

undoubtedly on the side of the workers.

Bourgeois experts contend that the advance of war techniques—poison gas, airplanes, high explosives—has made it possible for the ruling class to bomb or gas revolutionaries out of existence in a few minutes.

This analysis fails to point out that the modern war-machine is completely dependent upon the uninterrupted operation of industry and transportation. Disrupt any branch for a short time and the whole machinery of war comes to a halt. Consequently, the very strength of the war machine is its undoing when it is confronted by a strong and disciplined working class. The military effectiveness of the bourgeoisie has increased at the expense of its increasing dependence upon the working class for the successful operation of the war machine, which can only function when industry supplies its needs. These external needs of the military apparatus are supplemented by an internal need for mechanics, radio operators, and innumerable other skilled workers, a need that is increasing as armies and navies become more and more mechanized. One can hardly function in the air force or the navy these days without knowing how to operate a machine of some sort, and without having some sort of technical knowledge. The strike of the British sailors at Invergordon a few years ago demonstrated that the officers are the prisoners of their men, if the latter should rise against them. In similar fashion,

a machine-gun company or a squadron of tanks or a gas platoon, are also dependent upon a great deal of technical skill, and could be tied into knots by a strike or a mutiny.

Add to the factor of the dependence of the armed forces upon skilled workers the fact that the counter-revolution in its efforts to put down the revolution would have to arm workers and farmers and sympathetic middle class groups who would turn their weapons against the counter-revolution. We get a picture of the counter-revolutionary forces in a constant state of disintegration from within as a result of working class propaganda, and of assault from without by the revolutionary armies. The former would be isolated from their vital industrial needs. They could not force the workers to run the few factories they might control—sabotage and resistance would soon destroy their value. Without supplies the counter-revolutionary armies would soon be disrupted by continuous mutinies within their ranks and the overt hostility of the civil population.

Nor would a sudden, sharp attack win victory for the counter-revolution. The terror of modern warfare would act as a boomerang that would drive the neutrals into the camp of revolution. Under the conditions of gas and aerial warfare, every person of the population becomes a target. This would bring about the disintegration of the potential forces of the ruling class as incendiary and poison

gas bombs destroy the capitalist and middle class as well as the proletarian residential sections. It is impossible to control chemical and bacteriological weapons. You can no longer attack only working class quarters, while the inert bourgeoisie look on. Air raids and gas attacks would accelerate the movement of the petty bourgeoisie into the ranks of the proletarian revolution.

The counter-revolution might destroy some cities and some industrial centers. But cut off from industry and the major means of transportation, its weapons and supplies would be exhausted in a few weeks, while it had to fight the ever growing revolutionary forces. Under such conditions a revolutionary insurrection if properly planned and executed has the ultimate advantages on its side.

These comments are not meant to portray the actual tactics of the general strike and the proletarian revolution. These will be dictated by the material factors of the objective situation and by the temper and will of the working class. They do indicate, however, the essential falsity of those theories that claim that technological advance has destroyed the objective possibilities of proletarian victories. Modern technique does not deny victory to the working class; it merely demands of the working class and its leaders that they conduct more skillful struggles. If skillful tactics are used, then technology becomes a tremendous force on the side of the workers.

A California Summary

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TO THE unimaginative reader, the simple statement that A, a striker, was shot; or that B, an organizer was beaten; or that C, a worker, was kidnaped, is like the distant echo of a thunderbolt. Many are the pealing reverberation he hears during a storm. Unless lightning and thunder blend in a deafening, blinding moment, he does not care. The danger is . . . off there.

Similarly the constant repetition of the statement that Fascism is approaching in America is exciting enough, although not nearly so stirring as the bald fact that Fascism is here. To many of you, Fascism seems beyond the horizon. The battles rage here and there, troops in Toledo, police murders in Cleveland, troops in Minneapolis, terror in Alabama. Storm across the political-economic weather map. A few are struck by lightning. The storm passes your vicinity. You, in your cosmic self-sufficiency, are safe.

I tell you that Fascism is here. We in California know it. Quite true, storm troopers do not parade our streets; stiff-armed salutes are not seen in public. But Fascism is here.

In California aspirants for the post of *Fuehrer* are many. Gov. Merriam had his

day. Down in the Imperial Valley, A. N. Jack, chief of the growers, is It. In Los Angeles "Red" Hynes. In Sacramento, "Nit-Wit" McAllister, Inquisitor of Jimmie Cagney, Dolores Del Rio and Johnnie's Lupe.

What are the tactics of California Fascism? Let us see.

Death to traitors . . . meaning Communists, Socialists, Parlor Pinks and most union labor. Many votes were recorded at the state convention of the American Legion this summer. The idea was defeated. Another year is coming. A *Fuehrer* . . . then Death to Traitors.

Exile to Communists, Socialists, Parlor Pinks and most union labor. The Aleutian Islands suggested by some. Death Valley by others, notably Prof. Withagermannname who teaches Economics at the University of California at Los Angeles, a state institution.

Confiscation of property and denial of all civil rights to all leftists. This treatment was recommended by the National Commander of the American Legion, immediately following a report from Germany that the Nazis were planning such action against those who voted Nein in the so-called August plebiscite.

These are threats. Now for actualities. You have naturally heard about the Vigil-

ante and police raids on Communists during the general strike. You may be inclined to doubt that the tactics used at that time were fascist. You may point out that capitalism, harried on all sides by the dock and marine and general strikes, used temporary fascist tactics to break these labor down-tools movements.

Let us examine the facts.

In Los Angeles the right of free speech is denied except at three points. One is the Plaza, a park set in the center of an open space. Here Communist demonstrations have been permitted during the past year. The Plaza is in the center of a Mexican-Asiatic neighborhood, where English is seldom spoken or heard. In Hollywood at St. Andrews Place and Santa Monica Boulevard, meetings are permitted on Saturday nights. At San Pedro a vacant lot is assigned to such gatherings.

Only at the Plaza have Communist meetings gone unchallenged. There, however, squads of police guard the meeting. These police are armed with lengths of gas pipe, hardwood clubs, three feet long, tear gas bombs, billies, revolvers, sub-machine guns, etc. Detectives roam through the crowds. A

photographer uses a miniature "candid camera" to snap pictures of those in the crowd and speakers.

These precautions are taken, despite the fact that no Communist has ever been convicted of carrying a dangerous weapon in any street affray.

The Saturday night meetings in Hollywood are supposedly permitted on the condition that the street be kept open, that a path be allowed for pedestrians on the sidewalks and that motor cars be permitted to pass. As a result no meeting can reach more than one hundred listeners. Violations of these conditions means instant breaking up of the meeting by the police.

The police usually break up such meetings by striking listeners on their legs with special "anti-Red" clubs. Recently agents provocateurs have been used to stop the meetings. On one occasion an old woman dashed into the crowd, slapped a speaker in the face. The meeting forthwith was broken up. On another week, numerous American Legionnaires, armed with clubs, beat everyone in sight, including several passers-by.

Street meetings are forbidden in the Imperial Valley. Tear gas has been used to break up meetings in halls. On one occasion, the fire department was used to flood a building. Similar tear gas and water attacks were used by the Los Angeles police to break the milk strike of last spring.

Lengths of chain were used by "Red" Hynes' squad in breaking up a protest addressed to the Los Angeles Superintendent of Relief on June 1. The Superintendent has since resigned under a cloud. The protestants were held in jail for two months before trial. Several were badly beaten. Three, upon conviction, have been sentenced to from two to two and one-quarter years in prison. Appeal is now being taken.

Beatings have been administered to radical and non-radical workers in all parts of the state. Vigilantes have beaten lawyer Grove Johnson half a dozen times, but he refuses to be intimidated. His companion in investigating a particularly brutal attack on a worker was a young woman of 19, wife of a Los Angeles organizer. She was beaten by Vigilantes, who kidnaped her and took her to a lonely washroom and attempted to rape her.

James McShann's testicles were smashed by police following his arrest on June 1. Britt Webster's head was placed between a "Red Squad" detective's knees and then twisted, in an effort to break his neck, following his arrest in San Pedro late in July. Thomas Sharp's right shin was repeatedly beaten with a long club until he suffered a compound fracture, a hemorrhage; his shoulder was dislocated.

In San Jose, the thirteen radicals in the Jess Tanner party were variously beaten with sticks and clubs, one was hung for a short time, pick handles were shoved into their rectums, their clothing was torn off, they were photographed nude.

Radicals' motor cars have been destroyed.

The car of A. L. Wirin, Civil Liberties Attorney, was driven over an embankment in the Imperial Valley. In Richmond, near San Francisco, the car of E. H. Crooks was overturned and burned.

Most of the workers in the general street battles in San Francisco were shot in the back. Tear-gas bombs were hurled not at the sidewalks so as to confuse workers with fumes, but at their heads. Several suffered basal skull fractures.

Conditions of imprisonment under which radicals are held are made as difficult as possible. Bail for arrest on a technical charge of vagrancy has been raised as high as \$2,000. Although those arrested were convicted of no crimes, they were treated much more harshly than habitual criminals. They were assigned not to cells but to bull pens. Reading matter was refused them. Their friends were not permitted to send them fresh food. Means of defense were circumscribed. Lawyers who appeared at the jails in an effort to talk to them have been threatened and in some cases beaten.

Radicals in the Imperial Valley have been held in solitary. A desert chain gang on Superstition Mountain toiled during the summer under temperatures ranging from 96 to 122 degrees. During the winter strikes, hundreds were held in stockades, as the prisoners could find no shelter in jails. During the general raids in San Francisco in July, many slept on jail floors. Mouldy food was their share.

Badly injured political prisoners have been discharged from hospitals without adequate treatment on the excuse that the beds were needed, as in the case of Thomas Sharp. Jails have been opened to Vigilante leaders so that prisoners about to be released might be identified and beaten up following the conclusion of their prison terms, as in the case of Tony Solzaro.

In the San Joaquin Valley, Gus Sartoris was given sixty days for suggesting to unemployed men in Mercedes that they form a union. Others have been arrested on various pretexts: drunkenness, disorderly conduct, selling the Western Worker, being a correspondent of the Western Worker, filing false statements as to names on petitions, theft of an automobile which later turned out to belong to the man arrested. The average of convictions has been 1 to 30. The ratio of those arraigned to those arrested is 1 to 4. The significance of these figures is that 29 out of every 30 arrests of radicals have no justification in the capitalist law. In three out of four cases, those arrested are not even arraigned before a justice. They are beaten up and sent home.

Beatings by police and Vigilantes are part of a carefully organized campaign of intimidation. During strikes, radical strikers are kidnaped and ordered to join A.F. of L. unions, as in the case of I. Wooded, who was kidnaped and beaten recently in San Pedro.

Onlookers at street meetings are mildly beaten, in order to frighten them away from future meetings. Property owners are visited

by gangs and ordered not to rent rooms for radical meetings.

In the Imperial Valley all visitors passed inspection before entering the Valley from the west coast and were warned not to attempt to aid imprisoned radicals. Known Communists were turned back.

The police have resorted to gangster tactics of taking their victims for a ride. Many workers have been picked up by police in motor cars, taken riding, beaten and released with a warning.

In several cases, agents provocateurs have willingly accompanied union organizers to union headquarters, later reporting to the police that they have been kidnaped. In the milk strike, such tactics removed from the scene three union leaders. The charges of suspicion of kidnaping were never tried.

At the Mission Knitting Mills strike in Los Angeles, police held back a crowd while strikebreakers beat union organizers with lengths of gas pipe.

The police cooperation with roaming bands of thugs in San Francisco has been related elsewhere.

Mail addressed to radicals arrested in Sacramento has been opened and the contents, in one case a personal love letter, given to the daily press. Radicals in other California cities now address their mail in such a way that the authorities cannot spot it.

Use of public schools has been forbidden radical speakers. Their books have been burned in San Diego, quite as books were burned in Germany in 1933. Meetings of a Philosophers Club in a Berkeley church was broken up because a radical sympathizer was speaking. A speaker before a San Diego business men's club, Chester Williams of the I.L.D., was told to leave town following an address which he had been invited to make. A track meet of Los Angeles radical children was stopped by city authorities.

The building in which the press of the Western Worker was housed was fired by Vigilantes. Property damaged included electric light fixtures, pianos, mandolins, typewriters, so that, to quote a newspaper article, "Reds could not see to read nor write, nor play their battle hymn, the *Internationale*, nor to compose their treasonous propaganda."

The district attorney of Sacramento County is attempting to obtain an injunction against all "Reds, Pinks, their friends, sympathizers or contributors to their funds throughout the state of California." If the courts grant his plea, freedom of speech in California will be officially at an end. The crime of contempt of court will thus be added to the list of allegations against Communists.

As for death . . . you have heard of Dick Parker and Howard Sperry and others martyred in California this year. As in Germany, the California Fascists know how to take life. No one has been punished for the deaths of numerous California workers this year. Thus to the list of crimes of which the Fascists should be accused—but of which they are not—is added murder.

Freed Land

(From the Diary of Li-Yan-Chen, Chairman of a Village Soviet)

APRIL 13.—The battle ended yesterday. The enemy was thrown back beyond the mountain ridge. Their forces were large and strong. Two regiments of the Kuomintang General Li-Tzi-Shen, three detachments of kulak forces, a band of hirelings paid for by the rich landowner Ma-been, owner of all the villages in the district. On our side were the third brigade of the Red Army, a detachment of Red Lancers (partisan peasants), and one detachment of the Young Guard. The battles were fierce. The old life struggling against the new—and the new life won. Landowners and generals were driven out of almost the entire district. The ruler of the district fled to town, and the rich peasants, kulaks, and big merchants grew tame.

We returned again to Baisha, which we had been forced to leave when the Social Democrats, who wielded considerable influence in the northwestern part of the Province of Futzian, succeeded in engineering an uprising of kulaks and landowners in several villages. The entire northern county of the district of Shanchan had been declared independent of the Soviet region. Uniting with the Kuomintang, and aided by white troops, the Social Democrats opened a campaign against the Soviets. The Soviet power held out for only six months. That was in 1931. We had to abandon almost the entire district of Shanchan. But now it is 1933. The whites have been thrown back all the way north and in my native village of Pei-Tsun there will wave once more the heroic banner of the Soviets! Pei-Tsun, the largest village, will be the county seat.

April 16.—Today we held elections to the village Soviet. The new word "Su-Wei-Wo," meaning "Soviet," is pronounced by many peasants as "Shi-Wei-Wo," which means "It is for me." This is really so. The peasants are learning more and more that the Soviet regime is the only one in China which cares for the welfare of the worker.

The meeting was held in the field. About 2,000 people were present. I was greatly pleased with the words of Yan-Show, the hired hand: "We must elect into the village Soviet only hired hands, poor, and middle peasants. There is no place for min-ta-ne [kulaks] here, for only we know the meaning of labor, and only we have felt real hunger."

I was elected chairman because the peasants said: "He is himself a hired hand and his father is poor. He fought for a long time in the Red Army. He must be our chairman." Thus did the former hired hand Li-Yan Chen become chairman of the Soviet in the village Pei-Tsun.

April 21.—I haven't slept for two nights.

The Soviet is in session. There is only one question—the division of the land. But what a question! For hundreds and thousands of years the Chinese peasant strove to own a patch of land so as to be free of the landlord's yoke. But only the Soviet regime brought freedom to the peasant and gave him land. Landowners and rich peasants always had the best fertile lands. They took for themselves the rivers and canals which watered the fields. They owned thousands of buffaloes for ploughing their soil. We took all that from them. We drove the landlords out of the villages, and some of them we even sent further—to their ancestors. We granted the rich peasants the right to live and work according to our laws, but we gave them poorer land and made them till the land themselves. However, we took from them their spare ploughs and harrows. The rich peasants are sullen and angry, but they obey.

We divide the land according to the number of workers in the family, with extra lots for children and old folks.

April 23.—Today, in the field where we hold our parades and meetings, there is a session of the revolutionary tribunal of the Third Red Army Brigade—on a special mission from the City. They will try one of the Social Democratic leaders of Shanchan who, after our occupation of the district, remained there to sabotage. The Social Democrats began their counter-revolutionary work in 1931, when young Soviet China was struggling against Leftism. The Leftists had no understanding of what was going on about them. If it is revolution, they thought, then it ought to go the limit. In the backward Chinese villages, amid the terrible poverty, ruin, and remains of feudalism, they began to organize collective farms and force peasants into them. Without stopping to consolidate their gains, they kept on advancing eagerly to district towns. As a result, they were beaten and crushed, which, of course, helped and pleased the whites.

Such, then, were the favorable circumstances which gave birth to an alliance between the Social Democrats, the anti-Soviet bloc, and the Kuomintang. The Social Democrats penetrated into the village Soviets, Red Army units, and land commissions. In dividing the land they gave the rich peasants the better portions; they did not confiscate the land of the rich and often left the poor peasants without any land. In the villages the Social Democrats would say: "A peasant who owns more than three hens and two pigs is an enemy of the revolution." Then again they would say: "The Soviet system demands of every peasant that he change his wife every six months." The result was that many peasants fled from the Soviet regions.

In the Red Army they instigated desertion and treachery among the soldiers. Everywhere they had but one aim: to keep the masses away from the Soviets and Communists. But the masses remained with us.

April 25.—A peasant came to me today and said: "Why do you divide the land according to the number of workers in a family? It should be divided according to the number of people who own tools. Without ploughs and buffaloes it is impossible to plough the land the Soviets give you." I explained that the Soviets would help in the tilling of the land by supplying ploughs and buffaloes. He shook his head unbelievably, and left.

This is the propaganda of the rich peasants. Still owning many tools, they can hire hands. We restrict them everywhere and they begin a desperate struggle. Such propaganda is their main weapon.

At a village Soviet meeting a rich peasant stepped forward and said: "The Red Army should not be given any land because they will then want to return to the village; they will fight half-heartedly, and finally quit the army."

In answer to this bit of propaganda, another peasant said: "Most of our Red Army men are peasants. They fight for the Soviets because they know that it is the Soviet regime which gives land to them and to their families and thus saves them from starvation."

Today our village chose a propaganda committee composed of one Communist, three Young Communists, and one Red Army man who was not a member of any party. This committee will explain the new Soviet laws to the peasants, and will fight all propaganda by the rich peasants.

April 27.—The sowing season is in full swing. We plant wheat, maize, pumpkin and rice. "Not a patch of unsown land," said our Soviet government. We carry out this order. The completion of the sowing must be reported by May 1.¹

The recently organized district plough-and-buffalo station is giving us much help. With the tools and buffaloes taken from the rich landowners, the station was organized.

Did you ever hear of a buffalo marching over a poor peasant's land and turning chunks of earth with a fine iron plough? It never happened here before. But it is happening under the Soviet.

When I am asked about my father, I answer: "My father Fou-Li-Chan died working like an ox. I do not say this as a figure of speech such as 'died like a dog,' or 'worked like a horse.' No; I am speaking literally.

¹ To that effect we agreed to a Socialist competition with the neighboring village.