# IN THE INTERNATIONAL OF LABOR

# Reviews and News of the Working Class and Revolutionary Movements

# The Black Shirt Dictatorship

The Problems of Revolutionary Struggle in Italy

Italian fascism has recently celebrated would be to deceive oneself grossly. the tenth anniversary of its coming to would say, rather, that the dilemma power. At the end of October 1922, the fascist coup d'Etat gave the Italian bourgeoisie new means of exploiting and dom- this question I have noticed your discusinating the working masses. Since this sions with the "Center" and I foresee the time, the situation of the masses has grown continually worse. All their victories, the result of a half-century of struggle and sacrifice both on the political and the economic field, were swept away by brutality and violence.

What is the present situation in Italy? This is what an old comrade, recently neturned from there, says:

"Unemployment is terrible. Among workers' families, there are few who have jobs. Relief amounts to nothing, and when the relief chest is empty, even those miserable payments are suspended. Small business is completely ruined. The wages of those who work are very low, and they talk of still further cuts. A large number of factories have been closed, with no improvement in sight. In the country, poverty is still worse. Poor markets and bad crops have finished the ruin of thousands of peasants who will not be able to pay even a part of their taxes this year. From all parts of Italy, the people are trying to emigrate. But where to? The frontiers, too, are closed

"Yes, but don't they try to get out of such a situation?"

"Everybody says we ought to get out of it, and everybody wants to get out of it, but how? That is not the problem. The right to complain is freely exercised everywhere. Nobody is satisfied with the regime. Only the other day, I attended a meeting of podestas central government. Then too, the language of the Pope in his famous encyclical is typical of the situation, in spite of the reconciliation which, inevitably, has come about since then. Openly, one can hear criticism of the regime. This is evidently a change from the situation just past. But-the government still strikes, and strikes hard. The blackjack is not suffering from unemployment. The fear of reprisals is still strong. Since be the changed position of Britain in the creation of the O. V. R. A., the fear the world market. The period of imperof provocation has become an obsession lialism is also the period of capitalist in all social circles. But the most ser, decline. The intensification of industry ious thing is the regime of isolation in the growth of the productive forces far which all of us live, at the factory, even beyond the bounds of the narrow proat home.

### The Difficulty In Spreading Information

"Suppose, for example, that somewhere in the factory some comrades stop work as a protest against some particular abuse. Do you think that we all know about it at once? Not at all. It is only a few days later that the whole factory knows what happened. If in some workmen's quarter the population has an encounter with the police force, and shots are fired, do you suppose the news circulates freely? It is only by chance that they will hear about it some days later in the other quarters, and then in confidence, because such events are kept in deepest silence. What shall we say then about things that happen in other cities, or in other parts of Italy? We in Italy know nothing about them. There were many things which happened there which I did not learn until I got here. Besides, the fascist press has not many readers. That is how a wormeaten regime like fascism, hated by the entire population, worn out by a tremendous economic crisis, can continue to

"But we have gone a long way since the time when the ruling class, after defeating and scattering the revolutionary forces, thought itself all-powerful. It sees once again that the ground is elipping from under its feet, and it is disturbed. Until yesterday, the only clandestine paper circulating in Italy was ours, that is to say, anti-fascist papers. There is another symptom of the situation. Italian fascism is on the downgrade. But in order to overthrow it, we must organize the activity of the masses, aroused and driven on by the deepening monopoly. The chief results can and broadening economic crisis."

"How do the masses, especially the working masses, look on the problem of the succession to fascism? Do they pose it as, Communism or Fascism?"

"Of course for us communists the question cannot be posed in any other way. For us the dilemma, fascism or communism, poses itself at once. But to say that this is the dilemma which poses itself before the working masses

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which poses itself presently before the masses is, Fascism or anti-fascism. On objections which can be made against my statement.

### The Issue: Fascism or Communism

"The objection will be made that we cannot talk of true anti-fascism without giving it a true class content, a prole tarian content; that fascism is the spe cial form of dictatorship of Italian capitalism under present conditions of its evolution; that to overthrow fascism is therefore to overthrow capitalism, so that the dilemma, fascism or anti-fascism, has no other meaning in practice than the dilemma, fascism or commun-

"All this is correct and perfectly clear for us communists. But it must be masses, and we have not yet gotten so the entire process with understanding. increases every day the general sympathy for the Communists; but we must realize that today everything which goes against fascism has likewise the sympathy of the masses. The task before us, Communists, especially at the present time, is not to turn our backs to the anti-fascist aspirations of the masses; it is to prove to them by our everyday activities that only the proletarian solution offers a way out of the present crisis and a guarantee against the re-

turn of fascism. This task demands of us a flexible tactic, capable of bringing us closer to the masses and taking them away from the influence of the bourgeois anti-fascist parties, whose hold, even among the working class, it would be childish to deny.

"The activities of these parties, on the contrary, are the more dangerous to us because they pose before the masses aims which seem to them easier to attain; so that in the last analysis they act as a brake on the revolutionary forces. All this is elementary. Is it not also the lesson of the events in Spain?"

### Lessons From Various Countries

We think so. If it is true that the revolutionary Spanish workers must never forget our Italian experience of 1919-20, and must cut off the road to any true fascist dictatorship by accomplishing the tasks which the Spanish revof the bourgeoisle, installation of the dictatorship of the proletariat), it is also learn the lesson of the events in Spain. Whether it is Italy or Spain or Germany, tee the workers against a fascist dicmade just as correct and clear for the tatorship. But the proletariat can come far. The masses have not yet followed know how to conduct a consistent revdemands with the struggle for the overthrow of capitalism.

> This does not mean in any way that we must combine Communism and democracy. For the rule of capitalism cannot be overthrown by any kind of transformation in the field of democraitc polities, but only through the proletarain insurrection.

Paris, November 7, 1931

-FEROCI.

# I heard speeches strongly criticising the central government. Then too, the land

can best get some understanding of the medies. English situation and formulate a policy upon which the Left Opposition can work and can develop its activities.

perty rights and national boundariesthese factors make for increased imperialist rivalry, for war, for collapse and crisis; and for revolution.

Britain's old monopolist position disappears; its financial and trade suping slaves for the exploiters, are in revolt: even the necessary reorganization of its industries is held up by a host of conflicting property rights, small factors of production and parasitic in-

Paradoxically enough, while Britain's power has been declining and her basic industries fighting a losing battle, the bourgeoisie have intrenched themselves. By their financial policy; by the extension of profitable industries in the colonies; by their monopolist control of certain commodities enabling them maintain high prices; and by certain rapidly developed light industries, sections of the bourgeoisle have been able to make high profits. But since their position in the world market is based upon the heavy industries, upon coal, iron and steel, textiles and engineering, the actual position of Britain has been worsened. The real effects of this decline are to be seen in the weakening of Britain's position on the world market and the increasing unemployment among the bulk of her working popula-

Coming on top or the long years of industrial depression the world crisis has hit Britain severely, although she is still protected in some directions by

n the following ngures	
Manufactured Goods Total (All Goods)	Exports 1929 430 543
All Industry	Production 1929 112
Mines	97
Iron and Steel	114

ant when we realize that 1924 produc- olutionary movement. The old movetion was about 10% below the 1913 level. ments, built up under the old conditions,

Engineering

the balance between imports and exports it is not sectional struggles but mass and to leave a surplus for reinvestment struggle; not national movements but overseas. The following figures show Max Shachtman Maurice Spector the amount available for overseas invest-

•		
	(Million)	
1924	1928	1930
86	137	39
86	137	39

will be an actual deficit of some 60 mil- tion possible? What are the immediate

It is proposed, in this and in follow-| clear: the decline is a real and permaning articles, to examine briefly the situa- ent thing and not a passing phase to tion in Great Britain. In this way we be ignored or treated by superficial re-

### The Changed Political Outlook

brought about a change in the political France to the same extent as in certain an improvement of the world economic obstacles for every real effort for unity Clearly, the basic consideration must attitude of the ruling class. Benificent other advanced countries, and is thereism": capitalism ceases to give and commences to take away: democratic forms begin to give way to more effective dictatorial measures—Emergency Powers Act, Orders In Council and the suppression of the militant workers' movements. The unemployed benefits, wrested from the bourgeoisie by the power of the working class, is reduced; wages are attach ed: expenditures on health, education schemes of work and so on, are cut remacy are affected by new and strong down ruthlessly. Tariffs are proposed, rivals; its colonies, no longer passive bringing dearer food; taxes imposed and recipients of Britain's products or will- the possibility of inflation threaten the upper strata of the proletariat and the petit-bouregoisie with very much worsened conditions. Here and in other spheres of social life is the political expression of the economic decline of Britain.

In such conditions, the working class movement cannot go on in the old way. The basis for the old trade union bargaining is gone; no longer is it quite safe for the unions to operate on the sphere of wages and conditions; in the period of capitalist decline, wage reductions become imperative and necessary for the maintenance of capitalist profits. Resistance to wage reductions or attempts at wage increases is no long- into monopoly, and the development of er an attempt to secure a share of the margin left over after all interests are finance capital, will break down the unsatisfied but an attack upon "fixed stable equilibrium of the past four years, charges". Industries are declared "incapable" of paying the old wage standards: to challenge this is to challenge the whole basis of the capitalist control of industry.

The trade unions cannot, in the present period, remain in the centre: more and more are they forced to fight on political issues, and to choose either to become part of the machinery of the State or to advance to revolutionary struggle. The old sectional methods of struggle are useless in the face of modern conditions.

These conditions have, in every coun-Per Cent of

1930	1931	1929	
343	221	-35.6%	
441	292	-33.7%	
(1929 Equ 1930		21	
1300		rter 2nd Q	uarter
103	9	5 92	
91	9	5 92	
88	6	8 63	

117 The above table is even more signific-1 try in the world, given rise to the rev In the past the return from overseas reveal their inability to adapt themselves tribute has been sufficient to make up to the needs of the present time. Today

international movements. In England, as elsewhere, the economic conditions are ripe for revolution. Is there the necessary readiness on the part of the proletariat and the necessary break-up of the ruling class groups and the weakening of its hold upon the mid-It is estimated that this year there die classes to make a political revoluperspectives?

# Perspectives of the Crisis in France

## Economic - Social Changes and Prospects

which began to manifest itself in the indicated by the yields of new securities and 637% in October, 1930; wholesale United States in July, 1929, did not ser- offered to the public, declined from prices dropped still faster, being 423% iously affect French economy until the 5.36% in 1929 to 4.69% in 1930, indicat- in October, 1931 against 437 in Septemlatter part of 1930. At the present time, ing the abundance of capital and the ber and 519 in October of last year. The with a false dawn of recovery appear- confidence of the bourgeoisie. Bank- cost of new capital, which had declined ing in England on account of inflation, ruptcles showed only a small increase, as low as 4.10% by February of this year, and in a few partial and temporary from a monthly average of 508 in 1929 has been rising steadily-4.60% in June manifestations in the United States, the to an average 521 in 1930. In foreign trend in France continues downward. trade, imports showed a small increase What is the likelihood that the crisis in from 59,461,000 tons in 1929 to 60,759, France may continue to grow deeper and 000 tons in 1930, while exports decreased sharper, even in the face of the begin- somewhat from 39,906,000 tons in 1929 olution puts before them (expropriation nings of an industrial upturn elsewhere? to 36,759,000 tons in 1930. The survival or partial stabilization of In the course of 1931, the picture has a sharp decline in exports against the capitalist economy in the United States, changed considerably, and the tendency corresponding period of last year, in true that the Italian Communists must in England and in Germany has been is still rapidly downward. Steel productionnage from 24,787,000 tons to 20,399,based on attacks on the standard of tion in September, 1931 was 654,000 tons 000, and in value from 29,309,000,000 living of the workers, whose resistance against 680,000 in August 1931, 801,000 francs to 20,970,000,000, while imports only the dictatorship of the proletariat, has on the whole been limited and sporthe proletarian revolution, can guaran- adic. In France the problem has not of 783,000 tons for all 1930. Retail prices nage from 40,313,000 to 39,910,000 been posed in its full forms because of in October, 1931, were 571% of pre-war the delay in the outbreak of the crisis out the victor only if the Communists but already the strikes in the textile, The daily news of the Special Tribunal gle for immediate economic and political rank and file. A further sharpening of the crisis and an attempt on the part Dear Friends: of the French bourgeoisle to solve it from the backs of the workers will lead to an intensification of the class struggle on the economic field which is bound to have its effect on political developments at a time like this when the French C. P. has already indicated that it acknowledges the need for a turn to regain the confidence of the masses. The following study attempts to outline the economic background of the present stage in the crisis and to indicate some probable perspectives.

> The approach to its conclusions can be outlined as follows:

1. French industrial capitalism, betries. As a result, capitalism has not every side, so that action was deferred federation of Labor. The changed economic situation has matured its basic contradidctions in to December 15th in the expectation of But in practice, they are putting up liberalism is abandoned for "die-hard- fore not so susceptible to the immediate in England. effects of a crisis.

2. This does not mean that French capitalism occupies an "exceptional" position, but merely that its tempo of develoment has lagged behind that of capitalism elsewhere. The broad line of development has been similar: increasing ing to fight, but they are in an awful displacement of agriculture, increasing concentration, increasing development of bility for that situation rests upon Stalexport markets, before and since the

3. The specific circumstances surrounding the post-war crisis of capital- from an insignificant minority to seize ism in France made it possible to postpone bringing into the open the internal eral Federation of Labor, with the asagainst the petty peasantry and the financial oligarchy on the other.

4. This period of truce is now com

ing to an end: the questions of bring-

ing down the cost of living at the expense of French agriculture, of cutting wages in the interests of export competition at the expense of French labor, and of bringing finance capital into its normal relation as advance agent and leader in the concentration of industry export markets through the export of tion of the Greek workers. The Indupraised by bourgeois economists as the "harmony, the balance, the sense of measure of France". This unstable equilibrium has been based on the protection of an inefficient agriculture gle our best comrade Theodore Ladas, against indudstry; on the limitation of industry to little more than the restricted home market based on small-scale industry and agriculture; and on the development of a powerful financial olig- unions in Athens and Piracus and ten in archy on a relatively narrow industrial Salonica. But this was far from groupbase. These three policies are contrary ing the majority of the workers who are to the iron necessities of capitalism-, 90 per cent unorganized. primitive accumulation through the displacement of the peasant by the proletarian; expansion of production and the consequent necessity of a world market; and a hegemony of finance capital based on the interweaving of its interests with those of a concentrated and monopolistic industry, instead of a finance capital chiefly concerned with non-"productive" and non-industrial operations such as short-term credits to for- ary management, the other under ours, eign banks, Stock Exchange operations, and loans to foreign governments. The industrial bourgeoisie can make its peace with finance capital, but sooner or later result was that we obtained the direction with the intensification of the general of the amalgamated union. post-war crisis of captalism, it will have to come into open conflict with the peasantry, which can find an ultimate solution only in the alliance of the latter with the proletariat.

#### Relative Mildness of the French Crisis in 1930, Increasing Sharpness in 1931

Only a few data are necessary to bring out the relative lateness of the manifestations of the crisis in France. Steel production in 1930 declined 3.1% compared with the previous year in France; 35% in Germany, 37% in the United States, 21% for the whole world. Prices for Paris rising from 556 in 1929 to 581 We also propagated this slogan at the Athens, November 12, 1931

The world-wide crisis of capitalism over the world. The cost of new capital, against 588% in the preceding month

tons in January 1931 and an average have fallen off relatively little in ton-

and July, 4. 75% in August, 5% in September. Bankruptcies amounted to 1,005 in October, 1931, nearly twice the monthly average of last year, against 675 in September, 1931. Foreign trade for the first eight months of 1931 has shown (Continued on page 2)

## know how to conduct a consistent revolutionary struggle, combining the strug a high degree of militancy among the

in our country has become worse. The national was in attendance. Our orfail of the English pound has disturbed ganization circulated a tract against this the economic life and especially the ex. traitor. Two comrades were arrested ports of tobacco, raisins and olive oil. and beaten up by the police who were The income from the merchant fleet is protecting him. reduced, while individuals and banks who had deposits in London lost tremend- ions, one under our direction. In a comous sums. The State Bank alone lost mon meeting, the workers accepted our 300,000 pounds, which reduced the paper slogan and a committee of fifteen was drachma and put the stabilization of the elected to carry out the fusion of the Greek currency on the edge of the abyss. unions. In Athens, the same will take The state income from taxes is reduced place with another bakers' union which by 60 million drachmas per month was founded by the reactionaries, when (\$750,000), and it is forecast that the our comrades were arrested at the betotal deficit of the economic year will ginning of a general bakers' strike. cause of the historical conditions under total 300 million drachmas. The Govwhich it arose, has met with more re- ernment is preparing to reduce the turn accepting our slogans and declaring sistance from other sections of the bour- wages of the State employees by 6%, but that they are prepared to accept a union geoisie than capitalism in other coun- it was met by unanimous protest from Congress for the formation of ONE Con-

#### Worsening of the Workers' Situation The maintenance of the drachma at

the stabilized level of 20% over English currency is followed by the reduction of industrial production and an attack of capital upon wages. Workers are willstate of disorganization. The responsito take foot in the trade unions, and crime committed against the organiza- from the I. L. D. strial Leather Union for years was unable to get together in meetings of more than 15 workers. For three years they did not hold elections for Council renewal. We have resisted this crime of Stalinism and in the midst of this strugshoemaker-worker, was assassinated.

Our organization strived in this period to organize the workers and succeeded to have fifteen

## Trade Union Unity

It is natural that the slogan for unity should be at the heart of every worker, and when our organization put forward the slogan of the united front and later of unity, the response from the workers

In Athens there were two bakers' unions, one of which was under reaction-Under our pressure, workers obliged their leaders to accept the unity propagated by the Archio Marxists. The

Our slogan for unity meets the stubborn resistance of Stalinists, who prefer the masses concentrated in them. In sentenced to eighteen months in jail. the past, when the Archio-Marxists became a majority in unions under the in favor of the Russian Revolution, four-Stalinist regime, they (the Stalinists) teen comrades, members of our organizaexpelled these majorities rather than to tion, were condemned from two to three surrender the union control. That is the and a haif years' imprisonment and exile. history of the great majority of the un- Among them are two working-women. ions which are now under our direction. For a month now, 4,000 shoemakers Our slogan for unity is: ONE UNION are on strike in Athens and Piraeus. In FOR EVERY INDUSTRY.

proletarian democracy in the union and this strike in the near future after the

ANGLICUS. for 1930, while prices were falling all VI Congress of the General Federation

of Labor, where Jouhaux of the French Since I last wrote to you the situation C. G. T. and of the Amsterdam Inter-

In Piraeus there are three bakers' un-

Under our pressure, Stalinists made a

aries against us. This was the case in the Bank Employees' Union, where Stalinists worked with reactionaries to defeat the Council composed of sympathizers to our organization. They did not succeed; we have retained our position in the Council.

## International Labor Defense

Our participation in the I. L. D. groups continues, but we are met with inism, which for ten years by its errors all the obstacles that Stalinism is capand adventurism helped the reactionaries able of. They took occasion to expel the entire I. L. D. group in the bakers' union which protested against the persecuthe direction of the unions and the Gen- tion of Rakovsky and Trotsky and the Bolshevik-Leninists of the Soviet Union. class conflicts of French capitalism, sistance of dictator Pangalos. Instead The Rakovsky campaign was very sucagainst the proletariat on the one hand, of struggling against them to gain the cessful in bringing to the knowledge of confidence of the workers, the Stalinists the workers the situation of the Opposiwithdrew from the G. F. L. and founded tion in the U. S. S. R. The Stalinists the Unionist G. F. L., which, through the have been enraged at this exposure, and policy of the Third Period-the general they began a fierce campaign of calumnipolitical strike and the like-became a ation against Trotsky and Rakovsky, mere skeleton. In the same period they whom they calumniated as counter-revdissolved the trade unions under their olutionists. For the same reason, they direction and amalgamated them into in- expelled from the I. L. D. four of our dustrial unions. But at the stage of best comrades who are in prison cells economic development in which our coun- at Syngrow. Now they are preparing try was and still is this meant a suicide the expulsion of every Archio-Marxist

> In Salonica prisons, exasperated by the criticism of our comrades in the prison, they rushed against them, twenty against five, and beat them fiercely. They attacked comrade Cavilla, then secretary of the Drama radio, and member of the district committee of East Macedonia and West Thrace, who lately joined our organization, after addressing an open letter to the members of the Party denouncing the crimes of the Stalinists, the thefts, treason, etc. They wounded him in the head with a rifle. Some days later our comrade was discovered and arrested by the police and imprisoned and tortured.

## The Terror

The terror against the militant workers is increasing. The courts are dissolving workers' unions; they imprison, send to jail and deport for years. The foundation of new unions is forbidden. On August 1st the police arrested some of our comrades at Agrini and attached them to the tail of a horse which was galloping. In the shoemakers' strike, which now involves 4,000 workers in Athens and Piracus, we have twenty comrades sentenced to years of prison. The secretary and president of the shoemakers' union (Archio-Marxist) were condemned to eight months' imprisonment. The comrade who was standardto have lifeless unions instead of having bearer in a demonstration of strikers was

On November 7th at a demonstration

this strike, Stalinism revealed its hideous The only terms we propose are: face. We will give you an account of

-P. P.