

NEW MILITANT

with which is merged THE MILITANT Published weekly by the Workers Party of the U. S. 2 West 15th Street, New York City Phone. ALgonquin 4-9058

Entered as second class mail matter at the Post Office at New York, N. Y. under the act of March 3, 1879.

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SUBSCRIPTION RATES: In the United States \$1.00 per year; 65c six months. Canada and Foreign: \$1.50 per year; \$1.00 six months. Bundles Rates: Two cents per copy.

Vol. 1 SATURDAY, MAY 18, 1935 No. 22

Lessons of the Toledo Battle

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successful fight was put up against the A. F. of L. bureaucrats in the automobile situation than ever before.

That General Motors knew whom it was fighting is attested by the fact that when Flint was threatened with a strike despite all the efforts of the company and the A. F. of L. to prevent it and the General Motors-controlled newspapers in that city launched a vicious campaign of red-baiting and incitement to violence, it was directed against the Workers Party and its national secretary.

That the A. F. of L. bureaucrats shared the company's view as to the enemy to be feared is attested by Francis Dillon's petulant exclamation when the Chevrolet workers barred him from speaking at their meeting: "Let Muste run their union for them if they want him."

2. The Party and the workers must nevertheless frankly face the fact that the strike was only in a very limited sense victorious. General Motors was compelled to negotiate directly with the Strike Committee elected by the rank and file. The Automobile Labor Board was clubbed into unconsciousness. Wage increases were obtained. They are small when the cost of living and General Motors' profits are taken into account. Real union recognition and definite assurance that a quietus will be put upon the company union was not obtained. Questions of seniority and abolition of the "merit clause" are left hanging in the air. Most deplorable is the fact that Toledo workers who have marched in the vanguard so often and to whom General Motors' workers in Norwood, Cleveland and Atlanta had pledged not to return to work until Toledo got its union contract—Toledo workers at the critical moment permitted themselves to be thrown into confusion and to vote to go back to work before settlements had been negotiated in these other plants. That was indeed a defeat and a humiliation.

3. The Toledo workers were subdued not by General Motors and not from any lack of courage and militancy on their own part, but chiefly by the perfidious treachery of Francis Dillon, the chief representative of the A. F. of L. bureaucracy in the situation. The lowest forms of trickery, the most brazen intimidation, were employed by him. For public consumption he pretended to urge the Norwood committee to call their men out in support of Toledo. Privately he told them to throw copies of Strike Truth into the waste basket. The New Militant has told the story of how he literally forced the Flint workers to stay in, condoned their working on scab transmissions, and insinuated that the Toledo strikers were yellow and unworthy of support. His henchmen beat up a Toledo union militant in Flint.

This mouther of phrases about "democratic" America and the "democratic" A. F. of L. told the Toledo strikers, the strike committee, the union executive board, BEFORE THE VOTE Monday night that if they did not vote to accept the company's compromise proposal, he would withdraw the union's charter! This is his notion of democratic procedure! Thus when the Chevrolet strikers had barred him from speaking at their meeting—correctly so in view of the slimy role he had enacted—he played, desperately and despicably, upon their

very loyalty to their union, upon the desire of the new unionists to be a part of the A. F. of L., in order to put over a brazen piece of autocracy, which violated the most elementary principles of democratic unionism.

More openly and more sharply every fight for unionism is a fight against the present reactionary leadership of the labor movement. In every strike we must from the outset make it one of our principal tasks to expose it and undermine whatever confidence the rank and file may have in it. That it can be done was proved in Toledo. The Chevrolet strikers Monday night, after having read the New Militant issues with the exposure of the Akron sell-out and Dillon's performance at Flint on the picket lines that day hooted with derision at Mussolini Dillon's attempt to whip up a red scare against the W.P.

4. The next most important factor in the partial undoing of the Chevrolet strikers was the organizational and political inexperience of the strikers themselves and their leaders. Of the marvelous battle put up especially by Jimmy Roland and some of his colleagues we have already spoken. Nothing can dim that achievement, yet there were defects which must be avoided in the future. The importance of making a fight for a militant daily bulletin was not sensed and the Strike Committee backed down on it too readily when the union executive at Dillon's behest vetoed the idea. Technical details such as regular strike committee meetings, secretarial service, etc. were neglected. The calling of a conference of all striking locals was too long delayed. When Roland for the Strike Committee at last got the call out, Dillon was in a position to countermand it. The power of the reactionary forces in the labor movement, and the length to which they would go in betrayal, was underestimated. Strike Truth was the greatest weapon of the strike. It was a fundamental error to allow it to be suppressed.

5. What next? For the Chevrolet workers, loyalty to the union. No tearing up of union books. Closing of ranks, so that General Motors will understand that they are dealing with workers who have been tested and hardened in the fires of experience, who intend to build an ever stronger union, and who will fight at the drop of the hat against any attempt to discriminate against active unionists or to revive a company union. We know that this is the spirit of the Toledo workers.

For the militants in the Toledo Auto Union and especially those in the Chevrolet plant who in a few days were developed into such an intelligent, courageous, dashing force, the task now is solid organization. That organization must not be merely local. Through the contacts they have made in other centers, a national organization of progressive automobile unionists must be built. The time is ripe for it. This will give notice to Dillon, to Fred Schawke, the business agent who buckled under pressure, and all their ilk that this was the first round and that in the next they will not merely be hanging on the ropes but down for the count. No lesson of the General Motors strike, so brilliant yet so far from attaining the results that the courage and spirit of the workers had earned, is more basic than this that the progressives in the unions must learn, must discipline themselves, must organize, must become an independent force.

In the eyes of General Motors, of the A. F. of L. bureaucracy, of the press of the nation, the Workers Party is in the vanguard of the battle for unionism in the automobile industry. We must, we shall, meet the challenge which that implies. Branches in the auto centers must redouble their work, recruit, project themselves into the struggle. New branches must be built where we have as yet no base. The National Committee must map out a comprehensive plan of action based on careful and constant study of the industry. All of us must toil and sacrifice to raise the material resources needed for the task and to make ourselves the trained revolutionists who can eventually lead the workers of the United States to the assault upon the citadels of company unionism and open shopper!

The Pulitzer Prize for Poison Pens

The Sacramento Bee wins the Pulitzer prize for the year's best newspaper reporting. The prize is awarded by a board of editors and professors of journalism, on the advice of the publishers of big capitalist newspapers, such as Adolph S. Ochs of the Times, whose recent death, Karl Radack of the Communist International tells us, should be mourned by "newspaper men of every class."

Not even Hearst's notorious San Francisco Examiner printed more lies per column-inch about the recent Sacramento criminal syndicalism trial than did the Bee. For example, when the defense counsel told the jury that a conviction would be used by reactionaries to renew terrorism against workers (a prophesy which came true a few days after when the cops told Mike Plesh, an acquitted defendant, to get out of town or be beaten up), the Bee reported that defense coun-

sel had threatened "red terror" in the event of convictions!

The closing argument by Attorney Albert Goldman of the Non-Partisan Labor Defense so profoundly affected several jurors that they held out against convictions for 66 hours. When he concluded, he was given a hand-written note by a Bee reporter explaining that "for reasons which will be obvious," the report in the Bee would not represent what the reporter really thought. The Bee did not dare report Goldman's argument honestly; it was afraid of awakening sympathy for the defendants.

The campaign of lies against the defendants, their ideas, organizations and counsel, created the atmosphere in which reactionaries on the jury could bulldoze Juror McIntire into a horse-trade which sent innocent workers to prison and gave an impetus to reaction. The Sacramento Bee, which might better be called the Sacramento Viper, led

the swarm of loathsome creatures whose hissing and buzzing dominated the jurors' "deliberations."

For its efficiency in wielding a reactionary poison pen and bending to its ends the talents of its kept reporters, the Bee gets the Pulitzer Prize and thousands of capitalist editors envy the achievement.

There can be no over-estimation of the importance of the workers' own press to counteract the poison pens of the bosses' kept journalists and kept journals. The New Militant alone, with its honest, accurate weekly reports, gave a true and complete picture of the Sacramento trial. Build the New Militant and help scotch the Sacramento Viper!

CLASSICAL LANGUAGE

A Yale student specializing in classical languages has been arrested at the Colt Arms picket line in Hartford, Conn. He called the boss a skunk.

Stalin's Treason in France

Some Startling Quotations from L'Humanite of Paris

The working masses are searching the political line which will prevent war, or if the war breaks out in spite of the efforts of the proletariat, will accomplish the overthrow of the capitalist regime, which is responsible for war, and substitute the socialist regime for it.

We wish to show merely by quotations from L'Humanite, the daily paper of the Communist Party of France, which can easily be verified by anyone, what is the real political line of the Communist International toward war.

The international line of the 3rd International is thus defined in the sixth condition of admission:

"All parties desiring to affiliate with the III International must denounce not only social patriotism, but social pacifism with its falseness and hypocrisy as well; they must systematically reveal to the working class that without revolutionary overthrow of capitalism, no international tribunal of arbitration, no debate on the reduction of armaments, no democratic reorganization by the League of Nations, can preserve humanity from imperialist war."

That was the line of yesterday. Today, since the C. I. has been reconstructed (after the expulsion of the Leninists) on the dogma of "Socialism in one country," that is to say, independently of the world revolution, the international line of the 3rd International is the following:

Defense of the peace policy of the U.S.S.R., consisting of proposals to disarm addressed to the imperialist nations, and mutual assistance pacts against "any aggressor."

The Peace Policy of the C. I.

The political line is based on the following premise: there are imperialist nations interested in peace, and others interested in war.

"We must know," says Péri in L'Humanite, April 11, 1935, "if the powers who are not interested in war will assure peace through promises of mutual assistance, or if they will fall into line with the plans for a new division of Europe conceived by A. Hitler."

From this flows the whole line of the C. I. Take Péri again in L'Humanite, April 16, 1935:

"What formula alone can make warlike enterprise most difficult under the present system? The best formula, it is evident, would be the general or partial disarmament proposed and defended by the U.S.S.R., but opposed by all the other powers. Failing a general reduction of armaments WHICH THE U.S.S.R. HAS NO INTENTION OF RENOUNCING the Soviet government and the proletariat of all European countries with it believes a system of pacts whereby the signatories agree to boycott an aggressor nation, would place the greatest obstacles in the way of war. We must see things as they are and realize that any other contractual formula is vain or dangerous."

Under these conditions what is the task of the C.I.? To join Soviet diplomacy in an attempt to convince the various imperialisms "which are interested in peace" of the necessity of mutual assistance pacts.

The following shows how the organ of the French C.P. goes about the task (From L'Humanite, April 2, 1935):

"But what then does the National Union Government of France think of the attitude of the National Union Government of Britain? It is no longer a secret that Laval is lending his ear to Hitler's propositions. Does he believe that an accord with the Nazis against the Soviet Union would benefit French imperialism? Is he forgetting that the mass movement against war and for the defense of the Soviet Union is much stronger in France than in England?"

"Has he already forgotten the time, not so distant, when the French imperialist government was able to pacify the mass movement of the workers and soldiers for the dictatorship of the proletariat only by stopping immediately the war against the Soviets?"

In other words, if French imperialism wishes to survive the war, let it lend an ear to the advice of the pupils of Stalin, let it conclude a pact with the Soviet Union.

To help Laval "understand," Péri becomes positively lively and pressing:

"In the name of the Franco-British Entente, Pierre Laval has lent himself to those criminal evasions which we have so often denounced here and which we must denounce today more vigorously than ever."

"Everything indicates that Laval has given up the Eastern Pact and mutual assistance. The Minister of Foreign Affairs has deliberately renounced the only formula capable of preserving peace and putting a stop to armament. His deplorable attitude earned him the felicitations of the Volkische Beobachter yesterday. But it will rouse against him the anger of all those who sincerely

wish to conquer war. (L'Humanite, April 4)"

Péri and Pertinax

Blum rates Pertinax, of the Echo de Paris, among the "awkward friends" of the U.S.S.R. (Populaire, April 21) because, bourgeois realist that he is, he considers the question of an alliance with the U.S.S.R. from the point of view of relative force, without attaching any importance to vague promises. Pertinax is solely concerned with "French" interests. If he were solely concerned with "Russian" interests he would no doubt write as Péri, true friend of the U.S.S.R., writes:

"Others believe that M. Laval together with John Simon would be disposed to replace the project of an Eastern Pact by an Air Alliance open to all the signatories of the Locarno Treaty, the U.S.S.R., and the Little Entente. They boast of having obtained the support of Poland and of Germany for this system."

"Well, without a second thought we can say, this system has nothing to do with peace. Those who support it would precipitate the very rule of cannons which the masses wish to avert at any cost."

"Aggression will not be discouraged if the sole risk to the aggressor is the risk of not being actively assisted. Passivity by itself is an encouragement to adventures."

"In the concrete case under

consideration, the system invented by M. Laval would limit itself to an agreement that Germany might carry on its Eastern projects, that France would lend no assistance, but at the same time would offer no opposition." (L'Humanite, April 4).

Péri and the C.P. of France, from the point of view of the national interests of the Soviet bureaucracy, and Pertinax from the point of view of the national interests of the bourgeoisie advance, in fact, the same political line.

If, as Thorez has informed us since July 1934, it is the Communists who love their country well, it follows that those who do not love their country, the bourgeoisie, are "the traitors."

This is just what Cachin informs us in an article for April 10, in which he concludes:

"We shall tear off the masks of the exploiters of the country, the worst enemies of the French people, without failing in our duty of defending the peace and bread of their victims."

Cachin, who is a past master when it comes to traitors, is not fully understood by the true patriots as appears from his denunciation of Taittinger:

"Taittinger, the fascist, divulges with impunity official diplomatic and military communications which he receives in his official positions on the various committees in parliament. Thus he furnishes Hitler with new arguments for rearmament, and carries coals to the fires of fascism across the Rhine. A 'patriot' who conducts himself in such a treasonable manner, at the same time advocates repression against the anti-fascists!"

From which we conclude that the country, at present under the leadership of the bourgeoisie, does not understand where its real interests lie.

P. Vaillant-Couturier moreover makes no effort to conceal it from the country, he undertakes a crusade "To the rescue of French culture."

"If the proletariat, according to Marx, 'has no fatherland' they have now as internationalists something to defend: that is the cultural patrimony of France, the spiritual wealth, the works of its artisans, its workers, its artists, and its thinkers." (L'Humanite, April 13)

In other words: if the proletariat has no fatherland, nevertheless for L'Humanite it has had one for some time—the French patrimony. "Conquer the country" for Cachin and P. Vaillant-Couturier means to reconquer, by means of brainstorms in L'Humanite, their positions of 1914.

The Announcement of Treason

From such evocations can come nothing but treason. Unhappy for the proletariat, the C.I. and its various sections have just advertised their treason, without any equivocation or shame.

The duty of the proletariat in case of war is outlined in the following appeal of the European C.P.'s of April 18:

"We salute the progress made in the military field by the only workers' land, the progress in reinforcing the red army of workers and peasants, a true guarantee of peace, we salute every strengthening of the frontiers of

the socialist fatherland; we will support, in case of counter-revolutionary war against the socialist fatherland, the red army of the Soviet Union by every means, and we will struggle for the defeat of every power that engages in war against the Soviet Union.

"We will aid by every means, even by the sacrifice of our lives, the victory of the Soviet Socialist Union in its war against all those who attack the land of socialism."

The proletariat is no longer to struggle for the defeat of its own imperialist government, but for the defeat of "German imperialism and its allies."

In other words: the French proletariat will go to war hand in hand with its own bourgeoisie against German imperialism for the defeat of the latter. That is what is known as national defense.

The appeal of the municipal elections confirms us (L'Humanite, April 21): "The most sacred duty of the proletarians of the entire world is the defeat of aggressors against the Soviet Union and the defeat of all the aggressor's allies."

"The communists want the UNIFICATION OF ALL FRENCHMEN, who work in the factories, docks, offices, stores, laboratories, schools, universities, and the workers of all nationalities and races who share the same suffering and the same hopes."

There we are, twice warned. Blind are the workers who do not immediately draw the correct lessons and the consequences thereof. —(From La Verite, Paris)

Stalin-Laval Communique

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relentlessly that no resistance is to be offered when war begins. The Social Democrats of Germany and France voted for the war credits of their respective Governments on the Fourth of August, 1914. Following that they became recruiting sergeants for the war.

The Social Democrats carried out their historic betrayal under the slogan, "Defense of the Fatherland." The Stalinists march on the same path under the banner of "Socialism in One Country." The content of the actions and the results are the same.

Lenin in his time denounced the League of Nations as a "thieves kitchen" and the Versailles Peace as a brigands' peace and the breeder of a new war. Stalin joins the League of Nations and pledges the Red Army to defend the status quo established by the Versailles Treaty.

Lenin said: turn the imperialist war into a civil war. Stalin says: Do not interfere with the military operations of your own capitalists.

Down with perfidious Stalinism!

Long live the watchword of Karl Liebknecht—the watchword of the Fourth International:

The enemy is in our own country!

Election Battle In Minneapolis

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assembly and organization for the workers: use of public places for meetings and demonstrations without police interference.

Follows an analysis of the Farmer-Labor Party, its inability to fulfill the tasks of the working class, the attainment of the socialist society. "The Farmer Labor Party is not truly a revolutionary workers party, nor can it become one. It will not serve the workers when the big bosses decide to take away the rights which are looked upon by the people as 'constitutional guarantees.' The Farmer-Labor Party puts its faith in parliamentary debate, which the capitalists have shown they will abandon the moment it goes against them."

"Workers of Minneapolis: Elect the Farmer-Laborites to office but watch their every move, do not trust them. They will serve the workers' movement only if the workers' organizations force them to."

The leaflet concludes with an appeal to join the Workers Party, to build the revolutionary party and the revolutionary International.

SPEAKER: Max Shachtman

War and the Stalin-Laval Agreement

Sunday, May 19th, 8 p. m. Irving Plaza, 15th st. & Irving Pl.