

# THE MILITANT

Published Twice a Month by the Communist League of America (Opposition)

VOL. IV, No. 2 (Whole No. 61.)

NEW YORK, JANUARY 15, 1931

PRICE 5 CENTS

## Labor Faces Year of Fight to Live

The American working-class faces the year 1931 with heavy losses behind it and with long, hard and militant struggles in front of it, if it is to resist successfully the savage onslaught against it in the future. In one of the country's foremost bourgeois economic reviews, we read:

"We estimate that the current rate of annual income of all workers, exclusive of those in agriculture and Federal employ, is approximately 35 billion dollars, as compared with a peak rate in 1929 of about 44.6 billion. This represents a decline of 9.6 billion, or 21.5 per cent. The most severe reductions have occurred in the building and metal trades. In manufacturing industries, unusually severe declines have been registered in most branches of textiles and iron and steel, and in lumber, leather, brick and tile, glass, brass and bronze, automobiles, agricultural implements, electrical equipment, pianos and organs, rubber products and automobile tires."

### The Decline in Workers' Income

This decline in the workers' income is hardly transitional. As was pointed out in the last issue of the *Militant*, it is the expression of a definite trend in boss class strategy and has only reached the first stages of development. With the fall in the purchasing power of the masses, the economic crisis continues to deepen. According to the bourgeois statisticians, business has dropped about 30 percent "below normal." Despite all of Hoover's optimism, despite the promises of the politicians and the mockery of the "buy now" campaigns, sales have descended to new lows, regardless of the continuous downward curve of commodity prices.

An extremely interesting computation has been made by Dr. Lewis H. Haney of the N. Y. U. Bureau of Business Research

## A New «Relapse into Trotskyism» in Russia

In the course of the last four weeks, *Pravda* has once more been devoting great attention to "Trotskyism", which has allegedly been dead and buried for some time. *Pravda* in recent days regretfully establishes the fact that "the new Oppositionists come forward for the most part under the banner of Trotsky", that "the struggle must be conducted unrelentingly against the relapses into Trotskyism", etc.

We will only set down a few quotations. *Pravda* of December 12 says: "It has been discovered (!) that in the nucleus of the shoe factory 'The Paris Commune' in Moscow, the bureau, including the chairman of the trade union section and all the other responsible party functionaries, was composed of former Trotskyists." A number of names are cited. So, despite the capitulations and recognitions of the "general line", the workers in "The Paris Commune" have once more succumbed to the counter-revolutionary Trotskyists! Or is it perhaps a question of petty bourgeois who retreat before difficulties? . . .

### A Terrible Traitor

*Pravda* of December 18: A long, two-column article declares that the nucleus of the Communist Academy at Leningrad conceals many opportunists. There are today, for instance, still eight members who presented a resolution in which they declare that the Central Committee and *Pravda* are "responsible for the mistakes of recent times." At the voting, five others, besides the eight who voted in favor, abstained. *Pravda* treats them as conciliators. It appears that the rector of the same Academy, Uvarov, wrote a book "The Economic Policy of the Soviet State", which, in its 179 pages, does not as much as make the slightest attack against the Right. A certain comrade Kurotskin catches the fact and—mark you—Kurotskin is expelled from the university for that and is jeered at as the most vulgar of traitors.

Now, after the central bodies have intervened, the nucleus has once more been obliged to correct its "errors" . . .

Another comrade. Below (of the same Academy) declares in an article that "the party undertook the attack against the capitalist elements only in the recent period". This justified reproach is called by *Pravda*

(see the statistical table printed below)

Highly significant are not only the composite figures, which are comprehensive enough, but also those for machine tool orders, which Dr. Haney terms "barometric". The difference there is one of more than 95 points between November 1929 and November 1930, with 1926 as "normal" or 100. To predict a quick recovery on the basis of these figures is beyond all reason. Even the rise in automobile production is characterized as "of doubtful significance. . . . In our opinion, consumer purchasing power [payrolls, Ed.] has been so reduced that automobile producers must remain close-

|                       | Nov. 1930 | Oct. 1930 | Nov. 1929 | Oct. 1929 | High 1929 | Low 1927 |
|-----------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| Manuf. Products       | 83.0      | 86.0      | 105.0     | 117.0     | 128.0     | 99.0     |
| Employment            | 76.9      | 79.0      | 95.5      | 98.8      | 101.0     | 93.2     |
| Automobile Prod.      | 61.0      | 51.0      | 98.6      | 130.2     | 175.0     | 61.2     |
| Machine Tool Orders   | 49.0      | 71.1      | 145.2     | 254.2     | 305.9     | 103.4    |
| Sales, Finished Steel | 60.3      | 73.5      | 82.4      | 127.0     | 169.9     | 92.9     |
| Unfilled Orders       | —         | 70.9      | 88.4      | 86.7      | 97.7      | 75.2     |
| Stocks Manuf. Goods   | —         | 123.1     | 118.9     | 119.0     | 113.8     | 116.6    |
| Wholesale Sales       | 77.0      | 85.0      | 98.0      | 102.0     | 103.0     | 92.0     |
| Dept. Store Sales     | 98.0      | 102.0     | 108.0     | 112.0     | 114.0     | 104.0    |
| Payrolls              | 73.9      | 77.5      | 102.9     | 109.1     | 112.5     | 99.2     |
| Composite             | 72.4      | 78.1      | 104.5     | 131.3     | 151.2     | 93.1     |

reefed during the first half of 1931." This abysmally low ebb of production in the basic industries, combined with the perpetual, cancerous agrarian crisis has had similarly disastrous reverberations on the stock market. The World Almanac for 1931 tells us that:

### The Bank Failures

"Total listings [on the Stock Exchange] increased nearly one-third at 1,296,845,244 shares, had a market value of \$55,025,710,617 or an average of \$42.43 per share, on Nov-

a "confused conception".

In the nucleus of the Centrosoyuz also, all is not in good order. *Pravda* of December 12 speaks "of the necessity of uprooting all the symptoms of the disease." This time it is comrade Ignatiev, the nucleus secretary who is raked over the coals in the usual way. *Pravda* prints the title: "The Leadership of the Centrosoyuz Nucleus under the Fire of Self-Criticism".

The inspector of a whole district in the Donetz Basin openly defends, at a party meeting, the opinions of Trotsky and declares that the general line of the party is wrong. *Pravda* speaks of "counter-revolution hidden in the party" and other things of the same stripe. Many comrades, experienced as old militants of the party, who still occupy responsible posts declare openly in conversations that "comrade Trotsky was right in his criticism of the internal régime in the party, in the question of the rhythms of industrialization and collectivization," that "one can hardly breathe in the party," that "the old cadres of the party are being destroyed while the youth is not being educated in the Marxist spirit," that "the whole struggle has long ago ceased to have a political character and revolves solely around the recognition of the infallible leader Stalin".

Rykov is liquidated. None of his capitulations did him any good. Bucharin has left his partisans in the lurch. Hundreds of them have been driven out of the party. Radek is loyal, but "Stalin is very conservative in his conceptions and does not want

continued on page 2

ember 1, 1930 as compared with \$87, 073,-680,423 or \$63.06 per share, for 1,048,359,362 shares on October 1, 1929." While the number of shares has risen by about 250,000,000, their value as a whole has fallen by close to \$33,000,000,000 within the last year or to nearly one half their value per share. "In banking, outstanding credit has been reduced by \$5,000,000,000. . . . Fully \$16,000,000,000 to \$18,000,000,000 of our member bank funds continue tied up in loans on securities and in investments." With the results that: Failures of banks in the U. S. in 1930 were more than double in number and more than four times greater

from the bourgeoisie. As to the workers who are hit by these events, their struggle bears a very distinct class character but the tasks before them are concentrated on an entirely different front.

To think that the capitalist system has already reached the precipice, however, is utter self-deception. The flight of American capital to foreign enterprises, the opening up of the Chinese market by a stabilization of the silver standard in the Orient (in which American capitalists are taking the initiative), further rationalization at home and above all the extension of layoffs and wage-cuts, these are the ways by which stricken capitalist economy is attempting a solution. The degree of their success or failure depends in very great part, upon the militancy of the American workers.

The official organ of the labor skates, who only last year sang eulogies of the bosses and their "rugged American individualism" (for workers only) concluding class truces with them and lulling labor into inaction, reports "with alarm":

"Figures for dividend payments of all corporations for 11 months of 1930 were above 1929 by \$346,600,000—11 percent . . . Adding interests payment to dividends, the figures are \$7,287,600 for 11 months in 1930 against \$6,882,300,000 for the same period in 1929, an increase of \$405,300,300. Standard Statistics estimates the decreased in wage payments in all industries this year has been \$8,800 million. (American Federationist, January, 1931.

But are the bureaucrats of the A. F. of L. thinking of struggle even now? Hardly. They merely ask, in the voice of the timid, boot-licking lackeys that they are, "whether the profits of the recent prosperity have been wisely spent." They whiningly plead that pittance granted to the workers from these profits "would be a sustaining force not only to business but to the social standards [sic] of our whole nation."

While the labor fakery strive to keep down the proletariat by their zealous services to the bosses, the task of the Communists is to expose them and to rally the workers for struggle by a broad united front on a basis of immediate demands such as the thirty-hour week without wage-cuts, recognition and credits to the Soviet Union, social insurance paid by the bosses and their government. The organization of real mass unemployment councils on an industrial basis, uniting the workers and the jobless must be carried out without the methods of mechanical control which only serve to abort them. The main danger to the revolutionary movement lies in a relapse into opportunism, so illuminatingly revealed by the recent election and petition campaigns of the Stalinists, who today pretend to advance the Communist party. A broad united front led by the Communists must unfold the defensive of the workers and train them in collective struggle for class solidarity and the successful offensive.—S.G.

## Hoover Attacks Labor Press

Ever since the beginning of the present crisis, the capitalist politicians, the capitalist press and the government have been conducting a fierce attack on working-class organizations and particularly against their press. The Fish Committee was the official signal for the campaign. Thus far we have witnessed serious attacks on the flanks of the Communist movement. The Right-wing Revolutionary A. Vida Obrera, Spanish organ of the Communist Party, *The Young Worker*, official paper of the Communist Youth League, and the *Liberator* of the American Negro Labor Congress, have all been banned from the mails within recent months. Fish and the government patrioteers are organizing anti-Communist meetings, preparing the mob spirit against the Reds, calling for the ruthless suppression of Communist propaganda, etc. The entire revolutionary labor press is under fire. All class-conscious workers must come to the defense of their papers and join actively in the fight against the threats and reprisals of the government.

## N. Y. OPEN FORUM

EVERY SATURDAY NIGHT

at the Labor Temple  
14th Street and Second Avenue

Admission 25c

Come Early

Unemployed admitted free upon presentation of Unemployed Council card.

Auspices: New York branch of the Communist League of America (Opposition).

JANUARY 17:

The Present Crisis - What Next?

Speaker: ARNE SWABECK

JANUARY 24:

The Theory of the Permanent Revolution

Speaker: MAX SHACHTMAN