

THE YOUNG VANGUARD

The Misery of India's Youthful Toilers Communist Youth and the Left Opposition

BIGGER AND BETTER WARS

It would be ridiculous to expect from the British (and their junior partners, the native) ruling classes that have made of India a huge welter of poverty, pestilence, superstition and ignorance anything but the most callous treatment of the young toilers in field and factory. But even we, none too pampered by Hooverian propriety were deeply shocked to read of the terrible conditions the young workers and peasants are forced to live and work under.

Speaking generally, an idea can be gained by noting the fact that infant mortality reaches the rate of 206 per thousand all over the peninsula as compared with 91 in the United Kingdom. In the textile city of Bombay this reaches the sickening total of 667 on the average and 828 in the workers centers. Behind these figures can be glimpsed the terrible poverty, poor housing and poor food that grips the nation, the five acres of land that compromise the average holding, causing the terrible holocausts that sweep the country in the shape of epidemics and pestilences.

The margin between bare existence and non-existence is so slight that the child, when barely able to balance itself must go into the field to work. School is out of the question even if such facilities were present. The British Empire, that carrier of enlightenment, does not deem it necessary to spend more than 11 pence per head in India for education (local, district, national and from the empire) as against the two pounds spent in the British Isles which has none too a high a standard.

When Prince Albert Victor (the royal gentleman on the tins of tobacco) who was the grandson of Queen Victoria visited Poona in 1882, the following doggerel greeted him:

"Tell grandma we are a happy nation,
But 19 crore* are without education."

A crore is 10,000,000.

Of the 269 millions in India today but 22 million know an alphabet. The huge profits, the great taxation, the usury is returned in no form whatever to the masses of India.

If the conditions of the ryots (peasants) are bad, they are infinitely above those of the factory workers. In 1926 there were 1,500,000 factory workers of whom 250 were women and 70,000 are children below 15 years of age. (These figures are a factory population of 2,650,000 with the percentage of women and children doubtless holding their own if not actually gaining.)

Textile is the chief industry in India. Nowhere has King Cotton been a benevolent monarch; his history is one of blood, particularly of women and children whether in England in 1844, in Gastonia or in India from 1919 on.

Read the section of Marx's Capital dealing with conditions in the spinning mills darken the picture and an idea is gleaned of the conditions of the mill cities of India today.

There is a total of 374,380 workers in the cotton industry of India of whom 70,000 are women and over 15 thousand are children.

Wages in the Cotton Industry by Days

	Adults		
	Rupee	Anna	Pies*
Abmedabad	1	5	0
Bombay	1	5	6
Sholapur		15	11
Other Centers	1	1	8
Big Lads and Children			
Abmedabad		11	4
Bombay		11	1
Sholapur		9	1
Other Centers		8	11

*A rupee is about 32.4 cents. An anna is one-sixteenth of a rupee or 2 cents and a pie is one-twelfth of an anna or about one-sixth of a cent.

These wages allow the workers a diet on par with that of a Bombay criminal prisoner, a chawl (tenement room) each chawl containing on the average 4 persons.

It is said that conditions in the mills owned by native capitalists are worse than those owned by the Britishers. (Although this comes from reliable sources it

Of the organizations in the Communist International, none have suffered and continue to suffer such mangling as the Young Communist International. With a splendid background—the struggle of the Youth against the war in unison and under the political guidance of the Bolsheviks, the Russian Revolution, and the splendid leadership of comrades Lenin and Trotsky during the early days of the organization of the Communist International—the Y. C. I. was destined to enjoy a healthy growth and activity.

Education and participation in mass activity—these were the watchwords of the Youth Leagues. Progress was inevitable. The Leagues everywhere enjoyed considerable growth. They embodied a revolutionary enthusiasm and energy that gave rise to splendid activity. The education in Communism and the participation in the class struggles prepared hundreds and thousands of young revolutionaries for future leadership in the ranks of the Party.

This ascent however, in the ranks of the Young Communist International was halted abruptly. In preparation of the struggle against the Russian Opposition under the leadership of comrades Trotsky, Rakovsky, etc., the Stalinist bureaucracy aimed heavy fire against the Youth International. The Youth International was made a mere appendage to the Right-Center bloc. Made to think that the youth alone were the leaders in the struggle for correct political lines in the ranks of the revolutionary movement, the theory of "vanguardism" once again made its way in the Youth International. From this theory grew a negative attitude toward the education of the Youth and their participation in mass activity. In place of a training for the future, the international leagues entered a stage of heated participation in "high politics" and into an unprecedented period of factionalism. There developed in the ranks of the youth cynicism for the elementary tasks of organization.

Beginning with the period of 1923-24 a state of passivity, opportunism and stagnation set in. Bureaucratic direction displaced the education of the Youth. Mass activity was shunted for an accelerated condition of factionalism. The scandalous maltreatment of the Young Communist International left horrible gaps in its ranks. The Russian League alone withstood the heavy decline of its organization.

In Germany the social democratic and Reformist youth gained heavily at the expense of the Young Communist League. In France the League lost 12,000 members and has today a membership of only 3,000. The opportunist policy of the Right-Centrist leadership was not without its effect on the British League. There with the splendid situation caused through the split in the Guild of Youth (Social Democratic) and the General Strike, the League numbers only a few hundred (even Bulky Bill Rust cannot count more). In Sweden the Right wing split carried more than half of the

seems hardly likely—the conditions in the British-owned mills challenge worsening.

In the jute mills of Calcutta and Bengal, where most of the jute in the world is produced the average wage for children is 9 pence per day. In 319,000 workers in 76 jute mills investigated 50,000 were women and 29,000 children.

And so it is in the entire country. On the plantations of Assam hundreds of thousands of farm laborers, entire families including babes toll for a few pence per day. Fabled spices of India!

Women and children even dig coal in India, bringing coal to the surface in baskets—human beings are cheaper than hoisting machinery. Of the 250,000 miners, 9 thousand are women and a similar number children.

As for social legislation for children and youth, the little that has been forced through is flagrantly disregarded. Twelve years is the minimum age at which children are permitted to work in factories employing more than 10 workers and using motive power. Between the age of 12 and 15 half time is allowed or 30 hours per week.

A far different side of the story is the profits of 200 and 300%. It was a bad year when only 125% was secured on capital investment. —C. CURTISS

Youth membership into its ranks. The young workers of Austria remain under social democratic influence while the Communist influence is almost nil. The American League continues to remain at a static membership of between 1,000 and 1,500 members. Here the fruits of the Lovestone leadership and the present incompetent, pretentious and impotent leadership of Steuben, Green and Harvey have made matters only worse. (Of the American League more will be said in other articles.) And so on ad infinitum.

The invention of the spurious "third period" theory and the rise of adventurism in political policy has only made matters worse. It has added greatly to the already achieved sectarianism and isolation. The present policies of the Y. C. I. and its Leagues only promise to perfect this condition.

This situation in the Youth movement is but a reflection of the situation in the Communist International. The past seven years history of the Comintern is mirrored in the Leagues, though at times even more grotesque and more accentuated. The solution of the present crisis in the International Youth movement can come about only through a solution of the problems facing the Communist International. The struggle of the Opposition against the present revisionism, adventurism and opportunism alone will solve this crisis. A resurgence and reeducation is necessary—on the basis of a correct political program. That program is the platform of the Opposition. Participation in the ranks of the Opposition and common struggle together with the Party comrades is an imperative task of the Youth. The bureaucratic Stalinist leadership cannot bring about a revitalizing of the International Youth movement. That task belongs to the Opposition. In the solution of the present crisis in the Communist movement the Youth will play no little role. —ALBERT GLOTZER

Lovestone's «Americanism»

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the Opposition held by all its adherents from Russia to America. That the danger of the Thermidor is being augmented in the persecution, exiling and shooting of Oppositionists, in the breaking of the alliance between the workers and peasants because of adventurist policies in industrialization and collectivization; in the growing of the power of the Kulak and the Nepmen due to Stalin's zigzag policies; in the ominous growth of the Thermidorian bureaucracy in the Party and the government—only a Herberg can deny while he shuts his eyes and shouts "don't talk to us about Socialism in one country, we want to hear about American questions."

Covering Lovestone's Misdeeds

The most interesting part of the meeting was Herberg's answer to the question of Lovestone's use of underworld tactics in the fight against the Left Opposition and the challenge to debate with us on fundamental questions. Complacently Herberg repudiated the violence perpetrated against the Opposition by the Lovestone group with the naive remark "at that time we were under Stalinist influence". Even if any weight could be attached to this remark, Lovestone will have to explain away their burglary of the Party office and his own tacit silence while Blumkin was shot and thousands of Oppositionists are criminally persecuted and exiled to Siberia. We are still waiting for Lovestone to raise a voice against the exiling of L. D. Trotsky.

Not less demagogic and cowardly was Herberg's reply to the challenge of a debate on fundamental issues. No! Herberg won't debate with us because, 1st, we are too small; secondly because the questions we want to debate about don't interest the American workers. The great Lovestone, the overwhelming "majority" of the American Party refuses to debate with us because we are too insignificant. Only yesterday Lovestone strained every muscle to prove to a recalcitrant minority that "Trotskyism" was the main danger in the American Party. Not quite so distant as that Lovestone shouted to the wide world that the ideas of "Trotskyism" has captured the C.I. We would suggest to Herberg to

Thursday, May 24, a Rochester audience seated themselves in a vaudeville house to be treated to an unexpected view of the latest scientific marvel, television—the combination of radio and vision.

One mile away, in the laboratories of the General Electric Company, artists sang and spoke, a director led the orchestra which was in the theatre, all clearly visible on the screen.

The next morning every thinking person was deeply thrilled as he read the account. This feeling, however, turned into one of abhorrence when he or she read the statement of the developer of the television, Mr. W. E. Alexandersson.

Mr. Alexandersson spoke of the latest discovery as being "inspiring". Of the uses to which this new invention could be put, he said:

"Or what will this mean in the future when a staff officer can see the enemy through the television eyes of his scouting plane or when they can send a bombing plane without a man on board which can see the target and be steered by radio up to the moment it hits?"

You question, Mr. Alexandersson, what it means. Let us tell you:

It means that the next war (in the offing in spite of, or more truthfully, because of, your master class's "peace" and "disarmament" conferences) will make of the last war child's play; that where young workers and farmers were killed singly now they will be slaughtered by the droves for the bosses' greater profits. It means that all your vaunting of scientific progress is a terrible taunt; it means that capitalism is rapidly approaching its doom—either barbarism or Communism; either capitalism will scientifically poison, gas, drown, tear and otherwise efficiently kill the toilers and drag society back into the abyss of barbarism or the proletariat will seize power and society will advance into the next stage, Communism, where man's wisdom will not be used to discover more "rationalized" methods of killing each other, but to provide more leisure, more of the better things of life to the masses. That is what it means!

Capitalism is here shown in its stark, hideous reality. Its path of glory leads but to its grave. And that path is rapidly nearing its end. Every such new discovery but adds velocity to this journey.

Mr. Alexandersson is the guest of the U. S. Navy on the airplane carrier, Saratoga, bound for Panama, to experiment with the pilotless plane.

recall these trifles before he terms us insignificant to debate with.

Evading Questions of Principle

But just like the whole Lovestone crew, no sooner does Herberg say this than he starts to retract it. Well, the reason they didn't want to debate, according to Herberg is because the questions we raise (Socialism in One Country, Chinese Revolution, Anglo-Russian Committee, etc.) "hold no interest for the American workers". When Lovestone was in good graces with Stalin, when he ran the *Daily Worker*, when we had no press, before we could print any of the suppressed literature, then it was time to scatter scandal, lies and calumnies about us. Now, when we are in a position to reply to his lies and expose his opportunism, Lovestone hides himself in a dark corner and fearfully cries out, "The American workers are not interested in the Chinese Revolution". Whom does this remind us of? Haven't we heard somewhere before this same alibi about the American workers not being interested in fundamental problems but in more immediate and more pressing questions. Doesn't the S. P. carefully avoid the questions of internationalism, the Proletarian Dictatorship, etc. with just such platitudes?

But the Opposition is not afraid to debate with Lovestone on American questions; not afraid to show Lovestone, Herberg and Co. how the question of socialism in one country once helped Lovestone get control of the American party and reduce it to 7,000 and how this question has brought the Party to its disastrous state today and how it will help bring worse results even with Lovestone's kind in power in the future to the American Party.

—GEORGE CLARKE