

May Day is the day of the working class; the international working class. Traditionally, it is the day on which the forces of the entire Labour movement down tools and gather together in demonstrations and meetings, in every country, to show the world the singleness of purpose of the toiling masses of all lands: the struggle against the common enemy, international capitalism.

To the pioneers of the movement, May Day was the occasion for measuring the forces of the working class, confidently and optimistically ranged in the struggle for world socialism. To the official leadership of the Labour movement to-day, May Day has become an annual outing, during which they preen themselves and make their pious gestures before continuing to forget in practice the internationalism to which they pay lip-service.

"HOW SOON ? "

On May Day, 1948, the working class of Britain and the world can take stock of their surroundings. They can soberly weight up the price they are paying for the continued existence of capitalism.

It is barely three years since the bombing and the blood-letting ceased in the second "War to End War". The famine and desolation, the ruins and the agonies which resulted from this holocaust weigh heavily on us. Yet the preparations for a Third World slaughter are under way. And what a prospect this entails! The living hell of Hiroshima marked the culmination of the last conflict. It will be but the beginning of the next.

The sacrifices and sufferings of 1939-45, no less than those of 1914-18, have proved incapable of solving a single basic problem facing the working class. The "Atlantic Charter", the "Four Freedoms" and all the other airy promises, have proved to be so

In the Chancellories and Embassies of the world powers there is no longer even a pretence that we are finished with war. The only question discussed is: 'How soon?"

The see-saw of the "cold war" pivots around the "Iron Curtain." In the well-worn name of "Freedom and Democracy" the British, American, French and other working classes of the Western Powers are being prepared for war against their "comradesin-arms" of the last war, the Russian masses

OPPRESSION IN THE "DEMOCRACIES"

In the "Democracies," Negro Trade Unionists are butchered and persecuted on the Gold Coast. Negroes and striking workers in America are brutally assaulted. The Vietnam masses are shot down by French bullets, Greek workers and peasants are oppressed by a fascist-military dictatorship maintained by British and American arms and troops, Workers in the shattered German cities suffer the very depths of misery and degradation under the heel of the "Allied" occupation. But these things matter little to the statesmen of the Western Powers who things matter little to the statesmen of the Western Powers who use "Democracy" as their slogan. What's in a next, so long as it provides the fig-leaf to cover up the real aim: war against the Soviet Union for new fields of capitalist exploitation?

DECEPTION OF STALINISM

At the same time the Soviet leaders lend a hand to the At the same time the Soviet leaders tend a nand to the deception of the masses. They present U.N.O. as an instrument of peace instead of what it really is: a "Thieves' Kitchen" in which the world powers manocuvre one against the other before resorting to the hard clash of steel. They are parties to the occupation and dismemberment of Germany, and the subjugation of the German working class. They preach the deception that "blocs of nations", instead of international class struggle, which ignores frontiers, can salve the problems. solve the problems.

They stifle criticism and workers' democracy in the U.S.S.R. and the areas under their domination. All of this in the name of "Communism", of which they have completely forgotten the

WORKERS HOLD THE KEY

Nevertheless, in spite of these terrible clouds which hang over the homes of the world working class, the last word has not yet been spoken by organised Labour. In its tremendous powers of resistance and capacity for struggle the working class holds the key to the future in its own hands. Even the black years of faseism and war were insufficient to quell the ranks of Labour. Since 1945 there has been a tremendous regroupment of the forces of the European working

In Britain the working class swept the Labour leaders to power In the European countries the workers give the Communist and Socialist parties their support in the belief that on this road they can march to socialism. Since the war we have witnessed struggle after struggle being undertaken by the colonial masses.

One thing is crystal clear. The toiling masses of the entire world want to rid themselves of the horrors which weigh down on them, and are prepared to struggle towards this end. All that is lacking is a fighting socialist lead.

FOR INTERNATIONAL UNITY

In face of this favourable situation the Labour and Trade Union leaders, and we must add to them the Stalinists, have abandoned the perspective of international socialist struggle; they have abandoned all the ideas of the founders of the working class

The Labour Government pursues a policy of propping up capitalism at home and defending imperialist interests abroad.

May Day, 1948, provides no cause for jubilant celebration. must be commemorated in the spirit of preparing for battle. There is no easy road for the working class. Only the expropriation of the capitalists and planning with the control and initiative of the workers nationally and internationally can solve our problems. The rank and file workers must demand that those who claim to speak in their name shall fight for an international socialist programme.

In 1917 the Russian working class took the first step along this road. Under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party of Lenin they overthrew the capitalist class and took power into their own

The weak Soviet Republic, with a backward economic heritage, isolated in a capitalist world gave rise to a bureaucracy which abandoned Lenin's internationalism and adopted the utopian formula of "socialism in one country." They have imposed a monstrous tyranny on the Russian workers and peasants. This led to the most amazing zig-zags in policy, Stalin-Hitler pacts, Stalin-Churchill pacts, and assisted in the disorientation of the advanced workers, thus giving a further lease of life to capitalism.

Only the Fourth International has maintained the traditions of October, 1917. On this May Day, the Revolutionary Communist Party re-affirms its faith in the international working class. It extends a hand of class solidarity to the German workers and colonial masses. It calls upon the British working class to recognise that their strength lies in unity, stubborn international unity, based

on a programme of world revolution, This alone can solve the problems of war, of starvation, of all the miseries that confront us. By dedicating ourselves or this May Day to the building of the World Party of Trotskyism, under whose banner the British, German, Russian, French, American and the working classes of the entire world will march to the socialist order, we will be dealing the only effective blows against the eathering way clouds and the other pichtmares of capitalism. gathering war clouds and the other nightmares of capitalism.

IN RUSSIA

Scapegoats for the Regime

The "Observer" of April 25th reports the beginning of a new purge in Russia.

"The past ten days have seen the first faint but unmistakeable signs of a new Soviet witch-hunt the victims this time being chiefly the manufacturers of consumer goods. Last week every newspaper in the U.S.S.R. carried an important statement issued by the Public Prosecutor's office announcing the conviction of a select list of officials and technicians for turning out goods of inferior quality.

Grozny factory, run by the Ministry of Local Industry, was sentenced to five years' deprivation of liberty' for producing inferior bicycles. The chief engineer of a Leningrad felt factory, under the same Ministry, got two years for producing bad quality felt footwear the traditional felt winter boots called 'vablenky'. The head of a bakery in Chalov Province was give five years 'for alowing the systematic production of in ferior bread!

"Three senior officials of an open-cast coal mine in Irkutsk Province were sentenced for turning out sub-standard coal (six years and five years). Further offenders are awaiting trial, among them the director of a Moscow clothing factory and his two chief technical assistants."

The background for this new purge is the gathering discontent of the workers who see that the main benefits of the successes of

"The chief engineer of a affect the standard of living of the

There are less notor cars and other luxury goods er hend of the population in Russia than in such advanced - countries as Britain, where despite the ligher standard of living the overwhelming majority of the workers do not own even the cheapest motor car.

The correspondent of the "Observer" remarks correctly "A fortnight ago certain price reductions were announced as a measure of the first importance, and occasion was taken to stress the rapid increase in the purchasing power of the rouble, which was said to have gone unity over 50%. power of the rouble, which was said to have gone up by over 50%, since December. But the new price cuts will hardly affect the real cost of living in Russia, which is a matter of food and clothing of the most elementary kind—above all new clothing. Bicycles, motorcycles, gramophones, sporting rifles, opera glasses, cameras, sewing machines, and wrist-watches, which all figure in the list, are luxury all figure in the list, are luxury goods as far as Russia is con-cerned, and almost the only items which will affect the mass of the people are vodka and beer.

But clothes and food (apart from caviare) remain unaffected; and on the average income it still takes a month's work to buy a pair of shoes and three morths' work to have a suit of clothe." buy a suit of clothes."

Only the abolition of bureau cratism can determine that the Plan is operated in the interests of the masses, both as regards kind

The "Moskvitch" for Bureaucrass

Russia's latest researd to favoured members of the bureaucracy is the 10,000 rouble Moskvitch car, desecudent of the pre-war ear Kim 10. First buyers of Kim 10 included artists, writers and Stakhanovite workers. Taking the rouble at 10d. (fairest estimate of its spending power), the new ear costs roughly the equivalent of £410 in British money, A high estimate of a Russian worker's average wage is 400 roubles per month.



industrialisation and the reconstruction of the economy are reaped by the upper strata of the bureaucracy.

The articles of mass consumption are of shockingly low quality, further aggravating the already low standards of the masses. The purge is intended to divert the attention of the masses from the real criminals, and to make sections of the lower ranks of the bureaucracy especially the scape-goats for the crimes and failures of the whole bureaucratic regime.

Stalinist propaganda in this country made great play of the reduction in prices announced in Russia recently. But it must have been obvious to anyone who gave the problem a moment's thought in the price motor cars, for instance, could not quantity and quality of products produced. But the bureaucracy will not give up its tyrannous domination over the masses, its power and privileges. Consequently, they try constantly by means of repressions and the finding of scapegoats to divert the attention of the masses from the real root of the evils which beset them: arbitrary and uncontrolled rule by the officialdom.

However, these events mirror the pressure of the Russian workers and peasants. They are proof of the fact that it is im-possible for the bureaueracy to establish itself securely. In the long run the Russian masses will overthrow the bureaucracy and introduce the Soviet system of true the days of Lenin and Trotsky.

Negro Mothers' Death Sentence

Commuted to Life Imprisonment

Union and progressive organisations in America against the death sentences for Mrs. Rosa Ingrain, Negro mother of 12, and her two sons, Sammy, 14, and Wallace, 16, have won a first victory.

Judge William M. Haiper, of Americus, Georgia, who sentenced the Ingram's to the electric chair for the self-defence slaying of a white farmer, has been forced to commute the sentence to life imprisonment.

The National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People, it is believed, will appeal the case to higher courts in the battle to free the Ingrams.

Mrs. Ingram, a sharecropper, was attacked by a white neighbour when her pigs wandered into his fields. Armed with a rifle, he threatened to shoot her and when she grabbed

Mass protests by Labour, Trade | the rifle he beat her severely. At this point her two teen-age ran to the aid of their bleeding blow on the bead resulted in the death of the white farmer.

The Ingram's were immediately hauled off to jail, denied legal rights and found guilty by an all-white jury. The landlord confiscated the livestock and tools of the Ingram family. The remaining lugram children, the youngest of whom is 17 months, have been lives in a tryy sheet gives the living in a tiny shack since the imprisonment of their widowed

Mass protest has saved the Ingrams from the electric chair.

Mass action must how be organised to free Mrs. Ingram and her two children from the Georgia prisons. " MILITANT "

(U.S.A. Trotskyist Organy

NEW PURGE WALL STREET VICTORY N TALY by TED GRANT

THE VICTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS IN THE ITALIAN ELECTIONS MARKS A DECISIVE SET-BACK FOR THE STALINISTS AND A VICTORY FOR WALL STREET AND THE "WESTERN BLOC" IN THE STRUGGLE FOR THE DOMINATION OF EUROPE.

The polls took place on the background of direct intervention by Anglo-American Imperialism with threats to cut off all aid if the Italians voted for the "Popular Front" lists dominated by the Communist Party. During the election period America and Britain attempted to undermine the Stalinists by offering to support the

According to reports from the State Department £1,000,000 was spent from a special fund for the purpose of supporting the struggle against "Communism" in Italy. Thus, as after World War I, the weapon of food and other support is used to back up the forces of counter-revolution in Europe.

MASS MOVEMENTS

puppets in Italy. Ever since the fall of Mussolini the peninsula has been the scene of a tremendors upsurge on the part of the Italian masses. The disillusionment following the "liberation" by Allied troops and the ending of the war has been intense. Over the past two years the hungry Italian masses have moved into action again and again. Strike struggles in Milan, Turin, Genoa and other cities by the industrial workers have been followed by a movement of the agricultural workers in the Po Valley and, emulating their example of the landed labourers and peasants in the formerly backward In September of last year a million agricultural workers struck in the Po Valley, the strike sprending to Venetia, Rovigo and Ferrara Provinces. They were followed by 900,000 steel workers who struck in the same month, and 40,000 technicians and employees in textiles. A million workers in Rome, Turin and other large cities demonstrated against the hunger government. An agricultural strike involving 30,000 to 60,000 took place near the capital and several Thus the abolition of rationing bargely benefits the not the masses.

of rationing thousand peasants seized the land. Sympathy strikes of the workers took place in Civitavecchia and Monte Rotondo.

C.P. PRESSED FOR COALITION

However, as late as September 26th in the Itulian Parliament, Toglintii the C.P. leader denied revolutionary intentions and again pressed the demand for a new scalition with the Christian Democrats. Clearly the C.P. was Democrats. Clearly the C.P. was using the revolutionary pressure of the masses for the purpole of arriving at an agreement with Italian capitalism in the interests of Russian foreign policy. Now this policy has reaped its reward in the election and has helped in the turning of Italian capitalism firmly in the direction of Washing-It is interesting to note that the same debate the Uome Qualunque, a semi-fasci-t party also asked for the co-operation of the Christian Democrats,

THROWN OUT BY GOVERNMENT

The employers and landowners having successfully used the Stalinists and Socialists in the Cabinet in order to prevent the workers seizing control, and having rebuilt an apparatus of repression, at the behest of Wall Street, threw the Stalinists and Socialists out of the Government. Meanwhile reaction had so consolidated itself that the Fascists began their series provocations and murders against the militant elements within the working class. It was on this basis that the workers replied by militant strike action against the premises and organisations of the fascists. With the militant mood of the workers the Government was possible for the Stalinists and Socialists to overthrow the Govern without any serious resistance.

But afraid of the repercussions of direct revolutionary action on the part of the masses the Stalin-ists held them back, hoping to come o power through a general election. They wished to gain control from he top, supplemented by a movement from the bottom so that they could maintain control of the movement throughout and speedily bureaucratise and strangle it on the lines of the movement in Czechoslovakin. This is the explanation of their failure to seize control during the last couple of years when power was in their grasp.

REACTION UNITED

basis, they raised the danger of

succeeded in this objective. And their success marks a definite change of relationship between the workers and the capitalists, and the Stalinist bureaucraey and Anglo-American Imperialism since the

end of the war. Through the menced the Allied reaction was not at all sure of the victory of their puppets in Italy. Even of the reaction was not at all sure of the victory of their puppets in Italy. Western Europe.

STALINISTS CONFUSE THE WORKERS

Instead of explaining the role of the Church and of the capitalists instead of attacking the hypocrisy of capitalist nationalism and put-ting forward the idea of international Socialism, the Stalinists vied with the reaction in frenzied chauvinism; this in their attacks on America. Instead of explaining the need for workers and peasants control of the state, the Stalinists competed with the capitalist parties in demagogy about constitutionalism, liberty and democracy Their attempts to paint the Czech crisis as one settled purely by coustitutional means could not impresany wavering elements as anything but cynical lies, The Stalinists had voted in the Constituent Assembly for the Lateran Treaty between Mussolini and the Vatican to become part of the Constitution. This makes Catholicism the state religion and gives the Church special privileges in the schools and in the country. They guided the revolutionary movement of the masses into harm-

POPULAR BLOC HAD GAINED

However, with the Stalinists and Socialists forced out of the Govern-ment and in opposition during the last few months, there was a steady growth in the influence of the Popular Bloc, composed of Socialists supporting Nenni, small groupings For the first time they began to penetics, the backward peasant masses in the former stronghold of the Right Wing, the Southern part of Italy. In the municipal elections on November 8th in 143 municipalities including Rome, Naples, Genoa, Turiu, Florence and Palermo the Popular Bloc emerged as the strongest force.

The C.P.-S.P. Block secured 775,915 votes Christian Democrats 379,588 231,168 122,551 Uomo Qualunque Liberals 97,041 Monarchists 58:639

Other Parties

21,889

The Popular Bloe improved their positions in all the cities in comparison with the former general election. Even in Sicily, one of the most politically stagnant areas of the South, the Popular Bloc headed the poll with 590,870 in comparison with the Christian Democrats 399,125. In the previous elections the extreme re-actionary parties had three time the number of votes as the parties of the Popular Bloc.

TENDENCY REVERSED

But this tendency was sharply

reversed in the present general election. In nearly all the cities, election. even of the industrial North, the Christian Democrat poll topped that of the Popular Bloc. In the 1946 general election the C.P., S.P. and the Action Party received 9,421,229 votes together amounting to 41.1% of the votes, the Christian Democrats 8,083.268 votes or 35.2% and other Right Wing parties the balance, Nov the Popular Front received 8,025,990 or 30.7% together with the Socialist Unity Party who split from the Neuni Socialist Party and received 1,860,528 or 7% of the votes, a total of 9,886,518 votes. This is 465,000 more than the last election but only 37.7% of the total vote or 3.4% less than formerly. The Christian The Vatican, the industrialists and the landlords united in an intensive drive to rully round the Christian Democrats. Using the Christian Democrats. Using the Christian Democrats. Using the Christian Democrats. Using the control of the total this time. This represented an increase of nearly 4 and the christian votes. Democrats gathering round them-selves the hulk of the reaction and million votes! Most of the Right Wing parties did hadly but the Stalinist totalitarianism es a means to scare the middle class and indifferent and backward elements, large numbers of whom were received 525,408 votes, Thus and indifferent and backward elements, large numbers of whom were normally too apathetic even to vote, in order to drive them to the bolls.

Candidates for the first time received 525,408 votes. Thus three years after the war and despite the experience of 20 years bolls. of fascism they can now come for-Despite the chronic misery of the workers and peasants and the destriction of 1,500,000 unemployed they succeeded in the chronic misery of ward and dare to flaunt their doctrines in the face of the working class.

PRESENT SITUATION

The Stalini-ts apparently intend to accept the swing of Italy over to the Anglo-American bloc for the

time being. In the meantime some of the Nenni Socialists led by the former Socialist Minister of the Interior apparently intend to split towards the Right Wing Saragat Grouping which is to become part of the coalition Government with the Christian Democrats. The Stalinist, di Vittorio, secretary-general of the Italian T.U.C., which is dominated by the Communist Party, declared on the Marshall Plan (according to the 'Daily Herald'" of 22nd April and not denied by the C.P.), "When someone wants to help you, it is ridiculous to slap him in the face.

NO LASTING SOLUTION

The American Imperialists are preparing to rush supplies to Italy. Allies are already discussing bringing Italy into the Western Bloc, i.e., the joint conspiracy against the Socialist revolution in Europe and for ultimate war against the Soviet Union.

Meanwhile, de Gasperi is selecting and training a police force from which "subversive forces" have been weeded out and which the Italian capitalists consider will be entirely reliable for use against the workers. With the lack of a revolutionary alternative the capitalists, especially with Marshall aid may succeed in temporarily stabilising the situation. But such a situation cannot endure for many years. The Christian Democrats, like all the middle-of-the-way capitalist exploiters of the middle class are doomed to break up. The urban middle class and the peasants will swing away to Right and to Left. As the correspondent of the "Daily Mail" remarks with foreboding, a permanent solution has not at all been attained. The temporary stampede of the middle class and backward pea ants and workers can rapidly change on the basis of the crisis of capitalism in Italy. This crisis cannot be fundamentally eliminated even with Marshall aid. A new polarisation of the classes is inevitable. In the coming days the number-ship of the C.P. too, will begin to ask why the C.P. fails to give a revolution-

The alternative will inexorably be posed: either the conquest of power by the workers led by a genuine revolutionary Communist Party or the crushing of the workers and their organisations in new fascist dictatorship.

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