

THE CLASS STRUGGLES IN FRANCE.

Page 21

"Therefore, even during the classic period of street battles, the barricade had a moral rather than a material effect. It was a means to shake the solidity of the military. If it held until that had been accomplished, the victory was won; if not, it meant defeat. This is the point of view to be borne in mind, even . . . in an investigation of the prospects of the future street-battles."

Page 23

"And finally, the newly built quarters of the large cities, erected since 1848, have been laid out, in long, straight and wide streets as though made to order for the effective use of the new cannon and rifles. The revolutionary, who would himself select the new working class districts in the north and east of Berlin for a barricade battle, would have to be a lunatic. Does this mean that the street-battles will play no part in the future? Not at all. It simply means that conditions have become far more unfavorable for the civilian fighters since 1848, and far more favorable for the military forces. Street battles in the future may be successful only if this unfavorable situation can be neutralized by other factors. Such fights will therefore be far less usual in the earlier stages of a great revolution, than in its later course, and will have to be fought with greater resources of strength. Such battles will rather resort—as in the great French Revolution, and as on September 4th and October 31st, 1870, in Paris—to open attack than to the defensive tactics of the barricades."

Page 24

"In the Latin countries, too, it is being realized that the old tactics must be revised. Mere unprepared random fighting has everywhere been relegated to the background. Everywhere, the German example of the utilization of the franchise and of the conquest of all possible positions has been imitated."

Page 26

"To keep going this growth (Reference is here made to the increasing parliamentary influence of the German Socialists—A. T.) without interruption until it swamps the ruling governmental system, not to use up this daily increasing accumulation of force, but to preserve it intact for the decisive day, that is our main task."

Page 27

"To shoot out of existence a party numbering millions, that is not possible with all the magazine rifles in Europe and America. But normal development would be hindered, the accumulated forces would perhaps not be available at the critical ('decisive' stricken out by Engels) moment, the decisive struggle (English translation gives decision) delayed, prolonged and coupled with heavy sacrifices."

Page 28

"But do not forget that the German Reich (Engels addresses here the Prussian reactionaries—A. T.), like all small states, and indeed like all modern states, is the product of a covenant; first of a covenant among the rulers themselves, and second of a covenant of the ruler with the people. If one party breaks the agreement, the whole of it falls, the other party being no longer bound by it. As Bismarck has so neatly shown the way (in 1866). If you vio-

late the Constitution of the Empire, the Social-Democracy will be free to act or not act with regard to you as it may choose. But what it will do—there is hardly any fear of its telling you about that now."

DIE KLASSENKAEMPFER IN FRANKREICH.

Page 18

"Selbst in der klassischen Zeit der Strassenkämpfe wirkte also die Barrikade mehr moralisch als materiell. Sie war ein Mittel, die Festigkeit des Militärs zu erschüttern. Hielt sie vor, bis dies gelang, so war der Sieg erreicht; wo nicht, war man geschlagen. Es ist dieses der Hauptpunkt, der im Auge zu halten ist, auch wenn man die Chancen . . . künftiger Strassenkämpfe untersucht."

Page 19

"Und endlich sind die seit 1848 neu gebauten Viertel der grossen Städte in langen, geraden, breiten Strassen angelegt, wie gemacht für die Wirkung der neuen Geschütze und Gewehre. Der Revolutionär müsste verrückt sein, der sich die neuen Arbeiterdistrikte im Norden und Osten von Berlin zu einem Barrikadenkampf selbst aussuchte. Heisst das, dass in Zukunft der Strassenkampf keine Rolle mehr spielen wird? Durchaus nicht. Es heisst nur, dass die Bedingungen seit 1848 weit ungünstiger für die Civilkämpfer, weit günstiger für das Militär geworden sind. Ein künftiger Strassenkampf kann also nur siegen, wenn diese Ungunst der Lage durch andre Momente aufgewogen wird. Er wird daher seltener im Anfang einer grossen Revolution vorkommen, als im weiteren Verlauf einer solchen, und wird mit grösseren Kräften unternommen werden müssen. Diese aber werden dann wohl wie in der ganzen französischen Revolution, am 4. September and 31. Oktober 1870 in Paris, den offenen Angriff der passiven Barrikadentaktik vorziehen."

Page 20

"Auch in den romanischen Ländern sieht man mehr und mehr ein, dass die alte Taktik revidiert werden muss. Ueberall ist das unvorbereitete Losschlagen in den Hintergrund getreten, überall hat man das deutsche Beispiel der Benutzung des Wahlrechts, der Eroberung aller uns zugänglichen Posten, nachgeahmt."

Page 21

"Dies Wachstum ununterbrochen in Gang zu halten, bis es dem herrschenden Regierungssystem von selbst über den Kopf wächst, diesen sich täglich verstärkenden Gewalthaufen nicht in Vorhutkämpfen aufreiben, sondern ihn intakt zu erhalten, bis zum Tage der Entscheidung, das ist unsere Hauptaufgabe."

Page 21

"Eine Partei, die nach Millionen zählt, aus der Welt schiessen, dazu reichen alle Magazingewehre von Europa und Amerika nicht hin. Aber die normale Entwicklung wäre gehemmt, der Gewalthaufe wäre vielleicht im kritischen ('entscheidenden' durchgestrichen) Moment nicht verfügbar, der Entscheidungskampf, (Printed German text gives Entscheidung) würde verspätet, verlängert, und mit schweren Opfern verknüpft."

Page 22

"Vergessen Sie aber nicht, dass das Deutsche Reich, wie alle Kleinstaaten und überhaupt alle modernen Staaten, ein Produkt des Vertrages ist; des Vertrages erstens der Fürsten untereinander, zweitens der Fürsten mit dem Volk. Bricht der eine Teil den Vertrag, der andere Teil ist dann auch nicht mehr gebunden. Wie uns das Bismarck 1866 so schön vorgemacht hat. Brechen Sie also die Reichsverfassung, so ist die Sozialdemokratie frei, kann Ihnen gegenüber thun und lassen was sie will. Was sie aber dann thun wird—das bindet sie Ihnen heute schwerlich auf die Nase."

The above quoted excisions show that the leaders of the German Social-Democracy have not only betrayed a personal trust which Engels, before his death, bestowed upon them, but have also conspired to adulterate and falsify his views on a very important and vital tactical question. Comrade Riazanov and the Russian Communist Party under whose direction he worked, deserve the gratitude of the entire revolutionary movement for having "excavated" from the archives of the German Social-Democracy that part of the Introduction which the literary executors of Engels have so traitorously and flagrantly suppressed, and which he is now able to restore to us. Under the able and devoted leadership of Riazanov the Institute is continuing these researches and we may expect more important contributions of Marx and Engels which the German Socialists concealed either in part or in their entirety.

This tremendous undertaking of the Institute to reconstruct Marx and Engels in their full scientific greatness and revolutionary glory is bound to redound to the benefit of the revolutionary labor movement. The Communist parties of the various countries which will spread the works of the Institute among the masses will find thousands of workers who still follow Socialist leadership coming over to them when they learn of the dastardly betrayal of the memory and principles of Marx and Engels by that leadership.

Marx and Engels in America.

Not very many of our American comrades know of the great interest which Marx and Engels took in the early American Socialist and labor movements. There is a great deal of Marx and Engels material available in this country which must be "excavated" and brought to light. There are several libraries in this country which have buried writings of Marx and Engels. Some writings, though published, are little available to the membership. The writer reported to

the last Convention about his photographing of over two hundred original letters of Marx and Engels which are in the files of the New York Public Library. Those letters dealt to a great extent with American problems. They should be translated and made available for our movement. How many of our comrades know of Marx' and Engels' continued contributions to the *New York Tribune* for about ten years, of their reactions to our Civil War, of their contact with people active in the early labor and Socialist movement through the American sections of the First International and through private correspondence? And what about the atrociously translated and poorly published writings of Marx and Engels which we have in the English language?

The Marx and Engels Institute does not belong to the Russian Communist Party alone. It belongs to the revolutionary working-class movement of the world. It is the gift of the Russian Revolution to us all. The Communist International has pledged the support of all the Communist parties to the work of the Institute. By doing our share in bringing to light a great deal of material dealing with the early Socialist and labor history which can be easily made available, we shall aid the Institute and ourselves learn something of the traditions of the American labor movement.

Besides encouraging Marxian and Socialist research our Party should stimulate serious study of the fundamentals of Marxism. To our demand that every Party member should be a Leninist we must insist that he should also be a Marxist. In fact one cannot be a true Leninist without being a thorough Marxist.

The Marx-Engels Institute is doing yeoman's work in salvaging the heritage of Marx and Engels so that we may be richer in tools with which to sharpen our minds and steel our energies. Let us make the most of this opportunity.

The Left Wing in the Needle Trades

By William Z. Foster

DURING the past month two events of prime significance took place in the needle trades. These occurred simultaneously. They were the reinstatement of the expelled three local unions of the International Ladies' Garment Workers and the holding of the third national conference of the needle trades section of the Trade Union Educational League.

When the revolt of 30,000 members of Locals No. 2, No. 9, and No. 22 of the International Ladies Garment Workers' Union in New York took place in the middle of June, it was the inevitable result of the policy being followed by the Sigman administration. Briefly this was, on the one hand the policy of class collaboration with the employers, involving as usual the surrender of the workers to the bosses, and on the other hand a policy of wild terrorism against the left wing elements who proposed a program of union reorganization and of militant struggle against the employers. Driven to desperation by the advance of the left wing, and forced to try to win a base of operation in the New York unions against the rival Breslaw group, which is deeply entrenched among the skilled workers, the Sigman machine tried to cap-

ture the rebel strongholds, Locals No. 2, No. 9, and No. 22, by a coup d'etat of expelling the entire Executive Boards, 77 members, of the three locals upon the ridiculous pretext that the local unions, at their May Day meetings, were addressed by Communist speakers.

Revolt followed. Immediately the leaders of the 30,000 workers found themselves confronted with a multitude of problems. The first and foremost was the time-honored tendency toward dual-unionism, which always manifests itself in such situations. It is the crude, instinctive reaction of goaded workers against union bureaucrats who have betrayed them. It was necessary, if the fight were to be conducted according to Leninist tactics, that this dual union tendency be checked and the struggle directed towards the goal of reestablishing the unity of the union under a more advanced type of leaders. This objective was achieved. The dual union tendency was killed. One of the most important victories over it was the decision for the expelled members to stand trial before the Joint Board. This trial reacted all to the advantage of the victimized local officials, as it showed

up all the rottenness of the Sigman administration. Similar maneuvers, all directed towards maintaining contact with the International Union, had the final effect of completely eradicating dual unionism and of making the masses of workers realize that their hope of victory lay in the fight to consolidate all the union forces together.

Another tendency that menaced the movement in its early stages was that of taking the struggle into the courts. At first the leaders of the workers tended too much to take the advice of lawyers. The proposal to get out against the officials of the International an injunction restraining them from having members of Locals No. 2, No. 9 and No. 22 discharged from the shops, from seizing the funds of these locals, and various other acts, would have been a disastrous mistake had the left wing leaders yielded to it. The left wing has nothing to gain in capitalist courts. In the first place, it is idle nonsense to believe that the capitalist judges would side with Communists and their close allies as against reactionary trade union officials; and in the second place, even though the impossible happened, and the left elements were able to get a decision against the bureaucratic officialdom, they would only succeed in discrediting themselves in the eyes of the rank and file of the union. The lefts stood to lose either way if they took their case to court. In such situations the recourse of the left wing must be to spread solidarity and militant methods on the part of the masses involved. Fortunately the leaders of the movement finally understood this. They avoided the mistake of going to the courts, and they won the fight by an appeal to the masses against the corrupt and reactionary Sigman and Breslaw machines.

Another problem was to prevent the Sigman and Breslaw machines from breaking the united front between the Communists and the progressives, which was the backbone of the movement. Sigman especially left no stone unturned to make the question of Communism the issue and thereby to isolate the Communists from the masses. But in this he failed signally and thus was defeated in the whole struggle. The Communists were able to keep the attention of the workers focused on questions of immediate issues in the struggle and thus avoided isolation. They made the issue of the elimination of Sigmanism, with all the corruption, gangsterism, and reaction which Sigmanism implies, the center of the struggle. They made a serious mistake in not bringing more prominently to the front the economic demands of the workers, but in spite of this they managed to maintain control of the masses. The demonstrations in the Yankee Stadium, and the gigantic hall meetings will remain as landmarks in the history of the New York labor movement. The needle workers could not be frightened by the "red scare."

In the face of the unbreakable mass uprising of the workers, the Sigman machine collapsed. The first real sign of its collapse was the resignation of Perlstein and Feinberg, the two most contemptible figures in the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, both of whom were the most active leaders in the expulsion policy. The next was the adoption of the fake peace proposals by the General Executive Board,—proposals which fell flat and which made the Sigman machine look ridiculous. The last step was when Sigman faced a meeting of the shop chairmen, which elected a so-called non-partisan committee, dominated by left sentiment, to negotiate a settlement of the dispute. The creation of this committee under the very nose of Sigman, regis-

tered for him the most striking defeat of his whole policy of expulsion. After that the only question was how much of a victory the left wing could crystallize over the conference table as against the tottering Sigman machine, and the forces of Breslaw, who had succeeded in organizing most of the right wing elements behind him during the course of the struggle.

The principal demands of the Joint Committee of Action which conducted the left wing struggle were as follows:

1. All persecutions for political opinions shall immediately cease and all suspended and expelled members shall be reinstated.

2. The principle of proportional representation shall be applied in the election of delegates to the Joint Boards and the International Convention.

3. All workers who have been taken off their jobs through the actions of the international officials shall be reinstated.

4. A general election shall be held in all locals of the New York Joint Board. All members shall be eligible to run as candidates. The election to be supervised by a committee representing the International and the Joint Committee of Action.

5. All officers of the Joint Board and International shall be elected directly by the membership.

6. Repudiation of the Governor's commission award and the development of a movement against the bosses for better conditions in the industry.

7. Establishment of lower dues and economy in the management of the union.

8. Development of an organization campaign to bring the unorganized workers into the union.

On nearly all of these points the settlement resulted in substantial victories for the representatives of the Joint Committee of Action and the membership of the union at large. Point 1 of the agreement adopted unanimously at a great mass meeting on September 24, in Cooper Union, says:

"On the question of tolerating political opinions in our union, it is unanimously decided by all parties at the conference that a spirit of tolerance must be established in our union, and that all discrimination for political opinions must immediately cease."

To force the Sigman machine to sign such a statement was a real victory for the left wing. It was an open acknowledgement, also confirmed by Sigman in his speeches that the policy of expulsion in the International Ladies Garment Workers Union was a complete failure. It is a warning to bureaucrats in other unions who are now embarking upon the policy of expulsion which was initiated in the American labor movement two years ago by Sigman.

In the matter of reinstatements, the agreement was not so satisfactory. All the suspended members of the Executive Boards of Locals No. 2, No. 9, and No. 22 were reinstated, which was an important victory. Other expelled members throughout the country are to appeal their cases to the General Executive Board, and under the agreement will be reinstated, with the exception, however, that those members who have already appealed their cases to the General Executive Board and whose cases have been acted upon unfavorably must let their cases go to the convention for settlement. How the union feels on the question of general amnesty, however, was evidenced by the unanimous adoption

by the Cooper Union meeting of a resolution endorsing the immediate reinstatement to full membership of all the workers victimized in this long and bitter struggle. The left wing must categorically insist upon the Sigman machine's yielding to this universal demand for a general amnesty.

Point 2, the demand for proportional representation, was of the most vital importance. As the Joint Boards and Conventions are now organized, the great masses of unskilled and semi-skilled workers are largely disfranchised to the advantage of the skilled workers and the bureaucracy. Proportional representation would eliminate this evil and tend to throw the union more under the control of the left elements. The question was referred to the Convention in November, with the provision that the proposals for proportional representation (there will probably be two or more of them) shall be submitted to a general vote of the membership, the referendum to be supervised by representatives of the various plans proposed. With an active struggle by the left wing to carry the referendum, this makes it almost certain that the union will have a much higher degree of proportional representation than heretofore. In order to safeguard the make-up of the national convention, the candidates for election as convention delegates shall have "the right to take care of the elections."

The demand under Point 3 resulted in a complete victory for the left wing. The workers discharged from their jobs during the struggle were reinstated to their positions. This was a bitter pill for Sigman to swallow.

On Point 4 the left wing was only partially successful. Instead of elections in all the local unions, as demanded, the agreement called for elections only in Locals No. 2, No. 9, and No. 22. These have since resulted in sweeping victories for the left wing, the old officers, leaders of the Joint Committee of Action movement, being returned to office by votes of about ten to one against the Sigman candidates. Breslaw, through pressure upon Sigman, succeeded in preventing elections in the other New York locals and thus for the moment saved himself from defeat.

On Point 5 the left wing secured the concession of electing the General Manager of the New York Joint Board by a referendum vote. Hitherto this powerful position, which is next in importance to that of International President, has been filled by appointment. The new arrangement means that almost certainly one of the leaders of the Joint Committee of Action will secure the position.

On Point 6, the left wing failed to make an effective fight, so it got few concessions. The best that was done was to secure an agreement that immediately after the elections in the union the whole matter of economic demands will be taken up afresh.

On Point 7, the question of dues was referred to a referendum vote of the New York membership. This means that the left wing proposal of 40 cents a week dues will almost certainly carry, and thus will mark the successful end of one of the bitterest fights in the history of the International. On the economy demand, the matter will be taken up after the elections by the New York Joint Board, with the almost certain result that many of the evils complained of in the management of the union's finances will be rectified.

Point 8 was not greatly stressed by the left wing. Consequently only a vague agreement was reached that "after the elections of the three locals, a plan for organization shall

be worked out which will draw in the active membership into the union activities."

From the foregoing it is manifest that the united front of the Communists and progressive elements in the Joint Committee of Action, supported by the great masses in the union, has won a substantial victory. A death-blow has been struck to the expulsion policy, and the union has been started off on a new track towards a better leadership and more militant policy. Some mistakes were made. One of these was not to have brought the economic demands of the workers more strongly to the front, a mistake made all through the movement and repeated at the settlement. Another was in not having raised the question of amalgamation of all the needle trades unions. The necessity for combining the various needle trades unions is fundamental. Without this, no real policy of struggle is possible. The representatives of the Joint Committee of Action in the negotiations, should have made this an issue by demanding a general amalgamation convention of all the needle unions. The overwhelming masses of workers in the clothing industry believe in industrial unionism. If they are not now aggressively demanding it, it is simply because, on the one hand, the union bureaucrats have actively combated amalgamation, and on the other hand, the left wing leaders have not really conducted a fight for it. At the big Cooper Union meeting of shop chairmen, a speech for amalgamation by any of the leaders of the Joint Committee of Action would have swept the gathering by storm. It was a great mistake not to have seized the occasion for the launching of a real amalgamation movement. In the future these weaknesses of policy must be corrected. A militant movement must be launched in support of the left wing economic demands, for the organization of the masses of unorganized in the industry, and for the consolidation of all the needle unions into one powerful industrial union.

Although it has undeniably scored a victory in the great movement which reached its climax in the settlement on September 25, the left wing still has hard struggles ahead of it in its inevitable march to control the International Ladies Garment Workers' Union. The right wing, supported principally by skilled workers, is strong and well organized. Although Sigman and his group have been weakened in the struggle, Breslaw and his followers, supported by the reactionary Jewish Daily Forward and the socialist party, are powerful. They represent the real enemy of the left wing in the union. But if the Joint Committee of Action group rises to the possibility of the situation, they should be able, at the coming convention, to defeat both the Sigman and Breslaw forces and to start the union, under new leadership, into a new era of progress and development.

The National Conference of the Needle Trades Section.

THE third national conference of the needle trades section of the Trade Union Educational League was held in New York City on September 21 and 22, just in the midst of the negotiations for the settlement of the controversy in the International Ladies Garment Workers' Union. There were present 90 delegates coming from all the important garment centers of America, including New York, Chicago, Montreal, Rochester, Baltimore, Cleveland, Boston, Philadelphia, Toronto, etc.

The conference, which was one of the most important ever held by the Trade Union Educational League, mapped

out elaborate programs of work for the industry, including campaigns in support of the left wing economic demands, the organization of the unorganized, the relief of unemployment, the reorganization of the unions upon the basis of shop committees, the foundation of a labor party, the establishment of the **Needle Worker**, the broadening out of the League groups and their establishment upon a firmer basis financially. Resolutions were adopted condemning the policy of class collaboration now being so energetically promulgated in the labor movement, condemning the exclusion of Saklatvala, demanding the recognition of Soviet Russia, world trade union unity, and the release of class war prisoners.

A feature of the conference was the great stress laid upon amalgamation in the program of work presented by Comrade Zack. It has long been one of the weaknesses of our work in the needle trades unions not to have laid greater stress upon the consolidation of all the craft unions into one industrial organization. This conference of the needle trades section, bids fair to mark the beginning of the first real struggle of the left wing in the needle industry to amalgamate the unions. Comrade Zack showed how the whole future of unionism in the clothing industry is directly bound up with the problem of joining the present scattered and demoralized organizations into a single unified movement. The conference clearly recognized that the amalgamation movement has been greatly neglected in the needle trades.

But the high light of the conference was the discussion of the concrete policies to be applied in the actual struggle to win the unions from the control of the reactionary bureaucrats. These policies involved questions of the propagation of our program as a whole, the formation of united front blocs against the reactionaries, and especially the war against right wing deviations in our own ranks. This was a conference which dealt with the living problems in the industry.

The needle trades section of the Trade Union Educational League has held three national conferences, each marking a new stage of development of the left wing in the needle trades. The first took place in 1922. At that time the left wing had hardly a trace of real organization and but little understanding of the correct policy to be pursued in the unions. The first conference, therefore, dealt with the elementary questions of policy and organization. The question of amalgamation was dealt with, but not in a manner to make it a living issue in the left wing.

The second conference took place in 1923. Already the left wing had made rapid progress in understanding and organization. It had become a real power in the industry, with the result that the bureaucracy had declared the most ruthless war against it. The great question at the second conference was how to combat the expulsion policy, how to cling to membership in the unions in spite of the terrorism of the officials, who saw themselves menaced by the rising wave of revolt.

The third conference marked the defeat of the expulsion policy, and the entry into power of united front combinations in which the left wing exercises a powerful influence. In the Fur Workers' Joint Board the revolt had taken place some months previously and had resulted in an overwhelming defeat for the Kaufman machine and the expulsion policy. And now, just as the conference was in session, the negotiations were on foot between representatives of the International Ladies Garment Workers' Union and the Joint

Committee of Action, for a settlement, which was bound to register a defeat for the Sigman machine and the expulsion policy in the International. The beginnings of such movements are also taking shape in the Amalgamated Clothing Workers and the Capmakers. The problems of the third conference were the problems of actually assuming control of the needle trades unions.

The conference emphatically declared for the application of united front tactics to combine the revolutionary and progressive forces in blocs against the reactionary bureaucracy. But it was unsparing in its criticism of right deviations practiced by left wingers in carrying out such united front movements. In this respect Comrades Wortis and Zimmerman, who headed the national committee of the needle trades section until they resigned recently under sharp criticism, were the storm center. Their policy of maneuvering was attacked. It was demonstrated that they tended to ignore the broader issues of the League program and to concentrate too much upon the securing of official position of the left wingers in the unions. Many speakers pointed out the dangers of such opportunism. The report of the national committee of the needle section, which dealt extensively with these points, was overwhelmingly adopted.

The reports to the third national conference of the needle trades section showed that a revolution is taking place in the leadership and policies of the needle trades unions. Under the pressure of the bosses, who are decentralizing the industry and scattering it out of the big clothing centers, the masses of workers are moving to the left. They are fast becoming more revolutionary and are demanding a higher type of unionism and of struggle against the employers. Their political horizon is rapidly broadening. The old leadership, long dominated by the socialist party, is bankrupt and is breaking up into various warring factions. Its class collaboration policies are hopelessly inadequate to meet the situation. To the front is coming a new left wing leadership, made up for the most part of members of the Workers Party. These new leaders are bringing with them a new policy of class struggle. The whole industry is in a process of ferment and change.

The fate of unionism in the needle industry is bound up with the success of the revolutionary upheaval now taking place in the unions. The left wing must find ways to fight its way to control and to break the power of the incompetent right wing, which has absolutely nothing to offer the workers. In this situation much responsibility rests upon the growing group of new young left wing leaders in the unions. If they have the understanding to follow a real Leninist policy, the progress of the left wing will be greatly facilitated. During the past year these leaders have made many mistakes, such as the failure to emphasize the economic demands in the big struggle in the International Union, the failure to make amalgamation an issue in the needle industry, and the over-stressing of the importance of official positions at the expense of the League program. These mistakes must be remedied in the future. The needle trades section program is the program necessary for the regeneration of the unions in the needle industry. It must be prosecuted vigorously and all deviations from it resisted. The fourth needle trades conference should show a needle trades unionism regenerated and pointing the way that all American trade unions must go.

U. S. S. R., 1921-1925

By A. A. Heller

BROADWAY is reaching out across the Atlantic—London, Paris, Berlin continue Broadway attractions with their incessant rush after enjoyment. The streets, the shops, the cafes, the theaters join in a noisy appeal to live for the moment. "Bread and sights" as in old Rome—abundant signs of a decaying civilization reaching the last stage before its downfall. Sharp contrast between wealth and poverty never before so openly, so brazenly displayed. In England—mass unemployment has become a permanent institution. Neither the government nor the old labor leaders offer any solution, or seem to know what solution to offer. Labor meekly accepts its dole, continuing to live a sort of benumbed existence, not knowing whither to turn. In Germany the "upper classes" openly advocate a return to monarchy, to the Strong-Arm System, to the suppression of all rights gained by labor in decades of struggle. Speculators and schemers amass wealth only to squander it in ostentatious, riotous living—for the moment. The working class bears a double burden of low wages and uncertainty. . . . In France—a wave of superficial prosperity. Nevertheless the mass of the people complain bitterly of the high cost of living, of the difficulty to make ends meet, of the hopelessness of the future.

There isn't an optimistic note to be heard in any of these countries. In England, Bertrand Russell advocates a return to primitive civilization and puts forward Nirvana as life's ideal. French literature has become more erotic than ever—the pains and pleasures of the flesh are the writers' concern; not an appeal to an ideal, not a vision of a better future. Excepting Barbusse and one or two others whose voices cry out in the wilderness. German public men battle between fear of France and England and the secret desire to get even with the conquerors for their present humiliation.

This widespread pessimism among journalists, statesmen, philosophers who reflect the mind of the upper classes, is further augmented by a very real and tangible fear: the rising power of the Soviet Union. Truly the eyes of the world are on Soviet Russia—with fear and hatred on the part of the ruling classes, with hope and inspiration on the part of the militant working class.

Along the "great white ways" of London, Paris, Berlin, and in the dark working-men's quarters of these great cities the last acts of an old civilization are being staged.

Across the border in the U. S. S. R. it is just the reverse.

The moment you cross the border into Russia you feel as though you had left an old stuffy house and walked out into the fresh open air. You breathe freely, there is space and freedom about you; you are glad the old, the staid, the cramped life is behind you.

I was in Moscow in 1921; when I was approaching it this time, nearly four years later, I had my misgivings. Moscow was not gay in '21. Life was very difficult then; it was just at the moment of the introduction of the New Economic Policy. People were living on short rations, there was lack of

essentials everywhere. The town itself had a bedraggled appearance. The effects of the severe fighting in the streets of Moscow—destroyed buildings, broken up streets, pierced walls—were still in evidence. Beggars swarmed; every railroad station in Moscow was jammed full of people, camping there, as for that matter in every other railroad station in Russia. At that time, in the spring of '21, the military phase of the revolution had just come to an end; the final flare-ups, in Kronstadt and elsewhere had been liquidated. But what remained? An enormous task of upbuilding the vast country with practically bare hands, and the threat of an approaching famine. Obviously help must come from outside: in the form of loans or concessions from the capitalist states of Europe or America, or in the form of a Social Revolution by the workmen of those countries. It was hard to believe that Russia could save itself. In spite of the stout faith of the leaders, in spite of their super-human effort, the air was full of misgivings, the immediate outlook was anything but cheerful. One felt the uncertainty of the moment, the tenseness of the struggle that was still on.

And now, four years later, what a change! What a different Moscow greeted me.

Already at Sebej, the Russian station on the Latvian border, which four years ago was a desolate refugee camp, there is now an orderly customs house, with a government money exchange office, where for our dollars we obtained Chervontzi (at 1.93 roubles to the dollar). The little station restaurant supplied tea and food, very reasonably. . . . The Russian train started from here, composed of "soft" and "hard" carriages, and a restaurant car. Traveling is slow but comfortable; later, on other lines I found sleeping cars on the European model, some brand new, made in Russia, irreproachably clean and comfortable.

Arrived in Moscow we found porters eager to carry our baggage, hotel porters inviting us to their respective hotels, and droshkis and even automobiles to carry us there. I went to the Savoy, which was recommended as the best hotel for foreign citizens. Having settled in my room I went to the telephone to call up some of my old friends. Lo and behold, it worked! The young lady at the Central—call her comrade, or she'll be offended—repeated the number I wanted and in a twinkle of an eye said: "I rang"—to which I should have replied "Thank you," had I learned Russian manners, and I heard my friend at the other end of the line say: "**Sloosha-you**"—I am listening. I mentioned my name; a peal of laughter greeted me: "Welcome, stranger." "You haven't forgotten how to laugh," I said. "Why, of course not, don't you laugh in America?" "No, we don't," I said, "we're too busy working to be gay." "Well, get the Moscow spirit," said my friend, "come and have some tea as soon as you can."

Such is the Moscow spirit. The people laugh and sing. The young boy and girl comsomols, marching in the streets to the beating of a drum (or their still younger brother and sister-pioneers) laugh and sing. The crowds filling the streets