

CIVIL WAR IN NATIONALIST CHINA

By Earl Browder

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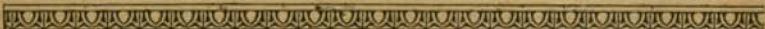
EARL BROWDER, Editor

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A HISTORIC MOMENT IN THE CHINESE LABOR MOVEMENT

Demonstration on streets of the British Colony of Hongkong, (1922), to celebrate the surrender of the British Government to the striking Seamen's Union. The workers are watching the police replace the Union sign over the Seamen's Union office, while they shout "Down with Imperialism." The first victory of the Chinese Revolution.

Civil War In Nationalist China

By

EARL BROWDER

(Member of the International Workers' Delegation to China,
January-June, 1927)



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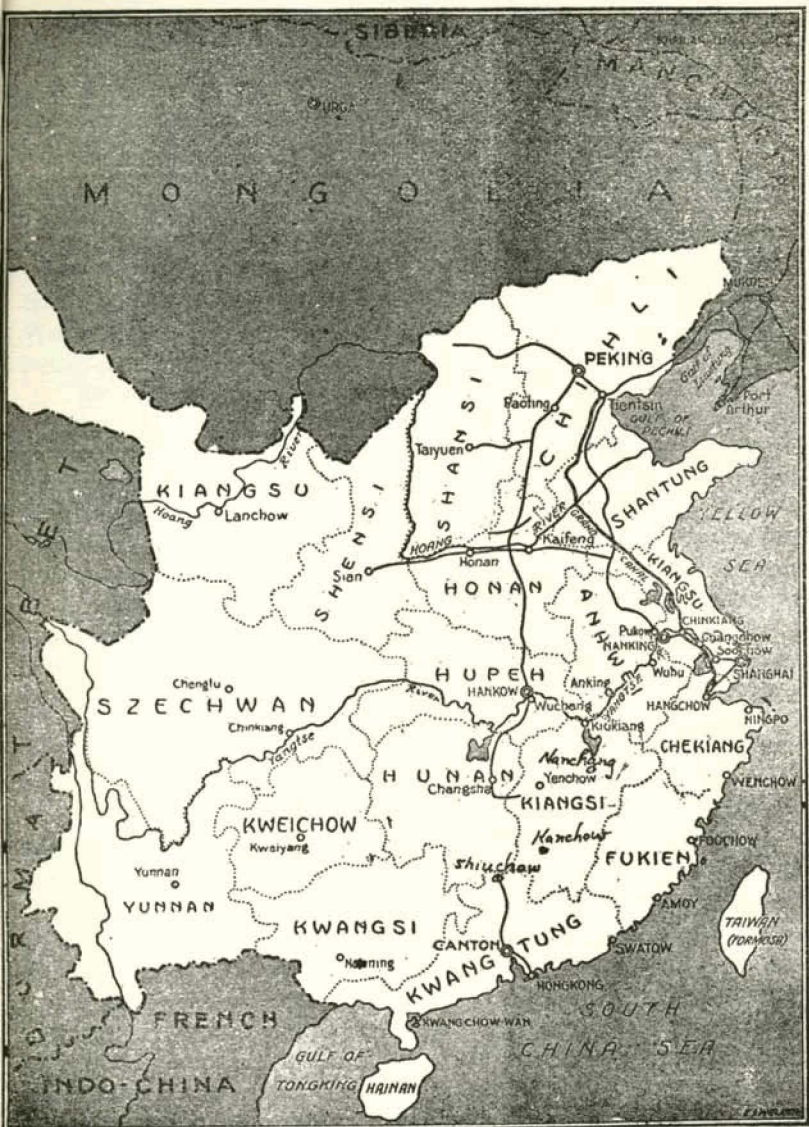
1927

CIVIL WAR IN NATIONALIST CHINA

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FOREWORD

In 1926 and 1927, China, whose very name had been for ages a synonym for changeless stability, underwent the most kaleidoscopic transformations in her political life. These changes were at the same time the heralds of far-reaching social and economic revolution, of such a fundamental nature that the mere intimation of them in connection with the revolution in China sufficed to cause the Western ruling classes to shiver with horror and apprehension.

It was my good fortune to spend several months in China during the most critical days of 1927, under such circumstances as to bring me into contact with the leaders of all sections of the nationalist movement of China. In both local and national developments, there were times when the International Workers Delegation, of which I was a member, became one of the determining factors in events. It has been my aim in writing this pamphlet, to condense the most important or most typical of these experiences, into a brief and readable narrative which will make the current history of the Chinese revolution more easily comprehensible to American readers.

Throughout the pamphlet I have taken for granted that the reader has a general knowledge of China, and of the Chinese revolution up to 1926, in the main aspects as reported currently in the capitalist newspapers and magazines. It is assumed that the reader knows of the fall of the Manchu Dynasty (1911) the resignation of the Dr. Sun Yat-sen in favor of Yuan Shih-kai as President of the Chinese Republic; the attempt of Yuan Shih-kai to make himself Emperor and establish a new dynasty, with the resulting revolt of the South, and the death of Yuan Shih-kai (1914); the division of China which followed the death of Yuan, among the various most powerful Generals of the monster Army created by Yuan by means of the loans from Britain; and the chronic civil war between rival militarist rulers which has torn China to pieces since 1914.

In 1926, the Chinese Nationalist Party, which up till

then held power only in the extreme South (Kwantung), began a Northern Punitive Expedition against the militarist rulers. This expedition had the most phenomenal successes. It swept through the provinces of Hunan and Kiangsi to Hupeh and the Yangtse River valley, occupying the commercial and industrial center of interior China, Hankow (the Wuhan cities). It gathered in the coast Provinces of Fukien and Chekiang; it occupied Nanking after a furious battle, and was handed Shanghai by the revolutionary working class, adding the Provinces of Anhui and Kiangsu. From the Yangtse Valley the Northern Expedition proceeded, in the spring and early summer of 1927, onward toward Peking, establishing its lines on the Hwang Ho (Yellow River) and the south of Shantung Province in mid-summer.

Simultaneously with the occupation of the Yangtse Valley by the Nationalists there came to the forefront of Chinese affairs a new factor: This is the struggle within the Nationalist Movement itself. The Kuomintang, a bloc of the most varied classes, began to divide itself into two separate and distinct parts, along the lines of antagonistic economic interests. This differentiation within the Kuomintang rapidly developed into an open split, and then into Civil War.

It is with this Civil War within the Kuomintang, within Nationalist China, that this pamphlet is primarily concerned.

In addition to personal experiences, and long interviews with leaders of all phases of the revolutionary movement, I have also made use of translations of extensive reports which were placed at my disposal by Comrade Michael Borodin. This material which is the result of several years' investigations by many competent workers will be used later for extended work on the more fundamental aspects of the Chinese Revolution.

EARL BROWDER,
Chicago, Aug. 5, 1927.

I. THE SPLIT IN THE NATIONALIST MOVEMENT

1. The International Delegation

The International Workers' Delegation was composed of Tom Mann, Chairman of the National Minority Movement of England and one of the oldest leaders of British Trade Unions; Jacques Doriot, member of the French Parliament, elected by the workers of Paris; myself representing the Trade Union Educational League of America; and Sydor Stoler, who acted as secretary and translator to the Delegation.

The Delegation entered China from the extreme south, at Canton, on February 17, 1927. After spending three weeks there we proceeded northward on the southern stub of the Canton-Hankow railroad to Shiu Chow. From there we proceeded by boat up the North River to Namyung, where we walked across the mountains thru Meiling Pass into the province of Kiangsi. At the city of Nananfu we again took boats on the Chikiang to the city of Kanchow. From there we went by boat northward down the Kankiang traversing the entire province of Kiangsi to the Yangtsekiang; proceeding up that great river to the Wuhan cities. This trip through the interior of China covered a period of twenty-five days during which we visited one or two days in about a dozen towns and cities, including, besides those named, Kianfu, Changshuki, Nanchang, and Kiukiang. After three weeks in Wuhan we made a five-day trip on the railway, southwest to the center of Hunan province, stopping at 28 cities including the great cities of Yochow and Changsha. Thus it will be seen we came in direct contact with all sections of the Chinese people in more than 40 cities and towns in the Nationalist territory, including the former capital and birth place of Nationalism, Canton; the first base of Chiang Kai Shek in his open split with the Kuomintang, Nanchang; and the center of the peasant movement which caused the split in the Kuomintang, Changsha.

This trip extended through the months of February, March, April, May and June. This was the period which began with the reorganization of the Kuomintang Nationalist government, the split by Chiang Kai Shek and the establishment of the Nanking government, and ended with the breakup of the reorganized National government of Wuhan. It was a time of civil war in almost every city and town which the Delegation visited. A tremendous regrouping of class forces was occurring in the Chinese Revolution.

2. First Glimpses of the Developing Split

Upon our arrival in Canton we were immediately received by the Kuomintang government of the province. Upon the invitation of this body a joint reception committee was formed which consisted of representatives of all public bodies of Canton, including the government, the Kuomintang, the Communist Party, all sections of the trade union movement, the peasant union, the student union, the Revolutionary Army and the merchants associations. This committee was a complete united front of all elements comprising the Nationalist movement in its broadest sense.

The visit of the Delegation was made the occasion for tremendous demonstrations everywhere; mass meetings, banquets, gatherings of all kinds were organized. But behind the appearance of unity which was created by these demonstrations, we quickly found that desperate struggle was being carried on. Within the united front of the Nationalist movement the regrouping of forces was proceeding at feverish pace.

A few days after our arrival we heard news of a recent clash culminating in an armed struggle, between the Railroad Workers' Union and the body known as the Canton Mechanics Union, which had occurred only two weeks before our arrival. Strangely enough both these bodies, which had only emerged from a fight in which they had been shedding one another's blood, were represented on our reception committee. We were entertained by both organizations, held mass meetings with them, and long interviews

with their leaders. Gradually we learned all the details which showed to us the class forces represented by each side. Because this fight forecast so much of what occurred in the following months, I will give some details of what we learned about it and about the organizations involved.

The Canton Mechanics Union is one of the older labor organizations in China. It claims a history since 1905 when it was organized along the lines of the old Chinese Guilds, comprising workers and employers alike. In the old days it conducted struggles only against the British in Hongkong. In 1922-23, at the time when the trade union movement proper was organizing itself in the All-China Labor Federation, this Canton Mechanics Union partially reformed itself into a trade union in a modern sense. It retained, however, much of the old guild character, including the complete absence of rank and file control. Its officers are self-perpetuating. It has continued to maintain close relations with the employers. In all of the internal struggles within the Kuomintang it has been openly or secretly aligned with the right wing. At the time when Chen Chiung Ming split with Sun Yat Sen and drove him out of Canton, this Union maintained an attitude of benevolent neutrality in the open while actually assisting the counter-revolution. During the rising of the so-called "paper tigers" or merchants' volunteers in 1925 this union played a very ambiguous role. Since the rise of Chiang Kai Shek as the leader of the right wing in the Kuomintang (the Chung Shen Cruiser incident of March 20th, 1926) the Mechanics Union has been closely connected with Chiang Kai Shek and with his chief lieutenant in Canton, General Li Chi-sen.

For some months before the fight, the provincial government, acting in the name of Chiang Kai Shek, had been bringing pressure to bear upon the trade unions in the All-China Labor Federation. Particularly it had been moving toward the disarmament and dispersment of the armed labor pickets. But while they were disarming the bona fide trade unionists, they were arming the right wingers of the Canton Mechanics Union and inciting them to disruptive activities against the real trade unions. Toward

the end of January, the Mechanics Union put forward a claim to control the railroad shops and terminals, demanding that the members of the railway workers' union (an industrial organization) should give up these positions to the members of the Mechanics Union. Upon the refusal of the railway union to accept this demand, the Mechanics Union sent its armed troops to the railroad terminal to take possession of it. They were supported by a company of soldiers from the troops of General Li Chi-sen. The Railway Workers Union defended itself. The peasants self-defense corps of the surrounding district also came to their assistance to the number of several thousand. A pitched battle took place in which the railroad workers assisted by the peasants came out victorious.

We also found the same struggle going on inside of every mass organization. This was particularly true of the army. Within the army there was established at the end of 1925, a political department for the purpose of educating the soldiers in the principles of the Kuomintang, and also for carrying on mass propaganda among the population of the new territories being occupied by the nationalist armies. The workers in this political department had in the course of their work developed into quite a solid left wing, against the compromising and reactionary policies of the right wing. It was this department which arranged great mass demonstrations for us at the Whampoo Political-Military Academy. It was quite evident to us that these demonstrations, at which the soldiers and cadets sang the International and shouted such slogans as "Long Live the World Revolution," were not at all to the taste of the staff officers of the army present in Canton. During our presence in Canton, however, these higher officers merely smiled and spoke fair words. But five weeks after our departure from Canton they arrested most of the workers of the political department and blew out their brains.

3. Counter-Revolution in Kanchow

After leaving Canton we plunged into an atmosphere of even more active civil war. For us this atmosphere crystallized itself around the name of Kanchow, the third

largest city of Kiangsi province. Days before reaching there we began to hear of events which had spread terror throughout the trade union and peasant movement of the south. At Nananfu on March 16th we had a conference with the leaders of the trade unions and peasant unions. They told us: "The countryside is in terror; the Kuominchun (revolutionary army) has turned against the people. At Kanchow, the Second Division has assassinated the secretary of the General Trade Union and occupied the union offices; the leaders are all in hiding and communication with the city is cut off."

When we had arrived at Canton weeks before we had sent telegrams of greetings to the Nationalist government at Wuhan and to the General Staff of the Revolutionary Army, of which Chiang Kai Shek was chief. It was somewhat ironical that two days after we received the first news of the Kanchow murder, which was committed by order of Chiang Kai Shek, we received a telegram from this renegade dated Kiukiang, March 18th, which read: "I acknowledge with pleasure receipt of your telegram and express my hearty welcome for your coming visit." Signed: Chiang Kai Shek.

We immediately prepared for a thorough investigation of the situation at Kanchow. We sent a telegram to that city addressed to the Magistrate, the Kuomintang and the Trade Unions, announcing our coming and requesting that we should meet with the leaders of all the people's organizations there. As we came down the river towards Kanchow in our boats we saw a large delegation waiting our arrival with banners, music and fireworks. But we had been learning lessons in our short visit to China and we remained upon our boats, requesting a small delegation to visit us before we disembarked. The delegation came; it brought to us the cards of those awaiting us on the wharf; our translator read the cards to us; one after another they were, merchants unions, Chamber of Commerce, bankers' associations, women's culture clubs, magistrates—everything except trade unions or peasant unions. We expressed our surprise at the absence of those organizations in which we naturally had an especial interest and which had been

in the foreground of all our previous visits. After much questioning on our part we were finally informed that the trade unions had been "temporarily closed." Upon our insisting upon a detailed explanation they finally told us that the trade unions had been suppressed on account of extravagant wage demands which they said went as high as 500 per cent increase, and on account of a conflict between the trade union leaders and the Women's Emancipation League. The murder of Chen Chang-Shu, trade union secretary, they explained was caused by his threat to kill the magistrate. We endeavored during long conversation to obtain from them any word of regret at the situation existing there; they seemed rather exultant than otherwise, and in answer to a direct question as to whether they did not consider the situation extremely harmful to the revolution, they only answered: "Since the death of Chen there has been order and quiet in the city."

We closed the interview with the refusal to accept their proffered hospitality. On another boat, meanwhile, there had quietly arrived a delegation of Trade Unionists, seven in number, who gave us in full the real story of events. It is very interesting to note the personnel of this first delegation of Kanchow trade unionists who came to us. The seven members were the Executive Committee of the Bank Clerks' Union. To us this was a sort of symbol of the complete unification of all the proletarian elements at Kanchow which had been established under the leadership of the dead Chen. Where else in the world can one imagine the Bank Clerks' Union playing a leading role in a civil war, where the propertyless are united on one side against the bloc of all other classes opposing them?

They told us about how a few weeks before, Chiang Kai Shek had dispatched to Kanchow a new garrison, composed of troops newly-recruited from deserters of the Northern armies, the Second Division, headed by a Kuomintang Commissar, named Li-pin. On the evening of March 6th, Li-pin had appeared with a company of soldiers at a trade union meeting being addressed by Chen and placed him under arrest in the name of Marshal Chiang Kai Shek. When the workers, fearing danger, wished to accompany

Chen to the Magistrate's office they were turned back with the threat of machine gun fire. Chen was unarmed.

The next morning when the workers came to the Magistrate they were given the body of Chen completely riddled with bullets, eighteen of which were still in his body. They found all trade union premises occupied by troops.

The claim that the unions had been demanding wage increases up to 500 per cent was categorically denied by the union leaders; all demands had been carefully adjusted to the economic possibilities of each trade, the very highest demand being for 50 per cent increase (that is, an increase from approximately 14 cents a day, the former wage, to 22 cents a day). The grievance against Chen on the part of the Women's Emancipation League, we learned, consisted in that after this League (a small group of wives and daughters of rich merchants) had refused admittance to a group of trade unionists at a public dramatic entertainment, they had found next day some obscene writing on the wall of the girls' school, and they had blamed this upon Chen. It is rather interesting to note, that when we talked later to the leaders of this Women's League, they justified the murder of Chen on the grounds of this grievance. The entire story as told to us by the Bank Clerks' leaders was later verified by a meeting of the entire trade union executive which met with us on our boat.

I have gone into such great detail in describing the Kanchow situation because it contains in embryo one whole phase of the deep going split that was tearing the Kuomintang into two separate warring bodies throughout China.

4. The Split in the Army

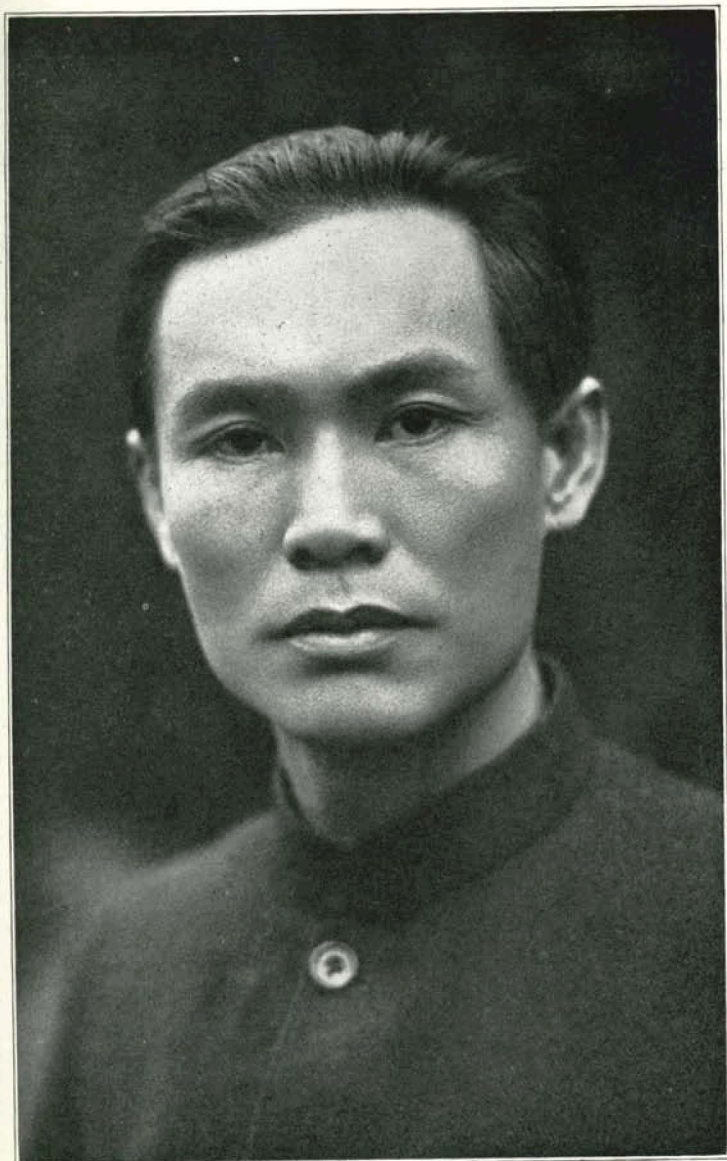
But if it was the Army which had launched the counter-revolution in Kanchow, it was also the Army which played a very active role in changing the situation back again. In the Army, also, the split of the revolutionary forces had penetrated; and troops were active on both sides of the struggle.

A few hours after we met the trade unionists, we were visited by another delegation, this time three workers of the Political Department of the Army, coming from a regiment newly-arrived in Kanchow. In a few brief words they spoke of arriving two days before, their regret that the Army should be in conflict with the trade unions and peasant unions, their failure to get in touch with the Union leaders because of the latter's fear of the military since the murder of Chen, and their willingness to do anything in their power to change the situation. "But we can do nothing alone," they said; "We must have contact and cooperation with the trade unions."

This was the least difficulty, in our eyes, as we quickly told them; we arranged at once a meeting between the Army representatives and the trade unionists. This occurred the next morning, and to the two groups we proposed that a mass meeting be called by the Army, at which the trade union leaders should also speak, to welcome the International Workers Delegation. This meeting could be made the occasion for open mobilization of the revolutionary population and overthrow of the counter-revolutionary officials of the city. This plan was agreed upon without discussion; all those present rushed away to make preparations, and three hours later the meeting was held.

At one o'clock in the afternoon (17 hours after our arrival in Kanchow) we left our boats to be greeted, not by the bankers and merchants associations who had murdered Chen, but by the trade unionists and the new Army division. With banners flying, brass bands playing, fire crackers popping, we marched to the field where the meeting was to be held. Nobody was sure that the meeting would not end in a pitched battle for control of the city.

At one side of the field, against a wall, was erected the speaking platform. On the wall was hung a large portrait of Sun Yat Sen, flanked on either side by pictures of Marx and Lenin. Below was a paper banner inscribed with revolutionary slogans—ending, as all such banners end now in China, with the slogan of "Long Live the World Revolution."



SOU CHEU GING

*Chairman, All-China Labor Federation
Chairman, Chinese Seamen's Union
Chairman, Hongkong Strike Committee
and China's first Minister of Labor.*

中國國民黨中央執行委員會海外部
 OVER-SEA DEPARTMENT
 Central Executive Committee of Kuo Min Tang, Hankow, China

民國 年 月

June 3, 1927

Mr. Ma Tsi Yu
 The Kuomintang
 502 Mason Bldg.
 422-13th Street
 Oakland, Cal., U.S.A.

Dear Comrade:

I have the honor to introduce you Mr. Browder, the
 American Delegation of Pan-Pacific Labor Conference. He now
 returns to America from China where he has given a great
 deal of help to the Kuomintang and the Nationalist Government.
 Hope you and all the comrades welcome him and
 introduce him to the branches of Kuomintang in America.

Sincerely yours

彭澤民



Letter from Pang Chek-min, Chief of Kuomintang Oversea's Department, recommending Browder to the Chinese in America as one who "has given a great deal of help to the Kuomintang and the Nationalist Government."

Ten thousand people were awaiting us in the field. As we walked thru the crowd, with several hundred soldiers aligning themselves along the edges to protect the meeting, each soldier with a revolutionary banner on his bayonet, a great roar of joy and relief came from the crowd. They had a living demonstration that armed force was not all on one side; and that the International Delegation which the Wuhan government and Chiang Kai-shek had united in welcoming to China was also standing squarely in support of them in their struggle against counter-revolution. The support of the International Delegation was doubtless a great moral stimulus; but it was the support of the bayonets that really changed the situation.

Chinese crowds are very emotional; this meeting was the most enthusiastic one I have ever participated in. Out from their hiding came the people's leaders; spoke with us from the platform; and from the meeting, the crowds with their leaders went into the city to re-establish revolutionary order. They were successful without a serious struggle.

Next morning, after 36 hours in Kanchow, our boats resumed their journey down the Kankiang. But we left behind us a different city from that we had found. Counter-revolution had for the time been overcome. Two weeks later, we received a despatch at Hankow, telling of the arrest, trial, and public execution of the murderer of Chen.

In my memory these experiences stand out vividly, not only because of their dramatic quality, but because they contained in a simple, concrete situation, a picture of the condition of a great land of 432 million people. Kanchow was a picture of China.

5. An Idyllic Interlude

Ten hours from Kanchow we stopped for the night at the village of Liangko. All quiet, peaceful. We strolled thru the streets, towards the school on the hillside pointed out to us as the Kuomintang headquarters. At the school we found the secretary of Kuomintang, the school master, surrounded by 40 or 50 young boys who live there.

While Doriot and I were talking to the teacher, I noticed that the shy, timid youngsters who had been so quiet on our entrance were making quite a noise in the next room. I looked thru the door. There was Tom Mann, the 71-year-old dean of our Delegation, in the center of a regular riot; two boys of about eight years were perched on his shoulders, and he was leading the rest in a song. He was singing a nursery rhyme in English:

"London's burning! London's burning!

"Look yonder, look yonder!

"Fire, fire! Fire, fire!

"Pour on water, pour on water!"

With shining eyes and joyous faces the boys were joining in the song, especially the line "Fire, fire," which they had quickly caught. Tom Mann had made 40 fast friends who will never forget him, I'm sure. The ice was broken, and we were all at home.

A Chinese supper in this big family, eaten with chopsticks, and then a game of football (the school was possessed of an old English pigskin which had seen better days) in which Doriot won excessive admiration for the energy with which he kicked the ball high in the air and clear off the field. A walk around the fields in the dusk, and we returned to meet a delegation of trade union leaders who came to talk with us. The boys disappeared. We thought they had gone to bed.

At ten o'clock we prepared to return to our boat for the night. But we had to wait. Something was being prepared outside. Finally we started. There in the football field was the whole school, with lanterns and illuminations, drums and bugles, drawn up in military formation to escort us thru the dark city streets to the river. We made a glorious procession, and I'm sure the International Delegates were just as pleased, right down to the bottom of their hearts, as were the boys who had arranged the "demonstration."

6. Civil War in Kiangsi Province

For three weeks we had been cut off from all connection with the larger world—no newspaper, nothing but an

occasional laconic telegram which only deepened the feeling of isolation. Every day the atmosphere of civil war intensified. More desperate struggles were occurring all about us; where open struggle was not occurring, the tension was almost worse than violent battle. What was going on in Hankow, Shanghai, Canton? What were the foreign powers doing? What was coming out of this chaos of wild struggle?

Down the river, the main highway for a province of 25 million population, we came to the city of Kianfu. An ancient sprawling city of three-quarters of a million people, Kianfu seems at first sight to be a piece of ancient China preserved unchanged from the days when Britons still went about in undressed skins and wielded stone clubs. Only some electric lights gave a modern touch. The only modern industrial workers in the city are the 19 men who run the electric light plant; otherwise, the economic structure of the city seems at first inspection to come unchanged thru the thousands of years. Had the revolution penetrated Kianfu?

It had, with a vengeance! In spite of the fact that in the entire city there were only 19 workers in modern industry (workers in the electric light plant) yet this city was entirely under the control of the left wing of the Kuomintang, having a Communist magistrate and protected by an army garrison of which the officers were all left wingers of the Kuomintang or Communists. The mass organization basis for this left government consisted of the trade unions of coolies and artisans (handicraft workers) and the peasant unions. This was the only spot we found in China which was completely left wing. Everywhere else control was either in the hands of the right wing or of a combination of left wing and wavering centrist elements. I emphasize this situation in Kianfu because it is the best concrete instance that I know of to illustrate the revolutionary role of those sections of the proletariat (coolies and artisans) who have as yet been affected by modern industry only in a negative way. Kianfu was a revolutionary oasis in a desert of counter-revolution in the province, so far as governmental power was concerned.

But from this point on we were again immersed in civil war. At Changshu-ki we found the trade unions existing in a semi-legal condition, the city being under the control of the chief bankers. Here we received our first direct news from the center of revolutionary developments, the Wuhan cities. This was in the form of copy of a manifesto issued by the Hupeh provincial trade union on March 15th, publicly denouncing Chiang Kai Shek as a counter-revolutionist.

Nanchang, our next stop, is a great city, capital of Kiangsi province. Here we had trouble getting contact with the trade unions because actual fighting had been going on around their offices. We found soldiers guarding the trade union premises. Upon reaching the officers in charge we learned that these soldiers were part of the "left wing army." They were protecting the trade unions from the assaults of the "right wing army" and from hired hooligans. The government was completely in the hands of the tools of Chiang Kai Shek. The army garrison was sharply divided into two almost equal divisions; one supported Chiang Kai Shek, the other supporting the left. Between these two armies existed a state of armed truce.

The city Kuomintang, based upon direct contact with the party membership, had elected a complete left wing leadership. This body directed the revolutionary struggle. The provincial Kuomintang, personal appointees of Chiang Kai Shek, controlled the government and directed the counter-revolution. At the moment of our arrival the leaders of the city Kuomintang were directing the struggle from secret headquarters; a printers' strike was being broken by armed force on the part of the reactionaries; the city was under martial law.

We received here the first news of the meeting of the central Kuomintang held in Hankow on March 11th. We learned of the reorganization of the government, the removal of Chiang Kai Shek from his positions of civil and party power, and entrance of the Communists into the government.

The people of Nanchang were seething with revolt against the right wing government. They were only

awaiting the signal to sweep them out of power. In spite of the martial law and prohibition of all meetings, the city Kuomintang and the left wing army immediately arranged a mass demonstration for the International Workers' Delegation. This was held, the big meeting being followed by a procession through the streets of the city, to the slogan of "Down with the reactionary provincial government," and "Down with Chiang Kai Shek."

Kiukiang was our next stop. This city is located at the junction of the Kan River with the Yangtse. Here is located a British concession, the administration of which had just been taken over by the Nationalist government a week before our arrival. On the broad waters of the river we saw the gray gunboats and cruisers of Britain, United States, and Japan, sullenly threatening the Chinese revolution.

The trade unions and city Kuomintang of Kiukiang had just been burying their dead, killed in a pitched battle with the reactionaries a week before our arrival. Here as elsewhere under civil war conditions we had the experience of the actual street fighting being suspended during our visit while the leaders of both sides talked to us. The tactic of the right wing was always to prevent us from getting information, and to endeavor to occupy all of our time with formalities, banquets, and entertainments. The left wing forces always came to us with complete and systematic reports about the number of workers organized in each occupation and industry, the scales of wages, the conditions of the peasants, and their unions, the exact status of the international struggle in the Kuomintang, etc. At Kiukiang we had a symbol of the class forces operating on each side, during a meeting in which leaders from right and left were present with us. The secretary of the general trade unions was giving us a long, detailed report of the working and living conditions of the people; the personal representative of Chiang Kai Shek, a fat bourgeois army officer, partially under the influence of strong liquor, set back in his chair and went to sleep during the interview. His contribution, later, to the work of the International Delegation was to present us with a bas-

ket of fruit and a propaganda speech to the effect that "China needs a strong man and the only strong man is Chiang Kai Shek."

We learned later that a week after we left Kiangsi province, the people had swept Chiang Kai Shek's agents from power and forced them all to flee to Shanghai.

II. THE UNITED FRONT AGAINST CHIANG KAI-SHEK

7. The Leftward Swing of the Kuomintang

We arrived in Hankow on March 31. In a few days we had a clearer idea of the new stage of the Chinese Revolution. The situation was reviewed by me on April 10th, in an article, from which I quote a few pages:

With the reorganization of the Chinese National Government on March 11th at Hankow, and the immediately following capture of Nanking and Shanghai by the revolutionary army, the Chinese revolution has definitely entered a new phase of its development. This new phase is a deepening and intensification of the revolution, at the moment of military victory, when all observers concede that it is but a matter of months when all inner-China will be in the hands of the Nationalist Government.

The new personnel of the Government, established on March 11th, includes participation of the Chinese Communist Party. The Ministry of Agriculture is headed by Tan Ping-shan, just returned from Moscow, where he represented the Chinese party at the recent Plenum of the E. C. C. I. The Ministry of Labor is in the hands of Sou Cheu-Ging, chairman of the All-China Labor Federation, chairman of the Chinese Seamen's Union, leader of the famous Hongkong Strike, and member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party. Appointment of Communists to head these two posts signals a deepening of the social phases, the foundation of the Chinese revolution.

This turn to the left by the Chinese revolution undoubtedly came as a surprise and shock to American, Japanese, and British imperialism. The diplomats of Downing Street and the White House had been flirting with the right wing of the Kuomintang, and undoubtedly thought that their proteges in the Nationalist movement were prepared to step in and seize power just at this moment of military victory. It must have been discon-

certing to them to have events move in exactly the opposite direction. Their chagrin was expressed by the spilling of the blood of hundreds of Chinese men, women, and children by British and American gunboats shelling Nanking and Weichow.

It must be stated that the imperialists had reasons for their reactionary hopes. On March 20, 1926, while the Kuomintang was still confined within the Province of Kwantung so far as power was concerned, under the shadow of Hongkong, symbol of British power in China, the right wing in the party executed a coup d'etat, under the leadership of General Chiang Kai Shek, head of the military forces and the Whampoa Military Academy. From that time on, Chiang Kai Shek assumed supreme power in the party, expelled the Communists from all official positions, and forced the elected Chairman of the party, Wang-Ching-wei, into exile. British and American newspapers suddenly began to speak in a different and more friendly tone about the Nationalist Government. And when Chiang Kai Shek became Marshal of the Northern Expedition, which swept through China in the summer of 1926, and occupied the Wu-Han cities in November, the imperialists thought the right wing was completely in power in the Kuomintang.

Under such conditions, how was it possible to effect such a radical change as we found on arriving in Hankow? How was the right wing defeated in the Party? To what extent does there exist a danger of military revolt against the Nationalist Government? What are the next perspectives of the Chinese Revolution? The following is an attempt to find the answer to these questions in the expressions of the Chinese masses themselves:

8. The Development of Revolutionary Forces

It was when the Northern Expedition of the Revolutionary Army last year marched from Kwantung, through Honan, Kiangsi and Hupeh, capturing half of China, that the forces were prepared which have now overthrown the dictatorship of Chiang Kai Shek in the Kuomintang. These military victories have been hailed by bourgeois writers as

"miraculous"; but the "miracle" lay in the revolutionary masses of the occupied provinces, who were only waiting the opportunity to rise against their militarist rulers. In many places, indeed, the army did not have to fight, finding that the mere news of their advance had been taken as the signal for the uprising of the people, who drove out the militarists.

Close behind the advancing army came the organization of the workers into the All-China Labor Federation, and the peasants into the Peasants' Union. In less than a year, more than a million peasants in the Peasants' Union, were mobilized. With this organization began the real process of revolution—breaking down the basis of power of militarism, the landlords, corrupt magistrates and gentry of the villages—and an enormous widening of the basis of the revolutionary power. From Canton, under the guns of British Hongkong and close to the sea coast, the National Government moved to Wuhan (Hankow), having under its feet a solid ground of half of China, with the many million masses organized under its direction. Once more it became possible to openly struggle against the forces of counter-revolution entrenched within the revolution itself.

9. Struggle Against Chiang Kai-Shek

The issue upon which the struggle between right and left began was, strangely enough, the question of moving the seat of Government to Wuhan. After agreeing to the move, Chiang Kai Shek caused the official heads of the Government to stop in Nanchang, Kiangsi, while the majority of the Kuomintang Central Committee were in Wuhan, with the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Finance, Communications, and Justice. Delay followed delay in completing the move. The Central Committee members in Wuhan set up a Joint Conference to transact Government affairs. Chiang Kai Shek in Nanchang, after greeting the Joint Conference and making proposals to it, changed his mind and denounced it as an illegal body. After negotiations, it was agreed in Nanchang to move to Wuhan on February 9; when that date arrived, postpone-

ment was again made until the 16th; on that date it was again postponed. Whereupon, at an enlarged Joint Conference in Wuhan, it was decided that the Central Kuomintang and the National Government should both begin office to succeed the Joint Conference without further waiting. But Chiang Kai Shek sent out a telegram over the country declaring that the Central Committee had not moved to Wuhan. At the same time, the Kuomintang was circulated with telegrams stating that the Plenary Conference of the Central Executive Committee had been cancelled.

Here was a definite struggle. The Central Kuomintang, openly challenged by Chiang Kai Shek, began to open its ears to the complaints pouring in from the people's organizations against this budding militarist. Suddenly the party awoke to what had been going on. Already, on March 15, the Hupeh Trade Union Executive issued a public denunciation of Chiang Kai Shek. On March 16, the Executive Committee of Hupeh Kuomintang issued a long statement, indicting Chiang Kai Shek as counter-revolutionary. This statement, published in the *Min Kuo Jih Pao*, Hankow, March 16, 1927, contains the following declarations:

The party has lost its power, and all the power has gone to the hands of a dictator and the highest organization of the party has lost its functions.

Help the Central Executive Committee to overthrow the condition of usurpation, to restore the spirit of democracy, to make all party members obey the orders of the party. All political and military affairs should be unified under the direction of the party Every person, no matter who he is, should submit to the power of the party Only the oppressed masses are the supervisor of the party. Only the principles of Chung Li (Sun Yat Sen) and his spirit are the director of the party . . .

Now it is time for us to manifest the power of the party. Whether our party will even exist depends entirely upon whether we can make the power of the party felt.

On March 25, a special issue of the Kuomintang official daily paper, *Min Kuo Jih Pao*, for the discussion of the party situation, contained an article entitled: "Arise, revolutionary masses, and unite together to overthrow Chiang Kai Shek." Some paragraphs from this article follow:

"Chiang Kai Shek who proclaims himself the genuine follower of the President, has proved himself counter-revolutionary. His reactionary movements in the past are too numerous to give an exhaustive account.

Immediately after he left the Whampoa Academy, he concluded with a handful of students to stabilize his own position and power. He secretly helped the Sunyatsenist Association to disturbance, causing the Chung Shan cruiser incident on March 20, last year, and the departure of Comrade Wang Ching-wei, who is the only successor of the President and who is most respected by the revolutionary masses. He prevented also the Central Kuomintang and the Nationalist Government to remove to Hupeh, monopolizing the party affairs, violating the party organization, frustrating the party discipline and practising dictatorship."

After describing how Chiang Kai Shek had, by appointment, taken possession of all departments of the party through his personal friends, the article continues:

"He secretly employed men to destroy the various provincial, sectional, and overseas party organizations, despatching soldiers to disperse the Canton Municipal Kuomintang, and harboring all reactionary elements Since the revolutionary army occupied Kiangsi, he has dispersed the Kiangsi Provincial Kuomintang with no reasons, and supported the old and indiscreet Chang Ching Ki-ang and Wong Fu He has entered into collusion with the Fengtien and Shantung militarists to frustrate the diplomatic policy of the Nationalist Government, disavowing the reclamation of Hankow with the purpose of compromising with the imperialists He has also changed the diplomatic policy, severing relations with Russia, entering into intimacy with Japan, and defaming the Russian advisors He intimidated the Central Executive Committee with military force, and secretly ordered Ni Pi, party representative of the First Division, to murder Chen Tsan Yen, chairman of the General Labor Union at Kanchow He dispersed the Nanchang Municipal Party, and ordered the arrest of its supervision committee, he attacked the Nanchang Students' Union, and ordered the arrest of its committee; butchered four responsible members of the Kuikiang Municipal Party and General Labor Union, devastated the Political Department of the Sixth Army; and secretly ordered the prohibition of the Hankow Min Kuo Jih Pao and Chow Kwong Pao.

. . . What is the difference between Chiang Kai Shek's murdering the workers at Kiukiang, and Wu Pei-fu's murdering the workers of Kin Han Railway, and between his poisoning party members and Chang Tsung-chang's killing the Nationalists at Tientsin?

To speak frankly, Chiang Kai Shek is no longer a Kuomintang member, for he has fundamentally overthrown the President's policy of alliance with Russia, and the Peasant and Labor policies. He is not worthy to be a follower of the President. He is not worthy to be a man

Our present demand is to request the Central Kuomintang to remove him from the office of Commander-in-Chief of the Revolutionary Army, abrogate his authority as Executive Committeeman and as Principal of the Central Politico-Military Academy, and summon him for investigation and punishment."

10. A Chinese "Napoleon"?

Now it had become clear what was the political significance of the struggle between Nanchang and Hankow over the location of the seat of Government. From Nanchang, the reaction could base itself, first upon its control of the Provincial apparatus, and from there, move to its second, and more fundamental base, contact with the imperialist forces in Shanghai and the Northern generals with whom it was negotiating. Hankow (Wuhan cities), on the other hand, is the center of the most intense revolutionary spirit and organization, and already the location from which was functioning the apparatus of the Kuomintang Government, which it was necessary for the reaction to disrupt.

The magic of military glory surrounding the name of the Commander-in-Chief of the victorious Revolutionary Armies was relied upon to sway the masses away from the leadership of the Central Kuomintang. Further, it was expected that again, as on March 20, 1926, military pressure would intimidate the Central Committee, and cause it to submit. The strategy of reaction was the production of a Chinese Napoleon.

Already I have indicated the forces that checkmated this strategy. The Central Kuomintang, through the Northern Expedition, had emerged from the narrow confines of Kwantung Province; there had been an enormous release of revolutionary forces, in the organization of eight million peasants and workers in the conquered Provinces; the masses had learned that their own revolutionary energy and initiative was the basis of the military victories; and

above all, the army itself had been to some extent transformed, through the work of the revolutionary Political Section, into an army of conscious revolutionists, connecting itself everywhere with the trade unions and peasant unions, so that it could no longer be used as a blind tool by those holding military command at the top.

11. Some Favorable Developments in the Army

In China, in the midst of revolution, the army is necessarily the immediately decisive factor. What was the attitude of the army, therefore, in this inner struggle? A few of my own contacts with the army will indicate what was going on in many places:

(1) At Whanpoa Military Academy, the stronghold of Chiang Kai Shek, the International Workers' Delegation was received by a wildly enthusiastic demonstration of 5,000 cadets, who sang "The Internationale" and shouted in unison slogans which included, "Follow the advice of the Communist International."

(2) At Kanchow, where reaction had crushed the Labor movement by means of an Army Division, newly recruited from Northern deserters, another Division, consisting of experienced revolutionary troops and politically-trained leaders, arriving in Kanchow just a few days ahead of the International Delegation, used our visit to arrange a public demonstration for the trade unions, brought them out of their illegality under the protection of the army, and completely reversed the local situation in a few hours.

(3) At Nanchang, under the nose of General Headquarters, the local garrison staged a demonstration for the International Delegation, at which a private soldier spoke in public defiance of the policy of Chiang Kai Shek; later, the garrison protected the trade unions in a mass meeting, violating the martial law proclaimed by the reaction, at which the slogan was proclaimed: "Down with the reaction which controls the Provincial Kuomintang."

(4) On April 8, the Wuchang Political-Military Academy, jointly with the staff of the Political Section of the army, gave a reception to the International Delegation, delegates of the Indian National Party, to the new Labor

Minister, and to the head of the Peasants' Union. The meeting, opened by the chairman of the National Government, cheered the speech of Kou Yu-Han, editor of the *Min Kuo Jih Pao*, denouncing Chiang Kai Shek and demanding his removal and trial before the party. All assembled soldiers and leaders of people's organizations joined in the slogan: "Down with Chiang Kai Shek."

* * * *

Since writing the above, I attended the celebration of the establishment of the new National Government, the new Hupeh Government, and welcome to Wang Ching-wei, leader of the Kuomintang, exiled last year by Chiang Kai Shek and now returned on the request of the Central Committee. Here also, the slogan was: "Down with Chiang Kai Shek."

Yesterday (April 10) was published a joint statement by Wang Ching-wei and Chen Tu-shiu, secretary of the Chinese Communist Party, issued at Shanghai on April 5, of which the following are extracts:

"The Communist Party of China always has recognized frankly and honestly that the Kuomintang and the Three People's Principles laid down by our late leader, Sun Yat-sen, are the foundation of the Nationalist movement. It is only counter-revolutionaries who seek to overthrow the San Min principles of the Kuomintang, and it is only counter-revolutionaries who seek to split the Nationalist front

"It is true that the Communist Party and the Kuomintang have different programmes, but the essential points for the members of both parties is that they be guided by the spirit of earnest co-operation in their struggle for a free united China. Those who understand the Communist Party conception of the revolution and the Communist Party attitude toward the Kuomintang, will certainly not doubt the wisdom of Sun Yat-sen in saying that the two parties should co-operate."

* * * *

A few days after the above review was written, Chiang Kai Shek openly broke with the Wuhan government, massacred the workers of Shanghai, Nanking, Can-

ton, and all other cities within his reach, and proclaimed the establishment of his right wing "government" at Nanking. The nationalist armies were definitely divided on a national scale into two hostile bodies.

12. "A Part of the World Revolution"

The atmosphere in Hankow at the time of our arrival, both as regards the heads of the government and the masses of the people, can be described in no better way than by copying a few items from the *People's Tribune*, an English language daily published in Hankow, which relates to the reception given the Delegation by the government and the masses, followed by the manifesto which was issued by the International Delegation to the imperialist soldiers and sailors of the foreign powers:

Highest Political Body of Revolutionary China Receives And Hears International Workers' Delegation.

On April 2nd, the International Workers' Delegation was received by the Enlarged Political Council of the Kuomintang Central Executive Committee, at its session.

The session was opened by Mr. Hsu Chien, Minister of Justice in the Nationalist Government. Mr. Hsu Chien in his opening address recalled how Dr. Sun Yat Sen had clearly seen and understood the necessity for an alliance with the revolutionary proletariat of the West. Dr. Sun had also clearly understood that the Chinese Revolution was an integral part of the World Revolution. Greeting the Delegation in warm and expressive words, the speaker concluded by saying that at this critical period and in spite of all difficulties and obstacles revolutionary China will continue its struggle for liberation to the end.

Just before the international delegates were given the floor, the Council was addressed by Mrs. Ho Shang-nee, the widow of the great revolutionary disciple of Dr. Sun—Liao Chung Kai. She sketched briefly the early activities of Dr. Sun Yat Sen in the beginning of this century. She greeted the International Workers' Delegation whose presence recalled to her mind those years when the revolutionary party was in its formation under the able guidance of the great revolutionary leader Sun.

Comrade Jaques Doriot then addressed the Political Council, greeting it in the name of the revolutionary proletariat of France and expressing the complete and unreserved solidarity of the millions of workers, he represents with the Chinese Revolution.

Earl Browder, delegate from America, spoke next. After greeting the gathering as the highest organ of the Chinese revolution, and explaining why the workers of the West have such deep confidence in the complete success of the revolution, he dealt at length with the situation of American Imperialism and its role.

After the speech of the American delegate, Comrade Jaques Doriot, the French representative, announced that the International Workers' Delegation, having cognizance of the most recent provocations of the imperialist powers in different parts of China, particularly at Nanking where more than six hundred Chinese were killed in the unjustifiable bombardment perpetrated by British and American warships, have decided to address a telegram to labor and peasant organizations of the world.

The International Workers' Delegation have also issued an Appeal to the foreign soldiers and sailors in China (this appeal appears below), calling upon them to refuse to be used by the imperialists as tools of oppression against the Chinese people.

Before the Delegation left the Session of the Political Council, Mr. Sun Fo, the son of Dr. Sun Yat Sen, moved a resolution which was adopted unanimously, greeting the International Workers' Delegation and declaring that henceforth the closest contact will be maintained with the international proletariat in the great struggle of the Chinese Revolution which is but a part of the World Revolution.

Fifty Thousand People Greet International Workers' Delegation

Over fifty thousand people filled the Hankow race course on Sunday, April 3rd, to greet the International Workers' Delegation.

From early morning till noon the streets of the city were thronged with eager masses marching towards the race course where four platforms flanked the extensive field. It was a stirring spectacle to see this ocean of humanity with countless banners and flags bearing inscriptions that reflected the mood of the masses of workers and peasants at this critical moment which revolutionary China is living through, and manifested the attitude of the Chinese people towards the International Workers' Delegation.

Long after the opening of the mass meeting thousands of people were still pouring into the field. Special trains packed with people could be seen drawing into the adjacent railway station, and discharging fresh thousands of workers and peasants.

The mass meeting was opened by Li Li Sam from the All-China Labor Federation. The assembled masses were addressed



MEETING OF PEASANTS' UNION OF NAMHAIHSIEN, KWANTUNG PROVINCE.

The armed men in front are of the Nationalist Army, fraternizing with the peasants. Those toward the back who are armed, are the Peasant Union's own Defense Corps, the beginnings of the Chinese Red Army.



INTERNATIONAL WORKERS DELEGATION TO CHINA

*Standing, Earl Browder and Sydor Stoler
Sitting, Tom Mann and Jacques Doriot.*

simultaneously from the four platforms by Tom Mann, Earl Browder, Jaques Doriot and Sydor Stoler.

The great demonstration at Hankow was a further proof of the feeling of solidarity of the masses of China with the workers of the West, to whom they look for aid in their heroic struggle to throw off the yoke of foreign imperialist oppression.

* * *

Appeal of the International Workers' Delegation to the Troops of the Imperialist Powers in China.

Hankow, April 2, 1927.

To the Soldiers and Sailors of Great Britain, France and America:

The ruling class of your country has sent you to China. It wants to use you as a servile instrument in its policy of oppression against the Chinese people. It wants to use you to maintain the shameful privileges which it enjoys in this country.

It is the very same ruling class which exploits you, and your brothers and sisters, in your own country. It is the same class which draws scandalous profits and enriches itself from your toil and misery. It is the same class which fights mercilessly against you, soldiers and sailors, who but yesterday were workers and farmers yourselves, and who tomorrow will be workers and farmers again.

Like you, the Chinese people suffer from this exploitation. Like you, they aspire to liberation. Like you, they struggle to improve their miserable conditions.

For two months, our Delegation, consisting of representatives of revolutionary labor organizations of England, America, and France, has visited numerous organizations of the Chinese people. It has studied the situation of the workers, of the peasants, of the merchants, of the students, in town and village. It has found untold misery caused by the oppression of imperialism and its ally in China, local militarism. The International Workers' Delegation are profoundly convinced that the cause for which the Chinese people are fighting is a just cause.

The ruling classes which sent you, sailors and soldiers, here, accuses the Chinese people of hatred against foreigners. You are told that the hatred of the Chinese people is directed particularly against you. Even if this were really the case it would indeed be comprehensible, for, besides the untold misery which the imperialists impose upon the Chinese people, they have periodically, during the past two years, instituted massacres and bloodshed such as the Shamen, Shanghai (several massacres), Hankow and Wanhsien massacres in which hundreds of Chinese were massacred in cold blood. Only the other day in order to avenge the six Europeans who were killed by the paid agents provocateurs of the Northern militarists, the

British and American imperialists bombarded the city of Nanking, killing over six hundred defenseless Chinese.

However, our Delegation, consisting of representatives of the British, French and American workers, have traversed Southern China, and have everywhere been received with open arms and with the greatest enthusiasm by the Chinese people. Everywhere the workers, peasants, students, soldiers, merchants and artisans have manifested the complete unity of the oppressed peoples of the East with the exploited classes of the West. You, who are of the flesh and blood of the workers and peasants of your respective countries, are being deceived by those who have sent you here as to the true nature of the spirit and attitude of the Chinese people, in order that you may be used as instruments in the perpetration of criminal acts which are unworthy of your class and of yourselves.

We, the representatives of millions of workers of England, France and America, consider it our imperative duty to appeal to your conscience as workers and to reveal to you the horror of the crimes which the imperialists want you to commit against a people which is fighting for its freedom.

It is your duty and in your own interests that you who are yourselves being exploited should not fight against the Chinese people, but on the contrary, you must aid it in its struggle for liberation. It is your duty and in your own interests not to aid those who exploit you; on the contrary, you should fight against them.

In the name of the revolutionary workers of our countries, and fully conscious of the importance of such an act, we appeal to you not lend yourselves to the criminal action for which you are being used.

You are told to shoot and kill the Chinese.

We tell you to fraternise with the Chinese people.

The International Workers' Delegation:

Tom Mann (England)

Browder (America)

Doriot (France).

III. THE CHINESE LABOR MOVEMENT

From what has already been said, it will be clear that the Chinese trade union movement has played a leading role in the Revolution, and that its importance is constantly increasing. Everywhere we went we gathered the most detailed information about this movement. At Hankow we received our most valuable contact with it. I choose from my note book two items, as being best calculated, in a brief space, to give a correct idea of the trade unions: First, is a brief historical sketch of the labor movement, given me in an interview by Sou Cheu Ging, Teng Tsung-hsia, and Li Li-san, leaders of the All-China Labor Federation; second, is a description of one particular union, the Wuhan Textile Workers' Union.

13. Historical Sketch of the Chinese Labor Movement

The Chinese trade union movement, as a power affecting the national life, dates from 1919. It arose during the great anti-Japanese movement, protesting against the "21 points," known as the "Fourth of May movement." This began as a student movement. Some embryonic organizations had existed previously, as those among the railway workers on the Peking-Mukden line and the Peking-Hankow line, but had not yet become properly a trade union movement. These embryonic groups were transformed into trade unions during 1919.

At the same time in Shanghai there broke out the strikes of textile workers and dockers, who were in Japanese employ, 20,000 in all; while in Hongkong occurred a large metal workers' strike. These were successful, and gave a great impetus to the labor movement elsewhere. During this time the trade unions in Kwantung province made especial progress, in Canton alone their number increasing from 20 to 100 during 1919. This year may therefore be called the real beginning of the Chinese labor movement.

Among the most important influences affecting the

course of development of the labor movement were the following:

1. The Russian revolution, which was made known to the Chinese masses through several weekly propaganda papers.

2. The rising Chinese national movement which began to absorb masses into its ranks. A seamen's union was organized at that time under the influence of the Kuomintang; there existed the Social-Republican party, and also many anarchist groups. The political movement was especially strong in Canton.

3. The workers had lived through several insurrections which had failed; from these, the lessons of the necessity for strong, centralized organization had penetrated large masses.

4. Organization of the Chinese Communist Party, which furnished a central direction for the movement; this was done through a special organ, called the "Secretariat of the Chinese Labor Movement," with branches in Shanghai, Canton, and Hankow.

After 1919, the trade unions grew steadily. But it was not until 1922, when another wave of struggles broke out, that the First All-China Congress was held. First among the battles of 1922, was the great Hongkong Seamen's strike, which was declared on January 12 and lasted 56 days. Before it ended in the granting of the workers' demands, all Hongkong labor had been drawn into the struggle in a General Strike which included the railwaymen. The successful outcome of this struggle stimulated the workers of the entire country.

The center of the 1922 movement was the Railwaymen's organization, particularly that of the Peking-Hankow line, which had 16 branches with 18,000 members. A successful strike on this line was quickly followed by railway strikes throughout Central and Northern China; Peking-Mukden line, Changchow-Haichow line, etc. Through this movement 50,000 railwaymen were organized into the Union.

In the Province of Hupeh, a General Trade Union

(Provincial Federation) was established with 23 trade unions and 35,000 members.

In Hunan province, after a long strike of 13,000 miners of An-yuen, the movement was established with 25 unions, in which were 40,000 members.

The Shanghai movement was very active, with strikes of seamen, silk filature workers, postmen, and others. All these strikes, except that of the seamen, were, however, unsuccessful, and the movement there received a setback, only 20,000 members being organized as a result of the 1922 movement.

On May 1, 1922, the First All-China Labor Congress was held in Canton, on the initiative of the "Secretariat of the Chinese Labor movement." A membership of 230,000 was represented. The most important resolution of this Congress was that providing for the industrial form of organization.

It had been decided at the First Congress to convene the Second Congress at Hankow on May 1, 1923. But on February 7, occurred the massacre in Hankow of the railway leaders and others by Wu Pei-fu, and white terror reigned throughout China. This massacre and repression was planned and ordered by British imperialists who were financing Wu Pei-fu. The immediate occasion for it was the creation of the General Union of Railwaymen on the Peking-Hankow line; Wu Pei-fu dissolved the union, whereupon a general strike broke out which was joined by all Hankow workers. An All-China strike was imminent. But the movement was crushed by the army of Wu Pei-fu, who executed 43 leaders, imprisoned unknown hundreds, and dissolved all trade unions. Even sympathizing schools here closed, and active unionists were driven from the factories and railroads when not imprisoned and shot. During this reign of terror the entire movement was crushed, except at Canton where the trade unions remained intact.

Until September, 1924, there was a period of reaction. Then the movement began to revive. On January 18, 1925, occurred the beginning of a series of strikes in Shanghai, Tsingtao, and other cities. These were all successful, and

regained some of the losses of hours, wages, and conditions which had been lost in the period of reaction. This period had been made use of by the workers to assimilate the lessons of past experiences. There occurred during this period a great change among the leaders of the Kuomintang, who finally had come to realize the vastly important role of the working class in the Chinese national revolution. The masses themselves had achieved political consciousness and learned the necessity of strong trade unions. International relations had been established during the struggle, when the Russian and Japanese trade unions sent telegrams of solidarity, and the Chinese trade unions had addressed themselves to the trade union movement of the world.

On May 1, 1925, the Second All-China Labor Congress was held at Canton, in an atmosphere of a rising movement. More than 600,000 members were represented. At this Congress the All-China Labor Federation was definitely formed; theory, tactics, and organizational methods firmly established, and a recognized central leadership set up.

Quickly thereafter followed the massacre of May 30th at Shanghai, and the Shakee massacre at Canton on June 23rd, by the British imperialists. These occurrences were the signal for a national upheaval. Strikes broke out everywhere. The most notable of these was the glorious strike of the Hongkong and Canton workers against the British, and their blockade of Hongkong for 17 months (which wiped out Hongkong trade and caused the British a loss of over 500 million dollars). In Shanghai more than 300,000 workers came into the trade unions. Great movements sprang up at Dairen, Tientsin, Tsingtao, Nanking, Kiukiang, Hankow, Changsha. Living and working conditions were everywhere improved. In Shanghai a general wage increase of 15% was secured. Not only the industrial workers, but also the artisans throughout China flocked into the movement.

The Third All-China Labor Congress was held on May 1, 1926, in Canton. Already there were 1,200,000 members. Concrete resolutions were adopted on all prob-

lems of the movement. The May 30 movement had raised the level of the entire working class. Previously the political side of the trade unions had not been firm; now the trade unions were deep in the political struggle and were leading it. Active and permanent contact had been established with the International labor movement. The Chinese labor movement had become mature.

Militarist agents of imperialism still tried to crush the rising trade union movement, especially at Tientsin, Tsingtao, Shanghai and Mukden. But steady and rapid progress continued, and continues up to today. The masses of all China had been won to the trade unions and for the Revolution.

The Northern Expedition of the Revolutionary Armies was prepared by the great national strike movement following May 30th. This was the basis of the military victories, which resulted in the occupation of the Yangtze Valley, the capture of Nanking and Shanghai, and the drive on Peking. When, for example, the Southern Armies entered Shanghai, they found the city already policed by the Workers' Guards, and an administration jointly established by the trade unions, commercial associations, and students unions, already functioning.

This as a general and very brief review of the history of the Chinese labor movement up to the spring of 1927. Results which in Europe or America would have taken decades to accomplish, have in China taken but a few years. Because even the smallest demands could not be realized without revolutionary struggle, therefore the trade unions have rapidly advanced through the whole scale, from the most elementary economic demands right up to participation in Government and management.

14. Textile Workers of the Wuhan Cities

On April 11th, we visited the Textile Workers' Union, held a meeting with their delegates' council, and visited two of the largest cotton mills in Wuhan. It was one of the most interesting days we have had in China. Crossing the river from Hankow in a steam launch, we were met

at the Wuchang wharf by about 200 delegates of the Union, their picket corps (uniformed and armed), the children's organization (uniformed and drilled), and a band of musicians belonging to the Union. With them we marched through the streets, accompanied by music and fire-crackers, to the meeting hall.

This hall proved to be an American church, which was the only building in the neighborhood large enough for the gathering. The altar had been transformed with red flags, and large pictures of Lenin, Sun Yet Sen and Karl Marx. The meeting was opened by singing "The Internationale," which was joined in lustily by men, women and children; all knew the words, and in China the tune is still a matter of secondary importance; it is the spirit that is important in singing "The Internationale," and never have I heard it sung even in Russia, with greater fervor.

The Chinese workers are great believers in the committee system. They do not leave their affairs to single individuals. Even a meeting such as this was managed by a "presiding body" of five, of whom two were women. No union meeting is opened without the approval of the presiding body by the members.

After a few hours of speech-making the meeting closed in high spirits, heightened by the merriment produced when we foreign delegates cried the slogans of the meeting in Chinese language.

After the meeting we went to the Trade Union Headquarters. This occupies a modern building, near the largest factory, set in a neat courtyard. It is thoroughly modern throughout, the offices are models of neatness, efficiency, and organization, and would be a credit to any labor union in the world. We were deeply impressed by the thoroughness with which every detail was taken care of, especially when we remembered that this Union has existed only since the occupation by the Revolutionary Army, or less than six months.

From the Union offices, we went to the largest mill, the Hankow Dee Yee Cotton Spinning and Weaving Co. This is a strictly modern plant, erected in 1919, with more than 90,000 spindles, 1,200 looms, and employing 9,700

workers, of whom more than half are women in this mill, and about one quarter are children from eight to fourteen years. The machinery is all British, except the engine room and electrical equipment, which seemed to be American. Many of the machines date from 1923, the rest 1920, when the first installation was made. The plant is owned and manned throughout by Chinese. There are no foreigners employed in any capacity.

After visiting this mill and another, the Yu Wah mill with 41,000 spindles and 4,400 workers, we talked with the representatives of the Textile Workers Union about their organization, and about the living and working conditions. The following information was given us by Han Yu-win and Fun Chin-vin, members of the Executive Bureau of the Wuhan Union. The last-named is a young woman, head of the secretarial department and of the women's committee.

The Wuhan Textile Workers Union has 37,096 members. These are organized in 11 branch unions. Six branches are based upon the six large cotton mills in Wuhan, one branch to one mill; two branches are silk workers, one of weavers, one of dye workers, and one of hosiery workers. The last two named are branches of artisans, employed in myriad small shops.

In the big mills, the inner organization of the branch proceeds first, with the organization of a row of spinners (for example), each row or group of machines being the basis of the first unit of organization of the workers. This group of workers elects a delegate to a section committee. The sections of each main department join together to form a department committee. From the department committees the branch is formed.

The Dee Yee Mill, which we visited, has 9,700 workers. Here one delegate is elected by each 50 members to a branch Assembly, which is the supreme body of the branch, electing the standing executives, delegates to higher bodies, etc.

The General Executive Committee for the Wuhan General Textile Workers Union, is elected by a meeting of branch delegates, with each branch represented in pro-

portion to its membership. This delegates' meeting is held once a year; but a smaller number of permanent delegates meet every month. The Executive Committee has 25 members, who elect a Standing Committee (or Executive Bureau) of seven, for conduct of the business. Each one of the Standing Committee is in charge of a Department (Secretarial, Finance, Propaganda, Women's Department, etc.).

In the Executive Committee of each Branch, there must be at least one woman and one youth; this is to guarantee that proper attention shall be given to the special problems of women and children. The voting power was stated to be: men 45%, women 32%, children 23%, in the union as a whole; but here, as elsewhere in the world, the men predominate in the leadership more than in the general numbers.

The Union has a Picket Corps of 500 workers, trained under control of the General Union. All but 60 of these work regularly in the mills, and are only called for special service. The other 60 are on permanent duty, the personnel being changed every three months, and the workers being paid by the factory to which they belong. Support of this picket body is one of the obligations of the employers contained in the contract with the Union. Ten of the pickets are armed with rifles.

Another interesting provision of the Union contract with the employers, is the provision of an Educational Fund, to which the employers pay \$4,000 per month, for the benefit of the textile workers. This money goes into the general educational scheme of the Hupeh Provincial General Trade Union.

The general condition of the industry is slack, and there is much unemployment. This is due to civil war conditions, interruption of transport, etc. Conditions of labor are bad, but rather above the average of even industrial workers in China, and considerably better than artisans. Hours of labor are 12 per day. In most of the mills there is no lunch time off. Pay is mostly by piece-work. Wages run from 30 to 50 cents per day, depending upon the volume of work available, being now about 30 cents.

The working week is six days. The six-day week prevails in Shanghai also, but in Hankow the workers get paid for seven days, the extra day being paid for at the average rate of earnings for the week. Conditions and wages of women are somewhat below that of men. The trade union is giving special attention to the problem of women and children, but in the six months of its existence has yet made few improvements in this respect.

A set of demands has been formulated by the Union, which indicate their immediate desires regarding improvement of conditions. These include: 1. eight-hour day; 2. One-hour lunch period; 3. Minimum daily wage; 4. Punitive overtime for night work; 5. Enlargement of lodgings; 6. Improvement of toilets and health conditions; 7. Dining rooms and rest rooms in mills; 8. Abolition of child labor under 12 years, etc., etc.

The few improvements that have so far been achieved in the conditions of women and children are, briefly: women get six weeks vacation with full pay at childbirth; special schools for the children have been established by the Trade Union; factories provide special rooms for feeding children; special departments of the Union have the duty to attend to the needs, demands, and grievances of women and children from day to day.

In the administration of the Union, the women are taking a constantly increasing part. Although women in China are only now emerging from the terrible fetters of feudalism, bound-feet, and double-oppression, they are displaying a remarkable talent which already has given them a position in the trade union movement of China at least equal to that of women in the United States.

This union above described is, of course, one of the best organized unions in the newly-acquired territory of the Nationalist Government. Some unions, which existed before for many years during the illegal period, are stronger and more solid. Others of the new organizations in the trade union movement may not yet make such a good showing. But on the whole, the Textile Workers Union of Wuhan may serve as a good sample of the Chinese Labor Movement.

15. Wages and Working Conditions in Canton

There is so little exact data on wages and working conditions in China, that every bit of information that can be added to the store of information on the subject is of value. Therefore, I have recorded the most important observations made on this subject during a five-month visit covering the Provinces of Kwantung, Kiangsi, Hupeh and Hunan.

Canton (Kwantung Province) was our first point of investigation. This is a city of over a million population, the Southern gateway to China, the center of the Nationalist movement for years, and the only place in China where trade unions were legal before the middle of last year. Canton was the headquarters of the All-China Labor Federation from 1922 to the beginning of 1927. It is not, however, a modern industrial city, like Shanghai or Hankow, but almost entirely commercial and handicraft industries. However, the workers of Canton were enjoying conditions better than we found later in any other place.

There are approximately 230,000 workers in Canton organized in the trade unions. Of these about 10,000 are industrial workers in the modern sense, the rest being artisans, shop clerks, and coolies. These industrial workers constitute a sort of economic aristocracy, their wages and working conditions being much higher than the rest of the working classes. They consist of, in the main, seamen, railway workers, chauffeurs, electric light and waterworks employes, arsenal workers, the employes of a few small textile mills and machine shops, and modern printing plants.

The ordinary, usual wage of workers in these lines is \$30 per month. (\$1 Chinese is nominally about the same as 1 ruble Russian, or 50 cents U. S., but Chinese currencies are almost universally depreciated about 20% at this time.) This wage allows for no rest days; Sundays are worked the same as other days, this being true in Canton for ALL workers. The railroad workers get a wage somewhat above this average, because, although they also work on Sundays, they now get paid double-time for

this day. Chauffeurs are another special category; on account of shortage of skilled men they were receiving \$60 (Chinese) per month. Almost all of these 10,000 workers have the 8-hour day, nominally, but "military emergencies" constantly cancel this "rule."

The artisans (handicraft workers) constitute the main body of the Canton working class. The principal groups are, the workers in the matting, bamboo work, ivory and bone, silk, tea, metal, herbs, earthenware, fire-crackers, paper, furniture, wood-carving, marble, and precious stones. They generally work, 2 to 6 artisans, in the shop with their employer, who also works alongside of them. These little shops are scattered along the business streets, the entire front being open, the men working next to the street where the prospective customers are passing along. They eat and live with their employer, working 12 to 16 hours per day, seven days per week; their only holidays are at New Years, when they have 7 to 10 days. Apprentices work 3 to 5 years for nothing but food and bed; at the end of their apprenticeship they begin to draw wages, \$5 to \$7 per month, which gradually increases, up to \$20 per month, with a very few highly skilled workers, of course, getting more. The wage for artisans of average skill is about \$20 per month when he has been in the trade for 10 years. In addition to his wage, the artisan gets fed a bowl of rice, twice or three times a day, with a piece of pork twice a month; and has a hole to sleep in, or a bench in the shop.

The coolies form a large and important part of the working class in Canton, as everywhere in China. There are several groups, such as rickshaw coolies, warehouse coolies, etc. They perform the labor that in other countries is done by animals or machinery; it is absolutely "inhuman," if that word can have any meaning, as it is almost impossible to believe that human beings can continue to live, bearing such burdens every day in the year, for 10 to 14 hours a day. The rickshaw coolies take the place of horses and automobiles for city transport, and spend hours on end, running at a smart pace, to carry their more fortunate fellow citizens several miles for from

5 to 10 cents. These coolies not only bear the burden of their physical loads, but also a terrific burden of taxation and middle man. Thus, the rickshaw coolies, even in Canton, pay a tax which, in proportion to their earnings, is doubtless the heaviest borne by any section of the population. Paid in the first place to the Government by the owner of the rickshaw, it is then added to the rent which the coolie must pay; but when it gets to the coolie it is 12 cents per day, instead of five. The coolies of all kinds and grades suffer from the middleman, who contracts jobs and then lets them out to all sorts of sub-middlemen, so that the coolies get about half or less of what has actually been paid for the work. I was told of instances which the Union had investigated, where the coolies had received less than 20%. The average earnings of an able-bodied young coolie is \$15 (Chinese) per month—when employed. Unemployment, a terrible scourge for all kinds of labor in China, is especially chronic among the coolies, on account of the constant flow of peasants, driven from the land, coming into the cities. Old and infirm coolies live from hand to mouth on the few coppers they pick up here and there from odd jobs. I have seen in Canton, great heavy carts loaded high with cans bearing the "Socony" (Standard Oil Co. of New York) label, being pulled thru the streets by gangs of men, women, and children, evidently families, starved-looking, gaunt and exhausted, straining with all their might at the ropes—and earning an average of 15 cents each for twelve hours labor, to the greater profit of Standard Oil. It made me understand more clearly why Rockefeller prizes his Chinese business, and why capitalists everywhere are determined that the "Bolshevik" trade unions of China must be destroyed.

The clerks, in stores, shops, and tea houses, form another large group. In Canton about 35,000 are organized in the trade unions. There are still traces in Canton of the semi-slave, semi-feudal conditions under which this class works still in most places in China. The Unions have, however, abolished many of the worst abuses, such as corporal punishment, unlimited hours, etc. Gradually order and system is being brought even into the lives of

these miserable shop clerks. In Canton, after a long strike, the hours of clerks in the big department stores were limited to 10 per day. In the small stores hours are still 13 to 16 per day. In some of the tea houses the hours are 12, because they keep open night and day and the Union will no longer permit the 24-hour shift that used to prevail, when the workers slept at odd moments when there were no customers but had to be present at all times ready for work. Almost all of them live and eat in the shops, their lodgings usually consisting of a shelf under a counter, or beneath a staircase, and their food the inevitable bowl of rice, with a bit of pork on feast days. They begin work as apprentices, with no wages, which only start with the fourth year. Wages in the small and poorer shops average average \$10 per month; in the big stores and the richer establishments, the average is \$15 per month.

Women and child labor is even more exploited than that of men. Generally their wages are from 30% to 60% of that of men. Besides ordinary coolie labor, they are found principally in the small factories (matches, hosiery, silk, food preparation, etc.). There are 16,000 women members in the trade unions of Canton, which the union leaders claim is 80% of the women workers. The hosiery workers are 100% organized, the match factories 70%. Women and children have relatively made the greatest gains from trade union organization.

Hygienic conditions are indescribably bad. That is, of course, true for the entire population, including employers, for sanitation in a modern sense is only in its beginnings. Only in the modern industries, the Government plants, big department stores, is there a beginning of sanitation and hygiene. These also have dispensaries with modern medical attendance for the workers.

16. Conditions in the Interior

The conditions described above are in Canton, a great city, the most modern in China aside from Shanghai and Hankow, where the trade unions had been able to work openly for several years. What then must the conditions

be in the interior? We had an opportunity to see at first hand when we began our overland trip to Hankow. A few typical towns along the route will give a picture of the general conditions.

Namyung is the last town on the Pei Kiang, or North River, northern Kwantung Province, near the Tayu mountains bordering Kiangsi Province. It is reached by boat, drawn by ropes and pushed by poles against the current for six days from Shiuchow, the present terminus of the railroad eventually to continue to Hankow. The men and women who perform this labor are strongly organized in the Water Transport Union (originally the Seamen only), and their Union controls all transport on this river. They are therefore among the better-off; they receive 40 to 60 cents a day, working from dawn until dark, and sometimes till ten o'clock at night, stopping 20 minutes twice during the day for food.

Arrived in Namyung, we are lodged as the guests of the city in the public gardens on top of the great old city walls which in former times protected the commerce that flowed here from the North thru Meiling Pass from Kiangsi. These walls, typical of Chinese cities, are still in good repair but in the era of modern artillery useless for anything more serious than parks and tea houses. In the quaint tea houses perched over the city we met a dozen trade union leaders who spent hours with us answering our interminable questions.

Here we learned a peculiarity of most Chinese inland towns; a sort of rough division of labor has, in the course of time, developed between them, so that one town makes a specialty of one line of business, another town of another line, so that almost in each town will be found an industry predominating over the others. Namyung is a tobacco town, a market center for the tobacco raised thru a large district, where it is dried, packed, and shipped to the big cities to be made into cigarettes.

These tobacco packers and shippers in Namyung number 1,300, of whom 500 are women. Their work is seasonal, lasting only six months in the year. How they live for the other six months we could not learn, but when

they have work, they spend 14 hours per day at it, for which they receive, for men 40 cents, for women 20 cents. The secretary of the Union came to us directly from work, and therefore did not show up until after 10 o'clock at night. He would begin again next morning at daybreak. He told us that the struggle with the employers at the moment was to force them to pay the 40 cents and 20 cents per day in silver instead of depreciated coppers.

Clerks in Namyung are all paid by the year. Apprentices get only "food and lodgings," the fourth year they begin at \$20 per year. From that point they slowly progress upward. When we insisted upon knowing what was the very highest wage being paid to any clerk in town, we were told \$150 per year. Hours, daybreak until 11 p. m.

Artisans, upon completing apprenticeship, begin to receive wages at \$4 per month. The average wage is \$8 per month, with "food and lodgings"; the hours are 15 per day.

From Namyung we walked over the mountains to Nananfu, a distance of 120 Chinese li (about 40 miles). Throughout this distance we constantly passed groups of carriers, loaded with great bundles, bales and boxes, transporting the commerce between two great provinces exactly as it had been done for the past two thousands years. Only the character of the commodities has begun to change—again I saw oil cans bearing the "Socony" label. The carriers are about equally men and women. We are told that they earn 30 cents per day, but can get no detailed information.

Nananfu was the first town we had visited in the newly-conquered Nationalist territory. It was the first point in Kiangsi entered by the Nationalist Armies last July when they began their triumphant march northward. Following the advancing Armies had come a sweep of trade union organization, and struggles to ameliorate the terrible conditions of labor. Everywhere it was the same tale of feverish organization activities, strikes, and a few meagre gains which, however, had tremendous significance for the workers. Above all, they realized for the first time the power of organization, for the first time

they "had something to say" about the course of events. This was the enfranchisement of the Chinese masses, the greatest product of the revolution so far.

The trade unions of Nananfu had about 2,500 members in the city, and 13,000 in the district. The special industry of the town is bamboo and timber, the next in importance being tailoring. The bamboo and timber workers, engaged in felling and transporting raw materials, not in fabricating commodities, work unlimited hours on piece work. They earn \$1 per day on the average; we could not get a satisfactory explanation of why these workers can get so much more than the average wage of their district, more than twice as much as the general wage. Tailors, formerly paid 25 cents per day for 14 hours, have cut the hours to 10 and raised the wage to 28 cents, with increase of food. The shop clerks seemed to have made the greatest proportionate gains; formerly, apprentices began without wages, and worked up to a maximum of \$60 per year; after several strikes, they now begin apprentices at \$10 first year, \$20 second year, \$30 third year. When we arrived, 20% of the clerks were obtaining more than \$100 per year, 50% received from \$60 to \$100, while only 30% were getting less than \$60, which was formerly the maximum. Following are brief tabular notes on other trades in Nananfu:

Carpenters, formerly 25 cents, 14 hours; now, 35 cents, 10 hours.

Confectionery workers, minimum \$80 year, maximum \$150 year; hours, daybreak to dark.

Wine and rice shops, 30 cents per day, hours unlimited.

Cooks, \$2 to \$8 per month; hours, 14 to 15.

Jewelry workers, 25 to 30 cents per day, with allowance for food; formerly 10, now 15 cents per day; hours, 14 per day.

Drug clerks, 60 cents per day and food; 13 hours.

Porters, young, able-bodied, 40 to 50 cents; old, 20 cents per day; 10 hours (formerly 14 hours).

Pasing several other cities, not essentially different from Nananfu, we come to the city of Kianfu. This was the first city we had found, where the shop clerks were

still in the medieval guilds together with their employers, instead of being in the modern trade unions. Yet in spite of the very backward social and economic structure, this was the most advanced spot politically we found in Kiangsi Province. The trade unions, in alliance with the peasants of the district, were under the leadership of the "Left" Kuomintang, which controlled the city at a time when Chiang Kai Shek still had his fingers tight around the throat of the rest of the province. One explanation of this is the fact that here trade unions and Kuomintang had been established illegally in 1924, and the leadership had been steeled in two years of civil struggle under the rule of Sun Chuang-fang.

Wages in Kianfu, under the militarist rule, had been especially miserable, running from 400 to 2,000 coppers per month (equivalent to \$1.40 to \$6) and always paid in coppers, which are constantly depreciating. The first gain made by the trade unions was to establish wage-payments in silver, and raise the minimum to \$3. The average wage, when we arrived, had been raised to \$7 per month, plus food and lodging, with three meals per day instead of two. Corporal punishment by employers had just been abolished by the trade unions. In the six months the unions had existed openly, they had conducted strikes in 80% of all establishments in the city, to obtain these gains.

Here we made special inquiries as to the exact numbers of the various trades among the artisans. All Chinese figures seem to be more or less approximations, but we were assured that the following were based upon trade union admittance fees (40 cents), and the monthly fees (20 cents per month) paid by the members. The figures given were: Rice workers, 1,400; Boatmen, 1,200; Tailors, 1,100; Dyers, 1,000; Dockers, 1,000; Masons, 800; Hosiery workers, 500; Shoemakers, 260; Barbers, 120; Printers, 40.

Farther down the river, 150 miles, is the city of Changshu. A smaller city, but with about the same social and economic conditions, only here the right wing Kuomintang hold power and oppress the trade unions. Wages were about the same, having been raised by strikes to an average of \$7 per month (daily rates from 10 cents to 60

cents per day, varied not according to occupations, but to length of service, etc.). The "specialty" of this town is the preparation of drugs, and the Pharmacists Union has 400 members, out of a total membership in the city of 3,000.

In Nanchang, capital of Kiangsi Province, the reaction of Chiang Kai Shek was rampant. Trade union leaders were in hiding, and their headquarters were guarded by soldiers of a "Left" Army to prevent their destruction by soldiers of the official garrison. Wages and working conditions were the worst we had seen. The artisans were receiving 10 to 15 cents per day; the hosiery industry employing a large number of women, was paying 15 cents per day *without food*; 40% of all workers were unemployed.

At Kiukiang, on the Yangtsekiang, we again found traces of modern industries. The principal groups and their wages, were ascertained to be as follows:

Railwaymen, 2,300 employed, maximum \$15 month, average \$10.

Chinese-owned factories, 2,700 employed; 30 cents per day.

Foreign enterprises, 2,000 employed; 30 to 40 cents per day.

Artisans, 20,000 employed; 10 cents to 20 cents per day.

Coolies, number not given; 15 cents per day, without food.

17. At Hankow, Headquarters of Nationalist Government

Hankow is the capital city of Nationalist China. It is the industrial and commercial center of China, having the most modern industry and developed working class of any city except Shanghai, which is in many respects a foreign city. As might be expected, therefore, the labor movement here is the most highly developed. There are 300,000 trade union members in the Wuhan cities (Hankow, Wuchang and Hanyang) which make up one economic whole. In order to have a definite idea of the conditions of these 300,000 workers, it is necessary to examine in detail

a few separate groups. I have already dealt with the textile workers, who represent those workers most thoroughly brought under the conditions of modern machine production. The rickshaw and cart coolies, who are the least directly influenced by modern methods in their work will balance the picture. These two groups may be taken as the two extremes of the working class in Wuhan. Conditions of artisans here are much the same as elsewhere.

The rickshaw and cart coolies are very thoroughly organized. There are 29,900 members of the Union; of these, 17,000 are public rickshaw pullers, the others being: Private rickshaws, 3,000; Carters, 5,000; Carriages, 600; Automobiles, 600; Lorries, 1,600; Bicycles, 400; Car repairers, 700; Car manufacturers, 700.

The basic group is the public rickshaw pullers, whose earnings set the standard upon which other coolie wages are set. The secretary of the Union informed me that an extensive investigation by the Union (since the Union raised fares) has shown average gross earnings by these men of 2,000 cash (the large copper coin is 20 cash, therefore 100 coppers, which were worth at that time 160 to the Chinese dollar). Out of this, the man must pay rent for the rickshaw, license, tax, and "squeeze" for one or two middlemen, totalling 1,100 cash (equals 55 coppers). He has left as his net earnings, on the average, 45 coppers, or 900 cash, which are worth 28 cents Chinese silver (equals 28 kopecks Russian, 14 cents American, or 7 pence English). Out of this he must support himself and family. As a result, their living conditions are unspeakably miserable and vile.

IV. THE AGRARIAN REVOLUTION

18. Land Ownership and Distribution

Although the city working class is the leader of the Chinese revolution, and has occupied the forefront of the stage, yet it is the peasantry, and the problem of the land, that forms the key to the Revolution in its present stage of development. The Chinese Revolution is now essentially an agrarian revolution.

The agrarian problem in China is so different in its forms from those in other lands, that a full understanding of it can only be gotten from long study. Only a limited material of scientific investigation is available. The most valuable is the investigation conducted by Michael Borodin, which will be the principal basis of an extended study on the peasant problem which I will publish soon. In the meantime, this pamphlet would not be complete without giving at least the main outlines of the position of the peasantry, and the importance of the land problem in the Revolution.

Private and absolute ownership of land is the basis of the Chinese landholding system. So-called public lands are largely based upon private ownership (by family, clan, etc.).

A large proportion of the privately-owned land is in the hands of a relatively small class of landlords, who rent it to landless peasants. The so-called public land is also cultivated by landless peasants. Thus the preponderant element in agriculture is the tenant (varying in different provinces from 40% to 80%), and the agrarian question is dominated by the landlord-peasant relationship.

Peasant economics has been dragged under the influence of world markets, specialized cultivation, etc., but the social and legal relationships are still dominated by feudal and semi-feudal customs.

The unprogressive technic of agriculture, practically unchanged for thousands of years, produces an exceedingly

minute division of units of cultivation. The tremendous pressure of population accentuates this factor and heightens the intensity of cultivation.

Out of these factors has grown an exploitation of the masses of peasantry amounting to 70% or 80% of their produce in the case of the main bulk of tenants or semi-tenants.

These are the main outlines of the fundamental question of the Chinese revolution. While the "bolshevik" workingclass in the cities is leading the revolution, yet at the same time the peasantry relentlessly drives the revolution on and on, making it impossible to find a compromise that will stabilize China short of a thorough-going transformation of its entire economic and social system.

China's so-called public lands are in effect though not formally absorbed into the system of private ownership. There are 3 main forms of public lands, ancestral lands, village lands, and scholar fields. The most important is the ancestral land, which in Kwantung province comprises 25% of all cultivated fields. Rich landholders many generations ago set aside portions of their holdings to be preserved from division or sale, the produce of which was to be devoted to ancestor worship. Many also provided that a proportion of the income must be used to purchase additional land. These areas also grew through descendants demonstrating their piety by adding to the ancestral land.

Practically all the ancestral land is rented out, mostly to landless peasants or to middlemen who sublet it. The rents amount to huge sums, which enable the "elders" of the family to form the principal portion of the ruling caste wherever the ancestral lands exist.

The village public lands are those which have been set aside for special village needs, such as upkeep of the village school, road building, maintenance of village temple, etc. Instead of being administered by the elders of a single clan or family, they are in the hands of village elders comprising several families.

The scholar fields are lands of which the incomes have been assigned to certain learned persons as a reward for

learning. These lands are either assigned from ancestral land to some one who has made his clan famous by becoming a scholar, or by a society of learning from great estates or funds procured from the government. These societies are a trade union of the literate sections of the village ruling class. All these lands are cultivated by propertyless tenants.

The mass of peasantry gets no benefits from public lands. The principal effect of this form of landownership is to weld into a closely-knit body, the village ruling class, the "gentry," who are the masters of the village, of its funds, its road building, irrigation, etc., who levy taxes, control the local militia, and administer "justice" to the peasantry.

19. The Peasant Unions

Ten million peasants are today organized in the Peasants' Union. This is the basic force which has made the Chinese Revolution, and shaken the political stability of the entire world outside of the United States. Organizing what is practically a new government from below, with its own armed forces for defense, the Peasant Movement is transforming China from one of the most backward countries into a modern land.

Most Chinese peasants are tenants, or semi-tenants. Their living conditions are so low, that it is hard for an American to understand how they can exist. The average income of a family of tenants is 36 dollars per year. Rent takes half of their produce or more; taxes of all kinds takes another 20%; and they finally have 3 dollars per month left to feed and clothe the family. Their food is a couple of bowls of rice a day, and "congee," a kind of grass fried in peanut oil, supplemented twice a month by a few ounces of fat pork. Their clothes consist of a plain cotton jacket and trousers, grass sandals, and a grass hat. Their houses are hardly fit for pigpens.

The great object of the Peasant Union now is to lift the terrific burdens of rent. At first they tried to reduce rents 25%. The landlords and gentry, in control of village governments, formed militia to crush their unions.

The peasants thereupon formed their own defense corps, drove out the reactionary landlords from the village governments, and established their own power in the villages. This is what the Revolution means in the villages.

In the Province of Hunan (30 million inhabitants) there are now five million members of the Peasant Union. There the peasants are proceeding to abolish rents altogether, confiscating the lands. It was this development which caused the officers of the Revolutionary Armies (Generals Chiang Kai Shek, Feng Yu-hsiang, Tang Shenshi) who are closely connected with landlord families, to turn against the revolutionary people and begin to compromise with the foreign powers and the Northern militarists (Chang Tso-lin) in order to check the revolution. It was this break-up of the united front of the Kuomintang which has brought a temporary check in the development of the Chinese Revolution.

V. BREAKUP OF THE WUHAN GOVERNMENT

20. Land—the Crucial Question

We have seen in the previous pages with what a brave front the Central Committee of the Kuomintang began their campaign against Chiang Kai Shek. According to the logic of political struggle, it was necessary for the Wuhan Government to turn to the left, to base itself more squarely and consciously upon the labor and peasant movement in China and internationally. This it did—in words and gestures. But when the crucial test of action came, it hesitated, swung about in mid-air for a while, and then swerved sharply to the right, turning its guns against the mass movement of the people in a manner hardly to be distinguished from that of Chiang Kai Shek.

The crucial question was the land. In Hunan Province the peasants had organized five million strong. They controlled absolutely the village governments of most of central and southern Hunan. They therefore proceeded to the next step in the revolution, the solution of the land problem upon which their very lives depend. They abolished rents, drove out the resisting landlords, and divided the public lands among those who worked them.

21. Betrayal of the Generals

In the Nationalist Armies, even as in those of the Northern militarists, the officers were recruited largely from the families of landlords or rich industrialists and merchants, connected with landholding or with exploitation of cheap labor in the cities. With the beginning of the expropriation of the landlords, a great cry went up from them to their relatives in the Army for help. The cry was not in vain. A majority of the officers of the Army turned against the peasant movement. In Changsha, center of the movement, they suddenly descended upon the trade unions and peasant unions, slaughtered the leaders and the armed defense corps, and closed their offices.

This occurred towards the end of May. Early in June, the Nationalist Government sent a delegation to Feng Yu-hsiang, the leader of the strongest armed forces on the side of Wuhan. Feng pronounced against the solution of the land question; and further proceeded to a conference with Chiang Kai Shek, with whom he issued a joint public statement. General Tang Shen-shih, the Buddhist, a native of Hunan (Changsha), also pronounced against the peasants. Under the pressure of the military, the Central Committee majority, shrinking in fear from a struggle against the military forces nominally under their control, began to surrender to the reactionary tendency. The Wuhan Government, organizing center of the Chinese revolution, was in deepest crisis.

The trade unions, meeting in Congress at this period (June) pledged their 2,800,000 members to solid support of the Government if it would unhesitatingly support the solution of the land question. The peasant unions, with ten millions members and hundreds of thousands under arms, pledged its undivided support. The Communist Party threw its weight onto the side of solution of the land question. But the Central Committee majority crumbled under the military pressure.

For the left wing there could be no question of supporting further the Wuhan Government after it turned definitely against the peasant movement. By this act it had transformed itself from the organizing center, into the "hangman" of the revolution. The Communists withdrew from the Government. Such well-known figures as Mme. Sun Yat-sen, Eugene Chen, Teng Yen-ta, and others, resigned from the Government. Those who remained began negotiations for reconciliation with Chiang Kai Shek.

22. Perspectives

The Chinese revolution has received a serious check, a serious defeat, as a result of the betrayal of the generals and the collapse of Wuhan. Is this defeat a permanent one? Does it mean the elimination of the workers and peasants as the main forces in the Chinese revolution?

Will the Chinese revolution from now on become purely a bourgeois movement, ending in the establishment of a unified bourgeois China with workers and peasants suppressed?

The defeat of the revolution is certainly but temporary and partial. None of the problems of the revolution have been solved, and the masses of China are in motion. Nothing can stop the movement of these 400 million people, except the solution of their life problems, which are the problems of the revolution.

It is impossible for the workers and peasants to be eliminated from the nationalist movement. The bourgeoisie of China is too weak to fight against the workers and peasants, and at the same time fight against the Northern militarists and foreign imperialists. It is also divided, because a large section of the city middle classes go along with the mass movement. It must make peace with one or the other: If it makes peace with the militarists and imperialists, then it abandons the national revolution altogether; if it makes peace with the workers and peasants, then it must proceed to solve the land question and improve the conditions of the workers.

Only under the condition, therefore, of the working class playing the leading role, and the peasantry furnishing the main driving force and the city petty-bourgeoisie supplementing this combination with its technical and political aid, is it possible for the Chinese revolution to move forward now to the establishment of a firmly united China proceeding to solve its social and economic problems and holding its own against foreign aggression. And this necessity of revolutionary solution for the problems of existence of hundreds of millions is the guarantee that the Chinese workers and peasants will rise again and again if necessary; and that there is no peace for China until these problems have been solved.

It is in the interests of all workers in America to help the Chinese masses in this most difficult struggle. This means first of all, to understand their problems, to establish close connection with them and their organizations, to

exert all efforts to prevent the Government of the United States from using its power to crush the Chinese revolution, and to work in all ways for assisting the Chinese trade unions and peasant unions.

To the ruling classes of America we must say: "Hands off the Chinese Revolution."

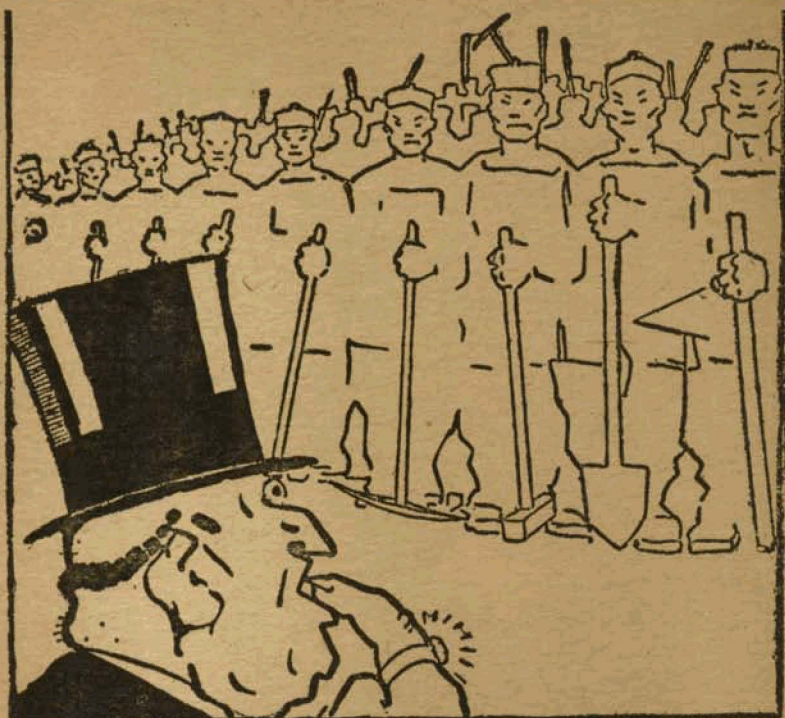
To the American workers, the word is: "Solidarity with the Chinese workers and peasants." Solidarity with the Chinese revolution, as a most important step toward the world revolution."



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