

SOCIALIST APPEAL

ORGAN OF THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN
PART OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL.

VOL. 6. No. 9. SEPTEMBER, 1944. TWOPENCE

BRITISH BAYONETS IN 'LIBERATED' BELGIUM

By Girand — Belgium

BRITISH TROOPS HAVE BEEN PUT AT THE DISPOSAL OF THE BELGIAN CAPITALIST GOVERNMENT TO HELP DISARM RESISTANCE FORCES.

While, on Sunday, 19th November, thousands of workers and members of the Belgian Resistance Force demonstrated in Brussels against the Belgian capitalist government's order to disarm the Resistance Movement, British troops stood by to help the Government.

General Erskine, head of the Allied Military Mission, publicly stated that the decision of the Pierlot Government to disarm the Resistance forces had the approval of S.H.A.E.F.; and that if necessary British troops would be placed at the disposal of the Government, should the Resistance refuse to give in.

On the 25th, a demonstration of 10,000 people organised by the Resistance, demanding the resignation of the Government, a new democratic government, and the organisation of food and coal supplies, was fired on by the gendarmerie, after a group of demonstrators had broken a police cordon in front of the Rue de la Loi (the Belgian Whitehall).

37 demonstrators were wounded by machine-gun fire and 4 were killed. The demonstration continued with thousands chanting in unison: "Pierlot, assassin!"

Thus once more the warning of the Trotskyists that this "war against fascism" was a sham, and that the real purpose of the war was the furtherance of the profits and power of Big Business, is shown to be true by events as they unfold.

THE COLLABORATORS ARE IN CONTROL

The Government of M. Pierlot is hated by the overwhelming majority of the Belgian workers. If the masses had their way the Pierlot Government would be swept away. It is kept in power against the wishes of the people, with the help of British bayonets and tommy-guns.

Under the German occupation, the greater part of the capitalists, bankers etc. carried on "business as usual"—factories and mines worked at full capacity, producing coal, tanks, lorries, machinery etc. for the German "New Order"—at a handsome profit for the shareholders. In fact the Belgian (like the French) capitalists relied mainly on German bayonets and execution squads to protect them from their own workers. When these went on strike the bosses called in the Gestapo and the S.S. to suppress the workers.

The "liberation" has changed nothing. A lot of small fry among the collaborators have been arrested to create an impression. Poor prostitutes who have slept with German soldiers are condemned, but not a single big industrialist or banker who made millions out of the blood, sweat and toil of the workers and collaboration with the Nazis has been arrested. The big capitalist firms, which yesterday produced material for Germany, now hope to amass new profits—producing this time for the Allies.

THE PEOPLE STARVE

"Business as usual" under the control of the capitalists means misery and starvation for the masses. The bread ration is 300 grammes (11 ozs.) per day; sugar, meat and butter are unobtainable at official prices. The black market, however, continues, and while the rich can still eat their fill, the ordinary worker who relies on his official ration must see his children go short. But there is meat, butter and sugar in the country. In some country districts butter is going rancid, while in the next town the housewife has forgotten what it looks like. The big farmers refuse to sell it at the official price and keep it back for the black market, where it sells at 300 to 400 francs a kilo. The small working farmers are forced to do the same, having to pay for their fertilisers, farm implements, etc. at inflated prices to the big trusts; they would sell at a loss at the official price. Moreover the big dairies and marketing firms further fleece both the small farmer and the consumer.

The Government has done nothing to smash the black market and organise a fair distribution of food. It cannot, for the simple reason that the biggest profiteers of the black market are the big landlords, the agricultural banks, the big dairies, the fertiliser trusts, etc., who have their representatives and stooges both in the Government and in the whole Civil Service.

Since the "liberation" complete chaos has existed in industry. Many factories are shut down, or work only one or two days a week, through lack of coal and other materials. Belgium was a coal-exporting country, yet there was no coal distribution for industry in October, and at the time of writing, none for November. Thou-

sands of homes will be coal-less this winter. The coal-owners give the lack of wood for pit-props as an excuse. Yet in the Ardennes forests there is plenty of timber, which could have been used. Delivery was held up for a long time by a dispute over prices between the coalowners and the timber capitalists.

The workers, however, were determined to have their say as well. All over the country strikes and demonstrations have been taking place since September. At Charleroi and in the mining region, there was a one-day general strike for better rations. In Brussels in October, 10,000 women demonstrated with posters in French, Flemish and English: "We want butter and coal", "Milk for our babies", "Down with the black market".

WORKERS OCCUPY THE FACTORIES

The Belgian workers are not accepting this passively. In most factories the workers have elected "purge committees" which "accuse and try" the directors and managing personnel. For example, in the big engineering works of the ACEC trust at Charleroi, the workers, tired of waiting for the authorities to arrest a certain managing director, demonstrated with the help of the local Resistance forces, and went to arrest him themselves. He was not at home. He was later arrested in Brussels and then released by the Government.

The re-starting of industry is a matter of life and death for the workers. Without work and wages they are faced with starvation; even when at work, wages will not feed a family at black-market prices. It is estimated that out of a total population of 8 million there are only 6,000,000 employed. The Belgian workers are beginning to understand that as the capitalist class and its government cannot or will not give them work, they—the workers—must take control themselves. In one factory, for example—at the SAFEA chemical fertiliser works—the workers manager having been arrested, the workers elected a workers' committee to organise production. When the bosses told them to shut down the factory on the pretext that they could not draw money to pay wages, the

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EBBW VALE STRIKE

AT 10 P.M. ON NOVEMBER 29th, ALL MEMBERS OF THE A.E.U. AND THE BOILERMAKERS' UNION EMPLOYED AT THE GREAT STEEL AND TIN WORKS AT EBBW VALE, RICHARD THOMAS', CEASED WORK AS A PROTEST AGAINST THE SPYING METHODS USED BY THE MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY POLICE. ALSO INVOLVED IN THE STRIKE WERE SOME MEMBERS OF THE BRICKLAYERS ASSOCIATION AND SECTIONS OF THE TRANSPORT AND GENERAL WORKERS' UNION.

The dispute originated in the Victoria fitting-shop on the night of Nov. 21st. 2 machinists, whose work involved long and slow processes requiring little attention were filling in time by making toys for their kiddies Xmas. They were discovered by the County Police who stated that they had spent the previous 10 minutes spying on the men through the window.

The workers in this shop, whilst they recognised that the police had a "legal" case against the "toymakers", nevertheless strongly resented the snooping, spying methods used to catch the "culprits".

After a joint meeting had been held with the incoming day shift, it was decided to approach the management for a clear definition of the rights and duties of the County Police. The bosses treated the whole matter with complete levity and stated that they saw no reason at all to interfere with the behaviour of the police. In view of this obvious approval by Richard Thomas' of the despicable methods used by the police, the day and night shift of the fitting-shop downed tools. This prompt and vigorous action was quickly followed by sympathetic strikes in the boiler-shop and the electrical-winding shop.

The tremendous anger aroused by this action of the County Police can only be properly understood when it is realised that the workers at this plant have suffered for years under an elaborate spying system introduced by the management. The works police (as distinct from the County Constabulary) have repeatedly stopped and searched workers suspected of stealing the Company's property, and it is common knowledge that spies and informers have been sent to work among the workers. The spying incident in the fitting-shop was merely the spark which ignited the smouldering anger of these exasperated workers.

By Friday, November 24th, after meetings of the various unions involved, all members of the A.E.U., E.T.U. and Boilermakers—that is, the skilled men—had ceased work. From then on the dispute was handled by the Ebbw Vale Joint Skilled Trades Committee, representing all the unions of the skilled men. As is usual, the management refused to negotiate with the above Committee whilst the strike was in progress. However, since they had previously washed their hands of the whole affair it was clear that Richard Thomas' was not prepared to negotiate at all—on strike or not.

ANEURIN BEVAN CALLED IN

A mass meeting on Saturday, November 25th decided to continue the strike until the Company would agree to negotiate, and also endorsed the action of the Committee in asking the local M.P.—Aneurin Bevan—to address a further mass meeting on Monday, November 27th.

Nearly 2,000 workers attended this meeting to hear Bevan's position. He justified the strike action but, nevertheless, advised a return to work. His case being that, from a purely legal point of view, Richard Thomas had no more control over the activities of the State Police than had the workers and that, consequently, the men's objections to the behaviour of the police should be raised, not with Richard Thomas, but elsewhere—if needs be in Parliament.

However, it must be also pointed out that Richard Thomas' alleged inability to interfere with the activities of the Police is a purely legal fiction. The Police Force are not neutral—they are the servants of the capitalist class as a whole. Their task is to protect the property and privileges of all the Richard Thomases, i.e. of the ruling class. It is quite true, as Bevan pointed out,

that the struggle against the State Police cannot be settled in Ebbw Vale alone. It is also correct to give publicity to the anti-working class character of the Police Force by raising the issues in Parliament. But it must never be forgotten that the struggle for power—a struggle to smash the forces of the capitalist class and to create the forces of the working class. That is a national and a class struggle. Meanwhile, vigorous action such as was taken by the workers at Ebbw Vale will serve to check the more brazen boss-class activities of the so-called "neutral" police force.

In the course of many questions to Aneurin Bevan, three points were very clearly established:

1. Richard Thomas' private police force have no right at all to search any worker;

2. Action had not been taken to defend so-called "illegal" practices (spy making) but to stop spying on the workers and to prevent the County Police usurping the normal duties of the supervisory staff—chargehands, foremen etc., and;

3. That no stoppage would be taken place had the management agreed in the first place to clearly define the precise duties and responsibilities.

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MANCHESTER GAS STRIKE

BY R. RYAN

In face of the threat of the Manchester gas strike spreading throughout Lancashire, the Ministry of Labour served notices on 36 men of the Bradford Road Works. They were told that unless they returned to work immediately, they would be charged under an old Defence of the Realm Act, dug up for the purpose.

Undaunted by this threat the men failed to turn in, and as a result appeared in court on November 9th, 1944 where they were fined £10 each, with the threat of imprisonment if the strike continued.

The men had no money to pay the fines—workers can't save on £3:19:10 per week—but they declared that even if they had the money, they would not pay it themselves.

Solidarity with their cause has been shown by workers' collections which have been sent in to Bro. Moores, secretary of the Bradford Road, Union Branch (N.U.M.G.W.).

The Trade Union has refused to help with payment.

THE JUST DEMANDS OF THE GAS WORKERS

"We want time and a third for night shift." This is the demand of the Corporation Gas Workers throughout Lancashire. In spite of the hard and dangerous nature of their work, long hours and had pay is the rule in these works. The top rate is 16/63 per shift. The average weekly wage is £3:19:10, without deductions.

These men work a 7 day week, with only 6 days holiday in the year.

Over a year ago, the men's claim for time and a third for night shift came before the Joint Industrial Gas Council. But the men were granted the insulting concession of 1d. per hour for day workers, and 2d. per hour for night shift.

This sop naturally enraged the workers, and in April they came out on

strike for 3 days, but returned without satisfaction. They then pressed the officials of their Union to place the demand for time and a third on the agenda for the Joint Industrial Gas Council—a body composed of representatives of the Trade Union and the Employers' Federation. The Union officials refused to take this matter forward immediately.

After months of delay, the Bradford Road Branch of the Union met on October 31st, and the shift workers involved decided by a vast majority, to give 3 days' notice of their intention to strike. The organiser, Mr. H. Butters, had promised to attend this meeting. His failure to turn up was the last straw for the men.

SOLDIERS USED TO BREAK THE STRIKE

The strike began on November 6th. The Government, prepared for this, sent in 100 soldiers to do the strikers' work in an attempt to break the strike. Thirty of these soldiers were men just returned from Burma, who did not like the job they were forced to undertake. Some of them expressed the opinion that they would sooner be at the front and would not have the gas workers' jobs for £12 a week.

STRIKE THREATENED TO SPREAD

The Stockport shiftworkers decided to come out on strike on 7th November. They carried out this decision despite the appeals of the union organiser, Mr. H. Butters and the secretary Mr. Eccles.

The strike showed signs of developing further. Meetings were to be held at Rochdale, Stretford and throughout Lancashire to consider what action to take. At Bradford Road, the day shift workers were coming out in sup-

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WHAT ARE WE TO DO WITH THEM?



Nazi at 14 Nazi at 10 Nazi at 9 Nazi at 8
These four German boys were snipers captured near Aix-la-Chapelle—they fired on U.S. troops

I have looked into the souls of these Nazi boys—they are black

What would you do with the Nazis after the war? I say Nazis instead of Germans deliberately, not so much because I think there are categories of good and bad Germans, who must be treated differently.

by Maj. R. Crisp, D.S.O., M.C.

"Daily Express"

"KILL THE KIDS"

Anti-German Hate Propaganda Infuriates Soldiers at Front

Some weeks ago, the yellow press, including the "Daily Worker" featured a disgraceful propaganda story of four German children between the ages of 8 and 14, who were arrested as snipers at Aachen.

Photographs were displayed, such as the one reprinted above, to show how behind the mask of innocence, lies beastly characteristics and "black souls". The "Daily Mirror" sought the opinions of its readers as to what should be done with these children. Fifty percent said "Kill the Kids."

ALL THIS FOUL EVIDENCE WAS FAKED. We could have said this in advance.

"Tribune" this week reports:

"We now learn from an officer at the front that the incident, as reported never happened. What did happen was that two boys found an unattended machine-gun, started playing with it, it went off, hurt none and scared the life out of the boys."

The officer reports that his comrades at the front were furious at the manner in which the London press presented this 'news' and the way it provided Goebbels with one of his best propaganda and morale-building stories."

None of the yellow papers who printed the story denied it—even after it was disproved. Nothing else can be expected from them. But the "Daily Worker" claiming to be a

workers' paper, has sunk so low that it too did not issue a denial. In order to facilitate its Vansittart, anti-German hate campaign, it allowed this lie to circulate unrefuted. The rank and file of the Communist Party and the workers will not let these despicable methods go unnoticed.

This campaign is specially conducted against the German youth. The Allied workers and soldiers must be convinced that the problem of the German youth is insoluble without a military occupation of Germany.

A letter published in the "Manchester Guardian" of 29th September, gives an effective answer to this propaganda. A neutral reporter, who was in wide contact with cross sections of the workers in Berlin for four years—1940-44, writes:

"The majority of the younger generation of class conscious workers resisted Hitler's youth education and remained surprisingly accessible to socialist influences, partly from their families, partly from older co-workers."

In the coming period of struggles, the German youth, inspired by the socialist traditions of their fathers, will be in the forefront of class battles. Brushing aside with contempt, the poisonous propaganda of the Capitalist press and the renegade "Daily Worker", the British workers must extend a hand of solidarity to the revolutionary German youth in its fight for a Socialist Germany.

Tyne Naval Workers Still Out

BY H. LEE.

As the weeks pass by, it becomes more and more obvious that the employers are determined to establish a precedent, while the Industrial Truce remains, that the new American machinery they are rapidly introducing into the shipbuilding industry shall be operated by semi-skilled workers at the labourers rate.

Workers, members of the Boilermakers Society, who are being displaced by the new flame-plane gas-cutting machine at Vickers Naval Yard, Walker, are putting up a magnificent stand against the bosses and in the interest of trade unionism.

Their fellow Boilermakers all over the country have rallied to their aid and have made it possible for these 500 workers to live for the 7 weeks that they have been locked out. During the last few weeks delegates of the locked-out workers have visited the Clyde-side, Barrow, Leith, Aberdeen and Cardiff and have presented the true facts to shop stewards in these areas.

The outcome of the discussions has been that the Boilermakers Shop Stewards will be calling a National Conference in the next few weeks. It appears obvious, that the Employer's Federation have decided that Vickers Armstrongs will fight this case on their own and establish a precedent, by forcing the workers in their works to accept "even if only temporarily as a war time measure" the employment of semi-skilled labour which is not controlled by the Boilermakers Society. Once they can establish this precedent, they will be able to argue "past practice and custom" and force the issue on a National scale.

Up to the present all the big Shipbuilders on the Clyde, the Forth and Cardiff are employing members of the Boilermakers Society on the flame-plane machines, but if Armstrong Vickers win the present issue they will be able to compel the boiler-makers in other areas and works to accept the thin edge of the wedge.

The dispute over the flame-plane machine is only the beginning. New

American machines of amazing types are being introduced daily. Ormiston, Manager of the Naval Yard has told the shop stewards that they intend Americanising the industry. This means the introduction of mass production methods on an unprecedented scale. It also means the revolutionising of technique and an extension of pre-fabrication. This raises a whole series of new issues. For example, I am given to understand that a similar machine to the flame-plane cutter has been installed in the fitting shops in the Naval Yard and that an unskilled man is handling the machine. There will be nothing (except perhaps the expense of transportation) to prevent the bosses from building a shop far away from the works, call it a fitting-shop or any other name and employ cheap labour on the job.

Pre-fabrication and mass-production raise sharply before the workers the need for new organisational forms. There must be far closer collaboration between all unions in the Shipbuilding industry. This can be achieved by reviving the Works Committees in shops and yards where they are dormant and by a similar link-up to that which the Boilermakers Shop Stewards propose on a National scale.

The vital danger to trade unionism is demonstrated in the present dispute since the unskilled man who was operating the machine before the lockout, claims that he is a member of the Transport and General Workers Union. The danger of inter-union strife is a very real one, and will become even worse when there are thousands of workers unemployed. Closer co-operation on a workshop and factory basis, the industrial form of organisation, is in the last analysis the only safeguard in the mass-production period which lies ahead. The conference called by the Boilermakers shop stewards is one of the most progressive steps taken by any section of the British working class in the course of the present war.

At this conference the demand must go forward for the Rate for the Job on a national scale.



Roosevelt "Democracy"

We reproduce a letter sent to the organ of our American brother Party, the "Militant" which describes the conditions which obtain in the Southern States of America. While pretending to wage a war for "democracy" the American capitalist maintain similar racial oppression, terror and discrimination as the Nazis do in Europe. Our brother Party in America, the Socialist Workers' Party, is conducting a systematic struggle against "Jim Crowism" and all forms of racial discrimination and oppression.

THE "DEEP SOUTH"

Editor: The atmosphere here in the "Deep South" fairly crackles with the leashed fury of the Negro people at generations of degrading repressions. And more Negro blood has flown in the South since Pearl Harbour than you would know about from reading the papers. The following "incidents" reported to me never saw print:

Louisiana, white woman: "Why, them niggers are trying to take over the South. 150 of them marched on our town a while back, were going to take it over. We got word they were coming, and a crowd of white MP's and the town's strong men went out to meet them. They got as far as the depot there. Our men stopped them with bullets." I asked were the Negroes armed. She said sure, "but we shot first." I remarked that I hadn't read that in the papers. "Sure not," she said. "A lot of other things like that aren't in the papers, either. Them niggers'll learn that this ain't the north!"

Mississippi, farmer: "Why the other day, one of them niggers got on the bus and set right down by a white woman. The bus driver told him to get up and he refused to do hit. The bus driver called ahead to have the sheriff meet the bus at the next stop and a squad of armed men met the bus and ordered the nigger to get off and he jst set there. They had to drag him off the bus and they filled him full of lead on the spot. But that won't cure them. We got to do more than kill one nigger to cure them."

All bus drivers, I was told, carry guns now. "They have to, the niggers has got so bad."

I got on the bus at Alexandria, La., and there were no empty seats. As I was standing in the aisle, perfectly willing to take my turn at standing, the driver came back and ordered a Negro sailor to get up and give me his seat. I protested that I didn't want to take another's seat, but the driver again rudely ordered the sailor to get up and move back. I had to take the seat; I knew that if I protested again it might make trouble for the Negro.

It is practically worth a Negro man's life to be seen talking to a white woman, so I couldn't even apologize to him. It was a very uncomfortable ride for me but I noted that the Negroes didn't take it uncomplainingly. They muttered among themselves quite audibly, and I heard one man say distinctly that "in some parts of the country, service men of all colors get the choice of seats," and there was a general murmur of approbation from the Negroes. It is a new thing in the South for Negroes to dare to publicly state their discontent.

Another time I was riding on an almost empty bus. I had a seat towards the rear of the coach, and across the aisle from me two Negro men sat quietly talking to each other. Suddenly the driver stopped the bus and strode furiously back and ordered the Negroes to move back. "Can't you see there's white folks sitting there?" he shouted, meaning me.

I quickly got up, and said, "Why don't I move up?" There are plenty of empty seats," and started to take another seat. The driver blocked my way and said "Keep your seat. They kin move back." I pushed him out of my way and took a forward seat, saying I didn't want to inconvenience other people needlessly. The Negroes sat there. The driver slouched back up front and looked his hatred at me into the mirror.

One significant thing I have noticed. There is more friendly, easy talk between whites and Negroes, in spite of the terrorism, than there ever was in the days before the war. I have seen white boys and men talking to Negroes on the buses many times, talking as men talk to each other. In Baton Rouge I spoke to a friend about the "Negro menace." This friend, certainly no radical, replied that the situation is due almost solely to the fear that has taken hold of the white people, and their reaction to it. They are treating the Negroes so badly that they are making inevitable the explosion that seems imminent.

D.S., Baton Rouge, La.



Recent contributions

	£	s.	d.
Edmonton	3	17	6
A.P.V. Workers	1	0	0
Leeds	2	1	0
Tom	10	0	0
S.	1	0	0
J.B.	1	14	0
Wandsworth R.C.P.	2	0	0
G.B.	14	0	0
J.D.	10	0	0
G.S. (Southall)	15	0	0
Birmingham R.C.P.	2	11	6
Dalmuir R.C.P.	7	0	0
Hendon R.C.P.	5	0	0
H.C., Leith	10	0	0
Leith Dockers	10	0	0
Mc. V.	10	0	0
N.A.A.F.I. Worker	10	0	0
The "Spoiler"	12	0	0
L.A.C. G.	1	0	0
A.C.	5	0	0
J. Long	2	6	0
Cornwall	5	0	0
Birmingham Sympathiser	1	6	0
Nottingham R.C.P.	22	12	6
J.S.	2	6	0
R.F.	2	0	0
P.K.	2	10	0
Polish Comrade	1	0	0
G.S.	10	0	0
T.B.	5	0	0
Danes	1	0	0
T.W.	1	0	0
Newcastle	2	6	0
M.H.	4	10	0
Lianelly	10	0	0
Brynammon	1	0	0
R. (Swansea)	10	0	0
P. (Brynammon)	2	6	0
Narbeth Sympathiser	2	6	0
J. Merthyr	2	6	0
Ebbw Vale Sympathiser	10	0	0
Liverpool	5	0	0
Motherwell R.C.P.	10	0	0
O.T.	1	0	0
J. C. Maltby	6	0	0
H.W. (Plymouth)	2	4	0
Charlie White	2	0	0
Harry Haston	2	0	0
South Wales	1	18	6
M.H.	4	10	0
Tony	1	0	0
J. Bains	1	0	0
J.P., Calro	1	10	0
Chingford R.C.P.	1	0	0
G.T.	3	0	0
Newcastle R.C.P.	2	2	0
Dan	3	0	0
Edinburgh R.C.P.	9	8	6
H.A.	4	10	0
Hugh	2	0	0
Glasgow R.C.P.	1	14	6
R.J.W.	10	0	0
Total	£104	13	5

C.P. Sabotages Blitz Workers Committee

At its meeting held at the Royal Vet Hostel, Camden Town, London, on the 22nd November, the London Blitz Workers Hostel and Site Committee carried their attempt to organise an Action Committee a step further.

There was a reported increase in the number of workers represented—4,000—by the delegates who assembled to report and discuss the next stage in the organisation.

Among the numerous complaints and grievances elaborated by the delegates were: lack of sheets in the hostel beds where the building workers are billeted; cold and poor food served in the canteens as well as at dinner break. But the main grievances are the low wages and bad working conditions, together with chaotic organisation on the job.

It was clear from the outset of the meeting that the Stalinists were well organised as a faction and were seeking to smash the attempt to form a militant committee which express the desires of the rank and file trade unionists.

Jock Kennedy, an official of the A.S.W. and leader of the Stalinist faction in the London District of that Union who was the only paid official present, led the attack to smash the Blitz Action Committee, and to convert it into safe channels for the trade union bureaucrats.

The rule of the Union were sufficiently elastic, he said, to keep in check any attempt to set up an unofficial committee which tried to deal with wages and conditions. He was followed one by one by the Stalinist faction, who demanded that the Action Committee be converted into a "welfare" committee.

One delegate reported that a Trade Union official had come on the job at the insistence of the workers to correct a grievance, and before he went he told the management that they were paying their workmen over the rate!

A.V. ROE STRIKE

Dispute Over Award 356

BY D. MORGAN

The recent 12 day strike of A. V. Roe workers at Woodford and Manchester, although only involving 2,300 operatives, threatened all the A. V. Roe plants in the North West, and could have easily led to a complete "down tools" by 30,000 workers.

The strike was provoked by the Management's "interpretation" of Award 326—the Award that provoked the Barrow strike a year ago—and its refusal to carry out the findings of a York Conference.

WORKS COMMITTEE OFFICIAL BULLETIN PUTS CASE

The Works Committee official Bulletin outlines the case of the struggle as follows:

"Owing to the controversy caused throughout the engineering trade by Award 326, the National Arbitration Tribunal met again on the 25th September to answer eight questions submitted by the Engineering and Allied Employers Federation and by the National Engineering and Joint Trades Movement as to the interpretation of the Award.

After a Works Conference on the 28th October, the first claim for retrospective pay inside the Avro Group was made and proved. This claim concerned only those prices signed up since the Award. The question of old prices and consolidation generally was left in abeyance.

The Woodford Works Committee put forward a supplementary claim for consolidation of all prices signed before the Award on a basis of the average bonus earned at the time of the Award and retrospective payment on them."

The intention of the Award was that the piece worker should not lose as a result of consolidation when putting in the same effort as before. The A. V. Roe management were not prepared to recognise this arrangement. This meant

a loss of 10 per cent or more in wages for the majority of workers, and as much as £1 in others. The effect on wages can easily be calculated by the fact that £60,000 in back pay was involved in the Woodford plant alone.

A local Conference was called to discuss the claims of the workers: "failure to agree was registered". The dispute then went to a Central Conference at York where the findings were referred back to the Works for final settlement. On the basis of this decision the Stewards hoped to achieve a speedy settlement. The management's idea of settlement was that the workers "should forget" their demands. After six months negotiation, and eighteen months after the date of the Award, the Works Committee was confronted with a situation where a member of the Employers' Federation refused to apply a decision of their Executive body!

The management refused all attempts to solve the problem. On Monday 23rd October, at a meeting of production workers they passed the following resolution. "In view of the management's refusal to settle our claim under the 326 wage award, we herewith withdraw our labour, pending Ministry of Labour Enquiry into the action of the firm."

1,500 workers came out, later these were joined by 800 workers in the Manchester factory. Workers throughout the whole A. V. Roe North-West factories threatened to down tools in sympathy.

As a result of this threatened complete stoppage, a composite Conference was agreed to. At this Conference the bosses' representatives upheld the management's interpretation. Because of the workers' delegates opposition they agreed that the firm would compute bonus on the consolidated rate, provided the workers agreed to adjustments of time.

On the basis of this agreement the workers returned, on condition that

they would strike again if the time adjustments are not satisfactory.

A substantial victory has been won as a result of this direct militant action. But for the treacherous role of the union officials—who at every stage frantically demanded a return to work—a greater victory would have been won. If the workers had accepted the policy of the union officials and Stalinists they would have lost everything.

The workers of Woodford and Manchester A. V. Roe have learnt by their own experience that Arbitration machinery works in the interest of the boss alone. The E.W.O. and class collaboration must go! For a militant union leadership—for effective factory organisation.

South Wales DEFENCE COMMITTEE

The delegate Conference held in Troedyrhiw on Saturday, November 11th was called by the Merthyr Provisional Defence Committee in order to widen the representative basis of the Committee and to establish, if possible, a permanent Defence Committee in this important mining area of South Wales.

The delegates present represented the following organisations:—

- Merthyr Trades Council and Labour Party
- Dowlais Womens Co-op Guild
- Merthyr I.L.P.
- Revolutionary Communist Party
- National Union of Public Employees
- National Union of General and Municipal Workers
- A.E.U. No. 2
- Amalgamated Union of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen
- Dowlais Lodge S.W.M.F.
- Merthyr Vale Lodge S.W.M.F.
- Penalta Lodge S.W.M.F.

The Conference was chaired by Councillor Claude Stanfield (I.L.P.).

Discussion was opened by Mr. S. O. Davies, M.P., who showed quite clearly that the ruling class is consciously preparing to beat down the workers' socialist aspirations and that in the coming struggles they will not hesitate to use all the anti-working legislation which is at present on the Statute Book. The general discussion which followed showed that the delegates were alive to the necessity to establish a representative Defence Committee and the general opinion expressed was that such a Committee would not only provide invaluable aid to any victims of ruling class legislation but would also act as a rallying point in the defence of Labour's hard-won rights.

A resolution was then adopted reflecting the old Provisional Committee and deferring the setting up of a permanent committee to a further conference to be called after the delegates had reported back to their organisations and received the necessary mandate.

John Lawrence.

CAPITALISM IN WAR AND PEACE



Reproduced from U.S. Trotskyist paper "The Militant".

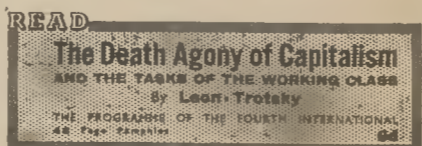
All the Stalinists took up the lead given by Kennedy in attacking the "Socialist Appeal" for trying to make "political capital" out of the meeting, as he put it. This expressed the rage of the Stalinists at the fact that the assembled delegates eagerly bought the "Socialist Appeal" because of its forthright presentation of the building workers' case.

The chairman, Ewan Carr certainly gave the Stalinists a hiding. He refused to allow the Stalinists to draw the red herring of the "Socialist Appeal" sales into the discussion, and denounced the Stalinist slanders that the Committee was anti-trade union.

Building Workers! Don't be fooled by the ilk of Kennedy. He was the only paid official there. He said how sympathetic he felt to this committee... But it must not fight. If the other Trade Union bureaucrats kept away, they were honest. They didn't want rank and file committee and said so. Kennedy is much more dangerous because while pretending to be a friend of the rank and file, he is trying to smash up the movement from within.

Keep these people off your platforms. Let the delegates have time to express their wishes. Get down to forming a real fighting committee. If the conditions of building workers are bad now, they will be a thousand times worse after the war. The building workers have the opportunity of their lives not only to improve their shocking conditions, but to get better conditions all round.

J. C.



PARTY NOTES

Owing to a hitch, Party Notes were not included in last month's "Socialist Appeal". We are therefore including some items of party news which should have gone in the last issue and which should be of interest to our members and sympathisers. We hope Branch Secretaries will continue to send items of interest regularly each month.

M. Lee.

NOTTINGHAM.

On Sunday, 8th October, the Nottingham Branch of the R.C.P., co-operated with the I.L.P. in organising an Anti-Labour Laws Victims Defence Committee meeting held at the Circus Street Hall. Comrade Ted Fletcher of the Birmingham I.L.P. and Comrades Roy Tearse and Jock Haston were the speakers. Eric Nightingale, prominent member of the Nottingham District Committee of the A.E.U. was in the chair. About 300 people listened attentively while the three speakers dealt with the significance of the attack on the R.C.P. under the Trade Disputes Act. The overwhelming majority of the workers present were engineers from a number of Nottingham factories. Two delegates from the Albion Strike Committee (Glasgow) asked to be given the platform for 10 minutes to state the case of the 1,600 Albion workers then out on strike. An appeal for solidarity was warmly responded to.

SHEFFIELD.

At a meeting of sympathisers organised by the Sheffield Branch of the R.C.P., 35 workers listened to Comrade Haston deal with the lessons of the

Tyneside strike case, the attack against our Party, and the perspectives for the future. A number of contacts were made for the party. Over £4 was collected which is excellent taking into consideration the low wages of the Sheffield workers. A quantity of literature was sold.

GLASGOW.

Regular open-air meetings are being held in Brunswick Street on Sundays at 3 p.m. with Comrade Frank Ward as the main regular speaker. These meetings serve two purposes—propaganda and training of speakers.

In addition to our weekly indoor study class (open to all contacts) a special class for workers in a large factory was started four weeks ago. Comrade Roy Tearse gave the first four lectures which were well received, and the class shows signs of increasing numbers. We hope to run other factory classes in the very near future. To raise funds, a dance was arranged for Friday, 10th November in Hillhead Burgh Halls.

EDINBURGH.

Public meetings are being held at the Melbourne Hall every Sunday night. Comrade Frank Ward, the Party's Scottish organiser (recently discharged from the air force "services no longer required") spoke to an audience of 50 workers on the "Military Policy of the Proletariat." Drawing the full political conclusions from the position in the armed forces and from his own experiences, he explained the transitional slogans of the Fourth International as they apply to the problems of the workers in uniform.

BREAK THE COALITION! Labour to Power

on the following Programme

AN END TO THE COALITION WITH THE BOSSES. LABOUR AND TRADE UNION LEADERS MUST BREAK WITH THE CAPITALIST GOVERNMENT AND WAGE A CAMPAIGN FOR POWER ON THE FOLLOWING PROGRAMME:—

- Industrial and Economic Policy.
 - Nationalisation of the land, mines, banks, transport and all big industry without compensation, as the prerequisite for a planned economy and the only means of ensuring full employment with adequate standards of living for the workers, and the operation of the means of production under control of workers' committees.
 - Confiscation of all war profits, all company books to be open for trade union inspection, control of production through workers' committees to end the chaos and mismanagement.
 - Distribution of food, clothes and other consumer commodities under the control of committees of workers elected from the Co-ops, distributive trades, factories, housewives' committees, and small shopkeepers, and allocation of housing under the control of tenants' committees.
 - A rising scale of wages to meet the increased cost of living with a guaranteed minimum; the rate for the job; and industrial rates for all members of the armed forces.

Democratic Demands

- Repeal of the Essential Works Order, the Emergency Powers Act and all other anti-working class and strike-breaking legislation.
- Full electoral and democratic rights for all persons from the age of 18 years. Full democratic and political rights for the men and women in uniform.
- Immediate freedom and unconditional independence for India, Ireland and all the colonies of Britain; immediate withdrawal of British armed forces from these countries; full economic and military assistance to the Indian and colonial peoples to maintain their independence against all imperialist attack.

Military Policy

- Clear out the reactionary, pro-fascist, and anti-labour officer caste in the armed forces and Home Guard; election of officers by the ranks.
- Establishment of military schools by the Trade Unions at the expense of the state for the training of worker-officers; arming of the workers under the control of workers' committees elected in the factories, unions and in the streets for the defence of the democratic rights of the workers from reactionary attacks by the enemies of the working class at home and abroad.

International Policy

- Against race hatred and discrimination of all forms (Vansittartism, Anti-Semitism, and the Colour Bar); for the fraternisation and co-operation of workers and soldiers of all countries.
- Unconditional defence of the Soviet Union against all imperialist powers; despatch of arms, food and essential materials to the Soviet Union under the control of the Trade Unions and factory committees.
- A Socialist appeal to the workers of Germany, Europe, Japan, and the rest of the world, on the basis of this programme in Britain, to join the socialist struggle against Nazism, Fascism and all forms of capitalist oppression and for a Socialist United States of Europe and a Federation of Asiatic Soviet Socialist Republics.

Bill Davy, Tyne apprentice leader spoke at the following meeting to about 100 workers on the "Lessons of the Tyne strike and the problems facing the Youth." He received a wonderful reception from the audience who were impressed by his ability in expounding the Party's case. Harold Atkinson spoke on the anniversary of the Russian Revolution, and our position was well received. The average attendance was 50 to 60 workers.

The study class which meets every Wednesday in Marthyr will in future be held in the I.L.P. Rooms at 7 p.m. and not as previously stated, in the Miners' Hall.

MERSEY.

A central study circle for members and sympathisers has been inaugurated under the auspices of the Merseyside District Committee of the R.C.P. to be held on Sundays, in Cooper's Hall, Islington Square, Liverpool, at 4 p.m.

BELFAST.

The Belfast Comrades are holding regular study circles each Sunday at 36 Gresham Street, commencing at 8 p.m. All interested in the programme of the Fourth International are invited to attend. Discussion follows each lecture.

BIRMINGHAM.

The Birmingham comrades are organising an India Meeting to be held on Indian Independence Day in Birmingham on January 26th, 1945. The two Indian speakers will be Ajit Roy and V. Sastry. Arrangements are already in hand to draw a full meeting of Indian workers in the district.

SOCIALIST APPEAL
 Organ of the Revolutionary Communist Party, British Section of the Fourth International.
 256 HARRLOW ROAD, LONDON, W.2
 Phone: CUN 2526.
 EDITOR: E. Grant.
 BUSINESS MANAGER: J. Graham.

Unite the Working Class

Unity is in the air. The "Communist" Party raises it to divert the attention of the workers away from the communist solution. Fearful of their seats and privileges, as usual, the Labour leaders reject it.

In the clouded atmosphere, one vital question is overlooked: **UNITY WITH WHOM AND FOR WHAT?**

The Communist Party proposes it as an electoral bloc between the Labour Party, the Communist Party, Common Wealth, the Liberals and "progressive" Tories.

This bloc is to form a "progressive" capitalist government which will introduce certain social reforms. But there will be no fundamental changes: the capitalist structure will remain. There will be no expropriation of the means of production. Where industries are nationalised, this will only be with the consent of the capitalists, and with compensation to the owners. The British Empire will remain intact.

This is a resurrection of the Popular Front such as was formed in France. There the leftward moving workers had won concessions as a result of stay-in-strikes; under the pretext of "national crisis" the Government took these concessions away to maintain capitalism, and ultimately delivered them, tied hand and foot, to Petain.

In Spain, the Popular Front was in power. The factories the workers had seized were handed back to the owners; the feudal landlords were given back the land; arms were taken away from the workers' and peasants' militias. Finally, the workers and peasants of Spain were delivered by the Popular Front to Franco.

The Popular Front is a reactionary snare for the working class. France and Spain serve as a bitter lesson against such electoral blocs.

But the workers want genuine unity. Their standard of living is being undermined every day; their hard won rights are being taken away; legislative attacks are directed against their organisations. To defend their living standards, their rights, and their fighting organisations, the workers want unity.

In the factories, in the mines and transport, in the Trade Unions and Trades Councils, in the Shop Stewards Committees, the Revolutionary Communist Party stands shoulder to shoulder with members of all other working class parties in a struggle to defend these and other rights of the workers. We support an agreement with all the parties of the working class for such a struggle.

But such agreements must be reached openly; discussions must be conducted publicly before the working class. No manoeuvres at the top; no machinations behind the scenes; and no arrangements in private.

The workers want unity for the purpose of returning a Workers Government. "Unity Conferences" are run up and down the country by the Communist Party for the purpose of selecting candidates. We support such conferences, provided they are genuinely representative, including delegates from Trade Union Branches, Labour Party Wards and Divisions, C.P., I.L.P. and R.C.P. Branches. Each party must be given the opportunity to present its programme and policy. Let there be a genuine democratic selection—not Stalinist "rigged" Conferences and stampeded meetings.

In general, millions of workers support the Labour Party. They believe that a Labour Government will solve their problems. We do not. The Parliament will not solve their problems. Only Soviets, or Workers' Councils can. But the workers do not yet have confidence in our party. We will not stand aside; we will unite with the workers to force the Labour leaders to take power. We will demand that they take power on a socialist programme. We will give them critical support even on their own programme. Nothing will serve to expose the Labour leaders as agents of capitalism better than this.

NO UNITY WITH THE CAPITALIST PARTIES UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES. FOR THE COMPLETE INDEPENDENCE OF THE WORKING CLASS. Temporary agreements between the working class parties against the capitalists—that is the essence of the unity we support.

TROTSKYISM LIVES

A Comrade writes:

"I have been fortunate these days. First of all I worked with Italian prisoners and later with Russians. The Italians were very interested in the American 'Militant' showing the mass demonstrations in Naples. I managed in a pidgeon way, to explain what was going on there under the 'liberators'."

The Russians were different. Most of them were educated and could speak German. I had a look at some "Pravda's" they had and J. Stalin's name was most prominent. They hated Stalin. Trotsky was a man for the people, they said. When I showed them the picture of the Bolshevik Old Guard and explained that Stalin was the sole survivor, they understood. I also explained to them

about the C.P. of America and the cancerous growth that the Third International had become before its collapse. They were interested in the Fourth International and seemed surprised to learn of Trotskyist groups in other countries, especially America.

From a Polish comrade who spent two years in Stalin's jails after the occupation of Poland in 1939, comes news that while in Stalin's jails, he met many members of the Trotskyist Opposition who, despite years of imprisonment, are still imbued with the Trotskyist ideas of world revolution. Further, they are optimistic that the bureaucracy will be destroyed and the ideas of Lenin and Trotsky will triumph again in Russia.

WHY HITLER CAME TO POWER

By Fed Grant

Introduction to the Pamphlet now on Sale, "Germany — the Key to the International Situation" by Leon Trotsky.

THE imminent defeat of Hitler raises many questions as to the past and future of Germany. According to the reports at the Quebec Conference, *What to do with Germany* once she has been defeated has loomed large as the problem which is worrying the spokesmen of Anglo-American imperialism. They consider this to be as grave and thorny a problem as the destruction of German imperialist power itself. Their fears as to the possibility of maintaining control of Germany by means of Allied armies of occupation has led the imperialists to launch a virulent hate campaign. Now at the head of the gang, spewing forth the foul doctrines of racialism and nationalism; of indiscriminate hatred of the Germans as a nation, thus emulating the worst features of the racial doctrine of the Nazis, stands the so-called Communist Party leadership. In the rear, but more cautiously, for fear of their own membership, the Labour leaders, faithfully echo the Vansittart teaching of their imperialist master.

But the fate of Germany today, as it has been for many decades, remains a key question for the fate of Europe. The reason for the insistence of the ruling class, and of Stalin, on the formula of unconditional surrender, lies in their fear of the Socialist revolution which is rapidly maturing within Germany. Once the heavy hand of the Gestapo and the S.S. has been removed there will be no organised force capable of maintaining the repression of the German masses. During the rule of Hitler, monstrous crimes and repressions on the part of the Nazis have engendered a hatred which has few parallels in history. An enormous explosion is being prepared which threatens not only to blow the Nazi Party to smithereens but threatens the whole of the capitalist system itself. Every worker in Germany knows that it is the combines, monopolies, trusts and big capitalists who organised Hitler and placed him in control. As Rauschning, the ex-nationalist, ex-Nazi Gauleiter of Danzig has pointed out, the expropriation of the Jews leads inevitably to the posing of the problem of expropriation of all the capitalists. It is not for nothing that Hitler has attempted to give his demagoguery a "socialist" coloration. This reflects the aspirations not alone of the German workers, but the overwhelming majority of the German population as a whole. In the past few decades, all the forms of capitalist exploitation and political rule have been tried and found wanting. Inevitably, the socialist revolution will be automatically posed with the fall of Hitler.

a cover for their crimes against the German people. All the more necessary then, to show the rôle that Stalinism played in the rise of Hitler.

The truth of the matter is that the Stalinists devoted the major part of their energy to ridiculing the danger of the Nazis and concentrated their whole attention on fighting the social democrats as the "main enemy". They fought viciously against Trotsky's suggestion that the united front was the only means of smashing Hitler and preparing the way for the victory of the working class. From the lips of Thaelmann himself, we get the following:

"Trotsky wants in all seriousness a common action of the Communists with the murderer of Liebknecht and Rosa (Luxemburg), and more, with Mr. Zoergiebel and those police chiefs whom the Papen regime leaves in office to oppress the workers. Trotsky has attempted several times in his writings to turn aside the working class by demanding negotiations between the chiefs of the German Communist Party and the Social Democratic Party."

(Thaelmann's closing speech at the 12th Plenum, September 1932, Executive Committee of the Communist International, "Communist International" No. 17/18, Page 1329.)

The Stalinists went even further, openly inciting the Communist workers to beat up socialist workers, break up their meetings, etc., even carrying the fight to the school children in the very playgrounds! Thaelmann even put forward openly the slogan "Chase the social fascists from their jobs in the plants and the trade unions." Following on this line of the leader, the Young Communist organ, *The Young Guard* propounded the slogan: "Chase the social fascists from the plants, the employment exchanges, and the apprentice schools."

But the line has to be carried through to the end. In the organ of the Young Pioneers which catered for the communist children, the *Drum*, the "unifying" slogan is put forward:

"Strike the little Zoergiebels in the schools and the playgrounds."

THAELMAN DENOUNCED THE UNITED FRONT

Thaelmann indignantly repudiated the very thought of a united front with the social democratic party. In an article published in *Die Internationale*, November December 1931, page 488:

"It (the Social Democratic Party) threatens to make a United Front with the Communist Party. The speech of Breitscheid (whose murder was announced at the same time as Thaelmann's) at Darmstadt on the occasion of the Hesse elections and the comments of Vorwaerts on this speech show that Social Democracy by his manoeuvre is drawing on the wall the devil of Hitler's fascism and is holding back the masses from the real struggle against the dictatorship of finance capital. And these lying mouthfuls . . . they hope to make them more palatable with the sauce of a so-called sudden friendship for the Communists (against the prohibition of the German C.P.) and to make them more agreeable to the masses."

and again in a vehement attack on Trotsky:

"In his pamphlet on the question, How will National Socialism be Defeated?, Trotsky gives always but one reply: 'The German C.P. must make a bloc with the Social Democracy. . . .' In framing this bloc, Trotsky sees the only way for completely saving the German working class against fascism. EITHER THE C.P. WILL MAKE A BLOC WITH THE SOCIAL DEMOCRACY OR THE GERMAN WORKING CLASS IS LOST FOR 10-20 YEARS. This is the theory of a completely ruined fascist and counter-revolutionary. This theory is the worst theory, the most dangerous theory and the most criminal that Trotsky has constructed in the last years of his counter-revolutionary propaganda."

Thaelmann, closing speech at the 13th Plenum, September 1932: "Communist International" No. 17/18, p. 1329.

But it is not necessary to deal with the dupe. The founthead of this criminal policy was Joseph Stalin. He proclaimed that the main enemy of the working class was not at all the fascists but the socialists. He even put forward the nonsensical theory that the socialist party and the fascists were one and the same thing:

"Fascism", said Stalin, "is the fighting organisation of the bourgeoisie, which rests upon the active support of the social democracy. Objectively, the social democracy is the moderate wing of Fascism. There is no reason to admit that the fighting organisation of the bourgeoisie could obtain decisive successes either in the struggles or in the government of the country without the active support of the Social Democracy. . . . There is also little reason to admit that Social Democracy can obtain decisive successes either in struggles or in the government of the country without the active support of the fighting organisation of the bourgeoisie. THESE ORGANISATIONS ARE NOT MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE, BUT ON THE CONTRARY ARE MUTUALLY COMPLEMENTARY. THEY ARE NOT ANTIPODES BUT TWINS. Fascism is a shapeless bloc of these two organisations. Without this bloc the bourgeoisie could not remain at the helm."

Stalin, quoted in *Die Internationale*, February 1932. In carrying out this theory the wise Manuilsky had explained at the 11th Plenum of the Communist International April 1931:

"The social democrats, in order to deceive the masses, deliberately proclaim that the chief enemy of the working class is Fascism. . . . Is it not true that the whole theory of the 'lesser evil' rests on the presupposition that Fascism of the Hitler type represents the chief enemy?"

(The Communist Parties and the Crisis of Capitalism, p. 112.)

(Continued on back page)

GERMANY - the Key to the International Situation

By Leon Trotsky

1931

Price - 6d.



But this is precisely what the ruling class of Britain and America and the traitors in the Kremlin, fear more than anything else. The spectre of a German revolution—of a new and this time completed 1918, is their main pre-occupation now that German militarism is in its death throes.

The instinct of the working class in the Allied countries is, while maintaining implacable hatred for fascism, to distinguish between the fascist thugs and the ordinary German worker. Profiting from their experience after the last world war when all the armies of occupation fraternised with the German masses (who easily convinced them that they were no different from themselves) the ruling class are attempting to place barriers in the way of its reoccurrence. The army staffs of both Britain and America have backed up the ideological campaign of chauvinist incitement by strict orders threatening punishment to any soldiers fraternising with German civilians.

The attitude of the British and American workers to the German workers can decide the fate of the coming German revolution and in so doing, will also decide whether there is to be a new version of Fascism and imperialist World War III. Under these conditions the necessity to enlighten the British masses as to the history and meaning of German events, at least since the last world war, becomes doubly important. It becomes necessary to restate the most elementary propositions of Marxism. Today, those traitors who point the finger of scorn at the German workers pretend that it is the fault of the German workers that Hitler came to power. They attempt to evade their own historic responsibility for this catastrophe. In commenting on the murder of Thaelmann the *Daily Worker* cynically says that he fought for the united front in Germany with all other working class organisations in order to destroy fascism. That is why it is all the more necessary to explain to the British and other workers exactly what did take place. The new generation in particular, must understand the part Stalinism played in German events prior to Hitler's seizure of power, if they wish to understand its present role.

Thaelmann has been murdered by the Nazis together with tens of thousands of other victims of the fascist barbarians. But it is necessary to speak the truth if there are to be no more victims of the system which produced Hitler. Now the Stalinists wish to use Thaelmann's martyrdom as

WHY HITLER CAME TO POWER

(Continued from page 3.)

It was with this revision of all the teachings of Lenin that the Communist Party of Germany with the assistance of the social democracy, confused and paralysed the workers and then handed them over without a battle into the hands of the fascist executioner.

The British hypocrites who now slander the German workers applauded this policy of betrayal at the time when the revolutionary socialists were raising their voice all over the world in an effort to prevent the tragedy which was impending in Germany.

"It is significant" jereed the DAILY WORKER of May 26th, 1932, "that Trotsky has come out in defence of a united front between the Communist and Social Democratic Parties against Fascism. No more disruptive and counter revolutionary class lead could possibly have been given at a time like the present."

At the eleventh hour, just before Hitler's coming to power in the Communist Review of December 1932, Ralph Fox wrote:

"... The Communist Party of Germany has now succeeded in winning the majority of the working class in the decisive industrial areas, where it is now the FIRST PARTY in Germany. The only exceptions are Hamburg and Saxony, but even here the Party vote has enormously increased at the expense of the Social Democrats.

These successes have been won only by the most unwavering carrying through of the line of the Party and the Comintern. Insisting all the time that Social Democracy is the chief social support of capitalism, the Party has carried on intense and unceasing struggle against the German Social Democratic Party and the new 'Independent Socialist Labour Party', as well as against the right wing and Trotskyist renegades who wanted the party of the proletariat to make a united front with Social Fascism against Fascism."

It is this suicidal policy of Stalinism against which Trotsky and the international Left Opposition waged a struggle in the critical years 1930-33 when the fate of Germany hung in the balance. Trotsky's works on Germany will remain forever as textbooks on the problem of the United Front. They will serve as models for the revolutionary movement of the future. That we commence publication of Trotsky's material on this question in England for the first time, is a reflection on the revolutionary movement in Britain. Every student who desires an understanding of the degeneration of Stalinism will study this material with great care.

Even though Germany—the Key to the International Situation was written in 1931, it retains its freshness at the present time. The outline of the situation, not only in Germany, but in the other countries dealt with, indicates clearly Trotsky's profound understanding of the political process of development of our period. Trotsky and the Fourth International alone warned of the catastrophe that the coming to power of Hitler would mean for the workers of Germany, Europe and of the Soviet Union. When the Stalinists refused to learn the lesson of events, and in a most cowardly way, surrendered the German masses to Hitler without a fight, or even a shot being fired; when they even went so far as to proclaim the coming to power of Hitler as a victory for the working class—as it expressed the crisis of capitalism and his victory was merely that of the caliph of an hour, boastfully proclaiming "our turn next"—it was then that Trotsky proclaimed the end of the Comintern as a force making for world socialism.

How pitiful, how despicable are the writings of the pen prostitutes of the Kremlin on Germany, when the real historical events are analysed. These Dutts, these Rusts, these Ehrenburgs—not satisfied with having betrayed the German workers into the hands of the Nazis, now systematically disseminate chauvinist poison to the Allied workers in order to assist Anglo-American imperialism to enslave the German people. Having proved incapable of leading the German workers to victory, they now actively oppose the socialist revolution in Germany. Thus as always in politics, ineptness and stupidity, if not corrected, become transformed into treachery.

The German and British workers will yet present their accounts not only to their imperialist oppressors, but to their hirelings in the ranks of the working class. Once the working class realises the full depth of their treachery, like the traducers of the Commune, they will forever be held to scorn in the memory of the working class.

It would have been impossible to conceive that elements claiming to represent the working class should stoop to such depths as the Stalinists. From the Social Democrats nothing more could have been expected—they remained faithful to their past tradition of reformist betrayal. The Stalinists have often enough in the past referred to the murder of Liebknecht and Luxemburg and the betrayal of the revolution of 1918. But nothing in their record could equal the long list of crimes marked up to the account of Stalinism.

Surely, all the gods must have laughed at the spectacle of the Stalinist leaders solemnly intoning that it was necessary to "re-educate" the German workers—and their educators? Allied imperialism and Stalinism! Yes, re-education is necessary! Re-education of the ranks of the working class as to the rôle of the leadership of the organisations claiming to represent them. Re-education which will assist them to burn out the cancer of Stalinism and reformism which will lead the workers only to further catastrophe. In order to accomplish the task of "educating" not only the German but the British and world workers, it is necessary that the advanced guard should be trained and armed with a knowledge of the Marxist method and of the history of past defeats. As an indispensable means of understanding the position in Germany today, it is necessary for the workers to conscientiously study the works of Trotsky. Germany is still the key to the international situation—with an understanding and with a knowledge of the past and future tasks we will go forward to the building of a new socialist world.

"LIBERATED" BELGIUM

(Continued from page 1.)

workers answered by calling on the local Resistance forces, who helped them to occupy the factory.

MINERS' DEMANDS

These workers were not alone. A national conference of Miners' Trade Union Struggle Committees on the 22nd October called upon the workers to demonstrate on the 30th with the following demands:

1. Immediate start of production.
2. Requisitioning of all idle pits and industries and those whose owners have collaborated with the Germans, and their management under workers' control.
3. Rational organisation of food supplies with the co-operation of the Resistance movement.
4. Legal recognition of the Workers' Purging Committees.

The resolution ends: "Failing the immediate implementation of these measures the workers should occupy the idle pits with the help of the Resistance forces in order to re-start production."

A National Conference of Unified Unions and Trade Union Struggle Committees of the Engineering, industry associated itself with the miners' resolution.

THE RESISTANCE MOVEMENT

It is in relation to this background that the decision of the Government to disarm the Resistance must be seen.

The Belgian Resistance movement, like the French, is not homogeneous, but made up of several different groups representing the main political tendencies and class interests in Belgium.

There is the Armée Secrète (Secret Army) organised by officer and capitalist elements which was formed with the help of the big capitalists, etc., not so much with the object of fighting the Germans but of providing the capitalists with an armed organisation of their own to face the workers once the machine guns and revolvers of the S.S. and Gestapo were no longer there to maintain "law and order."

On the other hand there is the Independence Front (F.I.) in which are represented the Communist Party, the Socialists, the Trade Union Struggle Committees and also Liberals and Catholics. The main influence is that of the Communist Party. The F.I.'s armed formations are the Belgian Partisan Army and the Patriotic Militias in which, again, the Communist Party has great influence. Under the German occupation the struggle against the "common" enemy especially the fact that the Communist and Socialist parties reduced their whole policy to "chuck out the Boche first and we will discuss afterwards the regime we will have", hid the real differences in aim and social composition of the different movements.

Now that Belgium is "free" of the Germans, the question is posed: "After the Germans, who will rule—the capitalists (with the help of the Anglo-Americans) or the workers?" The strikes that are taking place, the chaos in industry and especially the occupation of the factories by the workers, poses that question today—and to this question each section of the Resistance will give its own answer according to its class and political character. The reactionary Armée Secrète and White Brigade will act as the bosses' special guards, whereas the Patriotic Militias and Partisans of the F.I., being largely working class, will act—and have already acted—as Workers' Militias. When the Patriotic Militia helped the workers occupy the S.A.F.E.A. works, and when maybe tomorrow they will help the miners occupy the pits—they were and will thereby be acting as exclusive organs of the working class—as Workers' Militias. Under the pressure of events a rapid regrouping and resorting will take place inside the Resistance groups: the capitalist and middle class

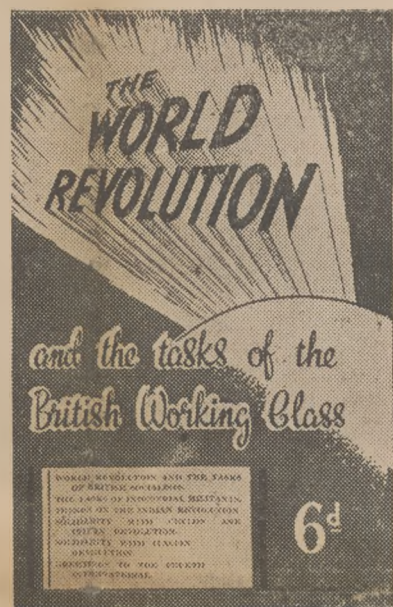
elements in the F.I. and other groups, the W.B., the O.M.B.R., etc., will, with the A.S. act as a Belgian S.S. to repress the workers. The capitalists are well aware of the danger to them represented by the armed workers in the Resistance—particularly the Partisans and Patriotic Militias.

That is why Pierlot decided to disarm the Resistance—the workers must not have arms to defend themselves from the bosses' attacks.

The Belgian Trotskyists—the Revolutionary Communist Party of Belgium—have put forward the slogan of "Workers' Militias" based on the factories, with elected officers and under the control of the Workers' or Factory Committees. The workers will realise the necessity of preparing for future struggles, for thousands are hiding their arms rather than give them up.

THE TREASON OF THE STALINISTS

In their struggle, the Belgian masses are being betrayed by their misleaders. Both the Communist Party Ministers and the "Resistance" representative Demany, resigned in protest, and through the Independence Front called upon the people to demonstrate against the Government. Their counter-proposals, however, are a capitulation to the Government and show they have no real differences with Pierlot. They propose that the Resistance forces be incorporated in the regular army—as whole units and under the command of their own off-



cers. But the regular army is controlled by the reactionary capitalist class; it is the instrument of the capitalist class, and to propose the incorporation of the Resistance forces in that army is to propose turning them openly into instruments of the capitalists. Are the Resistance leaders and the so-called "Communist" leaders naive enough to believe that the General Staff would not, once the Resistance forces were in the army—and subject to military discipline—weed out officers that were not subservient to them? What guarantee have they that after a few months or weeks the capitalist higher officers would not split up the Resistance units all over the army?

No—our Belgian Trotskyist comrades are quite right in pointing out that the workers must build up their own Workers' Militias as their weapon in the working class struggle against the capitalists, and must fight for a Workers' Government.

The Belgian working class is realising through bitter experience that the "liberation" has changed nothing and

that they still have a struggle ahead—to kick out the capitalists and take power for the working class. The workers are turning in masses towards the Belgian Communist Party, believing that under its leadership they can achieve their aims.

The aim of the leadership of the Communist Party is, however, entirely different. Their rôle, as in Britain, France and the U.S.A., is in fact to save capitalism by diverting the revolutionary sentiments of the workers. When the Pierlot Government was formed soon after the "liberation", they entered it, thus giving the workers the illusion that something good could come out of such a government. The Pierlot government, however, showed by its actions and by its attack on the Resistance that it was a faithful watchdog of big business. Now the Belgian C.P. has left the Government, but its new demand, "For a Government of Democratic Concentration", is also meant to fool the workers. They propose a government of Communists, Socialists and progressives.

This programme, containing many demands which revolutionary communists can agree—i.e. smashing of the trusts, workers' participation of management, planned economy, etc., is however merely a camouflage to hide the C.P.'s capitulation; the C.P. leaders know very well that no capitalist government will take any steps to smash the monopolies (i.e. their own backers) or plan economy in the interests of the working masses of the country. The capitalists will fight tooth and nail against any real encroachment of the workers into the sacred domain of their management of industry. The C.P. leaders know quite well that economic security is impossible so long as capitalism exists, they know that the capitalist class is incapable of getting Belgium out of its present mess and that only the complete smashing of the capitalist State and its replacement by workers' power will make possible a real planned economy controlled by, and for the benefit of, the working class and the overwhelming majority of the population. To achieve this the working class must build up its organs of struggle, its Workers' Committees based on the factories and elected by all workers, its workers' militias etc.—But the "Communist" Party does not say a word about these, and by pretending that their programme can be carried out merely through Cabinet reshuffles and the "concentration of democratic forces" it is deliberately fooling the workers.

Both the Belgian Socialist and Stalinist Parties claim that the present Pierlot Government with its majority of Catholic Party and liberal capitalist ministers does not represent the views of the majority in the country. It is undoubtedly true that free elections today would result in a "socialist" and "communist" majority. Why then do not the Socialist and Stalinist leaders demand a general election? Is it because they are afraid of taking power, because then the masses would expect them to apply their programme and really kick out the capitalists? The Revolutionary Communists of Belgium will demand that the Labour and Stalinist leaders match words with deeds. They say this is a government of collaborators: then down with the government! Let them fight for power and end their capitulation to the capitalists and their government. By this means our Belgian comrades will demonstrate that they alone can carry out a programme of socialism and in defence of the interests of the working class.

On the foreign field as well as at home the "programme" of the Stalinist leaders in Belgium is a capitulation to imperialism. They call for the old catchwords of "collective security" and a "lasting peace based on the destruction of the imperialist foundations of Germany". As if Germany were the only imperialist aggressor! No, destruction of German imperialism alone will not assure peace. Only the destruction of all imperialism—German and American, British and Japanese, and the establishment of workers' power, and as a first step a United Socialist States of Europe can assure lasting peace. The Belgian working class will take part in the mighty struggle by fighting side by side with their French, German and British comrades for a Workers' Belgium and a Workers' Europe.

THE TASKS OF THE BRITISH LABOUR MOVEMENT

The capitalist Government in Belgium would not last for a minute were it not for the Labour and Stalinist misleaders who hold the masses back on the one hand, and support the British army on the other. During the demonstrations in Brussels, British and Canadian troops were standing by to help the Belgian police and gendarmerie if necessary. As yet, they have not had to fire. But the British workers and soldiers must understand that the struggle is only beginning and that British troops will be used, sooner or later, against the Belgian and European workers, to keep in power the ex-collaborationist capitalists. The British and American capitalists do not want the workers to triumph anywhere in Europe and the British and American armies will be used to keep in power the old discredited capitalist and pro-Fascist and reactionary cliques who yesterday co-operated with the German capitalists in the exploitation of the German and European workers.

Yesterday, the Belgian bosses called in the Gestapo and the S.S. to suppress their workers, break their

(Continued in next column.)

EBBW VALE STRIKE

(Continued from page 1.)

bilities of their private police force. A resolution to end the strike was then adopted unanimously.

LESSONS OF THE STRIKE

The outstanding feature of this stoppage was the fact that, for the first time in Ebbw Vale, a dispute was led and organised by a Joint Committee of all the unions involved. This new form of organisation expressing as it does the solidarity of all the workers, irrespective of trade and craft, must be maintained and extended. In future struggles, no matter what particular union is immediately involved, the Works Committee, representing all the unions at Ebbw Vale, must be called in to co-ordinate the struggle. And meanwhile, the Works Committee itself must be strengthened. First and foremost the A.E.U. must send delegates to this important and all-embracing committee.

Insofar as the existing Strike Committee has decided to notify all the workers at the Ebbw Vale works of their rights in relation to Richard Thomas's private police force, the strike can be termed a partial victory. It was not a complete victory because the struggle against the State Police has been left uncompleted.

But the fine solidarity shown by the Ebbw Vale workers bodes well for the future. It is a warning to Richard Thomas, and to the employing class in general, that the workers are not prepared to tolerate a police dictatorship in the workshops—or elsewhere.

R.J.

(Continued from previous Column.) strikes. Today the same bosses look to the Allied army. But the British soldiers do not want to become an Allied S.S. They have been told they are fighting to "liberate" Europe and destroy Nazism. They do not want to be used to protect the collaborators and profiteers of Nazism from the wrath of their Belgian and European fellow-workers.

The capitalists will distort or suppress the truth, will tell all sorts of lies. It is the duty of the British labour movement to expose these machinations, to explain to the British workers and especially to the British soldiers, the counter-revolutionary use the capitalists will want to make of the troops, to explain the real situation.

So far, the official labour movement has not protested against the intervention of General Erskine, as head of the Allied military mission on the side of the capitalists. It is known that General Erskine summoned the Resistance leaders, and the Communist Party ministers, to a conference and no doubt warned them that British troops would be used against the Resistance if necessary. It is also known that Walter Citrine, general-secretary of the T.U.C. was also in Brussels at the time. Was that just a coincidence? Or was he there to add the pressure of the British labour leaders to that of General Erskine in support of the disarmament of the Resistance? The "Tribune" of November 24th comments on this matter:

"Something else happened in Brussels that day that needs explanation. While the Socialist rank and file, which had been in the forefront in the resistance groups, particularly in the mining areas, made unmistakable common cause with the Communist and Liberal leaders, the Socialist Ministers were issuing equivocal statements saying that they had not made up their mind and giving no direction to their followers except indicating that they would not resign. This statement does not fit into the known background of some of the Socialist Ministers whose resistance record is well known. Questions have, therefore, been asked in Brussels whether the interference in this Belgian affair was confined to the military, whether the presence of Sir Walter Citrine in Belgium on that day was entirely accidental, and if the influence of the secretary of the T.U.C. was required to fortify that of the Allied Commander?"

When the British soldiers come to realise the dirty work they will be made to do, in defence of ex-collaborating big business, and ordered to come out against their Belgian fellow-workers, they, in their overwhelming majority, will be disgusted and opposed to being used as S.S. But they are shackled by military discipline. It is therefore up to the whole labour movement to mobilise its forces in defence of the Belgian workers.

Workers, in your trade union branches, in your factory committees in your shop-steward's committees, trades councils, etc., demand that the labour movement oppose the manoeuvres of the capitalist reaction. The labour ministers must leave the government. The labour movement must not be made responsible for the suppression of our European fellow-workers.

Hands off the Belgian workers! British troops are not S.S.!

Long live the unity of the British and Belgian working class!

Long live the Revolutionary Communist Party of Belgium!

Gas Strike

(Continued from page 1.)

port of the night shift. The Government decided to act quickly. The notices were served on 36 of the strikers as a means of intimidation.

BRADFORD WORKERS ISOLATED

Cajoled and pleaded with by the union officials, and threatened by the Government; isolated and lacking contact with each other, the Gas Workers throughout Lancashire did not come out in support of Bradford and Stockport. Because of this, the strikers feared that skilled men would be drafted from other works.

On November 9th, Bro. Moores went to the Trade Union office and warned of the chaos and danger involved in gas production as a result of the action of the Government. He asked for a definite assurance that negotiations would take place.

The trade union officials, who do not suffer under the miserable conditions of the men they are supposed to represent, wouldn't give any assurance.

T.U. OFFICIALS FORCED TO RAISE MEN'S DEMAND

At a meeting of the workers held in the Bradford Road Works Canteen on November 11th, there were 6 representatives from Stockport present. The mood of the men was ugly. Exasperated by the delay and enraged with their leadership they were determined to bring the whole workers out on strike. So far the Key men and the Maintenance men were not involved. During the course of the meeting, a

message from the union was received to say that the demand for time and a third was on the agenda for the Joint Industrial Gas Council, to be held the following Thursday.

This was a victory for the men. But their justified mistrust for the slow and unsatisfactory machinery of arbitration was shown by the large number who voted against returning to work. When the vote was taken, 98 voted to go back, and 40 voted against. The Stockport workers came to a similar decision in order that the strikers should return in a solid body.

FOR A JOINT GAS WORKS COMMITTEE

Although the holding of the Joint Industrial Gas Council was speeded up, the back of the strike was broken due to the lack of support from the other works. No Joint Committee of workers' representatives exists, although the men have been attempting to form such a committee. The only means of publicising their case was through the capitalist press. This is obviously a bad method, since boss class press accounts are seldom true, and are more often than not unfavourable to the workers. The union bureaucrats who have the means of contact, are tied to the capitalist machine and are not prepared to fight for the workers' interests.

The first step for the Gas workers is the formation of a Joint Gas Works Committee. Only along the road of united action on a local, regional, and national basis—can the workers gain their demands.