardness of the situation?"

Before the crash of the Bank of United States the National City Bank of New York, one of the big imperialist banking institutions, actually declared itself heartily in favor of small bank failures which resulted in the bigger banks sucking up the valuable assets of the smaller fry. Commenting on the big increase in bank failures, the National City Bank *Bulletin* of December, 1930, says:

"While bank failures have been more numerous this year than in previous years, a fairly large number has occurred every year as far back as the records go and, *as in other lines of business, is the natural process by which the weaker units are forced to liquidate or to merge with stronger institutions.*"

They see in the process merely the usual trustification so desirable to the big imperialists that takes place not only in banking but "in other lines of business."

The Bank of United States was not one of the leading im-

perialist banks, in spite of its huge size (62 branches). It was mainly connected with the garment industry and real estate speculation in New York City. But its failure was not particularly desired by the other leading imperialist banks because it reached too close to home. Every endeavor was made to absorb the bank into the other larger institutions, or to bolster it up, with a profit to the financiers who undertook the job. It was a hopeless task. The main sufferers in this instance are the workers and small business men who made up nearly 90 per cent of the depositors and whose funds supplied over \$200,000,000 out of the \$265,000,000 which the bank claimed as assets.

Hence, while the imperialists delight and profit by the controllable wrecking of banks, putting more power into the hands of the larger financial institutions, the process during a crisis of the present magnitude results in a Frankenstein monster that must be stopped or he will swallow up his maker.

The process of liquidating the smaller banks in the interest of the larger finance-capitalists rested on the indomitable belief of the capitalists that the crisis would be short-lived and would pave the way to ever greater booms. But the course of the crisis has proved them wrong. Even after 14 months of ever-deepening crisis, the *Annalist* of December 19 finds that its business index has dropped to 76.5.²

Then, proceeding on a purely mathematical basis, without any understanding of the basic forces of the crisis itself, D. W. Ellsworth, one of the editors of the *Annalist*, calculates that "complete recovery to normal can not well be expected to occur inside of 13 months and may not occur inside of 19 months." In short, he expects the crisis to last at least another year; and what he means by "normal" is open to many interpretations.

The driving force behind the bank failures in the present stage of the crisis is not the desire of the Federal Reserve system, and the leading imperialists who control it, to reap profits at the advantage of the weaker links in the chain. It is the crisis which has racked American capitalism for 14 months, and on the most optimistic calculation, will not leave it for at least another year, that is the decisive factor. In this situation, the capitalists themselves do not want a continuation of the bank failures because though these failures may temporarily profit the *creme de la creme* of the

²The New York *Evening Post* index of business activity showed the crisis in November to have reached the lowest point ever recorded. Sir Charles Addis, the British fiscal authority, speaking before the American Economic Association convention in Cleveland, on December 31, 1930, said that the present crisis was "the most serious in 100 years."

finance capitalists, the effects produced injure the capitalist system too severely, even so far as the interests of the "59" are concerned.

What effect have the bank failures had on the crisis itself? The capitalist crisis produces a whole series of vicious circles, and the crisis taking place in so highly developed an imperialist country as the United States produces a network of complicated vicious circles. Overproduction brings in its wake unemployment, wage cuts, and the sharp contraction of the inner market. These in turn worsen the crisis and lengthen its duration. The highly trustified industries are able to hold back the drop in prices of their commodities for a while, thus interfering with the liquidation of the crisis, and bringing about a sharp disparity between the various branches of industry. The crisis sets off a whole series of bank crashes, which gain in momentum, and these in turn worsen the crisis immeasurably. The talk of the capitalist press that the bigger bank crashes actually caused a sigh of relief because they cleared up some bad spots is sheerest rot.

Under imperialism the banking system is woven into the entire industrial and agrarian fabric by a thousand threads. It is not something apart from the economic structure, standing over and above it, impervious to whatever earthquakes may shake the ground below. Lenin pointed out the relation of the banking system, under imperialism, to the productive machinery. He said:

"In proportion as banking operations develop, and as they become concentrated in a small number of establishments, the banks become transformed, and instead of being modest go-betweens they become powerful monopolies dealing with almost all capital, and with almost all capitalists (and small proprietors); and similarly dealing with the biggest part of the means of production and of the sources of raw materials of a country or of several countries."

From this it can be plainly seen that a crisis of the character which is now engulfing American imperialism, as well as the colonial countries from which American imperialism draws its raw materials and in which it has the major portion of its exported capital invested, cannot pass off without having a major effect on the banking system.

Pointing out the origin and growth of the banking system, Marx stressed the relation of banks to crises. He said:

"By means of the banking system the distribution of capital as a special business, as a social function, is taken out of the hands of the private capitalists and usurers. But at the same time banking and credit thus become the most effective means of driving capi-

talist production beyond its own boundaries, and one of the most potent instruments of crises and swindle.”³

With the development of finance-capital, this process is speeded up and intensified. The clap-trap that the capitalists spread about the Federal Reserve system eliminating the possibilities of crisis is “a tale for the marines.”

The stock market crash had an immediate effect on the entire banking system. More than one capitalist authority has stated that at the time of the stock market crash nearly every bank in the country was technically bankrupt. A bankers' group, representing the leading Wall Street bankers, was formed to ease off the huge blocks of stock that had been deflated too quickly. In this way the big bankers were able to clean up at the expense of the petty-bourgeoisie.

But maneuver as they will, the finance-capitalists are inevitably drawn deeply into the crisis as the effect is felt more and more on the basic industries in which they are involved.

The crash of the banks, growing out of the crisis, in turn has a depressing effect on the crisis itself. In this respect the Bank of United States is an outstanding example. More than 400,000 depositors, including large garment factories, small merchants, and about 300,000 workers, have all their available cash tied up. With their families, these depositors represent about 1,000,000 people, or one-seventh of the total population of New York City. The purchasing power of these 400,000 is cut to a minimum. The results will definitely show in the New York retail trade return figures for December and January. With the crisis at the stage it has reached, this will not have a salutary effect.

The smaller bank crashes add measurably to the worsening of the crisis. In many small cities the banking facilities are entirely wiped out, interfering with the usual business functions in an already greatly troubled area. The failure of hundreds of banks in the cotton areas has had a marked effect in further depressing the cotton market. Alexander Legge, chairman of the Federal Farm Board, has admitted that the unprecedented number of bank failures has made an already bad agrarian situation much worse.

Taken together with the other phenomena of the crisis, the continued drop in production in all basic industries, the uninterrupted decline in stock and bond prices, the recurring fall in commodity prices, and the extension and complication of the agrarian crisis, the effects of the bank failures will be to extend and deepen the crisis, increase unemployment, sharpen the attacks on the workers, and tend further to shatter the stabilization of world capitalism.

³*Capital*, Vol. III, page 713.

The Revolutionary Movement in Mexico

*Report of the Representative of the Central Committee of the
Mexican Communist Party before the Plenum of the Central
Committee of the Communist Party of the United States,
November 24, 1930.*

Translated by MARGARET NEAL

The presence of a delegate of the Communist Party of Mexico at the Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the United States has great importance from the point of view of cooperation between the two Parties, and in general between the Communist Party of the United States and the Communist Parties of the Latin-American countries. The colonial theses of the Communist International impose upon the Communist Parties of the imperialist countries the duty of supporting the revolutionary movement of the colonies and semi-colonies, which is a most important part of the world proletarian revolution. This struggle, weakening the power of imperialism in its economic bases in the colonies, helps the struggle of the proletariat of the imperialist country against its own bourgeoisie. My presence at this Plenum indicates that both the Communist Party of the United States and the Communist Party of Mexico are beginning to correct the error made up to this time, in failing to maintain regular and close relations for effective cooperation.

COOPERATION BETWEEN THE PARTIES

The first acts of practical cooperation of the Communist Party of the United States with the Communist Parties of Latin-America were the demonstrations against Ortiz Rubio and in support of the revolutionary movements of Cuba and of Haiti. These demonstrations made the toilers of those countries understand that there exists in the United States a revolutionary movement and a Communist Party able to support the struggle of the workers and poor farmers of Latin America against Yankee imperialism. The first act of theoretical and political cooperation of the Communist Party of the United States with the Communist Parties of Latin America was the article published in the May number of the *Communist*, on "Problems of the Communist Party of Mexico."

The theses of July, 1929, of the Central Committee of the

Communist Party of Mexico, which represent a great effort towards correcting the old opportunist errors of our Party, and towards the orientation of our Party on the line of the Communist International, unquestionably embody some of the old errors, specifically on one of the fundamental questions in Mexico: the role of the imperialists in relation to the social groups within the country. These July theses considered Yankee imperialism as absolute master of the situation in Mexico, and English imperialism as weakened in the extreme and no longer an important factor in the country's politics. Consequently, the theses considered all the counter-revolutionary forces in Mexico as grouped in one solid bloc, under the direction of Yankee imperialism. This incorrect conception limited the outlook of the revolutionary movement in Mexico and led to pessimistic conclusions as to the opportunities and possibilities of action of our Party. The Central Committee of the Communist Party of the United States, by its article in the *Communist*, made us see this error in our theses, thus helping us to clarify and rectify our political line. Today, our Party has a clearer and more correct view of the situation in Mexico, and of the possibilities and perspectives of the revolutionary movement.

WAR PREPARATIONS

Aside from the general reasons expressed in the colonial theses of the C.I., there are special reasons—based on the concrete situation on the American continent—for making closer and more effective the cooperation between our Parties. The first reason is that Mexico is not only a market and a source of raw material for Yankee imperialism, but also an important strategical point, with means of communication, naval bases, bases of supply, for war when this breaks out. The whole policy of the United States in Mexico is a policy of preparation for war. The tourist propaganda, the construction of highways, and the opening up of air routes have as their object first and foremost the perfection of means of communication and transport, to make it easier for the Yankee government to mobilize its troops and war supplies, and to extract fuel and raw materials. The Pan-American road will permit the United States to move its forces rapidly across Mexico to Central America and the Panama Canal. That the government of Mexico is already an ally of Yankee imperialism for the next war is shown by the declaration of General Almazan, Secretary of Means of Communication and Public Works, that “in case of a war in which the United States takes part, Mexico, for its own interests, should place itself on the side of the powerful country of North America.”

These preparations for war indicate not only the imminence of

an armed conflict between the United States and England, but also the increased danger of imperialist aggression against the Soviet Union. Ortiz Rubio is today an instrument of Washington for anti-Soviet agitation and intrigue; it was Ortiz Rubio who received the orders of Hoover in Washington on breaking off relations with the Soviet Union; it was he who ordered the police attack on the Soviet legation; it was he who deported from the country Lulinsky, the representative of the Amtorg Corporation; and it is he who has placed himself at the service of the Fish Committee, in the capacity of Yankee police chief in Mexico. All this means that our Parties must establish an ever-closer and more regular cooperation for the struggle against the war preparations—and against the war itself, when the moment arrives—and for the defense of the Soviet Union.

THE MEXICAN CRISIS

Again, the economic crisis in the Latin-American countries, with the growing discontent of the masses of workers and poor peasants, serves as the basis for a series of armed movements which are at bottom not lacking in expressions of the struggle of the rival imperialisms for the economic and political control of these countries. The bourgeoisie, the petty bourgeoisie, and the feudal elements of these countries are grouped into factions which fight one another for their own class interests; but also, and above all, for the interests of the English and Yankee imperialisms. This is the case in Bolivia and Peru, where the capitalists of England subsidized the military movements against Siles and Leguia, the instruments of Yankee finance capital. This is the case in Argentina, where the interests of the United States counter-attacked the rival interests, ousting Irigoyen, the "friend" of England. This is likewise the case in Brazil, where both imperialisms are fighting up to the present day for control of the coffee plantations and the mines.

In these armed struggles for the interests of the national bourgeoisie and the imperialists, the workers and poor peasants were dragged into the bourgeois, petty-bourgeois, and feudal factions. This was possible through the lack of Communist Parties capable of organizing, mobilizing, and leading the workers and poor peasants in struggle as an independent force and for their class demands, against all the factions, against both imperialisms, for the national liberation of these countries and for the setting up of Workers' and Peasants' Governments. The most urgent task, then, is the organization of real Communist Parties in the Latin-American countries; and this task can be accomplished only with the cooperation and support of the Communist Party of the United States.

The economic crisis in Mexico is an aspect of the American con-

tinental crisis, which in turn is a part of the world crisis. All the Latin-American countries, whose economy is based on agriculture and on the production of raw materials, have been terribly hit by the world crisis. In Brazil the most important factor of the crisis is the fall in the price of coffee; in Argentina, the fall in the price of wheat and of meat; in Chile, of nitrate; in Bolivia, of tin; in Mexico, of silver. In Mexico the crisis has forced a reduction in the output of oil. The taxes on petroleum, in the years of greatest production, amounted to more than 30 per cent of the budget. The reduction in the oil output, therefore, damaged business severely, preparing the ground for the present crisis, which is unparalleled in the history of the country. The crisis is further heightened by decreased production in light industries, such as textiles and shoes, and in agriculture. But the most important factors heightening the crisis in Mexico are:

(a) Narrowing down of the market in the United States, which leads to a decrease in the exports from Mexico to the United States. (A large percentage of the foreign trade of Mexico is done with North America.)

(b) The Hawley-Smoot tariff, which limits Mexico's exports to the United States to 50,000,000 pesos yearly.

(c) The Lamont-Montes de Oca financial agreement, which calls for the shipment of 30,000,000 pesos in gold coin yearly to Wall Street, as payment for the foreign debt, and on the basis of which 10,000,000 pesos have already been sent.

(d) Pressure of Yankee imperialism constantly to increase the exports from the United States to Mexico, converting that country into a market exclusively for Yankee industry and agriculture.

(e) Deportation from Yankee territory of Mexican workers by the tens of thousands, who will swell the army of the unemployed in Mexico.

As a result of this brutal policy—the policy of the House of Morgan, implanted in Mexico by Ambassador Morrow, in three years of “intelligent” diplomacy—in the first eight months of the year, the trade balance of Mexico showed a deficit of 42,000,000 pesos. Adding to this sum the 10,000,000 pesos sent to the Bankers' Committee as first payment on the debt, we have 52,000,000 pesos taken from the gold resources of the country, which have not for many years exceeded 100,000,000 pesos. All this causes a depreciation of the silver money—the money current in Mexico—and as a result, a rise in the cost of living, and the heightening of the misery in which hundreds of thousands of workers and peasants and their families are struggling. All the efforts of the bourgeoisie and of the government of Ortiz Rubio to alleviate the crisis have been

and will be futile. The government is powerless to stop the depreciation of silver money. The crisis will continue to deepen, above all as a result of the decrease in the exports on the basis of the Hawley-Smoot tariff, which was put into force in July and which for that reason will make its effects felt the more disastrously at the end of the year, and even more next year.

RISE OF FASCISM

The government of Ortiz Rubio is already a fascist government. After its agreement with Washington, the government tends to strengthen its alliance with the big capitalists in the country. The economic policy of the government is a policy of barefaced protection of capital, and above all of foreign capital and its national allies. This protection shows itself in reduction of and exemption from taxation for mining and other important industries; in the special laws for protection of industry, and, above all, in the systematic authorization of lockouts, readjustments and cutting of wages. Many thousands of miners, railroad, and textile workers have been thrown on the streets with the authorization of the government. Many thousands more are working short time, at starvation wages. The most recent event is the agreement with the bosses in the textile industry to reduce the working week—with corresponding wage cuts—to three or four days.

The government is cementing its alliance, first and foremost, with the big commercial importers of foreign goods—especially Yankee goods. This group, highly developed and notably rich in Mexico, finds itself tied up with Yankee finance capital through the branch of the National City Bank in Mexico. It counts upon the absolute support of Amaro, the Secretary of War, of Montes de Oca, Secretary of the Interior, and of President Ortiz Rubio, who head the faction charged with carrying out Wall Street's program in Mexico. The big import trade holds in its hands the Tariff Commission—which is dependent on the executive—and uses it to keep in force tariffs favoring the importation of foreign products.

ATTACK ON AGRARIAN MOVEMENT

An important—perhaps the most important—aspect of the policy of Ortiz Rubio is the destruction of the agrarian movement. On November 7 Rubio declared publicly that the time has come to make an end of all workers' and peasants' agitation, and to protect private wealth, thus laying the bases for the financial prosperity of the country. The following day he sent to Congress a draft bill to amend the law on distribution and restitution of land, which is the first legal step toward leaving definitely landless 900,000 poor

peasants and tenant farmers, and more than 1,000,000 agricultural workers. At the same time, Rubio proposes a law for agricultural credits which would require the poor peasant to buy shares in the Agricultural Bank as an indispensable condition for getting credit. Of course, this law has the object of strengthening the well-to-do peasants—the petty bourgeoisie of the countryside—and of completing the ruin of the great mass of poor peasants.

The results of the agrarian reform have been: 590,000 peasants deprived of land, many of whom have abandoned the land because they could not cultivate it, and have returned to work as peons or have gone to swell the army of unemployed; 2,000,000 agricultural workers and poor peasants altogether landless; 7,000,000 hectares which had been given to the poor peasants and 160,000,000 hectares in possession of foreign enterprises, big landlords, landowners, and ranchers. In Mexico, as in all other places where it has been carried through, the bourgeois agrarian reform has created merely a stratum of petty bourgeoisie, whose role consists of side-tracking the struggle of the poor peasants for land. The conclusion is, without question, that the central problem in Mexico is the land problem, the lever which moved the rural masses in the bourgeois revolution of 1910, and which will move them again in the coming workers' and peasants' revolution.

POLICY OF BRUTAL REPRESSION

In order to further its policy against the masses, the Rubio government is using ever more brutal methods of suppressing the revolutionary movement, as is shown by the assassination en masse of 20 workers and poor peasants in Matamoras, on June 29, and the torture recently inflicted in Torreon on a young Communist, whose fingernails were torn out to force him to speak. The prisons of the country are being filled with Communists and militant revolutionists. Strikes are smashed "legally" by boards of conciliation and arbitration, or by the military power of the army. The leaders are exiled to the penal islands. The Central Committee of the Communist Party and all its local organizations; the National Committee of the Unitary Trade Union Confederation; the National Committee of the Mexican section of the Red Aid and the majority of its local organizations, are working under the most complete illegality. The government counts upon the effective cooperation of the social-fascist organizations (the so-called autonomous unions, the railroad workers' societies, the anarcho-fascists of the C.G.T., and also, in spite of their "opposition," the labor-fascists of the CROM). These forces break strikes, hinder every struggle of the workers, and, especially the laborites, organize the hunting down

of militant revolutionists by special bands of gunmen. The government counts also upon the fascists of the countryside, the former supporters of the agrarian policy, now become fascist and drawn into the army as reserves.

At the same time that the white terror grows, the government begins to restrict the "labor" and "pro-peasant" demagoguery which has been in use in Mexico since 1910 to win the masses. This does not mean that the government has put demagoguery aside. It means only that it has ceased to be the chief method of the government in its relation with the masses, as it was during the provisional government of Portes Gil. Demagoguery has been entrusted in the past months to the National Revolutionary Party, which, together with the Workers' and Peasants' University, the Missions for Social Action, the pushing of sports and the publication of "anti-imperialist" articles in its periodical, is trying to keep up the illusions of the working peasant classes about the government. The demagogic activity, official and semi-official, by means of organizations created or supported by the government, has been concentrated for some time on the question of the unemployed. As in the United States, the bourgeoisie in Mexico is striving to hinder the organization and mobilization of the unemployed under the leadership of our Party, creating and nourishing in them illusions about the solution of their problem by the government.

RUBIO GOVERNMENT UNSTABLE

The stability of the government of Ortiz Rubio is merely apparent. Hunger and misery are pushing the masses of workers and poor peasants into the fight for bread, for wages, for land, and for better living conditions. The 800,000 unemployed and the many thousands more of workers working short time; the ruined peasantry; the petty bourgeoisie smashed by the crisis, are factors for the break-up of the government. The workers are beginning to agitate and fight against the lock-outs, the "readjustments," and reductions in wages. We have already had the strike of the miners at Nacozari, the agitation in Pachuca against the order authorizing a cut of 50 per cent in the working force in the mines (which was repealed by the government), and the plundering of the food stores in Concepcion del Oro, by the unemployed miners. In the countryside there is growing what the bourgeois papers call "banditry," that is to say, parties of peasants who fight with arms against landlords, against the white guards, against hunger, against the federal forces which try to disarm them. In Mexico there are large numbers of peasants who have kept their arms since the movements of De la Huerta, Serrano-Gomez, and Aguirre-Manzo Escobar, in which

they were dragged into the fight for the bourgeois factions. The petty bourgeoisie—traders, shop-keepers, farmers—who in Mexico represent an important and active factor, is breaking into demonstrations, like those of Puebla and Tlaxcala, against the high taxes. The native Indian tribes, such as the Yaquis of Sonora, the Coras and Huicholes of the states of Nayarit and Jalisco, important although not numerous, have decided to fight for the land from which they have been ousted.

The most acute recent aspect of the crisis in Mexico has been the fight of the bourgeois factions, in the very heart of the government and of the National Revolutionary Party, the official party. The policy of the government, which is the policy of Washington, sharpening the economic crisis, depreciating the silver money and increasing the cost of living, has smashed and submerged certain groups of the national bourgeoisie, the petty industrialists, traders in wheat products, and agriculturalists. The big commercial importer—allied to Yankee finance capital—is getting big profits from the importation of foreign goods, and is ruining the infant industries of the country—the shoe and clothing factories, the old textile factories which are working with antiquated machinery, and also a certain section of the plantations. The Tariff Commission favors the import of automobiles and confections, foot-wear, cotton goods, chemical and pharmaceutical products, corn and wheat. The political crisis in October, which nearly ended in an armed struggle, was due to the resistance of the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois groups prejudiced against the policy of the government. It is precisely these groups that make up the basis for the National Revolutionary Party, which controls the Congress, which brought Rubio to power, and which, since its inception, has been an instrument of Yankee capital. Hence the struggle, begun in the Congress, against the Tariff Commission and against the Lamont-Montes de Oca agreement. The petty bourgeois trend, the “leftist” trend, of the National Revolutionary Party, attempted to continue the demagoguery of Portes Gil and to nourish the illusions about “national economy,” about the conciliation of the interests of imperialism with the interests of the Mexican bourgeoisie.

BOURGEOIS FACTIONS COMPROMISE

The quarreling factions succeeded in temporarily “settling” their difficulties in October, thanks to the intervention of North American diplomacy and with the aid of Calles. Calles is the founder of the National Revolutionary Party, the “chief of the revolution,” as he is called in Mexico. He is at the same time a leader of the industrial and agrarian bourgeoisie; but he is also allied to Yankee

capital. The compromise achieved the elimination of Portes Gil as president of the National Revolutionary Party; of Puig Casauranc as head of the Department of the Federal District (an office as important as that of minister), and of Luis Leon, Secretary of Industry, Commerce, and Labor—the three demagogues, petty-bourgeois “leftists.” But the factional struggle continues. Big capital has strengthened its position in the government. Puig Casauranc and Leon were replaced, respectively, by a leader of the Confederation of Chambers of Commerce and by a member of the industrial council of Monterey, the most important industrial center of the country. In the leadership of the National Revolutionary Party was placed a general of the army, who immediately began to restrain demagoguery and as a result orientated the party towards a policy of support of the government. The present leadership of the National Revolutionary Party has capitulated on a question of tariff control—the result was favorable to importers and Yankee finance capital.

But the greater the pressure of the government and of imperialist capital, the greater the resistance of the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois groups prejudiced against it. The active opposition, without failing to show itself in Congress, now manifests itself above all in the states. In the Peasant Congress of Jalapa, October 30-31, Tejada, the governor of Vera Cruz, an extremely dangerous petty-bourgeois demagogue, and Andrew Almazan, the governor of Puebla, put forth a challenge to the federal government, demanding: (a) suspension of the payment of the foreign debt; (b) indefinite suspension of the payment of the agrarian debt and nullification of the farm mortgages in the hands of the speculators (that is to say, in the hands of the National City Bank, which got them for 5 centavos on the peso); (c) indefinite continuance of the agrarian reform, which the government has begun to abandon. On this last point a resolution was adopted threatening the government with armed struggle of the peasants for the land. Governor Almazan declared categorically that the “revolutionary family” is divided into two factions which are fighting each other and made it clearly understood that this struggle is leading to an armed clash.

YANKEE-ENGLISH RIVALRY SHARPENS

On this basis, there is sharpening in Mexico the rivalry of English and Yankee imperialisms. The latter is on the offensive. The diplomacy of Morrow captured excellent positions for Wall Street, such as the opening of the branch of the National City Bank, which has begun to control the finances; the investment of more than \$100,000,000 by the General Electric Company toward a mon-

opoly in electric power; the Lamont-Montes de Oca agreement, which puts in the hands of the House of Morgan the control of all the foreign debts of the government and which stipulates the reorganization of the National Railroad, strengthening Morgan's control over this, the most important enterprise in the country. But it would be erroneous to think that English imperialism is retreating. The English retain one of the biggest railroad lines, the Mexican Railway; the Mexican Light and Power Company, which is a serious obstacle to the monopoly which the General Electric intends; and the powerful "El Aguila" oil company, which last year paid 50 per cent of all the taxes on oil and was valued at 17,000,000 pesos. English capital, moreover, has a strong hand in the Swedish enterprise of the Ericson telephones, which is engaged in a furious competition with the Mexican Telephone and Telegraph Company, of Yankee capital. Also, the British interests in the mining and other industries are considerable.

It is evident that English capital has not ceased to maneuver in Mexico. It is seeking revenge for the defeats suffered in 1923 (De la Huerta), in 1927 (Serrano-Gomez), and in 1929 (Escobar, Aguirre-Manzo). In the months preceding the July elections for deputies and senators, and in the days following the elections, the Labor Party and the CROM carried out a campaign against the National Revolutionary Party, and above all against Portes Gil, the traditional enemy of the laborites. But this campaign was, objectively, an aspect of the struggle of English capital against the regime established by the Yankee interests, and against the party which has since its inception been in the service of these interests. One of the leaders of the Labor Party, Lombardo Toledano, declared in a speech that "we must place in opposition to the penetration of Yankee capital, engulfing and dangerous, the investment of European capital—that is to say, English capital—more progressive and less dangerous." Today we can see the alliance of Morones and his party, at least in Vera Cruz, with the petty-bourgeois "leftists," whose notorious representative is Tejeda, and who are the very ones designated to lead the armed struggle against the group which serves Yankee interests. The demagogy of Tejeda in the Peasants' Congress at Jalapa had for its object to fool the poor peasants of the state, to draw their discontent into another channel, to stop the spread of the influence of our Party, which had an important fraction at the Congress; but also, and above all, to assure to itself the support of the peasants and on this basis to prepare the armed struggle, which has merely been postponed and which must inevitably break out.

(To be concluded in March.)

Our Party Organization

By R. BAKER

EVEN a superficial review of our Party structure reveals that we have failed to adjust the Party organization to its immediate task of leading and organizing the mass struggles of workers for partial demands. The very good programs and outlines for activity are only partially realized because of our inadequate and loose organization.

This organizational looseness and slow reaction to local problems is the most persistent remnant of our past line and policies. The Party organization was adjusted to periodic campaigns, occasional spectacular demonstrations, and the three annual indoor mass meetings. Concentration at the factories consisted of distributing general leaflets announcing the anniversary of the Russian Revolution or some international issue. The activities of the District and Section Committees and lower units were primarily confined to preparations for these general activities. Consequently the problem of local leadership with initiative and ability to prepare and lead local struggles, and the necessary organizational forms for this purpose, did not arise sharply until the recent turn in the line of our Party.

While the Party today generally accepts the line and seriously strives to realize it in life we find that the chief obstacles encountered are our elementary organizational forms and the almost total lack of understanding of how a Bolshevik Party should function. This astounding inexperience marks the functioning of practically all the organs of the Party and is especially marked in the lower units.

DISTRICT COMMITTEES

With a few exceptions, our District Committees are taking only the first steps toward becoming the actual leading Party Committees in their territories. Initiative, guidance, and decisiveness are still largely confined to the District Organizer. Neither the District Committees nor the District Bureaus are sufficiently organized on the basis of collective leadership and division of responsibilities and functions.

Functioning departments are practically absent or else confined to one individual who is too often a full time functionary. The

result is that no effective division of work, development and extension of activities, and growth of local leadership are possible. The District Bureau finally decides on all the small as well as large problems arising in the District. Because of this almost total lack of organization of work, our District Committees too often become panic-stricken or swamped when confronted with two or three major problems. Too frequently we witness a "successful" election campaign or strike activity at the expense of all other phases of Party work. Disorganized Party leadership is further reflected in the disorganized state of affairs in the basic units.

CONTACTS WITH NUCLEI

Even in our best Districts the Section Committees are politically non-existent. They are formal organs that convey the instructions of the leading committee to the units and often in the large cities actually act as buffers between the District Committee and the units. Vital, personal contact with the lower committees and units is not yet established as a permanent routine phase of our organization. The basic units on the whole receive their instructions in a maze of mimeographed documents usually impossible to read and digest. The meetings begin late, last long, and consume time and energy over a mass of details that normally should be decided by the organizer or the unit buro.

THE PARTY UNIT

The weakest link in the entire structure of our organization is the basic unit. Even after we succeed in overcoming some of the outstanding weaknesses of our Party committees and departments, the unit remains a loose meeting of individuals. The Party unit should be the weekly gathering of Party comrades to receive guidance for their daily work, political clarity on their tasks, and instructions for their week's activities.

This, however, is not the case. The units do not have a leading Party committee which prepares the meeting, outlines the tasks, divides responsibilities, assigns work, and controls the day-to-day work of the individual comrades. Comrades still decide for themselves when they shall be active. They do not feel the driving force of leadership, firm discipline, and responsibility in the unit meetings.

Notwithstanding the fact that our Party has made great headway in the recent period, acquired valuable experiences, and learned many lessons, these are still the property of the various leading

committees and have not been conveyed to our units. The militant activities of our Party in the last year have resulted in visible improvement of the social and political composition of our membership. Our leading committees possess an excellent army of earnest, militant proletarian fighters whom we are unable to use in any appreciable degree of Bolshevik efficiency.

MUST CONCENTRATE ON ORGANIZATION

Correct Bolshevik organizational forms, proper internal functioning of our organization, firm discipline, and theoretical clarity of our Party can be established only in the course of action and leadership of class battles. Constant activity and struggles improve our Party organizationally and ideologically, and this improvement in turn multiplies the successes of our struggles. However, this process is neither automatic nor spontaneous but must be conscious and planned.

Our Party committees must concentrate their attention on the systematic improvement of the entire structure of the Party and its inner life simultaneously with the development of the current activities and campaigns. Each leading Party committee must systematically develop collective leadership by drawing in all its members into elaboration of all its problems, divide responsibilities among its various members, sub-divide the committee functions into departments, outline the tasks, and check up on the realization of these tasks.

The multiplicity of our tasks today makes it imperative to conduct our work on a department basis. In addition to developing new forces through our departments, this is the only method through which each of our manifold tasks can be effectively elaborated and prepared for successful application in life.

IMPORTANCE OF THE ORGANIZATION DEPARTMENT

The Organization Department is the most vital organ of a Party committee. The Organization Department prepares the plans of action for the Party committee in all the campaigns and activities; it distributes the Party forces, checks up on the proper functions, and improves the entire Party apparatus.

The inner Party life problems must be carefully studied by the Organization Department with special emphasis on the structure, functions, and inner life of the basic units of the Party. Such important problems as the proper organization of meetings of Party committees, departments, and units with the object of eliminating

the immense waste of time and energy that occurs at our meetings must become an immediate and pressing task of the Organization Department. The effective utilization of the splendid fighting energies of the Party through the establishment of Bolshevik organizational forms, and the correct guidance of our organization in the day-to-day activities, are today among the main tasks of the Party.

"PARTY ORGANIZER" OUT AGAIN

The reappearance of the *Party Organizer* answers a crying need in the Party for a manual on Party Organization, the lack of which was reflected in the day to day activities of the organizers and functionaries of the Party.

The February issue is marked by concreteness and practical guidance in building the Party apparatus along bolshevik organizational principles. "How to Bolshevize our Party Units," "The Role and Tasks of the Unit Buro," "How the District Buro should function," "Main Requirements as to Organization Finances," "Planned Work and Calendar Plan," "Against Bureaucracy," "Party Mobility," "To learn from the Masses," are only some of the titles included.

Every issue will contain reprints of important documents and material long out of print and not available in any other form. Party functionaries and active members are obligated to carefully read the *Party Organizer* monthly and preserve a file of it.

American Imperialism Enslaves Liberia

By G. PADMORE

AMERICAN Finance Capital long ago invaded Liberia. However, judging from the character of the report recently issued by the special commission which was appointed last April to investigate the question of slavery in that country, Liberia seems doomed to definitely become a protectorate of the United States. Here again we see the ruthless policy of Yankee Imperialism, which brutally exploits 12 million Negroes in the United States, maintains a military dictatorship over Haiti, and now reduces Liberia, the last independent Negro Republic in Africa, to the position of a vassal State.

Ever since the last imperialist war, Dollar Diplomacy has assumed great influence over the financial affairs of Liberia, thanks to the economic activities of the Firestone Rubber Company, which is the largest and most important foreign concern operating in the country.

Liberia is a typical colonial country. It is situated on the West Coast of Africa, between the British colony of Sierra Leone and the French colony of Ivory Coast. The country covers an area of about the size of Ireland and Wales combined, with a coast line extending 350 miles. Liberia is inhabited by two principal groups; (1) the *indigenous population* which numbers about 2 millions and is composed of various tribes, and (2) about 20,000 *Americo-Liberians*, Negroes whose ancestors were once slaves in America, who returned and settled in the country during the early days of its colonization. The majority of them reside in the coastal towns, such as Monrovia, Cape Palmas, Marshall, Greenville, Great Bassam, etc., where they are chiefly engaged as trading capitalists and state officials. Because of their favored economic and political positions these "Anglo-Saxonized" blacks are not only the petty-bourgeois class, but they have actually constituted themselves an oligarchy, imposing their will upon the indigenous population which is chiefly engaged in agriculture and pastoral occupations. These people, in contra-distinction to the coastal Negroes, still retain their native customs and their own social and political institutions. Because of their economic and social status they are not only despised and ill-treated, but most ruthlessly exploited by their Europeanized

black brothers as well as by the white capitalists. Thus we have the irony of the descendants of former slaves themselves becoming slave masters.

The situation in Liberia gives us one of the most striking examples of the fallacy in Garvey's utopian scheme of "Black Racialism." It shows that Negro capitalists will oppress and exploit other Negroes, just as the whites do, when they are in the economic position to do so. Therefore, the Negro workers must realize that their class interests take precedence over race, which is only being utilized by the black bourgeoisie in order to promote their own economic interests.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Historically speaking, Liberia has always been considered a sort of "stepchild" of America, for the republic not only had its origin in the efforts of an American organization known as the Colonization Society, which was established in 1817 for the purpose of settling emancipated slaves in Africa, but America has despatched cruisers to Liberia on several occasions in order to suppress native rebellions and to save the country from the intervention of European powers. The Liberian Movement was a kind of "Black-Zionism." After many difficulties the new state was proclaimed free and independent in 1847. Constitutionally, the Liberian government is modelled on the same republican lines as the United States.

In the latter part of the 19th century, the Government was compelled to float loans from British bankers under terms which placed the British in complete control of her customs. This intervention of British officialdom led to increased taxation on the native tribes, who refused to pay. The Government was therefore forced to float a new loan in 1906, much of which was frittered away by an English company.

Shortly after this, new boundary difficulties arose. Great Britain threatened to take a more aggressive stand in respect to taking over the administrative affairs of the country, while France was about to annex a slice of the Liberian frontier next to the Ivory Coast. However, the American capitalist press awoke to the occasion and by conducting a campaign evoked much sympathy for the republic, which enabled the Liberian mission that visited the United States in 1908 to secure the intervention of the State Department. Elihu Root, at that time Secretary of State, declared that "Liberia is an American colony," and his Government would negotiate outstanding questions with Britain on behalf of the republic.

DOLLAR DIPLOMACY

President Roosevelt, having annexed the Panama Canal Zone in 1903, was desirous of getting a permanent foothold on the African Continent in order to enable America to compete with European Imperialism. With this object in view, he sent a commission of three to Liberia in February, 1909, for the purpose of investigating conditions affecting boundary disputes and reporting on economic possibilities. The Commission issued its report in the latter part of the same year.

On the basis of this report, the United States announced in July, 1910, that it would take charge of the finances, military organization, agriculture, and boundary questions affecting Liberia. This was agreed to by Great Britain, France, and Germany. The first step taken in this direction was to float an international loan of \$1,700,000 in 1912. This loan was secured through Morgan & Co., Kuhn Loeb, and the National City Bank of New York, Fleming & Co. of London, Warburg & Co. of Hamburg, etc., on the customs revenue, a rubber tax and a tax on native labor shipped from Liberia to work on the Spanish cocoa plantations in Fernando Po and the Portuguese Island of San-Tome.

For this financial obligation, Liberia placed the collection of the revenue in the hands of an American Receiver General appointed by the United States Government, assisted by British, French, and German sub-receivers. This arrangement was pursued until the war, when America definitely assumed full control over the finances of the Republic. The constabulary was also turned over to the United States and placed under the control of army officers. The imperialists hoped that in this way the indigenous population which had frequently revolted against taxation and the oppressive policy of the Liberian Government would be kept in subjection. This, however, did not prevent such a serious revolt by the Kroo tribe in 1915 that the Government was threatened with foreign intervention in order to save the lives and property of British and French nationals. The United States again saved the day by despatching the warship *Chester* to Monrovia, the capital of the Republic, where ammunition and other military supplies were landed. This naval intervention further strengthened the grip of America over the Republic. The Liberian Government a few years later agreed to place its entire public defense in the hands of the United States War Department. Colonel Charles Young, the senior ranking Negro officer in the American Army, was sent to Liberia as military adviser to the government. In 1924 the sum of \$120,000 was spent on arming the Constabulary and Frontier Force.

Prior to the war, Liberia was largely dependent upon Germany as a market for her raw products. Large quantities of palm kernel, cola nut, cocoa, rubber, coconuts, and coffee, were shipped to Hamburg annually. But when the United States entered the war in 1917, Liberia was forced to break diplomatic relationship with Germany. This was done in order for the allies to annex the cable station in Monrovia, which was owned by a German company, as well as to break Germany's commercial domination over the republic. Liberia lost her most dependable European market and was soon reduced to a state of absolute financial dependence upon the United States. This again provided another opening for the further domination of the country by American imperialism.

By the beginning of 1918 the finances of the republic were in such a deplorable condition that the Liberian Government through its Consul General in Washington, Dr. Ernest Lyons, approached the United States Government for another loan of \$5,000,000 "with which to refund the 1912 loan, to develop the interior resources of the country under American supervision, and to give practical aid and assistance to her allies now in the greatest struggle of the epoch." The communication further stated:

"Liberia offers for the satisfaction of this loan, among other things, material assistance to her allies in the present war; viz.

"(1) Labor, (2) base for the operation of allied fleets along the west African coast, (3) food, (4) communication facilities, (5) internal revenue, and (6) the customs levies.

"*Liberia can furnish, estimating conservatively, 200,000 able-bodied men.* It is well known throughout Europe that maritime communications between there and the west coast of Africa would be impossible were it not for the services of these natives as seamen and stevedores of which Liberia furnishes the greater number. From the coastal tribes, viz. the Krus, Bassas, Grebos, and Veys, *Liberia can furnish a minimum of ten regiments of experienced and qualified stevedores. A large portion of the contract labor employed in the various colonial possessions is drawn from the Liberian hinterland. Since the war, this labor has been at a standstill and could be transferred to France for communication service during the war.*" (Emphasis mine.—G.P.)

The United States agreed to grant the loan providing Liberia consented to the following terms: (1) That not only the customs, but the hinterland revenue be placed under the control of American officials; (2) that a Commissioner General be appointed to govern the native tribes, and (3) that military officials be increased so as to place all the strategic positions of the government in the hands of United States officials.

Due to the wide-spread discontent of the masses, the Liberian

government refused to agree. After repeated threats, however, it was forced to accept, and was only temporarily saved from this new financial entanglement because the U. S. Senate defeated the loan.

THE FIRESTONE DICTATORSHIP

After the war, America found herself confronted with the British rubber monopoly. As rubber is an indispensable product in the automobile industry of the United States, a conference was called by the rubber manufacturers in which the United States Government participated. At this conference it was agreed that the United States Government would actively cooperate with the industrialists in providing a tropical sphere of interest in order that they might produce their own raw rubber. Such a plan would also create an outlet for the capitalists to invest more finance capital in the colonies. President Hoover, then Secretary of Commerce, was the official spokesman of the Government and principal supporter of this imperialist project. At that time he was the most bitter assailant of the Stevenson Plan which created a monopoly for the British capitalists who were restricting the production and marketing of rubber from the Malay States and the Dutch East Indies in order to control prices on the world market. About 75% of the world supply at that time was under British control. In 1927 the world was consuming about 575,000 tons of rubber annually; the United States was using 70%, which is about equal to the quantity produced by the British. This dependence of the American tire manufacturers upon British producers did not suit the interests of Yankee imperialism, especially at a time when both powers are feverishly preparing for war. A way out had to be found, and Liberia provided it. Hoover got Congress to appropriate thousands of dollars to enable the United States Department of Commerce to investigate the possibilities of rubber cultivation in Africa.

Whatever opposition a section of the Liberian officials who were under British influence expressed against America's economic intervention, was soon suppressed by pressure brought to bear on the part of the State Department in Washington, and in July, 1925, the Liberian Government finally decided to enter into negotiation with the Harvey Firestone Rubber Corporation for a lease of rubber producing lands. The Firestone Corporation secured a concession of 1 million acres of land at the cost of 6 cents per acre. It has been estimated that when the trees reach maturity within six years, the crop will be about 250,000 tons.

After the negotiations were completed, the Firestone Company demanded that the Liberian Government accept a loan of \$5,000,-

000 at the rate of 7% interest, failing which, they (Firestone) would not carry through the proposed land development scheme. The Liberian people were reluctant to accept this heavy financial obligation, realizing that they had recently escaped the clutches of the United States Government. But this time the pressure from Wall Street was too great, the Liberian legislature finally succumbed to the coercion of the great Colossus of the North.

One of the greatest obstacles in the way of the economic development of the Republic, has been the lack of transportation. In this respect Liberia is medieval when compared with the neighboring British and French colonies on the west coast of Africa. There are no railroads in the country, while roads suitable for vehicular traffic only exist in the principal towns. The only means of communication between the hinterland and the seaports is on animal back over mud-covered forest tracks and bridgeless rivers. This is the reason why the Firestone Company was so insistent upon the Government accepting the loan in order that funds might be provided for the construction of railways and motor roads, as well as the improvement of the harbor of Monrovia. The terms of the loan therefore specially stipulate that half of the money has to be expended on public works, while the other half is to be used in payment of certain outstanding public debts. The proposed road-building scheme will greatly facilitate the company in transporting its raw produce from the plantations to the ocean for shipment to the United States. Under the terms of the loan the office of Receiver of Customs was abolished and a Financial Adviser appointed. The Liberian Government received very little actual cash as the Firestone Corporation turned over the loan to the American Financial Adviser who alone was responsible for disbursements.

This is how Dollar Diplomacy operating through Firestone and through the machinations of a corrupt clique of native bourgeois politicians who prostitute themselves as the lackeys of Yankee imperialism, has been able to enslave millions of colonial toilers by saddling loans upon this little West-African Republic.

SLAVERY UNEARTHED

In carrying through the imperialist project of large scale plantations, the Firestone Corporation has been confronted with two major problems: (1) *Confiscation of native lands*, and (2) *an adequate supply of cheap labor*. The Liberian Government, headed by President King, has actively cooperated in solving both of them. Now that the Liberian legislature has expropriated and given away to the Firestone Company the lands of the natives, they are resisting the attempts of the rubber interests to turn them into wage

slaves. This has already led to several uprisings which have been put down by the Liberian military force.

By enlisting the services of various Americo-Liberian officials, such as administrators of provinces and districts, as well as native chiefs, the American imperialists are gradually succeeding in getting the peasants to leave their villages and work on the rubber plantations. Over 40,000 men have already been recruited and turned over to the Firestone Concessions. This recruiting is carried out largely under the orders of the chiefs who are paid one cent for every worker supplied. The Government has also established a Central Labor Bureau in Monrovia with branches in various parts of the country, through which able-bodied Negroes are conscripted into labor battalions and shipped off to the plantations. The Government also receives a commission for each man supplied. The workers get about five cents a day and are compelled to labor 14 and 15 hours under the most brutal and demoralizing conditions.

In some parts of the Republic actual slavery exists. Kathleen Simon, the wife of the British Liberal statesman, Sir John Simon, in her recent book entitled *Slavery*, states: "Whether the number of slaves in Liberia is 100,000 or 500,000, no one can say. Equally it is difficult for anyone to deny that slave-owning and slave-trading prevail over wide areas of the country." Open charges against the Liberian Government for promoting the slave trade have been made by Dr. Buell of America and Mr. John H. Harris of England before the League of Nations, and more recently by Mr. Roland Faulkner, a Liberian Senator. Mr. W. G. Gibson, the Liberian Secretary of State, in a letter in reply to the allegation of Faulkner, published in the *Liberia Times*, admitted that thousands of natives are recruited in the interior, brought to the ports of the country and shipped to the Portuguese Island of Fernando Po, and to African colonies. Mr. Gibson said, "*All of us (Liberian officials) know that it is a transaction authorized by law and sealed by contract and agreement. Whether we agree with the law or not, is another question.*" (Emphasis mine—G. P.)

The Government not only knows of the existence of slavery, but actually legalized the system in order to enable a few degenerate black politicians to enjoy a parasitic existence by turning over thousands of native toilers to the Portuguese and French slave dealers.

The slave trade of Liberia has become such an international scandal that even the League of Nations has been forced to make a gesture. An international commission composed of the following representatives was appointed last April to investigate the charges: Dr. Cuthurst Christy, on behalf of the League of Nations Secre-

tariat; Dr. Charles S. Johnson, a well-known Negro-sociologist and Professor of Fisk University, on behalf of the United States; and the Hon. Arthur Barclay, a former president of Liberia, on behalf of the Black Republic.

The commission held many sessions in various parts of the country, where, according to the *African World* of June 14th, 1930, "*The chiefs and other prominent men, as well as the better class of the native population expressed their loyalty to President King and said that they had no complaints to make.*" (Emphasis mine.—G.P.) This was to be expected! For these chiefs and other "*prominent men and better class natives*" are the ones who constitute the feudal land owning class of Liberia, and therefore maintain domestic slavery. Such bloodsuckers certainly have "no complaints to make."

The toiling masses, however, had a different story to tell. Their evidence was so indicting that the Commission despite its attempt to whitewash the Government was compelled to admit "*that inter- and intra-tribe domestic slavery existed.*" The Commission also stated "that the pawning of human beings was widespread throughout the country." "Forced labor has also been widely used, both by the Government and by private persons, chiefly for road making, erecting public buildings, and portorage." "This system has also been largely abused by many officials of the Government, as well as soldiers, who use these slaves to cultivate their own farms." With respect to the exportation of labor, the Commission discovered that large contingents of laborers were recruited from the indigenous population and shipped to Fernando Po and French Gabon under conditions scarcely distinguishable from the old methods of slave-trading and slave-raiding.

As was to have been expected, the commissioners entirely exonerated the American imperialists for the part they played in recruiting forced labor by stating in their report that they "discovered no evidence that the Firestone Co. 'consciously' employed forced labor." This is nonsense! The commissioners know better. Even the American bourgeois liberal, Dr. Buell, in describing the labor problem in Liberia in his authoritative book, *Native Problem in Africa*, has the following to say about Firestone:

"Agreement Number Two provides that the Liberian Government will encourage, support and assist the efforts of the Lessee to secure and maintain an adequate labor supply."

"In the spring of 1926 the government established a Labor Bureau at the head of which it appointed a Commissioner, under the control of the Secretary of the Interior. According to this Commissioner, the Bureau will supply annually a total of 10,000 men to the Firestone Plantations—two thousand men from each

county. By June, 1926, the Bureau already had supplied the Plantations with six hundred men. It sent out requisitions to each Native and District Commissioner who in turn divided up contingents among the chiefs. According to the Commissioner, the Firestone Plantations paid the chiefs one cent a day for each boy and the same sum to the Government Bureau.

"Thus, under this system, which is similar to that which has produced wholesale compulsory labor in other parts of Africa, the Firestone Plantation Company is making it financially worth while for the government and for the chiefs to keep the plantations supplied. The concession Agreement Number Two imposes on the government the obligation to cooperate in securing these men. As Liberian officials and chiefs are already accustomed to imposing compulsion whether in securing men for road work or for Fernando Po, there is no reason to believe that they will employ any different methods in obtaining labor for the Firestone Plantations." (Emphasis mine.—G.P.)

What an indictment! Did the commissioners know of these facts? Perhaps, like the Firestone Company, they "consciously" did not know.

Such a statement that the Company did not "consciously" employ forced labor is merely a way of white-washing Firestone and his agents, and at the same time providing the United States Government with the pretext for assuming still greater political control over the republic in the form of a protectorate. This will no doubt justify the fears expressed by the British imperialists in their organ *The African World* of October 5th, 1929, which commenting editorially on the Liberian situation stated:

"No one who follows the question would be surprised if, as the outcome of the Commission, the United States were invited to take the more definite administrative interests in Liberia. It is thought that America may be prepared to enter upon an extension of a colonial policy in West Africa."

Today we can already see a definite movement in this direction.

RECOMMENDATIONS EXPOSED

The commission made certain recommendations in its report. The most important were: (1) That Liberia abandon the policy of the "closed door"; (2) The re-establishment of the authority of the chiefs; (3) The appointment of Americans to administrative positions in the Government, such as Commissioners, district officers, etc.; (4) Declaring domestic slavery and pawning illegal; (5) Cessation of the shipment of laborers to Fernando Po and other places outside of Liberia; (6) Increasing discipline over the military forces; and (7) Encourage the emigration from the United States.

All of these recommendations definitely support the interests of American Imperialism. Let us examine some of them briefly. The "closed door" policy was established in order to prevent foreign capitalists from invading the country and competing against the native bourgeoisie; the Americo-Liberian politicians enacted a law that only Negroes were entitled to certain economic and political privileges. But now that American finance capital has a stranglehold over Liberia the imperialists are demanding a change in favor of the "open door" policy so that their interests might be better safeguarded.

The authority of the chiefs is to be established because these chiefs are not only big landlords and usurers, but also the official tax-gatherers and labor-recruiting agents of the Government. Within recent years the toiling masses have begun to revolt against them. So in order to bolster up their authority which can be utilized in the services of the imperialists to extort super-profits out of the masses, the Commissioners have appealed to the Government to rally to the aid of these feudal exploiters. With the appointment of Americans in the Government, with the administration of finance, the military and other key positions in the hands of Americans, the Liberian Government will easily be converted into a Bureau of the State Department of Washington.

The Commission talks glibly about abolishing domestic slavery and pawning. *Domestic slavery* has always been widely practiced in Liberia by the native chiefs and the rich Americo-Liberians who hold thousands of men, women, and children enslaved on their plantations. The women and children attend to the household duties as well as the lighter phases of agricultural production, while the men and boys do the heavy labor on the land. *Pawning* is a system whereby a man may give his wife or child to another as security for a loan. During this time the person pawned has to work for the moneylender until the principal and interest on the loan have been liquidated. Through these methods the indigenous tribes are held in bondage. These systems are so deeply rooted in the social life of the country that they will never be abolished by mere legislative enactments. And whatever "freedom" is given will be to make exploitation and oppression easier.

The fifth recommendation aims to abolish the exportation of forced labor to foreign countries. At a glance it might appear that humanitarian reasons prompted the commissioners to make this recommendation, especially in view of the great human sufferings and torture involved. But, oh no! When stripped of its garb, we see the sordid motive of capitalist exploitation back of this ges-

ture. In 1926 the Firestone Co. published a statement in the American press saying that it would require 300,000 to 350,000 laborers in order to carry through its projects. The able-bodied male population in Liberia has been estimated at between 300,000 and 400,000, or one-fifth of the total indigenous population. The present rate at which these laborers have been shipped from the country threatens to deprive the Firestone Company of its quota. Therefore, in order to put an embargo on exportation and thereby facilitate the plans of Firestone, the worthy Commissioners discovered that this is an opportune moment to call upon the Government to curtail the activities of the native slave-dealers.

Now let us turn to the sixth point, which deals with the question of military discipline. The Liberian Constabulary and Frontier Force are made up largely of men from the interior known as "bush-Negroes," who have close economic and social ties with the toiling masses of the hinterland, and because of this, they very frequently display great sympathy for the exploited classes. They have often refused to obey the orders of the officers who are recruited from the rich Americo-Liberian bourgeois families. The Commission, realizing that in the event of a native uprising the army cannot be depended upon, have called upon the Government to strengthen military discipline.

The last point takes the cake—"encouraging the emigration of the Negroes from the United States." One wonders whether this is a concession to Garveyism or not? Did not Garvey attempt to carry out a similar project in 1926? Rumor has it that Dr. Dubois, who was sent to Liberia by President Coolidge to represent the United States Government at the inauguration of President King in that year, was the one who blocked this "black-Zionist" exodus. At that time American capitalism still needed black labor in the United States, therefore the bourgeoisie could not sit idly by and see their black slaves transported away. But four years have gone by and the economic situation in America has changed considerably. The United States is today in the grip of a tremendous crisis resulting in the unemployment of over 8 million workers. Perhaps the Commissioners hoped to help their bourgeois masters out of their dilemma by advocating the repatriation of Negroes back to Africa. Whatever might be the idea in the back of the minds of these "saviors of capitalism," we advise the Negro workers to remain where they are. They built America out of their sweat and blood, and their historic task is to organize their forces and join hands with the class-conscious white workers under the revolutionary leadership of the Communist Party, which alone fights for the interests of all toilers, in order to win their self-determination and social emancipation.

"Back to Africa" whether raised by Garvey or the Liberian slave commissioners is a reactionary slogan aimed to help in saving capitalism in America.

LABOR AND THE CRISIS

Exclusive of the plantation laborers who represent the forced labor class in Liberia, there are a few wage workers, such as carpenters, masons, mechanics, shipwrights, etc., in Monrovia. At various ports along the coast hundreds of men and boys belonging to the Kroo tribe are employed as stevedores, boatmen, and sailors by European and American steamship companies operating in West Africa. The average wage of these marine workers is 20 to 24 cents per day of 12 hours.

This is also another method by which the Liberian Government is able to extract money out of the blood and sweat of this section of the native population. Every steamer which signs on Kroo seamen has to pay the Government one dollar per head, which the steamship company in turn deducts from the already small wages of these workers. The Government collects over \$25,000 per annum from this source. These seamen are also exploited through other bureaucratic methods. For example, whenever the Kroo sailors return home from a voyage they are made to pay the governor of their town one shilling each for the upkeep of the municipality, including the Governor's residence. Furthermore, the governor also imposes a special tax of 3½ shillings on each man for what purports to be sanitary construction, while the central government in Monrovia also collects a poll tax from these workers.

As a result of these various kinds of taxation the Kroo seamen are constantly in debt, for while they are away their families are forced to obtain credit from the Americo-Liberian merchants and tradesmen in order to get food and clothing. The Kroo seamen are entirely unorganized and, therefore, at the mercy of their employers, who treat them in the most shameful manner.

The following incident gives us an idea of the conditions under which these black seamen are forced to work.

"In 1924 fourteen Kroo boys complained that they had been unjustly imprisoned in Warri, a port in Nigeria, as a result of the complaint of a British captain, their employer, who charged that they had refused to obey his orders. The boys stated that they had been frequently compelled to work overtime from three o'clock in the morning to midnight—twenty-one out of twenty-four hours; and that at Warri they had worked storing palm oil from three o'clock one morning to one o'clock the following morning, when they were given permission to rest. At 2.45 A.M. they were ordered to scrub down the deck. At the same time the captain upbraided

them for having left three casks of oil on deck. The boys by this time 'began to jeer and to behave insolently,' whereupon the captain had them arrested and they were placed in a British prison while the steamer sailed away." (Buell, *Native Problem in Africa*. Vol. II, page 775).

From time to time spontaneous strikes break out on board ships, but these are invariably crushed in the bud largely because of the lack of organization and leadership.

During the past six months the already low standard of living of these workers has fallen even lower due to the acute economic and financial crisis in the republic. Liberia, like all colonial countries, is in the grip of the agrarian crisis. The revenue dropped from \$1,270,000 in 1928 to \$985,000 this year. After the stock market crash in New York, last November, Firestone began to curtail production of raw rubber which brought about a catastrophic disorganization in the business life of the country. Thousands of people were turned out of work, both by the Firestone Company and the Government, which is dependent upon Firestone for a considerable portion of its revenue.

The Liberian merchants and traders today find themselves confronted with vast stocks of goods which cannot be disposed of. The Liberian trade correspondent of the *African World*, October 11, 1930, writes:

"Owing to the present state of the world rubber market, the Firestone plantations are continuing to curtail their developments and have already reduced their European and American staffs while the native labor employed there now is some thousands below what it was some little time back."

Two other factors which have contributed to the present panicky situation are: (1) the formation of a Chamber of Commerce by the European and American trading companies in Monrovia in order to protect their common interests and at the same time bring pressure to bear on the Government in order to collect well over a million dollars due them for official supplies, and (2) the closing of the Bank of West Africa, the only bank institution in the country.

ROLE OF NEGRO PETTY-BOURGEOISIE

It is also interesting to observe how American imperialists are using the services of the Negro petty bourgeoisie in order to advance their own interests. The Firestone Company, which was implicated in the slave business of Liberia, had to draw its chestnuts out of the fire, so instead of appointing a white American as United States representative on the slave commission, the politicians in Washington conveniently departed from their traditional policy and ap-

pointed a Negro. When dirty work has to be done, especially in relation with a Negro state, a black lackey has always been found to do the task. These petty-bourgeois Negroes on the other hand are always ready to play the sycophantic role for their imperialist masters, in reward for a few political and economic crumbs from the overladen tables of the white-bourgeois exploiters.

Even a so-called leader like Dr. DuBois, the editor of the *Crisis*, the "left" organ of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, commenting on their appointment of Dr. Johnson, had the following to say:

"The United States Government has been extremely wary in allowing itself to be represented officially by an American of Negro descent. To be sure, we have had ministers in the past to Haiti and Liberia but these representatives concerned only two countries directly. If our memory is not deceived never before in an international commission, where a body like the League of Nations is represented by white men, has the United States nominated a colored man to represent this country. *President Hoover deserves credit. . .*"
(Emphasis mine—G. P.)

Here we see DuBois who considers himself the most radical Negro in America and the greatest champion of the rights of his oppressed race paying compliments to the imperialist Hoover for utilizing the services of the black lackey in order to exonerate Firestone and give America a justification to establish a protectorate over the little Negro Republic of Liberia.

But the American Negroes are not the only ones engaged in this "Uncle Tom" business. The petty-bourgeoisie of Liberia, especially the trading capitalists and the politicians in Monrovia, in order to advance their economic and political interests, are actively cooperating with Negro business men in the United States who are the agents of American finance-capital.

Mr. Faulkner, the opposition leader of the present Liberian administration and one of the leading merchants in Liberia, at the recent session of the National Negro Businessmen's League held in Detroit, said, "It is my desire to secure the cooperation of American business men to investigate business and commercial conditions by a commission," furthermore, "I desire the cooperation of American financiers in order to establish a bank in Monrovia, since the British Bank of Liberia, the only financial institution now there, closes the doors of its agency on the 30th of September and the doors of its Monrovia branch on the 31st of October." (From the *Afro-American*.)

True to their historic role, the Negro bourgeoisie of America and Liberia have sold out to Yankee imperialism.

The Tasks of Our Party in Agrarian Work

By H. PURO

THE Seventh Convention of our Communist Party marked a decisive turning point in the Party's attitude towards agricultural work, as it marked a turning point regarding all other important tasks of our Party. In the thesis presented to the Convention by the Central Committee, the agricultural question was a special point. It was stated in a self-critical manner that "the past failure of the Party to do any work among the agrarian masses is the outgrowth of an indefensible underestimation of that work." The thesis points out the necessity and possibilities of entering into this important work.

In the Seventh Convention a Draft Thesis on the agricultural question (published in *The Communist*) was presented and discussed, and the line of the thesis was adopted as the basis for our agrarian program. Between the time of the Seventh Convention and the November Plenum our agrarian work was further developed by assisting the United Farmers League to prepare a program for this mass organization of oppressed farmers and by helping to revive the organ of the U.F.L., *The United Farmer*.

By taking these steps a basis for our agrarian work was laid during the last summer. But our work in the agrarian field is still very insufficient and unsystematic. Work in this field was limited to Minnesota, North and South Dakota, and some initial steps which were taken on the Pacific Coast and in the southern districts. But the majority of our Party districts have not taken any steps to approach the farmers. Even in our election campaign we had no concrete program and demands for the farmers.

THE NOVEMBER PLENUM ON THE AGRARIAN WORK

Realizing these shortcomings in our agrarian work, the November Plenum made the following decision:

"The development of our work among the farmers has been extremely slow. The favorable conditions for this work have been demonstrated by the development of spontaneous struggles of the impoverished farmers in some sections of the country, especially in the South, as well as by the big increase of the 7,000 votes gained by the Party in North and South Dakota in the elections, an increase of 600 per cent. With the clarification of our basic analysis and

program, by adoption of the line of our draft thesis of the Seventh Convention, the Party must now energetically pass on to the concretization of this line in organization and struggle among the farmers. An Agrarian Department must immediately be formed which will systematically direct the building of a mass farmers' paper as the weapon of leadership of the impoverished farmers in every district in the country. Each District must charge responsible comrades with developing contacts among the farmers and agrarian workers and with the formation of units in the Agricultural Workers Union and Action Committees of the Poor Farmers.

"Every District must work out, in consultation with our farmer contacts, concrete programs of demands directed against foreclosures of mortgages, against oppressive taxation, for local relief measures for the poor farmers, against the local ruling cliques of landlords and bankers on all issues affecting the daily life of the masses. In each locality, especially in the South, we must endeavor to form Leagues of Tenant Farmers and Share Croppers, uniting black and white together. All of this work must result in organizational crystallization, in the development of the financial resources for the work, from among the farmers themselves. Every district must organize committees for the distribution of the farmers' paper and to secure the reflection of the local struggles in this paper and furnish financial support to the paper."

THE SITUATION DEMANDS ACTION

Now that our Party has laid down the correct line, has formulated a policy of action and established a regularly functioning Agrarian Department, the whole Party must take our agrarian work as one of its most important tasks. With the continuance and deepening of the agrarian crisis, the situation of the impoverished farmers has become very critical. The agrarian crisis in this country has been chronic since 1920, but the present worldwide industrial crisis, including the United States, has greatly sharpened the crisis in agriculture. The farmers in the United States are afflicted also with the worst drought recorded in the history of this country. The drought situation last summer affected 30 states of the union. As a result, farmers' income in these states was further reduced by 25 per cent from what it was in 1929. Manipulation of agricultural prices by the trusts, combines, and banks, further aggravates the situation for the impoverished farmers. News items from Idaho state that farmers are using their wheat as fuel, because it is cheaper to burn wheat than wood or coal, the price of wheat being \$9 a ton, whereas wood costs \$10, and coal \$16.50 a ton. This shows the miserable plight into which capitalism has led the big majority of farmers in the United States.

Still more tragic stories come from the South and the states immediately bordering the South. These stories tell how landlords are shooting down the poor tenant farmers on the slightest pretexts.

Tens of thousands of tenant and poor farmers are on the verge of starvation in these states.

HOOVER, HYDE, LEGGE AND COMPANY TRY TO FOOL FARMERS

Pretending to "help" the poor farmers in their miserable plight, President Hoover has created the so-called Federal Farm Board, through which he is expending huge sums for the bankers, assisting them further in their exploitation of the poor farmers. Secretary of Agriculture Hyde is compelled to admit in his report on the agricultural situation that, "due to the low world prices on agricultural products and the effects of the drought, the income from the production of 1930 is expected to be lower than for any season since 1921." The only remedy he is able to suggest is the curtailment of production. Hyde refuses to consider any aid by the federal government for the farmers. He says, "It is evident that supply-and-demand conditions cannot be set aside by legislation, that the dumping of surpluses abroad is not feasible, that the indefinite storing of surpluses tends to prevent rather than to cause a rise of prices, that tariff duties are not effective on commodities produced largely for export, and that subsidies would increase rather than restrain production. *Voluntary curtailment of production is the only logical remedy for the surplus problem.*"

TRIES TO SHIFT BLAME UPON SOVIET UNION

Although compelled to admit that "in some parts of the country thousands of farm families will suffer privation," Hyde refuses to suggest any remedy or aid for the impoverished farmers. Instead, he tries to shift the blame for the privations of American farmers from United States capitalism to the Soviet Union. By attacks against the Soviet Union in a number of speeches and interviews to the newspapers, Hyde tries to make millions of poor farmers in the United States believe that "Russian dumping" is to blame for their miserable plight, and warns that "the producers of the United States should watch carefully the possibility of keen competition from Russia for the next 10 years."

Hyde's attack against the Soviet Union has a twofold purpose: (1) he tries to relieve American capitalism of responsibility for the misery of millions of farmers; (2) he is preparing "public opinion" for an armed attack against the Soviet Union. We must expose these attacks and win over the poor and middle farmers for the defense of the Soviet Union by explaining to them the big improvements that have been achieved under the Soviet system for the farm population.

THE FARMERS WILL NOT BE FOOLED

But in spite of the fake "remedies" of Hoover and his Farm Board man, Legge, and in spite of Hyde's attacks against the Soviet Union, ever growing masses of oppressed and exploited farmers are showing readiness for struggle. This is shown partly by the increased Communist vote in many farming sections, especially in the South and in some northwestern states. Radicalization of the farmers is also clearly indicated in connection with the recent annual convention of the Farmers Union, in which the left wing elements won control of the organization on the basis of fighting against Hoover's administration. The former leadership, which had worked hand in hand with the Hoover administration, was ousted from control. Of course it must be stated that the "left wing" in this convention was not clear. The "left" leaders will betray the interests of the poor farmers. But the revolt of the rank and file against Hoover supporters indicates a development of anti-capitalist sentiment in one of the biggest farmers' mass organizations. It is our duty now to give a clear perspective for these left wing elements and mobilize them into struggle against exploiters of the farmers and against allies of the exploiters within the farmers' organizations. This split in the Farmers Union shows also the possibility of working in such existing organizations where there are a considerable number of poor farmers.

PRACTICAL TASKS IN THE AGRARIAN FIELD

The line laid down by the Seventh Convention and by the Central Committee Plenum must not remain on paper. It must be realized by beginning to do practical work in the agrarian field. The Central Committee has already adopted the Plan of Work, which must be a guide for our work in the immediate period. The following points in this Plan of Work are particularly important:

(1) *Ideological clarification.* It is necessary first of all to have ideological clarification on the agrarian question. For this purpose material has already been sent to the districts. The Central Committee is preparing more material, and re-editing and re-publishing Lenin's writings on American agriculture. On the basis of this material, discussions must be held in every District Committee on the agrarian question. District committees must also arrange discussions in the sections, among the functionaries, and in the units. In these discussions the practical tasks must be linked up, applying our general line to local conditions.

(2) *Development of practical program of action.* The Central

Committee has already decided to develop, on the line of our draft thesis, a practical program of action. This will be done in the near future, on the basis of further clarification and concrete study and experience that our Party is gathering. The incompleteness of our general concrete program should not, however, prevent each District and each section from developing its local action programs. On the contrary, these section programs will help us to develop our general program.

(3) *Our Party must begin immediately to prepare and issue leaflets and pamphlets* on the agrarian question. This is absolutely necessary so that we can agitate and properly educate the poor farming population for the class struggle against capitalism, in alliance with the industrial workers and under the leadership of the Communist Party. The Central Committee has already taken steps in this direction. When we have some agrarian literature we will have additional means of approach to the farmers.

(4) *Circulation of the United Farmer* is one of our immediate and most important tasks. Now that this paper has been revived, it must be made the popular fighting organ and organizer of tenant, small, and a section of the middle farmers. In every district committee an agent must be immediately elected for the distribution of the *United Farmer*. Districts, sections, and units must order bundle copies of the *United Farmer* and arrange Sunday visits to the countryside, for distribution of this paper and at the same time to make contacts with the farmers and develop friendly relations between the industrial workers and the poor farmers.

(5) *Development of local demands.* Besides circulating the paper, one of the purposes of the Sunday visits of our comrades to the countryside must be to study conditions and grievances of the farmers and find out on what points they are ready for immediate action and struggle. On this basis local demands must be formulated and farmers organized into action under the leadership of the United Farmers League township committees, Tenant Farmers Action Committees, and the like. In the process of these activities the United Farmers League can be built upon a mass basis.

(6) *Laying basis for Agricultural Workers Union.* In our agrarian work the agricultural worker, of course, is the most important element. These workers are most ruthlessly exploited. It is our duty to assist them to organize themselves. Therefore we must, in agrarian work, make contacts with these workers and help the Trade Union Unity League to organize them into the Agricultural Workers Union.

(7) *In the South* we must make special efforts to win over the Negro agrarian laborers, share croppers, tenant and poor farmers, who are subjected to conditions of feudal slavery and race hatred. In the work in the southern agrarian field, the Agrarian Department must work in close collaboration with the Negro Department of the Central Committee.

ALLIANCE OF WORKERS AND FARMERS

Lenin has taught us that the proletarian revolution, especially in countries where peasants form a considerable portion of the population, is impossible without winning a decisive section of poor and middle farmers to the side of the revolutionary class struggle. The farmers are a very important section of the population in America, and only through the alliance of these sections of the rural population with the American proletariat, under the leadership of our Party, can we make the proletarian revolution successful.



Resolution on the Negro Question in the United States

Final Text, Confirmed by the Political Commission of the E.C.C.I.

1. The Communist Party of the United States has always acted openly and energetically against Negro oppression and has thereby won increasing sympathy among the Negro population. In its own ranks, too, the Party has relentlessly fought the slightest evidences of white chauvinism, and has purged itself of the gross opportunism of the Lovestoneites. According to the assertions of these people, the "industrial revolution" will sweep away the remnants of slavery in the agricultural South, and will proletarianize the Negro peasantry, so that the Negro question, as a special national question, would thereby be presumably solved, or could be put off until the time of the socialist revolution in America. But the Party has not yet succeeded in overcoming in its own ranks all underestimation of the struggle for the slogan of the right of self-determination, and still less succeeded in doing away with all *lack of clarity* on the Negro question. In the Party discussion the question was often wrongly put and much erroneous counterpoising of phases of the question occurred; thus, for instance: Should the slogan of social equality *or* the slogan of the right of self-determination of the Negroes be emphasized? Should only propaganda for the Negroes' right to self-determination be carried on, or should this slogan be considered as a slogan of action? Should separatist tendencies among the Negroes be supported or opposed? Is the Southern region, thickly populated by Negroes, to be looked upon as a colony, or as an "integral part of the national economy of the United States," where presumably a revolutionary situation cannot arise independent of the general revolutionary development in the United States?

In the interest of the utmost clarity of ideas on this question, the Negro question in the United States must be viewed from the standpoint of its peculiarity, namely, as the question of an *oppressed nation*, which is in a peculiar and extraordinarily distressing situation of national oppression not only in view of the prominent *racial distinctions* (marked difference in the color of skin, etc.), but above all, because of considerable *social antagonism* (remnants of slavery). This introduces into the American Negro question an important, *peculiar* trait which is absent from the national question of other oppressed peoples. Furthermore, it is necessary to face clearly the inevitable distinction between the position of the Negro in the *South* and in the *North*, owing to the fact that at least three-fourths of

the entire *Negro* population of the United States (12,000,000) live in compact masses in the South, most of them being peasants and agricultural laborers in a state of semi-serfdom, settled in the "Black Belt" and constituting the majority of the population, whereas the Negroes in the northern states are for the most part industrial workers of the lowest categories who have recently come to the various industrial centers from the South (having often even fled from there).

The struggle of the Communists for the *equal rights* of the Negroes applies to all Negroes, in the North as well as in the South. The struggle for this slogan embraces all or almost all of the important special interests of the Negroes in the North, but not in the South, where the main Communist slogan must be: *The Right of Self-Determination of the Negroes in the Black Belt.* These two slogans, however are most closely connected. The Negroes in the North are very much interested in winning the right of self-determination of the Negro population of the Black Belt and can thereby hope for strong support for the establishment of true equality of the Negroes in the North. In the South the Negroes are suffering no less, but still more than in the North from the glaring lack of all equality; for the most part the struggle for their most urgent partial demands in the Black Belt is nothing more than the struggle for their equal rights, and only the fulfillment of their main slogan, the right of self-determination in the Black Belt, can assure them of true equality.

I. THE STRUGGLE FOR THE EQUAL RIGHTS OF THE NEGROES

2. The basis for the demand of equality of the Negroes is provided by the *special* yoke to which the Negroes in the United States are subjected by the ruling classes. In comparison with the situation of the other various nationalities and races oppressed by American imperialism, the yoke of the Negroes in the United States is of a peculiar nature and particularly oppressive. This is partly due to the historical past of the American Negroes as imported slaves, but is much more due to the still existing slavery of the American Negro which is immediately apparent, for example, in comparing their situation even with the situation of the Chinese and Japanese workers in the West of the United States, or with the lot of the Filipinos (Malay race) who are under colonial repression.

It is only a Yankee bourgeois lie to say that the yoke of Negro slavery has been lifted in the United States. Formally it has been abolished, but in practice the great majority of the Negro masses in the South are living in slavery in the literal sense of the word. Formally, they are "free" as "tenant farmers" or "contract la-

borers" on the big plantations of the white land owners, but actually, they are completely in the power of their exploiters; they are not permitted, or else it is made impossible for them to leave their exploiters; if they do leave the plantations, they are brought back and in many cases whipped; many of them are simply taken prisoner under various pretexts and, bound together with long chains, they have to do compulsory labor on the roads. All through the South, the Negroes are not only deprived of all rights, and subjected to the arbitrary will of the white exploiters, but they are also socially ostracized, that is, they are treated in general not as human beings, but as cattle. But this ostracism regarding Negroes is not limited to the South. Not only in the South but throughout the United States, the lynching of Negroes is permitted to go unpunished. Everywhere the American bourgeoisie surrounds the Negroes with an atmosphere of social ostracism.

The 100 per cent Yankee arrogance divides the American population into a series of castes, among which the Negroes constitute, so to speak, the caste of the "untouchables," who are in a still lower category than the lowest categories of human society, the immigrant laborers, the yellow immigrants, and the Indians. In all big cities the Negroes have to live in special segregated Ghettos (and of course, have to pay extremely high rent). In practice, marriage between Negroes and whites is prohibited, and in the South this is even forbidden by law. In various other ways, the Negroes are segregated, and if they overstep the bounds of the segregation they immediately run the risk of being ill-treated by the 100 per cent bandits. As wage earners, the Negroes are forced to perform the lowest and most difficult work; they generally receive lower wages than the white workers and do not always get the same wages as white workers doing similar work, and their treatment is the very worst. Many American Federation of Labor trade unions do not admit Negro workers in their ranks, and a number have organized special trade unions for Negroes so that they will not have to let them into their "good white society."

This whole system of "segregation" and "Jim-Crowism" is a special form of national and social oppression under which the American Negroes have much to suffer. The origin of all this is not difficult to find: this Yankee arrogance towards the Negroes stinks of the disgusting atmosphere of the old slave market. This is downright robbery and slave whipping barbarism at the peak of capitalist "culture."

3. The demand for equal rights in our sense of the word, means not only demanding the same rights for the Negroes as the whites have in the United States at the present time, but also demanding

that the Negroes should be granted all rights and other advantages which we demand for the corresponding oppressed classes of whites (workers and other toilers). Thus in our sense of the word, the demand for equal rights means a continuous work of abolishment of all forms of economic and political oppression of the Negroes, as well as their social exclusion, the insults perpetrated against them and their segregation. This is to be obtained by constant struggle by the white and black workers for effective legal protection for the Negroes in all fields, as well as actual enforcement of their equality and the combating of every expression of Negrophobia. One of the first Communist slogans is: Death for Negro lynching!

The struggle for the equal rights of the Negroes does not in any way exclude recognition and support for the Negroes' right to their own special schools, government organs, etc., wherever the Negro masses put forward such national demands of their own accord. This will, however, in all probability occur to any great extent only in the Black Belt. In other parts of the country the Negroes suffer above all from being shut out from the general social institutions and not from being prohibited from setting up their own national institutions. With the development of the Negro intellectuals (principally in the "free" professions) and of a thin layer of small capitalist business people, there have appeared lately not only definite efforts for developing a purely national Negro culture, but also outspoken bourgeois tendencies towards Negro nationalism. The broad masses of the Negro population in the big industrial centers of the North are, however, making no efforts whatsoever to maintain and cultivate a national aloofness. They are, on the contrary, working for assimilation. This effort of the Negro masses can do much in the future to facilitate the progressive process of amalgamating the whites and Negroes into *one* nation, and it is in no circumstances the task of the Communists to give support to bourgeois nationalism in its fight with the progressive assimilation tendencies of the Negro working masses.

4. The slogan of equal rights of the Negroes *without a relentless struggle in practice against all manifestations of Negrophobia on the part of the American bourgeoisie* can be nothing but a deceptive liberal gesture of a sly slave owner or his agent. This slogan is in fact repeated by "socialist" and many other bourgeois politicians and philanthropists, who want to get publicity for themselves by appealing to the "sense of justice" of the American bourgeoisie in the individual treatment of the Negroes, and thereby side-track attention from the one effective struggle against the shameful system of "white superiority": from the *class struggle against the Ameri-*

can bourgeoisie. The struggle for equal rights for the Negroes is, in fact, one of the most important parts of the proletarian class struggle of the United States.

The struggle for equal rights for the Negroes must certainly take the form of common struggle by the white and black workers.

The increasing unity of the various working class elements provokes constant attempts on the part of the American bourgeoisie to play one group against another, particularly the white workers against the black, and the black workers against the immigrant workers, and vice versa, and thus to promote the divisions within the working class, which contribute to the bolstering up of American capitalist rule. The Party must carry on a ruthless struggle against all these attempts of the bourgeoisie and do everything to strengthen the bonds of class solidarity of the working class on a lasting basis.

In the struggle for equal rights for the Negroes, however, it is the duty of the *white* workers to march *at the head* of this struggle. They must everywhere make a breach in the walls of segregation and "Jim-Crowism" which have been set up by bourgeois slave-market morality. They must most ruthlessly unmask and condemn the hypocritical reformists and bourgeois "friends of Negroes" who, in reality, are only interested in strengthening the power of the enemies of the Negroes. They, the white workers, must boldly jump at the throat of the 100 per cent bandits who strike a Negro in the face. This struggle will be the test of real international solidarity of the American white workers.

It is the special duty of the revolutionary Negro workers to carry on tireless activity among the Negro working masses to free them of their distrust of the white proletariat and draw them into the common front of the revolutionary class struggle against the bourgeoisie. They must emphasize with all force that the first rule of proletarian morality is that no worker who wants to be an equal member of *his class* must ever serve as a strike breaker or a supporter of bourgeois politics. They must ruthlessly unmask all Negro politicians corrupted or directly bribed by American bourgeois ideology, who systematically interfere with the real proletarian struggle for equal rights for the Negroes.

Furthermore, the Communist Party must resist all tendencies within its own ranks to ignore the Negro question as a national question in the United States, not only in the South but also in the North. It is advisable for the Communist Party in the North to abstain from the establishment of any special Negro organizations, and in place of this to bring the black and white workers together

in common organizations of struggle and joint action. Effective steps must be taken for the organization of Negro workers in the Trade Union Unity League and revolutionary trade unions. Underestimation of this work takes various forms: lack of energy in recruiting Negro workers, in keeping them in our ranks and in drawing them into the full life of the trade unions, selecting, educating and promoting Negro forces to leading functions in the organization.

The Party must make itself entirely responsible for the carrying through of this very important work. It is most urgently necessary to publish a popular mass paper dealing with the Negro question, edited by white and black comrades, and to have all active followers of this paper grouped organizationally.

II. THE STRUGGLE FOR THE RIGHT OF SELF-DETERMINATION OF THE NEGROES IN THE BLACK BELT

5. It is not correct to consider the Negro zone of the South as a colony of the United States. Such a characterization of the Black Belt could be based in some respects only upon artificially construed analogies, and would create superfluous difficulties for the clarification of ideas. In rejecting this estimation, however, it should not be overlooked that it would be none the less false to try to make a fundamental distinction between the character of national oppression to which the colonial peoples are subjected and the yoke of other oppressed nations. Fundamentally, national oppression in both cases is of the same character, and is in the Black Belt in many respects worse than in a number of actual colonies. On one hand the Black Belt is not in itself, either economically or politically, such a united whole as to warrant its being called a special colony of the United States. But on the other hand, this zone is not, either economically or politically, such an integral part of the whole United States as any other part of the country. Industrialization in the Black Belt is not, as is generally the case in colonies properly speaking, in contradiction with the ruling interests of the imperialist bourgeoisie, which has in its hands the monopoly of all the industry; but in so far as industry is developed here, it will in no way bring a solution to the question of living conditions of the oppressed Negro majority, nor to the agrarian question, which lies at the basis of the national question. On the contrary, this question is still further aggravated as a result of the increase of the contradictions arising from the pre-capitalist forms of exploitation of the Negro peasantry and of a considerable portion of the Negro proletariat (miners, forestry workers, etc.) in the Black Belt, and at the same time, owing to the industrial

development here, the growth of the most important driving force of the national revolution, the black working class, is especially strengthened. Thus, the prospect for the future is not an inevitable dying away of the national revolutionary Negro movement in the South, as Lovestone prophesied, but on the contrary, a great advance of this movement and the rapid approach of a revolutionary crisis in the Black Belt.

6. Owing to the peculiar situation in the Black Belt (the fact that the majority of the resident Negro population are farmers and agricultural laborers and that the capitalist economic system as well as political class rule there is not only of a special kind, but to a great extent still has pre-capitalist and semi-colonial features), the right of self-determination of the Negroes as the *main slogan* of the Communist Party in the Black Belt is appropriate. This, however, does not in any way mean that the struggle for equal rights of the Negroes in the Black Belt is less necessary or less well founded than it is in the North. On the contrary, here, owing to the whole situation, this struggle is even better founded; but the form of this slogan does not sufficiently correspond with the *concrete* requirements of the liberation struggle of the Negro population. Anyway, it is clear that in most cases it is a question of the daily conflicts of interest between the Negroes and the white rulers in the Black Belt on the subject of infringement of the most elementary equality rights of the Negroes by the whites. Daily events of the kind are: all Negro persecutions, all arbitrary economic acts of robbery by the white exploiters ("Black Man's Burden") and the whole system of so-called "Jim-Crowism." Here, however, it is very important in connection with all these concrete cases of conflict to concentrate the attention of the Negro masses not so much on the general demands of mere equality, but much more on some of the revolutionary *basic demands* arising from the concrete situation.

The slogan of the right of self-determination occupies the central place in the liberation struggle of the Negro population in the Black Belt against the yoke of American imperialism. But this slogan, as we see it, must be carried out only in connection with two other basic demands. Thus, there are three basic demands to be kept in mind in the Black Belt, namely, the following:

(a) *Confiscation of the landed property of the white landowners and capitalists for the benefit of the Negro farmers.* The landed property in the hands of the white American exploiters constitutes the most important material basis of the entire system of national oppression and serfdom of the Negroes in the Black Belt. More than three-quarters of all Negro farmers here are bound in actual

serfdom to the farms and plantations of the white exploiters by the feudal system of "share cropping." Only on paper and not in practice are they freed from the yoke of their former slavery. The same holds completely true for the great mass of black contract laborers. Here the contract is only the capitalist expression of the chains of the old slavery, which even today are not infrequently applied in their natural iron form on the roads of the Black Belt (chain gang work). These are the main forms of present Negro slavery in the Black Belt, and no breaking of the chains of this slavery is possible without confiscating all the landed property of the white masters. Without this revolutionary measure, without the agrarian revolution, the right of self-determination of the Negro population would be only a Utopia or, at best, would remain only on paper without changing in any way the actual enslavement.

(b) *Establishment of the state unity of the Black Belt.* At the present time this Negro zone—precisely for the purpose of facilitating national oppression—is artificially split up and divided into a number of various states which include distant localities having a majority of white population. If the right of self-determination of the Negroes is to be put into force, it is necessary wherever possible to bring together into one governmental unit all districts of the South where the majority of the settled population consists of Negroes. Within the limits of this state there will of course remain a fairly significant white minority which must submit to the right of self-determination of the Negro majority. There is no other possible way of carrying out in a democratic manner the right of self-determination of the Negroes. Every plan regarding the establishment of the Negro state with an exclusively Negro population in America (and of course, still more exporting it to Africa) is nothing but an unreal and reactionary caricature of the fulfillment of the right of self-determination of the Negroes, and every attempt to isolate and transport the Negroes would have the most damaging effect upon their interests. Above all, it would violate the right of the Negro farmers in the Black Belt not only to their present residences and their land, but also to the land owned by the white landlords and cultivated by Negro labor.

(c) *Right of self-determination.* This means complete and unlimited right of the Negro majority to exercise governmental authority in the entire territory of the Black Belt, as well as to decide upon the relations between their territory and other nations, particularly the United States. It would not be right of self-determination in our sense of the word if the Negroes in the Black Belt had the right of determination only in cases which concerned

exclusively the Negroes and did not affect the whites, because the most important cases arising here are bound to affect the whites as well as Negroes. First of all, true right to self-determination means that the Negro majority and not the white minority in the entire territory of the administratively united Black Belt exercises the right of administering governmental, legislative, and judicial authority. At the present time all this power is concentrated in the hands of the white bourgeoisie and landlords. It is they who appoint all officials, it is they who dispose of public property, it is they who determine the taxes, it is they who govern and make the laws. Therefore, *the overthrow of this class rule* in the Black Belt is unconditionally necessary in the struggle for the Negroes' right to self-determination. This, however, means at the same time the overthrow of the yoke of American imperialism in the Black Belt on which the forces of the local white bourgeoisie depend. Only in this way, only if the Negro population of the Black Belt wins its freedom from American imperialism even to the point of deciding *itself* the relations between its country and other governments, especially the United States, will it win real and complete self-determination. One should demand from the beginning that no armed forces of American imperialism should remain on the territory of the Black Belt.

7. As stated in the letter of the Political Secretariat of the E. C. C. I. of March 16, 1930, the Communists must "*unreservedly* carry on a struggle" for the self-determination of the Negro population in the Black Belt in accordance with what has been set forth above. It is incorrect and harmful to interpret the Communist standpoint to mean that the Communists stand for the right of self-determination of the Negroes only up to a certain point but not beyond this, to, for example, the right of separation. It is also incorrect to say that the Communists are only to carry on propaganda or agitation for the right of self-determination, but not to develop any activity to bring this about. No, it is of the utmost importance for the Communist Party to reject any such limitation of its struggle for this slogan. Even if the situation does not yet warrant the raising of the question of uprising, one should not limit oneself at present to propaganda for the demand, "Right to Self-Determination," but should organize mass actions, such as demonstrations, strikes, tax boycott movements, etc.

Moreover, the Party cannot make its stand for this slogan dependent upon any conditions, even the condition that the proletariat has the hegemony in the national revolutionary Negro movement or that the majority of the Negro population in the Black Belt adopts

the Soviet form (as Pepper demanded), etc. It goes without saying that the Communists in the Black Belt will and must try to win over all working elements of the Negroes, that is, the majority of the population, to their side and to convince them not only that they must win the right of self-determination but also that they must make use of this right in accordance with the Communist program. But this cannot be made a *condition* for the stand of the Communists in favor of the right of self-determination of the Negro population. If, or so long as, the majority of this population wishes to handle the situation in the Black Belt in a different manner from that which we Communists would like, its complete right to self-determination must be recognized. This right we must defend as a free democratic right.

8. In general, the Communist Party of the United States has kept to this correct line recently in its struggle for the right of self-determination of the Negroes, even though this line—in some cases—has been unclearly or erroneously expressed. In particular, some misunderstanding has arisen from the failure to make a clear distinction between the demand for “right of self-determination” and the demand for governmental separation, simply treating these two demands in the same way. However, these two demands are not identical. Complete right to self-determination includes also the right to governmental separation, but does not necessarily imply that the Negro population should *make use of this* right in all circumstances, that is, that it must actually separate or attempt to separate the Black Belt from the existing governmental federation with the United States. If it desires to separate, it must be free to do so; but if it prefers to remain federated with the United States it must also be free to do that. This is the correct meaning of the idea of self-determination, and it must be recognized quite independently of whether the United States is still a capitalist state or whether a proletarian dictatorship has already been established there.

It is, however, another matter if it is not a case of the *right* of the oppressed nation concerned to separate or to maintain governmental contact, but if the question is treated on its merits: whether it is to work for state separation, whether it is to struggle *for this* or not. This is another question, on which the stand of the Communists must *vary* according to the concrete conditions. If the proletariat has come into power in the United States, the Communist Negroes will not come out for but *against* separation of the Negro Republic from federation with the United States. But the *right* of the Negroes to governmental separation will be *unconditionally realized* by the Communist Party; it will unconditionally give the

Negro population of the Black Belt freedom of choice even on this question. Only when the proletariat has come into power in the United States the Communists will carry on propaganda among the working masses of the Negro population against separation, in order to convince them that it is much better and in the interest of the Negro nation for the Black Belt to be a free republic, where the Negro majority has complete right of self-determination but remains governmentally federated with the great proletarian republic of the United States. The bourgeois counter-revolutionists, on the other hand, will then be interested in boosting the separation tendencies in the ranks of the various nationalities in order to utilize separatist nationalism as a barrier for the bourgeois counter-revolution against the consolidation of the proletarian dictatorship.

But the question at the present time is not this. As long as capitalism rules in the United States the Communists cannot come out against governmental separation of the Negro zone from the United States. They recognize that this separation from the imperialist United States would be preferable, from the standpoint of the national interests of the Negro population, to their present oppressed state, and therefore, the Communists are ready at any time to offer all their support if only the working masses of the Negro population are ready to take up the struggle for governmental independence of the Black Belt. At the present time, however, the situation in the national struggle in the South is not such as to win mass support of the working Negroes for this separatist struggle; and it is not the task of the Communists to call upon them to separate, without taking into consideration the existing situation and the desires of the Negro masses.

The situation in the Negro question in the United States, however, may undergo a radical change. It is even probable that the separatist efforts to obtain complete state independence of the Black Belt will gain ground among the Negro masses of the South in the near future. This is connected with the prospective sharpening of the national conflicts in the South, with the advance of the national revolutionary Negro movement, and with the exceptionally brutal fascist aggressiveness of the white exploiters of the South, as well as with the support of this aggressiveness by the central government authority of the United States. In this sharpening of the situation in the South, Negro separatism will presumably increase, and the question of the independence of the Black Belt will become the question of the day. Then the Communist Party must also face this question and, if the circumstances seem favorable, must stand up with all strength and courage for the struggle to win independ-

ence and for the establishment of a Negro republic in the Black Belt.

9. The general relation of Communists to separatist tendencies among the Negroes, described above, cannot mean that Communists associate themselves at present, or generally speaking, during capitalism, indiscriminately and without criticism with all the separatist currents of the various bourgeois or petty bourgeois Negro groups. For there is not only a national-revolutionary, but also a reactionary Negro separatism, for instance, that represented by Garvey. His Utopia of an isolated Negro state (regardless of whether in Africa or America, if it is supposed to consist of Negroes only) pursues only the political aim of diverting the Negro masses from the real liberation struggle against American imperialism.

It would be a mistake to imagine that the "right of self-determination" slogan is a truly revolutionary slogan only in connection with the demand for complete separation. *The question of power is decided not only through* the demand of separation, but just as much through the demand of the *right* to decide the separation question and self-determination in general. A direct question of power is also the demand of confiscation of the land of the white exploiters in the South, as well as the demand of the Negroes that the entire Black Belt be amalgamated into a state unit.

Hereby, every single fundamental demand of the liberation struggle of the Negroes in the Black Belt is such that—if once thoroughly understood by the Negro masses and adopted as their slogan—it will lead them into the struggle for the overthrow of the power of the ruling bourgeoisie, which is impossible without such revolutionary struggle. One cannot deny that it is just possible for the Negro population of the Black Belt to win the right to self-determination during capitalism; but it is perfectly clear and indubitable that this is possible only through successful revolutionary struggle for power against the American bourgeoisie, through *wresting* the Negroes' right to self-determination from American imperialism. Thus, the slogan of right to self-determination is a real slogan of national rebellion which, to be considered as such, need not be supplemented by proclaiming struggle for the complete separation of the Negro zone, at least not at present. But it must be made perfectly clear to the Negro masses that the slogan "right to self-determination" includes the demand of full freedom for them to decide even the question of complete separation. We demand freedom of separation, real right of self-determination, wrote Lenin, "certainly not in order to 'recommend' separation, but on the contrary, in order to facilitate and accelerate the democratic rapprochement and unification of nations." For the same purpose,

Lenin's party, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, bestowed after its seizure of power on all the peoples hitherto oppressed by Russian Tsarism, the full right to self-determination, including the right of complete separation, and achieved thereby its enormous successes with regard to the democratic rapprochement and voluntary unification of nations.

10. The slogan for the right of self-determination and the other fundamental slogans of the Negro question in the Black Belt do not exclude but rather pre-suppose an energetic development of the struggle for concrete *partial demands* linked up with the daily needs and afflictions of wide masses of working Negroes. In order to avoid, in this connection, the danger of opportunist back-slidings, Communists must above all remember this:

(a) The direct aims and partial demands around which a partial struggle develops are to be linked up in the course of the struggle with the revolutionary fundamental slogans brought up by the question of power, in a popular manner corresponding to the mood of the masses. (Confiscation of the big landholdings, establishment of governmental unity of the Black Belt, right of self-determination of the Negro population in the Black Belt.) Bourgeois-socialist tendencies to oppose such a revolutionary widening and deepening of the fighting demands must be fought.

(b) One should not venture to draw up a complete program of some kind, or a system of "positive" partial demands. Such programs on the part of petty-bourgeois politicians should be exposed as attempts to divert the masses from the necessary hard struggles by fostering reformist and democratic illusions among them. Every positive partial demand which might crop up is to be considered from the viewpoint of whether it is in keeping with our revolutionary fundamental slogans or whether it is of a reformist or reactionary tendency. Every kind of national oppression which arouses the indignation of the Negro masses can be used as a suitable point of departure for the development of partial struggles, during which the abolition of such oppressions, as well as their prevention through revolutionary struggle against the ruling exploiting dictatorship, must be demanded.

(c) Everything should be done to bring wide masses of Negroes into these partial struggles. This is important—and not to carry the various partial demands to such an ultra-radical point that the mass of working Negroes are no longer able to recognize them as *their own*. Without a real mobilization of the mass-movements—in spite of the sabotage of the bourgeois reformist Negro politicians—even the best Communist partial demands get hung up. On the other hand, even some relatively insignificant acts of the Ku Klux

Klan bandits in the Black Belt can become the occasion of important political movements, provided the Communists are able to organize the resistance of the indignant Negro masses. In such cases, mass movements of this kind can easily develop into real rebellion. This rests on the fact that—as Lenin said—“Every act of national oppression calls forth resistance on the part of the masses of the population, and the tendency of every act of resistance on the part of oppressed peoples is the national uprising.”

(d) Communists must fight in the *forefront* of the national-liberation movement and must do their utmost for the progress of this mass movement and its revolutionization. Negro Communists must *clearly dissociate* themselves from all bourgeois currents in the Negro movement, must indefatigably oppose the spread of the influence of the bourgeois groups on the working Negroes. In dealing with them they must apply the Communist tactic laid down by the Sixth C.I. Congress with regard to the colonial question, in order to guarantee *the hegemony of the Negro proletariat* in the national liberation movement of the Negro population, and to coordinate wide masses of the Negro peasantry in a steady fighting alliance with the proletariat.

(e) One must work with the utmost energy for the establishment and consolidation of *Communist Party organizations* and revolutionary *trade unions* in the South. Furthermore, immediate measures must be taken for the organization of proletarian and peasant *self-defense* against the Ku Klux Klan. For this purpose the Communist Party is to give further instructions.

11. It is particularly incumbent on Negro Communists to criticize consistently the half-heartedness and hesitations of the petty-bourgeois national-revolutionary Negro leaders in the liberation struggle of the Black Belt, exposing them before the masses. All national reformist currents as, for instance, Garveyism, which are an obstacle to the revolutionization of the Negro masses, must be fought systematically and with the utmost energy. Simultaneously, Negro Communists must carry on among the Negro masses an energetic struggle against nationalist moods directed indiscriminately against all whites, workers as well as capitalists, Communists as well as imperialists. Their constant call to the Negro masses must be: *Revolutionary struggle against the ruling white bourgeoisie, through a fighting alliance with the revolutionary white proletariat!* Negro Communists must indefatigably explain to the mass of the Negro population that even if many white workers in America are still infected with Negrophobia, the American proletariat, as a class, which owing to its struggle against the American bourgeoisie represents the only truly revolutionary class, will be the only real mainstay of Negro liberation. In as far as successes in the national-

RESOLUTION ON U. S. NEGRO QUESTION 167

revolutionary struggle of the Negro population of the South for its right to self-determination are already possible under capitalism, they can be achieved only if this struggle is effectively supported by proletarian mass actions on a large scale in the other parts of the United States. But it is also clear that "only a victorious proletarian revolution will *finally decide* the agrarian question and the national question in the South of the United States, in the interest of the predominating mass of the Negro population of the country." (*Colonial Theses of the Sixth World Congress.*)

12. The struggle regarding the Negro question in the North must be linked up with the liberation struggle in the South, in order to endow the Negro movement throughout the United States with the necessary effective strength. After all, in the North, as well as in the South, it is a question of the real emancipation of the American Negroes, which has in fact never taken place. The Communist Party of the United States must bring into play its entire revolutionary energy, in order to mobilize the widest possible masses of the white and black proletariat of the United States, not by words, but by deeds, for real effective support of the struggle for the liberation of the Negroes. Enslavement of the Negroes is one of the most important foundations of the imperialist dictatorship of United States capitalism. The more American imperialism fastens its yoke on the millions-strong Negro masses, the more must the Communist Party develop the mass struggle for Negro emancipation, and the better use it must make of all conflicts which arise out of the national difference, as an incentive for revolutionary mass actions against the bourgeoisie. This is as much in the direct interest of the proletarian revolution in America. Whether the rebellion of the Negroes is to be the outcome of a general revolutionary situation in the United States, whether it is to originate in the whirlpool of decisive fights for power by the working class, for proletarian dictatorship, or whether on the contrary the Negro rebellion will be the prelude of gigantic struggles for power by the American proletariat, cannot be foretold now. But in either contingency it is essential for the Communist Party *to make an energetic beginning now—at the present moment*—with the organization of *joint mass struggles* of white and black workers against Negro oppression. This alone will enable us to get rid of the bourgeois white chauvinism which is polluting the ranks of the white workers in America, to overcome the distrust of the Negro masses caused by the inhuman barbarous Negro slave traffic still carried on by the American bourgeoisie—in as much as it is directed even against all white workers—and to win over to our side these millions of Negroes as active fellow-fighters in the struggle for the overthrow of bourgeois power throughout America.

Soviets in China

By L. MAGYAR

(Concluded from the January issue.*)

CHARACTER OF THE CHINESE REVOLUTION

THE Chinese worker and the peasant, the very course of the revolution on soviet territory, decided the question of the social-economic content of the revolution.

What, after all, is taking place in the soviet territories? Landlords' lands are being confiscated and turned over to the peasants, which will not pass without plebian revenge against the landlords, the gentry, and all the other class enemies of the peasantry. Old taxes imposed by the militia are abolished. All contracts of servitude, deeds, and mortgages are being cancelled and destroyed. Property, houses, equipment and live stock of the landlords and mortgagees are being confiscated and distributed among the workers, peasants, and Red soldiers. A Red Guard is being established, a Red Army is being built up, an eight-hour day is being introduced, and a certain minimum of social legislation for the protection of the workers, particularly of working women and youth, is being put into effect.

These are the chief measures undertaken by the soviet power. Simultaneously, the Soviets struggle for the complete independence of the country, for the cancellation of all the iniquitous treaties, and, without refusing to treat with the imperialists, they insist upon the complete independence of Soviet China. The soviet power wages a struggle for unifying the country under the power of the Soviets. And all this, taken together, means that in the soviet terri-

*The phonetic spelling of the Chinese names in the January section of this article was not properly checked. Some of the more important changes of spelling which we ask our readers to make are as follows:

Chang, Tuan, Sun, and Ming to Han, Tang, Sung, and Ming (p. 74). Da-e (Dairen) to Tah-yeh (p. 76). Chang Fa-guy to Chang Fa-kui; Tsien-t sien, Tsien-soo, Kwan-tung, and Hupei to Chekiang, Kiangsu, Kwantung, and Hupeh; Kwangsu to Kansu (p. 80). Wang Tsin-hwei, Cheng Gum-bo to Wang Chingwei, Chen Kungo-po (p. 81). Szechuan to Szechuan (p. 83). Uhan to Wuhan; Kiangsu to Kansu (p. 84). Futsian and Tsiani to Fukien and Kiangsi; Mao Tse-du and Chu-de to Mao Tse-tung and Chu-teh.

The corresponding changes should be made in other parts of the article.

teries of China an anti-imperialist and agrarian revolution is taking place, i.e., in its social-economic content, a bourgeois-democratic revolution. Of socialism there is nothing yet in the soviet territories of China. The revolution there is not as yet proletarian. In scattered soviet regions some over-zealous communists attempted to introduce socialist measures. In western Fu-Kien some comrades dreamt of planned economy. There were attempts at regulating market relations. There were attempts at nationalizing some branches of industry. There were attempts at establishing state farms on the lands of kumirs and monasteries, at transforming large farms into state farms. There were attempts at organizing collective farms. More than that, at the first conference of the Chinese Soviets some communists attempted to put through a temporary law providing that large farms be turned into state farms and that the lands newly distributed among the agrarian workers and poor peasantry be unified into collective farms. All these attempts ended unsuccessfully. The revolution has not yet risen to the point of solving basic tasks of a proletarian revolution. The soviet power regulates prices only here and there, where blockade, counter-revolutionary sabotage or speculation sky-rocket prices and attempt to doom the revolution to famine.

The conduct of the war, or the interests of the agrarian revolution, often dictate requisitioning and at times even confiscating some enterprises essential to the war. At some places the agricultural wage workers and poor peasantry, newly awarded land but without any means of production, gather up several confiscated buffalo or oxen, or several plow-shares, create out of them some sort of a collective farming station, and collectively plow the lands taken from the landlords. Among the masses of poor peasantry there is an elemental tendency toward these primitive forms of collectivized economy. But all this does not change the basic content or character of the revolution. It is a bourgeois-democratic, anti-imperialist, agrarian revolution.

Theories and concepts are rapidly tested in the flame of revolutions. Trotsky has for the last few years attempted to prove theoretically that in colonial countries such as China and India, only a proletarian revolution is possible. With all his might Trotsky is trying to prove the correctness of his Trotskyist theory of permanent revolution. The Leninist conception of a bourgeois-democratic revolution he declared a "working hypothesis." He proposed to the workers of China and India to chase to hell the communists who recognize the bourgeois-democratic stage in the development of the revolution. What has become of the

Trotskyist concept of the Chinese revolution in the light of facts, in the light of the actual course of the revolution? Nothing remained of it. The victory of the Chinese Soviets is the victory of the Leninist concept of colonial, anti-imperialist, anti-feudal revolutions.

Does this mean that the revolution is only clearing the road for the ideally rapid development of capitalism? Does this mean it is merely opening up an "American way" of developing agrarian economy? Does this mean that on this land, cleared of all feudal snarls, capitalism will develop? By no means! So far in the soviet territories the commodity market relations develop better than in Kuomintang China. But there are better prerequisites in the external and internal situation of China for the transformation of the Chinese bourgeois-democratic revolution into a proletarian socialist revolution, than there were perhaps for the transformation of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into a socialist revolution in Russia in 1905.

The driving power of the revolution in China is the workers and the broad masses of the peasantry under the leadership of the proletariat. Not the entire peasantry, but the basic masses of the peasantry—the poor and middle peasantry—came out for the agrarian revolution. The rich Chinese peasant, applying pre-capitalist servitude methods of exploitation rather than present-day capitalist methods, is the sworn enemy of the revolution. He will sooner rent his land for servitude-rental, than rent outright. He is also a usurer. He fears not only the class struggle of the bitterly exploited farm laborer, but he also fears the full swing of the anti-feudal revolution, which hits him, the rich peasant, as a lessor of lands and as a usurer. The rich peasant fights against the equitable redivision of land, against this basic slogan of the agrarian revolution. Behind the proletariat, follow only the poor and middle peasantry. Such a setting of the class forces assures a rapid transformation to socialist measures.

The depth of the crisis, the intensity of the struggle against the imperialists and the counter-revolution, pre-condition the basic peasant masses to agree to a series of far-reaching socialist measures of the proletariat.

The larger enterprises in China, the banks, railroads, mines, blast furnaces, are in the hands of the imperialists. The Chinese Soviets have set it as their aim to nationalize the foreign enterprises. Subject to confiscation and to nationalization are also the enterprises of Chinese capitalists, who actively aid the counter-revolution or who sabotage production.

Nationalization of the land, which is not yet being introduced, but for which the Soviets must already carry on agitation, under the conditions of the soviet power will prove a powerful lever towards rebuilding village economy. Nationalization of the irrigation systems, which is being introduced, will become a powerful lever towards putting village economy on the socialist road of development.

A majority in the soviet government in China are communists. The revolution is led by the party of the proletariat. This means that the state power, as the midwife of the new social order, will be consciously and systematically utilized for accelerating the transformation into socialism.

Already there is the U.S.S.R., the land of proletarian dictatorship, the land of rapidly growing socialism. The imperialist world system is undergoing a general crisis. A wave is rising of colonial revolutions. A wave is rising of proletarian class struggle in the West (Europe). Then there is the Comintern.

These are the pre-conditions and the levers for the metamorphosis of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in China into a proletarian revolution.

THE CLASS STRUGGLE IN SOVIET TERRITORY

After the victory of the revolution, after the confiscation of the feudal land, a class struggle goes on between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in the cities and between the various social groupings in the villages. The banker, the big merchant, the manufacturer, and the handicraftsman exploiting wage labor—they all carry on a struggle in new forms against the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the working class and peasantry, adapting themselves to the new setting. The revolution did not destroy capitalist private ownership, but the Chinese bourgeoisie, closely tied up to feudal property and to usury, does not reconcile itself to the abolition of feudal property, to the cancellation of usurious debts, the introduction of the eight-hour working day, social legislation, improving the condition of the working class, and depriving the bourgeois-feudal bloc of political power. All this could not but meet the most stubborn resistance from the bourgeoisie.

In the village, the struggle centers around the question of who is to reap the fruits of the agrarian revolution. Since the rich peasant could not stop the agrarian revolution, he now wants to appropriate its fruits. He now advocates the slogan of civil peace in the village. He attempts to win the middle peasant to his side with the slogan: Distribute the land according to the means of production. He attempts to interfere with the distribution of the land

and to halt the agrarian revolution at the stage of the confiscation of feudal estates. Allying himself with the small landlord, he advocates the slogan that only feudal holdings of over 50 mu be confiscated; allying himself with the usurers, he struggles against the cancellation of mortgages. He agitates against workers' strikes in the cities, basing himself on the pretext that workers' strikes and increased wages will raise the prices of industrial products, will create a gap between the prices of agricultural products and industrial products, and will thereby destroy the alliance between the working class and the peasantry. The rich peasant fights bitterly against the equitable redivision of land.

But the poor peasantry, the coolies, the farm hands, fight for the equitable redivision of the land, for carrying the agrarian revolution to its conclusion. The poor peasantry, the coolies, the farm hands, frequently giving a peasant socialist touch to the demand for equalization, struggle for a more thorough-going, more radical, more ideal purging of the land of all pre-capitalist survivals and vestiges, for a completely democratic agrarian revolution. We know that on the land cleared of Chinese medievalism but retaining the conditions of commodity production, capitalism could not but at first thrive rapidly, on a mass scale. We know that commodity production will not radically free the basic peasant masses from want and poverty. We know that prohibiting the purchase and sale of land, prohibiting securities and rent of lands under the conditions of a bourgeois-democratic revolution, as some Chinese comrades propose, is incorrect. The positive measures of the soviet power, increasing the area under cultivation, improving the existing irrigation systems, the creation of new irrigation systems, state organization and support of migration, state organization and support of the cooperative movement, school building, and the like, could not in the circumstances radically change the essence of the productive relations.

The C.P.C. must nevertheless support the striving of the poor peasantry, the coolies, and the agricultural laborers for an equalizing redistribution of the land as the central task of the agrarian revolution. Therefore the task of the C.P.C. consists in freeing the middle peasant from the influence of the richer peasants, in winning the middle peasant to the side of Soviets as a close ally of the proletariat. A correct taxation policy is one of its first prerequisites. The freeing of sections of the poor peasantry or of the entire poor peasantry from taxes, a very moderate taxation of the middle peasantry, placing the main burden of taxation on the rich, the rich peasants, and the capitalists must become the core of the tax system of the Soviets. A correct economic policy that takes into

account the successful waging of war, improving the conditions of the working class and the peasant economy, must consolidate the bloc of the poor and middle peasantry against the rich peasants and strengthen the alliance of the working class with the basic peasant masses. A correct economic policy must consider that in the soviet territories, peasant commodity production predominates in the village and handicraft and manufacturing commodity production predominates in the city. This situation may, and surely will, change in the degree that ever larger cities will be swept in, in the degree that the bourgeois-democratic revolution will grow into a proletarian revolution.

This by no means excludes confiscating the enterprises of active counter-revolutionary capitalists, who sabotage production and the measures of the soviet power. This by no means excludes that the soviet power should at once nationalize certain enterprises necessary for the conduct of the war or that it should establish and organize them. This by no means excludes, but, on the contrary, presupposes workers' control of production. However, at the present stage of the revolution, the soviet must not, without compelling necessity, interfere in the process of production.

To carry on the agrarian revolution to its conclusion, to overcome the rich peasant and the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie, to build a new soviet state, to build a real workers' and peasants' Red Army, to be victorious in the revolutionary war against the Kuomintang and imperialist intervention—all this will be possible only if the masses are organized. The C.P.C. is faced in this connection with immense tasks. The first and basic task is to organize the proletariat, including the handicraft proletariat, into trade unions; to organize the coolies and farm laborers into trade unions. So far, the C.P.C. has barely begun fulfilling this task. It is necessary at the same time to organize and consolidate the poor peasantry, *creating leagues of poor peasants*, creating groups of red partisans (guerilla warriors). Only by relying on the trade unions and on the groups of the poor, will it be possible to rally the middle peasantry around the Soviets, to kick the rich peasants out of the Soviets, to build a real Red Army, to organize a new state apparatus, boldly advancing the workers and poor and middle peasantry. This is all the more necessary since in many soviet regions, rich peasants, small landlords, and gentry crept into many offices, into many sections of the Red Army, and into many guerilla detachments.

The heroic exploits of the Red Army evoke the admiration of the toiling masses in colonial countries. But is it possible to wink at

the many weaknesses and shortcomings of the Red Armies of the Chinese Soviets? Those shortcomings are by far not only military and technical weaknesses. More important is the fact that various sections of the Red Army are composed up to 50 per cent of soldiers of former militarist armies, that in various sections a considerable percentage consists of rich peasants, that the commanding and commissary staff is insufficiently proletarian, that the party core is weak, that political activity in the Red Army is poor, that the leadership is insufficiently subordinated to the party.

All these weaknesses and shortcomings of the soviet movement are taken advantage of by the class enemy. All these weaknesses and shortcomings can be overcome only in the course of the class struggle by organizing the masses.

PECULIARITY OF THE PRESENT SITUATION AND THE TASK OF THE COMMUNISTS

The basic peculiarity of the present situation consists in the unevenness of the development of the revolutionary movement in China. The degree of organization, the level of consciousness, the revolutionary training of the proletariat in the various sections of the country vary. The peasant movement, also, develops most irregularly. Whereas in a number of provinces of southern and central China the banner of the Soviet is already waving (Kiangsi, Hunan, Hupeh, and Fukien) in a number of other provinces the soviet movement is beginning, (Northern Kwantung, Chekiang, Kansu, Szechuan, Anhui), in northern China the uprising peasant movement takes the form only of the revival of spontaneous peasant organizations. Even in several southern provinces there is no sign yet of large mass uprisings of the peasantry (Kweichow, Hunan), and in Manchuria the villages are comparatively quiet. *The peasant movement in its tempo outstrips the proletarian movement.*

The causes for this phenomenon are contained in the unevenness of the economic development of the various parts of the country, in the feudal disjointedness of the country, in the historical preconditions of the revolutionary movement itself. The revolution of 1925-27 deeply ploughed up the soil in southern and central China, touched the North less, and left Manchuria as a black buffer of reaction. The difference in the agrarian structure between the North, where feudal landowning plays a lesser role, and the South where feudal landowning predominates, also has its effect on the development of peasant struggles. *In resisting the proletarian movement in the large centers the deciding role is played by imperialism.*

The entire policy of imperialism, of imperialist intervention, is directed towards interfering with the merging of the peasant war and the proletarian uprising, towards depriving the peasant choir of its proletarian conductor, towards interfering with proletarian struggle coinciding with the peasant uprising.

The Chinese counter-revolution also strains all its forces to defend the large cities in order to erect a dam between the flooding peasant war and the proletarian movement. Chang Kai-shek at the end of August threw three divisions into the region of Wuhan, in order to save Chang-sha and Wuhan, and reinforced Nanchang with fresh counter-revolutionary troops. The entrance of Chang Hsueh-liang, the interference of the Mukden group in the militarists' war, the change in the military situation in the North, will enable Nanking to throw fresh forces against the Red Army, against the soviet regions. True, throwing fresh militarist troops against the revolutionary front will hasten the demoralization of these troops. During 1929, 36 large military mutinies were noted among Chiang Kai-shek's troops; during the first half of 1930, 300 military mutinies of considerable dimension were noted. The agrarian revolution demoralized the mercenary troops of the war lords. Instances multiply where units of the war lords' armies go over to the Red Army. The feudal land lords and the bourgeoisie feverishly organize volunteer detachments, attempt to organize green (counter-revolutionary) bands of rich peasants. With the aid of the rich peasants they try to turn the spontaneous peasant organizations, like the League of Red Lances, against the Red Army and against the revolting peasants.

Undoubtedly, the *temporary* lull of the militarists' war in the North will make it possible to intensify the counter-revolutionary intervention in soviet regions. It is just as certain that the intervention of the Mukden group in the North will not create an equilibrium or a possibility for unifying the country, but on the contrary, will open the doors wide for a new series of militarist wars.

The revolution has already achieved great victories, but the greatest battles between the revolution and the counter-revolution are still ahead. This situation imposes upon the Chinese detachment of Bolshevism most responsible tasks. The main tasks of the Chinese Communists consist of the following:

A *strong* Red Army must be created with a worker-peasant composition, with a proletarian commanding staff, with an iron discipline, with a strong Communist core, with a unified Communist leadership. The Red Army must have a firm *territorial and mater-*

ial basis. This basis will also be the territorial basis of the revolution.

Simultaneously with this a *Soviet government* must be created on a territorial basis, as the organizer and leader of the revolution. The Soviet government, basing itself upon the Red Army, must organize soviet regions, carry through the program of the agrarian and anti-imperialist revolution, consolidate around itself the proletarian and peasant masses, and prove by deeds that the soviet power is the power of the workers and peasants.

The proletarian and basic (poor and middle) peasant masses in the soviet and non-soviet territories must be *organized and mobilized* to struggle for the victory of the revolution, since the main weakness of the revolutionary movement consists in the insufficient organization of the masses.

This is the three-fold task of the Communists. In order to organize and mobilize the masses, the Communist Party must obviously proceed from the daily interests and needs of the masses, linking them up with the class interests of the proletariat and of the basic peasant masses, with the conquest of power, with establishing the soviet power on an all-China scale. Developing the *economic struggles* of the workers around the question of wages, hours of labor, working conditions, social legislation, for rice, for unemployment relief, for humane treatment in the shops and enterprises, against the system of labor contracts and overseers—this is the most immediate aid to the Soviets. Developing the peasant struggle against rent, usury, taxes, requisitions, enforced servitude is the direct and immediate aid to the Red Army. Developing the *political struggles* of the workers and peasants against the Kuomintang, against imperialist intervention, against the transfer of armies, mass political strikes of the workers, guerilla war of the peasants will rally and enlighten the masses, and raise the class struggle to a higher plane. These activities will lead the proletariat in the larger cities to a position of struggle for power, will surround these cities with an iron ring of peasant uprisings, will draw into the struggle not only millions but tens of millions who will by their mass crush like an avalanche the imperialist and Chinese counter-revolution even in the larger cities. In this sense the deciding battles are still ahead. Only through mobilizing and organizing gigantic masses, only through coordinating the proletarian uprising with the peasant war and the advance of the Red Army of China, only through stubborn bolshevist mass work for realizing these epochal tasks will it be possible to achieve new victories.

In order to achieve these ends the Communist Party must merci-

lessly fight the main, the *right danger* that finds expression in retreat before the difficult conditions of underground existence, in liquidationist-legalist tendencies, in kulak deviations in agrarian policy, in opportunism, in the manner of building Soviets, in petty-bourgeois vacillations. But at the same time the Communist Party must mercilessly resist the adventurist toying with the slogans of uprising and general strike, with absurd opportunist theories of the impossibility of partial battles, with detachment from the masses, with attempts to skip over and above the mass movement, with gestures of desperation, with disdaining and neglecting the every day needs of the workers and peasants. Both these deviations are fed from one source; from the petty-bourgeois environment which has its influence on the proletariat. Both deviations distract the proletariat and peasantry from achieving the real task of the revolution.

The international significance of the Chinese revolution is immense. The Soviets in southern China are leading the way for India, Indo-China, Korea, for the proletariat and the peasantry of the colonial and semi-colonial countries. These Soviets in southern China blazed forth the beam of the red Leninist beacon. The heavy peasant reserves of the world revolution are entering into battle. Heavy blows are being dealt to the imperialist world system, grown together in the colonies with feudalism and usury.

On the 7th of November, the First Congress of the Chinese Soviets opens.* At this Congress will be represented 200 counties of southern and central China under the authority of the Soviets, 300,000 fighters of the Chinese Red Army, millions of the rising masses of the peasantry united into guerilla detachments, the revolutionary trade unions, the revolutionary workers' and peasants' organizations in Kuomintang China.

Lenin at the Second Congress of the Comintern said: "The imperialist war drew the subject nations into world history and it now becomes one of our foremost tasks to consider how to lay the corner stone for organizing a soviet movement in the non-capitalist countries. Soviets there are possible. They will not be workers' soviets, but they will be soviets of the peasants, or of the toiling masses.

"Much work will be required, there will be unavoidable mistakes, many difficulties will be encountered on this road. The basic task of the Congress is to indicate or to work out the practical beginnings in order that the work that has hitherto gone on in an unor-

* The Congress began December 11.—EDITOR.

ganized way among hundreds of millions of people, may now proceed in an organized, consolidated, and systematic manner.

"A beginning has been made for a soviet movement throughout the East, through entire Asia, amongst all the colonial peoples."

The Soviets in China are the greatest victory for Leninism!

A SPECIAL EDITION OF LENIN'S WRITINGS

Readers of *The Communist* will welcome the publication of a new subscription edition of Lenin's *Works*, just issued by International Publishers. The appearance of this edition, which contains all the material included in the original books, will greatly aid the wide distribution of Lenin's writings.

The English translation of these books are prepared with the closest co-operation of the Lenin Institute in Moscow. They have been enriched by the Institute with numerous notes and documents, many of them never before published, which not only serve as a background for Lenin's own writings, but compose a revolutionary history of the periods covered in the various volumes.

Six books are now ready in the *Collected Works*. "Materialism and Empirio-Criticism" includes Lenin's attack against revisionist tendencies among certain Russian Marxists after 1905. "The Iskra Period," which includes the famous pamphlet "What Is To Be Done?" deals with the formative period of the Bolshevik Party and lays down the fundamental policies and tactics for a revolutionary mass party. "The Revolution of 1917" includes all of Lenin's writings from the overthrow of the Tsar to the first open conflict with the Provisional Government. In "The Imperialist War" are all the writings of the early period of the World War. Here are found Lenin's teachings for turning it into a Civil War. The last two titles named are each in two volumes.

Literature agents are in a position to supply readers of THE COMMUNIST with further information concerning these books, which should be in the possession of every Party member and class conscious worker.

The Collapse of the Theory of Organized Capitalism

By SAM DON

AT the very time when bourgeois economists, with the American economists in the lead, were "marching triumphantly" to a new era, at the time when the social fascists, with their theoretical spokesman, Hilferding, were theorizing about organized capitalism, at the very height of partial stabilization, Comrade Stalin in his report to the Fifteenth Party Congress of the C.P.S.U., held in 1927, stated:

"Out of the stabilization itself, there is growing up the profoundest and severest crisis of world capitalism, a crisis which will completely upset the stabilization."

The masterful application of the dialectic method by Stalin foretold the inevitability of developments which are now conclusively shown by life itself. But Comrade Bukharin, who in the words of Comrade Lenin, "never really mastered the dialectic method," and also because of his old sins on the question of imperialism and state capitalism, could not see the limitations of partial stabilization. Therefore he fell prey to the theory of organized capitalism that had its beginnings in the reformist theories of Bernstein and that received its maturer expression in Hilferding.

* * *

In this article we will contrast the early prophecies and concepts with the present reaction of the capitalists in face of the continuous deepening of the crisis.

Organized capitalism denies the basic contradictions of capitalism. We will therefore in the first part of the article deal with these basic contradictions.

The Hoover report on *Recent Economic Changes in the United States*, which was published in 1929, while having misgivings, is full of the most optimistic predictions and is the most concentrated expression of the "new era" theories of the elimination of crises, which are at the bottom of the theory of organized capitalism. We

will begin by quoting two paragraphs which are the clearest expression of their theory:

"The survey has proven conclusively what has long been held theoretically to be true, that wants are almost insatiable; that one want satisfied makes way for another. The conclusion is that economically we have a *boundless field before us*; that there are new wants which will make way endlessly for newer wants, as fast as they are satisfied."

"As long as the appetite for goods and services is practically insatiable, as it appears to be, and as long as productivity can be consistently increased, it would seem that we can go on with increasing activity. But we can do this only if we develop a *technique of balance*." (Our emphasis.)

Since wants are almost insatiable—what has limited the "boundless field"? Has the appetite for goods perhaps disappeared, or the productive apparatus collapsed *technically*? Of course not! It is the insatiable lust for profits driving the capitalists to increase productive capacity, and at the same time reduce the standard of living for the masses, thus creating overproduction because of the poverty of the masses. For the sake of discussion, we will pose the question in the following manner: Wants today are greater than ever before, the productive apparatus can satisfy them more than ever before. How does it come then, that we are in the midst of the worst crisis of capitalism? ("At no previous time covered by our records has business activity in this country declined for so long a period and reached such low levels as in this instance. And then postponed a definite recovery for another year."—December 15 issue of the Cleveland Trust Company bulletin.) Precisely because the increase of the productive capacity is linked up and based on the most ruthless exploitation. Post-war capitalism made a desperate attempt to restore the "normal" processes of capitalist production. But with it we did not merely have the "restoring" of the inherent contradictions of capitalism, but a tremendous intensification of them. Why? Precisely because war, impoverishing the masses on a world scale, has limited "the boundless field," sharpened competition, has developed rationalization (the most brutal expression of capitalist exploitation), thus still further widening the gap between productive capacity and the purchasing power of the masses.

The U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics estimated that from 1919 to 1929 production increased 32 per cent, although aggregate payrolls went up only 3 per cent and employment actually decreased 11 per cent. As a matter of fact, wages really decreased. But even so, the figures tell the tale, especially if we link up the above fig-

ures with the ruination of the large masses of the farming population.

Some of the bourgeois economists try to explain the present existence of overproduction by under-population. (Inverted Malthusian theory of over-population against which Marx argued, as being the cause of the poverty of the masses.) This latest theory of the bourgeois economists is based on the following figures: In the 17 years since 1913, just before the war, the population of the world has increased 10 per cent, while the production of food-stuffs and raw material has expanded 25 per cent. In the same period the industrial output in the United States has advanced 60 per cent while the population has grown 25 per cent. In the last 15 years the quantity of wheat at the disposal of the market has increased almost 32 per cent, while in the same period the population has increased at most about 10 per cent. It is not, however, the growth of population lagging behind the growth of the productive apparatus, but the poverty of the masses caused by capitalist exploitation, which causes overproduction.

That it is not under-population, but capitalist exploitation, we can see from the following fact and figure: In December, 1928, the Department of Labor in drawing up a "budget of health and decency," set the weekly living minimum at \$44.79 per week for a family of five. And this was considered to be "the bottom level of health and decency, below which a family cannot go without the danger of physical and moral degeneration." Yet, what was the official figure of the average wage in 1928? It amounted to \$27.24. This meant that the workers' earnings fell short of the living minimum by no less than 40 per cent. The capitalist lust for profit is so insatiable that it cannot give the workers even its own capitalist standard of decency. And if this was the case in the years of the height of capitalist prosperity, what is the bottom level of the workers at present?

Thus the basic cause of all crises is the "poverty and limitation of the consuming capacities of the masses in comparison with the tendency of capitalist production to develop its productive forces with such intensity as if their boundary were only the absolute consuming power of society." (Marx, *Capital*, Vol. 3.) The Marxian concept of the basic cause of crises was stated most clearly by Comrade Stalin at the Sixteenth Party Congress:

"The bases of the overproduction crisis of economics and their cause lie in the system of capitalist economy itself. The basis of the crisis lies in the antagonism between the social nature of production and the capitalist form of appropriation of the products

of this production. One expression of this fundamental contradiction of capitalism is the contradiction between the colossal *growth* of the possibilities of production, calculated on the winning of a *maximum* of capitalist profit, and the relative limitation of the solvent demand on the part of the masses of the workers, whose standard of living the capitalists are constantly endeavoring to press down to the utmost *minimum* limit.

"In order to gain the upper hand in competition, and to press out fresh profits, the capitalists are obliged to develop technique, to carry out rationalization, to increase the exploitation of the workers, and to intensify the productive capacity of their undertakings to the utmost. In order not to fall behind one another, all capitalists are forced to strike along one path or another of blind haste in the development of the possibilities of production. But the purchasing powers of the million masses of the workers and peasants, at bottom the chief buyers, remain at a low level in both home and foreign markets. Hence, the overproduction crises."

Let us now compare the optimistic "scientific" statements of the Hoover report, of "remote saturation points," with some of the present statements. The *Journal of Commerce*, in a leading editorial of January 3, 1931, stated:

"Viewing the situation from the longer range point of view, however, it probably would not be too much to say that the basic price factor at the present time is the largely unused capacity to produce many goods well in excess of any reasonable estimate of consumption requirements *for a good while to come*. . . . At the present time, not only the United States, but most other countries, are equipped and organized to produce a great deal more of many articles of commerce than they can consume."

What has happened then, to the "technique of balance"? Why this excess of goods and unused productive apparatus? Certainly not because the "appetite for goods" has left the masses.

Since the present crisis "is not a simple repetition of old crises" (Stalin), it therefore assumes such sharpness in its violent expression of the inherent contradictions of capitalism. So much so that the entire capitalist system, as a system, is affected by it. Is it any wonder that the capitalist economists begin to wonder what is happening to the "well established" capitalist system? They begin to speak of capitalism being on trial, and pray to the almighty that this present crisis will turn out to be merely the old type of a cyclical crisis. The *New York Times*, in an editorial of January 4, with a headline, "Capitalism on Trial," stated:

"The country has had to pass through several types of depression, more severe than the present, but was not misled into thinking that capital was the sole destructive power."

The mere fact that the *Times* feels compelled to raise the question shows that the present crisis has not only done away with the rosy picture of "our situation is fortunate, our momentum is remarkable . . . we have only touched the spring of our possibilities." (Hoover report.) But the ruling class is beginning to get nightmares.

The optimism of the golden era is being replaced with heavy layers of fatalism. Thus we see that Mr. Watson, the majority leader in the Senate, in a speech that he delivered on September 11, 1930, says:

"We can neither foresee nor legislate against a collapse in the price of stocks, or a widespread and disastrous drought, or an economic depression that embraces the whole earth. But for such sudden, unexpected, and inescapable catastrophe, we should be enjoying our customary degree of prosperity."

So we see, from talk of doing away with crises, and organizing capitalism, the capitalists and their spokesmen are shifting to considering crises as an "inescapable catastrophe," and comparing them with earthquakes.

The capitalists themselves are beginning to ask what is the matter with their economic system. We find Mr. Baruch, former chairman of the War Industries Board, speaking to the Boston Chamber of Commerce on April 30, 1930, coming to the following conclusion:

"The present condition revealed an amazing spectacle of complete economic stultification. (And what would Mr. Baruch say of the conditions that have developed since April, 1930?—S. D.) It may have been sound public policy to forbid by law anything that looked to regulation of production when the world was in fear of famine. But it is lunacy to decree unlimited operation of a system *which periodically disgorges indigestible masses of unconsumable products.*"

Right you are, Mr. Baruch, it is lunacy to maintain a system which in face of poverty suffers from "indigestible (you don't mean that the workers have spoiled their stomachs in the days of prosperity!) masses of unconsumable products."

The new era and organized capitalism theories are the twin brothers who were denying the inherent contradictions of capitalism. Volumes were written in the days of prosperity to prove their contention. The continuous deepening of the crisis, however, made these "scientific" writings and research look very primitive and antiquated. Not so long ago, only in 1929, we found the following gem in the Hoover report:

"To maintain the dynamic equilibrium of recent years is, indeed, a problem of leadership which more and more demands deliberate public attention and control. Research and study, the orderly classification of knowledge, joined to increasing skill, well may make complete control of the economic system a possibility. The problems are many and difficult, but the degree of progress in recent years inspires us with high hopes."

But the depth and character of the present crisis are undermining the confidence of the bourgeois economists in their scientific research and findings. Let us contrast the above-quoted statement of the Hoover Commission with the statement of the Cleveland Trust Company bulletin of December 15, 1930:

"It is true that despite an immense amount of study and research devoted to the problem over a long period of years we do not clearly know what causes these great and irregularly spaced periods of bad business that we term depressions."

But most learned, accomplished gentlemen of "science"! Don't you know that when capitalism was still in its diapers, Marx clearly understood "what causes these great and irregularly spaced periods of bad business that we term depressions"? The present crisis already leads in many instances to a formal admission of the collapse of the theory of organized capitalism.

We have up to now mainly dealt with the basic contradictions of capitalism. In the second part of this article we shall take up concretely the roots and fallacies of Comrade Bukharin's theories which, under the shattering effects of the crisis, are admitted to be false by the capitalists themselves.

(To be concluded in the next issue.)



BLACK PEONAGE

The Rural Negro. CARTER GODWIN WOODSON. The Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, Inc. Washington, D. C., 1930. 257 pages.

Reviewed by B. D. AMIS

The author is accredited the most capable Negro historian. Many of his writings portray the injustices of the United States government toward the Negro masses. In his latest book, the purpose of which is to show the status of the Negro peasant and persons living in southern centers of less than 2,500 population, he gives a vivid picture of the southern Negro peasant in his true state of peonage. The book is a result of a three-year survey by the author and investigators, including a study of returned questionnaires. Blame for the present state of affairs is placed by the author entirely upon racial differences and the general ignorance and backwardness which grew out of the slavery period of the rural Negro. The role of the church and the rural Negro preacher, the power of the white plantation owner, and the inadequate educational facilities, are given as causes which retard the advancement of the Negro farming population in the 14 southern states.

Woodson plainly shows that he has thoroughly absorbed the capitalist ideology and conception regarding the Negro farmer. In true imitative fashion, he feebly and vaguely calls for an alleviation of economic and social oppression by an appeal to the liberal sympathies of philanthropists and state powers, to move them to be more interested in this horrid situation. But he seems to be much more concerned about saving "business" in the United States. In exposing the wretched conditions of the rural Negro, Woodson states that to retard his progress is to hamper the "country," and "such a country eventually must fail in competition with those which have no such impediments." "The rural Negro could produce more, not only to enrich himself, but his country." The unchaining of the peasant from the plantation owner who has made the Negro a slave to him and to the soil is not so important, according to Woodson, as is the stabilizing of imperialist America, so that it may withstand the storm of competition from other imperialist nations.

How is imperialist America going to withstand this storm? Only at the expense of the entire working class. Harsher oppression of Negro farmers, mass unemployment, wage cuts, speed up, are some of the means to this end. The Negro masses, a section of the toiling class, receive more than full equality in sharing the burden. This more than full equality calls for an intensification of the special forms of discrimination against and persecution

of the Negro. The rising spirit of restlessness and the migration of thousands of Negroes from the South to the North is evidence of this. Desire to escape this persecution, lynching, mob-terrorism, disfranchisement, poor schooling, tenancy and peonage is a cause for the trend northward. But in the North political freedom as well as living standards are not much better. Escape from the plantation owner's rule is merely an escape into urban centers where the Negroes are segregated into black belts, paying exorbitant rents, and where they have the worst housing conditions and unsanitary quarters. The jobs to be received in the North are the most menial, paying the lowest wages. The Negroes are among the first to be fired. These conditions have their roots in the economic structure of the capitalist system, in both North and South. The very class which Woodson wants to save represents the forces which support and enforce these miserable conditions for both the Negro workers and the Negro farmers.

Woodson disapproves of the Negro peasants migrating North. Rightfully so. But does he call upon them to remain in the South, to organize and carry on a joint struggle with the white proletariat and poor farmers against the land-owners, and to overthrow them and take the land? No. He states that because of roving tenants, the rich plantation owner is ruined, the preacher and the rural church suffer, and the accumulation of wealth is hindered. Tenants show evidences of lawlessness and evil habits because they are spiritually and mentally undeveloped. This is incorrect. This "lawlessness" is in many instances discontentment with political and living conditions, pent up over a long period of time, expressing itself in its elementary form. The Negro peasant when given equal opportunity, without economic repression and without the mystic religious opium peddler constantly filling him with fear, has the same possibilities for development as any other group.

Woodson, as the lackey of the bourgeoisie, endorses the robbery of the peasants. He sees the ruination of the banker, merchant, and professional man, if credit is extended to the peasants. He supports his class by definitely stating that the peasants should be chained to the soil permanently, and also to the land owner, thereby establishing a dependable and stationary peasantry whom the petty business-man could exploit without interruption. Woodson favors long-time tenant leases, as they will make it possible for the peasants to pay obligations to local bankers more promptly, and to invest surplus profits (which the poor farmers do not realize) in local enterprises, which will build up rather than "bleed" the community. "Principles of equality and justice will prevail in their transactions." Only a confused mind can imagine the white ruling plantation owners drawing up a contract with a tenant, having the slightest idea of *justice to the Negro*. They know only *class justice* which recognizes the Negro as legitimate prey for all manner of robbery.

The author states that out of tenancy there rises a concomitant evil generally referred to as peonage. This system, in many places, is upheld by the law. Peonage is an actual return to slavery. But by trickery and chicanery the southern states avoid enforcing the federal law which prohibits such practices.

In speaking of the church, Woodson definitely allies himself with the bourgeoisie, as he realizes that the church is an important factor in keeping the rural Negroes in subjection. The Negro preacher is seldom disturbed. "He is regarded as a factor in making the church a moral police force to compel obedience to what is known as moral obligation. He is also an asset in that he keeps Negroes thinking about the glorious time which they will have beyond this troublesome sphere and that enables them to forget their op-

pression here. White people give, therefore, more readily to religious work among the Negroes than to any other of their needs, although what they do give is inadequate." Millions of dollars are spent yearly for Negro churches, but little effort is made to relieve the Negro masses of the special forms of persecution under which they suffer. In the rural districts of the South the churches are the center of Negro life. The duty of the preacher is not alone to detract the mind of his congregation from their wretched conditions. It is also to serve the white plantation owners as their best agent in spying upon the activities of the rural populace. For so faithfully serving their masters, these lackeys often receive excellent wages. Due to their tactics, they help in attempts to crush all signs of revolt manifested by the peasants. The leaders of the revolt are generally whipped, tarred and feathered, put on the chain gang, or lynched.

In many places Woodson gives contradictory statements. "The Civil War worked the economic and social emancipation of both the poor whites and Negroes." We know the paper emancipation of the Negroes as given by the 13th, 14th, and 15th federal amendments was only regarded for a short period. During this time the Negro poor farmers and workers were granted certain rights, such as the right to vote, to hold office, to have equal schooling. But after agreement was reached between the northern capitalists and the southern plantation owners, these rights were ignored and the oppression of the Negro masses continued. Despite saying that the Civil War freed the Negroes, Woodson turns around and states that "it will require a stronger force than those now operative to disrupt the present system and hasten the dawn of the new day"—which will bring freedom to the Negro masses.

At the time this book was written there was a sign of a decrease in lynching. Since the beginning of last year, however, lynchings have increased in number and savagery. Three times as many Negroes were lynched in 1930 as in the year before. Woodson asks the question: "And what can the Negro do about it? Nothing." "If he is to live in these parts he must accept these conditions and keep his mouth shut." "If he does not like the place assigned to him here he may go to Africa where he will fare worse." Preposterous!

Woodson, not a student of economics, knowing nothing of Marxian and Leninist principles, naturally expresses a viewpoint which coincides with the corrupt bourgeois ideas that he has been taught. The only way out that he sees for the Negro peasants is for them to remain passive and subservient, to acquire more land and capital, to go into the professions. By obtaining financial power they will be able to contribute financially to their communities, and capitalism, recognizing this contribution, will lessen its oppression. The peasants are to become rich—and how! Capitalism, which exists on exploitation, will lessen oppression! In such a case, capitalism would cease to be capitalism. And Woodson, recognizing that it will have to be destroyed to free the Negroes, still sides with the capitalists. He says: "To stop the procession, *oppression of the Negro masses*, would be tantamount to a revolution for it would destroy the present economic system at an apparent loss to all concerned." (Emphasis mine—B. D. A.). To him the freedom of the working class would be a loss!

The workers will decide this question. The wresting of the land from the robber landlords in the South and giving it to those who have tilled it for years is essential to assure liberty to the black masses. In contiguous counties in the black belt the Negroes have a large majority of the population; they must have the right to govern themselves. From a practical standpoint, to have full equality in the South means full right of self-government. Under militant revolutionary leadership, the Negro farmers will become the allies

of the white and black revolutionary proletariat. Together, they will fight against the ruling class, the oppressors of the Negro masses. They will destroy the system which breeds lynching, mob terrorism, segregation, and other special forms of oppression to which the Negroes are subjected. Also, they will destroy the system that has made economic slaves out of the entire working class and will put in its stead a government that will be controlled by the workers and peasants, not the bourgeoisie.

Although this book is valuable to the worker because of the facts it contains about conditions in the South, and the statistics are accredited to be the best available, the reader must never lose sight of, and be on guard against, the author's perverted capitalist ideology.

THE "DEMOCRATIC-LIBERAL" STATESMAN

Makers of Modern Europe—Portraits and Personal Impressions and Recollections, by COUNT CARLO SPORZA. The Bobbs-Merrill Co., New York, 1930. 420 pp.

Reviewed by LOUIS GIBARTI

Makers of Modern Europe is the somewhat pretentious title of the memories of Count Carlo Sforza. As aid to the pre-war foreign minister of Italy, Marchese di San Giuliano, and messenger boy of Giolitti, prime minister of Italian "liberalism," Count Sforza is a standard personification of the "democratic, liberal" statesman and diplomat. His book gives an important opportunity for the clarification of the meaning of this term.

One should expect that Count Carlo Sforza would give some sort of notion about this new Europe, the makers of which are so elaborately described in the different essays. In fact, in the last chapter, called "Conclusions," Sforza tries to prove that in this epoch of the obvious and unprecedented efforts of the bourgeoisie to abandon democratic methods of ruling, the display of democratic liberties is making strong headway in Europe. He observes that,

"an undeniable present skepticism concerning traditional democratic phraseology among the amorphous masses will soon prove to be nothing but the result of an ever greater increase of democratic tendencies."

Another important admission of Sforza is that,

"Bolshevism and fear of Bolshevism have been and are still the two diseases of Western Europe. . . . America cannot be immune from them."

Count Sforza, of course, fails to explain why Europe and America are afraid of Bolshevism if the victorious democratic development is affirming itself with increasing strength.

Absolute inability to approach the real problems of Europe or of the Versailles treaty is generally characteristic of Sforza's book. His weakness in not dealing with the problem integrally, compels the writer to choose the method of dealing with certain personalities and certain events, with no obvious consistency. He is giving biographies. He makes the statement that,

"The ultimate fate of political problems rests with the inexorable evolution of history transcending the will of individuals."

On the other hand, his whole method of dealing with the "inexorable evolution" is to find "a psychological evidence, nothing more."

It would be a mis-statement to say that Sforza does not know anything about the role of the economic factor in history and especially the role of monopoly in the present period of capitalist development. Sforza is a cleverer politician than that. He only speaks about democracy and liberty, but silently he is aware of the all-determining role of the commanding capitalist interests. Writing about the proposed Federation of European States in *Current History*, he says concerning Briand's scheme:

"While politicians are discussing liberties, industrial leaders are making agreements and working together with success."

He also mentions the German-French agreement for the division of the potash market between the German Kalisyndicate and its French counterpart in 1926; the creation of the Continental European Iron and Steel Cartel in the same year, and the German-French chemical cooperation established in 1927. He deals with the role of Young's "Bank for International Settlements." Here Sforza analyzes to a certain extent the economic background of Briand's move. He, however, does not go too far, and carefully avoids drawing conclusions concerning the state of his "democratic liberties" in the European Federation, to be constituted under the auspices and effective control of the leading capitalist monopolies of Europe. Here we are confronted with the innermost characteristics of Sforza and of the idealist democratic liberal politicians. They speak about liberties and democracy, though they are themselves aware of the decay and emptiness of these institutions in these days of monopolist capitalism.

Sforza then gives a psychological portrait of certain leaders of the old Europe: Franz Joseph, and his son Archduke Rudolf, Archduke Franz Ferdinand, Aerenthal, Tisza, Empress Eugenie and Lord Curzon. He destroys some popular legends about the "silent suffering and goodness" of the late "warden" of the worst European prison, called Austria. This arsenal consists of gossip, anecdotes and "fine psychological touches" as delicacies to the *New York Times Magazine* reader.

Accidentally, it happens that after theories of liberalism we sometimes get a taste of liberalism put into practice. Speaking about the expulsion of Michael Karolyi from Italy under the Giolitti cabinet in 1920, Sforza says:

"It is true that Karolyi was expelled from Italy while I was still in power. . . . Giolitti informed me . . . that it would be very embarrassing for us to have in the person of Karolyi a center or pretext for agitation and disorders. . . . I made no objections."

A characteristic feature of "practical liberalism" of our days. Count Sforza did not like his French colleague, General Serrail, who defended individual liberties, as the President of the French League for Human Rights, in his leisure time, and nearly wiped Damascus from the surface of the earth when French imperialism entrusted him with the defense of its colonial interests during the Syrian war.

In the chapter, "The War," he speaks in terms of friendliness and admiration for the French and Italian generalissimos, Foch, Cadorna, Diaz, the Pope and some other politicians of the Balkan region. Then he deals extensively with the outstanding statesmen of post-war Europe, Lloyd George, Balfour, Sir Austin Chamberlain, Poincare, Briand and Giolitti, among them. While trying to immortalize the great, clever ruling capacity of his adored chief, Giolitti, it occurs to him to disclose the role of the Italian social democrats who actively fought against the Italian workers during their revolutionary offensive for the conquest of the factories in 1920. At this time, according to Sforza, Giolitti was urged by the Italian industrialists to use every possible means and shed "rivers of blood" for the defense of capitalist property. Giolitti, however, remained inactive.

"It was his conviction," says Sforza, "that however divided the Italian socialists might be, they would instantly reunite if violence were used against the workers. As it was, by his temporizing policy *he induced many of the moderate leaders to contend persistently and successfully, though in secret, against the illusions that had prompted the more violent and childish to seize the factories.*"

In the language of Sforza, this means that "liberalism" is a part of the bourgeois arsenal to be used against the working class, in a situation when violence would unite the rank and file and the "moderate influence" of the socialist leaders would become impossible. Practicing liberalism, Giolitti succeeded in giving a chance to Turati, Treves, and other Second Internationalists, to divide the ranks of the workers and break the proletarian offensive.

Another interesting case is Sforza's attitude towards Stambulisky, the assassinated leader of the Bulgarian peasantry. The peasantry, and especially their political representatives, tried to play an independent role in post-war time. In all these experiments, the poor and middle peasantry were under the influence of the rich peasants and their political machine. No wonder that the Polish peasants, under the leadership of Witos, were used for the purpose of the bourgeoisie and imperialism.

The case of Stambulisky was a peculiar case. While his "dictatorship" was largely directed against the workers and poor peasants, he also made some defensive movement against the rapacious demands of British and French finance capital trying to subjugate Bulgaria, as well as other Balkan countries in the post-war period. Because of this insufficient and meek resistance, the Bulgarian bourgeoisie and foreign capital built up against him the "Macedonian movement" with a strongly fascist character. On June 8, 1923, Stambulisky was killed. It is characteristic that Sforza's criticism of Stambulisky is directed chiefly toward acts in which he tried to secure a certain independence for his "peasant policy." It is also important to note that Sforza fails to see the abortive character of this "peasant experiment." Without an underlying economic program and without a decisive turn to collectivism and an alliance with the industrial proletariat, no liberation of the peasantry was possible. Sforza, on the contrary, asserts in the face of the blood-stained Bulgarian dictatorship, that the

"Bulgarian peasantry, strengthened by the vigor he managed to instill into it, is certain of counting more and more every day in the life of the state. . . ."

The pages on fascism, on "The Crisis of Democracy" and "How Fascism Came" also give interesting details. It is, however, characteristic that Sforza traces the origin of fascism to the poetry of D'Annunzio and his followers, and characterizes it as a rather intellectual movement. Further, he fails to see the social phenomenon of fascism on an international scale, as a universal attempt of the world bourgeoisie to substitute fascism for democratic ruling methods in view of the increasing crisis and the offensive of the workers and peasant masses. The favoring and nursing of the young fascist movement by the DeFacta cabinet is worth while reading about.

In the chapter "Dictators," Sforza even manages to write on Lenin, putting him in the same rank with Mustapha Kemal and Pilsudski! It is interesting to see how the "all-comprehensive liberalism" of Sforza fails before Lenin and the Russian Revolution. He evidently does not understand a word of the works of Lenin which he claims to have read:

"It is impossible to find one page in them, a single page in which one feels the pulsing of a great soul . . . any kind of originality of judgment."

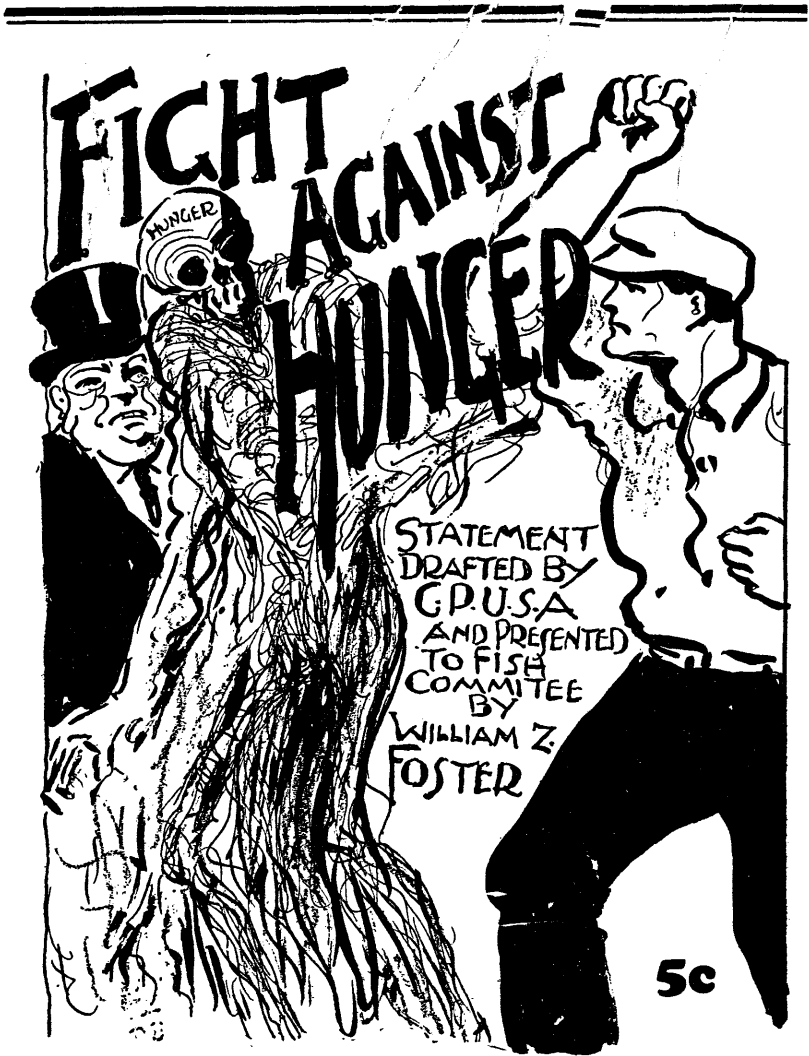
It is not worthwhile to even consider the childish comments that the servile politician of out-worn democratic liberalism makes on the greatest spirit of our epoch. These remarks judge themselves. We must, however, dwell a minute on one malignant remark of Sforza:

"Possibly Lenin's one source of strength," he says, "was that he was not clever enough to doubt his own gospel."

This of course could not be said of Count Carlo Sforza. His whole book is just one evidence that he is "clever enough" to doubt his own gospel.

Concerning Mussolini, he practices restraint worthy of a true liberal. How could it be otherwise, since Sforza accepted commissions to represent Mussolini's Italy in important international gatherings. It is towards Pilsudski's fascism that he is more comprehensive and he also recognizes "the rare gifts of energy and will-power of the leader of Polish fascism."

Truly the memoirs of Sforza are of a documentary value. They show an emasculated and decayed liberalism in its last agony. Sforza somehow tries to excuse his chaotic and childish book by a quotation of Pascal, starting: "I write here my ideas without order. . . ." The excuse is superfluous. Even this miserable chaotic venture to explain the happenings of post-war Europe was gratefully acknowledged in every important review and paper of the American bourgeoisie.



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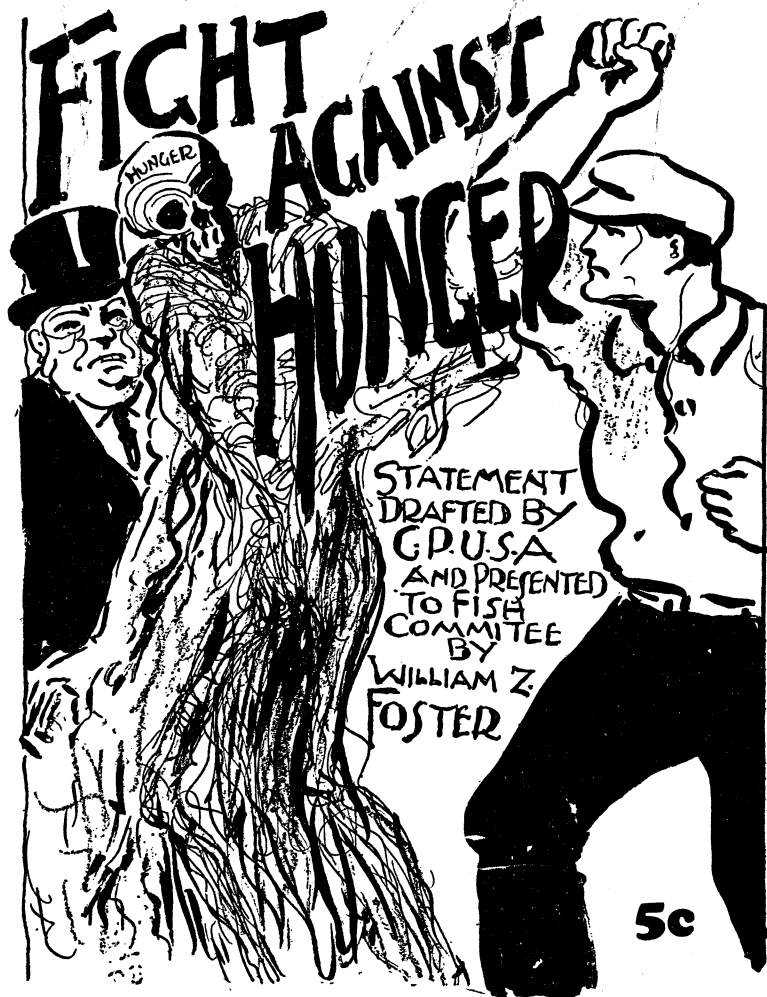
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