

THE INTERNATIONALIST

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FRENCH MINE STRIKE ENTERS NEW STAGE

With the opening of the fourth week of struggle, the French mine strike entered a new stage. Deating around the bush, the government had set up a commission of three so-called "wise men" who were charged with establishing the facts about wage levels in government-operated industries (mines, electricity, gas, railways). The "wise men" made their report March 22. They admitted that wages of the miners had lagged eight percent behind other categories of workers. The union figures showed eleven percent. The "wise men" dared to include as an increase the fact that the miners had been granted a reduction in hours. The unions also challenged the basis used by the "wise men" for their comparisons. For categories other than the miners, the "wise men" were evasive.

Although the government had said that it would make "its own" the conclusions of the "wise men," it did not do so. Once their report was in, it ordered mine management not to take the eight-percent figure as the basis for "catching up" but to break it up and spread it out over the next year in such a way as to give only a slight immediate increase. As for an increase beyond that, if it had appeared that the government was promising something, all that it actually committed itself to do was open negotiations -- next September. Nor was anything said about lowering the work week (the miners want a 40-hour week at 48-hours pay) or granting an annual four-weeks paid vacation, a demand which is becoming more and more popular in France. Finally, up to now, the government has not mentioned any proposals for the other categories (electricity, gas and railways).

The government proposals to the miners were unanimously rejected by the unions as an outrage to that sector and to the working class as a whole. To recognize that wages have fallen behind about ten percent and to call for "catching up" through increases spread over a year, that even then would not achieve the goal in face of prices that are constantly mounting, could be meant only to provoke the miners.

And it does appear that the intention of the government now is to try to beat down the miners by running them into debt -- their financial resources are very weak if not nonexistent -- and by isolating them and eventually bringing them into disfavor with the public. For the first time, certain newspapers are beginning to show less sympathy for the miners and are starting cautiously to sound the theme of the necessity to take into consideration the government proposals, etc.

The miners have unanimously rejected the government proposals. On Monday March 24 not a single miner had returned to work. The strike is as solid as the first day. The meetings in the mine areas are as packed as before. The wives of the miners are just as firm as ever and are even participating as pickets.

The solidarity of the workers continues. Many organizations including the Communist and Socialist parties are appealing to the workers to donate a day's pay to help the miners in their struggle. In France this is a big donation. At the same time, wage demands are multiplying in all sectors (banks, building trades, social security administration, etc.).

A new phase is opening. Either the government will begin action or the trade unions will find it necessary to take the initiative to compel the government to offer better terms. Among the rank and file, the miners tend to want more energetic measures. The trade unions are still confining themselves to no more than general things like appeals to unity and discipline. The movement is most certainly powerful; it is still supported by public opinion that is to say, not only the working class but also very wide layers of the petty bourgeoisie. But it is becoming more and more evident that things cannot remain as they have been since March 1 when the strike began. What is necessary is big street demonstrations to make the government meet the demands of the miners satisfactorily.

NUCLEAR TEST IN THE SAHARA

On March 13, one year to the day after the Evian cease-fire agreement was signed, the French government exploded a nuclear device in the Sahara; that is, on the territory of Algeria.

The French government sought to justify this violation of Algerian sovereignty by citing a clause in the Evian agreement granting them the right to use certain military bases in the Sahara for another five years. The agreements say nothing, however, about nuclear tests.

Protesting the crime against humanity which was committed on its territory only because the country is still weak, the Algerian government called an emergency session of the National Assembly. It has now officially told the French government that it wants a revision of the military clauses in the Evian agreements.

In Algiers students organized angry demonstrations to protest the violation of Algerian sovereignty and the staging of a nuclear test. Ben Bella spoke to the demonstrators, telling them that the government shared their indignation. However he asked them not to attack Europeans who now constitute but a small minority of the population.

Many other African governments have also protested against the French test.

Why did the French government make this move which crosses its general policy of "co-operation" with Algeria in the most cunning and flexible way? Probably the French military command, in a hurry to build the "force de frappe" which de Gaulle wants, carried it out for immediate practical reasons. They have said that they plan to shift the scene of testing to an island in the Pacific.

BELGIAN ANTINUCLEAR-WEAPONS MARCH IS BIG SUCCESS

BRUSSELS, March 25 -- Some 15,000 people participated yesterday in an antinuclear-weapons march through the streets of the capital. The demonstration was organized by a joint committee of youth organizations. The Socialist and Communist youth played a prominent part in bringing together a wide spectrum of groups, including some Catholic youth organizations.

The size of the march came as a complete surprise to the public. A march in 1960 brought out 4,000 participants. Although no one openly opposed or condemned the project, the newspapers of mass circulation maintained silence about it and the big political parties joined in the conspiracy to kill it by saying nothing about it.

As in the Aldermaston march in Britain, the great majority of demonstrators were young people. Unlike the British march, this one manifested a more political and militant character. The main slogans were: "No nuclear weapons in Belgium!" "No nuclear weapons for the Belgian armed forces!"

These slogans were in direct opposition to government policy. The Belgian minister of defense admitted early this year that nuclear weapons will be stockpiled for a wing of the Belgian air force. The weapons are to include rockets with nuclear heads.

The Belgian section of the Fourth International distributed 5,000 leaflets to the marchers. The Trotskyists gave full support to the march but appealed to the marchers to merge their efforts with the general struggle of the left wing of the labor movement for socialism. "Only the overthrow of world capitalism will put a definite end to the danger of nuclear annihilation," the leaflet concluded.

STRUGGLE SHARPENS INSIDE BELGIAN SOCIALIST PARTY

BRUSSELS, March 20 -- The struggle inside the Belgian Socialist party between the right and left wings reached new levels of sharpness when all the socialist dailies in the country published an editorial March 13 signed by party chairman, Leo Collard, threatening E. Mandel, editor of the left-wing weekly La Gauche, and E. Glinne, the main spokesman of the left Socialists in parliament, with expulsion.

Mandel and Glinne have played a prominent part in the struggle against proposed new antistrike legislation. At a recent emergency congress of the Socialist party, Mandel, in open defiance of party leader Spaak, said that the tendency he represented would fight to the end against such repressive legislation.

On March 16 La Gauche responded to the attack on Mandel and Glinne by publishing an editorial signed by Jacques Yerna, secretary of the important Liege Trade Union Federation. Yerna told Collard that if he wanted to expel Mandel and Glinne, he would also have to expel him and the majority of the Walloon trade-union militants.

"QUATRIÈME INTERNATIONALE" FEATURES CASTRO SPEECH

The March issue of Quatrième Internationale, official magazine of the International Executive Committee of the Fourth International, features the full text of Fidel Castro's speech at the Latin-American Women's Congress.

The main editorial is on "How to Fight Against the Nuclear Threat?" Other editorials deal with "The Coup in Iraq"; "Latin America after the Crisis in the Caribbean"; "A New Situation in Great Britain" and "The Crisis of the Common Market."

Articles include "The New Phase of the Sino-Soviet Conflict and the International Crisis of Stalinism" by Livio Maitan; "Whither the Algerian Revolution?" by H. Fable; "Independence in Jamaica" by Ben Monroe; "Five Years of Economic Upheavals in China" by E. Germain; "The masses and the Intellectuals on the Move in the Soviet Union"; "'Arab Socialism' and the Nasserite National Movement" by A. Sadi; "The Coming Independence of Kenya" and "Rising Revolution in South Africa" by D. Anderson; and resolutions adopted by the International Secretariat of the Fourth International on the Sino-Soviet conflict, the situation in the Congo and the banning of the Algerian Communist party.

For a copy of Quatrième Internationale (in French only) write Pierre Frank, 64 rue de Richelieu, Paris 2. A one year's subscription is \$3 (U.S. currency or equivalent).

MAY TURN TROTSKY HOME INTO MUSEUM

Esteban Volkov, grandson of Leon Trotsky, appeared before a judge of a civil court in Mexico City, together with his lawyer, March 16 to file the will of Natalia Sedov Trotsky, widow of the martyred founder of the Soviet Union who was assassinated twenty-three years ago by Stalin.

Natalia Trotsky requested in her will that her home in Coyocacan, where Trotsky was murdered and where she lived until a year before her own death should be turned into a museum.

Esteban Volkov had already revealed this wish of his grandmother when public ceremonies were held in Coyocacan at the time her ashes were brought to Mexico. Natalia Trotsky died in Paris January 23, 1962, of cancer. She was eighty years old.

NEW FACTS ON FRAME-UP OF TUKHACHEVSKY

The popular weekly magazine Ogonyok (Little Flame), which went on the newsstands in Moscow March 24, contains an article signed by Nikouline which reveals important new facts about the frame-up of Marshal Mikhail Tukhachevsky, the Red Army's most outstanding general, in 1937.

Ogonyok confirms reports published in other countries that on Hitler's orders, German Army intelligence chief Reinhard Heydrich forged Tukhachevsky's name to incriminating documents which were then successfully planted on the Czech intelligence service. These were turned over to Czech President Eduard Benes who passed them on to Stalin in the fall of 1936.

"Stalin used them to order the judges to sentence Tukhachevsky to death," Ogonyok admits.

The magazine does not discuss the speculation that the documents were first manufactured by the GPU under Stalin's orders and then planted on the Gestapo. It thus leaves open the possibility that Stalin was genuinely taken in by Hitler's plot to have Stalin himself decapitate the Red Army.

The Kremlin announced June 12, 1937, that Tukhachevsky had been shot together with seven other top commanders of the Red Army. These purges marked the beginning of a blood bath that decimated the Red Army officer staff in the face of Hitler's preparations to attack the Soviet Union.

At the time, Leon Trotsky denounced the secret trials as frame-ups and accused Stalin of opening up the defenses of the Soviet Union and facilitating an invasion by German imperialism. For such warnings, the Stalinists denounced Trotsky as a "traitor" working in a "pact" with Hitler.

Of the nine judges who acted on Stalin's orders to condemn Tukhachevsky, six were later murdered by Stalin.

Oronyok reveals that Stalin personally ordered the murder of Tukhachevsky's aged mother, his sister Sophie and his brothers Alexander and Nicholas. Three other sisters were sent to slave-labor camps. When Tukhachevsky's daughter reached the age of sixteen, she too was deported. What happened to Tukhachevsky's wife is unknown. She "disappeared."

Tukhachevsky was one of a group of young career officers in the Czarist forces who went over to the Red Army when it was organized by Leon Trotsky. Under Trotsky's command, Tukhachevsky distinguished himself in the difficult years of war when the Allied powers sought to crush the young workers' state.

Trotsky had high regard for Tukhachevsky's military talents but rated him mediocre in political capacity. It was under Tukhachevsky that such innovations as parachutists were introduced into modern warfare.

There was no doubt about Tukhachevsky's complete loyalty to the Soviet Union and to its civilian authorities. Stalin, fearing every possible focus of opposition to his totalitarian rule, wanted the brilliant general out of the road along with every major figure in any way associated with Lenin and Trotsky as outstanding collaborators of the two founders of the Soviet Union. Such figures were framed-up by Stalin on charges of "selling out" to Hitler and most often shot as "fascist mad dogs."

From the article in Oronyok, it appears that the author did not have available the transcript of the secret courtmartial. Whether this means that it was destroyed by Stalin or that it is too damaging to Khrushchev or others now prominent in the Soviet government cannot, of course, be determined. Two of Tukhachevsky's nine judges, Veroshilov and Budenny, are still alive.

Why the article should be published at this time remains obscure. It is to be noted, however, that Tukhachevsky was among the first of Stalin's victims to be rehabilitated following Khrushchev's famous admissions of Stalin's crimes at the Twentieth Congress of the Soviet Communist party.

Army officials have long been bitter over what Stalin did to Soviet defenses on the eve of Hitler's invasion. Since Tukhachevsky's rehabilitation, army periodicals have carried many articles about him and the tradition he represented in the military defense of the Soviet Union.

Publication of an article about Stalin's murder of Tukhachevsky and his close relatives also provides a certain counterbalance to Khrushchev's recent step backward in de-Stalinization when, admitting that he "shed tears" over his coffin, he praised the

late dictator and denounced those who would go "too far" in demoting him.

KASSEM'S DOWNFALL AND THE IRAQ COMMUNIST PARTY

By A. Said

For all those who have attentively followed political developments in the Arab world, the event which occurred in Iraq on February 8 came as no surprise. Everyone was well aware of the weakness of the Kassem regime which had already lost its mass support within a year after the July 14, 1958, revolution.

The July 14 revolt was a general popular uprising based on all the anti-imperialist and antifeudal forces. Workers, peasants, intellectuals, petty bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie all participated in it. It received general acclaim everywhere.

The new Kassem regime began at first to carry out social changes. Among these the agrarian reform was the most important. Since it supported itself on the mass of the people, it had to grant broad democratic freedoms.

The workers and peasants started to organize and to fight for their own demands. In the same way, organization began among the intellectuals; i.e., journalists, writers, lawyers, students, etc. In addition an armed people's militia was created in which broad layers of the masses participated.

All these organizations were led by the Iraq Communist party. The masses dominated the streets, the cities, the countryside. Dual power became visible. Nevertheless, the CP faithfully followed a policy of "national frontism" and co-operation with the bourgeoisie. It didn't so much as dream of orientating the struggle of the workers and other popular masses toward the conquest of power.

This "popular front," which was the most precious of all possessions to the Stalinists, didn't last long. The first differences occurred over the question of Arab unity.

The followers of the "Baath" (Socialist Party of Arab Renaissance) and the Nasserites led by Abdel Salem Aref -- at that time vice premier -- demanded immediate unification with the United Arab Republic (Egypt and Syria). Kassem, the Stalinists and sections of the bourgeoisie opposed immediate unity.

From that time on, the CP went further in its support of Kassem, helped him to suppress the advocates of Arab unity, elevated him to the status of a popular hero and gave him the title "exclusive leader of the Iraqi people." When the insurrection of the pro-Nasserite el-Chuaf broke out, the Stalinists were the main force that rushed to Kassem's aid and mobilized the masses in order to liquidate the insurrection and the Baathists.

Even after the suppression of the el-Chuaf insurrection, when the CP had become the only organized political force in Iraq, the party did not start a struggle for power. It limited itself to demanding participation in the government. Even this demand was soon dropped on the insistence of the Soviet bureaucracy which considered it too "leftist."

In their fight against Nasser and the Nasserites, the Iraqi Stalinists, like the Stalinists in all the Arab countries, became the main and most resolute opponents of Arab unity. Instead of opposing the undemocratic way in which Nasser sought to achieve unity between Egypt and Syria and explaining to the masses what great harm the Nasserite methods worked on the real goals of Arab unification, they began to oppose unity as such.

To explain this they resorted to the absurd argument that the various Arab countries are unevenly developed, as if the prerequisite of national unification of the people is even development. Even worse, they started disseminating the theory of "Arab peoples," and gave up speaking of a single Arab nation. In doing this, they lost their influence with great sectors of the masses to whom Arab unity is a main demand.

Having liquidated the Nasserites and Baathists, Kassem turned on the Communists. Just as he had supported himself on the Communist party against the Nasserites, so he now supported himself on the anti-Communist struggle of the right wing.

The counterrevolution had started.

Communists and other leftists were persecuted and arrested; the left press was banned; the popular militia was disarmed; a reactionary leadership was imposed on the trade unions and the organizations of the peasants, youth, women, students and intellectuals; all Communist influence in such organizations was banned. Agents of imperialism, who had been condemned to prison by popular courts, were freed. Under pressure from the feudal landowners, the government halted the agrarian reform. In the industrial centers, trade-union activists were fired.

All this, however, was not sufficient to win the confidence of the reaction. Kassem refused the support of the left but didn't win the support of the right.

The bonapartist police regime alienated even the Kurd people who were struggling for their national rights. It decided to follow a policy of discrimination against the Kurds in all fields: the program of industrialization, the creation of cultural and medical institutions, the admission of students at the universities and in the distribution of scholarships. In view of such discrimination, the insurrection of the Kurd people became inevitable.

The Kassem regime was now completely isolated. It had lost its mass base. It lacked the support of any political force, of

any popular layer. It rested exclusively on the police and the army. But inasmuch as the army is an uncertain factor -- this is true today in all the Arab countries -- a big question mark was placed over the destiny of the Kasser regime. Its days were numbered.

From all this, the Iraqi CP learned nothing. It continued to pursue its Khrushchevist line, the line of the "popular front," of co-operation with the bourgeoisie, of defense of the status quo of the capitalist regime, of rejection of proletarian revolution and of postponement of socialism to the distant future.

Instead of mobilizing the masses through class struggle means in order to win leadership of the proletariat in the national liberation movement, the cry of the Communist party was "Back to the way of July 14" and "A democratic parliamentary republic." They even tried to convince themselves and the masses "that the objective conditions are not ripe to replace the Kasser regime by a popular democratic regime." In accordance with the Khrushchev line of "peaceful coexistence," they held that "to have such an aim could favor foreign imperialism and domestic reactionary forces."

Instead of backing the right of the Kurd people to national self-determination and advocating the national unity of the Arab people, they called for autonomy for the Kurds within the framework of the Iraqi republic. Although they admitted that "autonomy cannot replace the right of self-determination of the Kurd nation, including the right to create an independent state bringing together the whole of Kurdistan," they declared that this aim could only be attained in the distant future.

They learned nothing from the experience with Chiang Kai-shek and the defeat of the Chinese Revolution in 1927. Notwithstanding all the experiences since then, they still did not learn that the national bourgeoisie in underdeveloped countries is unable in the present period to carry out even the tasks of the bourgeois democratic revolution and that the revolution in these countries cannot stop half way. There can be no "national democratic revolution" such as they call for. A revolution that does not deepen into a socialist revolution degenerates and paves the way for counterrevolution.

The tasks of the bourgeois democratic revolution, including the unification of all the Arab countries, which is posed today before the Arab people, cannot be realized under the leadership of the national bourgeoisie. Only the proletarian revolution can realize them on the road to socialism.

The two essential demands under which the masses of the Arab countries are mobilizing today are national unification and socialism. The national bourgeoisie is moving forward by utilizing these two slogans under Kasser's leadership. The Stalinists turned their backs to both slogans and thereby lost contact with the masses.

abandoning the field to Nasserism which is winning them.

Behind the latest upheaval in Iraq are all the anti-Communist elements: Nasserites, Baathists, agents of American and British imperialism, supporters of the late Nuri es Said, etc. The only goal which binds them together is the attempt to block the workers from coming to power and the effort to liquidate the Communist party. On everything else they are divided and there is no question of them enjoying any mass support. Their regime is still shaky and does not give the impression of being able to last. The Iraqi masses, tested in struggle, will not grant it a long life. But these masses still lack adequate leadership. Can the CF, aside from which no alternative leadership has been formed, learn something from the events?

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