

IN THE WORLD OF LABOR

By Paul G. Stevens

The Revolt Against the "National Register" in Great Britain

At the time of the "Munich" war crisis last September there was no lack of speculation as to the causes for the so-called Chamberlain capitulation. All commentators agreed, however, that the desire for peace on part of the general population was strongly in evidence—even if it was expressed only passively: by the missing enthusiasm that usually precedes the opening of hostilities.

A far more positive confirmation of this fact is being driven home dramatically by the revolt against the "National Register" that is now taking place in British working-class ranks.

The "National Register" is a measure adopted by the Chamberlain government recently, calling for the "voluntary" registration of workers in all industries preparatory to the unfolding of a general conscription plan. The vast majority of the Labour Party members voted for it, or "abstained," in the House of Commons. The Labour Executive and the Trade Union Council have agreed to "cooperate with the government in its execution. But . . .

The rank and file of Labour has risen up in arms against this war-mongering scheme. No less than seven Trade Councils in the major industrial cities—Sheffield, Leeds, Norwich, Huddersfield, Barking, Perth and Lowestoft—have rejected all responsibility for it. The powerful National Union of Railwaymen and the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen, as well as the Scottish Miners Union and the South Wales Miners Federation, have turned down cooperation.

As was to be expected, the revolt against the war plans of the British capitalists takes the form of a revolt against their agents at the head of the Labour Party and the General Council of the Trades Unions. Obviously, these bureaucrats were not responsible for the widespread anti-war sentiment last September. But even more significant is the fact that the Stalinists, who enjoy a certain prestige as radicals in the United Kingdom because the trade union and Labour bureaucrats still are opposed to having any truck with them, have had no better luck in pitting themselves against the sentiment of the masses.

One of the leading British Stalinists, Arthur Horner, President of the South Wales Miners Federation, has been touring the coal fields with the pro-war Labour parliamentarians in his area in support of the "National Register." The usual result is indicated in a resolution adopted by the miners lodge at Troedyfahir, in the presence of the speakers, denouncing support of the "Register" because it "places the Labour Party in a position where they can be charged with lining up with the National Government for the preservation of British Imperialism and Capitalism" and calling "upon the rank and file members of the Labour Movement to demand an immediate revision of the anti-working class policy adopted by the Parliamentary Labour Party." The resolution was carried 200 to 3 in spite of persistent appeals by Horner that it be withdrawn.

Belgian 4th Internationalists Take Office in Municipality as Revolutionists

As readers of the Appeal are aware, our com-

rades of the Belgian Revolutionary Socialist Party (P.S.R.) won an absolute majority on the Municipal Council at Flenu, in the Borinage mining section, in the course of the elections last fall. This month they have been inducted into office. Forced to take the royal oath, they did so with a public statement that is an example of the revolutionary behavior of Fourth Internationalists on the parliamentary arena. Here are some excerpts from this highly interesting document:

"If we yield to the restrictions imposed by the capitalist state, it is only in order to be seated in this deliberative assembly, in which we intend to defend vigorously the interests of the laboring masses who have elected us. For us, the oath is a mere formality. It cannot commit us politically in any way. . . . In fact, we are for the abolition of the monarchy as a symbol of the exploitation of the working class by the possessing class; the capitalists. We are fighting and we shall fight for the installation of a workers and peasants republic, a socialist Soviet republic like the one formed by the workers of Russia in October 1917 in the course of the greatest revolution in history. . . ."

According to the Belgian constitution, our comrades in Flenu, having an absolute majority on the Municipal Council, are entitled to select the Mayor. The latter, however, must have the formal approval also of the Departmental Commissioner who represents the central government. Comrade Walter Dauge, the leader of the Revolutionary Socialist Party, was proposed for the post. Before giving his approval, the Departmental Commissioner posed two questions before Comrade Dauge, requesting a written answer. The questions were: "1. What will you do in case of a strike? 2. What will you do in case of factory occupation [sit-ins]?"

Dauge replied by reaffirming, as to the first question, the election platform of the party, which says: "In case of a strike (like those of July 1932 or June 1936) the representatives of the P.S.R. will be entirely on the side of the workers. Even under the threat of being removed by the central authorities, they will systematically refuse to carry out the orders of the governor or of the Minister of the Interior regarding prohibition of meetings, demonstrations and picketing. On the contrary, they will remain with the latter to the very end, defending them in their demands."

As to the second question, our comrade expresses doubt about its realism, since most of the factories in the region have been shut down. But, in case of their reopening, and in the event of a sit-in, he says: "I will be heart and soul with the sit-inners. I will support them with all my strength. I will organize the food supply for them. I will appeal to the entire laboring population to back them up effectively so as to help them win out against the bosses and the government."

The actual outcome is still in doubt. The Belgian "democracy" is in a pickle: Shall it flout the "democratic" constitution and refuse to seat Dauge or shall it allow an avowed revolutionist who sticks to his principles under fire, to take charge of the municipality? In any case, the workers know where the Fourth Internationalists stand.

ON THE LINE --- With BILL MORGAN

The amazing ability of the working class to meet every new attempt of the bosses to smash picket lines, prevent organization or discourage militant action has been demonstrated hundreds of times in every country. Especially in America are the workers able to thwart the tricks and devices of the bosses. There are countless instances of how the workers' courage and determination in the face of apparent defeat have turned the tide of reaction into a wave of victory.

Several years ago in New York City, during a strike of textile workers, a new problem was solved by the daring and undefeatable workers who until the strike had no experience in the struggles of the union.

It Looked Hopeless

The shop to be called out on strike was on the eleventh floor of a twelve story building. The boss had guards in all the entrances and at both doors of the shop. Police were carefully watching all who entered the building. The shop was locked up tighter than a drum. The workers inside, all young girls who had never known about the union, were prevented from leaving. Food, blankets and radios were brought in by the boss to keep the girls from all contact with the picket line on the sidewalk.

It seemed a hopeless problem. The union organizers were afraid that this shop might break the strike by holding out long enough to enable other bosses to try the same trick. It was impossible to even talk to the workers about the union and many did not even know about the strike.

But . . . the Strikers Find a Way

On the third day some of the pickets were eating lunch in a nearby Coffee Pot and they overheard some workers talking about the strike. Said one husky young fellow, "My sister hasn't been home for three nights now and my mother is worried." Another joined in, "My old man is going to raise the roof with that boss if he keeps my sister up there another day."

Soon the pickets and the brothers and friends of the locked-in girls were discussing ways and means. It was not long before things began to happen.

A worker in the uniform of a telephone inspector entered the building and went up to the shop to "inspect" the phones. Thus contact was established between the locked-in girls and the union. The girls learned about the strike and the reason they were prevented from leaving. They all wanted to come out.

Next, the workers secured a long, sturdy rope. Then they entered the building one by one and met on the twelfth floor in the men's room. So far so good. No one had noticed anything unusual.

The Guards See the "Light"

Then one of the workers whose sister was imprisoned on the floor below, tied one end of the rope to the steam pipes and lowered himself down to the floor below while the workers on the street watched with baited breath. Slowly

he reached the window sill of the eleventh floor. When he was safe in the room below, his comrades dashed down to the shop door and convinced the fink who was on guard there that they meant business. He soon saw the light and they were ready to act according to the plan.

The worker who lowered himself to the men's room on the eleventh floor suddenly burst out and made a dash for the rear door where another unsuspecting fink stood guard. It was a simple matter to rush up behind the fink guarding the inside door and with a flying tackle bring him to his senses. The door was opened and the waiting pickets rushed in, turned off the power and escorted the girls down the fire escape. The police arrived to find an empty shop and a picket line twice its original size marching up and down singing "Solidarity Forever!"

The Lesson Is Never Forgotten

The effect of this victory by the union against the open shop bosses was felt immediately and the workers, proud of their union and their comrades, soon carried the fight into every shop in the city.

The bosses were stunned and began to fight among themselves. The police were blamed for allowing the strikers to get away with such tricks and soon picket lines were formed and "educational" committees elected to complete the organization of all textile workers.

This is but one of the many ways in which workers were able to turn what seemed like certain defeat into complete victory for the workers. There are countless other such stories. The lessons of that battle will not be forgotten by the workers of that shop and especially the daring committee which planned and carried out the strategy.

There are hundreds of such stories and we would like to retell them for the benefit of our readers. If you have been in action with the workers anywhere send in your experience for this column. Stories of workers' bravery in strikes and the methods used to combat the bosses' reaction are lessons we can all learn.

"Neighborliness"

The "Good Neighbor" policy of the United States government received an illuminating illustration last week when Mr. Guillermo Esteves, Acting Reconstruction Administrator for Puerto Rico, handed in his report on relief conditions in that "back yard" possession of Yankee imperialism.

Of the somewhat over 350,000 families in the little island, 200,000—more than half—are receiving breadline "relief"! And that isn't all, for Mr. Esteves blandly announces that there are many more who should be getting it but aren't. That is the state to which the New Deal reduces its Latin-American subjects while it preaches sermons to rival imperialists.

ABANDONS SPAIN TO MERCIES OF FASCIST HORDES

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These orders could have only one comprehensible purpose: to do away with the possibility of the college professors and their were dominated by Stalinists, as reported in the Appeal several weeks ago.

Undoubtedly the suspended locals are under Stalinist control. Nevertheless the action of the C.T.L.C. is reactionary. To the bureaucrats of the A.F.L. the cry of Red and Communist is a clever guerrilla bands remaining behind to harass Franco's troops.

Stalinists Prepare to Weep. Accomplices of Azana and Negrin, with whom they closely collaborated in the government, the Stalinists on Monday still indignantly denied that the "Spanish republic" was seeking peace with Franco. Already, however, the Stalinists dared not defend either Negrin or Azana by name!

In a few days, we can expect an indignant outcry by the Stalinists that they have been "betrayed" by Azana and Negrin. The truth is that the Stalinists worked hand in glove with these traitors while knowing that they were planning treachery.

As late as January, 1936 the Stalinists characterized Azana as "an enemy of the working class," justifying a joint ticket with him in the February elections solely on the ground that the defeat of the reactionary slate would bring "a certain amount of relief from the repression, for a time at least." (Imprecor, vol. 15, p. 762).

As late as July 6, 1936 the central Stalinist organ in Spain, Mundo Obrero, declared that the Azana government was repeating its repressive and reactionary course of 1931.

Stalinists Suppressed Facts. But when the civil war broke out, the Stalinists, seeking to curry favor with Britain and France on behalf of the Stalin regime, became the loudest defenders of Azana, insisting that he remain at the helm, and denouncing all his critics as "Trotskyist-fascists." Together with the Social Democrats, they suppressed the fact that Azana, upon the outbreak of the civil war, attempted to capitulate to Franco.

Negrin's Peace Terms. As for Premier Negrin, his statement of "war aims" at the Cortes meeting merely continued the line which, as we have pointed out repeatedly, is one of seeking conciliation with Franco. Negrin called for (1) a guarantee of independence for Spain, (2) a government desired by the people, (3) "liquidation of the war without persecution to permit all Spaniards to join in the country's reconstruction."

Franco has already rendered lip-service to the first and third of these essentially treacherous "demands." As for "a government desired by the people," that is to be decided by a plebiscite.

Even if such a plebiscite were dressed up by being conducted under the supervision of the European powers, it would be a sham. With Franco in possession of three-fourths of Spanish territory, and with the Italo-German and Anglo-French blocs competing for Franco's friendship, one can state in advance the outcome of such an armed plebiscite: unity of the bourgeois elements in both Spanish camps in a Bonapartist regime, ruling the masses primarily through the armed might of Franco's armies.

The difference between Negrin and Azana is merely that each group is maneuvering for a more favored position in the "united" regime.

Neither, however, can provide more than a fig leaf for the Franco dictatorship, which, moreover, won't have them. They cannot guarantee submission of the workers and peasants.

Not Yet Too Late!

Premature revelations of Negrin and Azana's proposals may yet cause the armed workers in central Spain to take their destiny into their own hands. Even now it is not too late. Revolutionary war against Franco, launched from central Spain, could be carried into the rest of Spain, just as the Bolsheviks, hemmed in on all sides during the Russian civil war, managed to disintegrate the White Armies behind the fronts.

LABOR OPPOSES PROPOSED ROCHESTER SALES TAX

ROCHESTER, N. Y.—Interviews with local labor leaders reveal a unanimity of opposition to the proposed 2% sales tax. Business agents of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, Painters Union and Carpenters Union, as well as the president of the Central Trades and Labor Council, Henry D. O'Connell, have expressed disapproval.

Welfare Commissioner Gauhn, however, is quoted as saying, "I am wholeheartedly behind the idea . . . it brings the problem right into the open, and lets the people know what this thing is and what it costs."

"Death to Jews and Trotsky!" Cry Rioting Mexican Fascists

MEXICO CITY, Jan. 29.—A Jew was severely beaten here last night when a group of hoodlums rioted in the downtown section of the city, breaking the windows of Jewish-owned shops and crying "Death to the Jews!" and "Death to Leon Trotsky!"

The fascists threatened to march in a body from Mexico City to Coahuacan where Trotsky is living in order to carry out their threats of death, but police broke up the demonstration.

Reactionaries Riot. The riot ostensibly protested the arrest of five members of a reactionary clique in the National Party of Mexico who had instigated a demonstration against granting asylum in Mexico to 1,500 members of the International Brigade unable to return to their native lands. President Lazaro Cardenas had sharply rebuked these reactionary members of his party when they protested against members of the Brigade

entering Mexico. They responded with a demonstration on the nights of Thursday and Friday which was followed by their arrest on Saturday.

C. P. Asks Trotsky Ouster. The inclusion of Trotsky's name in this anti-Semitic demonstration falls directly in line with Communist Party convention resolutions calling for the expulsion of Leon Trotsky from Mexico. Both Hernan Laborde, Secretary of the Communist Party of Mexico, and Lombardo Toledano, Stalinist trade union leader, have repeatedly demanded that Trotsky be ousted. The present fascist demonstration follows on the heels of the Communist Party campaign against Trotsky.

Nazi Finance Anti-Semitism. Anti-Semitism in Mexico is largely financed by Nazi interests and finds its principal response from small business men. The Jewish population in Mexico is relatively small.

On the Way to the Trenches

Senator Thomas, chairman of the Committee on Education and Labor of Utah, has introduced a bill into Congress to make the Civilian Conservation Corps a permanent institution. There is a growing movement in Congress to provide for military training of the 300,000 enrollees in the C.C.C., concurrent with the move to make it permanent. Endorsing the bill, Senator Connally expressed the hope that it would include provision for military training. In the House, Representative Richards introduced a bill to make six hours of military drill obligatory for all C.C.C. members with the exception of war veterans.

The regular appropriation bill having been reported to Congress with huge increases listed, it is now probable that further increases will be asked. According to the reports of a White House conference held on February 3, Roosevelt will propose a revised Army Appropriation Bill, including the items listed in his special defense message that will EXCEED \$1,000,000,000. That sum will be asked for the army! "Non-military" items, such as the care of rivers and harbors, will bring the total above \$1,200,000,000. With the Navy appropriation, the total for war funds for the fiscal year will be well above the \$2,000,000,000 previously announced.

Assistant-Secretary of War, Louis Johnson, has announced plans for mobilizing industry for war purposes. The War Department has already made plans to inform 50,000 factories of what will be expected from them. The factories will work according to uniform plans drawn up by the War Department.

A new "flying fortress" has been designed for the army. The YE-17A flies in excess of 250 miles an hour, carries five machine guns, and a crew of seven to nine, including pilots, navigator, bomber, engineer, and gunners.

Deputies Are Unanimous For Colonial Slavery

The second largest empire in the world today is the French. France, with a population of less than 42,000,000 and an area of 212,659 square miles, rules over a colonial world with more than 65,000,000 inhabitants scattered over more than four and a half million square miles.

Every single one of these colonies was obtained by means of violence, chicanery, perfidy and has been kept under the French flag by exactly the same means.

Tens of thousands of colonial slaves have been slaughtered in the struggle to impose upon them by force the benefits of "French civilization." Tens of millions of others go through hell on earth every day for the greater glory and profit of French imperialism.

All the aspirations of these millions can be summed up in one word: Independence!

TVA Plan Lines Utility Co. Pockets

(Continued from Page 1) 600,000. Even this figure, however, was far greater than justified, since it did not make adequate allowances for depreciation and similar factors.

The price of \$80,000,000 now agreed upon means that the government is not merely paying out the highest possible sum for the physical plant, but is in addition paying \$25,000,000 or more to Commonwealth and Southern for all of the water that Wendell L. Willkie, president of C & S, and his fellow-pirates have pumped into the capital structure of the company.

Furthermore, this outrageous sum, which will be charged on the books of T.V.A., will act to raise substantially the government electricity rates for the people of the Tennessee valley.

The resolution was adopted by the Chamber's unanimous vote. The Stalinists and social democrats joined the reactionaries and fascists in a public demonstration which says to Italy:

"Hands off our property—we stole it from the natives and you can't steal it from us!" and which says to the natives: "Stop thinking of freedom, self-government or independence. You will not be Italian slaves, to be sure, but you've got to remain French slaves!"

That the outright imperialists have time and again used the

PLANS SECRETLY TO HURL NATION INTO CONFLICT

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right to know if they are going down the road to war?"

Isolationists On The Run. And that is the road Roosevelt is consciously travelling and these devious maneuvers are just his politician's way of letting the people know what they're in for and of making them think they'll like it.

Roosevelt has the so-called isolationists on the run and he knows it. Herbert Hoover made a speech last week which was made to sound like an attack on the president's policies and a demand that the nation be kept out of war. Actually, as no less an authority than Walter Lippmann pointed out in the New York Herald-Tribune, "Hoover went much further than the president has ever gone in telling Hitler and Mussolini to count on American intervention if they attack France and England."

Amidst all his verbiage about peace and neutrality, Hoover said that "if wholesale attacks were made upon women and children by the deliberate destruction of cities from the air, then the indignation of the American people could not be restrained from action."

Tories and F.D.R. Agree. Since air raids are sure to be part of any war, Lippmann rightly pointed out that Hoover and Roosevelt "see eye to eye on the main issue"—i.e., the issue of going to war. The essential agreement of the so-called Tory reactionaries with Roosevelt's war policy was further underlined by the Herald-Tribune in an editorial which stated:

"We heartily agree with Mr. Roosevelt's general outlook of sympathy with the democracies and we incline to the view that the continuing threat held over the world by the dictators has reached a stage that requires united action by the democracies for the period of the emergency."

Sanctions Mean War

In all this discussion much use has been made of the phrase "measures short of war" to bring the so-called aggressors to book. But this is thrown in, like a pious prayer that everyone knows will not be fulfilled. It has been shown over and over again with regard to China, Ethiopia, and Spain, that where imperialist rivalries clash, brute force rules and must in the end decide. "Economic sanctions" were given their trial and were shown to be unworkable unless backed by armies and navies and air fleets in action.

That is why Roosevelt is preparing a gigantic army, an unsurpassed navy, and the strongest air fleet in the world. That is why he wants to help his potential allies raise their own strength to proportionate levels.

Pressure on Britain-France. Moreover Roosevelt's maneuvers are designed just as much to exert pressure on Britain and France as on Germany and Italy. Both London and Paris are still angling for "appeasement settlements" with Hitler and Mussolini and of this policy Roosevelt clearly disapproves.

That is why in London, especially, the reception given to his reported statements was guarded. With the Spanish revolution being gradually strangled, Anglo-French imperialism still counts on being able to make a dicker that will postpone the showdown of war.

Roosevelt considers such postponement a blunder. He is pressing, therefore, for an openly aggressive policy that will force the issue sooner rather than later and he promises to Britain and France the American support which would theoretically ensure their victory in the war and leave to Britain, France, and the all-powerful United States the exclusive right to divide and exploit the resources and the markets of the world after a new blood-bath.

Fight War-Mongers!

That is where Roosevelt is leading us. The workers have no interest in shedding their blood for the sake of Wall Street and the Anglo-French capitalists. In fighting the war-mongers at home, they'll be fighting the menace of fascism on their own doorsteps and by making a new imperialist war impossible, they will make possible the liberation of all peoples, in the fascist countries, in the subjected colonies of "democratic" Britain and France, and in our own land.

Hollywood Merry-go-round

There is no "Zola" on this year's schedule of movie releases. Since Walter Wanger's sad experience with "Blockade," which was widely attacked as being "biased" in favor of the Spanish Loyalists, Hollywood has been playing safe. True, there is "The Citadel," which almost comes out for socialized medicine, but this picture was made in England.

The general tendency at present is to yield in advance to every conceivable censorship body, official or unofficial, political or moral. The most powerful of these bodies, the Legion of Decency, is almost ready to close up shop out of sheer boredom: there is nothing left for it to crusade against.

"Offending Sequences" Are Eliminated

Three times in recent months, however, Hollywood has shown signs of raising its head, as if it were about to open its mouth—and three times it has been slapped down. One of these films which were heavily censored has already been issued: "Men With Wings." And subversive celluloid is now being cut out of two films still in the making: "One Third of a Nation," a film version of the W.P.A. housing play, and "Idiot's Delight," made from Robert Sherwood's anti-war play.

The story is that advance clips of "One Third of a Nation" now being made in Astoria, L.I., were shown to a preview audience of Paramount bankers and bigwigs in general with a near-riot ensuing. Cause of the panic was the opening sequence, with a shot of Franklin Delano Roosevelt delivering the speech on housing which contained the title line. One banker fainted and three had to leave for air. Finally under the section of the Hays code which prohibits horror scenes, the offending sequence was eliminated. The speech is still in, but the image of F.D.R. is out. Love interest has also been added to the film—the millionaire owner of the condemned tenements falls in love with a daughter of the slums and is, of course, regenerated into a model landlord.

Hollywood Surgeons Operate on "Idiot's Delight"

"Idiot's Delight" is being similarly butchered. If you recognize its anti-war features after it emerges from the operating room, it will be no fault of the surgeons. Hollywood waited a long time before daring to commit itself to a stand against war, waited, in fact, until the German and Italian markets were closed to it anyhow. Even now it is proceeding with great caution. With the great powers girding their loins for the new Armageddon, it is a brave soul who will come out against the munitions-makers—and Hollywood is not being brave this season.

Which brings us to the third of the would-be crusaders—"Men With Wings." In the original script, the ending contained pronounced anti-war sentiment. The hero, airplane designer and aviator, gets the adventure-bug and leaves his factory and girl to his partner. He returns home from expeditions in China and Spain, filled with nausea over the memory of tons of explosives being unloaded on helpless women and children, and determined to settle down to more peaceful pursuits. His business in the future will be to design innocent—and presumably unconvertible—transport planes. This is the way the original plot went. But in the film as actually released, a slight alteration has been made. The hero returns, glum and disgusted, but his whole future is made bright by an order which the government places with him—for more and bigger bombers, to defend Democracy with.

Motion Pictures' Gloomiest Year

All this is very discouraging, and leads one to think that perhaps this is not Motion Pictures' Greatest Year after all. A survey of forthcoming productions adds to the gloom. Warner Brothers are making "Flying Irishman," with Douglas Corrigan as the hero, and a film on Maximilian and Juarez, starring Paul Muni, which sounds almost promising. M.G.M. is filming "A Christmas Carol," based on the Dickens story; Paramount has another of its epic horse operas scheduled in "Arizona Bracelets," Columbia has "Racketeers" in production, Republic has "Federal Manhunt."

In brief, Hollywood, which bragged of its daring in making "Zola" and "Fury" and "Mr. Deeds" and similar "social documents," is now in full retreat before Mr. Martin Quigley, publisher of the reactionary trade journal, The Motion Picture Herald; in flight from the onslaughts of the Legion of Decency; in terror of anyone who says, "Boo!" Any one who wants a picture scrapped has only to whisper the magic word, "Propaganda!" and the goose is cooked. In Hollywood at least, the Dies Committee is taken very, very seriously.

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