

An Eye-witness Account Of Events in Poland

Participant Tells How Revival in Labor Movement Is Met by Savage Police Repression and Betrayed by Stalinists and Reformists

CRACOW, March 28.—Following are some facts concerning recent events here. The workers of the rubber products factory "Semperit" struck and at the same time occupied the plant to prevent the employer from hiring scabs and to force him to acquiesce.

The city was almost completely paralyzed by the strike. Only the street car workers remained on the job. A crowd of 15-20,000 workers congregated in Varshavska Street.

Massacre on the Streets We arrived at the Mateyka square. The police fired. First in the air. Then into the crowd.

The official communiques spoke of 8 dead and a few scores wounded. In reality there were at least 20 dead and 100 wounded mortally or seriously wounded.

The Crisis in the Pilsudskyst Dictatorship

The white dictatorship in Poland is passing through dark days. The working and peasant masses are delivering it the most serious blows.

Very characteristic, in this connection, was the declaration of Mr. Bartel on April 24th: "These were very serious events. If the crowd is fired upon and it does not move to save itself for fear of death, these are no riots. They smack of revolution."

For several months strikes followed one upon another uninterruptedly. They embraced the entire country. After the textile workers of Lodz, came the turn of the petroleum workers of the Boryslaw district, the miners of upper-Silesia, the strike struggles at Cracow, Sosnowice, Poznan, Czestochowa, etc.

The conflicts assume a very acute character. The workers who struggle to maintain their miserable wages lock themselves in with their families, in the factories and the pits and it is only with difficulty that the forces of the police dislodge them.

Police Fire on Funeral On April 14th at Lvov the police opened fire during one of these demonstrations. Two were killed. The city seethed.

The Pilsudskyst dictatorship which is celebrating its 10th anniversary (in May 1926 the Pilsudskyst coup d'etat occurred) wished to resolve the contradictions of the regime by drawing inspiration from the Italian and German example.

On the same evening delegates of the trade unions, the P.P.S., demanded that the strike be immediately called off. The representative of the Bund wanted to continue it. The Stalinists demanded: 1. continue "until victory"; 2. proclaim the general strike in the entire country; 3. the immediate removal of Svitalski.

In actuality the workers wanted to struggle. On the next morning thousands of workers continued the strike against the orders of the "leaders", lackeys of the bourgeoisie; the streetcar workers did not work to 5 p. m.

But that did not prevent the Stalinists from celebrating it as a great victory of the People's Front.

And at the very time the union of social patriots and communopatriots was being established on the corpses of working class heroes, the police arrested hundreds of workers. A real massacre began. The arrested were tortured.

A number of militants disappeared without a trace. Daily new victims were secretly buried. The cops made expeditions against the trade unions killing on the spot those present, as for instance at the confectionary workers headquarters.

On Wednesday the funerals of the 8 "official" victims (the number admitted by the police) were held. More than 50,000 participated. The same fighting spirit which animated the masses three days earlier no longer prevailed.

Poverty, Unemployment and Terror

A volume edited by the "Economic Institute" of Warsaw and which prints numerous letters from peasants, reflects this unprecedented misery. "In many sections", a peasant writes, "the only resources are the veterans pensions. The only ones with small incomes are invalids. But there are not many such lucky fellows."

Unemployment is widespread. According to the official figure it has reached a half-million which is surely more than a third of the entire working class.

The petty bourgeoisie is completely ruined. To that must be added the police regime more severe than that of Czarism, the reign of the Punitzys (Polish Okhrana), the punitive expeditions in the Ukraine and in White Russia.

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1914-1936: The Same Social Patriotic Tune

By ARNE SWABECK

Marxists have always taken the position that the question of war in the modern imperialist epoch is inseparable from the capitalist system of society as is the class struggle.

Our attitude towards war is therefore the same as our attitude towards the class struggle: our aim is in both instances to work for the defeat of capitalism and to secure the victory of the working class.

This fundamental criterion the Stalinist leaders have thrown overboard long ago. Having abandoned the Marxist position the Comintern and all its sections now reincarnates in new form a and under new conditions the ideas of social patriotism which characterized the great betrayal in 1914.

To the Stalinist leaders the fundamental differentiation in the present day world does not proceed along the irreconcilable lines of opposing and antagonistic classes. To them the main division occurs between good capitalists and bad capitalists, between which the working class is to take sides, for and against, to rely on the former against the latter.

Nothing shows more clearly than this the completely anti-Marxist attitude of the Stalinists toward the problem of national state independence among capitalist nations.

Marxists recognize as well established the fact that the national state became a frightful impediment long ago to the economic and cultural development of humanity. The defense of the national state is therefore a reactionary task, worthy only of the depraved handmaidens in the service of decaying capitalism.

And how does Browder really propose to defend the independence of these national states? Obviously he relies upon the bourgeoisie but not entirely. In face of the war threats he demands the complete independence of the working class movement.

Not directly opposed to the policy of the capitalist government! In other words, follow the war map and not the map of the class struggle; this is the advice of Browder. You may make your reservations, but do not oppose directly the policy of the capitalist government.

Vote the credits! Not only Czechoslovakia, Austria and Belgium. "There are other countries," says Browder, "like France and the United States, which for their own particular interests are interested in maintaining peace, which are not furthering the development of war, which are resisting these developments."

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Dividing World into Good and Bad Nations, Browder Voices Same Phrases as Social Democrats

ers in the various nations entered the services of their respective bourgeoisies to the tune of the war cry, "Kultur versus Czarism" or "Democracy versus Kaiserism."

But the question arises: by whose military means is this aggression to be defeated? Who will organize and direct the military operations? Do the Stalinists answer: the proletariat! No. This is to be left in the hands of the "forces of peace"—the bourgeois democracies among the capitalist nations—supported by the Communist parties and such workers as the Stalinist leaders can mislead by their deceptive slogans of defense of national independence.

Handmaidens of the Capitalist State

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France had then been attacked by the Kaiser's troops, so he maintained. And now again we are told that the greatest threats of the military forces of Hitler are directed among other countries against France.

Bourgeoisie Pleased What kind of a war would it be, should these threats be carried out? The Daily Freiheit of May 19 gives the answer thus: "If Hitler should attack France it would be an imperialist attack on his part, and if France should in that situation defend herself, it would be a natural case of self defense which has nothing to do with imperialism because imperialism means the grabbing of foreign lands in the interests of home capitalism."

French imperialism would not grab foreign lands; God forbid! French imperialism does not want colonies. It didn't in 1914 either said the French social patriots. It was just plainly and simply attacked. Did not Vaillant write in l'Humanite, then the official socialist party organ: "In face of the aggression, the socialists will fulfill their whole duty to the fatherland for the republic and for the revolution."

Forces for Peace

But imperialism France is not only in danger of attack, according to Browder. Together with the United States it is interested in maintaining peace. These two countries, he insists, are not furthering the development of war; they are "resisting these developments."

The capitalist United States is "interested in maintaining peace. . . not furthering the development of war. . . resisting these developments," that is, provided power is not taken out of the hands of the Roosevelt administration. In these coming elections, "the victory of the Republican Party - Liberty League - Hearst combination," exclaims Browder, "would throw power on the side of the war makers."

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According to this has the choice, not of building a revolutionary party for the overthrow of capitalism, but purely the choice between the good and the bad capitalists.

The Bad American Bosses

"The main enemy of the people of America today is the Republican-Liberty League-Hearst combination," says Browder in his statement on the C.P. position in the coming elections. He adds: "We must place as the center of our work in the election campaign the need for combating this reactionary bloc and defeating its plans in 1936."

Surely in taking this position Browder remains entirely consistent and he remains faithful to his Stalinist line of policy. And this extends also to his position, and to the C.P. position, on the farmer-labor party question.

Pro-Labor and Pro-Roosevelt!

Can a movement fulfill the role not merely as an auxiliary to the old parties, i.e., to the capitalist parties, or even to the one of them which carries the Roosevelt label, and at the same time be a beginning toward a working class political movement? Obviously this question is not decided merely by forms or by labels but by the ideological position and by the program it stands for.

In taking this position Browder also remains entirely consistent. In

Inverted form he proves that the question of war in the modern imperialist epoch is as inseparable from the capitalist system of society as is the class struggle. A false position in regard to the question of war leads inevitably to an equally false position toward the everyday issues of the class struggle. It leads not to the victory of the working class but to its defeat.

Hillquit-Browder Wants U.S. to Act

"We must," says Browder in concluding his report on the war question, "crystallize such a mass opinion in America directed towards restraining the instigators of war that the United States will become an effective international force, will become a positive contribution to the world front of struggle for peace."

Browder now wants America to act, not to withdraw. In his statement, cited above, one cannot quarrel with his idea of crystallizing mass opinion toward restraining instigators of war. But who are the instigators of war? Is this a question merely of certain people of certain nations? Marxists reject such a conception and emphasize time and again that war is inevitable concomitant of capitalism regardless of which nation fires the first shot.

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In this lies the fundamental distinction between the Marxist position and the position of Browder and his Stalinist fellow bureaucrats. Their position proceeds from the Stalinist peace policy of the Soviet Union which has for its premise the preservation of the status quo of the boundaries of capitalist nations, of the relations between these nations as well as of their internal equilibria.

Rubber Unions and CLU Rally Against Company Provocation

(Continued from Page 1)

agement for fomenting "unrest and turmoil" by the provocative acts of its company union and vigilante organizations. Full support was pledged to the United Rubber Workers Union and a call was sent to federal government agencies to conduct investigations into espionage and "other unlawful practices" on the company's part.

In protest against the arrests and the scurry way they were carried out, workers at two Goodyear plants sat down late Sunday night. At 2 p. m. the sit-down lasted 4 hours, only being called off by rank and file leaders on the plea that the workers' strength should be conserved for possible greater struggles ahead.

The Goodyear Local's defense committee on the case blasted the company with the following statement, issued through its chairman, Bill Carney, one of the outstanding militant progressives in the recent strike: "Since Goodyear failed in its efforts during the strike to

break our union through threat of vigilante force known as the 'Law and Order League,' another more subtle and vicious means has been adopted.

"The arrest of our members after such company attacks like the shooting of five of our men recently were not penalized, is flagrant social injustice.

"The method used in making the arrests is nothing short of a public outrage. The men were deliberately picked up late Saturday night and placed under high bond at first because it would be exceedingly difficult for us to have them released on bond.

"They were questioned in front of George Hargreaves, the 'Law and Order League' attorney. Efforts were made through his questioning to obtain statements. The entire proceedings were a serious mockery of justice, a challenge to the whole community.

"The immediate support given our men by the entire organized labor movement indicates such methods will not succeed in breaking our unions. "The issue involved in this situation is clear. Can the rubber companies break the unions through

the use of legal trickery? We hardy think so, especially with public support behind us in protest over these arrests.

"We urge the companies to meet with our duly accredited representatives to establish true collective bargaining. Only that method can solve the present situation. "The rubber workers can't be crushed. They must be dealt with as men."

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