

WORKERS
OF THE
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UNITE

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Rebel Miners in Action!

New Movement in the Anthracite Growing Rapidly

Strikes are once again spreading through the coal fields. In the Pennsylvania anthracite region a large number of the black towering lagers are shut down as thousands of men have left the collieries. It is what is called an insurgent strike. The combination, of an insurgent movement and a powerful strike, has thrown both alarm and fear into the whole of the enemy camp. As it gained day by day during its first week it met the most terrific opposition from the united forces of the operators, the state cossacks and the United Mine Workers officials.

So far this opposition has not been able to stem the tide. While the state troopers are massed in the territory ruthlessly breaking up "insurgent" meetings and making wholesale arrests, more collieries join the movement.

First of all this strike is caused by the terrible unemployment, the widespread starvation and the operators demands that the collieries sign separate agreements with loss of conditions. Out of the little more than 100,000 miners in the territory at least 60,000 have remained unemployed ever since the crisis began, though largely as a result of increasing mechanization, speed-up and closing down of what is called unprofitable mines. But this is only one side of the picture. On the other hand the strike is an outright revolt against the corrupt administration of the U. M. W. One need but recall a few incidents which make up this recent history of rebellion.

Vote Stealing and Convention Packing

At the last elections held in district 1, the opposition slate headed by Maloney undoubtedly carried the majority vote; but to no avail. It was counted out. At the district convention following, this opposition again asserted itself but was squelched with strong arm methods. There is the one incident at the Silver Creek colliery near Pottsville in district 9 where on Feb. 21 a meeting attended by about 3,000 miners unanimously went on record to demand equalization of work, condemned their officials and demanded a special district convention. To these incidents can be added the last U. M. W. convention at Indianapolis where a packed audience steam rolled every demand and every grievance of the membership. This is, of course, nothing new in the history of the United Mine Workers under the Lewis regime but the constantly accumulating conflicts between the membership interests and the reaction of the officialdom is rapidly approaching a breaking point.

The outstanding demand of the anthracite rebel movement is the one for equalization of work. It particularly reflects the needs growing out of the acute unemployment conditions but it falls short of a program that can fully unite the employed with the unemployed. The movement itself is by no means a Left wing movement. It still harbors much confusion. Its leadership is not at all ready to break with the corrupt traditions of the union bureaucracy let alone to endeavor actually to found the movement on a class basis. But that only demonstrates the need of, and the possibility for real Left wing permutation.

Mine Strikes Elsewhere

We said before that strikes are again spreading through the coal fields and we can add that yet more are in prospect. The anthracite at this moment is merely the most outstanding case. In the Hocking Valley soft coal territory of Ohio a number of mine tipples have been idle since February 1st. Now this strike is also taking on bigger proportions, with more miners walking out in protest against wage cuts. As an indication of how drastic these cuts were one need but cite the example of the Hanna coal company announcing a reduction from \$4.30 to \$3.20 a day.

In both of these instances, in the anthracite and in the Hocking Valley, the coal miners are fighting a determined battle. The most splendid militancy is displayed on the picket lines. There has been no lack of perfidious efforts to undermine and to split their ranks. That is the job which the operators have assigned to their agents in the union office swivel chairs. But their other weapon is being wielded just as freely. In Pennsylvania the state troopers, in Ohio the national guard are applying the brute force to suppress the revolts.

Rumblings of New Revolts

Down in Eastern Kentucky and parts of Tennessee the coal miners have fought tenaciously against almost overwhelming odds. Yet, when a comparison is made the Northern oligarchs have been able to maintain themselves on an equal footing with the Southern bourgeois in staggering the odds. These recent Kentucky and Tennessee strikes remained entirely isolated and could not hold out when the full weight of the brutal enemy forces began to bear down upon them. These workers are now compelled to drift back again to take up whatever work is being handed out on the same old starvation conditions, or worse

Yet, how far this is from settling the issues becomes very apparent in the added rumblings of new revolts. Such are coming from Illinois. There the coal miners were from their recent opposition of the Edmonson rank and file movement again driven back into the folds of the U. M. W. It was a temporary setback but not a settling of the issues. By April first the Illinois miners' contract with the operators expires. The latter's efforts, to reduce the present wage scale are presented in the open, and in the Southern section it is just as openly conceded that the miners will resist. Thus there may be another spontaneous rebellion in the offing having also a double direction. For while the thieving office squabbles between John L. Lewis, for the International, and John H. Walker, for the district, are not at all settled it cannot be expected that either will sanction a strike. Not even one against a wage cut.

Revolts Localized—Not United

All in all, a look at the mine fields at this moment give ample evidence of signs of stirring worker resistance but as much proof also of the terrible weakness: of almost numberless spontaneous rebellions and strikes, localized, confused and, while militantly fought, still lacking both perspective and organization. This is precisely as true for the Kentucky and other sections, under the leadership of the Left wing National Miners Union, as it is for the U. M. W. revolt movements; and, for that matter, also for other independent unions such as the West Virginia organization headed by Frank Keeney. One characteristic nevertheless practically all of these movements and strikes have in common, and an important characteristic, namely the fact that they represent the unanimous but sadly divided efforts of the rank and file to direct their struggle equally against the operators and their corrupt agents of the U. M. W. bureaucracy. That alone should indicate the growing con-

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A Statement of the International

-- Left Opposition --

The decree depriving comrade Trotsky and three members of his family of Soviet citizenship rights and condemning them to perpetual exile, is not only an act of vengeance, it is also an act of impotence.

That Stalin was preparing such an act for some time, has been clear ever since last fall. His notorious letter to the editorial board of the magazine *Proletarian Revolution* served no other purpose than that of preparing a new wave of reprisals. The exceptional law against comrade Trotsky is only the practical fruit of the "theoretical" campaign.

What are the causes that drove Stalin to take such a step? They must have been very serious ones, for the entire disadvantage of raising a new campaign against "Trotskyism" is quite evident.

The principal cause is the fact that Stalin's position has been greatly undermined. To the bourgeois papers it appears that the last conference of the Russian party was the apogee of Stalinist strength. In reality, the conference bore the character of a masquerade designed to dissimulate the weakness of Stalin's position. What do these oaths of personal loyalty to Stalin, which have of late become obligatory, actually signify? They signify that Stalin and his limited clique no longer can count, not only on the party—which they have strangled—but even on the apparatus. Whoever speaks today simply of the Central Committee—is thereby regarded as a concealed Oppositionist by Stalin. Only those who speak of the "Central Committee under the leadership of Stalin" are safe. This formula signifies that if the Central Committee breaks with Stalin, the undersigned, who subscribes to this formula, pledges himself to be for Stalin and against the Central Committee. Precisely in the same manner, at the conference of the Moscow organization, the oath was prepared for the Moscow Committee "with Kaganovitch at its head". The personal regime has not

only dispensed with the veil of the party but even with that of the apparatus. It has stripped itself bare. It is hard to decide upon so dangerous a measure except in the case where nothing else remains to be done.

The approaching crisis of the apparatus cannot help giving an impetus to the reawakening of the party. Therein lies the danger for the Stalin clique. This clique manifests the greatest suspicion with regard to everything that aims at a reawakening, a revival, a regeneration of the party. The reawakened proletarian nucleus of the party cannot at present find any other direction than that leading to the Left Opposition. Numerous symptoms are already becoming manifest. *Pravda* was obliged to publish several symptomatic facts in the pre-conference period.

The essence of the matter is that the authority of the Left Opposition grows parallel with the decline of the authority of the Stalinist clique. Despite the fact that Stalinism holds the masses in check, they do not nevertheless stop thinking. The fundamental facts in the struggle of the Left Opposition against the Stalinist bureaucracy remain fresh in everyone's memory. The apparatus at least knows and recalls the documents and the facts. It is precisely because it is well informed that the apparatus is disintegrating. It sees that Stalin has taken an organically incorrect path in all the major questions. Stalin's policy in the German question could only deliver the fatal blow to whatever was left of his authority. Stalin supported the participation of the Communists in the Fascist Referendum and was the author of the capitulationist formula "first the Fascists—then we".

In his pamphlet *What Next?* (Vital Questions for the German Working Class) comrade Trotsky wrote several weeks ago: "At the last conference of the Party, that is, at the conference of the Stalinist apparatus 'Trotskyism', three or four times before that crushed and buried, was declared the 'vanguard of the bourgeois counter-revolution'. This hardly intelligent and politically altogether terrifying decision lifts the curtain on several plans of an entirely practical order adopted by Stalin in the field of personal despotism. It is not for nothing that Lenin issued a warning

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The Workers' United Front in Canada

Due to the extremely difficult conditions under which the labor movement is forced to work in Canada at present, a delay of reports on events there, is inevitable. The article, we publish below, although belated, is extremely interesting and instructive. It should serve to stimulate a more active solidarity with our Canadian fellow-revolutionists as well as emulation of their splendid efforts for united working class action.—Ed.

The last maneuver of the Comintern's strategy in the "Third Period" was the policy of antagonistic struggle against both the leadership and membership of the social-democratic and reformist labor movement, because Stalin postulated that they were the Left wing of Fascism. Logically, therefore, they became "social-Fascists". This has now been smuggled away, and the latest policy is a united front with the workers, but not with their organizations or leaders, which means their united front still remains a slogan on paper, the Party still maintaining its isolation from the masses.

While the *Daily Worker* merrily dazes itself with denunciations of the Opposition, and maintains an absolute silence on the Canadian Party and its illegality, it remained to one of the smallest and weakest sections of the Comintern, the Communist Party of Canada, to establish a policy of the United Front in reality, of all sections of the labor movement. It seems destined in the realm of the revolutionary political movement that the weakest link in the chain is the one to break onto new historical ground.

The series of events leading to the arrest of the eight leaders and to the outlawing of the C. P. in Ontario have already been recounted in *The Militant*, *The Canadian Labor Defense League*,

which had charge of the defense of the eight, sent a call to the usual Party organizations for the forming of a defense movement, known as the Workers' Rights and Anti-Deportation Bill; but the Party leaders were soon forced to acknowledge that their own auxiliaries did not contain the masses, and the conference began to crumble. This meant that the eight would be railroaded to jail, the Party illegalized and decapitated, and no agitation carried on amongst the working class against the encroachment by the forces of reaction on the labor movement. To inaugurate such a movement meant taking the initiative and going into the A. F. of L., the A. C. C. L., and every body of workers, upon a focal issue which affected the rights of the whole working class, in this case the diabolical piece of legislation known as Section 98 of the Criminal Code of Canada (which contains clauses making it criminal for a human being to make use of his facilities) and under which the Communists were the first victims.

The Turn In Policy

As with the human organism, so with the political organism, to function healthily requires the shedding of the accretion of dead tissues, and re-invigoration with new body-building material. A united front meant breaking through the crust of Stalinism and adopting the methods of Leninism. The turn in policy came with the changing of the name of the Conference, to the Conference for the Repeal of Section 98, and the sending of resolutions throughout the country to various bodies asking their endorsement for repeal of this Act and release of the eight Communists. 876 units and locals, of the A. F. of L., and other unions, and miscellaneous organizations, with a membership of 171,315 have ad-

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The «Revolt» in Congress

An Indication of Radical Changes in Bourgeois Politics

The stormy and more or less spontaneous opposition of the representatives in congress of the petty bourgeoisie to the new revenue bill has found a loud echo in the country at large. The House line-up on the revenue bill reveals a pretty thorough-going disruption of the old party lines. Democrats and Republicans of the middle class type joined hands in fighting against a big bourgeois coalition of these same parties, whose chief objective at the present is to put over a tax measure—a direct sales tax ranging from 2.25 to 5 percent—to balance the budget at the expense of the lower and middle classes. The official machines of both traditional bourgeois parties united in a defense of the money bags and revealed the absolute uselessness of maintaining their separation. Both showed that they represent one and the same class—the big bourgeoisie. The dispute on the sales tax crystallized a not unexpected and fairly deep rift in the political make-up of present day capitalist America.

The increasing difficulties of balancing the government budget, due to the rapid decline of foreign and domestic trade brought about by the prolonged world crisis, was bound to pose the problem sharply: at whose expense? The official party machines, after shedding a tear over the "financial principles" they had to drop, very quickly came to an agreement not to disturb big business with this problem, since, they argued, that would only cripple its investment power and thereby prolong the crisis. They thereupon came forward with an innovation in American methods of taxation: the sales tax. The whole burden of making up for the budget deficit was in this manner to be shifted to the smaller business men, and indirectly to the consumer as such. It could not help rousing the already impoverished petty bourgeois to action.

In congress itself, the perturbation of the small business men opened up great possibilities for the demagogues of such notorious tribunes of the people as representative La Guardia, who rallied an opposition of Democrats and Republicans against the machine coalition in a sortie on the revenue bill. The La Guardia opposition has already achieved several parliamentary successes. It has managed to muster a majority for two measures to counter the sales tax proposal, passing on a surtax for incomes of over \$50,000 ranging up to 65 per cent on Friday, March 18 and on an increase in the estate tax up to a maximum of 45 per cent, applicable to net estates of more than \$10,000,000 on Tuesday last. In addition, the opposition has defeated a measure relieving corporations paying taxes to foreign governments of regular taxation. La Guardia is talking radical, speaking of "conscripting wealth", etc. The parliamentary movement has in addition, received wide-spread support from a great number of petty bourgeois organizations, which, according to one paper, include some 50,000,000 people.

To get a picture of the petty bourgeois character of this movement, here are a few of the organizations that have rallied behind the congress opposition: The Farm Bureau Federation, the National Grange and Farmers' Educational and Co-operative Union, the National Consumers' League, the National Association of Retail Grocers and other retailers' organizations; the American Federation of Labor, the Railroad Brotherhoods;

the People's Lobby headed by Professor John Dewey, etc. The scope of this movement is not to be underestimated. It signifies the first large scale attempt to give a political force in the America of the present epoch, to the differentiation within the ranks of the bourgeoisie. As was to be expected, the American reformists, the A. F. of L., find a prominent place in this movement of the Left wing of the bourgeoisie class. La Guardia, by the way, in his statements replying to his big bourgeois opponents, such as the Democratic House leader, leaves the door wide open for the participation of the labor misleaders through a flirtation with some social reforms.

It is an old axiom for Marxist revolutionaries, that the petty bourgeoisie cannot lead an independent political life. It can go only with the big bourgeoisie or with the proletariat—the two chief contenders for power under the present system of society. Where La Guardia and the other leaders of the current movement intend to go is indicated by the former's answer to Rainey's—the "Democratic" House leader's—charge that the actions of the House opposition are a move in the direction of Communism. La Guardia replied that it is precisely in order to serve as a bulwark against Communism that the House opposition is carrying on its policy. There is no doubt that within a relatively short time, this "revolt" too will be harnessed to the cart of capitalism as a whole. With the prolongation of the crisis, the growing misery of the workers and the impoverishment of the middle classes, it is not excluded that the bourgeois regime will seek a new support for itself in a popular movement of petty bourgeois reform such as this. The events around the revenue bill will serve to raise false hopes in the petty bourgeoisie for a way out of its plight. The fading away of these hopes may well give way to despair and political reaction in the form of an American type of Fascist movement. In the meantime, the road is open for activities of a large scope on the part of the petty bourgeois demagogues. Their political transformation, the crystallization of these demagogues into distinct political types is bound to follow in short order.

For the Communists, this differentiation within the ranks of the bourgeoisie, represents a perspective for rapid growth, provided a correct policy is pursued. The half-measures of the petty-bourgeoisie and the reformists, once they are carried out, are bound to show up all their weakness, all their hopelessness, with especial clarity. It is in practice that the masses learn most quickly. By a clear and intransigent propagation of the working class issue out of the capitalist dilemma, by a correct utilization of the conflicts bound to develop in the future within the enemy camp, by pressing the demagogues to the wall, by forcing them to take a definite position, the Communists will be able to consolidate the more decisive sections of the masses and in the first place, the increasing sections of class conscious workers' around their banner. To hammer out such a policy of revolutionary advance, to prepare the American masses for necessary action, it is, however, revolutionary to clear away all the eclectic confusionism of Stalinist theory and to bring the Communist movement back to the path of Marxism-Leninism.

—S. G.

The Raids on Hitler's Nazis in Prussia

As could be foreseen, the outcome of the presidential elections in Germany was attended by a feverish mustering of forces on part of the Fascists. The alleged purpose of the Hitlerite maneuvers is, of course, the protection of the people from "red savagery". In reality, Hitler and his hordes are arming not only to crush the Communist vanguard, but to seize the power and to subjugate the working class organizations as a whole.

The movements of the Nazis were brought to light by raids made on their Prussian local groups upon the initiative of the social democratic Minister of the Interior in the Prussian government, Karl Severing. Documents, outlining the line of action to be taken by the Fascist locals, were seized in these raids. Their plan of action was conceived under the form of auxiliary troops aiding the police against Communist uprisings. Anyone familiar with the situation knows that this "plan" is nothing more than a ruse, that in actuality, it was a matter of a general mobilization of the Fascist forces for decisive and independent action. Severing, who carried out these raids, knew this very well. He knew that he could not count on any support for his measure from the federal government. And he did not get any. The bourgeoisie values its Fascist whip too dearly to really mean to impair it.

In this light, Severing's move was nothing more than an impotent gesture

intended to soothe the disturbance within the ranks of the social democratic following. That is about all the "iron front" of the reformists amounts to. The social democracy, through Severing, once again revealed itself as the prostrate and senile Left wing of the bourgeoisie, capable only of leading the workers to the slaughter.

A working class movement, united against Fascism and prepared for struggle, would not have tolerated such a treacherous and deceptive maneuver as Severing's. Within a united front movement, in which the Communists are at their posts, in which the revolutionary party represents the driving force of the proletariat in action, such a gesture would not be tolerated. It would be exposed on the spot before the eyes of all. It would form a step in the consolidation of revolutionary influence within the working class, that is, in the preparation of the proletariat for a decisive contest for power with the class enemy.

This is the crime of the Stalinist leadership of the German Communist Party—that it allows the social democrats to retain their positions within the working class at a time like the present. The Stalinists propound the idea that the Fascists cannot be defeated if the social democrats are not defeated first. This is quite true. But it is precisely the other Stalinist idea, which makes Fascists out of the social democrats ("social Fascists") and confuses the issue for the workers, that prevents the Com-

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WHAT NEXT? -- by Leon Trotsky

The following is the introduction to comrade Trotsky's new work on Germany. The first chapter will appear in *THE MILITANT* next week.

Capitalism in Russia proved to be the weakest link in the chain of imperialism, because of its extreme backwardness. In the present crisis, German capitalism reveals itself as the weakest link for the diametrically opposite reason: precisely because it is the most advanced capitalist system, conditioned in its development by the insoluble European dilemma. As the productive forces of Germany become geared more and more highly, the more dynamic power they gather, the more they are strangled within the state system of Europe—a system that is akin to the "system" of cages within an impoverished provincial zoo. At every turn in the conjuncture of events German capitalism is thrown up against those problems which it

had attempted to solve by means of war. Acting through the Hohenzollern government, the German bourgeoisie girded itself to "organize Europe". Acting through the régime of Brüning-Curtius it attempted . . . to form a customs union with Austria. It is to such a pathetic level that its problems, potentialities and perspectives have been reduced! But even the customs union was not to be attained. As the witch's house for fairy tales, so of the entire European system has for its foundation a pair of hen's legs. The great and salutary hegemony of France is in danger of toppling over, should a few million Austrians unite with Germany.

For Europe, in general, and primarily for Germany no advance is possible along the capitalist road. The temporary resolution of the present crisis to be achieved by the automatic interplay of the forces of capitalism itself—on the bones of the workers—would

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