THE STRIKES

BACKGROUND AND LIMITATIONS.

The present industrial trouble has brought forward the usury lurking in the daily press. This war's aftermath is the work of the Communist Party. As the last war's troubled end was the work of the I.W.W., in each case there is an evident reluctance on the part of those who are leaders of the respective movements to admit the possibility of any objective cause for unrest.

The press is at one time that we are not concerned to deny that the Communist Party uses industrial trouble to further its own devices—viz., in fact, propaganda. They are now referred to as "band wagon" riders in existence. But the present trouble, like that of the last pre-war period, goes deeper than mere agitation, if any such thing exists.

OVERTIME—AT ANY PRICE.

To get to the root of the matter we must cast our memories back to the first few days just before the outbreak of war, to the days when for the first time for many years your average worker was able to rob a couple of two shilling pieces together in our pocket. When industry, and more particularly, heavy industry was booming, and when, instead of working half time, the boss expected, and found the workers only too eager to work overtime. This was the time when the workers were taking home what was a bulging wage packet compared with two or three years previously, which did not permit a detailed analysis of the possibilities inherent in the situation as it then existed.

Indeed, such was the anxiety for a little extra that in heavy industry were willing, and thought they were able, to work twelve hours a shift. This situation was furthered during the war by pressure from Chauvinist groups in the interest of internal propaganda, among whom was of course the Communist Party. There was now a further incentive to overtime work, the workers found that unknown to most of them the mechanism of prices was on the move in a upward direction: true to the laws of capitalist society prices were as high as the market would stand, and that market was buoyant.

LIVING STANDARDS FALL.

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Although few as yet realised it, the working class were already on a lower standard of living than previously, their overtime pay being watered down by rises in the prices of practically every commodity, and further, they were working on an average of fifty-two hours a week for this reduced purchasing power.

And now the spell has been broken; with the cessation of hostilities overtime was drastically cut, particularly in heavy industry, and the full force of reduced purchasing power of wages was brought home to the workers. This was worsened by the fact that taxation was already at an unprecedentedly high level, so that the changeover in production occurred, overtime was once more looked to as a savior, but despite the overtime prices of war standards will only exchange for about twelve and a halfpence worth of goods at the present time as any housewife can easily verify from her daily purchases.

PRESSURE OF RANK AND FILE.

The reaction has now set in and the workers are now attempting to make up the ground lost through their largely self-imposed wartime restriction on struggles over wages. The trade union leaders, reluctant as well established bureaucracies are to set motion the organisational machinery of trade union resistance, are being forced into activity by the growing pressure of rank and the discontent over wages and hours of work.

WAGES AND PRICES.

Now the hoary old shibboleth comes thick and fast from the daily press, with no value they about the warning against inflation, and point to what they consider to be an automatic effect of an increase in wage rates, an increase in price. They are that as soon as a wage increase is granted prices of commodities produced by the industry therefore the increase in take effect, will increase by an amount proportionate to the wage increase.

How easy would be the study of economic phenomena if this, were run on these lines, that is on the lines suggested by the daily press? Instead of pondering about a room according to the pressure of supply and demand, all the seller of commodities would have to do would be to fix an arbitrary price and increase the price whenever the pressure of working class demands made it necessary.

The seller of commodities, that is, his boss and mine, struggles against the worker's desire for increased wages and shorter hours simply because he realises that other things being equal an increase in the wage rate of his particular industry means a lower rate of profit for him.

MILITANCY PAYS.

The workers are told that struggling for higher wages and the strikes that arise out of this struggle are no good to the worker, but the lie directly is slavish to the point that the workers whose militancy and organisation are unexploited have a lower wage rate with fewer extras, and more plush-penny classifications, than those unions whose organisational strength is exploited at every favourable opportunity. A comparison between the wage rate of the building trades workers and the engineering trades workers is sufficient to prove this.

In this connection the building trade union was particularly active in the boom period before the last war, whereas the engineering trades workers were not only inactive in the struggle for higher wages and improved conditions, but imposed on themselves certain restrictions with regard to union activity during the war, a small as ameliorating a very slight amount of the trade.

Enough has been said, we think, to indicate that those who shout the loudest about the workers acting in a "sensible" manner are those who are afraid that the worker is learning too well to be "sensible." In his own interests he is prepared to struggle about the price of his labor power and not be taken in by the capitalist, apologists lack of knowledge of capitalist economics.

LESSONS OF WAR PERIOD.

The worker has only to reflect for a moment to see the fallacy of all this talk of automatic expressions of price following increases of wage rates. In his own case his wages have been poorly paid for years, yet prices have soared. A familiar example is motor cars—s the present time, although the amount of socially necessary labor embodied in the car has not increased, but if anything has decreased, and although wages have
POLITICS IN PALESTINE

MILLIONS AT STAKE

The British capital is not only a direct economic and political threat to the people of Palestine but also creates a population of 'tens of thousands' of Jews who live in the country. These Jews are not only the results of an industrial and commercial development in the country but are also the result of the desire for political control by the British government.

The struggle is between Arab feudal landlords, Jewish capitalists and the British government. It is a struggle for the future of Palestine. It is a struggle for the economic growth of the country. It is a struggle for the political independence of the country. It is a struggle for the economic independence of the country. It is a struggle for the economic independence of the country. It is a struggle for the economic independence of the country.

The class struggle.

The class struggle is between the 'have' and the 'have nots'. It is a struggle between the Israeli capitalists and the Palestinian workers. It is a struggle between the Israeli government and the Palestinian people. It is a struggle between the Israeli bourgeoisie and the Palestinian proletariat.

The struggle is a struggle for the future of Palestine.
be able to proceed in a single country.

Answer: No. The great industry has already, through the circumstances that it has created the world market, brought all the peoples of the earth, and particularly the civilized people, into such close connection with one another that every single people is dependent upon what happens to another. Further, it has equalized social development: in all civilized lands to the extent to which the national spirit and proletariat have become the two decisive classes of society, the struggle between the two, the two principal forces of the day. The Communist Revolution, therefore, will be no merely national one, it will be a Revolution proceeding simultaneously in all civilized countries: that is, in England, America, France and Germany at least. It will develop quicker or slower in each of these countries according as the one or the other possesses a more perfect industry, a greater natural wealth, more considerate government, and easier living conditions.

CONTRIBUTIONS RECEIVED.


S.O.S.!

Our funds are low. We depend on working-class support. If you are in sympathy with our work, send us a donation.

Treasurer,

"Socialist Comment." PO. Box 1440-M. Melbourne.

S.P.A.

The Socialist Party of Australia and New Zealand hold:

1. That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, traffic, lands, etc.) and the capitalist or master class, and consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose toil and labor the wealth is produced, and which prospers but do not possess. That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between the people who produce, but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.

3. That this antagonism can be abolished only by the destruction of the master class, the conversion into the common property of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

4. That the emancipation of the whole of society is impossible without the immediate and complete success of the working class in its struggle to achieve its freedom. The emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of sex or color.

5. That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

6. That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to preserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organize consequent and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocracy and slavery.

7. That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interest of all sections of master class, the party seeking working class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

S.P.A. and "Fighting Socialism" are not and never have been known as "ANARCHIST." We are a movement of socialist workers who have chosen to use the means of political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and call upon the members of the working class of this country to unite under the banner of social revolution, so that a successful termination may be brought to the system which deprives them of the rights of man and that God has given to them and that a peaceful, equal and slavery to freedom.

The agreement with the above principles and adhering conviction apply only to nearest address.

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