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ALEX BITTELMAN, Editor

AS AN ARTIST SEES THE SPRING



By Hay Bales

EDITOR'S NOTES

By ALEX BITTELMAN

THE rapid industrialization of the south is undoubtedly one of the major developments in post-war American capitalism. This development is having far-reaching effects not only upon the south but upon the country as a whole. And yet the American labor movement has hardly begun to realize the meaning and significance of these developments for the working class of the United States.

Not so with the American capitalists. They are fully awake to the possibilities of the situation from the point of view of strengthening capitalism and weakening the labor movement. And they are making ample use of these possibilities as is seen in the coal strike situation and in many more factors of importance.

Discussing the present coal mining situation the capitalist press is deriving a good deal of comfort from the fact that the unionized coal area has steadily contracted while the non-union area has expanded. The opening up of coal mines in the south and the intensive development of the industry there was bound to affect very seriously the condition of the mine workers' union. But it is primarily the failure of the Lewis administration to concentrate on organizing these new fields that is responsible for the fact that the shifting of coal mining to the south has worked altogether to the interests of the capitalists and against the workers. Because it does not at all follow that coal mining in the south must remain a non-union industry. That the coal barons are banking upon these new fields remaining non-union and are doing all in their power to resist unionization, is quite natural. But it is altogether

unnatural, in fact, criminal when union leaders pursue the same line. And this is exactly what Lewis and his henchmen have been doing.

Despite, however, the criminal negligence of the Lewis machine to organize the unorganized miners, sentiment for organization among the southern miners is very strong. So much so that the first earnest effort to organize them will inevitably produce splendid results. And this is the time when such action is most urgently needed. All efforts of the union must be devoted towards that end. It is only by striking the southern coal mines along with the others that a national bituminous coal strike will become a reality. And it is only through a national bituminous strike that the miners will win.

THAT conditions in the south are over-ripe for successful union organization can be seen also from the attitude of the southern church. When prominent dignitaries of the Episcopal and Methodist churches of the south feel compelled to appeal to the capitalists for "better" relations with labor and for industrial peace in order to "avoid the waste and bitterness of industrial conflict," this is a sure sign of restlessness among the workers and of their becoming ready to assert themselves against the capitalists in an effective way. For it isn't the misery of the workers that is worrying the church dignitaries but the approach of struggle against this misery by the working masses themselves.

SUCH an appeal to the "industrial leaders of the south" was signed by about forty bishops and

ministers representing every section of the south. The appeal calls for "friendly" cooperation of employers, employes, churches, educators and state officials "to improve social and economic conditions of southern industry." The things to be improved, according to the appeal, are: the isolation of population in the mill village; the long working week, extending in many industries even to fifty-five and sixty hours; a certain amount of the seven-day week, which still exists in some industries; the employment of women, and children between 14 and 16 at over-long periods of labor; low wage standards in some industries with consequent depressed standards of living and the general absence of labor representation in the factories.

THESE are the damnable conditions in the south which even the church is forced to recognize and speak about because of the approaching "danger" of industrial conflict. But this means nothing to Lewis of the miners' union, MacMahon of the textile workers and similar types in reactionary gangdom. To them these conditions are inventions of the Communists and progressive trade unionists which must be exterminated for the greater glory of the capitalists and their flunkies in the labor movement. But how about the facts? How about these mill villages in the south?

THE churchmen are not very explicit in their appeal. But even they are forced to admit that "life in a mill village under company control is not
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The Common Enemy

FROM COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

The following article is taken from The Communist International of February 28. The Communist International is the official organ of the Executive Committee of the C. I. The Chinese situation is the most important question facing the working class of the world today and every worker should be informed of its import. This article gives the viewpoint of the Executive Committee of the Communist International on the Chinese struggle and should be carefully studied by everybody who wants to be in a position to explain to his fellow workers what is taking place in China.—Ed.

THE Chinese revolution is occupying the centre of the historical stage at the present time, and around it forces are gathering for a mighty conflict between the international imperialist bourgeoisie and the international proletariat. The world bourgeoisie has mobilized all the social forces possible against the development of the revolution in China. The proletariat has only just managed to outline the fundamental path along which its activities should develop in support of the Chinese revolution, and in its defense against the military forces of imperialism from without, and against the compromising and wavering elements within. Only the most progressive section of the proletariat, represented by the Communist Party, has yet come forward as the organized force which clearly understands all the difficulties and dangers confronting the Chinese revolution. It is prepared, in spite of all obstacles, to lead the Chinese revolution as part of the world revolution, to final victory.

The complex and extremely important task of rallying the masses of the working class and of the oppressed nations for the struggle has still to be accomplished. This task should occupy the centre of attention of all the Sections of the Comintern, the Profintern, and all the trade unions. In order to mobilize all the reserves of the international revolutionary movement it is necessary to carry out, with the speed commensurate with the exceptional importance of the matter, the united front under the slogan of "Hands off China," while at the same time the Communist Parties must act independently and employ all forms of mass revolutionary struggle.

The mobilization of the reactionary forces against the Chinese people was carried out under the slogan of combatting the "mob," "Moscow influence," etc., i.e., against the leading role played by the working class in the national revolutionary struggle. In so far as this aim of causing a split in the national revolutionary front, and of reducing the Right bourgeois wing to compromise with imperialism, is the common aim of all bourgeois governments and their compromising lackeys, we may say that the world bourgeoisie has established a united front in its attack upon revolutionary China. This front extends from the Pope of Rome, Pius XI., to the pope of reformism, Ramsay MacDonald. It is equipped not only with battleships, cruisers and aeroplane carriers, but with all other kinds of weapons from diplomatic cunning and falsehood to Liberal hypocrisy and Social Democratic treachery.

Needless to say, the internal conflict of appetites, conflicts of interest, rivalry and competition, roused first of all by the insatiable greed of the bourgeoisie of each country, continues incessantly within the imperialist camp. To these antagonisms must be added the differences as to the methods of struggle which each predatory imperialist considers most convenient to employ in the given circumstances and time, from the point of view of the geographical situation and its strategical and economic positions both in China and out of it. It would be a fatal mistake if the Chinese revolutionaries failed at each stage of development of the revolution to watch closely the growing acuteness of these antagonisms, the play of conflicting imperialist passions, and to strive in their manoeuvring to utilize these differences in the enemy camp in its own interests. A breach in the imperialist front in China, where the interests of the imperialists are closely interwoven into a tight knot, has become possible because these interests conflict; but this knot, because it is tied so tightly, can only be cut by the sword of the revolution. At all stages of the struggle the Chinese revolution must proceed along the following lines: (1) utilize the antagonisms among the predatory imperialists; (2) utilize the hypocritical declarations of the compromising leaders, who, owing to the pressure of the masses, are compelled to make promises to the national revolutionary movement.

At the same time, it would be a no less fatal mistake to assume that the antagonisms among the imperialists operate automatically by a spring that is wound up once and for all, and that these antagonisms will not be temporarily put into the background at a decisive moment by the common hatred of the imperialists towards their dangerous class enemy.

There are grounds for fearing that we are approaching a decisive moment such as this in China. It is imperative that all the forces of the revolution should be speedily prepared to meet this danger.

IN all probability the British bourgeoisie will continue for some time to play the part of the pioneers in the attack against the Chinese revolution. The general collapse of British capitalism, as well



You're Next!

as the exceptional power of the blows which are being rained upon it by the victory of the revolution in Southern China, are the cause of the blind, frenzied aggression of the Baldwin government.

The powerful lever of covert intervention has already been torn out of the hands of British imperialism. Wu Pei-fu has been routed, Sun Chaun-fang is also on the eve of defeat. Not because they like it, did the British imperialists create a state of war not only in Shanghai but also in the capital of the British Empire. "Not only are the troops on the move," writes the "Daily Herald," in its issue on January 25, "but the war-drums are beating: war talk is beginning." Commenting on the newspaper report that the "scenes of Portsmouth barracks evoked memories of 1914," the "Daily Herald" exclaims "That is a true word."

What is the theatre of this forthcoming war like? "Formerly it may have been thought that the whole business will amount to defending a few streets. Now it appears that it is a matter of a front 21 miles long," writes one bourgeois newspaper, in pointing out that it will necessary to defend Shanghai. "But what is Shanghai?" asks another newspaper and replies, "It is a head, the loss of which will be irreparable, but for all that a head without a body is dead." "1914," consequently, does not apply to Shanghai, but at least to the whole of the Eastern Section of the Yangtze. J. H. Thomas was quite right when, in his speech at Newton Abbot, he declared: "I do not hesitate to say . . . I prefer a large army to be sent rather than a handful of soldiers." The British bourgeoisie has become so frenzied already that it will not hesitate to send a large army to China, and consequently is prepared to begin a serious war unless the British working class and the Chinese people put it in a strait jacket in time.

It would be entirely wrong to believe, however, that open violence is the only method British imperialism intends to employ in China. While troops are being despatched the British government is playing a complicated provocative game, with a view to splitting off certain of the leading groups of the revolutionary movement, and is converting them into a support for their rule in China. MacDonald with his feigned indignation against military intervention as a matter of fact is aiding and abetting it, is being used as a bait by the Baldwin government in order to decoy a certain section of the Kuomintang into its trap. Moreover, it is not Ramsay MacDonald alone that has been given the honorable part of a worm on the hook of intervention.

The "Manchester Guardian" and even the "Observer," are zealously angling for the national elements of the revolution, which are not infected with Bolshevism. "The irony is" writes the "Observer," of January 23, "that British policy in its substance entirely agrees with Mr. Chen. The real difficulty is that while Mr. Chen agrees with Sir Austen Chamberlain, they are both hampered by misinformed pressure from their supporters. Mr. Chen has to save his face before the 'bag and baggage' propagandists on whose political support he is dependent. Sir Austen has to contend with die-hard ignorance whose natural bend is towards the use of force." Is it necessary to add that all these intermediaries, bourgeois and reformists, guarantee Mr. Chen the complete liberation of Sir Austen from the influence of bad counsellors immediately he, Mr. Chen, breaks his compromising connection with the "propagandists?"

This game of double dealing has gone so far that in the height of the preparations that are being

made for war, Ramsay MacDonald is trying to throw a golden bridge for the retreat of the government in the event of General Duncan having to repeat in Shanghai in 1927 the same ignominious manoeuvre that he was compelled to make in Odessa in 1919. "I observe," declares MacDonald in the "Daily Herald," on January 25, about the military preparations, "an air quite different from that of the foreign office communications, that I suspect that once again we are faced with the problem of whether, in circumstances such as those in which we now are, the military is to be the servant of the State, or the State the plaything of the military." Hence, it is quite possible that even after the sanguinary conflict has broken out MacDonald will desire to act the part of honest broker between the right wing of the national movement, if the latter proves to be sufficiently terrorized to agree to make a treacherous deal with the British government (which, of course, will have no hand in the game of the military authorities and will remain as pure white as the Alpine snows).

THE tactics of American imperialism contain the elements of the same game, but in different proportions. Powerful American capital does not stand in need of artificially created privileges in order to maintain its domination in China—on condition, of course, that bourgeois "law and order" is firmly established. This explains the "liberal" tinge of American policy in China. Washington adopted a waiting policy with regard to the successes of the revolutionary movement, in the conviction that it will develop along capitalist lines. Wise Mr. Kellogg, in his official statement, described this policy, which is directed towards subjecting an economically weak country to the powerful pressure of American capital, as the United States having "no imperialist interest in China." If that is the case, then it has to be explained why the Washington government was the first to beat the alarm concerning the colonial conference that was to be held in Brussels, and called upon the Belgian government to prohibit it.

The European press is dazzled with the brilliance of American successes, and is urging their bourgeoisie to adopt the same "liberal" policy in China. The German press particularly is broadcasting these wise counsels, and is positively gloating at the sight of its neighbor's house burning. Even the French press is sufficiently imbued with hatred towards England to give her advice in the most friendly manner as to how to rest on a dislocated foot. Sauerwein, the journalist, commenting on the speech of Comrade Tang Ping-tshan, writes in the "Matin"; "The Bolsheviks fear most of all politics of the American type, which strengthen the position of the right wing of the Kuomintang. The League of Nations must abandon excessive caution, and seek the means for avoiding a conflict which will be to the advantage only of the U. S. S. R." This wise counsellor, who recalls to mind the hero of the Russian story who danced at a funeral, fails to observe that the development of the Chinese revolution has reached a stage which is causing American imperialism to revise its "liberal" tactics and to call up infantry for a landing in Shanghai.

(Continued next week)

HELD OVER!

Owing to pressure on our space the second and last installment of proclamations issued by the Bolsheviks in the early days of the Russian revolution were unavoidably held over until next week.

