
THE THREAT OF ILLEGALITY

American capitalism is already giving advance notice of the bloody answer it is preparing to the slaves whom it denies a living within their slavery. In the roar of gunfire at Detroit it said to the workers whom it has thrown onto the will not provide for you, and if you protest we will shoot you." The massacre at Detroit was followed a few days Chicago demonstration of the Communists before the Japanese Consulate. Here, as in Detroit, the police were clearly the aggressors. The demonstration was designed as a peaceful one, with Communist direction it could not be otherwise under the given conditions, for it is no part of Communist policy te intervention of the masses who are not yet active.

We do not credit the story, by means of which the police-murderers are attempting to cover themselves, that the first shots were fired from the crowd, and by a "Communist agitator" at that. Such individual reactions to the regime of brutal repression are of course possible; one may say inevitable. Even if that had been the case in Chicago, the police who forcibly deprived the manifestants of their rights would bear the whole responsibility. But their attempt to pin the accusation on a "known" Communisa discredits their story from the start. . It is a transparent subterfuge to justify themselves and to frame-up the party.

dictments. They are drawing the noose izes the present situation. tighter around the workers' vanguard. They are starting to isolate it from the up here and there are organized by great mass of discontented workers and the small Communist vanguard and, for to outlaw its activities. The labor pas- the most part, carried through by them bourgeoisie can only set up in its strug- chief threat to the entire regime of the sivity that has attended the Kentucky in almost every case. In these actions gle against the revolution. But this prosecutions and convictions only en- the Communist workers are distinguish- kind of government does not necessarily the population, the productive forces and courages a similar procedure after every ing themselves by their courage and re- signify weakness and prostration. skirmish in other places. The ruling solution. Thereby they are storing up the absence of a strong revolutionary one hand, and her present international capitalists and their Governmental hire- capital and prestige for the future. But party of the proletariat, a combination lings, shivering in fear at the coming the masses are not moving with the of semi-reforms, left phrases and gesstorm of labor rebellion, would like to Communists. In this disparity there is tures still more to the left, and of recut off and proscribe the conscious and a great danger that the vanguard will prisals can prove to be of much more lived hegemony, "nationalist" as well as But the latter lacked a strong revolution articulate section of the class and delegal spokesmen and organizers.

en at the prospect of a workers' mass movement o come, but not yet matured olutionary wing may be driven underground in spite of anything it can do.

There is no prescription that will guarantee legality. But within certain limits it can be safeguarded and strengthened by a correct policy. The experience of 1919-21 must be recalled and its lessons assimilated by those militants who have been drawn into the movement, under legal conditions, since that ing a single point of revolutionary doctrine or evading a single duty, to fight for it to the end. A retreat into illegality under the present conditions, or even under much more aggravated ones, would signify a retreat from the coming class battles.

THE SITUATION AND ITS TASK

One of the most important problems o American Communist tactics is to maintain an open legal, or at least semilegal, position until a significant workera' mass movement has caught up with pression of the Party will be a thousand support. times more difficult. The numerically weak Party, isolated and fighting virtually alone, is only a threat. The Party supported by a Workers' mass movement is a power.

If we are going to find our way in the charged social atmosphere of these days, the first obligation laid upon us is to see things as they are. History assigns an enormous role to the conscious revolutionaries who foresees the line of march theoretically, but it does wishes. Marxism is no doctrine of social miracles wrought by small minorputschism. Even if one is .convincedas we are convinced--that we are near the threshold of great events and great

THE MILITANT Published weekly by the Communist League of America (Opposition) at 84 East 10th St., N. Y.

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Entered as second class mail matter November 28, 1928, at the Post Office a.:

SATURDAY, MARCH 19, 1932 Vol. 5, No. 12, (Whole No. 108) Bundle rates, 3 cents per copy. | teract this poisonous delusion or does

changes in the life of the American working class, it is not permissible to forget for a moment that we alone will not and cannot be the authors of these changes and these events. The future of American Communism is bright with promise, but we will move toward that streets: "We cannot employ you and we great future only in so far as the working masses move with us at every step.

The material conditions are long ripe for a tremendous upsurge of militant lalater by the murderous attack on the bor. This we know and this is the foundation of our perspectives. But the workers do not react automatically to the material pressure upon them, and there is no rule by which to foretell the extent and tempo of their movement in advance. That must be judged and estimated as it actually unfolds or, at least, as it is clearly intimated. substitute the futile violence of an in- clear-sighted study of the mood and temdividual or of a small group for the per of the workers must precede and regulate the daily tactics and working methods of the revolutionary Party if it really aims to accelerate and influence the collisions of class forces.

inescapable fact in the situation-the workers have not yet begun the inevitable movement of revolt. Under pressure of conditions that become more and more intolerable the workers are under-They are proceeding in the same way It is like the slow accumulation of steam political power in the hands of the at Detroit. The four victims of their in a sealed boiler that has not yet reach- government, gunmen had not been laid away before ed the explosive point. The explosion they began a wild man-hunt for Com- will come, and it may come unannounce munist leaders and set the legal machin- ed; but it is not storm, but rather the of the bourgeoisie in its struggle against ery in motion to grind out wholesale in- dead calm before storm, that character-

> The sporadic movements which flare when it breaks.

The menace of illegality for the Communist movement is undoubtedly grow- working class. They are only its con- its most elementary tasks (the agrarian, of the abominable Rumanian clique, of ese regime. scious section, and at present in Amerand all-sided consideration. There is no ica they are a small and numerically and is still far from having exhausted dictatorship of the Jugloslavian miliprescription by the aid of which the insignificant section. The Communist the revolutionary resources of the mass- tary; to uphold the dismemberment of Party can be guaranteed a legal exist- workers alone cannot fight real class es. More than it has already given, the the German nation (Germany and Ausence. With the present weakness and battles. Their function is to fight with bourgeois revolution will not be able tria), to defend the Polish corridor in isolation of the Party, with the inten- the workers and in their front ranks. to give. With regard to the proletarian East Prussia, to aid Japanese intervensification of war danger increasing, and The task of the Communists at the mowith a powerful ruling class panic-strick- ment is to prepare the workers for the al situation in Spain may be character- military clique against the U. S. S. R. coming struggles. The center of this ized as pre-revolutionary, but scarcely to come forward as the chief enemy of task is the "patient work of explana- more than that. It is quite probable the liberation movement of the colonial and merged with the vanguard, the rev- tion"; of agitation and propaganda to that the offensive development of the peoples, etc. The contradiction be win the workers over to a course of Spanish revolution will take on a more tween France's secondary role in world struggle. There is no substitute for or less protracted character. In this economy and her immense privileges and this prosaic task and there is no way to manner, the historical process opens up, pretensions in world politics will become leap over it. A renovation of the Party's as it were, a new credit account for more distinct every month, will heap tactics in this sense is an absolute nec- | Spanish Communism. essary. Only in this way can it prepare

A FALSE SLOGAN

time. The first of these lessons is to Communist workers who demonstrated ial ebbs and and tides can elapse bevalue legality; and, without surrender- before the Japanese consulates last Sat- tween the pre-revolutionary and the imarday is not to be questioned. The firm mediately revolutionary situation. The will to fight against the imperialist war economic situation in England has reachmongeres was their animating impulse, ed extreme acuteness. Still, the politicprotest against the manner in which the tive country extraordinary lags behind of Fascism), the development of the inenergies of the militants are being mis- the changes in the economic basis. Bedirected by the false tactics of the Party fore taking recourse to new political in the next period, take a relatively "norlutionists, inspired by a hatred of "their and again to ransack the old storeown" imperialists, could give the out- rooms, to turn the old clothes of their demonstration", and be so described by out. The fact remains, that despite tionary situation. the capitalist press. Such a direction of the dreadful national decline there does the conscious vanguard and joined with the struggle does not in the least hamper not exist in England as yet, either a it in a common struggle on the concrete the war plans of American imperialism. questions of the day. Then the sup- On the contrary it gives them unwitting or its antipode—the Fascist party.

Of course we support the Chinese people; we ought to expose and denounce the Japanese militarists in our general edly wrong to concentrate the anti-war campaign in America against the govern agitation; but in our opinion it is decidment of Japan. And this is precisely the impression that, in the present situation, the demonstrations before the Japanese consulates are bound to create in the minds of the masses. In actions of this kind only the salient facts stand not allow us to force events by our own out. The subsidiary slogans, the other issues which are "linked up" with the main event, are lost in the shuffle. How ities. It has nothing in common with quickly wrongly formulated slogans exact their penalty! The popular impression of the Saturday demonstrations as an "anti-Japanese" affair is the price already paid for the asinine slogan of the Party leadership: "Drive the Japan-

ese diplomats from the country!" In this slogan there is the basis for a complete disorientation of the proletarian straggle around the question of central task of the American Communthe coming war. It fits in with the ists in the question of war is the syspseudo--pacifist policy of American imperialism in the East and facilitates its work of delusion at home. "The Japanese are mad with militarism; they are provoking a world war; but our own government strives for peace, and if it Hoover policy if it is to serve the in-New York, N. Y. Under the act of is finally of reed into war it will be the terests of the proletariat. The anti-Jap- decline in the conjuncture, but on the historical experiences of Czarism in the fault of Japan"-this is the imperialist anese slogan contradicts this task, conpropaganda for the coming year which fuses and disorganizes the struggle and is seeping into the minds of the Amer- even contains the germ of chauvinist de- crisis will open up a new epoch in the able of. Subscription rate: \$2.00 per year; for- ican people day by day. Does the "Anti- viations. The slogan should be with- life of the American proletariat and of The struggle unfolding in the Far eign \$2.50. Five cents per copy. Japanese" agitation of the Party coundrawn before it does further harm.

The World Crisis and Its Revolutionary Implications By LEON TROTSKY

ndicate-if only in its general outlines -the composition of the political world situation today, as it has resulted from the fundamental contradictions of decay capitalism, complicated and sharpened by the severe commercial, industrial and financial crisis. The following, hastily sketched reflections, far from embracing all countries and all questions, are to be the subject of serious further, collective treatment.

1. The Spanish Revolution has created the general political premises for the immediate struggle for power of the proletariat. The syndicalist traditions the Spanish proletariat have at once reveated themselves as one of the most important obstacles in the way of the development of the revolution. The Comintern was caught unawares by the events. The Communist party, totally impotent at the beginning of the revolution, occupied a false position on all the fundamental questions. The Spanish experiences have shown-let it be recalled once more-what a frightful instrument of the disorganization of the revolutionary consciousness of the ad-Unemployment on the one side and vanced workers, the present Comintern wage reductions on the other are weigh- leadership represents! The extraordining down upon virtually the whole work- ary delay of the proletarian vanguard ing class of America and ruthlessly lagging behind the events, the politically changing all the accustomed conditions dispersed character of the heroic strugand standards of life. But in spite of gles of the laboring masses, the actual that-and this is the most singular and assurances of reciprocity between anarcho-syndicalism and social democracy--these are the fundamental political conditions that made it possible for the republican bourgeoisie, in league with the social democracy, to establish an going a profound mental change. But appartaus of repression, and by dealing the outward signs of this change are not the insurgent masses blow for blow, to yet manifest to any appreciable extent. concentrate a considerable amount of not only of Europe, but perhaps of the

> By this example, we see that Fascism does not at all represent the only means the revolutionary masses. The regime existing in Spain today corresponds best to the conception of the Kerenskiad, that is, the last or "the one before the last") "left" government, which the

the church and the national questions) the decadent Pilsudski regime, of the

the coming workers' movement and en- likewise be termed with a certain de- discontent among the masses of the peogree of justification, as pre-revolution ple and create ever deeper political deary, provided it is strictly agreed, that rangements. These processes will un-"he revolutionary fighting spirit of the a period covering several years of partrevolutionary party of any significance Thanks to these circumstances, the bourgeoisie has had the opportunity of mobilizing the majority of the people under the "national" banner, that is, under the most hollow of all possible slogans.

> it contribute to it? In the event of war with Japan the Communists will be disarmed if the American imperialists can say: "You were more eager than we were; you demanded the expulsion of the Japanese diplomats while we were

still striving for peace." "The enemy is in our own ocuntry!" -this is the revolutionary slogan Liebknecht and Lenin, the guiding line of the proletarian struggle against imperialist war. Those who forget this for one moment are already on the toboggan to social patriotism. The proletariat in every country has to wage its own specific fight against its own imperfalists and work for their defeat. The tematic exposure of the policy of America which masks the most monstrous imperialist designs with the phrases of pacifism. The fire of the Communists must be concentrated mainly on this

ture to become adapted to the real eco- spicable A. F. of L. bureaucracy. At nomic and international situation of the the same time, unlimited possibilities

There is no ground for assuming that the collapse of the "national" bloc-and than one stormy outburst of revolutionsuch a collapse is inevitable in the re- ary or semi-revolutionary mass movelatively near future-will lead directly ments. Every time they died out quickto the proletarian revolution (it is a matter of course, that there can be no ed a new phase of economic upswing other revolution in England) or to the and also because the movements themtriumph of "Fascism". On the contrary, it may be assmed with much greater piricism and theoretical helplessness, probability that on her path to the revolutionary solution, England will go A new economic upswing (and one canthrough a lengthy period of the radical not consider it excluded in advance) democratic and social-pacifist demagogy will have to be based, not on the internal of the Lloyd-Georgiad and of Labourism. England's historical development will will enter an epoch of monstrous imbe confronted with the solution. From and convulsions. On the other hand, in this, however, it does not at all follow the form of Communism the masses of is required on the part of the Soviet govthat we can afford to continue losing the American proletariat possess-ratime with disastrous experiments and ther, could possess, provided with a cor-Centrist zig-zags. In the present world rect policy-no longer the old melange situation, time is the most precious of of empiricism, mysticism and quackery, raw materials.

entire world. The relative stability of the capitalist regime in France has its roots, to a large extent, in its backwardness. The crisis has less telling effects fidence. on it than on other countries. On the financial field. Paris even attempts vie with New York. The present financial "prosperity" of the French bourgeoisie has its direct source in the robbery of Versailles. But it is precisely the In the national income of France on the dangers upon dangers, upset her inter-2. The situation in England can nal stability, promote restlessness and doubtedly become manifest as early as the next parliamentary elections.

On the other hand, however, all in dications compel us to assume that, if no great events take place outside of the country (the victory of the revolution And that is all the greater reason for at super-structure of this arch-conserva- in Germany or the reverse: the victory ternal relationships in France itself will. leaders. It is a cruel frony that the forms and methods, all the classes of mal" course which will open up for Combrave demonstration of the Chicago rev- the English nation are attempting time munism the opportunity of utilizing a considerable period of preparation in order to consolidate itself prior to the ad. of the Stalinist bureaucracy). Preciseward appearance of an "anti-Japanese grandfathers and greatmothers inside vent of the pre-revolutionary and revolu- ly for this reason, the present regime,

> 4. In the United States, the most powerful country of capital, the present crisis has laid bare frightful social contradictions with striking forcefulness. After an unprecedented period of prosperity which amazed the whole world with its fireworks of millions and billions, the United States at once enterlions of people, of the most appalling of the years 1924-1927. physical destitution for the toilers. Such icalization in the American working masses. It may be assumed that the masses themselves have been so startled by the castastrophic upheaval in the conjuncture, so stunned and crushed by unemployment or by the fear of unemployment, that they have not as yet been able to draw even the most elementary political conclusions from the calamity that has refallen them. This requires a certain amount of time. But the conclusions will be drawn. The tremendous economic crisis, which has taken on the character of a social crisis, will inevitably be converted into a crisis of the the revolutionary radicalization of the istic Japan have obviously unbalanced broadest layers of workers will reveal her government. There is no lack of itself, not in the period of the greatest instigators (France). And from the contrary, during the turn toward revival Far East, we know what an unbalanced and upswing. In either case, the present the people as a whole. Serious regroup- East is, it is understood, carried on not

In the pre-revolutionary situation, the parties are to be expected, as well as most dulf-witted of conservatisms had new attempts to create a third party, etc. acquired tremendous political predom- With the first signs of a rise in the coninance. It will in all probability take juncture, the trade union movement will more than one month, perhaps more than acutely sense the necessity of tearing one year, for the political super-struc- itself loose from the claws of the de-

will unfold themselves for Communism. In the past, America has known more ly, because America at every time enterselves were characterized by crass em-These two conditions belong to the past. but a scientifically grounded, up-to-date 3. France, which the sages of the doctrine. These radical changes permit Comintern had placed a year and a half us to predict with certainty that the or two years ago in the foremost ranks inevitable and relatively rapid, revoluof the revolutionary "upsurge", is in tionary transformation of the American actuality the most conservative country, proletariat will no more to be the former, easily extinguishable "bonfire", but

> 5. The Czarist adventure in Manchuria led to the Russo-Japanese war; the war-to the 1905 revolution. The present Japanese adventure in Manchuria can lead to revolution in Japan.

> the beginning of a veritable revolution-

ary conflagration. In America, Commun-

ism can face its great future with con-

At the beginning of the century, the feudal-military regime of that country could still successfully serve the inter ests of the young Japanese capitalism. But in the course of the last quarter of a century, capitalist development has brought extraordinary decomposition inposition on the other, there is a crying to the old social and political forms. contradiction which must inevitably lead Since that time, Japan has more than to an explosion. To maintain her short- once been on the brink of revolution pend upon the support in the entire on it by the developments. The Man Needless to say, the Spanish revolution world, of the most reactionary forces, of churian adventure may accelerate the

Present day China, no matter how to drive out the Japanese expeditionary forces immediately, but the national consciousness and activity of the Chinese people have grown enormously. Hundreds of thousands, millions of Chinese have gone through military training. armies. The Japanese will feel themselves besieged. The railroads will be economic purposes. More and more new troops will have to be sent out. The begin to exhaust Japan's economic organism, increase the discontent inside the country, sharpen the contradictions crisis.

6. In China, the necessity of a determined defense against the imperialist invasion will also bring with it serious internal, political consequences. The Kuo Min Tang regime arose out of the national revolutionary mass movement. which was exploited and strangled by the bourgeois militarists (with the aid shaky and full of contradictions, is incapable of initiating a revolutionary war. The necessity of a defense against the Japanese invaders will turn more and more against the Kuo Min Tang regime and nourish the revolutionary sentiments of the masses. With a correct policy, the proletarian vanguard can, under these conditions, make up for all ed a period of unemployment for mil- that was so tragically lost in the course

7. The present events in Manchuria a gigantic social convulsion cannot fail prove particularly how naive those gento leave its traces on the political de- tlemen were, who demanded of the Sovvelopment of the country. Today it is let Union the simple return of the Chistill hard to ascertain, at least from the nese Eastern Railroad to China. That distance, any measure of important rad- would have meant surrendering it voluntarily to Japan, in whose hands the railroad would have become a weapon against China as well as against the U. S. S. R. If anything at all had hitherto prevented the Japanese military cliques March 24th. from intervention in Manchuria and if anything may still hold them within the boundaries of caution today, it is the fact that the Chinese Eastern Railroad

is the property of the Soviets. 8. Cannot the Manchurian adventure of the Japanese, nevertheless, lead to war with the U. S. S. R.? It is understood, this is not excluded even with the wisest and most cautious policy on political consciousness of the American the part of the Soviet government. The working class. It is quite possible that internal contradictions of feudal-capitalmilitary-bureaucratic monarchy is cap-

-J. P. C. ments and clashes among the ruling for the sake of the railroads, but over

the fate of all of China. In this gigantic historical struggle, the Soviet government cannot be neutral, take the same position with regard to China as to Japan. It is duty-bound to stand completely and fully on the side of the Chinese people. Only the unflinching loyalty of the Soviet government to the struggle for the liberation of the oppressed peoples can really protect the Soviet Union on the Eastern frontier against Japan, England, France, the United States.

Under what forms the Soviet government will support the struggle of the Chinese people in the coming period, depends upon the concrete historical circumstances. If it had been insane to surrender the Chinese Eastern Railroad voluntarily to Japan before, then it would be just as insane to subordinate the entire policy in the Far East to the problem of the Chinese Eastern Railroad. There are many indications that the be-"equilibrium", but on the present chaos havior of the Japanese military clique in These can therefore be no doubt that of world economy. American capitalism this question bears a consciously provocatory character. Directly behind this grant British Communism ample time to perialism, of an uninterrupted growth of provocation, stands ruling France. The transform itself into the genuine armaments, of intervention in the affairs aim of the provocation is to tie the hands of the proletariat at the moment it will of the entire world, of military conflicts of the Soviet Union in the East. All the more firmness and far-sightedness ernment.

The fundamental conditions of the East: its immense expanse, its countless human masses, its economic backwardness-give these processes their slow, their drawn out and crawling character. In any case, there is no threat of an immediate and acute danger to the existence of the Soviet Union from the Far East. During the coming period, the main events will develop in Europe. Here, great opportunities may arise, but from the same source also, great dangers threaten. For the present, only Japan has tied its hands in the Far East. The Soviet Union must, for the present, keeps its hands free.

> —L. TROTSKY. From ("Germany-the Key to the International Situation.")

German Opposition at Work

(Continued from page 3) issued now for material reasons). The pamphlets "Against National Communism", "Shall Fascism Really Be Victor-

ious?" and "How Can National Socialism Be Defeated?" have all appeared in a second edition. The latest pamphlets have all appeared editions of 15,000 and have been completely sold out. The present sphere of influence of the Left Opposition will allow us to advance to editions of 25,000. This is a significant step forward.

Due to the reasons mentioned above, enfeebled it may be by the dictatorship the Permanente Revolution could not, at of the Kuo Min Tang cliques, greatly first, appear more than once a month. differs from the China which Japan, fol- We had to overcome certain pessimistic lowing the European powers, despoiled sentiments against a more regular apin the past. China has not the strength pearance. Nevertheless, we have succeeded in issuing the paper as a semimonthly ever since January 1. That is an unquestionable success for the organization, although this result is by no means up to the mark of political neces-The Chinese will always improvise new sity. We are campaigning for a weekly

The successes achieved are the fruits of far greater service for war than for of a systematic work of preparation, which brought about the most effective utilization and application of the forces Manchurian expedition spreading out will of which we disposed. We must emphasize that all our work was carried on without any material assistance from the outside. In view of the fact that and thereby, accelerate the revolutionary there are more than 6,000,000 unemployed in Germany today, these material efforts are even worthy of a much higher evaluation. Without overlooking any of the shortcomings that still persist, it is, nevertheless, undeniable, that the German Opposition has overcome the stage of sectarianism and that it is on the road to becoming one of the most active sections in the International Left Op--R. WELL

P. S. In further articles, there will be a more detailed report of the newly organized groups and connections.

CLASS IN MARXISM It is not yet too late to join the class in Marxism taught by comrade Swabeck every Thursday evening at eight o'clock, at our headquarters, 84 E. 10th St. Comrades and sympathizers are invited to attend. The subject matter already covered included discussion of Class Struggles in France, the 18th Brumaire, the Communist Manifesto, the Gotha Program.

Some of the remaining sessions, and they are more than half, will be devoted to analysis and discussion of the dispute with the anarchists, the dispute with the Utopians, historical materialism, and dialectics. We repeat: it is not yet too late to join this class. The fee is small. The next session is Thursday,

BACK NUMBERS OF "MILITANT" WANTED

We are preparing files of the Militant for binding. We plan to bind in one volume all the issues from Vol. 1, No. 1 to Volume IV No. 12, the last issue of the semimonthly Militant. We are missing the folloing numbers: Vol. I, No. 1, November 15, 1928. Vol. 2, No. 4, Feb. 18th 1929; Vol. 3, No. 31; Oct. 1, 1930; Vol. 4, No. 2, January 15th, 1931. Vol. 4, No. 4, Februray 15th 1931. Vol. 4, No. 10, May 15th, 1931. Just as soon as we receive these numbers we will be able to proceed iwth our binding plans and offer the bound vol-