

## Back of the Air Maneuvers

Five hundred and ninety-seven army air machines soar over New York City in impressive war maneuvers, forming a spectacle which fascinated and thrilled thousands of onlookers. These maneuvers, in the words of chief of staff General MacArthur "are not a 'circus' but a test of preparedness of the air branch of warfare." (N. Y. Times, May 25, 1931.) This air drill over the skyscrapers of N. Y. involving some six hundred planes and more than fourteen hundred men, cost the U. S. government the princely sum of \$2,000,000. Aeroplanes are the instruments of the next war. The nations of the world realize this. In not one of their disarmament conferences, where the capitalist governments haggle and wrangle over the scrapping of obsolete and antiquated battleships, will they tolerate for a single moment the question of the reduction of air forces. The American capitalists are likewise well aware of the importance of the airplane. It has proclaimed a five year plan (!) for airplane building, whose provisions it is to increase the amount of service planes by 1128, from 672 planes today to 1800 planes in five years.

The political situation in Europe and throughout the world is extremely tense. War clouds darken the face of the whole world. France and her Little Entente are at dagger points with German-Austrian Anschluss. Italy looks with jealous eyes on France's colonial possessions and every move it makes causes friction between the two countries. America breaks up conference after conference on economic questions, while it grooms itself greedily watching that vast unexploited territory, that is, Soviet Russia, and promoting one counter-revolutionary plot after another, in the hope that this will aid them in their plans to overthrow the first worker's Republic. The capitalist nations are hopeful of solving their economic ills through a redivision of the world market and colonial spoil, which leads headlong into a new world war. Understood in this sense, the war games in the air assume an especial importance. That war looms in the near future is attested to not only by the feverish military preparations which the capitalist nations are engaged in, but also by the deluge of pacifism which is flooding the country and the world to-day. Pacifism (disarmament, "abolishing" war by treaties, laws, good will, etc.) is an inevitable concomitant of war. It is the barrage behind which preparations for war take place. Pacifism is the soft and soothing music that lulls the working class into a state of drowsy security while the capitalist politicians jockey for positions and intrigue for alliances. How well the United States knows this! At the same moment that the government is completely and wholeheartedly bent on these openly militaristic and warlike air maneuvers, it institutes another maneuver known as army economy. It abolishes fifty-three obsolete army posts, and thus kills two birds with one stone. It gives the appearance that it is disarming by abolishing several army posts, and it makes a show of economy. It hopes by these methods to blind the working class to its war preparations and to appease the gullible and treacherous pacifists and reformists. But the very next day it gives the lie to its own deceitfulness! It runs a militaristic air show which not only disowns any pacifist illusions it might have created but even its pretenses at economy. \$2,000,000 at one stroke! And it turns down the demand for social insurance because it will be a strain on the government revenue and on the "citizen's [read: capitalist's] income". The rôle of the socialists and their liberal allies is clear. Norman Thomas before a "War Policies Commission" congratulates the country (?) "on the conviction that when it comes to a real emergency like war the overblessed profit system won't work without an immense degree of control". Presumably meaning, that the capitalist class (Thomas calls it "the country") is beginning to understand the usefulness of the "socialists" and when war does come, they will lend the "country" some of their ideas to prosecute the war to a successful conclusion, and to hold the working class in check like their worthy predecessors have shown themselves so capable of doing, in the governments of the Kaiser, His Majesty Geo. V, the French Republic and other illustrious cabinets from 1915 to 1918 and thereafter.

The capitalist class is looking for ways and means to change the whole economy of peace in such a way that it may be transformed at a moment's notice to meet

the exigencies of war. Plans for universal conscription have been formulated. Elaborate details of war taxation are being devised. And on top of it all propaganda is being flung far and wide that the United States is preparing only defensive measures and will fight only if attacked. A picture of the future can already be seen, even down to the fake causes for which the capitalist class will attempt to make the American workers fight their English, French or Russian comrades.

For the working youth these air maneuvers have a great importance. Thousands of young workers are driven, into the army, navy, and national guard by the lash of the economic depression. In spite of all the indignation of the Charlie Chaplins, who want the "old men to fight the next war", and of the pacifists who want the combatants to be capitalists and their lackeys, generals, politicians, etc., the working youth will be the cannon fodder of the next war. It therefore becomes ever more necessary to point out the true anti-proletarian character of capitalist militarism and imperialist wars. It is a thousand times more incumbent on the young Communist today than ever before, to bring this message to the young workers in the armed forces; to break down the illusions of pacifism, and to point to the proletarian revolution as the only way out of the catastrophe capitalism is preparing for society.

—GEORGE CLARKE.

## Student Youth and the Workers Movement

The rôle of the student in the class struggle has not always been answered with sufficient clarity, nor adequately dealt with in recent years. For the revolutionary youth movement which is concerned with the problem of the student, a correct solution and understanding of the question is indispensable.

It is necessary, in order to understand their relation to revolutionary movement, to define the position of the student under capitalist productive relations and to view this position historically. The students are not a separate class in society but in their transitory character make up a defined category. In speaking of this category we are concerned in the main with the advanced sections of the student and intellectual group who prepare themselves for their "future" as executors, technicians, managers and theorists for capitalism.

The higher the educational institutions, the more marked are the class lines. In the elementary and intermediate schools we will find the most numerous sections composed of proletarian children and youth. The children and youth of the petty-bourgeoisie are also great in numbers here, while the off-spring of the bourgeoisie who happen to find their way into the "public" educational institutions (the great mass of them are either privately tutored or attend their own institutions and academies) are in a small minority. It is when we look to the advanced school, the colleges and universities, that the pictures change. The proletarian students are in the main eliminated—the "free" education of capitalism, proving to be far beyond their means. These students are in the main the representatives of the bourgeoisie and the petty-bourgeoisie. The proletarian university and college student, with exception of a few large cities, are few and far between.

The schools are one of the main bulwarks of capitalist society. It is here that capitalism trains the youth in a capitalist ideology. The perpetuation of capitalism, the indisputable correctness of this system, its permanent character, the maintenance of law and order, together with respect for the ruling class, nationalism, militarism, all these and many more make up the food on which the intellectual stratum of capitalism is raised. These institutions turn out intellectual prostitutes and apologists for capitalism. They become the brains and the leaders of the system. Under imperialist capitalism the students are in the main a reactionary section of the population who in decisive class struggle play the rôle of enemies of the revolutionary movement.

At times the students have played revolutionary rôles with heroism and self-sacrifice. Such instances have occurred during the period of capitalism's birth, or in countries of a backward development, where the system was yet in the process of development. Under such conditions, the

## Yipsels and National Youth Day

May 30 and 31 has been set aside by the American Young Communist League as the days to rally the proletarian youth against capitalist militarism, the war danger, for the defense of the Soviet Union. National Youth Day is also to serve as a mobilization of the youth for the Scottsboro boys and against the capitalist offensive.

The 30th of May was well chosen, for on this day the attention of the workers of this country is drawn to the memorial of the fallen soldiers of the American Civil War and Spanish-American War. At present, when the American ruling class is making strenuous attempts to get out of its economic crises by the extension of the foreign market—which inevitably leads to imperialist conflict and war; as the United States government is beginning to oil its war machinery—witness the recent meeting of the Policies Commission, universal conscription plans, air maneuvers, "military economy" (which does away with "unnecessary" expenditures of money), and lastly the intensification of the political offensive of the bosses and their state apparatus against the Communist and militant workers—at just such a time is it especially necessary to inform the workers of these events, mobilize them for the struggle against capitalist militarism and wage-slavery.

However, the difficulties in the way of effective mass youth demonstrations of such a character are many. One of the greatest, if not the greatest, is the non-

existence of a youth organization which has won the confidence and support of large sections of young workers. The official Young Communist League has at no time been an influencing factor among the American youth. In recent years, the policies pursued, the methods of work used, the type of leadership obtaining has, in spite of the most favorable opportunities, made the League even smaller and less significant.

One can dwell on the meager preparations for National Youth Day; the fact that even the Young Worker, until the last issues, had only incidental articles; on the manner in which the membership was rallied. But at the same time one must greet the move of the League, in attempting to arrange a general united front conference of all youth organizations. The inviting of the Young Peoples' Socialist League was indeed a turn from the policy of excluding all non-Communist party organizations on the grounds of "social fascism".

The Y. P. S. L. took advantage of this opportunity. Some of the young socialists in New York who had been accused of being "near-Communists", that is, members of the so-called Stanley "militant" group, decided to show their loyalty to the Hillquits and the Oneals, and prove that they are as good anti-Communists as the former. With this in mind, and the disruption of the Conference as aim a handful of about fifteen young socialists came to the Conference of May 16. A statement of their position was read to the meeting.

The statement of the Yipsels, after pointing out the agreement of the Y. P. S. L. with the aims of National Youth Day, repeats the slanders of the Thomases et al, about the united front between the Communists and the fascists, imperialist oppression (!) in Soviet Georgia, the alleged misuse of funds by the I. L. D., etc. It very cleverly takes advantages of the blunders and wrong policies of the party and League especially in connection with its united front policies. What could the League spokesman say when it was pointed out that the "Lovestonites and the Trotskyites" are excluded from various conferences which are supposed to be broad united fronts? This confirms our oft-repeated statement that the enemies of the movement will make capital out of the false policies of the official movement; that stupid tactics and Stalinist leadership play into the hands of the social democrats. This is to be expected.

But let us examine our critics a bit. "We have found through bitter experience that for a working-class organization to participate in a Communist united front means to betray the workers in the organization to the none too tender mercies of the Communists". When? Where? Not a word. In truth, the Y. P. S. L. has had very little experience in united front with communists. When in the middle of 1927 its New York organization joined the Miners' Relief Youth Conference, led by the Y. C. L., it was only for the briefest period of time. Suddenly it withdrew; no reason was given; neither the Conference nor its own membership were even formally notified of the action. This shameful, back-door tactic was in keeping with the socialist policies of boycotting the militant struggles of the workers.

Several months later, four members of the Y. P. S. L. were suspended for having invited a Y. C. L. speaker to a Miners' relief meeting. The ensuing protest by the overwhelming majority of the New York membership of the Yipsels conclusively showed that the rank and file of the organization wanted united front action with the young Communists. It must be remembered that it is one thing for the young socialists to talk about the lack of workers' democracy in the Communist ranks, but quite a different matter, to practise it in their own organization.

The rôle of the young socialists in New Bedford, where they played the game of the reactionaries like Batty and Binn; their open scabbery during the Fall River strike; their support of the fakers in the needle trades; the petty bourgeois pacifist utopian talk about disarmament and Kellogg Pacts; the splendid services rendered by the European social democracy for the capitalist class; and finally the disruptive tactics of the Y. P. S. L., as evinced in sharp form by its actions at the May 16th Conference, must be exposed. Every attempt should be made to win over the worthwhile working class youth in its ranks—who in our opinion form a minority of the organization—to Communism.—F.

students being an advanced section in a backward social system, saw in capitalism the saviors of their highest desires. They saw in capitalism the opportunities to rise above the mass, the enactment of the "liberties" which are so akin to their desires, and which would make possible the achievements of longings.

However, the moments such revolutionary situations reach a proletarian class character, the students participating therein desert the ranks. This was their rôle in 1905 in Russia. This Kamenev rightly remarks in his introduction to the Russian edition of Lenin's pamphlet on the youth;

"The revolutionary student with whom comrade Lenin had to deal in the early stages of the revolutionary movement, was to his mind a man originating from an alien class, a possible ally, an echo of the past, as one who had PASSED INTO THE LIMBO OF HISTORY."

How much more is this true, in a period of advanced capitalism, when the system has entered on the road of decline, and when the proletarian revolution is today on the order of the day. The inability of the students to make any very audible protest to the inequalities of the system and its brutal exploitation, attests to the above characterization. Hardly a protest is recorded anywhere against the enforced and voluntary military training instituted in the schools. The students remain meaningfully silent during the present mass unemployment and wage-cut drive against the working-class. The struggles of the working-class pass them by as if they did not exist.

There are however sections (the petty-bourgeois student) of the students, who during the time of acute revolutionary struggles, and faced with a collapse of the system, will be driven to the ranks of the working-class—but they will be few.

The task of the Communists in relation to the student is to recognize that in the main they are a reactionary section in society. When Lenin stated that "The injustices and pin-pricks which the students have to suffer is but a drop in the ocean of oppression of the people", he states in simple language their class-character and rôle. We must not forget that they are not a revolutionary grouping. With this in mind we will be able to understand why the 2nd Congress of the Y. C. I. was able to define the tasks of the Communist youth movement among the students as:

- To weaken the forces of counter-revolution.
- To tear a gap in the threatening sabotage front of the bourgeois professional intelligentsia.
- To secure the scientific and technical forces necessary for carrying through the revolution and for Communist construction.

A. M. GLOTZER.