Strikes Are No Honeymoon

The wave of strikes now sweeping Australia has led to the intensification of the anti-strike campaign. From the pulpits, through the radio, in the press, the professional head-filers attempt to stem the tide. That, of course, is what they are paid for. Let us analyse some of the tricks of one section—the pretenders.

“The Public Suffers.”

The recent Gas Strike. We were told that the strikers had a duty to “the public,” “the community,” “the people.” By striking, they were “inflicting unfair hardship.”

The truth is, the public’s tricking, and later on the stoppages imposed some inconveniences. These, of course, were magnified a thousandfold by the press—one would have thought that the majority of Australian workers would have died by eating cold salads instead of hot meals for a while. With the temperature at nearly 100 throughout the strike, some people would argue that the salads were merely necessary. However, that’s besides the point.

It is also true that capitalists not directly concerned with the Gas Co. were but little affected—you could buy electrical stoves at 13c a pop, and all the more expensive restaurants were open. But the unpaid labor of the working class caused some inconvenience to other sections of that class. But, in effect, who cares?

We live in a society where there is no “community,” or “public.” We have two opposing sections—exploiters and exploited, and the former living on the backs of the latter. When the workers get more, the bosses get less and vice versa. The struggle, or war, between these classes we call the class struggle.

Strikes are manifestations of this struggle. Just as wars are not fought with kid gloves, so strikes by their very nature can’t be conducted with sentiments. THEIR EFFECTIVENESS IS DIRECTLY PROPORTIONAL TO THE AMOUNT OF INCONVENIENCE THEY CAUSE. Capitalism today, a highly complicated system, depends on the exploitation of a working class who have to travel to work, have to eat. Transport services, gas, electricity, etc., are absolutely essential to get the workers to the job, and to allow them to accumulate sufficient energies for continued exploitation.

This, then, is the real reason why the press gets so absolutely hysterical when a strike in a “public utility” takes place.

Stunts.

In an attempt to whip up mass hysteria, it was suggested that the gas strike would lead to the death of many hospital patients: no gas would be available to sterilise instruments. This was played up for all it was worth. When the stunt was first put across, Adelaide had been without gas for five weeks. Yet no one had died. With the strike nearly over, it came out that “Melbourne’s public hospitals have been horrified to be informed by the gas strike . . . all sterilisation is carried out with steam generated over furnaces.” (The Age, 11/1/47.)

This stunt stopped. The “Herald” and the rest of the gutter press then attempted to inflame and glamourise a couple of Liberal Party women, who, with Liberal Party backing, had organised a “United Women’s Movement.” In spite of tons of publicity, these women, whose age, judging from their photos, must average about 50, who came from the ranks of the capitalists (one drove up to a meeting in a Rolls Royce) were completely blank in making fools of themselves. But the gas companies took serious their grandoquent promises to lead coal and truck it to the works.

“Volunteers.”

While coal in the works lasted, production was maintained by members of the staff of the gas company. If they had not “volunteered” they would have lost their superannuation benefits. It seems as if these “volunteer” workers—all the top managers—are increasing with the decline of capitalism—will have to learn by bitter experience that they cannot isolate themselves from the class struggle. Every worker who takes part in a strike may be victimised—such threats can only be countered by increased solidarity.

On the subject of seamen, it was Jack London who wrote: “After God had finished the fishes, the land, the vampire, he had come aside and said, ‘When a sea captain comes down the street, men turn their backs and angels weep in Heaven, and the Devil shuns the gates of Hell to keep him out.’

Increasing Discontent.

The A.C.T.U. by putting its full pressure on the Gas Workers, forced them back. Whatever the outcome now in the Arbitration Court of their claim for double time on Sunday, there seems no doubt that this strike is but the forerunner of bigger demands. The workers generally are getting fed up with the empty promises of the Labor Government. Having elected it in the belief that it would increase wages and reduce hours, they are now demanding some instalments of Chifley’s “golden age.” What they have yet to learn is the fact that, unless the Labor or Liberal Party is in power, they will have to fight for every concession on the industrial field.

But even if the 48-hour week and the 51 increase in the basic wage are achieved, the workers won’t even have caught up with pre-war standards—let alone surpassed them.

Here the Socialist steps in, pointing out the absolute impossibility of achieving even a minimum of security under capitalism. But it will require many more bitter struggles till the workers realise that conscious political action for the overthrow of this insane system and the establishment of Socialism is the only way out.

In the meantime, undeterred by press propaganda, they must continue, by vigorous strike action and inter-union solidarity, to fight against any worsening of conditions.

“TOO LONG HAVE THE WORKERS OF THIS WORLD WAITED FOR SOME NOSES TO LEAD THEM OUT OF BONDAGE; HE HAS NOT COME, HE NEVER WILL COME. I WOULD NOT LEAD YOU IF I COULD; FOR IF YOU COULD BE LED OUT, YOU COULD BE LED BACK AGAIN!”

—Eugene V. Debs (1899).

“What do you mean by increasing discontent?”

“I don’t want you to argue with other parties.”

“What about the every day practicalities?”

“Why are you so small?”

“Is state ownership of socialism possible?”

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POLITICS IN PALESTINE

(Continued from Page One)

The situation in Palestine has not significantly improved since the previous report. The Palestinian Authority has continued to resist Israeli demands, and the conflict has escalated.:

ROYALTY

(Associated Press dispatches)

Jamestown, New York, Nov. 12. - The United Nations Security Council today adopted a resolution that would establish a Palestine Jerusalem to replace the existing city. The resolution was introduced by Britain and supported by France and the United States.

Aid to Refugees

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) has announced that it will increase its assistance to Palestinian refugees in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The agency has faced criticism for its handling of aid distributions, but has pledged to improve transparency and accountability.

THE BOAT

The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) has announced plans to set sail on a peace mission to the Gulf States. The mission aims to promote dialogue and cooperation between Israel and the Gulf countries.

THE Cryptocurrency

The development of cryptocurrency has gained momentum in Palestine, with local enthusiasts forming a community around blockchain technology. However, the regulatory landscape remains uncertain.

THE ECONOMY

The Palestinian economy has been hit by the ongoing conflict, with rising unemployment and inflation. The World Bank has forecast a contraction in GDP for 2021.

THE ART

The art scene in Palestine is vibrant, with a mix of traditional and contemporary artists. The Jerusalem Biennale, held annually, is a showcase for local and international talent.

THE CULTURE

Palestinian culture is diverse, with influences from Arab, Jewish, and Western traditions. The annual Film Festival in Ramallah attracts filmmakers and audiences from around the world.

THE MILITARY

The Israeli military has increased its presence in the occupied territories, with a focus on securing the borders and preventing attacks.

THE PEOPLE

Palestinians continue to face hardship due to the occupation. Activists and journalists have been arrested and detained, and the struggle for freedom remains a central theme in Palestinian society.
to read a French paper on the situation.

"Vietnam is a capitalist government, exploited by capitalist parties. It represents the Indo-Chinese bourgeoisie, which is no different from other capitalists. It is the expression of the American war against the working class. And behind the American war, standing behind the capitalists, are the imperialists, especially the American imperialism.

That is the reason why Vietnam is supported by the agents of the imperialist power: the Stalini and the Trotskyite..."—From: "Le Proletaire," Lyon, France, January, '46.

"On Lenin's Tomb."

"The Russian people is slowly being conditioned to a collective leadership. For the second consecutive year, Premier Stalin did not stand in his traditional place atop Lenin's tomb to review the parade celebrating the 25th year of the October revolution. In the key speech of the demonstration, Marshal Leonid A. Gorbach, a Leninist...

Thus, while the super-power envelope all sections of Soviet life, transfer and redistribute of population is furthered by the recirculation of Eastern Europe, the Politburo wisely prepares Russia... for the fact that Stalin is replaceable that Soviet power is built on the domination of the ruling oligarchy..."

(q. from "The Russian State Party"

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OBJECT—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

The Socialist Parties 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, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the crystallized form of the working class, by whose toil the whole society is produced.

2. That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interest manifesting itself as a class struggle, between these who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.

3. That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of society. The working class must be the work of the working class itself.

4. That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopsony by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the working class, the working class must organize collectively 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 special organ of organization and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

5. 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 the master class, the party seeking class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

6. The SOCIALIST PARTIES OF AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND therefore unite in this common political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labor or apparently reformist, and call upon the members of the working class of this country to master their hands, and in the day that a speedy termination may be brought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, beggary to abundance, freedom to slavery.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment, apply to nearest address.

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