

Department for Agitation and Education

Edited by
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EDITORIAL

Facts for Speakers

(Clip for your notebook)

DECAYING CAPITALISM STIFLES CULTURE.

When capitalism first developed, education — invention — research — were encouraged because it needed scientists and technicians and teachers and skilled workers for developing its industry. Now capitalism has passed the stage of being a constructive agent and its dying hulk stifles the great forces of economic and cultural development.

To illustrate one phase of capitalist decay, we quote some figures on educational institutions, attendance and position of teachers:

SCHOOLS CLOSED

"Nearly 2,000 rural schools in 24 states failed to open this fall" (1933).

"1500 commercial schools and colleges have closed." "One out of every four cities has shortened its school term." "16 institutions of higher education have been discontinued last year." (1933).

CHILDREN WITHOUT SCHOOLING.

More than 1,650,000 children, 6 to 13 years old; and 521,000 children, 14 to 16 years old are without schooling in the U. S. in normal years. This fall more than 100,000 more will be deprived of schooling because of the closing of schools due to lack of school funds.

This makes a total of 2,280,000 children of school age who should be in school but are not. (This does not include child laborers whom the NRA claims to have taken from the factories and fields but who are still at the bench and machines and farms nevertheless).

TEACHERS PAY SLASHED.

"All U. S. school teachers in 1930 averaged \$1420 yearly salary. In 1933-34 this dropped to \$1050."

"The average for city teachers in the U. S. is \$1415 while the rural teacher's average salary is \$750."

"One out of every four American teachers is now teaching at a rate of less than \$750 per year", and prospects for 1934 predict that the figure will change to 1 out of every 3.

"In at least 18 States teachers are being paid in warrants cashable at discounts ranging from 5 per cent up".

TEACHERS UNEMPLOYED.

"Approximately 200,000 certificated teachers are unemployed." "City schools employ today 18,600 fewer teachers it is estimated than in 1931."

"Teachers are unemployed, but classes grow larger. One State has an average of 44 pupils per teacher. The average for 5 states is more than 40."

(All the above facts are from government sources and quoted from a leaflet prepared by the Office of Education, U. S. Dept. of the Interior "The Deepening Crisis in Education", leaflet No. 44.)

SOVIET UNION ADVANCES CULTURE.

To quote just a few facts which contrast sharply in favor of the advances being experienced in the Soviet Union under the rule of the Workers' and Peasants' Government, we present the following from the Soviet Union Review of October, 1933:

"Sept. 1, 200,000 schools in the USSR open their doors to 25,000,000 children in the primary and intermediate grades—two million more than were accommodated last year, and about three times as many as attended these grades in Tsarist Russia. Thousands of newly trained teachers are starting work this year."

More than 50% of the population of the Soviet Union are attending institutions of learning, classes, etc. at the present time. This compares to only 20% of the U. S. population in all schools, classes, etc.

SOVIETS BUILD SOCIALISM, ADVANCE CULTURE.

Thus we see that where workers and farmers are in complete control of the government as in the Soviet Union there is progress for the masses. These figures turn but one page of the volumes which show the advance of culture under a Workers' and Farmers' Government while culture is being destroyed in a capitalist controlled country run for profits to a few, as in the U. S. A.

"WHY COMMUNISM"

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THE WORKERS ELECTION PLATFORM.

On May 6th, in San Francisco, the California State Nominating Convention will take place. Among its tasks will be to adopt an election platform for which the workers candidates will fight.

All workers should participate in the writing of this platform. Here is how to do it:

Write to this column proposing a plank or a number of planks in the form of demands of the workers that should go into the platform. If you want to write a complete platform, do so. Every contribution received will be turned over to the Platform Committee. If the Convention does not elect those comrades as regular members, you will in any case be invited to attend the sessions of the Platform Committee.

So send in your ideas for the Workers Election Platform. Don't be afraid that "you do not know enough." You know what will be good for you and your fellow-workers, and that is what the Communist Party Platform should contain. Will you help us write the platform? Answer by sending your suggestions for its contents.

THE CANDIDATES.

We have already received several proposals as to who shall be candidates in the coming state elections. We will be glad to hear more proposals. In fact, candidates will be chosen out of the list of suggestions sent in by readers of the WESTERN WORKER, members and sympathizers of the Communist Party, and workers and farmers generally. Who do you think would be a good candidate, and for what office? Send us your suggestions. The same plan that applies to the Platform Committee will apply to the Nominating Committee. Comrades who send suggestions and who are present at the Nominating Convention will be proposed as members to the Nominating Committee. If the proposals are not accepted by the Convention, such comrades will be invited to attend the sessions of the Nominating Committee and be allowed to speak for their suggestions. Send us immediately your suggestions for a slate. The offices open are as follows:

Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, Comptroller, Treasurer, Attorney General, 4 Members of the Board of Equalization, U. S. Senator, 21 U. S. Congressmen, 80 State Assemblymen, 20 State Senators (from even numbered districts).

Fundamentals of a Communist Political Education

OUTWARD AND ESSENTIAL ROLE OF STATE.

In the last lesson, we showed that the institution of the state originated and grew as a weapon of the property owning class to maintain its special privileges primarily against the propertyless, but also in competing with other property owning groups.

For this reason, Comrade Lenin said "The State is the executive committee of the ruling class." This is not always obvious to everyone. In fact, the ruling class always tries to make its state function in such a way that it appears to be above the classes, and a mediator between the workers and capitalists.

Engels, in his "Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State" (which book we recommended for reading last lesson) explains that "the modern representative state is the instrument of the exploitation of wage labor by capital. By way of exception, however, there are periods when the warring classes so nearly attain equilibrium that the state power, ostensibly appearing as a mediator, assumes for the moment the appearance of being independent of both classes." And Comrade Lenin adds to that "Such were for instance, the absolute monarchies of the 17th and 18th centuries, the Bonapartism of the First and Second Empires in France, and the Bismarck regime in Germany. Such also, we may add, is now (September, 1917) the Kerensky government in Republican Russia."

STATE AS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

"In a 'Democratic Republic', Engels continues, 'wealth wields its power indirectly, but all the more effectively.' First by means of 'direct corruption of officials (as in the United States); second by means of 'the alliance of the government with the stock exchange' (France, United States and other countries). In other words, the U. S. (and all capitalist) government, although it outwardly presents itself as an institution above classes and as a reconciler of the capitalist class and the workingclass, is actually the organ of the executive committee of the capitalist class which uses its 'impartial' mask only to gain the confidence and thus more easily bamboozle the workers."

Amongst the institutions capitalism uses to give it this appearance are Parliament, mediation and arbitration boards in strikes, courts, etc.

Outward and Essential Role of State — The State as Executive Committee of a Class — Democratic and Fascist State, Both Capitalist — The Proletarian State and Socialism in One Country.

DEMOCRATIC AND FASCIST STATE—BOTH CAPITALIST.

However, as the struggle between the two classes sharpens, this "impartial" institution is forced to come out more and more as the open fighter on the side of the capitalist class, and finally, when the struggle reaches an extremely sharp point as it did for example in Germany, Austria, Italy and Poland, then the government throws off all democratic pretenses and openly appears as the brutal terrorist regime of the capitalist class against the working class. Even here it tries to retain an outward appearance of impartiality in order to get mass support. Thus, it promises that the fascist state really is against capitalism, but is also against Communism. In other words, it pretends to be above the interests of the two contending classes, while it has actually introduced the rule of the most reactionary section of the capitalist class which governs by terror.

Thus the capitalist class retains the state during its existence to protect its privileges. As long as capitalism, its profit system, and all its special privileges for the capitalist class remains, there will be a capitalist state to protect those privileges; but sometimes, when the capitalist class feels that its system is not immediately threatened, its state pretends to an "impartial" and "democratic" role, but if the capitalist class feels itself slipping and its system threatened, then its state takes on open fascist forms.

The mere overthrow of the capitalist state does not immediately destroy capitalism, and all capitalist elements.

THE PROLETARIAN STATE.

The experience of the Russian Revolution, Paris Commune, the German and Hungarian revolutions have all shown that after the overthrow of the capitalist system and seizure of power by the workingclass, there is a temporary shift in battle-lines, namely: the workingclass finds itself at an advantageous position, and

LECTURE 9

objectively, in so far as they undermine the domination of imperialism, constituent part of the proletarian revolution; a period in which capitalist and Socialist economic and social systems exist side by side in "peaceful" relationships as well as in armed conflict; a period of formation and growth of a Union of Soviet Republics; a period of wars of imperialist States against Soviet States; a period in which the ties between the Soviet States and colonial peoples become more and more closely established.

uneven economic and political development is an absolute law of capitalism. This unevenness is still more pronounced and acute in the epoch of imperialism. Hence it follows that the international proletarian revolution cannot be conceived as a single event occurring simultaneously all over the world; at first Socialism may be victorious in a few, or even in one single capitalist country. Every such proletarian victory, however, broadens the basis of the world revolution and consequently, still

SOCIALISM — EVEN IN ONLY ONE COUNTRY.

Further intensifies the general crisis of capitalism. Thus, the capitalist system as a whole reaches the point of its final collapse; the dictatorship of finance capital perishes and gives place to the dictatorship of the proletariat.

(END LECTURE 9)

THINK SHARPLY

INTRODUCTION.

We are foregoing our usual "Questions and Answers" in this column in order to make room for some critical remarks as to the last issue of the Western Worker. The regular questions and answers will be published next installment.

THINK SHARPLY.

A little self-criticism is in order for the Western Worker. The last issue contains several serious errors by various comrades who wrote articles for the paper. For example, Comrade Shoaf, in his article called "Sinclair's New Betrayal" states "He (Sinclair) well realizes that the tendency of events rapidly is toward the establishment of a fascist dictatorship in this country, and his present campaign is clearing the road for a fascist regime." We are afraid Comrade Shoaf is giving up the fight too quickly. Whether a fascist dictatorship comes or not will depend entirely upon whether the workers will struggle against it. In Spain, for example, the attempt towards the establishment of a fascist dictatorship received a decisive blow by the action of the workers against it. In France the attempt to establish a fascist dictatorship got a considerable setback by the tremendous general strike, and demonstrations which were carried through by the initiative and under the leadership of the Communist Party. Also, what is the meaning of the words "tendency of events"? The "tendency of events" is not some mysterious

quantity but is the facts of the fight between workers and farmers and capitalists. Does Comrade Shoaf mean the workers have no control over these "events"? Of course, knowing Comrade Shoaf as we do, we are certain that this unfortunate phrase crept in unconsciously, copied from capitalist language. Comrade Shoaf knows better and certainly is a better fighter than this phrase would indicate. But articles should be written all the more sharply, and not so loosely that the language of the opportunists creeps in to our writings.

We very much resent, and we think all fighting workers will, the opening paragraph of the usually excellent column called "Seeing Red" conducted by Comrade Kirby. This offensive paragraph reads "The 'Proletarian Party' is thinking of trying to have a youth league. But, writes A. S., it's only a change of name. Politically they're that already."

We are afraid Comrade Kirby's remark misses the entire significance of the role of the youth in the last two decades. His remark, probably intended as a jibe, is entirely unjustified praise for the Proletarian Party. The youth have played decisive roles both for the revolution as well as for the counter-revolution. Every serious student of the World War, the Russian Revolution, the Italian and German Fascist movements, will understand that very easily. The argument against this might be that the Youth have played de-

cisive roles but did not always think clearly. Did adults think clearly? Wasn't it the "mature" politicians who have led us from one disaster in to another?

In other words, the question is not and can never be the "backwardness" of the Youth as against the "wisdom" of adults. It is a class question. Revolutionary young workers and adults against counter-revolutionary reactionaries. Even in writing humor, there is no call for loose language or thinking.

THINK SHARPLY! A third example of loose writing is an error in fact contained in the front page leading story on the election campaign. Here the impression is left that the required number of signatures to put the Party on the ballot is 23,500. This is an error. Only 14,449 are required to put the CP on the ballot. We are campaigning for 23,500 because we are handing in 9,000 extra so that the capitalist politicians will have no excuse to evade putting the CP on the ballot. The danger of saying we must have 23,500 to put the Party on the ballot is that the election officials might try to use a shortage of several hundred signatures to take us off, and justify their action by an admission by ourselves that "23,500 must be in, and notarized if the workers are to have a ticket."

It is important to think and write more sharply so that we do not approximate the correct view and facts in our writing, but that we are exact.

Literature and Book Reviews

"SCHOOLS AND THE CRISIS" by Rex David, price 10c. Along with the economic crisis in the United States the crisis in American education has become catastrophic.

More than 200,000 certified teachers are permanently unemployed. Thousands have been fired. All are in danger; 33 out of every hundred teachers will be paid less than \$750 in the school year 1933-34, and at least 84,000 will receive less than \$450. Many communities are carrying their teachers on the relief rolls. This is no accidental situation. These attacks on the schools correspond to a directed plan published by the Chamber of Commerce of the United States and carried out by bankers and industrialists everywhere. They are an inevitable part of the economic system under which we live.

There is little chance for workers children, they must help support the family, and high schools and colleges are only for the well-to-do.

Negro children have fewer educational opportunities than white children. Negro schools have always been neglected and now they are the first to bear the load of the crisis. The Jim-crow methods of the capitalist system to keep white and Negro workers from uniting is also carried out in the schools among the youth and children.

This fine pamphlet is full of facts and figures showing the decay of the educational system along with the decay of the entire capitalist system.

"WHY COMMUNISM?" by M. J. Ogin. The third edition is now ready for delivery, with a hard cover. Send your orders and money at once to Western Worker Publishers, 37 Grove St., San Francisco. Single copies 5c, bundles of 100 or more 4c, prepaid.

This fine pamphlet is now available in Spanish at 10c per copy.

"CIVIL WAR IN THE TAIGA" by I. Strod. 25 cents. This is another of these new interesting stories of the class struggle.

"LEFT WING COMMUNISM" by Lenin, 25c, tells us of the most essential principles in Party tactics, especially in connection with the developments during the early stages of the Communist International.