

activity of unorganized workers in the basic industry; its initial form is the mass strike of the unskilled. In these strikes large masses of workers are unified by the impulse of the struggle, developing a new tactic and a new ideology.

Mass action is industrial in its origin, but it acquires political character as it develops fuller forms. Mass action, in the form of general political strikes and demonstrations, unites the energy and forces of the proletariat, brings proletarian mass pressure upon the bourgeois state. The more general and conscious mass action becomes, the more it antagonizes the bourgeois state, the more it becomes political mass action. Mass action is responsive to life itself, the form of the aggressive proletarian struggle under Imperialism. Out of this struggle develops revolutionary mass action, the means for the proletarian conquest of power.

The conception of mass action has little in common with Syndicalism. In its mass impulse, Syndicalism was a protest against the futility of parliamentarism. But anarcho-Syndicalism tactically and theoretically is a departure from Marxism. It does not appreciate the necessity of a proletarian state during the transition period from Capitalism to Communism (which implies the disappearance of all forms of the state). Syndicalism makes the proletarian revolution a direct seizure of industry, instead of the conquest of the power of the state.

Industrial Unionism also, cannot conquer the power of the state. Under the conditions of capitalism it is impossible to organize the whole working class into industrial unions. It will be necessary to rally the workers, organized and unorganized, by means of revolutionary mass action. Moreover, industrial unionism does not actually construct the forms of the Communist administration of industry, only potentially. After the conquest of power the industrial unions may become the starting point of the Communist reconstruction of society. But the conception that the majority of the working class can be organized into conscious industrial unions and construct under capitalism the form of the Communist society is as utopian

as the moderate Socialist conception of the gradual "growing into Socialism."

Dictatorship of the Proletariat.

The proletarian revolution comes at the moment of crisis in Capitalism, of a collapse of the old order. Under the impulse of the crisis, the proletariat acts for the conquest of power, by means of mass action. Mass action concentrates and mobilizes the forces of the proletariat, organized and unorganized; it acts equally against the bourgeois state and the conservative organizations of the working class. Strikes of protest develop into general political strikes and then into revolutionary mass action for the conquest of the power of the state. Mass action becomes political in purpose while extra-parliamentary in form; it is equally a process of revolution and the revolution itself in operation.

The state is an organ of coercion. The bourgeois parliamentary state is the organ of the bourgeoisie for the coercion of the proletariat. Parliamentary government is the expression of bourgeois supremacy, the form of authority of the capitalist over the worker. Bourgeois democracy promotes the dictatorship of capital, assisted by the Press, the pulpit, the army and the police. Bourgeois democracy is historically necessary on the one hand, to break the power of feudalism, and, on the other, to maintain the proletariat in subjection. It is precisely this democracy that is now the instrument of Imperialism, since the middle class, the traditional carrier of democracy, accepts Imperialism. The proletarian revolution disrupts bourgeois democracy. It disrupts this democracy in order to end class divisions and class rule, to realize industrial self-government of the workers. Therefore, it is necessary that the proletariat organize its own state for the coercion and suppression of the bourgeoisie. Proletarian dictatorship is a recognition of that fact; it is equally a recognition of the fact that in the Communist reconstruction of society, the proletariat alone counts as a class.

While the dictatorship of the proletariat performs the negative task of crushing the

old order, it performs the positive task of constructing the new. Together with the government of the proletarian dictatorship, there is developed a new "government," which is no longer government in the old sense, since it concerns itself with the management of production and not with government of persons. Out of workers' control of industry, introduced by the proletarian dictatorship, there develops the complete structure of Communist Socialism—industrial self-government of the communistically organized producers. When this structure is completed, which implies the complete expropriation of the bourgeoisie, economically and politically, the dictatorship of the proletariat ends, in its place coming the full free social and individual autonomy of the Communist order.

The Communist International.

The Communist International, issuing directly out of the proletarian revolution in action, is the organ of the international revolutionary proletariat; just as the League of Nations is the organ of the joint aggression and resistance of the dominant Imperialism.

The Communist International represents a Socialism in complete accord with the revolutionary character of the class struggle. It unites all the conscious revolutionary forces. It wages war equally against Imperialism and moderate Socialism—each of which has demonstrated its complete inability to solve the problems that now press down upon the workers. The Communist International issues its call to the conscious proletariat for the final struggle against Capitalism.

It is not a problem of immediate revolution. The revolutionary epoch may last for years and tens of years. The Communist International offers a program both immediate and ultimate in scope.

The old order is in decay. Civilization is in collapse. The workers must prepare for the proletarian revolution and the Communist reconstruction of society.

The Communist International calls!
Workers of the World Unite!

The High Cost of Living

THE cost of living haunts the working class and the workers are becoming restless. The underlying cause of the present unrest in this country is the high cost of the necessities of life. Great as the advance in the money wages of the workers has been their real wages have been reduced. These are facts of common experience but anyone who so desires may verify them by consulting governmental statistics.

Out of the inability to make their wages buy the kind of living they have become accustomed to, has grown the discontent of the workers. Unconsciously, they are in revolt against the misery brought on by the "high cost of living." Each day brings news of strikes and revolts against these conditions.

Many of these strikes have taken on a serious aspect. Workers have been murdered by hirelings of the bosses and riots are numerous. Usually the trouble is provoked by the brutal treatment of pickets and protesting strikers by the agents of the employers. The coal-mining districts are seething with unrest and there is a possibility that the transportation system of the country may be tied up.

The railroad workers, the "aristocracy of labor" before the war, no longer occupy

their favored position. At one time numbering in their ranks the best paid slaves in the country, they are today among the most poorly paid. The increase in the prices of the necessities of life has far outstripped their wage increases. The conservatism of the railroad workers has proven costly.

Conditions have become so serious that our honorable president is using the case of the railroad shopmen as the basis of an appeal to the slaves of the country to be loyal to their masters, and as a warning to the masters to be careful how they treat their slaves. An examination of the vagaries of this "call for a truce" will prove beneficial to the entire working class—and the shopmen in particular. Because of the "logic" of the appeal the men are asked not to press their demands; hence, they should examine that "logic."

The President, of course, examines the case and judges in all fairness. But the shopmen should by this time realize that the President's standard of "fairness" is not their standard. What Mr. Wilson would consider a "fair and equitable" return for their labor is not what the men have in mind. This is proved by the demands they have made and the judgment which has been handed down. The men demanded about

seventeen cents per hour increase, the President offers an increase of four cents. It seems that there is a difference of thirteen cents in the two standards of "fairness." What the shopmen must decide is whether they will accept four cents instead of seventeen. If they accept Mr. Wilson's idea of what is "fair" they will kiss the hand that gives them four cents and go back to work. But if they realize that they produce all the wealth and that there is nothing in common between them and those who take this wealth from them, in the form of rent, interest and profit, then it is likely that they will adhere to their original demands.

This increase of four cents is all that the railroad shopmen are offered. The balance of the President's message is an appeal to all workers to be contented with their lot.

According to the dweller in the White House, the cost of living will soon be lowered. Reading this beautifully written appeal we are moved to say "Almost thou persuadest me." But the fact is that the government has done nothing that will bring a decrease in the cost of living. The puny efforts now being made will have little or no effect. The constantly increasing cost of living cannot be solved within the capitalist system.