

MARCH OF EVENTS

By JACK WEBER

THE CLASS STRUGGLE IN FRANCE

The lull in the storm that adventured in France with the advent of the Flandin government, gives every indication of coming to a close. Flandin himself stated, on taking office as premier, that his government would be the last "experiment" in bourgeois democracy.

With the aid of big finance capital, the fascist forces have been closing their ranks in preparation for the coming coup d'etat directed towards the overthrow of the Third French Republic and with the aim of savage repression of the organizations of the working class.

THE RANKS OF THE WORKERS

The danger to the working class is rendered all the more acute, as the Marxist knows, by the lack of a revolutionary party in France at this critical juncture. In place of such a Marxist party, serving as the vanguard and the rallying force for the inevitable struggle, there exist two centrist parties led by reactionary bureaucracies.

revolutionary program to lead the workers along the road to power. This fraction has gradually become a force in the left wing of the S.F.I.O. and has won over to its views a large section of the revolutionary workers in the Federation of the Seine, both youth and adult.

ROLE OF THE BOLSHEVIK-LENINISTS

At this Congress the Bolsheviki-Leninists will present their program in the form of resolutions. They will review and sum up the history of betrayal of the Second and Third Internationals that brought about the victory of fascism in Germany, Austria, etc. instead of the ushering in of Communism, and they will therefore call for the formation of the Fourth International to lead the workers to victory.

Tremendous Strikes For 8 Hour Day Shook Nation

The May Day demonstration of 1886 the climax of a mighty mass movement for the eight-hour day which reverberated throughout the length and breadth of the nation. It was followed shortly after by the Haymarket bomb explosions and the legal crucifixion of the Chicago Anarchists.

The American worker of 1935 would have found himself in a bitterly familiar atmosphere in the days of 1886. The industrial and financial crisis of 1884 had been followed by all the catastrophic consequences of a capitalist crisis. Idle industries, bankrupt railroads, suspended banks and brokerage houses, falling prices for farm commodities had brought two years of hard times, intolerable misery, and a steady lowering of living conditions to the toiling masses.

Workers Roused to Action As soon as the workers recovered from the first paralyzing blows of the depression, they began to rebel against the unendurable deprivations laid upon them by the owners of industry. Spontaneously, almost overnight, they felt the need of organization. At first thousands, and then hundreds of thousands streamed into the ranks of the Knights of Labor, as the unorganized workers flocked into the A. F. of L. in the early months of the Roosevelt administration.

The Knights of Labor, which dominated the American labor movement from 1877 to 1887, was in most respects the superior of its successor, the American Federation of Labor. Although exhibiting symptoms of immaturity, inconsistency and confusion in its aims, it was an all-inclusive trade union organization, admitting all workers and even farmers, small shopkeepers and professionals into its ranks.



of new found strength came into conflict with the die-hard opposition of the bosses and the pacifism of their leaders, however, producing situations that could only be resolved by strike.

In the summer of 1885 strikes began to explode in one industry after another. 100,000 members of the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers around Pittsburgh struck against a threatened wage cut and won. The Knights of Labor led five railroad strikes during 1885 and won four of them easily.

The agitation in favor of the demonstration on May 1 for the eight-hour day had been spread by the radicals among the working class—the Socialists and Anarchists—against the opposition of the official labor leaders.

gathered such momentum that Powderley was impelled to order the Knights not to participate in the demonstrations.

Meanwhile, the strike wave rolled on, reaching its crest in the strike of the railroad workers on the Missouri Pacific system controlled by Jay Gould, the most notorious of the money monarchs. Early in 1885 the shop mechanics had tied up all the traffic on the road and prevented a wage cut. Their victory led to the formation of numerous lodges and assemblies of the Knights of Labor on the line.

Alarmed by the aggressive tactics of the workers and the increasing power of the Knights, the management and receivers of the Railroad determined to have a showdown to decide who was master in the house. They precipitated a second strike in March 1886 by firing a union officer for attending a meeting of the order. The local head of the Knights, Martin Irons, accepted the challenge and called the men out to protect the right of the union to exist.

State and federal troops had been used to break the bloody railroad strike of 1877. This time different methods were brought into play. On April 22 President Cleveland asked Congress to appoint a federal commission of three to arbitrate differences arising between the laboring classes and their employer. When it was set up two

Knights of Labor Sprang Up Almost Over Night

years later, the commission proved as impotent to settle any labor disputes as the present Labor Boards. The strike was finally broken by orders from Powderley.

Such was the state of the nation on May Day 1886. Despite the efforts of the Knights of Labor and A. F. of L. leaders to sabotage the demonstration, thousands of workers quit their jobs on the appointed hour and proceeded to give an unforgettable manifestation of their class strength and solidarity.

The demonstrators gained their most conspicuous success in Chicago. It was estimated that over 80,000 men had left work on May Day and as a result of their demonstration the packing house workers had been granted their demand for an eight-hour day with no reduction in pay.

This victory stimulated the fighting spirit of the Chicago workers and provoked police repressions. Then came the memorable events, the shootings, the bomb outrage, the trials and executions that have entered the annals of history as "Haymarket."

The Haymarket explosions and the vacillating, treacherous policy of the Knights of Labor leadership broke the back of the strike movement.

Torn by internal dissension, the Knights of Labor began to decline as rapidly as it had grown, giving way to the reign of Samuel Gompers and the craft-bound pure-and-simple unionism of the A. F. of L. Candidates put forward by labor tickets showed remarkable strength in the elections later in the year but these political successes did not compensate for the defeats on the economic field. They were the last spasms of this mighty upsurge of the working class. Later in the year after another abortive strike the gains of the packing house workers were lost and the ten hour day restored.

Nevertheless, the year when May Day was born in the fire of the class struggle and baptized in the blood of the Haymarket martyrs; the year when the American working class gave such magnificent examples of its courage and capacity for militant struggle; the year when the fight for the eight-hour day was hailed by workers throughout the world marks the coming of age of the American working class. 1886 will always remain a memorable year in its history, a milestone along the road to its conquest of power.

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Question Box

By A. WEAVER

N. G., NEW YORK— QUESTION: Are not the two Stalinist theories, "socialism in one country" and "social fascism" contradictory and mutually exclusive, since the first led to united fronts from above with Chiang Kai Shek, Purcell, etc., whereas the latter prevented it from going into a united front with the Social Democracy against Hitler?

ANSWER: The contradiction here is only apparent. Do not forget that the united front with liberals "from above," i.e., the Amsterdam Congress, took place during the epoch of "social fascism". In reality the "theory of socialism in one country", i.e., the subordination of the international proletarian revolution to the national interests of the Soviet bureaucracy, expressed by the subordination of the various official Communist parties to the policy of the Soviet foreign office, is at the root of all of the Stalinist's actions. By hook or crook their aim is to prevent political changes, even if such change comes from a proletarian revolution since, having no faith in the success of such revolutions, their chief fear is that the "peaceful building of socialism" will be disturbed.

Depending upon conditions the strategy which they therefore pursue involves making united fronts with anybody or the refusal to make united fronts under any circumstances. "Social fascism" and the "united front only from below" are merely the theoretical formulations, whether conscious or unconscious on their part, of the fact that the Stalinists never had any intention of trying to seize power in Germany. As results show, could any theories have been better calculated to maintain internal political peace in Germany and not interfere with the "peaceful building of socialism"?

May Day Greetings

NEW MILITANT

Davenport, Iowa Branch

MAY DAY GREETINGS S. SCHAMMEL, Allentown, Pa. FRANK COLLINS—Allentown, Pa. FRANK PANE—Allentown, Pa. ROSE YONESHCK—Allentown

A Sacramento Juror Weeps

(Continued from Page 3) recommended for probation, which he has refused.

Juror Wants Sympathy When McIntire finished, he looked at us. "I tell you, gentlemen," he said. "I will never forget what I have done. It will always haunt me. I never faced a harder problem . . . and I don't know that I solved it rightly." Mrs. Keith echoed McIntire's words. Suddenly the honey of our situation became apparent.

Here sat Warnick whose wife, and I whose friend, and Goldman whose client had just been condemned to incarceration in San Quentin, being asked for sympathy . . . by one of those who had voted to send them there!

Couldn't Sleep Nights

On the following day Jack Warnick and I, along with Bert Hannan of the Workers Party, were in my hotel room when McIntire came in. For an hour or so we heard the same complaints over again . . . no sleep, the pangs of remorse, confusion. I could see that Jack—whose wife, after all, had been convicted and who might be expecting a little sympathy himself—was growing tense.

"Mr. McIntire," said Warnick, "what are you going to do?" "What can I do? I want to undo the damage. I want to set things right. Especially regarding Decker and Mini."

"Do you want to help these innocent people get a new trial?" I asked.

"Oh, if only I could, I would do anything in the world," McIntire answered.

Jurors Condemn Statement

He left to attend a Masonic meeting and came back to my room late that night. Goldman, Warnick and Hannan were there again. McIntire dictated a statement. In the morning he signed it before a notary. Goldman read it to the court.

ting in the way of a verdict," said Carter, the youngest and one of the most reactionary of the jurors. F. M. Martel, one of the hold-out quartet, refused comment except to say that he was through with the case. Keith and Shannon, the other holdouts, apparently refused to make any statement. Unwilling to come out in support of McIntire, they were too remorseful to attack him.

Who is McIntire? He was in the National Guard seven years. For 27 years he was in the office of the State Adjutant General. He is a Past Master of the Masons, who recently gave him a diamond-studded watch chain which is his proudest possession. A widower, and accountant by profession, he is indebted to a big Sacramento bank. He loves the American flag, he goes to church, he is utterly ignorant of the meaning of radicalism, he is (or was) a Respected Member of the Community—that middle-class community which, poisoned by the Hearst and McClatchy press, wanted a conviction.

The Jury

Martel is a salesman for a large musical instrument house. Shannon, the smartest dresser in Sacramento, is a businessman. Mrs. Keith is the mother of a policeman. It was these three who stood back of McIntire until McIntire himself, pounded for 66 hours by "the community," whose influence reached into the jury room in a thousand ways, gave in.

This quartet helped sentence innocent people in violation of its own convictions. They gave in to "the community." But it was they who held out for 66 hours, who forced 118 ballots, who produced such acquittals as came about, and it was one of them who later, by the affidavit proving the compromise, drove a great breach into the prosecution's case and took the bloom off reaction's victory.

Was this a vigilante jury? If there were on it men lacking in learning, lacking in subtlety, lacking even in courage, but not lacking in a desire to find a way out for the defendants, what about the Western Worker, official organ of the Communist Party, which having put the jury down as hopeless vigilantes, proceeded to publish insulting cartoons and wisecracks about them?

What about Gallagher or the I.L.D., who expressed in open court brazen indifference to the jury's thoughts and feelings?

Pressure Counts Most

The truth is that, even in political cases, the action of the jury can rarely be foretold. A principled, well-reasoned, moving argument by the defense counsel, and still more the activity of the popular masses outside the court (public meetings and other impressive, serious manifestations which eventually impinge on the jury's consciousness and may give to some the courage to vote their convictions rather than what the middle-class community wants) may result in a defeat of the reactionary forces behind the prosecution.

Support the Defendants

As it is, McIntire, who felt that there was little popular pressure for acquittal and who admits he was very antagonistic toward Attorney Gallagher of the I.L.D., gave in. And now he wants sympathy because he can not sleep nights. Let us be a bit stony-hearted about McIntire. True, he is no vigilante. True, he feels bad; he gave a rotten verdict . . . and now the prosecution is hitting him into the bargain. But any spare sympathy can well be reserved for the eight workers he convicted . . . and should be expressed in the form of active support of the appeal struggle already under way.

PIONEER BOOK NOTES

The first in the series of popular pamphlets to be issued by the Workers Party is off the press. The title is Which Party for the American Worker? by A. J. Muste. It sells for 5c. Branches should send their orders in immediately with an eye to large sales on May Day.

The publication of the "Suppressed Testament of Lenin" has created quite a stir in Stalinist circles. Most C. P. members have never read Lenin's letter demanding Stalin's removal from the post of general secretary of the party. Every Branch should have a quantity of these pamphlets at hand. They are exceptionally interesting in view of Trotsky's explanatory articles dealing with the struggle in the party during Lenin's last days and how the legend of Trotskyism was concocted by leading members of the C.P.S.U.

The political significance of "The Kirov Assassination" (10c) is admirably dealt with in the pamphlet by that title written by Leon Trotsky. The brazen attempt of the Stalinists to link the Workers Party (through Comrades Muste and Cannon) to the plot makes it of the utmost importance that every class-conscious worker study the significance of the "amalgam" cooked up by the Stalinist scribes. An at-

tempt should be made to see that every C. P. member and sympathizer gets a copy of this important pamphlet.

THE DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES AND CONSTITUTION of the Workers Party is still not sufficiently read by the wide circle of workers with whom W. P. members come in contact. This is evidenced by the sharp drop in sales in the last two months. Every Branch should make a concerted drive to reach as many workers as possible with the message of the Party.

Greetings to the NEW MILITANT from the Philadelphia Sunday Evening Forum 1600 Arch St., Philadelphia

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