

Throughout the World of Labor

The Crisis in the Spanish Labor Movement

The formula: "Seventy five percent of our activity for trade union unity" had a tremendous echo in Spain and, it can be said, was the only slogan of the Comintern accepted practically by the Spanish working masses in general. The Communist Party of Spain, always at the tail of events and the masses, devoted itself one hundred percent to the application of instructions, blindly, without a clear vision of the problem, driven by the Spanish proletariat which is so inclined to impetuous but momentary actions. A guide was lacking, which would have canalized this strong movement of sympathy for trade union unity, which attained its peak in the very midst of dictatorial repression, during the convocation of the Congress for unity which was to have been held at San Sebastian in May 1926.

The masses demanded trade union unity at all costs. The Spanish Communist Party with the exception of a small group of competent militants who were grouped to be dominated by events and to be over-around the comrades of San Sebastian, among whom was the director of the Party's central organ, comrade Jean Andrade, was unable to establish itself as the guide and vanguard of the proletariat. The leadership of the party did not understand and was incapable of canalizing organically the aspirations of the masses; it allowed itself to be dominated by events and to be overcome on the unity wave that passed over the Spanish labor movement. La Antorcha, the central organ of the Party, was taken away from the competent direction of comrade Andrade and given to the political adventurer, Oscar Perez Solis, and, at the same time, the campaign for trade union unity and the daily La Antorcha came to a complete halt.

Had the masses already become "radicalized"? According to the calculations of the leaders of the Communist International, the "radicalization" already commenced. The poor petty bureaucrats of the Spanish C. P. were ready to comply with all the orders of Stalin and Co. without worrying over the result that their stupid, selfish submission would have for the Spanish labor movement. Inevitably, the masses of the workers who sought and hoped to meet a guide, saw their hopes deceived, and, taking place under the full repression of the dictatorship against the labor movement, they retreated; their militant spirit declined appreciably. Now the labor movement is entering into a real stage of crisis which the leaders of the C. I. and the Spanish C. P. designate as "radicalization of the masses".

The Spanish labor movement, based on the principle of the class struggle, had close to a million and a half organized workers in 1919. The C. N. T. (National Federation of Labor), with an anarcho-sindicalist tendency, counted a good million members. The U. G. T. (General Union of Workers), with a social reformist tendency, had more than two hundred thousand members. There existed besides a few independent trade unions which awaited the fusion of the two central organizations in order to give their adherence to the united trade union organization of the Spanish proletariat.

The repeated betrayals of the reformist general staff, the disruption of the united front which the social reformists perpetrated, the organized sabotage of the C. N. T. made the fusion of the two organizations a distant possibility to a large extent. The false tactic and the methods of struggle employed by the anarcho-sindicalists of the C. N. T., together with the repression of the bourgeois authorities, of which this organization was the object, rapidly weakened this giant that appeared invincible. The U. G. T. stood by impassively, arms folded, while the government attacked the C. N. T. Even more, the organizations fought each other with violence and the blood of the proletariat was spilled in various parts of Spain, at Bilbao particularly, during encounters between partisans of the two camps.

The C. P. of Spain, always slow to get moving, never succeeded, despite its con-

tention into a single Communist Party, to adopt a correct and really Communist position. For its leaders, the whole problem was reduced to denouncing the heads of the U. G. T. and the C. N. T. without giving any concrete directives that might facilitate unity by putting the masses on the right track. Thus, the leadership of the C. P. S. fulfilled the role of a buffer between the leaders of the two organizations without knowing what to do with the masses who detested the false course of the leaders. And then the coup d'Etat of 1926 took place.

"The crisis in the dictatorship is sharpening", "Primo de Rivera is retiring", "a new constitutional era is approaching"—these are the themes developed by the leaders of the Spanish labor movement. All of them await the fall of Primo de Rivera as the triumph of their ideal, await it in order to begin the elaboration of a program for the "struggle for organization" and what is worse, to begin again the "war of the generals" and the aspiring generals in order to determine who was the most ardent, most clear-sighted and most discreet during the dictatorial period.

For us, the Communist Opposition, the problem and its solution does not lie in the fall of the Primo de Rivera dictatorship. Primo de Rivera can, in one of his eccentricities, pass the baton of orchestra director to Martinez Anida or some other lackey of capitalism. And even if he formed a government of the type of those of the "old regime", the Spanish working class would always be confronted by a capitalism determined to oppress it and strangle it.

The reorganization of the Spanish working class, the reorganization of the Communist Party, the trade union unity of the Spanish proletariat based on the principles of the class struggle, the struggle against the dictatorship and against the Spanish capitalist regime, the struggle for the liberty of the small oppressed nationalities, the methodical organization of the peasant masses, in short, for the emancipation of the Spanish working class, must be undertaken immediately without waiting for Primo de Rivera to yield his place to another butcher of the proletariat, without hoping for so-called political transformations which can take place in the "last stage of capitalism" only as an insurrection of the proletariat. Whether Primo de Rivera falls or not, the battle against the Spanish bourgeoisie must begin. There can be no waiting until Primo opens the road for us, as some seem to hope.

The Spanish Communist Opposition warns the Spanish workers against the stark optimism of those who see in the "crisis of the dictatorship" the perspective or almost the triumph of our class aspirations. The workers must not await the fall of the dictatorship in order to organize, to undertake the struggle for their emancipation.

The Spanish Communist Party must be the guide of the working class of Spain, its vanguard. Its leaders paralyze its development, prevent its reconstitution. The Communist Opposition has a great task to realize and it will accomplish it along the ideas of Lenin. The perspectives are favorable.

Barcelona, January 1930

—HENRI LACROIX

Φ

The League against Imperialism

The All-Indian National Congress was presided over by Jawaharlal Nehru. Nehru, with Gandhi, is the representative of the various vacillating and petty bourgeois masses; driven by the masses, the predominant element of their policy is fear of the masses, of the revolution against which they are fighting today with all ideological means; tomorrow, when the revolution raises its head in spite of Gandhism, the internal logic of their attitude and their policy will lead Gandhi and Nehru into the camp of the avowed enemies of the revolution.

The road that Nehru and Gandhi will take is already clearly indicated in the declaration of Gandhi appearing in Young India, the review of the nationalist Indian intellectuals. This is what it says: "For the introduction of passive resistance, the

choice of the moment and the methods have been left to the Committee of the All-Indian Congress. But I must declare, that I do not see the atmosphere propitious for such a measure."

And Gandhi does not conceal the reason for which the atmosphere does not appear to him. It is that every measure of struggle, even if it is conceived pacifically, is exceeded by the masses and can provoke revolutionary struggles.

But Jawaharlal Nehru, charged with expounding this policy, is one of the most eminent celebrities of the "League against Imperialism."

To this League also belongs Madame Sun, the wife of Sun Yat Sen, founder of the Kuo Min Tang. Madame Sun belongs to the Left wing of the Kuo Min Tang, she is close to Wang Chin Wei. Every revolutionist is acquainted with the role played by the Left wing of the Kuo Min Tang at Hankow. If the Left Kuo Min Tang should succeed in conquering Canton in the Spring, the "Left" government of the South would soon prove that it is no less hostile to the working class than the Nanking government. Contrary to Nanking, it would thank Mme Sun by naming her an honorary member.

But in the meantime, Mme. Sun remains one of the luminaries of the "League against Imperialism."

The development of all these "heroes of a day" of the anti-imperialist struggle is obviously not due to chance. The Fengs and the Chiang Kai-Sheks became counter-revolutionaries the moment the worker and peasant masses entered spontaneously on the field of history and formulated their class demands. The same will happen with all the heroes of the Anti-Imperialist League.

It would be ridiculous to demand the exclusion of the already compromised "leaders" of the "League Against Imperialism." Not only must the Sandinos, the Nehrus and Company be removed from the revolutionary community of the world proletariat, but what must also be destroyed is the monstrous illusion, cruelly belied by history, according to which such a "League" can play leading, progressive role in the national revolution of the colonial peoples.

The "League against Imperialism," as a political center comprising Communist and bourgeois organizations, is a constant danger to the Communist International, to which it represents a competitor.

Things are similar if not worse in the Peasants International, which a European Peasants Congress is planned to draw out of its lethargy. For several weeks, the "revolutionary awakening" of the peasantry has been on the order of the day; in Germany, in Austria, etc., there are "revolutionary peasants demonstrations" for the election of delegates to the European peasants Congress. It therefore appears that we have arrived at a new edition of the "peasant policy" of the first "Leftist" period (1924-5); all the more necessary is it to recall to the revolutionary workers what Trotsky says in his criticism of the draft program of the Comintern:

"The peasantry will play a decisive role in the revolutions of the East. But this role will be neither leading nor independent. The poor peasants of Hupeh, Kwantung or Bengal can play a role not only on a national but on an international scale, but only on the condition that it supports the working class of Shanghai, Hankow or Calcutta. That is the only way out for the revolutionary peasant on an international road. The attempt to unite the peasant of Hupeh with the peasant of Galicia or the Dobrudja, the Egyptian fellah with the American farmer, has no chance to succeed."

What International Communism needs is not the creation of independent organizations of peasants and the unification of the bourgeois colonial parties into a "League against Imperialism," but a return to the teachings of Marxism-Leninism, the "outlived" teaching on the hegemony of the proletariat and the leading role of its party. "The village inevitably follows the city. The question is only to know which of the 'city classes' will be able to lead the village behind it." That is Lenin's formulation.

KURT LANDAU.

The British Daily Worker

The Communist Party now has its daily paper. It is a present given it by Moscow. It must be said that it was received without enthusiasm. At the Leeds Party Congress, T. A. Jackson, who is himself a capable journalist, declared: "The question is not to launch the paper—that's very easy—but to maintain it."

The first number contained a message from the Communist International, which has caused some stir, for the Conservative press immediately used it to sharpen its campaign against the re-establishment of diplomatic relations. It underlined the passage which said that the paper will be a "new and powerful organ in the hands of the working class in its struggle against capitalism, against rationalization and against the social-fascist Labor government."

That it is a "powerful weapon," only the leaders of the Communist International can believe. The Daily Worker is actually deplorable to the point where the bourgeois papers make fun of it and scoff at "Moscow's parsimony." The embarrassed Communists lay the blame to the press monopoly and the too high wages paid to the printing plant workers. One actually reads in the Communist Review: "It is a characteristic of this monopoly that the trade unions share in it. In the London daily press, there prevails the system of exceptionally high wages not only for the prostitutes of journalism but also—relative to the wages of other sections—for the typos, the pressmen, etc. In this way, the special interest of the unions is assured for cooperation with the capitalist trusts against the independent press and particularly against the workers' press." The leaders of the Party must be pretty ill at ease to resort to such arguments. Moreover, they have short memories: they forget that in 1926, on the eve of the outbreak of the general strike the linotype operators of the Daily Mail, in spite of the so-called exceptional wages, refused to set up a lying article directed against the workers, which still remains a pretty rare gesture.

The Clyde "rebels" have just suffered a serious defeat at the conference of the Scotch section of the Independent Labour Party, meeting in Glasgow on January 12, Maxton and his friends who voted against the government in an important debate—modification of the insurance law against unemployment—asked the approval of the conference. This approval was refused them by 103 votes against 94. If one considers that it is in Scotland that the Laborite Left has its strongest positions, the importance of this defeat will be understood.

Maxton's defense was very weak. He complained of having been cast off in the course of the discussion, by most of those who had signed his declaration: "I was thrown against the cannons," he exclaimed, "and when I looked about nobody was there any longer." That is the language of the "leader" of the I. L. P. He and his friends are full of excellent intentions; they have a faint desire to do something against the policy of abdication of the labor government, but they always halt before decisive deeds. That is why MacDonald always wins so easily over them.

—S B

London, January 21, 1930.

Chicago

HARD TIMES PARTY
& REBEL DANCE

Given by Communist League (Opposition)

Saturday Evening, February 22

STISKA'S HALL, 4021 N. Drake Ave.
(3335 West)

Doors Open 8 p. m.

Dance Music Refreshments

Special Entertainment Number

Admission 35 Cents