

WORKERS OF THE WORLD UNITE



October 1st, 1933

VOLUME X

# COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL No 19

TEN CENTS  
CONTENTS  
OVERLEAF

---

---

# CONTENTS

Number 19

Published fortnightly in Russian, German,  
French, Chinese, Spanish and English.

1. ON THE DEFENCE OF SOVIET CHINA  
AGAINST IMPERIALIST INTERVENTION  
*(See page 631)*
  
  2. LEIPZIG—A GRANDIOSE PROVOCATION OF  
THE BLOODY FASCIST DICTATORSHIP  
*(See page 634)*
  
  3. SOME FEATURES OF THE DEVELOPMENT  
OF FASCISM IN ENGLAND  
By R. M. WHITE *(See page 640)*
  
  4. WILL BRITISH TRADE UNIONS GO THE  
GERMAN ROAD?  
By R. PALME DUTT *(See page 646)*
  
  5. THE EXTRAORDINARY CONFERENCE OF  
THE C.P. OF THE U.S.A.  
By N. STANTON *(See page 652)*
  
  6. THE RICE RIOTS OF 1918 IN JAPAN  
By SEN KATAYAMA *(See page 658)*
- 
-

## ON THE DEFENCE OF SOVIET CHINA AGAINST IMPERIALIST INTERVENTION

ARMIES more than 400,000 strong in the aggregate have been massed at the borders of the Young Chinese Soviet Republic, especially of its central regions, in the provinces of Kiang-si, Fukien and Huhan, by Chang-Kai-shek and other counter-revolutionary Chinese hangmen of the rank of generals. In five campaigns the heroic Red armies of workers and peasants of Soviet China have victoriously repelled the counter-revolutionary hordes of Kuomintang mercenaries. In these campaigns the Red Partisan troops have become moulded into a powerful revolutionary army of the people. The *sixth* such expedition against Soviet China is now in progress. The military operations, in the wake of which follow the extermination of the peaceful working and peasant population, of the petty-bourgeoisie and the revolutionary intelligentsia, and by means of which the Kuomintang butchers seek to destroy the Workers' and Peasants' Republic in China, have now been going on for the past several weeks. But the admirable defence engineered by the fighting proletariat and peasantry of China, who have created the Workers' and Peasants' Soviets, in the course of this sixth expedition once again gives rise to miracles of heroism and strategy in the conduct of a revolutionary war. A storm of popular indignation is sweeping Soviet China and its border territories, directed against the campaign of extermination which is being waged by the Kuomintang. Men and women, young and old, even children, are rallying around the Red armies to protect to their dying breath the liberties which they have won, the soil which they have conquered and the conditions of the new life, a life fit for human beings, which have been established on Soviet territory. The heroism displayed by the Chinese Red armies, and the military genius exhibited by those in charge of field operations under the leadership of the C.P. of China have been paralleled only in the Civil War operations of the Red Army of the Soviet Union. The distinguished military services of the leaders of the Chinese Red armies, Chu-de, Mow-Shen-tong, Pe-Te-hue, Lung-E-ter and Ho-Lung, have indelibly engraved their names on history's roll of honour as exemplary liberators and army captains.

The *sixth* counter-revolutionary expedition against Soviet China differs from all previous anti-Soviet wars led by the Kuomintang in that this campaign was prepared and carried out with the

*direct participation* of the international imperialist counter-revolutionaries.

This direct participation of the imperialist powers in the financial and military preparation of Chang-Kai-shek's sixth campaign, which despite lacerating contradictions has reached a united front, the participation of their military forces in its actual execution, is dictated by the fact that Soviet China and its Red Army had proved themselves invincible in all of the preceding five campaigns. The counter-revolutionary Kuomintang was powerless to smash the revolution in China. It is dictated by the fact that the policy and success of the Chinese Soviet Republic have already made the cause of the Chinese Soviets actually that of the vast masses of the entire Chinese people, from which the energy for the struggle against the counter-revolutionary Kuomintang and imperialist oppressors is drawn. It is dictated by the powerful revolutionary influence of the Chinese Soviets upon the entire colonial and semi-colonial world, upon Indo-China, India, etc., which learns from the example of the Chinese Soviets' struggle against the native and imperialist robbers. It is dictated thereby that a destruction of Soviet China is a necessary pre-condition to the new distribution and complete colonial enslavement of China, as well as at the same time a heavy blow against the proletarian World Revolution.

On one sixth part, though not contiguous, of the immense territory of China a Soviet Republic has arisen with real popular rule within its bounds. The Soviet government, the power of the Chinese workers and peasants, of the urban and rural poor, under the hegemony of the proletariat and the iron leadership of the C.P. of China, was able to find a radical solution for the great social problems confronting China, especially the *agrarian* question, in favour of the broad masses of the peasantry—it has redistributed the land. It has introduced the eight-hour day, has created the basis for the cultural rise of the masses, has procured work and a livelihood for these masses. This is precisely the reason why the Chinese Soviet Republic has become a citadel also for the extension of the agrarian revolution in China, in the field of the *national* liberation of China, the focal point where the *anti-imperialist* struggle of all the colonial and semi-colonial East centres. Soviet China protests against the partition of China, espouses its unification. The policy

of partitioning China, as it is applied by international imperialism, the policy of organising a new imperialist war, clashes with that of Soviet China, which is capable of organising the struggle for the liberation and independence of China.

Nor is it an accident that the Soviet territories in China have become points of attack by the predatory imperialist states—U.S.A., Japan, England and France. German imperialism, too, is filing its claim to a share of the booty; it, too, dispatches its fascist hirelings to take the field against Soviet China.

The financial preparation of the sixth Kuomintang expedition against Soviet China was organised primarily by the *United States*. The so-called grain and cotton loan extended by the American government to the Nanking government was, even according to the admission of Chinese newspapers, a *war loan* in preparation of the sixth expedition against Soviet China. The fifty million dollars granted by this loan did not provide one bit of clothing for even one single half-naked Chinese coolie, did not give one slice of bread to a single starving Chinese peasant. The fifty million American dollars were spent on the purchase of arms and ammunition, airplanes and chemicals for military purposes to be used against the Chinese workers and peasants by the Nanking government. The latter also received other credits from the U.S. which were likewise expended on war supplies for the further conduct of the anti-Soviet military campaign.

The *English* imperialists do not content themselves with mobilising the armies of the Cantonese clique of generals for the attack launched from the South against the central Soviet territories, nor with organising an expedition of the armies of Tibet against other Soviet territories. Their chief agent in China, Ambassador Miles-Lampson, has personally, by means of bribery, organised a united front of the cliques of generals who used to war against each other in Sechuan where the Soviet revolution is victoriously marching on. This united front is to conduct the war against the Red workers' and peasants' army and against the anti-tax army of the insurgent populace.

The *Japanese* imperialists have their fingers in every pie, wherever a struggle is being waged against the Soviet territories. They do not want, in addition to their immediate unreliable hinterland, a Soviet China in the rear of their armies, which in the North of China are already arming to start a counter-revolutionary war in the Far East against the *Soviet Union*.

The *French* imperialists shed much blood when they wiped out the Chinese Soviets that existed on South Chinese territory within their sphere of

influence. They, too, are mustering new military forces to secure their share in the division of the spoils, to intensify their bloody rule in Indo-China by throttling the Chinese Revolution.

The League of Nations which embraces these imperialist robber states sent a commission to China, which is at the disposal of the Nanking government, as "technical aid" but which is, in fact, being exploited for the purposes of the counter-revolutionary war against Soviet China.

High military officers from *Hitler Germany* were the laborators of the military plans of this sixth expedition. Major-General *Seckt*, the "conqueror" of Saxony and Thuringia in 1923, the former head of the Reichswehr, together with two other German generals, *Wetzel* and *Kriebel*, were in charge of the preliminary work. Seventy officers of the German general staff participate in leading the operations of the counter-revolutionary troops.

A hundred and fifty *American* and *Canadian* pilots and countless military officers take part in the aerial and chemical warfare against Soviet China.

In Fukien, where the people's Red army made a breach in the front of the 19th army of the counter-revolutionary Kuomintang mercenaries, where the operations of the Soviet armies and the insurrection of the local population are endangering the ports of Fuchow and Amoy, *Italian* men-of-war have joined the naval units of the U.S., Japan and Great Britain for the purpose of shooting down the revolutionary Chinese soldiers and the rebellious workers and peasants by training their naval guns on them.

Where counter-revolutionaries hailing from imperialist lands meet with the troops of the Kuomintang counter-revolution, there the representatives of the Second International, the social-fascists, must likewise be present. If *Vandervelde* was, even in times past, the patron of Chang-Kai-shek in the Second International, if *Edo Fimmen*, the leader of the reformist transport workers, acted as international stool-pigeon for the Kuomintang hangmen, so now *Grzesinski*, the former social-democratic chief of police and erstwhile Prussian Minister of the Interior, together with Bernhard Weiss, his then accomplice in the murder and provocation of workers, are both travelling to China to provide police protection for the counter-revolutionary hinterland of the counter-revolutionary intervention front.

In the ports of the U.S.A., of Germany, France and other countries, guns, rifles, tanks, aeroplanes, munitions of war and supplies for chemical warfare are loaded aboard ship destined for the *interventionist troops* of the Chinese counter-revolution. An international imperialist *con-*



*spiracy* is afoot against the growing power of the Young Chinese Soviet Republic and its Red army. The purpose of the plot is to secure rich booty by parcelling up China.

*Without the support of the imperialist powers, their weapons, aeroplanes, ammunition and other implements of modern military technique, without the loans of the financial magnates in the capitals of the imperialist countries, their ships, their generals, their general staff officers, pilots and other servile tools, the murderous Kuomintang leaders, beaten in five preceding expeditions, would not be able to organise the sixth on such a scale. The sixth expedition after many defeats, for the destruction of the Chinese Soviets and the extermination of hundreds of thousands of workers and peasants and petty-bourgeois makes it imperative for the toilers of the imperialist countries of Europe, America and Asia, especially, however, for those workers of the imperialist countries directly or indirectly participating in the expedition against Soviet China, to do their elementary duty to their Chinese brothers, the Chinese masses.* Brothers, you must become more conscious than ever of the fact that our Chinese brothers are being mowed down by the very arms, ammunition and poison gas which are produced by the hands of European and American workers and loaded aboard ship by them. The call for aid issued by the Central Executive Committee of the Chinese Soviet Republic must not remain unanswered by the masses, but must *find expression in deeds.*

"Help us against those who want to cast us back into inhuman conditions of life, who want to deprive us of our lives," we read in that appeal. "The international imperialists have decided to stifle in blood the Soviet revolution of the Chinese people. They assemble their fleets and muster their forces in the vicinity of the borders of the Chinese Soviet territories. First these forces will be sent against us, then they will begin to fight among themselves. Thus they will start a new imperialist world war which will be a curse to the entire world."

Let the leaders of the Second International and of the Amsterdam International declare repeatedly that this war will be of no interest to the European and American workers; let M. Trotsky,

that counter-revolutionary tail of the social-fascist International, denounce the Chinese Red armies as "Red bandits" to his heart's content. This appeal for help correctly pictures the danger which menaces the European and American proletariat in consequence of the military intervention against Soviet China. The military forces that the imperialist powers are amassing in the Far East against Soviet China will one day commence to turn their guns on each other, and this will start a new sanguinary world war.

The Communist Parties must never forget what was incorporated, at Lenin's suggestion, into the Conditions of Admission into the Communist International, concerning their duty. The fourteenth of these Conditions of Admission reads:

"Each party which is desirous of belonging to the Communist International shall undertake to render unconditional aid to every Soviet republic in its struggle against the counter-revolutionary forces. The Communist Parties must engage in unequivocal propaganda to prevent the transportation of war munitions to the enemies of the Soviet republics; furthermore, they must conduct legal and illegal propaganda by all means in their power among the troops sent to throttle workers' republics."

To discharge these duties, the Communist Parties must really popularise among the *widest masses* the slogans which were addressed to the toilers of the whole world in the appeal of the Central Executive Committee of the Chinese Soviet Republic. They must not only do agitational work, but must *organise* action against the transport of arms and munitions to China, against the intervention of the American, European and Asiatic imperialists. The defence of the Chinese Soviets is a question of the defence of the proletarian world revolution.

The workers will set up the fraternal league of solidarity of the toilers of all lands in opposition to the league of capitalist robbers of the whole world, in order to follow the summons for aid issued by the Chinese Soviets: to defend the Chinese Soviet Republic and themselves against the oppressors and exploiters of the Chinese people as well as against their own oppressors and exploiters.

(Continued from page 664)  
struggle began to be successfully applied throughout the country. Strikes in the form of sabotage united the workers and strengthened their class-consciousness. In the course of 1919, numerous labour organisations were established in the country and secured the right to a legal existence. After the rice riots, the authorities were forced to allow labour unions to exist while

previous to that, the police inspectors treated them as illegal organisations. This policy now had to be abandoned, and some conflicts between the employers and the workers were even settled through the mediation of police inspectors.

The rice riots and the strikes which followed them captured for the trade unions *de facto* recognition by the Government.

(Continued on page 657)

## LEIPZIG—A GRANDIOSE PROVOCATION OF THE BLOODY FASCIST DICTATORSHIP

"This campaign of calumny does not possess its match in history, so truly international is the scene on which it is enacted, and so complete is the agreement with which the most various party organs of the ruling classes conduct it. After the great fire of Chicago the news was sent round the world by telegraph that this fire was the hellish act of the International, and, indeed, it is to be wondered at, that the hurricane which laid waste the West Indies was not ascribed to this same satanic influence"\* (Marx: Report of the London General Council to the Hague Congress in September, 1872).

**A**FTER half a year of bloody terror, the incendiaries, provocateurs and murderers—Hitler, Goering, Goebbels and Co.—have decided to construct a provocation still more dastardly than the burning of the Reichstag. Gripped in the vice of internal and foreign political difficulties, the fascist dictatorship organised on September 21st in the Leipzig Supreme Court, after eight postponements, the disgusting spectacle of a trial of four Communists who had nothing whatever to do with the fascist provocation. The spy, Van der Lubbe, for whom the headsman's axe is already prepared, is to supply the evidence.

This "trial" has also other aims besides the execution of the accused Communists. It is intended, by the fascist provocateurs, to become a *tremendous demonstration against the International Communist Movement, against Bolshevism*. The fascist executioners are surrounded by a world circle of hatred and contempt on the part of the workers. They arouse disgust among the wide circles of the petty-bourgeoisie and the intellectuals of all countries. Even some sections of the bourgeoisie oppose the fascist provocation for reasons dictated by the imperialist interests of their countries. The contradictions which are tearing the capitalist world to pieces, the struggle against the attempts of the German fascists to undermine the Versailles system, the fear of the arming of Germany, compel the bourgeois countries of the late Entente to regard the provocation of the Hitlerites with distrust, which the latter are utilising to strengthen their armed forces. The entire world bourgeoisie are feverishly preparing for a stupendous world war. But the fate of Russian capitalism which, entangled in the first world war, perishing in its flames, gave birth

to the great October Revolution, compels the bourgeoisie of most countries to undertake much more cautious and cunning preparations for the second than those now being made, with true Prussian crudity, by the frantic Hitlerite cut-throats. And now the fascist provocateurs have prepared a set of forgeries which they intend to display to the world bourgeoisie at Leipzig to dispel their doubts and exhibit themselves in the part of the only saviour of world "civilisation" from world Bolshevism.

But at Leipzig the fascists place most stress on the internal aims:

"Great masses of the workers do not want anything except bread and pageants," said Hitler to Otto Strasser in 1930, long before his advent to power. "They do not show any interest in any ideals, and we can never expect to win over a large number of workers."

Instead of bread, German fascism fed the working class on lead during this half-year. This makes it all the more necessary for German fascism to organise such pageants. The fireworks of the Nuremberg commemorations in May are dead. It is necessary to organise something more solid. The gallows in Altona, Chemnitz, Dusseldorf and other towns of Germany, have not enabled fascism to terrify the heroic German proletariat, fighting under the leadership of the C.P.G. against the fascist dictatorship. The overwhelming mass of the proletariat have always cherished a deadly hatred for the fascist murderers. But even the wide circles of the petty-bourgeoisie and peasants, who succumbed to fascist demagoguery, are now rapidly passing through a process of disillusionment which occasionally reaches the point of open unrest and mutinies against the big capitalist and landlord policy of the third Empire. Unrest has struck deep roots in the ranks of the proletariat and semi-proletarian elements who form part of the storm detachments of the fascists. An eloquent confirmation of this fact is the 10,000 national-socialists imprisoned in concentration camps, the order to arrest every national-socialist who leaves the fascist party, the hundreds of mutinous storm troops who have been shot. But these are only the flowers. The fruit is still to come. In autumn the moratorium granted the farmers ends. The wage agreements terminate in the basic branches of industry. Exports continue to fall disastrously. One after another, the municipalities declare themselves bankrupt. The Third Empire is menaced by a budget disaster

\* See No. 5/6, Communist International, 1933.

which it is hoped to avert by the reorganisation of the banking system now taking place in preparation for inflation. The fascist dictatorship means, in the next few months, to proceed to the policy long awaited by heavy industry (which is dissatisfied with half-measures)—*the sharp lowering of the standard of living of the masses, the general attack on the working class.*

The Leipzig trial, in particular, is intended to form the artillery preparation for this attack. At the national-socialist Congress which recently ended in Nuremberg, Hitler hinted at this, saying :

“During a difficult crisis we must support the feelings of the masses and distract their attention from gross material demands in the direction of spiritual needs.”

This is why the Leipzig trial is required precisely at the present time by the fascists. They will not be able to convince anyone of the guilt of the prisoners. Even an international commission of non-Communist lawyers and the London Public Court have proved incontrovertibly that the real incendiaries of the Reichstag are those who are now playing at the trial at Leipzig. They were too crude, too hasty and too awkward in their incendiarism of the building of the “people’s representation” in Germany. But if the world workers’ movement does not prevent them, they are still capable of using it to raise a third wave of terror. This is not a sign of the strength and firmness of the fascist régime, as putrid opportunists try to convince us, but it is a sign of frantic terror, the fear of a criminal gang of murderers in face of the anger of the people, and the maturing revolution.

\* \* \*

Provocation, as a political weapon in the hands of the bourgeoisie against the working class, is not an invention of the German fascists. The thorny path of the liberation movement of the working class against capitalist slavery is strewn with provocations. Bismarck’s anti-socialist law was prepared by the grossest provocation, the shooting of the gendarme Schtieber. The Tsarist government made a system of provocation of the Azev type to strengthen its rule. But provocation has never flourished so well as after the world war.\* Decaying capitalism is trying to form a mass basis for its rule. *Extensive and fantastic provocation is to serve as one of the means of doping the great masses of the petty-bourgeoisie and create a pogrom atmosphere against the revolutionary working class.*

The Russian bourgeoisie, in the stormy revolu-

tionary days of 1917, tried by the aid of the most abominable provocation against Comrade Lenin, the leader of the world revolution, to create a patriotic fervour and rouse the jingoist part of the petty-bourgeoisie to pogroms against the revolutionary proletariat. The foul cry, “Lenin is a German spy,” was launched by the bourgeoisie to rouse the soldier masses of workers and peasants, starving and ruined by the three years of imperialist slaughter, to continue the world war for the glory of stock exchange, the capitalists and the landlords.

In other circumstances, when they were not under such mass pressure as the Russian bourgeoisie in 1917, the British diehards limited themselves “merely” to forgery and the Zinoviev letter, which had been manufactured by the British Secret Service, to get into power. But, in proportion as class antagonisms become more intense, and the revolutionary crisis grows, provocation assumes an ever more bloody nature.

The Gorgulov affair, calculated on the provocation of war, did not provide the provocateurs with what they wanted. Owing to the vigilance of the Communist Party of France, which carried on a splendid campaign against the backers of Gorgulov, the veil was torn from the faces of the provocateurs. On this occasion the masses of the petty-bourgeoisie did not submit to provocation.

The stern hand of the proletarian dictatorship in the U.S.S.R. punished the provocateurs who were working under the guidance of the general staffs of the imperialist robbers. It exposed the rôle of Stern, Ramzin, etc., to the proletarian public opinion.

How inseparable a part of the practical policy of imperialist circles provocation has become is shown by events in the Far East, where it has *already unleashed a war* which may become a world slaughter. The warlike operations of the Japanese imperialists against China began with three provocations which were prepared and carried out by the Japanese General Staff: (1) The pogrom against the Chinese in Korea; (2) the explosion on the South-Manchurian Railroad; (3) the murder of the Japanese officer Nikamura by the Japanese gendarmes. These three provocations served as an excuse for the beginning of military operations by the Japanese imperialists against China, and made it easier to seize Manchuria and the whole of Northern China and also to prepare a series of new provocations towards the Soviet Union. Another example is afforded by the fascist dictatorship in Hungary, which organised an act of provocation through its agent Matushka. Many innocent people were killed when a train was blown up to charge the Communists with organising this crime, and bring

\* See “The Agent-Provocateur in the Labour Movement.”

about the execution of Comrades Sallai and Furst.

\* \* \*

But German fascism has broken the record in the sphere of provocation, because here, in the industrial heart of Europe, proletarian revolution is rapidly maturing. The C.P.G. had got to grips with the problem of winning over the majority of the working class. Despite the treacherous strike-breaking policy of the social-fascists in July, 1932, the masses, under the leadership of the C.P.G., replied by a stormy wave of strikes, reaching the point of a general strike of Berlin transport workers, which compelled the bourgeoisie to replace the Papen Government by the "social" General Schleicher. Six million Communist votes — such was the reply of the masses to the dictatorial measures of the German bourgeoisie. Schleicher was unable to weaken the tenseness of the overcharged atmosphere to the least degree. The bourgeoisie determined to allow Hitler to take the reins of government, but, out of fear of an explosion of the proletarian revolutionary struggle, they left the national-socialists still in a minority in the Cabinet, without giving the Nazis the basic commanding heights in home and foreign policy. A fierce revolutionary seething was taking place among the proletariat. In mighty demonstrations the masses showed their determination to struggle. The C.P.G. led the revolutionary struggle of the masses, not ceasing to show the proletariat the tremendous dangers which threatened the masses. Its appeals were directed particularly towards the social-democratic workers, the majority of whom were still captives of their leaders and by their influence rallied together the wide strata of the proletariat. In the history of the treachery of social-fascism, an extremely shameful page was written in February, 1933. When the masses were straining towards the struggle, preparing for a general strike which could have rapidly developed into a victorious armed revolt, the social-fascists who "hated revolution like poison" (Ebert), used all their influence through the trade unions, the party, the youth league and the press to keep the masses back from action by means of democratic illusions, assuring them that on March 5th, 1933, fascism would be defeated at the ballot box. Rudolph Hilferding, the theoretical leader of the S.P.G. and the Second International, wrote at this time :

"Hitler is again defeated, Hitler is again thrown back on to the grounds of legality, but in circumstances much less favourable for him. All that is left for him in the future is to play the rôle of parliamentary opposition" ("Die Gesellschaft," January, 1933, No. 1, pp.3-4).

The fascists, however, prepared the elections in such a way as to guarantee themselves success with the aid of the greatest provocation in history, compared with which the Rumanian elections are a mere plaything. While playing the comedy of "legally" winning the majority in parliament by democratic means, Hitler, Goering and Co. began to prepare for the destruction of the workers' organisations, dealing the chief blow against the C.P.G., manufacturing the election bomb — the burning of the Reichstag — so that at one blow they could destroy the vanguard of the German proletariat in a wave of pogroms, disarm the working class and not allow it to realise its position, and secure the support of the petty-bourgeoisie and the wavering part of the bourgeoisie, by facing them with an accomplished fact. "Hic Rhodus, hic salte." Fascism or Communism.

The continuity of the provocational methods of the government of the German bourgeoisie is astonishing. Eighty years ago Marx wrote :

"Thus the German christian government did not limit itself to breaking desks, stealing other people's documents, forcing people to give false evidence, manufacturing forged documents, buying perjury, and all that, to secure a conviction of the Cologne prisoners. They tried to throw a shadow of disgrace on the London friends of the prisoners so as to shield their Hirsch, whom Schtieber swore that he did not know and of whom Goldheim declared that he was not a spy" (Karl Marx : "The Exposure of the Cologne Communist Trial," Vol. viii., p. 549).

\* \* \*

Communism or fascism—such was the problem in March, 1933, when Goering set fire to parliament, so that in streams of workers' blood he could save German capitalism in face of a proletarian revolution. The problem is the same now, six months later, at the Liepzig trial. Only the social-fascists have tried to trick the masses by their chatter about the "third path," betraying the masses step by step, handing over to the bourgeoisie one position after another won by the working class in the revolutionary days of 1918. Their "third path" consists of fighting for the hundredth time on the other side of the barricades against the rebellious workers, together with the frantic counter-revolution. The "third path" consisted of the shooting of the Spartacists, the plot of Legien with Stinnes, the Bielefeld agreement of Severing, the crushing of the insurrections of 1921 and 1923, down to the use of a whole chain of such provocations as are now being used by the fascists.

Who was the first in Germany to blow open the safe containing documents of the first Soviet

representation in Germany, with the aim of provocation, afterwards forcing the Soviet representative to leave the country? Scheideman. Who was it that rigged up the provocation trial of the imaginary, non-existent Cheka? The social-democrats. Who was it that provoked and shot down the May-Day demonstration in 1929? Zoergiebel. These are the people who, in the post-war Weimar Germany, laid the path of provocation against the revolutionary working class. It was from them that Goering and Goebbels received their methods of provocation, burning parliament for the struggle against the revolutionary workers' movement. The social-fascists, who led the masses under the knife of fascism by their policy of the "lesser evil" and then joined in the régime of open fascist dictatorship, voting for the Hitler policy in the Reichstag, handing over the trade unions to the Nazis, leading the workers to the "national" festival on May 1st, etc., are trying to change over to the "anti-fascist style," because the social-democratic workers have had to pay dearly for their refusals of any attempt to form a united front with the Communists. The social-fascists are even now trying to hold back the masses from revolutionary methods of struggle against the fascist dictatorship, to restore the skeleton of their collapsing organisation, to keep back the masses from going into the camp of Communism, so that in the decisive fights between Communism and fascism they can once more try to come forward in the rôle of gravedigger of the revolution. For this purpose social-fascism makes wide use of "left" phrases. The social-democratic press, under the pressure of the masses, "undertakes the defence" of the prisoners of Liepzig. But not very long ago "Napshud" in Poland, "Het Volk" in Holland and "Social Democrat" in Denmark repeated in chorus, after the fascist gang, the provocation fantasies of Goering about the Communists. The C.P.G., which stands in the fires of the struggle against the fascist dictatorship, welding together the forces of revolution, knows the value of this "defence" of the Communists by the social-democrats, and is widely exposing the forced manoeuvres of the social-democrats.

Before the Leipzig Trial, before the new wave of provocation, every worker, every toiling peasant, every office worker will sum up the half-year of fascist dictatorship, using also for this the organisation of the burning of the parliament building. They will then understand what some of them did not yet understand at the time of the burning of the Reichstag by the fascist provocateurs. Never before in Germany have the capitalists, manufacturers and factory owners been such unquestioned masters in their factories.

Never have the workers been so exploited and downtrodden as at the time of the rule of the fascist dictatorship. Fascism has shown the masses its real face, which it tried to hide before coming into power.

Millions of workers have been denied all kinds of insurance. The budget for 1934 provides for a reduction of relief for the unemployed by 410 million marks. With the help of the so-called "voluntary" contributions, wages have been cut. Rationalisation measures, which cut wages in a hidden form, are being carried out everywhere. The rubbishy talk of the liquidation of unemployment is being exposed even by fascist sources.

In the official organ "Wirtschaftsdienst" on June 7th, the fascists recognise the breakdown of all their measures and the intensification of the crisis compared with last year:

"Poverty among the unemployed this year is undoubtedly greater than last year, because all reserves have dried up. On the whole, pauperism is no less than at the beginning of 1932. Owing to the fall of exports by 10 per cent. *unemployment has increased by 200,000 persons.*"

Never before have high prices struck such blows of starvation and ruin at the wholly or semi-unemployed masses of town and village as since the Hitlerites presented the landlords and Junkers with billions in premiums, by raising prices and a tariff war. The basic articles of consumption have been wiped out of the sorry budget of the worker. According to the figures of "Wirtschaft und Statistik," in comparison with 1932 consumption has decreased as follows: Meat by 6.2 per cent., sugar by 30 per cent., beer by 9 per cent., cigarettes by 2 per cent. The price of widely used articles rose by the end of June by 3 per cent. Butter hardly appears as an article of food for the broad masses. The price of margarine has jumped by 75 per cent. The "voluntary" contributions from wages takes up about 20-25 pfennigs a week.

Never before has arbitrary licence in Germany been such a heavy burden for simple people of town and village. The tax-collectors crush the small shopkeepers, craftsmen, etc., who are gasping in the grips of the crisis. Never before have the chain stores been surrounded with such a financial and legal guardianship as during the rule of those who at one time, for demagogic reasons, smashed the windows of these same stores. Hugenberg, even before his resignation, gave the foundation for the need to protect the big capitalist stores:

"Is there any sense—I ask from the point of view of the middle classes—in crushing the chain stores by taxes and other means, and



together with them big sums in capital and a large number of firms which supply them?"

Hugenberg himself was replaced by Schmidt. The excesses regarding the chain stores stopped.

Never before have the bankers and stock-exchange speculators lived in such safety as during the rule of the bold "destroyers" of usurious servitude. Never before did the landlords and Junkers in their estates so oppress the farm-hands and the poor peasants, liquidating all social legislation and reducing their wages to a starvation level, by means of the unpaid labour-power supplied by the fascist government from the so-called labour camps. The situation, not only of the poor peasants, but of the middle peasants, has grown worse in connection with the lowering of the purchasing power of the working class.

Never before in Germany has there been such an orgy of militarists, such a spread of armed gangs, such feverish war preparations, as now. There is not a workers' village, home, barracks or a hut in which the unemployed find shelter, where they are not mourning proletarians who have been arrested, tortured and shot. For the masses did not stop their struggle for a moment against the fascist dictatorship. And ahead lies . . . the worst winter of the century. We come to the people and say: we shall get through this winter, so that next spring we can once more begin the attack on unemployment" (Goebbels).

The skeleton hand of hunger, crisis, bankruptcy, gripping the throat of the third empire, will not be removed by endless pageants. The pageant of Leipzig has been thought out as a stupendous provocation of the fascist gang so as to distract the masses from the struggle against hunger, cold, unemployment and terror. The pageant of Leipzig, according to the plans of the fascists, should terrify the heroic vanguard of the German proletariat, which, in the difficult conditions of terror and provocation, has not allowed itself to be separated from the masses. The German proletariat, during this half-year, showed heroism unparalleled in the history of the workers' movement, showed self-sacrifice, unswerving loyalty to the revolution and to its class, to its Party, produced hundreds of Litgens, who, at the foot of the gallows, under the axe of the headsmen, from the prisoners' dock in the courts, threw out a proud challenge to the enemy, dying with the slogans of the proletarian revolution on their lips. Such a proletarian vanguard will not be terrified by the new round of provocation beginning at Leipzig.

Hundreds of thousands of Communists, despite the white terror, proudly carry the standard of the C.P.G. Thousands of papers and leaflets are being distributed among the working class

under menace of death. Not a single trade union meeting takes place without an anti-fascist demonstration. The strike wave is rising again. There have already been hundreds of cases, in which workers in the factories, under the leadership of the Communists, have succeeded in victoriously beating back the capitalist offensive. Further, there are ever more frequent cases of *political* actions in the factories against compulsory participation in fascist demonstrations, against compulsory deductions from wages, against the fascist pageants. On August 4th for the first time the workers came out on to the streets in militant demonstrations with red flags, in Berlin, Hamburg, Lower Rhine and other districts. All this shows that the masses and their vanguard are recovering from the first blows, are rallying together and beginning to take up the counter-offensive.

Not only the entire weight of the fascist terror was loosed against the C.P.G. Attempts were made to disintegrate it from within, by the aid of provocation, by the aid of vestiges of the counter-revolutionary Trotskyites and Brandlerites, by defeatists of the type of Herten, who sowed distrust and panic in the ranks of the fighting Communists. The fact that the C.P.G. stands like a granite rock against all attacks, that the masses of the members surround their leaders like an iron wall, proves that the Party, in preparing for battle with the fascist dictatorship, has every prerequisite for acquitting itself with honour. Let the social-fascist bankrupts and the counter-revolutionary Trotskyites slander as they will:

"The wild howls of rage almost immediately after the beginning of the Russian revolution are raised against the Bolsheviks by the entire bourgeois and almost all the petty-bourgeois press. And the Bolshevik internationalist supporter of the proletarian revolution may justly hear in these wild howls cries of approval, for the frantic hate of the bourgeoisie frequently serves as a further proof that those who are being slandered, cursed and persecuted are honestly and really serving the proletariat" (Lenin, Vol. xiv., p. 6).

The Communists of Germany will penetrate still deeper into the factories and rouse the last worker against the Leipzig provocation. The weeks of the trial must become a time of great mobilisation of all anti-fascist forces for the struggle against the fascist dictatorship. Every worker in Germany must not only know the truth and the meaning of the burning of the Reichstag, but also the meaning of the Leipzig trial. These masses must be drawn into the struggle against the fascist dictatorship and every manifestation of discontent and protest against the offensive of

capital, the house-owners the landlords, must be raised to the level of a struggle with the root of all the evils—the fascist dictatorship.

The Communists of all countries, all the anti-fascists, during these days will increase their efforts tenfold to mobilise the entire world proletariat and all honest toilers for the struggle against the Leipzig provocations. There must not be a factory, mine, port, railway terminus, office or university, where mass meetings do not take place in defence of the prisoners. A wave of strikes and demonstrations of protest against the fascist provocateurs must sweep over all countries. Up to the present the Communist Parties have not done all that is necessary in their struggle around the events in Germany. Every week the fascist murderers lead the heroes of the proletarian revolution to the gallows. *In connection with the trial we must bring about a sharp change in the anti-Fascist movement, we must mobilise the entire working-class press. The Communist Party must fiercely resist every effort on the part of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois nationalist circles to utilise the events in Germany for the filthy aims of their own bourgeoisie. We must expose the manoeuvres of the social-fascists in this direction. We must link up the struggle around the Leipzig trial with the struggle against the process of "fascisation" in our own countries.*

In all countries, social-fascism is trying to keep the masses back from revolutionary methods of struggle against fascism by empty talk of a boycott of German goods, which they themselves do not take seriously, and which, in the form in which it is imagined by the social democrats, can only play into the hands of their own bourgeoisie and the fascist cut-throats. In places where the boycott assumes a mass character, the Communists must be with the struggling workers, exposing the nationalist character which the social-democrats are trying to give to this boycott. When the Communist International organised a boycott against the murderers Horthy and Co., after the defeat of the Hungarian Soviet Republic, the social-democratic parties of all countries fell on the Communists, foaming at the mouth in their defence of the bloody deeds of Horthy. When the Communist International in 1923 proposed to organise a transport boycott against Mussolini, the social-democratic parties and the Second International disrupted this revolutionary matter, heaping filth on the Communists of all countries. At the present time, when the proletariat in many countries, under the leadership of the Communist Party, is organising revolutionary actions, strikes and transport boycotts of steamers which bear the emblem of the bloody fascist dictatorship, the social-democratic ministers Stauning in Denmark,

Cabalchero in Spain, Maisner in Czecho-Slovakia, attack the strikers with armed forces and bring the organisers of the *most effective and correct boycott at the present stage, the transport boycott, to trial* (prosecution of Larsen for organising a general strike at Appenrad in Denmark, against the provocation of the German fascists). This is the real face of the social-fascists, and the meaning of the boycott manoeuvres adopted by the Amsterdam International. The boycott of German goods, in places where it is carried on by social-democracy (Holland and Denmark) serves the social-fascists to draw the masses into the united front with their own bourgeoisie. Under the slogan "Buy British and Dutch goods" the social-fascists are carrying out the social orders of the bourgeoisie of their own countries.

Around the Leipzig trial we must *arouse the hatred of the toilers* of the whole world for all the fascist provocateurs. The chasing out of the super-provocateur and hangman Rosenberg by the workers of London must be an example for all revolutionary workers.

Under the pressure of the proletarian struggle against the bloody terror in Germany, the fascist canaille are trying to lie, to deceive and lead astray proletarian public opinion, denying the existence of the terror in Germany. Only a few days ago "Kreuzzeitung" brazenly stated in the official communique of the German government that murders and terror in July, 1933, had noticeably diminished compared with July, 1932, contrasting the 69 killed in July last year to 17 killed this year, while in reality, even according to a summary of the fascist press, in July this year 82 workers were shot, of whom 17 were publicly executed. The task of the Communists is to *rouse the indignation of the masses around the Leipzig trial against endless murders such as are taking place, day after day, in Germany.* Two thousand workers shot, tens of thousands mutilated by the executioners, 100,000 tortured in the fascist concentration camps, call the world proletariat to struggle against the fascist murderers *for the liberation of the political prisoners, headed by the leader of the German proletariat, Ernst Thaelman.*

The fate of the prisoners in Leipzig is in the hands of the world proletariat. It depends on the scope of their struggle, the scope of the anti-fascist struggle, whether Goering, Hitler and Co. will be able to carry through the Leipzig provocation successfully for themselves. The Communists must *rouse the vigilance of the masses towards new provocations which may be framed up by the provocateurs during the trial.*

The question of the dictatorship of the proletariat or the dictatorship of fascism has never

faced the world proletariat so sharply as now. There is no middle path and cannot be. The terror of the fascist dictatorship is scattering the last illusions which were created by the social-fascists in the minds of the social-democratic workers as to the third path, the blessings of bourgeois democracy. We must show to the masses the lessons of the two paths of development — the path of the victorious proletarian

revolution in the U.S.S.R., the path of the proletarian dictatorship, which stands like a granite rock in the raging sea of the capitalist chaos of fascism, provocation and war plots, and the path of Otto Bauer, Wels, Vandervelde, the path of the Second International, which leads to the dictatorship of the fascist murderers, prepared, in a democratic manner, by the apostles of the Second International.

## SOME FEATURES OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF FASCISM IN ENGLAND

By R. M. WHITE.

**D**URING the last year the fascist organisations in Great Britain have grown considerably. The process of the radicalisation of the working masses, who are disappointed in the policy of the Labour Party and trade union leaders, is becoming accelerated in the conditions of the end of capitalist stabilisation and evokes a number of new steps on the part of the bourgeoisie. Under this heading may be classed both measures for the fascisation of the state apparatus and the creation and development of fascist civil war detachments. The growth of militant action among the unemployed, mass strikes which take place against the will of the reformist leaders, street demonstrations consisting of many thousands of people which even develop into barricade fights with the police, the naval mutiny at Invergordon, and the extension of the influence of the Communist Party, form the background against which the organisation of the forces of counter-revolution is taking place.

The bourgeoisie uses against the revolutionary workers all "democratic" forms of persecution. For example, Comrade Tom Mann and others were sentenced to imprisonment under a law issued in the fourteenth century, in the time of Edward the Third. At the same time obsolete "democratic" rights are being abolished, as is instanced by the prohibition of meetings in districts near labour exchanges; the mass arrest of hunger-marchers in Wales and Ireland; the re-organisation of the police effected by Lord Trenchard; and the application of the Glasgow City Council for powers to prohibit all demonstrations and meetings, including those in private houses.

The English bourgeoisie is actively forming military fascist organisations and creating a mass basis for the fascist movement. The failure of all the attempts of the capitalists and the National

Government to stop the further aggravation of the crisis in England by "peaceful" parliamentary means, the inflation which is beginning, the growing contradictions in the camp of the bourgeoisie on questions of tariff policy, inflation and relations with other countries—all this promotes in the ranks of the petty-bourgeoisie uncertainty on the morrow, dissatisfaction with the policy of the government and the old bourgeois parties. Considerable sections of the ruined petty-bourgeoisie, the unemployed intellectuals, the labour aristocracy, and so on, seeing no way out along the lines of "democratic" capitalism, stake all their hopes on a "strong government." This government must find a way out of the economic crisis, must give these petty-bourgeoisie elements the assurance that they will not find themselves to-morrow expropriated by the great capitalists, or thrown on to the scrap heap.

This is taken into consideration by the magnates of capital. Both through the representatives of the old bourgeois parties and through various recently organised openly fascist organisations, the financial magnates are putting forward programmes of "salvation" calculated mainly to attract the petty-bourgeois, whose whole former mode of life has been upset, by demagogy.

In the columns of the *Daily Express* Lord Beaverbrook has been preaching the necessity of autarchy\* for over a year, of the creation of "strong government," i.e., the open dictatorship of finance capital, the cessation of class struggle and . . . the cessation of the lowering of wages.

The preaching of Mondism—"peace in industry"—has been displaced by the popularisation of the "corporative" interests of industry and of the extension of the home market by increasing the purchasing capacity of the masses, which is to be achieved by the "wise policy" of the govern-

\* Autarchy. Economic isolation.—Ed.

ment. The British Union of Fascists, the organisation of "British Fascists" competing with it, Greenshirts, etc., put forward, in the main, this same programme of Beaverbrook's. The terminology is changed in places, but the demagoguery remains the same: to save the collapsing "might of the British Empire," to strengthen the dictatorship of the capitalists, to annihilate the revolutionary movement.

Widely using social demagoguery, the fascist movement attracts to itself also certain sections of the proletariat. Disappointed in the policy of the Labour Party and its "labour governments," who promised bread and work, but gave only the Means Test and a starvation existence in the labour exchange queues, some sections of the unemployed are caught by the gradiloquent slogans of fascism. They have not yet understood the necessity for proletarian class struggle, while the "class struggle" of the trade unions and Labour Party leaders brings them directly on to the road of fascism.

This process, which ensued during the whole of the crisis period, has intensified considerably since the seizure of power by the fascists in Germany. Hitler's *coup* considerably enlivened the activity of the British fascists. They have begun to publish newspapers, to build up intensively their organisations, to make attacks on workers' meetings and to organise demonstrations.

Although the fascist organisations in England have not yet reached great dimensions, it would be a political mistake to underestimate the growth of fascism in England. The social-economic conditions for the growth of fascism exist. The bourgeois parties, in spite of their verbal squabbles with the fascists, are quite willing to allow the further development of the fascist movement. The Labour Party helps the bourgeoisie to introduce fascism into the ranks of the proletariat, to drive the workers to it, and clears the road for fascism.

The well-known manifesto of the leadership of the Labour Party and the General Council of Trade Unions on the subject of "democracy against dictatorship" is particularly significant in this respect, for it shows vividly the acceleration of the process of fascisation of the British reformists and the Labour Party. The social-fascists in this manifesto and in the campaign following it which, according to the plans, included also Citrine's speeches at the Congress of the Amsterdam trade union bureaucrats and Brighton, put fascist dictatorship on a par with proletarian dictatorship. Declining the proposals of the Communist Party for the creation of a united front against the attack of fascism, they, in the name of "pure" democracy, oppose "all dictatorship."

At the same time Sir Stafford Cripps, a former member of the Labour Government, makes declarations in favour of the dictatorship of democracy, thus proving his kinship with the French Right social-fascists, who openly declared themselves on the side of fascism.

It is evident that such a campaign, particularly at a moment when Hitler's fascist murderers are cutting off the heads of revolutionary workers, preparing to kill the leaders of the revolutionary proletariat, Comrades Thälmann, Torgler and others, and are actively preparing for military action against the U.S.S.R., cannot but serve as a support of fascism. It shows particularly clearly that social-fascism and fascism are twins, that in actual fact they are carrying out the same task. Therefore, particular attention should be paid to the activities of the English fascists, the real face of fascism must be exposed to the working masses of England, and an unflagging fight must be waged against the fascist danger.

Among the English fascist organisations, the *British Union of Fascists* is particularly noteworthy for both its organisation and activities and its particularly complete and extensively formulated programme.

The founder and leader of the British Union of Fascists is the millionaire, Sir Oswald Mosley, a former Labour member of parliament and a member of the "Labour" government of MacDonald and Henderson, formerly a member of the Conservative Party and Conservative member of parliament, who was married to the daughter of the notorious Lord Curzon. As we see, the political career of this "leader" displays all the colours of the rainbow. Conservative, labourite, fascist — such are the stages covered by this "leader." It is interesting to note that the reason for Mosley's resignation from the "Labour" government and his expulsion from the Labour Party in 1930 was the question of the government's policy, and Mosley's "Left" memorandum, on unemployment insurance.

The union publishes a weekly paper, the *Blackshirt*. Its organisations exist mainly in London and Lancashire. We have no exact data on the strength of the organisation; according to data published by the union itself, it has in Bristol two thousand members, in West Ham (London) 500 members, in Newport 800 members, in Stoke (Staffordshire) 700 members, and so on. In all probability these figures have been considerably exaggerated. Nevertheless, it is an undoubted fact that in all these localities the fascists are developing considerably activity: they arrange open meetings, organise camps and "fascist houses," send groups of agitators, newspaper sellers and sellers of fascist literature into other

towns and districts. For the organisation of all this work on the scale lately adopted by the fascists, considerable cadres are necessary. These cadres, as we shall see, are recruited not only from among the petty-bourgeoisie, but also from among a certain section of the workers, particularly the unemployed.

#### THE AIMS OF THE BRITISH UNION OF FASCISTS.

As its main aim the Union puts forward the "liquidation" of the class struggle, "salvation of European civilisation from Bolshevism" and "the establishment of the corporative state."

Under the slogan of "Britain First" the fascists inflame the nationalism and chauvinism of the masses, directing it along the lines of the imperialist policy of the British bourgeoisie.

Britain must "choose between fascism and communism, between a happy society and world chaos" — that is one of the self-satisfied programme slogans of the Union. Let us see what fascism actually promises and for whom this fascist society will be "happy."

It is necessary to put an end to the class struggle, says the first and foremost commandment of the fascists, for "it is too indecent ethically and contrary to the English spirit to preach the slogan of class against class." "The end of war lies in industry," a fascist newspaper teaches the workers. Instead of class struggle and "war in industry" we must have the co-operation of workers and employers and their common struggle against communism, for the corporative state.

But it not so easy to convince the workers that the end of the struggle against capitalist employers will improve their position and create a "happy society." They have before their eyes the experience of two Labour governments, the betrayal of the General Strike, the policy of Mondism, which have only made the position of the workers worse. So Mosley promises:

"Fascism teaches that it is not right for the individual to claim an undue and unearned profit at the expense of the community. Fascism will control this profiteering instinct of the business world and co-ordinate the whole in the interests of the state. In future the criterion of gain will no longer be considered paramount."<sup>\*</sup>

Now let us see how the fascists intend to "defend" the working class:

"The individual," Mosley's paper continues, ". . . may seek his private fortune, but not at the expense of the community; if he seek to withhold his labour for his private ends, if he seek by monopoly or trust the exploitation of

the community, Fascism will have none of him."<sup>†</sup>

Here we already see that a premise for the "welfare" of the workers under the rule of Mosley and his fascist hooligans must be a taboo on strikes. Only then will the fascist "happy society" be reached. Capitalists and workers will be equal before the state, which will be equally above both.

But whose is this state, who will have power? the workers will ask. The *Blackshirt* gives no straight answer to this question. The capitalist dictatorship in this "non-class" corporative state only shows between the lines of the *Blackshirt*. It only says: fascism will rule. But whether the capitalists or the workers will be the masters in the corporative state the fascist preachers do not say; nor who will own the means of production — the workers or the capitalists. And it is plain why — for "the truth," as they themselves say, "is contained in the fact that fascism is an idea," which has nothing in common with material relations of production. This latter sphere only relates to private actions of the individual. For society to meddle in such matters is to follow a wrong path. The historical development of the last three centuries was wrong precisely in the respect that "the world to-day has travelled far down the materialist-individualist path that opened at the Renaissance," as the anonymous fascist C.S.G. complains. We are told that, with the development of the bourgeoisie and the transformation of the capitalists into the ruling class, the method of masking the dictatorship of capitalism by democratic superstructure developed and expanded. And this, according to the fascists, contains the incorrectness of the development of society. "The masses of the electorate have little knowledge or interest in the problems they are asked to decide." But as these "ignorant" and "uninformed" elements in capitalist society are the proletarian and semi-proletarian masses, who are so as a result of their economic subjection, it is clear that it is those who are "not ignorant," i.e., the capitalists must solve problems and rule in the corporative "happy society." And we find that it is so. fascism declares that "*some are born to rule, some to be ruled*"<sup>‡</sup>. (Italics mine — R.M.W.).

In Italy and Germany, in those "classic" lands of fascism, power is in the hands of the capitalist bosses — the Thyssens, Stinnes, and so on. The conclusion to be drawn from this is that the British Union of Fascists is the class weapon of capital. It is meant to infuse fresh blood into the body

<sup>†</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>‡</sup> *Blackshirt*, No. 8.

<sup>\*</sup> The *Blackshirt*, No. 7.



of decaying British capitalism, to save its dictatorship over the proletarian masses.

#### THE ENGLISH FASCISTS AND THE COLONIES.

The essence of the fascist "theory" about those "born to rule" is revealed in still greater nakedness when one examines the *Blackshirt's* ranting about India.

Under the pressure of the national revolutionary movement of the working and peasant masses of India, British imperialism is forced to manoeuvre. One of its manoeuvres is the projected Indian Constitution. The adoption of this paper constitution should, according to the designs of the British imperialists, weaken the revolutionary struggle of the masses. But this aim will obviously not be achieved.

In an atmosphere of ever-intensifying revolutionary struggle in India and daily communications about the "humane" application of air bombardment against the revolting tribes of India, the fascists come forward with the grandiloquent promises: "Under fascism these problems" (the problems of China, India and Ireland) "will cease to be problems."

Then how will the problems of colonial and national revolution, with which British imperialism, for all its might, has up to now not been able to cope, be solved?

We find that under fascism England will not particularly need colonies, but, for the time being, it is necessary to put them very considerably "in order." In a word, this contains all the precious fascist wisdom.

*"In the long run the Indian market is not necessary to Great Britain,"* an anonymous "Lucifer" writes in the *Blackshirt*, "but until the fascist revolution has so reconstructed British economics as to make the producers no longer dependent on precarious exports to the Orient, the Indian market remains temporarily necessary—and even vital to larger sections of British workers. *This is the fundamental economic reason why British rule in India must be maintained for some time to come.*"

So we are told that the bloody rule of British imperialism in India exists exclusively in the interests of the British workers, for them to have someone to work for! But besides that, it is carried out in the interests of . . . the masses of the Indian people! . . . British rule, we find, saves the masses of the Indian people from exploitation by the Indian capitalists. "We shall be accepting . . . no less an authority than Lenin," the same author tells us, "on the true character of Indian (and Chinese) nationalism . . . a fake movement calculated to gain political and economic power for the bourgeois capitalist class in

India, for the big baboo millionaires of Bombay and Calcutta, and for the swarm of lawyers, moneylenders and half-baked students who are the natural parasites of the economic system of India as it exists." It is rarely that one meets a more impudent forgery. The fascist agents of the Deterdings attempt to use the name of Lenin and his criticism of the inconsistency of the nationalist bourgeoisie, which betrays the national revolutionary struggle of the masses, as a cover for their sanguinary imperialist plans of crushing the Indian workers and peasants. This author tells us that one of the first tasks which the fascist government of England will set itself will be the liquidation of nationalism in India. *"Those who finance sedition will answer with their lives and in their property"* (Italics mine—R.M.W.).

No constitutions! the fascist ideologist exclaims. It shows lack of responsibility to force a complicated democratic constitution on the illiterate masses of India! The recent development of affairs is nothing more than "irresponsible neglect of British interests (particularly those of Lancashire)," the *Blackshirt* declares, disclosing the fact that behind it stand the textile magnates, who are seriously disquieted by the situation in the textile market of India.

Therefore, having liquidated the "bourgeois nationalist" movement in India, having liquidated the "parasites," and, by the way, also the paper "constitution," the fascist government is going to reconstruct the economic system. The workers of India will receive "a reasonable minimum wage," calculated to liquidate the differences between the cost of production in Great Britain and India, while agriculture will be reorganised along the lines of "workers' and peasants' syndicates." The manager of all these fine things will be, of course, not the workers and peasants of India (they are too "ignorant" for that), but the Lancashire textile magnates, that is to say, the representatives of the British fascist imperialist dictatorship. But the workers know that such "management" will not do the masses of the Indian people any good: blood and sweat are going to flow. It is clear that such a "solution" of the colonial problem does not differ on any of the fundamental points from the policies of the "old" bourgeois parties. It is only combined with still greater bloodshed. It is wholly and completely in the service of British capitalists' interests.

#### FASCISM AND QUESTIONS OF EMERGING FROM THE CRISIS AND ECONOMIC REORGANISATION.

The fascists propose to bring about the economic reorganisation of England on the same lines as in Italy, *i.e.*, by creating corporations in indus-

try, agriculture and so on. The basis of the economic policy must be the aim of creating a self-contained country. Economic nationalism, autarchy—in this the fascists find salvation.

We find that the father of the policy of "national organisation," of autarchy, is no other than Mosley. As early as 1930, his paper tells us, he put forward this idea. What is now happening in various countries, particularly in Germany and America, is nothing else than the application of Mosley's prescription. Roosevelt, the President of the U.S.A., in putting into effect laws for the recovery of industry and agriculture, has absolutely plagiarised the work of Mosley. In this respect, "in thinking out these things . . . President Roosevelt and America are a long way behind fascism in Great Britain," dogmatically declares the author of a leading article in the *Blackshirt*. We are told that Roosevelt may have taken over the whole of the fascists' economic programme, but that he will not be able to carry it out without a fascist movement. "Therefore Britain, which created the idea, will yet be the first nation to carry it through when fascism has triumphed."

The whole of this precious system which Mosley has invented consists, as he himself says, in creating a home market by regulating and planning the corporative system.

This home market must be based on the raising of the standard of living of the masses of the population.

It is all clear! The only thing which is not clear is how this raising of the standard of living and purchasing capacity of the great masses of the people will be achieved. By government decrees? But we know that in the corporative state decrees will be issued, not by representatives of the masses of the people but by those "born to rule." And, apart from everything else, in Italy and Germany, in spite of the fact that the corporative state is in existence, the economic crisis becomes more and more serious, and we hear of no improvement in the position of the working masses.

For a complete presentation of the ideology of British fascism it is necessary to speak about a few other points.

In the first place there is *the question of the seizure of power*. The Union of British Fascists declares that it fights for power by legal and constitutional methods. The legal, constitutional traditions are too deeply ingrained in the masses of the petty-bourgeoisie for them to be disregarded. For this reason, the fascists are compelled to put on a semblance of constitutionalism and even "democracy," whose mortal enemy they have just declared themselves to be. "We desire to capture parliament at a general election, and

subsequently to transform parliament and the state to fascist purposes. Communism will head the forces of anarchy . . . we will meet with force the enemies of Britain," the *Blackshirt* declares.

"We are loyal! Fascism in Britain . . . is second to none in its loyalty to the throne and person of the king," Mosley's paper exclaims. "Fascism in Britain is definitely not either anti-Christian or anti-religious," the *Blackshirt* assures the paper of English churchmen, the *Church Times*, which accused the fascists of insufficient respect for the church.

"Fascism stands for peace, against the preparation for war," is the gist of an article in No. 8 of Mosley's paper. The Four Power Pact, whose initiator was Mussolini, is to serve as proof of this. The other "great peacemaker" is Hitler, whose "moderate and pacific utterances" in reply to the anti-German speeches of the members of the present British government are commended.

British fascism is in favour of first putting in order internal affairs in Great Britain. But "Britain First in the Air" is the fascists' slogan in connection with the air pageant in Hendon. The shame and misery of the nation lies in the fact that in the air Britain is weaker than France, Japan and the U.S.A. "*We must complete our armaments*,"—that is the main conclusion to be drawn from a special issue of the fascist paper in connection with the pageant. Against whom? one would like to ask. The answer is very clear—against the Soviet Union and Britain's imperialist rivals.

And, lastly, we must note the disassociation of British fascism, in the person of the British Union of Fascists, from the Jewish pogroms in Germany. "The Jew-baiting in every shape and form was forbidden by order in the British Union of Fascists before the Union was in existence two months." The Jewish question, we are to understand, is not a problem for fascism. "The great case of fascism should not be obscured by sideline or irrelevance," the official organ of the Union declares. Why? We must seek the causes of this in the financial sources of the fascist movement in England, as well as in the part played by Jewish capitalists in the economy of the country.

#### SOCIAL DEMAGOGY.

The British Union of Fascists has created a special organisation, the British Union of Fascist Workers, to attract workers and unemployed to their side. This organisation devotes special attention to the unemployed, particularly the unemployed youth.

"To-day in Battersea only Fascists and Com-

munists are busy militantly organising those idle upon the streets," the fascist organ writes. "Twenty cases fought and all successful! That is the record of the Fascist Union of British Workers before the relief officials," the paper boasts, attacking the Communist Party.

It may be doubted whether they have achieved such success in a single district. If that were so, they would themselves take care that such results of their work should be better known. But it is a fact that in a number of towns the fascists have succeeded in attracting to their side certain groups of the unemployed. This is achieved by putting forward a slogan of struggle against the Means Test, demagoguery "against bankers and speculators—for the unemployed," demands of work for the unemployed, and so on. Against the Means Test the fascists put forward the slogan of a "job test" and of work and decent wages. And the same fascists are verbally against wage cuts and salary cuts.

In a number of towns fascist clubs for the unemployed have been created (*e.g.*, in Hammersmith, London, in Manchester and other places), where the unemployed are treated to cigarettes, a plate of soup and sometimes even a few shillings.

The fascists devote particular attention to the organisation of meetings in the working-class districts. In Battersea in March the open-air meetings advertised by the fascists in their paper alone constituted seven.

The Union of Fascist Workers also tries to get into the trade unions. It recently published a circular which was sent to all the lower trade union organisations and which said: "Fascism fights for you while the Labour organisation betrays you."

The fascists showed great activity during the recent strike at the Firestone factory in London. The great body of the strikers was unorganised, but the strike was conducted under revolutionary leadership. The employers, police and reformists from the trade union leadership all attempted to put an end to the strike, but the workers continued to strike in spite of all the efforts made to break down their resistance.

A few days after the beginning of the strike, fascists made their appearance and expressed their solidarity with the strikers. They also offered their services as pickets, and brought tea and sandwiches for the workers. Nevertheless, they were turned out by the strikers. But it was not easy to get rid of the fascists. They even got into a meeting of the strikers and persisted in offering their services, but here they were simply put outside the door. After this they began to bombard the workers with leaflets, issuing as many as three leaflets for this strike.

One of these reads as follows:

"We have no complaint with trade unionism as an industrial protection for the workers; our policy is to strengthen the trade unions and to give them fuller powers."

Speaking to the workers of the Firestone Factory (an American firm) the leaflet declared:

"Disgraceful conditions of work are forced on you by foreign financiers; . . . we can rally the patriotic feeling of this country against the foreign exploitation of British workmen."

The workers answered this declaration of the fascists by saying that British exploitation is no better than foreign: the workers fight against both.

To the declaration that "class war is not a solution for industrial disputes" and that "your strike leaders have no right to refuse any assistance which will help to carry through this strike successfully" (*i.e.*, the help of the fascists), the strikers replied by electing Communists to the strike committee and unanimously continuing the strike; they emerged victorious without the help of the fascists.

The example of the Firestone strike shows their great activity among the workers, but at the same time it shows the good work of the revolutionary workers and the high degree of class-consciousness of the strikers. But it is not always so, nor everywhere; in some places the fascists succeed in penetrating into the midst of the workers and in using workers as their agitators. Cases of workers coming to work in black shirts (the fascist uniform) occur more often. Sometimes the Communists rightly understand the tasks and methods of the struggle against fascism, and succeed in bringing over to their side workers who had previously joined the fascists. For example, in one London printshop several workers began to come to work in black shirts. Under the influence of the skilful agitation of our comrades, the black shirts disappeared after a certain period of time, and later one of the workers joined the Y.C.L.

But some Communists have a peculiar and most incorrect idea about the methods of fighting the penetration of fascism into the factories. They think the problem can be solved by replying with red shirts to the black shirts. In other words, they think that fascism can be defeated not by means of mobilising the masses of the workers against it and organising proletarian self-defence, but by creating sectarian independent fighting detachments.

The Communist Party of Great Britain recently drew the attention of all its organisations to the serious fascist danger in England, and pointed out the correct methods of fighting it. One cannot say that the rôle and essence of fascism and

the methods of fighting this open form of capitalist dictatorship are fully understood in the ranks of the Party. The example of the Firestone strike can serve as a serious example for the whole Party of the struggle with fascism. Therefore, this example must be made full use of by the Party. The examples of mass struggle against the fascists in London and Manchester are also valuable lessons.

The main thing now is to explain to the workers the real meaning of the fascist programme, to show its capitalist content, using as examples Italy, Germany and England itself, to show its anti-working-class edge. At the same time it is necessary to expose the Labour Party and the leaders of the reformist trade unions before the

workers, as helping fascism. For this purpose particular use should be made of the German Social-Democracy, from which the Labour Party does not differ in any of its essentials. Simultaneously with such explanation, the Party must in the factories, labour exchanges and trade union organisations forge a united front of the workers against fascism, using the creation of a united front for the organisation of mass proletarian self-defence against fascism in every factory, in every trade union organisation, and so on. Only by means of mobilising the forces of the working class, by means of creating a united front of the masses from below, can the fascist attack be repulsed.

## WILL BRITISH TRADE UNIONS GO THE GERMAN ROAD?

**T**HE British trade union movement is to-day, after the collapse of German trade unionism, the centre and leader of reformist trade unionism. The line of behaviour of the British Trade Union Congress is of vital international significance as the demonstration of where reformism, after all the lessons of the German experience, is seeking to lead the workers.

The collapse of German reformist trade unionism, which was under the leadership of Social-Democracy and the trade union officials it has reared until Fascism seized power, has raised the sharpest issue for every trade unionist in every country where reformism holds sway. Inescapably the question poses itself:

Must the labour movement in Britain and elsewhere go the road of German trade unionism? Is there any difference between the policy of the present trade union leadership in Britain and that pursued in Germany which led to the victory of Fascism?

This is the issue which, above all, in the situation of growing crisis and capitalist attack, of declining trade union forces, of the accelerated revolutionisation of the masses and of the rising war danger, dominated the proceedings of the Brighton Trade Union Congress. It is the answer of the reformist leadership to this issue which the workers require to examine with the sharpest attention.

### THE SITUATION OF BRITISH TRADE UNIONISM.

The British Trade Union Congress met in an atmosphere of marked sharpening of class con-

tradictions. On the one hand, a militant spirit is growing up among the broad masses, which finds expression in the increasing sympathy felt towards the united front with the Communists in the class struggle; on the other, state fascist tendencies are accruing and the attack of capitalism is taking more acute forms.

These processes cannot fail to leave their mark on the trade unions and the policy pursued by its leadership. Membership has fallen by 245,000 to 3,367,000, the lowest figure since the war. During the current year the capitalist offensive was strengthened. During 1932 about two million workers lost over twelve million pounds in wages; during the first four months of 1933 about one million workers lost four million pounds a year. The overwhelming majority of these cuts was carried through by arbitration or negotiation, without any attempt of the trade unions to organise resistance.

For seven years, since the defeat suffered through the betrayal of the General Strike by the leaders of the General Council in 1926, the reformist trade union leadership has permanently maintained a policy of open class collaboration. Beginning with the Mond-Turner negotiations of 1927, this has developed stage by stage to successively closer unification with the capitalist state, as is instanced by the memoranda on economic policy drawn up jointly with the Federation of British Industries, by the participation in the Imperial Conference at Ottawa last year, and by the memorandum to the National Government on the World Economic Conference this year, which won the

praise of the Chancellor, Chamberlain, as "almost expressing the policy of the Government."

Just as in the parallel case of German trade unionism, this policy of collaboration with the capitalists has been defended on "practical" grounds as calculated to win better living conditions for the workers; the policy of class struggle has been rejected as mistaken; the unity of interests of the workers with the capitalists in the sphere of capitalist industry has been proclaimed; and the Communists and militant workers in the trade unions have been persecuted, their rights limited and in a number of cases expelled.

As in Germany, this policy has only resulted in continually worsening conditions for the workers. The promised "prosperity" has never materialised; unemployment has more than doubled; wage cuts have been continuous, longer hours and speeding-up enforced, and social legislation revised against the workers. The only practical outcome of this alliance with capitalism has been to make easy the capitalist attacks.

But the reformist trade union leadership regard this outcome with complacency. The Chairman of the Congress, Walkden, addressing a demonstration on the eve of the Congress, blandly declared, despite these lamentable results for the workers:

"Thanks to the determined spirit of trade unionism we have at last turned the corner, and turned back the tendency towards wage-cuts of all kinds."

The Secretary, Citrine, no less complacently, declared in an article preceding the Congress (*New Clarion*, 2/9/33):

"The Movement has weathered the storm of a decade of depression . . . The Trade Union Movement is not at the cross-roads."

The mood of the trade union membership reveals a very different character from this complacency of the reformist leaders. The steady drift away from the unions and lack of response to all the recruiting campaigns, reveals the growing dissatisfaction and disillusionment of the workers with the traitors' policy of the trade union officials. "Apathy," "disheartenment," "indifference" are the ominous words employed by the trade union officials in describing the response of the workers to their appeals. They understand quite well, incidentally, that the strengthening of the revolutionary spirit, sympathy towards the united front, etc., is particularly characteristic of the mood of the broad masses of the workers, and that if among a part of the workers there are "disheartenment" and "indifference," that is the direct result of their own bourgeois policy of curing capitalism and of unity with the bour-

geoisie. The Communists expose this pessimistic and capitulationist definition of the political mood of the working class, as a treacherous manoeuvre of the trade union officials, which helps them in the first place to lay the responsibility for their policy of capitulation to the bourgeoisie at the door of the workers, whom they represent as not wishing to fight, and, in the second place, to clear the road for fascism, hindering the revolutionary action of the masses, on the grounds of the alleged "depression" prevailing among the working class. An organiser of the shop assistants, Hogan, in a speech criticising the General Council, described the situation in the following terms:

"Our members are in the main indifferent and listless, and require the transfusion, if not of new blood, certainly of new ideals . . .

"There is no concerted policy. The General Council is helpless; the rank and file are apathetic and indifferent."

By "new ideals" Mr. Hogan certainly does not mean the ideas of consistent class struggle, the struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat, etc.

Hogan's statement does not correspond to facts, not only because it ignores the militant efforts from a section of the rank and file membership, but still more, because it ignores completely the realities of the General Council's treacherous policy. He declares that the General Council is "helpless," has "no concerted policy." On the contrary. The General Council has a most definite "concerted policy"—a policy of capitalism. That is what opens the way to fascism in England.

#### THE UNITED WORKING-CLASS FRONT OR UNITY WITH THE CAPITALISTS.

The Trade Union Congress was confronted with an enormous intensification of the capitalist attack against the workers in Britain.

In the face of this attack only two policies exist.

The first is the policy of united resistance, the policy of the united working-class front against capitalism, the united front under the leadership of the Communist Party.

The second is the policy of surrender to capitalism, the policy of unity with the capitalists, as advocated by the General Council, which in the final stage ends, as the example of Germany has shown, in the victory of Fascism and destruction of the trade unions and of all legal working-class organisations.

The Communist Party and the Independent Labour Party proposed to the Trade Union Congress in March the united working-class front. This proposal was rejected, so completely that this issue, a burning issue before the workers,



which stirred them more and more, was not even brought up for discussion at the Trade Union Congress.

How complete was the rejection was shown most strikingly by the answer to the proposal to receive a deputation of five hundred unemployed marchers who had come to place their demands before the Congress. This proposal was refused. Justifying the refusal, Citrine said:

"The purpose of this body wishing to attend Congress was shown in a circular the marchers had themselves been issuing on their way to Brighton. In that they stated that the march was to call on the delegates at Congress to vote in favour of a united front.

"Both the General Council and the National Labour Party had rejected what was euphemistically described as the united front.

"If they admitted the delegation, it would be to allow people to advocate a united front by a back-door method."

The English bourgeoisie, frightened by the success of the united front organised by the Communists, has dictated the following decision to the Trade Union Congress: to reject decidedly all discussion of this dangerous question; the experience of the I.L.P. has shown that once the working masses have entered on the path of joint struggle, they become more and more drawn into the struggle and come close to the Communist Party, in spite of all kinds of manoeuvres on the part of their reformist leaders. Therefore the Trade Union Congress has, on the contrary, worked out a programme of still closer collaboration with capital. The policy of the General Council is the policy of unity with the capitalists.

And the financial journal, the *Economist*, noted with satisfaction:

"It was significant that Mr. Citrine — who moved the Council's unemployment resolution in an able speech which made an obvious impression on his listeners—reminded the delegates that, however convinced they might be of the ultimate need for 'basic measures of social reconstruction leading to nationalisation,' they were living under capitalism. If recovery under that system could be effected by better organisation or other means not unfair to Labour, the workers of the country, he admitted, would count it a blessing" (9/9/33).

"They were living under capitalism"; that is to say, according to the reformists, not that the trade unions have to fight a ruthless class enemy, have to rise to new and higher forms of struggle in the present extreme crisis; but, on the contrary, that the trade unions have to adapt themselves to capitalism, and to assist the

recovery of capitalism. That is the key thought of the General Council's policy, which leads step by step, as the crisis increases and class contradictions and the class struggle in the country become more acute, to fascism.

This complete unity of the policy of the reformists with the existing policy of British capitalism reached such a point that when a resolution was put forward demanding that any rise in prices must be accompanied by a rise in wages, the General Council actually opposed this and secured its rejection, insisting that the policy of price-raising must not be made dependent on any equivalent rise in wages. This amazing decision of the Congress is thus a direct invitation to the capitalists to continue the lowering of the workers' standards as the best way to meet the crisis.

From this follows equally the applause of Roosevelt as the New "Saviour." If in the boom period of American capitalism, especially during 1927-29, the "American Economic Miracle" was preached by the Congress leaders as the great example and the demonstration of the triumph of the capitalist solution of the problem as the alternative to Communism, so equally in the crash, the reformists retain American capitalism as the Mecca they desire. The Roosevelt policy of inflation, intensified capitalist reaction, prohibition of strikes, compulsory arbitration, accelerated trustification of industry and all-round war preparations, was repeatedly approved by the Congress leadership and put down in a special resolution. The Chairman's address declared that the United States "had turned to the policy which Labour had long advocated as the solution of the present crisis." Another speaker even compared the National Recovery Act to the Russian Revolution. The resolution declared that the Congress—

"appreciates the significance of the vigorous efforts now being made by President Roosevelt towards the stimulation and regulation of industry by means of the Industrial Recovery Act and allied legislation . . .

"Congress expresses the earnest hope that with the co-operation of the trade unions President Roosevelt will be able to overcome the difficulties involved in this decisive departure from the traditional individualism of American industry."

That this policy is now the universal policy of the Amsterdam International and of reformist trade unionism was made fully clear by the delegates of the fraternal parties. Jouhaux "congratulated the American Federation of Labour on lending its aid to the effort" of President Roosevelt. The American delegate affirmed that "the

American Federation of Labour was behind President Roosevelt in his attempt to bring back prosperity."

This explicit support of Roosevelt is equivalent to defence of the policy of concentrated capitalist dictatorship which adopts more and more the fascist methods of suppression of the working class and inflation-robbery of the workers, with the trade union chiefs in the centre of the capitalist machine and executing this programme of workers' robbery.

SURRENDER TO FASCISM IN THE NAME OF  
DEMOCRACY.

How could this policy of unity with intensified capitalist dictatorship and robbery of the workers be presented in a form at all plausible to deceive the workers? This was the problem confronting the General Council. The answer to this problem they found in the magic formula "Democracy."

The Brighton Trade Union Congress was conducted under the dominant slogan, "Democracy versus Dictatorship." This was equally the slogan of the Labour Party in answer to the united front appeal, and of the Paris Congress of the Second International. It is the decisive present slogan of reformism, which shows the workers very convincingly where reformism leads.

The significance of this slogan is obvious. The advance of fascism expresses the most brutal intensification of the capitalist attack against the workers. The response of the workers universally demands united working-class resistance. But this means the ending of the policy of unity with capitalism and advance to united class struggle against capitalism under the leadership of the Communist Party. Reformism can only defeat this demand by endeavouring to destroy the class content of the fight against fascism. In place of the clear line of the fight of the working class against capitalism and fascism is placed the apparently abstract issue of "democracy" versus "dictatorship." "Democracy" is used to mean the existing capitalist states of Britain, France and the United States, which the workers are called on to support. "Dictatorship" is extended from fascism to the line of the revolutionary working class, to Communism and to the Soviet Union; and the fight of the workers is summoned against these. Thus the anger of the workers against fascism is endeavoured to be used to secure the support of the workers for capitalism and against the workers' revolution.

The swindle of this verbal trick is glaring, and is revealed in the contradictions in which its own protagonists constantly become involved. It may be noted that the Congress agenda contained four resolutions from trade unions against "fascism,"

"the menace of fascism," etc., and calling for working-class resistance. Then follows the General Council resolution, in correction of these, placing the issue as against "Dictatorship." Similarly, the original draft of the General Council Report on the issue proclaimed the negative attitude of the Congress to all dictatorships, whether fascist or communist.

In the same way, the Chairman in his address at one point identified all dictatorship with dictatorship of capitalism ("behind these dictatorships capitalist interests seek to entrench themselves afresh").

The complete and systematic line of the General Council was thus given by the Secretary, Citrine, who directed his whole speech to the identification of fascism and communism as equal enemies to "democracy," that is, to the existing British capitalist state, which it was the duty of the workers to support. But there were one or two incidents during the discussion of the question of the rôle of "democracy" as against dictatorship. First, the Indian delegate, the notorious reformist, Shiva Rao, reflecting the interests of his national bourgeoisie, had to say of British rule in India: "Much has been said in this Congress about dictatorship. Foreign rule is a form, a terrible form of dictatorship if carried on by bombing on the frontiers and the policemen's lathi elsewhere." Second, a leading trade union official, Jagger, who had recently been to the Soviet Union, reported that he found that "the position there was approaching to the purest form of democracy the world had ever seen." Needless to say, the leaders hushed up these remarks, which exposed their whole trick with the slogan of "democracy" and "dictatorship."

What shall the workers do if the capitalists adopt fascist methods against the workers? Invoking "democracy" will not help. The German trade unions also followed the line of capitalist "democracy." This did not prevent—in fact, it assisted by paralysing the resistance of the workers—the victory of fascism.

To this question the General Council, having rejected the united working-class front, remained without answer. Or, rather, they had a different answer. It was to pray to Almighty God that no such thing might happen; for if it should happen, it would be impossible to prevent it. This may sound a caricature, but is a literal summary of Citrine's speech. Speaking of the surrender of the German trade union leaders, and justifying their refusal to call a general strike because it would have been "an act fraught with the gravest consequences, consequences which might be described as nothing less than civil war," the leader of the General Council could not even make a

show of condemning this line, or promising to act otherwise in Britain, but could only say:

"I hope to God we are never put into a similar position. I hope we never have to face that position."

And again, with regard to the growth of unemployment as the visible "common factor" both in Britain and Germany:

"If that gets worse, I cannot answer for the consequences."

"Hope to God." "Cannot answer." Such is the lead of British Trade Unionism in the face of fascism. Of one thing only Citrine is sure. It is impossible to fight. If it comes to a fight, the workers will be beaten.

"If we go in for the method of force, we shall be badly beaten.

"If we try to organise by force of arms, we shall be beaten."

"We shall be beaten." "We shall be badly beaten." Such is the litany of defeat before the battle, by which the reformist leaders seek to drill into the workers the sense of their own impotence. This is the open invitation to the capitalists to launch the attack on the workers' organisations; the workers are defenceless and cannot resist; Social Democracy, as the Chairman declared, is "peaceful, law-abiding and shrinks from fratricidal conflict."

The very heart of reformism is here laid bare. Capitalism is all-powerful. The workers are powerless against it. The workers must only hope to get what capitalism permits them through the legal forms the capitalists permit. Let us cling to what capitalism may grant us in the conditions of "democracy" which is being fascised and "pray to God" that in reward for our being docile, capitalism may not strike us still further. Such is the voice of the cowering slave, the submissive and devoted servant, such is the philosophy of reformism.

The German trade union leadership spoke loudly beforehand of their readiness to resist "when the time come," "if the need should arise," "if the Nazis should resort to violence," etc. When the time came they surrendered without a struggle and sought only to win the favour of the new masters.

The British trade union leaders do not even make a show of any intention to resist. They have *surrendered to fascism before the battle.*

*Only the Communist Party organises resistance to the bourgeoisie, it alone heads the fight against the attack of capitalism, against fascism, against imperialist war.*

"WAR ON COMMUNISM!" "WAR ON THE UNITED FRONT!"

The real meaning of the slogan "Democracy versus Dictatorship" thus becomes clear.

The fight against fascism is a myth, is renounced before the struggle even arises.

We see that the real fight is only the fight against communism, against the revolutionary working class, against the united working-class front, against the Soviet Union.

This was the decisive direction of the General Council at the Trade Union Congress. Every attack was directed against communism, against "Russian propaganda," against "the menace of the dictatorship of the proletariat." Citrine declared:

"It is no use saying a dictatorship of the proletariat is not a menace to us, when day in and day out an attempt is being made to discredit this trade union movement in order to convert the people to that proletariat.

"Those supporting the Communist Party are deliberately and definitely out to destroy the trade union movement."

Already the first and immediate reaction of the Labour Party and trade union leadership to the victory of fascism in Germany was to proclaim a "Clean-Up" in the Labour movement. Against whom? Against the danger of fascism? Against the reactionary elements? On the contrary. Against the Communists and militants, and against every form of revolutionary organisation that could be accused of sympathising with the Communists or even supporting the united front. This offensive has been set going with renewed force during the past months in the principal unions against every form of rank and file movement.

But this is the same direction which characterises the "fascisation" of English democracy. *The labour offensive and the fascist offensive are revealed as parts of a single offensive—against the militant workers.*

The calculation of the reformist leaders is that they may escape the fate of their German colleagues by earning the gratitude of capitalism as the best agents in the fight against the revolutionary workers. If the development of the struggle makes it necessary for the capitalists to bring other means to the forefront, means of *open, bloody dictatorship*, they will be given other parts to play no less ruthlessly than in Germany, and a fascist régime, in which, however, Social-Democracy and trade union officials will as before act as the chief social support of the bourgeoisie, will be established. But for the present, the reformist leadership and the slogan

of "democracy" is the most decisive weapon of the English bourgeoisie to disorganise the workers' ranks.

THE BRIGHTON REFORMIST TRADE UNION CONGRESS UNDER THE SIGN OF WAR PREPARATIONS.

*The immediate direction of the line of the Brighton Trade Union Congress is, above all, important in relation to the war preparations of British Imperialism.*

The slogan of "democracy" is not only a means in the direction of creating unity with the bourgeoisie.

The slogan of "democracy" has a direct significance from the standpoint of preparation for war.

In the first place, it reflects the interests of British and French Imperialism against the German and Italian claims for re-division. In this sense it is put forward by British and French reformism, who now utilise their control of the Second and Amsterdam Internationals to convert them into instruments of British-French domination, which has no slight significance, and in the event of war against Germany.

In the second place, and above all, it is the slogan for a counter-revolutionary war against the Soviet Union. In this sense it has been abundantly used by all Labour propaganda, which has let loose a full offensive against the Soviet Union as "dictatorship," parallel to the offensive of British imperialism against the Soviet Union.

The acclamation of the Roosevelt measures, which are in the fullest sense measures of war preparation, bears the same character.

The character of the debate on the war question revealed the same line. Many unions had put down resolutions for working class resistance to war, the general strike against war, the "boycott of war," etc. It is well known that such a "boycott of war" or a general strike without the organisation of continuous mass struggle against the preparation for war is a "Left" manoeuvre of the social-fascists which deceives the workers when they are becoming revolutionary.

Only the organisation of a revolutionary struggle both before and after the beginning of the war — only a struggle which grows into the preparation and carrying out of civil war against its own bourgeoisie—is a really powerful weapon in the hands of the working class. The General Council, however, secured the holding over of all these resolutions in favour of the report of the Amsterdam International on the war question, which rejected the line of general working class resistance to all imperialist war, and advocated instead, as explained by the spokesman of the General Council, Gibson, the following line:

"They could not successfully call a general

strike after mobilisation of troops for war had begun.

"The I.F.T.U. advocated the use of the strike at the moment when, a dispute having been referred to the League of Nations, under Article Eleven, a country refused to agree to arbitration.

"The country refusing arbitration would be identified as the aggressor, and then immediately the working class of that aggressor country would be expected to take strike action.

"Other countries would be expected to aid them financially and by boycott."

It is obvious that this line is to attach the workers completely to the imperialist League of Nations; and further, that this mechanism is directed above all for use against the Soviet Union (on the ground of refusal of the U.S.S.R. to accept "impartial" arbitration under the British-French League of Nations). A Special Trade Union Congress or Conference of Trade Union Executives is to be called within the year to establish the line, which is a direct line of preparation of support for imperialist war under the auspices of the League of Nations.

THE FIGHT IN BRITISH TRADE UNIONISM.

The almost complete absence of any voting division at the Congress (only one vote was taken on a secondary issue), and the very small numbers of the militant opposition represented, should not be taken as evidence that the line of the General Council will not meet with opposition in British trade unionism. In fact, the division, especially on the issue of the united front, is reflected also in many sections of the bureaucracy, which fears its isolation in the masses; nearly all the speeches in the main debate on "dictatorship," including those of the official leaders and delegates of the leading unions, were directed against the line of Citrine, who put forward too nakedly the programme of collaboration with the bourgeoisie, although no vote was taken; the very abstention from taking any votes (as contrasted with Newcastle where a number of votes revealed a large opposition on important issues) indicates the fears of the bureaucracy, both Right and "Left," and its anxiety to conceal all issues.

The growth of the movement for the united front in the lower organs of the trade union movement is revealed, not only in the considerable representation at the various united front conferences, but also in many of the votes in recent conferences of the most important unions. Thus at the National Committee of the Amalgamated Engineering Union in June, a resolution for

rescinding the discriminatory ruling against Communists and members of the Minority Movement was only defeated by 21 to 18 votes. At the Conference of the National Union of Railwaymen in July, the united front received 31 votes, as against 49 votes for the official policy. This is evidence of a considerable and growing volume of opposition to the official reformist policy and support for the line of the united working class front.

The fight in the British Trade Unionism is now critical in the extreme, and of manifest inter-

national significance. The line of the reformist leadership has been proclaimed in the Brighton decisions. It is a line of fascisation in Europe. The fight against this line, the fight for the united working class front under the leadership of the Communist Party, can and must win the support of the mass of trade unionists in Britain, despite this reformist leadership in the service of British imperialism. It is to this fight that the Communists and all militant trade unionists need now to redouble their efforts.

## THE EXTRAORDINARY CONFERENCE OF THE C.P. OF THE U.S.A.

AT the beginning of July an extraordinary Party Conference of the C.P. of the U.S.A. was held in New York. It was attended by more than three hundred leading Party comrades from all over the country. The fact that this Conference was termed "extraordinary" shows that important questions were before the Party requiring to be dealt with in a manner not ordinarily resorted to by it. The Conference unanimously adopted an open letter to the whole Party membership. This open letter contains the most serious self-criticism of the weaknesses and shortcomings of the Party and indicates the ways and means of overcoming them. Why was such an extraordinary step as this appeal to the whole Party necessary?

To explain this, certain main facts regarding the development of the C.P. of the U.S.A. (which has now been in existence fourteen years) require mention. The building up and consolidation of the Communist Party in the United States took place amidst great difficulties. Born out of heterogeneous, theoretically weakly developed groups and having its main organisational strength in the small enterprises of light industry, with their narrow craft ideology, and a big percentage of the immigrant elements isolated from the masses, the Party became, from its very beginning, the centre for protracted factional fights which hampered the development of the revolutionary mass work and the rooting of the Party among the decisive strata of the American working class. Only in 1929 was the Party able, with the direct help of the Communist International, to purge itself of the Lovestone renegades and thus put an end to the factional struggle.

The Party could for the first time in its history, at its Seventh Convention, in 1930, record the complete liquidation of factions within the Party

and secure unanimous acceptance of the political resolutions. It very soon became evident, however, that the Party, despite the liquidation of factions, was not yet able to develop itself into a proletarian mass Party. The curse of the heritage from the past, the narrow attitude in approaching the mass work, still rested heavily upon the shoulders of the Party.

In April, 1932, the Fourteenth Plenum of the C.C. of the Party was held. This Plenum also unanimously adopted a very critical resolution as to the situation in the Party, stating two years after the Seventh Convention, among other things, the following:

"The radical turn towards revolutionary mass work among the basic sections of the American proletariat, which has been demanded by the E.C.C.I. in its resolutions and directives, has up till now essentially not been carried through in practice. Although the Party has recognised the necessity of this turn, and although the Party can show a number of successes in the attempt to carry out the turn in practice (strikes, Scottsboro', hunger march), *the work of the Party fundamentally remains in the same groove.*"

This resolution of the Fourteenth Plenum, besides giving an estimation of the situation within the Party, also set forth the main tasks before it; this resolution became the basis for directing the work of the Party for the year 1932. Unfortunately, at the following Plenums of the C.C. in August, 1932, and at the beginning of this year, the Party leadership was compelled to admit that the resolution of the Fourteenth Plenum had not been carried out in practice by the Party. This, of course, signalled a serious danger, especially taking the further deepening of the crisis into consideration, as a result of which wide movements developed (in addition to the



strike struggles and radicalisation of the working class) also among the non-proletarian strata (farmer-strikes, veterans' march to Washington, teachers' demonstrations, unrest among the students and other intellectuals, etc.). Thus the objective situation for the accomplishment of the turn towards revolutionary mass work demanded by the Fourteenth Plenum resolution grew more and more favourable during the year 1932. Notwithstanding this, the Open Letter which was adopted more than a year after the Fourteenth Plenum states that: "The Party has not developed into a revolutionary mass Party of the proletariat."

The main reason for the failure to carry out the unanimously adopted resolutions is, according to the Open Letter, to be found in the fact that—

"In the Party, and particularly among the leading cadres, there is a *deep-going lack of political understanding* of the necessity for strengthening our basis among the decisive sections of the American workers. From this follows the fact that the leadership of the Party has not adhered to a fixed course for overcoming the main weaknesses of the Party, allows itself to be driven by events, and does not work out carefully with the comrades of the lower organisations ways and means for the carrying through of resolutions and checking up on their execution. The result is that we talk about factory and trade union work in countless resolutions without carrying this work out."

The tasks indicated, and the methods of work put forward in the Open Letter, do not differ essentially from those of the Fourteenth Plenum resolution. In the Open Letter there is, however, one very important additional point; this is the warning given the Party of the possibility of "going off its proletarian base" if it does not strengthen it among the decisive strata of the American workers (especially in the big factories of the most important industries) much more rapidly than hitherto.

The proceedings of the Extraordinary Party Conference clearly demonstrated the correctness of the criticisms in the Open Letter. The discussion at the Conference revolved mainly around the question of shop work, how to correctly carry out the concentration policy decided upon by the Party over two years ago, and the building up of revolutionary trade unions and the work in the reformist unions. In the discussions, these questions were raised in connection with the gigantic strike wave which has raged throughout the United States during the last six months, sweeping the country from one end to the other, touching almost every industry and embracing the

most varied strata of workers; as well as in connection with the N.I.R.A., one of the chief aims of which was and still is to stem the strike struggles of the workers.

Let us examine the main questions dealt with by the Conference in the light of its discussions. Take, firstly, the question of the building up and strengthening of revolutionary unions which was raised as "the *key task* of the Party" in the resolution of the Fourteenth Plenum. Regarding the accomplishment of this task, the report of the Pol Bureau to the Conference says, among other things, the following:

"In steel, we still have forty to fifty shop groups, not mass organisations — about the same as one year ago . . . The union still does not play any significant rôle in the life of the steel workers . . . Most of the steel workers have not yet heard about the union . . . In heavy metal manufacturing, activities are equally weak, only some beginnings in small shops.

"In mining . . . the National Miners' Union organisation of mine locals still cannot count more than 30 to 40 units. Most of the membership is very loosely organised and lacks leadership; the membership has been practically stationary since the end of 1931. There is very little extension (even contraction) of the field of operation of the union. There is no development of cadres.

"Let us examine the railroad industry. Surely this is one of the most important centre fields of work. Yet, after years of resolutions and talk about the railroad industry, this remains largely—well, we might call it 'unexplored territory.'

"In the textile industry, the National Textile Workers' Union is only now, after a long period of passivity, beginning to participate again, to some extent, in strikes. Its membership remains about a thousand — about the same as in 1929.

"In the marine industry, the Marine Workers' Industrial Union has conducted a number of small struggles on the ships, has begun concentration work on the Munson Line; has done some serious work among the unemployed; yet the Marine Workers' Industrial Union also remain a small organisation, isolated from the larger masses.

"In the automobile industry we have the outstanding example of the great possibilities of big results with even a small measure of correct work . . . At the same time the Union shows an entirely unsatisfactory consolidation of the strike wave."

In addition to this, many speakers mentioned

numerous examples indicating that, on frequent occasions, our forces had not been able to influence the strike movement sufficiently, which had frequently been quite spontaneous this year. Why? Because the Party had been isolated from the workers concerned. For instance, the following example was reported:

"In the shoe and leather industry, some 50,000 workers are on strike in the last six months especially. In these strikes we see the rise in the rôle of the independent unions where we began to work, because we did not have enough perspective to see the rise of the struggles of the masses. We applied the torch which began the strike movement in Boston and New England in the shoe industry, but the National Protective Association recruited 40,000 workers and we did not build our union, fortunately at least we were able to see what they could do, and we did not remain on the outside, but got in on the inside, and began to build up our unions."

While many similar examples, indicating our isolation, were cited, there were also examples of an opposite character. In the State of Utah, for instance, the comrades, actually attempting to carry out their own resolutions on the penetrating into the mines, were able to establish fifteen bonâ-fide locals of the National Miners' Union, with some 1,500 members, in a very short time, and led these miners into strike struggle, despite the joint resistance of the coal capitalists, state and A.F. of L. agents. Among the nut-pickers in St. Louis, most of whom are the most oppressed Negro women, our comrades were not only able to initiate a strike and successfully carry it out, but also to build up the union during the strike and, in addition to that, considerably strengthen the Party. There was a similar situation in the needle trades strike in Chicago, where the revolutionary union was also built as a result of a successful strike struggle. It is worth while mentioning that in the strike in Chicago also most of the strikers were Negro women who had never participated in strike struggles before.

While the Conference recorded a whole series of actual facts on the failures, as well as the beginnings of gains in the trade union work of the Party, it must be stated that this question was not quite fully elucidated in the discussion as regards the quite new situation arising with N.I.R.A. which was already put into effect at the time of the Conference. The main attention in our fight against N.I.R.A. was paid to elaborating and bringing forward workers' "codes" on the part of the revolutionary unions. To do this was certainly correct. But N.I.R.A. has had, at least temporarily, very far-reaching significance

also in the question concerning the practical organisation of the workers into trade unions. Utilising N.I.R.A. and every kind of demagogy, the A.F. of L. has been able to draw new hundreds of thousands of workers under its influence and even into its ranks. This, of course, creates a quite new situation for our work inside the A.F. of L. If the work in the A.F. of L. was important before, now that importance, in connection with our fight against N.I.R.A., has multiplied. Many questions like that of the open and closed shops were not sufficiently clarified. The Conference did not stress the necessity of being on guard against certain capitulation tendencies, in face of the attacks and demagogy of the A.F. of L., sufficiently, despite the fact that examples of the confusion and helplessness produced by the new manoeuvres of N.I.R.A. were stated at the Conference. These capitulatory tendencies are the expression of right-wing opportunism, and it is necessary to mobilise the entire party membership for the fight against them as the main danger in the current period.

Another question was that of the independent union. The tremendous desire of the workers to organise has found its expression, besides the increase in the membership of the A.F. of L. and the revolutionary trade unions, in the springing up of numerous independent unions which do not wish to affiliate either to the A.F. of L. or the T.U.U.L. It is evident that the task of the Communists is to make every effort to bring these independent unions into united front activities with the revolutionary trade unions, and even create various organisational forms for closer co-operation with these scattered independent unions to save them from falling under the influence of the A.F. of L. bureaucrats. This puts new problems and new methods of work before the Communists. The only guarantee of achieving this aim is, of course, patient and energetic work among the members of these independent unions. Shop conferences with the leaders of the independent unions for finding appropriate forms for the unification, or joint actions, are, in most cases, doomed to fail if the Red Unions have not the necessary support among the masses of the members in these independent unions.

The complexity of all these questions directly connected with the work of the Party in the trade union field was rather insufficiently clarified in the discussions of the Conference. But a complete clarification certainly constitutes one of the necessary prerequisites for the successful building up and strengthening of the revolutionary trade unions, and organising a mass trade union opposition movement in the reformist trade unions, as demanded by the Open Letter. In connection

with the struggle against N.I.R.A. and especially against the new manoeuvres and demagoguery utilised by all the social-fascist camp and the bureaucrats of the A.F. of L. on its basis, as well as the "militant" leaders of the Socialist Party of America, the struggle against social-fascism is more important than ever. This struggle of the party, as stated in the Open Letter, is underestimated and neglected. The most important medium for the struggle is the correct operation of the united front from below. The discussion at the Conference disclosed that frequent cases of right opportunist errors had occurred in the attempts to establish a united front (agreements instead of struggle).

After the publication of the Comintern manifesto on the united front this March, the Party made energetic efforts to create a militant united front. But the Conference also established that in connection with these attempts the struggle against the social-fascist leaders frequently weakened. The party led the campaign for social insurance poorly. This was noted at the Conference, and a number of definite steps were indicated to strengthen this, as well as the struggles of the unemployed. In the attempts to create the united front a special part has been played (and still is) by the so-called "Progressives," headed by the notorious Muste. At the same time as he and his colleagues participated in conferences organised on the initiative of the Communist Party or Red Trade Unions, supporting the proposals of the Communist Party in words, in practice they habitually sabotaged them. Such circumstances, of course, demand a strengthening of the work of exposing these "left" representatives of social-fascism on the part of the Party. To the extent to which one may judge by different Conference speeches, however, this struggle has frequently been neglected by Party comrades.

Let us take the second question, that of concentration. It is, of course, closely related to the first one, that of the building up and radical improvement of the situation in the revolutionary trade unions.

The many speeches delivered at the Conference concretely substantiated the statements of the Open Letter, according to which, the plan of concentration has not been carried out, the methods used have been mechanical and formal, that the political meaning of the concentration, and the strengthening of the positions of the Party in the most important citadels of American capitalism, i.e., in the districts of Chicago, Cleveland, Detroit and Pittsburgh, have not been fully understood by the Party. And, indeed, it was clearly recorded at the Conference that, at the same time

as successful work is going on to build up the National Miners' Union in the State of Utah, there was almost a standstill in the main mining districts around Pittsburgh—where we have led gigantic battles of the miners. At the same time when almost no progress was to be seen in the main steel centres of Chicago, Cleveland and Pittsburgh districts, there were several struggles and beginnings in the building up of the Steel and Metal Workers' Industrial Union in and around Buffalo. At the same time that the membership of the Automobile Workers' Industrial Union was declining in the heart of the American automobile industry, and in one of the main concentration centres in the city of Detroit, there were small struggles and attempts to build up locals of A.W.I.U. in some other less important cities. At the same time that the work among the Negroes in the main Negro centre, Harlem, N.Y., is not going forward, there has been a steady progress in building up the Share Croppers' Union in the South. At the same time that a Food Workers' Union was built up among the nut-pickers of the Chicago district, in St. Louis the work of the Party among the Railroad Workers and in the stockyards remains in the same old groove. At the same time that the struggles of the unemployed are rising very high in a city like Seattle, they are rather going backward in Chicago and Cleveland. These and similar facts as to the carrying out of the plan of national concentration were evident in the speeches at the Conference. The case was the same in carrying out the concentration on a district scale. For instance, in Detroit the work in the Ford shops remains weak, but at the same time there is to be seen a certain movement around the relief question in the Ford city of Dearborn. It must be stated that, apart from mentioning the facts in this regard, not very many conclusions were made in the speeches as to how to actually remedy the situation. But that there are beginnings of a good understanding of the correct application of the concentration becomes evident, for instance, from the following excerpt of one speech delivered at the Conference:

"We have adopted a policy of concentration and then when something came up of immediate importance, we took up that problem of immediate importance and solved that. I think that we must say very specifically that in carrying out the policy of concentration it is going to mean neglecting of certain things, and we should not kid ourselves; we must neglect certain things to carry out these concentrations that must be carried out, and if we try to understand this we will not come back later and find fault that this or that was not done. We

cannot do everything with our present forces; we can only do certain things; we must do those which are most important, and if we do that it will make a better base for extending the work into all other fields. Also a policy of concentration means jarring a lot of comrades out of their present routine practices. We cannot carry in our routine practices as we have been doing month after month and year after year. It will mean cutting down lots of forces at the top, throwing these forces down below, neglecting certain routine tasks. But if we actually carry through the policy of concentration these things will be remunerated many times over."

While there is a certain confusion in this quotation, in contrasting the concentration (i.e., the most important task from the point of view of Communist work) with "neglecting certain things," and while there still is a certain adherence to respecting the "routine tasks" (i.e., the old methods of work which the Party has condemned in several resolutions) it shows a considerable clarity as to the understanding of the concentration.

Let us take the third question, which was one of the main points in the Fourteenth Plenum Resolution as well as in the Open Letter, the question of the *Daily Worker*. The Conference recorded (and correctly so) the further decrease, even since the Fourteenth Plenum, in the circulation of the *Daily Worker*, notwithstanding certain improvements in the contents during the recent period, in a very alarming manner. Several proposals as to how to remedy this bad situation were made at the Conference. In this connection, as well as in the dissemination of the other Press organs and the literature of the Party, the financial looseness and irresponsibility which still exists in the daily Party activity were strikingly exposed.

Let us take, finally, the fourth important question of the many touched upon in the Conference discussions, that of the composition of the Party and recruiting. In this regard also many facts were cited as to the insufficient work of building the Party during struggles, and carrying on systematic recruiting. As to how weakly the Party is still rooted among the American proletariat, the national composition of the Party membership offers striking evidence. According to the report on the organisational situation in the Party, 70 per cent. of the Party members are still foreign-born. The proportion, of course, should be the opposite. Figures presented to the Conference show that the Party increased its membership during the year 1932. Several thousand new members were also recruited during the

first six months of 1933. But the actual membership of the Party was, at the time of the Conference, not bigger, but rather slightly less, than at the end of 1932. It shows that the fluctuation of the membership is still tremendous. The Party easily gets new members, but cannot keep them. The great majority of the Party members are unemployed, which again shows that the Party has not determinedly adhered to the fixed course of getting new members from the big factories—and building factory cells. Notwithstanding that the present Party membership is proletarian and devoted, it is obvious that this membership must be strengthened with fresh forces from the shops, mines and mills, and, above all, from among the American elements. This means, and this was also clearly emphasised at the Conference, that special attention must be paid to the every-day practical organisational work, by building up lasting personal contacts with the workers, which was especially emphasised in the resolution of the Fourteenth Plenum. Only by greatly enlarging the Party membership and developing it, and increasing the rôle of the Party as an organisation, can such questions as the question of the cadres, fraction work, real Communist leadership in the mass organisations and the correct leading of the various struggles of the workers be solved.

The Extraordinary Party Conference of the C.P. of the U.S.A. was held at a time when a concerted attack of the American bourgeoisie and its main supporters, the A.F. of L. and the Socialist Party, was in full swing, under the auspices of N.I.R.A., which has now become the evangel for finding the capitalist way out of the crisis, even for the whole international social-fascist camp. The Party Conference, notwithstanding that its discussions suffered to a certain extent from an insufficiently developed political outlook in this new situation, has through its proceedings and its decisions created clarification as to the question of where the Party stands, and what it must do to rid itself of its isolation and develop into a genuine organiser and leader of the American proletariat.

Notwithstanding the increasing radicalisation of the workers, of which the recent and still extending strike-wave and the desire of the workers to organise are striking evidences, the work of the Party is proceeding at the present time in a situation which is much more complicated than it was during the Hoover administration. The bourgeoisie has now undoubtedly succeeded through the Roosevelt administration, at least temporarily, in broadening the basis for the policy of finance-capital among wide strata of the American toiling masses. The more important is it, therefore, for the Communist Party to

adhere to the course fixed in its resolution, above all in the Open Letter, and not to allow itself "to be driven by events" in the face of the new manoeuvres on the part of the bourgeoisie and the A.F. of L. bureaucrats.

It is still too early to judge the extent to which the Party has succeeded in mastering the decisions of the Conference, and putting them into effect. The first task after the Conference, of course, was to so popularise and discuss the Open Letter as to make it the property of the Party as a whole. In the carrying out and leading of this campaign, the *Daily Worker* has a position of paramount importance. It must be said that the *Daily Worker*, during the two months following the Conference, has not been able to successfully fulfil its tasks in this respect. It has so far been quite isolated from the discussions, which must have been taking place in the Party after such a stirring event as the Open Letter. It is quite evident that the paper, therefore, must take a different attitude to the Open Letter, by popularising it, as well as really leading the discussion in the Party. In one word, the paper should, firstly,

bring very thorough information as to what is happening in the Party organisations in connection with the Open Letter, and, secondly, itself take part in the discussion, correcting mistakes, criticising the lack of activity of various organisations in developing the discussion, giving concrete instructions on how to carry on the discussion, giving political estimation of the discussion and its results, etc. If the *Daily Worker* does this, and if simultaneously the whole Party leadership in the broad sense of the word, from the Central Committee to every district committee, do their part by going to the Party masses, to the lowest units, and directing the discussion there personally, the first steps in carrying out the Open Letter will be made; and the Extraordinary Party Conference will really be turned into an historical event in the developing of the Communist Party of the United States into a genuine revolutionary mass Party having its roots in the factories among the most decisive strata of the American workers, whence it cannot be dislodged by any manoeuvres of the capitalists or their allies.

(Continued from page 633)

A characteristic feature of the Japanese labour movement of that time was the active participation of women, who were quite as class-conscious as the men. Two years after the rice riots, the union of working women had 3,000 members. On the eve of the departure of the Japanese labour delegation for the International Labour Conference in Washington, a meeting of working women was held at Fukagana (Tokyo). One of the interesting features of this meeting was the appearance on the platform of a woman with a child on her back. This simple, illiterate woman drew in plain, unembellished words, full of deep feeling, a striking picture of the age-old sufferings and privations of the working class. Her fiery appeal made a tremendous impression upon the audience.

The workers also became interested in political suffrage. Up to this time, they were still deprived of it. After the August uprisings, the question began to be widely discussed at labour meetings and in the press, and the movement for wider suffrage assumed great dimensions.

Thus the Japanese proletariat is steadily moving forward, fighting for its political and economic rights, and will soon join hands with the world working class in the struggle for the emancipation of the toilers and the establishment of a new system, which will enable every toiler to fully develop his abilities and give him the right to a really human life.

The rice riots gave a powerful impetus to the

Japanese labour movement and placed it on the broad revolutionary road.

The experience of the rice riots and mighty strike wave showed that a mass spontaneous movement of the proletariat cannot be victorious. The key to the revolutionary struggle is in organisation. This is the lesson which the Japanese proletariat learned from this struggle.

Soon the best representatives of the Japanese proletariat formed the Communist Party of Japan. Under its banners, the workers, peasants and the oppressed of the Japanese colonies, thirsting for freedom, began to unite.

Fifteen years have passed since the rice riots. The Communist Party of Japan has been in existence for more than ten years. These years have been years of organisation, of purging from the opportunist heritage and of heroic struggle of the Japanese proletariat against its national imperialism. This struggle has been conducted under the direct leadership of the Comintern, under the banner of Lenin.

The decisive battles are still ahead. The present situation in Japan places upon the Japanese Communist Party the most responsible historical tasks of fighting for a "People's Revolution against imperialist war and the police monarchy, for rice, for land, freedom and a worker-peasant Government."

The experience of the struggle gained by the Japanese proletariat and by its vanguard, the Communist Party of Japan, and the Bolshevik struggle of the last decade are a guarantee of victory of the coming revolution in Japan.

# THE RICE RIOTS OF 1918 IN JAPAN

By SEN KATAYAMA.

## PREFACE.

**T**HE so-called "Japanese rice riots" form a striking page in the revolutionary history of Japan. Their story is devoted to the revolutionary action of the Japanese workers who are now heroically fighting for a people's revolution. The Japanese working class sustained tremendous sacrifices in the rice riots. This movement of 1918 was the first fighting mass action of the Japanese proletariat and greatly alarmed the exploiting classes of Japan.

The riots which began in the prefecture of Toyama on August 3rd, 1918, and ended on September 17th of the same year, affected 36 prefectures (provinces) in Japan, or two-thirds of the total territory of the country, involving ten million people, of whom 90 per cent. were workers. The riots affected 144 cities and were accompanied by numerous bloody clashes between the workers and the police, gendarmerie and troops, who suppressed the struggling masses by force of arms. As a result of the repressions which swept all of Japan the Japanese proletariat suffered serious casualties, no fewer than 7,813 persons being condemned to imprisonment by the courts. If these facts are considered the significance of the rice riots will become obvious. Besides, the rice riots were supported by simultaneous battles of the coalminers and other workers in the form of strikes, sabotage, etc., accompanied by skirmishes between the workers and the government troops, as a result of which many were killed and wounded.

The Japanese monarchy at first forbade the publication of any reports on the rice riots and followed this up by certain insignificant reforms for the petty-bourgeoisie, and a reign of ruthless terrorism against the rebellious workers.

When this story was written several years ago, a large part of the Japanese materials devoted to this subject, including those published by the investigating and judicial authorities, was utilised.

The rice riots of 1918 had several estimations. There can be no doubt that these riots bore a revolutionary character and broke out under the direct influence of the October revolution in Russia.

Nevertheless, at one time attempts were made to smuggle the view into the Communist Party of Japan that the "rice riots in Japan cannot be classed as revolutionary actions," the basis for this view being the fact that "the socialist group which then existed in Japan did not take part in this movement." The Sixth Congress of the

Comintern rejected this opportunist underestimation of the revolutionary action of the proletariat, and the programme of the Comintern regards the riots in Japan as one of the revolutionary events which broke out under the direct influence of the October revolution.

The point of view concerning the character and importance of the rice riots of 1918 expressed here was subjected, from the very beginning, to particularly acute attacks by the present vile renegades and malicious enemies of the working class—Sano Manabu (Kato), Takahasi Sadaki (Omura) and others. The Comintern, in evaluating the driving forces of the Japanese revolution and determining its strategy and tactics on the basis of Marxism-Leninism, rejected those views upon the historical development of the revolutionary movement in Japan which the present renegades sought to smuggle into the Communist Party.

The hopes of the Japanese bourgeoisie that the treachery of Sano and others would find the Japanese Communist Party unprepared and dismay the ranks of the revolutionary workers have not been justified.

The influence of the Japanese Communist Party, both political and theoretical, continues to grow among the workers, peasants and revolutionary section of the intelligentsia, and ever-growing numbers of toilers are beginning to realise that the Communists are right. It is not by accident that the Japanese bourgeoisie has been strengthening its merciless punitive policy against the Communists. This is an additional indication of the power and strength of the revolutionary movement in Japan, led by the heroic Communist Party.

To the Japanese proletariat, the fundamental force of the revolutionary movement, both fifteen years ago and to-day, this small sketch is dedicated.

## THE BEGINNING OF THE RICE RIOTS.

In the northern part of the prefecture of Toyama there is a little seaport town, Nisikhasamati, located on the coast of the Japanese sea, which also washes the coast of Siberia. The inhabitants of this town are engaged in fishing and navigation. In search of a catch they sail far out to sea, way up north, reaching the coast of Sakhalin. Possibly there, on the Siberian coast, they heard remarkable stories of the Bolshevik revolution, or perhaps the sailors from the boats which transport arms and sail between Tsuruga and Vladivostock, upon returning home, told their countrymen new tales about the Russian revolution.

In that year, at the end of the summer, the fishermen who had made a good catch were still refraining from returning home because the price of fish was low, while the price of rice was going up every day. The fishermen's wives and daughters had long spent all their small stocks of food, and their casual miserable earnings were insufficient to meet their daily wants. Tortured by hunger, frightfully alarmed over the fate of their weaker members of the family, the children and the old people, the women were at the point of despair.

The third of August arrived. After a hot day the fiery sun sank in the leaden waves of the Japanese Sea. When the dusk began to envelop the craggy roofs of the houses an unusual noise swept through the city. The fishermen's wives did not return home after the day's work was over, but remained in the streets, forming small groups. A crowd of two or three hundred women gathered on the beach. They broke up into three detachments and marched to the city—one detachment going to the house of the mayor to demand that rice should not be removed from the town, as its export caused prices to rise, and any further exports might only aggravate the already existing shortage of local rice supplies. The other two detachments of women surrounded the homes of the rice merchants, demanding that rice be sold only to the local population and at lower prices. "Otherwise we will set fire to all your property," they threatened. The police were summoned and a desperate struggle broke out between them and the women, in which many women were injured. About midnight the women dispersed, leaving pickets at the rice warehouses for the night.

In the morning of August 4th the news of the rising reached the nearest town of Higasi-Misukhazi, the streets of which hummed like a beehive all day long. Towards evening about 800 women, together with the older children, met at the beach here as well and, breaking up into groups, marched back into town. Naturally, the police were immediately sent against them, but failed to manage this Amazon army.

The next morning the City Council wired to Kobe, where one of the government grain warehouses was located, to send a consignment of rice to the town. Meantime a Council of fishermen's wives, or whatever the committee formed by them may be called, set up its staff in the town temple, sending out pickets to all the strategic points in the town and vicinity in order to watch the manoeuvres of the rice merchants.

The next point to be affected by the movement was the adjacent town of Namerigawa, which has about 1,000 inhabitants. Here, too, trouble began among the women, but by the night of August 6th the leadership passed over into the hands of the

men: about eight o'clock in the evening nearly 2,000 people gathered at the gate of the rich merchant and speculator Kana. While negotiations with his manager were in progress, the whole of the town police arrived. Because of the late hour, or perhaps because they were tired, the crown began to disperse and by midnight everybody had left.

The following day the town was relatively quiet, while the local authorities were in constant session. By noon of the third day a freight ship docked at Namerigawa going direct to the "Nitibei" company wharfs to load a thousand bushels of rice. Immediately the drum and bell of the town temple sounded the alarm. Women rushed into the street and went to the port, where they forced the loading of rice into the ship to be discontinued. The company offered to pay 500 yen, but the bribe was resolutely rejected by the women.

Similar outbreaks took place in the towns of Ekao, Tsuyama and Miosi.

#### THE RIOTS IN KIOTO.

Kioto is the ancient capital of Japan. This city of temples is extremely beautiful and picturesque. It is located on both the banks of the Kamo river among tree-capped hills. Kioto, a citadel of reaction, "law and order" and idle aristocracy, is the residence of the rich and pleasure-seeking loafers, who come here annually from every part of the country.

Now it was in this citadel of the reaction that, on the evening of August 10th, a call to rise was issued and spread like wildfire with lightning speed, penetrating every quarter inhabited by the poor. The cry was "forward to the rice warehouses." Immediately a great mob of men and women numbering about 800 people, armed with sticks and truncheons, gathered. Under the leadership of a man who came forward from among the mob, the irritated crowd hurled itself upon the warehouse of a speculator. Crashing open the gates the mob broke into the house, searched it and, dragging out the merchant who had taken refuge in some deep corner, forced him to agree to a reduction of the price of rice, and then proceeded further to the house of another rice merchant. About midnight the crowd had grown to such a size that it broke up into several groups, which made the round of all the rice merchants in the city, forcing them one after another to fix lower prices of rice. Meantime the police used the sound signals to start an alarm all over the town, and 200 policemen surrounded the locality. Despite the desperate efforts of the police authorities to check the spontaneous movement, it quickly spread to the entire city. The chief of the police, the press reports, began to



drive through the city in an automobile, stopping at the street-corners and making personal appeals to the population to maintain order. Everywhere manifestoes were posted telling the population that the city authorities would distribute ten thousand sacks of imported rice at 21 sen per se (half the market price). The movement, however, continued to grow bigger and bigger. The rebellious crowd charged the local authorities with complicity in the speculation. Towards the evening, when the tortuous lanes of the town were plunged in darkness and the indignation of the rebellious population reached the extremest degree, a detachment of soldiers of the 38th infantry regiment appeared on the scene.

Pressed back by the troops the rebels gathered in another part of the town. One of three groups, numbering two hundred persons, appeared in the southern section of the town carrying a rice sack on a bamboo stick in place of a banner. The banner carrier, who was subsequently arrested, was a boy of 18. These 200 demonstrators were joined by others, whose number exceeded 1,000. On their way the rioters smashed up the rice warehouses and public buildings, stopped the street-car service by lying down on the tracks, while the motor-men refused to drive the cars over live bodies. At the same time the electric and telegraph wires were cut at many points and the city was plunged in darkness. The whole evening warehouses were being ransacked. In the district of Nisidzin (the centre of the silk industry) the riots began at 3 p.m., but here the police succeeded in getting the situation in hand by attacking the rioters from automobiles and arresting about 30 people. On August 13th the city was again quiet and the rising considered to have been quelled.

#### THE RIOTS IN OSAKA.

Osaka, the second largest city in Japan, with a million inhabitants at that time, is the biggest commercial and industrial centre of the country.

In Osaka the movement developed into a desperate battle against the authorities, one of the biggest struggles in the history of the Japanese labour movement.

At 7 p.m. on August 11th a mass meeting of Osaka citizens was called at Tenodzi Park to discuss steps to combat the high price and shortage of rice. After several speeches were made, an appeal to the population was drafted and a number of resolutions adopted. At the very end of the meeting, however, a man with a dark face and thick beard mounted the platform and began to speak. A police sergeant quickly pushed through the crowd and stopped the speaker. The crowd of 3,000 then got excited and began to shout, "Continue, continue!" Within a few minutes

more than ten speakers appeared on the platform and addressed the crowd. While this was taking place within the park a huge crowd gathered outside the gate, being unable to enter. The crowd becoming riotous, the police began to disperse it, to which the mob replied by hissing and shouts of protest. A detachment of 200 police then came forward from behind the bushes of the park and surrounded the crowd. The latter broke through the police cordon, however, and marched to the poor quarters of the Imamiya district and opened a new meeting on a vacant plot near the railroad.

Soon afterwards over 3,000 men and women poured out of the crowded and filthy streets. Since the main forces of the police were concentrated at Tenodzi Park, the mob began to smash up the rice warehouses in this district. Similar events were taking place in other parts of the city, the rioters forcing the rice merchants, in many places, to sell rice at half the price.

In the course of the night 242 people were arrested in connection with the riots, including 42 women. A total of 250 warehouses were smashed up.

The next day, August 12th, the entire police were mobilised. The frightened governor, mayor and president of the Osaka Chamber of Commerce met to discuss the situation, and worked out a "splendid" plan according to which the rich citizens were to form a fund of one million yen which would make it possible to distribute 2,000 koku (a koku is 180 litres) of rice daily for 50 days at 30 yen per se (18 litres). By the end of that time the new crop was to have been gathered, market prices would go down, and the situation be saved.

Towards the evening great crowds, consisting mostly of workers, began to congregate at the Tamanna bridge. From there they proceeded to the Tamanna railway station, where it was rumoured several carloads of rice were awaiting shipment for the express company of Maruyi. On the way the rioters demolished a police station and broke through a police cordon near the Oe bridge. Another mob of about 30,000 people met down town, stopping all traffic. The situation was becoming ominous. Seeing their impotence, the city authorities at 11 p.m. called out troops. With the appearance of troops peaceful remonstrances gave way to ruthless violence. At 1 a.m. a bitter fight broke out between a group of rebels numbering about 500 and a mixed detachment of infantry and police in the district of Isumoko. Finally, a detachment of mounted gendarmes dispersed the mob with the aid of bayonets and swords. The Tamanna police station was saved from destruction only thanks to the arrival of a detachment of infantry at the last minute. On that night 542 persons were arrested.

The following day was rather calm but it was a lull before a storm. Towards the evening all military forces located in Osaka were put into fighting readiness.

This extreme measure aroused tremendous indignation among the rebellious people.

In the evening over 7,000 persons surrounded the house of the wealthiest company, Sudzuki, and began to hurl stones at it. The soldiers and policemen who guarded the house were also stoned. A big detachment of infantry then came to the rescue of the latter.

While this battle was raging a group of rebels in another section of the town set fire to a rice warehouse. The fire spread to two neighbouring houses and soon the entire district became a mass of flaming logs. An 9 p.m. the next day about 20,000 rebellious people congregated in the district of Nisikujo. The detachments of infantry and police arrived in trucks, but were beaten up and the tracks smashed. Late at night the mob continued to smash up the tea houses, the geisha houses and the other amusement places of the town.

Upon ransacking the rice warehouses, the rioters on the following day began to smash up the fuel houses. In front of one of these fuel warehouses located at Nihonbasi-Sudzi, a university student addressed the crowd with a highly "eccentric and dangerous" speech and succeeded in "persuading" the owner of the warehouse to sell his entire supply of wood and coal at a low price. As might have been expected, police arrived on the spot and arrested the student, which served as a signal for the beginning of the demolition of the fuel warehouses.

Meantime, the authorities had decided to call out a regiment of cavalry, a division of field artillery and a battalion of engineers in addition to the forces already mobilised. In the evening an order was issued prohibiting street meetings. At eight o'clock another order was published for the temporary suspension of the entire local railway traffic, apparently with the view of interfering with the mobilisation of greater forces by the rebels.

#### THE RIOTS AT NAGOYA.

Nagoya is known as the "central city," as it is the industrial centre of Japan, located in the very midst of the country. In 1918 Nagoya exported porcelain ware, toys and other manufactures to Europe and America.

In this city events developed as follow: At nine o'clock on August 12th, 15,000 persons, most of them workers, started forth from the city park. The endless chain of marchers stretched out into seven quarters of the town, filling the broad streets of Otemati to the brim. On their way the marchers hurled stones at the show windows of

stores. At the same time, another column of about 5,000 workers surrounded the district where the rice merchants' offices were located, while a third column numbering 3,000 persons gathered in the Hirokodzi street. At 10 p.m. the columns, after smashing up the houses in the Red Light district, near Osu park, as well as several police posts, merged together into a huge mob that proceeded towards the Rice Exchange. At the Hiedzi bridge a double cordon of police and cavalry interfered with their progress. A battle broke out, and the police were at first swept away. The cavalry then galloped right into the mob, trampling under the hoofs those who failed to get out of the way. For a moment the mob recoiled, but then rushed forward with even greater determination. The small military detachment proved to be totally helpless against the mighty onrush of the enraged mob. Two more infantry companies were rushed to their aid. By this time the building of the Rice Exchange was converted into a temporary hospital; the entire floor of the building was covered with wounded and dying people.

#### THE UPRISING AT KOBE.

Among Japan's five naval ports, Kobe is the second largest and most flourishing city.

The uprising in Kobe had a clear-cut revolutionary character. In the evening of August 12th a crowd gathered at Minatogawa park. A dozen speakers addressed the crowd with the call: "The small rice merchants have nothing to do with it. It is not they, but Sudzuki who must be dealt with."

This call aroused a unanimous response, and a tremendous mob marched forward in the direction of the fine modern type of building owned by the Sudzuki company. Despite police interference, the mob surrounded the building and began to hurl stones and bricks at it. By 9 p.m. a mob of 20,000 people had gathered here and the dismayed police stood by idly and helplessly. Meantime, out of the mob emerged several leaders who carried with them several thousand people to the mansion occupied by Sudzuki himself several blocks away. They broke into the house, threw out all the furniture and set fire to it, causing a great bonfire. They then rushed back to the besieged building of the Sudzuki company, fusing with the huge mob and breaking into the buildings there. Soon, oil had been poured and set on fire and within a few minutes the Sudzuki house, one of the buildings in Kobe, was aflame. The fire rapidly spread through the whole block; about 30 buildings were burned, including the "Kobe Herald" building, the main post office, etc. A fire brigade was called out but proved to be unable to do anything, as the mob cut to pieces the fire hose and forced the firemen to retreat at the point

of bayonet and revolver. By 12 o'clock the entire block had burned down. Whenever a building crashed in the mob loudly expressed its joy. It then broke up into separate groups, which began to smash up the other buildings belonging to the hated manufacturers, moneylenders and house-owners. Thus was burned the steel plant of the same Sudzuki company, the office of the Heisin-Kan real estate company which had aroused popular hate by its brutal exploitation of the poor tenants, the magnificent palace of the hated moneylender and owner of the houses in the poor district, Hasima, and so on.

Another huge mob moved in the direction of the Rice Exchange, smashing up all the rice warehouses on its way. Wherever it met with resistance it crushed everything to splinters, and demolished the rice-cleaning plant at Hioho.

While these mass actions were in progress, small groups of rioters marched through the city striking terror into the hearts of the bourgeoisie. But riots were taking place not only in the streets. In the morning 500 workers out of the 600 employed in the machine department of the Mitsubishi shipyards, after holding a brief meeting, instead of taking up their work, began to smash up their shops with hammer and crowbar. They then proceeded to demolish the office of the shipyard. A detachment of sailors was then summoned to the aid of the factory guards and constables. Later, the administration sent the chief engineer to negotiate with the workers and find out the *cause* of the disorder. The workers replied that they protested *against the low wages which were far below the living minimum*. Indeed, many workers with families were unable to buy even cooked rice for dinner and had to be content with rice water and "muchu."

Early in the morning of August 13th a battalion of the 29th regiment was called out and in the evening of the same day another battalion was also mobilised for duty. All the offices, factories, warehouses and stores were closed. In the evening the streets were plunged into complete darkness. Kobe resembled a besieged town, was dark and deserted.

In the evening a mob of 30,000 met at Minatogawa. One section of the crowd moved to the city hall where it caused considerable devastation, while the others, shouting, "Let us burn down the brothels," invaded Fukuharu, the red light district of Kobe. From here they were hurled back by a strong detachment of infantry and then proceeded to the market section of the town. While passing through the streets they stoned the homes of the rich merchants and completely demolished the famous Mitsuwa restaurant. Meantime another mob, which smashed up the

city hall, was led by armed rebels, who had removed all their upper clothing and wrapped themselves in white as a sign of their contempt for death. On the way, a company of infantry opened fire at them without warning. Many people were wounded. Seeing that the way was barred, the crowd turned to Sakamati, where another mob had already gathered in front of one of the biggest commercial enterprises of the city, Uasa and Company. Here a bloody battle took place with the soldiers and police, who met the mob with bayonets and swords. There were many killed and wounded, lying in pools of blood. For a while, the rebels were thrown back, but, receiving reinforcements, they closed ranks again and besieged the building until morning.

All night of August 13th bloody skirmishes occurred with the police and troops and several police stations, rice warehouses and wine cellars were smashed up. Only at dawn did the riots abate, although the situation continued to be threatening. All day, the city was patrolled by police and the army.

#### THE RISING OF THE FACTORY WORKERS.

When the news of the rice riots in the prefectures of Toyama, Kobe and Osaka spread through the country, the spirit of revolt affected the whole of Japan, arousing the hungry and disgruntled masses. The police proved to be totally impotent. It became necessary to mobilise the army and navy in order to save the tottering system which only a day before appeared so invincible. It is unnecessary to describe every local rising in detail. All of them had one common cause, and were identical in character, differing from each other only in external manifestations and scope.

The hunger riot which was begun by the fishermen's wives in the prefecture of Toyama affected, in a few days, big and small cities and even villages. In the industrial and mining centres this movement gradually assumed the form of strikes which had an exceptionally bitter character.

The first miners' strike, which may justly be called an uprising, flared up at the Minedzi coal-mines in the prefecture of Fukuoka in the evening of August 17th. The workers demanded high wages. The mineowners offered instead to sell them rice at reduced prices. But even this concession proved to be a mere bluff, as in connection with the rice riots the price of rice in the neighbouring towns had dropped below the prices charged by the mineowners. Enraged by these tricks, the miners began to smash up and burn down the mine building, offices, etc. By the evening of the same day, 13 different buildings had been demolished. Troops were then called out and in the battle that broke out between the

soldiers and workers six miners were killed and many injured.

In the coalmines of Ube in the prefecture of Yamaguchi, over 6,000 miners and other workers attempted to destroy the mines. Several companies of soldiers were called out to suppress the rebellion. The battle with the miners lasted until 4 a.m., August 19th, 15 miners being killed and several hundred wounded. Several leaders were arrested. The workers stormed the local jail in an attempt to free them. As a result another battle broke out, but meantime the arrested leaders had been secretly removed to the principal prison in the city of Yamaguchi. The same evening 1,828 arrests were made in connection with the uprising.

The revolt at the Aiwaia mines was marked by particular bitterness. These mines are located in the prefecture of Kaba and belong to the coal king Kaidzima. During the last seven months, the workers of these mines were strongly discontented with the low wages and the growing cost of living. Kaidzima had promised to raise wages by 10 per cent. after October 1st. But on August 29th the miners gathered at a meeting and put up the following demands: a 30 per cent. rise in wages, a reduction of the prices of commodities sold by the mine stores, and the right to buy goods in other stores. As the owner made no haste to reply, the miners began to demolish the mine buildings, dynamited the home of the mineowner, smashed up the mines and cut the telegraph and telephone wires. Troops freed the assistant mine director, who had been arrested by the workers and kept in the building of the theatre as a hostage, instead of the director, who had gone into hiding. This uprising rapidly spread to other mines, which are very numerous in this section of the country.

At Ochi, 19,000 miners smashed up the mines, warehouses, offices and other buildings. They were later thrown back by troops.

On September 2nd the centre of the uprising moved to the Fukuoka prefecture in which there are 12 coalmines. Here, 14 workers were killed and 24 severely injured, while the uprising was suppressed by troops. In the biggest mines of this prefecture, the Miike mines owned by the millionaire, Mitsui, 15,000 miners were affected by the movement. After a battle with the troops, they were forced to retreat. The uprising in the coalmines differed somewhat in character from those in the city. Here the miners were anxious to take revenge of the mineowners for the merciless exploitation to which they were subjected.

The devastation caused in the mines was much more serious than in the city. Here the workers had dynamite at their disposal, and used it unsparingly. They were able to go into hiding in the mines whenever troops appeared, and could

not be pursued there, of course. The Government resorted to severe measures, ordering the troops to shoot down the workers without mercy.

The highly embittered nature of the uprising in the coalfields was due also to the fact that the miners suffered from the high prices even worse than the other workers. Cut off from the rest of the world by the very nature of their work, they were completely in the power of their employers, who pitilessly exploited them.

From the coalmines the uprising spread to other factories. In Kobe, a rising of shipyard workers was joined by many other workers of the city. The number of strikes generally grew very rapidly at this time.

Of particular interest were the strikes of the guards of the Imperial Palace, Osaka Jail and of the city employees of Amagasaki. The strike of the guards of the Imperial Palace came as a complete surprise to Japanese society, the more so since the Japanese court is regarded as the richest in the world, and the annual appropriation for its maintenance amounts to 4.5 million yen. The Imperial Palace (which includes various other properties) is a great capitalist enterprise which owns 770,747 shares of 16 different Government subsidies valued at 150 million yen (on July 15th, 1918). Besides, the Imperial house owns 3,302,000 acres of forest out of a total forest area of 27,550,000 acres, as well as many thousands of acres of ploughland at Hokkaido. All of these possessions of the court are estimated at 400 million yen. Its other properties are valued at two billion yen. It may be assumed that the Imperial Palace had enough money to pay its employees in Tokyo rather well. But the fact remains that the Palace did not want to spend this money, and the employees went on strike demanding higher pay.

These facts speak sufficiently concerning the extent of the so-called rice riots. They really covered the whole country and completely dismayed the military-police bourgeois-landlord monarchy.

The participants of this great movement, which for a time shook the power of the Japanese monarchy, were, in their great majority, workers. For the young working class of Japan these actions were the first mass political actions against their exploiters. This movement clearly reveals the insufficient political maturity of the Japanese proletariat, which manifested itself both in the limitedness of the demands and in some of the manifestations of the methods of the struggle. Nevertheless, these actions gave the Japanese proletariat a certain amount of experience; it learned much in these first decisive heroic battles with the Japanese monarchy. We shall deal with this later.

**EFFECT OF THE RICE RIOTS UPON THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF THE LABOUR MOVEMENT.**

This brief description of the rice riots in Japan in 1918 clearly reveals the class contradictions of modern Japanese society.

The monarchy, the big landowners and big business are the pillars of the reaction. Shaken by the post-war crisis which replaced the "golden age" of Japanese capitalism, fighting each other for a larger share of the war spoils and a bigger opportunity to exploit the toilers within the country and in the colonies, they greatly hesitated in the choice of the means of struggle against the advance of the proletariat and peasantry; the movement of petty bourgeoisie of the city, and the limited opposition of the intelligentsia to the unbearable oppression of the bourgeois-landlord monarchy. These vacillations of the Government circles manifested themselves particularly in the first days of the heroic struggle of the proletariat. In order first, to split and then put down the movement, the Government resorted to manœuvres such as the promise of new legislative acts, as well as reckless military terror against the petty-bourgeoisie.

The policy of the Government produced certain results: the petty-bourgeoisie of the city and the bulk of the intelligentsia were appeased by the false promise of "universal suffrage." But this does not detract from the importance of the rice riots as a national uprising in Japan against capitalist exploitation and political oppression. The real participants of these riots were the workers and peasants. Under the influence of these events, the Japanese proletariat awakened and began to appreciate its power and strength. The risings were accompanied by many strikes of factory workers. In 1919, these strikes became more and more frequent, affecting every industry. The merciless suppression of the workers by the Government and cynical brutality of the trials of the 7,000 arrested rebels gave a powerful impetus to the awakening of the class-consciousness of the Japanese working class. The participants in the riots were condemned to many years of imprisonment. The cruelty of these sentences aroused the greatest indignation among the different classes of the population, especially among the toiling masses.

Despite all the efforts of the Government to crush every manifestation of the progressive labour movement, it steadily and rapidly developed throughout 1919. During the first eight months following upon the uprising, about 500 strikes were carried out in different industries. The main demands of the strikers consisted in higher wages, shorter hours and better labour conditions. There were cases of the

demand for an eight-hour day and a Sunday rest with full pay (in Japan holidays are unpaid). In many factories the eight-hour day was actually introduced.

From August, 1919, the workers began to employ a new method of struggle which had been unknown to them before, namely, sabotage.

The first successful strike of this type took place at the Kawasaki shipyard in Kobe (this shipyard is one of the largest in Japan, employing 16,000 workers, 800 foremen and 500 engineers). On September 18, 1919, after the demands of the workers, the chief of which was for a rise in wages, had been rejected by the administration, the workers decided to go on strike. They came to their shops as usual, started all the machinery without, however, doing any actual work. This continued for ten days. On September 29 it was unanimously decided to continue this sabotaging strike. During this time, an elected committee of workers negotiated with the company director. Meantime, the workers of the other departments of the shipyard decided to declare similar sympathy strikes, but the administration remained adamant. Finally, after the engineers and foremen appealed to the administration for the workers' demands, they made concessions, meeting first the demands of the workers of two departments, and later those of the strikers of the main shipyard, who were paid for the entire time of the strike on the basis of an eight-hour day.

Previously, sabotage had been resorted to secretly and only in serious cases. This time, it was employed quite openly in every part of the shipyard, the workers maintaining complete order and deciding beforehand, to contribute one day's wages to a strike fund.

Under the conditions existing in Japan, sabotage proved to be a highly effective weapon. An ordinary strike to workers who have no special funds is a highly risky affair. The strikers are threatened with arrest on the basis of paragraph 7 of the State Defence Acts, are disunited and unable to meet owing to police spying. Besides, Japan had very few trade unions, the workers were practically unorganised which naturally rendered strikes more difficult. Nevertheless, many strikes were conducted even without the trade unions, despite the tremendous difficulties and obstacles. Sabotage makes it possible to evade the police injunctions and eliminates the danger of arrest; besides, since all the workers are on the job, it is easy for them to come to terms for co-ordinated actions.

After the successful outcome of the strike-sabotage at the Kobe shipyards, this form of

*(Continued on page 633)*