

REVIEWING THE NEWS

It is not altogether out of place in a column headed Reviewing the News to say something about the movies. As disseminators of bourgeois opinion and ideology they stand second to none. Their approach is more disarming than is the approach of the press.

They boldly proclaim their intentions to be merely that of entertainment. Are some of these cinematographic entertainments occasionally nothing but vicious pieces of ruling class propaganda? Propaganda? Nay, comes the deafening roar from the concerted throats of all the Hollywood moguls. But propaganda, nevertheless, a good deal of the films we witness daily are. Then are we against the use of the cinema as an instrument of propaganda? No. We are not against the instrument—we are against the propaganda.

Recently there was released a picture titled "Our Daily Bread". This picture was preceded with a lot of publicity as a departure from the usual run of Hollywood goo, as an independent venture, as a revolutionary document, etc. etc. And to top it all the scenario was written and directed by none other than King Vidor, a staunch cultural friend of American Stalinism. We waited impatiently for the picture to be shown. Finally on the second day of its run, unable to contain ourself for another day, we bumbled two bits from the editor, rushed down to the Rialto theatre, bought a ticket, entered and sat back, prepared for a spine-tingling experience. . . . But "Our Daily Bread" is the most obnoxious piece of fascist, semi-fascist or near fascist effusions that has been disgorged by the motion picture behemoth to date.

There have certainly been other reactionary films, less concealed in their intentions, cruder and hence less impressionable. But this film, because of its subtlety, because of its unquestionable appeal to the more reactionary instincts of the impoverished middle class and because of its really dynamic finish will accomplish more for the Huey Longs of this country than any of its cruder competitors.

The picture deals with a group of unemployed workers, an impoverished farmer and professionless professionals setting up a cooperative farm in an effort to prove the director's thesis that the way out for the unemployed is the back-to-the-land movement. In his effort to prove this thesis, Mr. Vidor has thrown together a farmer, a bricklayer, a mason, a shoemaker, a clerk, a musician, a tailor, an ex-convict and a sort of species of Mae West (for a little sexual zest). Since the sex appeal is so crudely, baldly and even from a Hollywood point of view cheaply and unintelligently interpolated, we shall dismiss it now and forget it.

The cooperative gets organized by all pooling their resources and by the hero of the piece, the young husband of the couple who started the venture, making a speech for cooperation and for all pitching in and thus ridding themselves forever with the menace of landlords asking for rent and of grocers and butchers who refuse to extend that credit just a little longer. After the various posts in the cooperative are allotted, someone demands to know what kind of government shall prevail on the little commonwealth. Someone shouts back—A Democracy. This is met with jeering and the comment "It's that what got us here." Then someone suggests that the government should be a Socialistic one. This is met with a brooding rumbling of dissent. Then the farmer of the group speaks up and declares that since it was the young husband who organized the group he should be the boss—the boss of the cooperative farm. This proclamation is cheered to the echo.

The fascist ideology in this can be noted by any keen observer. It only has to be recognized and grasped by the vast impoverished middle class of this country to make this picture the most effective stump speech for fascism yet undertaken. Back-to-the-land—yet man-rule—mockery of democracy, these are the stock in trade of the fascist here, there and everywhere. True, the picture has a magnificent ending. The last ten minutes of the picture stand up well with the finest products of the Soviet cinema industry. The dramatizing of the construction of an irrigation ditch to save the corn crop smitten by drought is stirring effective. But, Hitler, too, told the German movie producers that they should model themselves on the Russian rather than on the Hollywood style. It is much more effective for propaganda, for convincing people. And King Vidor has learned that, too. Taking advantage of the Soviet form and technique he has stuffed it with a reactionary content. Its artistic superiority to the brazen Hollywood products will unquestionably disarm many as to the true viciousness of the film.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FALL FESTIVAL at IRVING PLAZA (15th St. & Irving Place) Saturday, October 27, at 8 P.M. Dancing, Refreshments, Entertainment, Prizes. MAX SHACHTMAN Master of Ceremonies. Admission 25c 35c at door.

LECTURE THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR Where Is It Going? The Issue of Industrial Unionism. Speaker: ARNE SWABECK Sunday, October 28 at 8 P.M. Stayvassant Casino 2nd Avenue and 9th Street

NEW YORK ELECTION RALLY Speakers and other details will be announced in next issue. SUNDAY, NOV. 4, at 8 P.M. Irving Plaza (Irving Place and 15th St.)

BRONX LECTURE Reform of the Second or Fourth International? Speaker: ARNE SWABECK Friday, Oct. 26, at 8 P.M. 1739 Boston Road Auspices: Bronx Branch, C.I.A.

PHILADELPHIA INTERNATIONAL WORKERS FORUM 431 Pine Street Sunday Evenings at 8:15 P.M. October to May 1934-35. Oct. 28—Lecture: "Civil Liberties in the Class Struggle" JOHN V. STANGER, Phila. Sec. Penna. Civil Liberties Union. Nov. 4—18th Anniversary Celebration of the Russian Revolution—

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IN THE TRADE UNIONS

Teachers Attacked By Ives Bill

At the special session of the New York State Legislature last July the forces of reaction and the professional patrioteers scored a victory by securing the passage of the Ives Bill which requires that all public and private elementary, high school or university teachers take an oath of loyalty, pledging themselves to uphold the government and constitution of the United States and of the state of New York. They must also pledge to faithfully carry out all duties assigned to them as teachers. The bill was signed by Governor Lehman without affording the teachers a public hearing and over the protest of the Teachers Union.

The passage of the Ives law was the opening shot in a new campaign against the schools and the teachers. In a letter to the Board of Examiners which has charge of the examinations for teachers' licenses, George F. Ryan, president of the Board of Education, said: "Let us close the door now against anyone who may seek a teaching position for the purpose of teaching American children un-American or subversive doctrines. Let us have no one whose professed zeal for academic freedom is merely a high-sounding excuse to make an attack on American ideals. . . . Let us have no more ill-mannered people such as those the Board of Education was forced to dismiss for conduct unbecoming a teacher." The last sentence refers to two teachers who were dismissed because they protested the dismissal of a third teacher, without his having been given an opportunity to defend himself at a public hearing.

New Espionage System The Board of Examiners replied to this letter. They announced the institution of a system of regulations for candidates for teaching positions which in effect introduces an espionage system reaching back into their college records and which resembles the system in vogue under the Lusk laws. It also suggests that supervisors in the schools help the Board of Education to weed out the progressive teachers who are now teaching by introducing a similar spy system. These measures are not isolated phenomena but are directly related

to the attacks on education and teachers which have been going on since 1930. For years this attack has assumed different forms. Since 1928 no new teachers have been appointed in the elementary schools, and until recently none were appointed in the high schools. The building of new schools has also been suspended, and the Board of Education has discharged almost its entire staff of architects and engineers. The result has been the children have been crowded into classrooms ranging up to sixty to a class in many instances and making effective teaching of even bare essentials impossible.

It has also created an army of unemployed teachers fully prepared to teach, even license, but denied that opportunity. Thousands of other candidates have been failed by the Board of Examiners in previous examinations and denied even a license.

The Economy Knife The educational authorities backed by large propertied interests, not content with these economic measures, also proceeded to attack teachers' salaries. First they imposed an involuntary contribution to finance lunches and clothing for the children of the unemployed in order to avoid taxation upon the propertied interests for unemployed relief. On top of this they put through a salary cut in 1932 and in 1933 a month's payless furlough. In addition full pay when on sick leave, in force for decades, was cut in half and based on the salary schedule in force before the cut. The latest attack has come in the form of a proposal from the state of education to abolish life tenure of teachers and to substitute for it a system which in effect would make permanent probationers of teachers.

As these measures were enacted they aroused the protests of teachers and progressive forces. The Board of Education replied by persecuting militant elements and by the enactment of measures to silence teachers and lay the basis for future wage cuts or retrenchment policies. One of the measures is the Ives law. The second major measure is the proposed abolition of tenure which would make it possible to dismiss teachers on any pretext and hire substitutes at a lower salary scale.

Modern Lusk Laws The present attacks resemble the situation that existed during the

reactionary wave of 1919-23 when both the labor movement and the teachers were attacked. In this period there also occurred a strike wave followed by a wave of unemployment. To offset this unrest the capitalist press created a red scare, which resulted in the Palmer raids and the Lusk investigation. In 1919 the Union League Club, a reactionary Republican organization, initiated and obtained the appointment of the Lusk investigation and its representative in Albany, Archibald Stevenson, became the chief counsel for the investigating committee. The committee not only spied on such organizations as the Amalgamated Clothing Workers and the L.L.G.W.U., but raided the offices of workers' political parties, schools, press, fraternal and cultural institutions. Gitlow, Larkin, Rubenstein, Winternitz, and two editors of a Finnish workers' paper were sentenced to long prison terms on the charge of violating a criminal anarchy law passed after the McKinley assassination but which had never been used before by the state authorities. Five duly elected Socialist party assemblies were expelled from the New York State legislature for disloyalty. New York teachers too were included in this infamous investigation and suffered dismissals and persecution.

The Lusk investigation resulted in the passage of the Lusk laws, one of which provided for the dismissal of any teacher who advocated a form of government other than the present government. It required every teacher to take an oath of loyalty to uphold the Constitution. In order to carry out the provisions of the law (with a vengeance) the state department of education set up an Advisory Council headed by the same Stevenson to investigate all suspected teachers in secret star-chamber proceedings. Principals and supervisors were required to draw up lists of teachers whose loyalty and morality they were certain and lists of those whose morality and loyalty they were uncertain. The latter were investigated by the Advisory Council.

There is a marked resemblance between the Lusk laws and the Ives law and the measures proposed by Dr. Ryan and the Board of Examiners. The latter are a second edition of the former. The Ives law can, and will be used as a club to smash the tenure rights of mili-

tant and progressive teachers. It will also be used to attack those teachers who espouse the cause of the labor movement.

Humble Slaves Not Teachers

Under the cover of such slogans as loyalty, patriotism, allegiance and good manners the plutocracy in New York State proposes to dismiss courageous, progressive teachers. As for the more timid—they seek to terrorize into silence and passivity. What the Ives, the Ryans, the Luskers of 1934, desire is a corps of timid, frightened, chicken-hearted teachers of the Sunday school variety who are loyal to capitalism and who will glorify imperialist wars.

They want teachers who will tell the children of the workers that the plutocracy has gained its swollen millions by unremitting "toil and thrift". And that if their parents are poor it is due to their own thriftlessness, laziness and lack of inherited ability and intelligence. They want teachers that will glorify the open shop, the company union and the scab; that will denounce attempts of workers to organize as un-American. In other words, the plutocracy seeks, through its control of the schools, to poison the minds of the children against their own interests, the interests of their working class fathers and mothers.

Ives Bill Attacks Labor The Ives Bill and the campaign now inaugurated thus becomes in reality an attack on the entire labor movement, not only a blow against the teachers. The labor movement should take up the campaign for the repeal of the Ives Bill as part of its fight against reaction, Fascism and company unionism. This campaign has already been started by the Teachers Union and has been taken up by the American Civil Liberties Union.

The New Leader, organ of the Socialist Party, in an article entitled Civil Rights of Teachers Unimpaired by the Ives Bill, Sept. 22, instead of sounding an alarm and calling on them to fight cites legal opinion to show that the bill does not impair the teachers' right to vote the Socialist party ticket! In taking this reformist, dangerous and sectarian attitude the New Leader "forgets" that during the Lusk hysteria five Socialist assemblies, all duly elected according to legal-constitutional procedure, were thrown out of the New York State Legislature on the ground of disloyalty. It also "forgets" the raid on the very legal Rand School during the same period! —L. BROWN.

MARCH OF EVENTS

Hunger Strike of Workers

In the "advanced" countries the hunger strike is a weapon used by workers only when they are horribly mistreated as prisoners in jail. The starvation strike of the twelve hundred Hungarian miners at Pecs, resorted to in utter desperation to call the world's attention to their unbearable misery, is not merely a symbol of the low level of organization of the working class of backward Hungary, but also a warning to the industrial proletariat of the entire world of the unutterable depths to which they can sink if they permit their organizations to be crushed under the iron heel of brutal capitalism or fascism. The Hungarian miners are indeed prisoners held in the chains of capitalism. The coolie level of existence of these miners threatens to become the normal level for the world's working class unless they learn the lessons of the overthrow of capitalism and the establishing of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

In the Orient, in Japan and China, the workers have also practiced the feudal custom of suicide strikes to force concessions; time and again the frightfully exploited girl textile workers (and the men too) have shut themselves up in the factories and threatened hara hara kiri if they were not granted relief. But these methods are slowly giving way to the militant action of an organized working class, more conscious of its ultimate goal. The strike of the miners must not only evoke the profoundest sympathy of every worker, but it must steel our determination to bring about a united working class struggling militantly for revolutionary aims.

Unity of the Working Class.

The series of black defeats of the world proletariat in one country after the other drives the class conscious workers to feel the urgent need for unity of the working class in its struggle against the further advance of reaction. Those workers who are unaware of the history of the Communist movement over the period of the last decade and more, uncritically demand such unity at all costs. They do not realize even now the need for something more than the mere cry for unity, the need for a program and a revolutionary strategy that, with the hegemony of a firm revolutionary party, alone can assure victory and not defeat in the struggle.

Nor is it possible to revive that utterly decayed corpse, the Comintern, and expect it to transform itself once again into the revolutionary instrument forged by Lenin and Trotsky. After its fresh crime of utter disregard of the needs of the Spanish Revolution, at the very moment the Spanish workers are suffering defeat, bloody defeat, at the hands of the fascists, the Comintern issues an appeal for a united front to aid the Spaniards,—the appeal that should have gone out years ago. Iterally years ago! Whether this appeal made by one organizer of defeats, the Third International, to the other organizer of defeats the Second, will lead or more rapidly to a proposal for organic unity on a world scale is as yet merely a matter of conjecture. In view of the converging interests of the two bureaucracies of these defunct international, it is not altogether impossible that such a move may ultimately be made. A move of this nature consummated as a deal between them, ignoring as it unquestionably would if the revolutionary workers permitted it, the real needs of the struggle in the various countries free from the stranglehold of fascism, would only lead to new defeats. But such a move would aid in the release of entirely new forces by helping to clear the road of what have become two great obstacles for the workers of the world. That clearing of the road, indicative of the need for the Fourth International and new parties in every country could be utilized by the Marxists to bring about an entirely new orientation of the workers' movement everywhere.

A Sign of the Times

The bookshop of the Communist Party in Minneapolis was raided by elements undoubtedly of fascist nature, all the books removed and burned. This was done at night and a warning for Communists to get out of town was left behind. Without the slightest hesitation we can be sure that in the background, supporting this beginning of a struggle that may at any moment take on a bloody character, are the forces of finance capital, the Citizens' Alliance, controlled by the banks and aroused to frenzy by the militant struggle of Trotskyists' Local 574. There is only one answer to these early provocative acts that tomorrow will take on a fiercer aspect,—the organizing of a united front of all workers' organizations immediately, without delay, for defence against fascist attacks, the organizing by each organization of Workers' Guards to be placed at the disposal of the united front. —JACK WEBER.

Some Fundamental Aspects of Youth Work Youth - Adult Relations

By ALBERT GLOTZER

In the social democratic movement the youth organization is more like an orphan child. The parties dominate the youth organizations with an iron hand. And so it was ever since the birth of the youth movement in 1907. The bureaucracy of the 2nd International always feared that the youth might get out of their hands. As a corollary to their political program they endeavored to create a youth organization on a purely cultural basis, lacking connection with the class struggle. The Party controlled the youth organizations not only politically, but also in a technical selection of its officers, never permitting the youth organization the slightest initiative. Only in the more recent years has this changed in some respects. The youth organizations have assumed a greater independence, upsetting in a measure, the former relationships. This is due more to the pressure of the youth within the adult organization. The Young Communist International began with a more or less proper relationship, which changed for the worse with the victory of Stalinism. The Y.C.I. became transformed into a factional instrument in the struggle against "Trotskyism", which occupied the greater part of its time.

The youth organization is politically dependent upon the party, but is organizationally autonomous, within the limits defined by the political relationship. That is, it particularly retains independence in fields of work that are carried out largely by the youth members and organization. This is how the question was regarded some thirty years ago. While the Party lays down the main political tasks of the working class as a whole, the youth organization applies them to its own particular problems. The youth must not be an "object of education" by the Party. Nor themselves, than because of any fundamental change of opinion should the youth organization be placed in a "second category". The Party must patiently permit the youth to work out its own problems, even allowing mistakes to be made (providing these are not of a major political character) in order thereby to enhance the initiative of the youth. The exacting character of the Party and the demands it makes of its membership cannot be applied with the same rigidity to the youth.

It is absolutely necessary that an exchange of representation takes place in all fields of activities and on all major committees between the party and the youth organization. This would assist greatly the political relationship outlined above. It would demonstrate to the youth that the party is really interested in the promotion of the youth organization and would serve as a means of educating youth cadres, to perfect their communist training. Naturally, all of this is dependent on the correctness of the policies of the Party. If Party policy is correct the youth organization will reflect it at once in growth and influence. Contrariwise, if the Party policy is false

in its theory and practice, the youth organization will also mirror it. The growth and decline of the Young Communist League (the true inheritor of the Stuttgart Conference of 1907) is a glaring proof of this contention.

THE ECONOMIC STRUGGLE OF THE YOUNG WORKERS

In his report on this question at Stuttgart in 1907, Alpari dealt primarily with the conditions and struggle of the apprentices. The system of apprenticeship was then fairly prevalent in the European countries. In the United States there never was a really acute apprentice problem and at the present time it does not even exist. Without a complete knowledge of the European situation, it appears, however, that the problem has lost its former significance, there also.

For the United States, distinct economic problems of the youth, separate from those of the adult workers, do not exist. Here, in the main, the youth and adult workers labor under the same industrial conditions, an equal number of hours, and the same wages. The mistake of Stalinism is that it artificially attempts to raise special youth demands in the factories. Yet they fail to raise properly those youth demands that have validity and strength. For example, if the youth workers do not differ essentially from the adult workers from the point of view of the rate of exploitation, this does not invalidate putting forth such demands as: less hours for youth labor, paid vacations of one month in each year, creation of special educational facilities for the working youth, labor etc. Instead, they raise a slogan of: equal pay for equal work. Such a slogan has no real existence in fact. In the field of shop nuclei organization, after a great deal of experimentation, the net result is a series of errors. These errors in method and application do not, however, invalidate the basic correctness of the shop the revolutionary party of the working class—a problem yet to be solved adequately by our movement.

In the United States particularly, nucleus form of organization for youth was always a policy to create special youth shop nuclei, where the problem was that of the creation of one shop nucleus under the leadership of the Party, in which the youth engages and raises youth demands along with the general demands of the nucleus. Even where the young workers predominate, the task of the shop nucleus is to struggle for the interests of the class as a whole (because under these conditions it represents the class and not any special section of it) rather than to narrow the nucleus to represent only the youth: "Everything that has happened in recent years in this respect was a result of a revision of the early

programmatic concepts of the Y.C.I. which on this question declared: "The Y.C.L. formulates and represents the economic demands of the working youth where these exist in the broad masses of the young workers as also in the working class, and in respect to their organization. The trade unions and the Communist party draw up these demands and fight for them in the struggle against capital and state authority. The Y.C.L. consolidates the masses of working youth and leads them into the economic struggle, whilst representing their interests within the proletarian world, but the trade unions and the Communist party are directly concerned in the carrying on of the struggle against the bourgeoisie. It would only be on special occasions such as when big movements occur among the masses and when there is active support from the C.P. that the Y.C.L. would then be able to successfully carry on a fight for an economic demand without the support of, or even in face of opposition from the trade unions. In all its struggles it must attempt to get the support of the trade unions.

"A SPECIAL ECONOMIC FIGHT ON THE PART OF THE YOUTH IS NOT ONLY COMPLETELY WITHOUT PROSPECTS OF SUCCESS BUT ALSO A DANGEROUS ILLUSION; IT DOES NOT EXIST. Therefore the trade unions must also be the organizations that conduct the economic struggle of the working youth. It is absolutely unnecessary to have a special organization of the youth because it would only tend to assist the en-

deavors of the bourgeoisie to set youth against age within the working class." This follows from the principle that the working class organizations as a whole are also the organizations of the working youth in their economic fight. The youth league must agitate and activate itself in the trade unions; it must constantly raise valid YOUTH demands and seek to obtain their support in all movements of the working class, never separating the youth from the adult workers and always striving to create unity of the class as a whole. With this conception we can begin to concretize the work of the revolutionary youth organization in this field, bearing in mind that the youth organization is neither a political party nor a trade union.

There has developed a new problem with which the revolutionary youth organization must seriously concern itself. It is the problem of the mass of unemployed youth, a large majority of them having left the elementary and secondary schools, NEVER PARTICIPATED IN THE FIELD OF PRODUCTION WITH THE LIKELIHOOD OF THESE WILL NEVER WORK IN INDUSTRY. The danger of degeneration and reaction effective in this group is a serious one. It is incumbent upon the revolutionary movement as a whole and especially the youth organization, to carry out such an activity as will bring this large grouping to the side of the proletariat and prevent the forces of fascism from gaining their support.

OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS

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