

THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

INTERNATIONAL PRESS CORRESPONDENCE



*ON
CYPRUS, GREECE, TURKEY, NEAR EAST
(1926-1934)*

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**IN THE COLONIES. LABOUR ACTIVITY IN
CYPRUS. *The International Press*
Correspondence, Vol. 6. No. 1, 7th January
1926**

We have received a report from our Comrade Alexander Nicolaides regarding the situation of the Labour Movement in Cyprus, from which we give the following facts for the information of our readers. Ed.

The Labour Movement in Cyprus is still in its infantile stage. The workers and peasants who are fearfully exploited by the bourgeoisie and the clergy, have just begun to show signs of awakening.

The recent elections have resulted in the defeat of a formerly all-powerful aristocratic clique and in the return of bourgeois candidates, who owe their success thanks to their having come forward with a labour programme and declared themselves in favour of a radical labour policy. This programme which procured them their successes over their opponents contains, among other items, the eight hour day, maintenance of disabled workers etc.

Following on the elections, the Executive Committee of the Limassol Workers Union adopted a resolution to be handed to the newly elected members of the Legislative Council, regarding the enactment of certain labour laws, viz. the eight hour working day, maintenance of disabled workers by funds to be raised by a drastic taxation of capital and other measures. Similar resolutions have been adopted by various Peasants' Leagues throughout the island.

The 8th Anniversary of the Russian October Revolution was celebrated by the Communist Party in a magnificent manner. The offices of the Party and the Workers' Union were handsomely illuminated and a meeting was held at which

speeches were delivered on the historical significance of the day, after which the “Internationale” was sung.

On November 21st the offices of the C.P. at Limassol were raided by the police. The raid was carried out by Chief Inspector Montague and two minor officers according to instructions received from the Central government in London. An those suspected or being leaders of the Communists were arrested, but instantly released. The offices of the Party and the houses of members were carefully searched, all correspondence, literature and even the pictures on the wall were confiscated. Thus British imperialism is extending its general anti-Bolshevik offensive to the little Communist Party of Cyprus.

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**AGAINST COLONIAL OPPRESSION.
IMPERIALISM IN CYPRUS. *International
Press Correspondence, Vol. 8, No. 79, 9th
November 1928***

The signature of the King of England has already been set to the Order in Council by which an abominable and oppressive law comes into force. Frightful tyranny and disgraceful barbarity are ready to be let loose against the people of Cyprus as soon as this law comes into force. The laws and decrees which have been drawn up in England and the great interest shown by the huge metropolis for small and insignificant Cyprus show very clearly that British imperialism can find no way out of the crisis in which it is involved owing to the boycotting of British goods in the most important markets as a result of the awakening of the huge masses of slaves in the colonies.

British imperialism, in order to maintain its rule determined that the Communist Party of Cyprus, which is carrying on a ruthless war against every oppressor should be dealt a severe blow; it was determined to stifle the awakening of the masses, in order to render Cyprus safe for the investment of British capital.

With the coming into force of this odious law "*Neos Anthrope*" (New Humanity), the only paper in Cyprus which is struggling heroically against capital and for the emancipation of the proletariat, will be suppressed. The C.P. of Cyprus, the young but vigorous leader of the working class, will be outlawed. The mouths of all those will be shut who dare even to speak or write against any "civilized" nation. Under the new law anyone writing or speaking against the fascist regime of Mussolini or against the actions of the charlatan and swindler

Venizelos in Athens, will be liable to be flung into the dark and miserable cells of the prisons of Cyprus, there to remain for two years. No words can adequately describe the hideous wave of terror which is about to sweep over Cyprus.

The C.P. of Cyprus has issued a stirring manifesto. to all the Cyprian people, denouncing the foul and shameful plans which the imperialists are preparing and summoning the people to. united, mass resistance. It is impossible to express in words the great reception accorded by the working masses to the Manifesto. The fighting spirit which the Manifesto has aroused among the people augurs well for a successful mass protest action. No matter what course events may take, the C.P. of Cyprus, either as a legal, semi-legal or illegal organisation, will not cease its struggle, hand in hand with the working class of the colonies, for the emancipation of the Cyprian people from the domination of British imperialism.

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**AGAINST COLONIAL OPPRESSION.
BRITISH IMPERIALIST OPPRESSION IN
CYPRUS. *International Press*
Correspondence, Vol. 10, No. 30, 26 June
*1930***

British Imperialism has introduced new repressive laws in Cyprus with a view to stifling any protests from the masses of the workers and peasants. The local and central authorities must be saved from all criticism.

A little while ago the representative of British capitalism and the loyal executor of the MacDonald Labour Government in Cyprus, **Sir Ronald Storrs**, the Governor of Cyprus, decreed a new Press Law. This law contains numerous provisions for gagging the press and also provides for a bond of two hundred pounds sterling to be deposited by all persons receiving a license to publish a newspaper in Cyprus, this sum to be, confiscated wholly or in part should the newspaper publish libellous or seditious matter. According to Section 4 Paragraph B of this law the Governor is the judge of what is libellous and seditious.

The new law even imposes these intolerable conditions on these newspapers which already exist, and they have been given a period of three months in which to comply with the new regulations and find securities in the sum of two hundred pounds sterling each.

It is clear that this is intended as a gagging law, and it is equally clear that it will rest most heavily on the workers press. In the first place, it will be difficult for the **Communist Party of Cyprus** to find the necessary security. It is even probable that a considerable section of the newspapers now being

published will have to suspend publication on account of their inability to find the necessary security. This is however exactly what the authorities want, for if the voice of the press is weakened then it will render, the task of imposing prohibitive taxation easier in the future.

The heavy taxes imposed by the British authorities to maintain their costly and extravagant administration on the island represent a crushing weight for the workers and peasants. The annual budget of the British authorities in Cyprus has risen almost to a million pounds sterling, and the per capita tax is estimated at three pounds sterling although the island is extremely poor.

All articles of mass consumption are taxed heavily and it is difficult for the workers and peasants to purchase even the most necessary commodities in order to exist at all. In addition wages are being so that the masses are being ground between the upper and nether millstones.

These frightful conditions are not unalterable. The government could easily alleviate the poverty of the masses by reducing the budget and lowering taxation. For this however, it would be necessary to cut down the fantastic salaries of the various departmental heads and of the hosts of "experts" who are brought from London to Cyprus to do work for which it is difficult to observe the necessity. Further real economies could be made by overhauling the complicated and bureaucratic system established by the British in Cyprus and in other colonies.

The British government, however, has no intention of making any efforts to improve the miserable situation of the masses. On the contrary, in its efforts to find a field for British capitalist activities in Cyprus it makes the situation of the masses even more difficult. Thus it has now been decided to float a loan of six hundred thousand pounds sterling in London to be used to improve the roads of the island and to enlarge the

harbour in **Famagusta (Salamis)** and turn it into a naval base for Great Britain. Its proximity to the **Dardanelles** and the **Black Sea** makes it particularly valuable as a base for naval operations against the **Soviet Union**. The harbour in its present condition is quite satisfactory for the limited trade of the island, and its extension is not demanded by the interests of the native population of Cyprus. The sums expended will go to the benefit of British industry which will supply the materials, and to British engineers who will supervise the work.

The conditions of the working class in Cyprus are intolerable. Labour protective legislation is unknown. The existing laws are applied solely against the masses and in favour of the employers. The new Penal Code introduced in January 1929 deprived the miners in Cyprus of the right to strike, and the right of the other workers to strike is practically also fictitious. A strike did occur last year and was met with all the repressive powers of the authorities. Many workers were sentenced to terms of imprisonment ranging from three months to twelve months for not other crime than that of having downed tools in an industrial struggle. The government supported the **Asbestos Company** up to the hilt in its efforts to maintain the oppressive working conditions and low rates of wages.

The legal existence of workers associations or clubs is dependent upon a governmental permit, and such clubs are strictly supervised by the police who have the right to withdraw the permit and close down the clubs or associations at their own discretion without the formality of having to submit proof. The British authorities in Cyprus have not forgotten the old imperial principle "Divide and rule" and they exercise it here with all their old cunning. The British Governor, Sir Ronald Storrs, has cleverly sown hatred between the Greek and Turkish populations of Cyprus and has gathered a little clique of notables around the government who are prepared to serve it

in return for their privileged position. The fictitious sanction of the British authorities in Cyprus is given by these treacherous **Greek** and **Turkish** bourgeois who are prepared to let themselves be misused for any purpose in return for government positions and high salaries. These traitors are the right hand of the British government in oppressing and exploiting the toiling masses of Cyprus.

Under the influence of the political agitation and propaganda of the **Communist Party of Cyprus**, the common people are steadily beginning to realise that their interests can only be served by ejecting the British encroachers, overthrowing the local bourgeoisie and giving them the fit reward for their treachery, and setting up a workers and peasants government on the island.

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**AGAINST COLONIAL OPPRESSION. THE
REVOLT ON THE ISLAND OF CYPRUS BY
MAX LEITNER. *The International
Correspondence, Vol. 11, No. 55, 29
October 1931***

The world crisis has seized the island of Cyprus just as it has seized other countries. The most important industries of the island are at a standstill; the asbestos and copper mines are closed, and no less than 25,000 workers are unemployed. The budget of the island shows a deficit of 75,000 pounds. The government tried to cover this deficit by extraordinary measures, and this was, the immediate cause of the revolt. New taxes were to be introduced, the customs duties raised and the reserve funds of the government, which were put by for quite other purposes, were to be drawn on. The Greek members of the Legislative Council—an instrument of British imperialism—wished to oppose these measures; they resigned, and thus the signal was given for the open fight.

The crisis had already caused the Greek workers and peasants on the island to resort to drastic offensive measures. This defensive action, which reached serious dimensions already in April of this year, was to be throttled by falsifying the character of the defensive action, by placing at its head reactionary forces such as the clergy. On October 24th, Venizelos declared in the “Figaro” that the British government benevolently tolerated the nationalist movement led by the clergy.

The British government, however, proceeded most ruthlessly against the Communists. On the occasion of the

demonstration recently held in Limassol, at which the slogan: Long live the Soviet Republic of Cyprus! was issued, 22 workers were arrested and tried immediately. Comrades **Skelea** and **Salamonides** were each sentenced to six months' imprisonment, and six other comrades were each sentenced to one month imprisonment. Almost at the same time a well-known leader of the Communist Party of Cyprus, Comrade **Vakis**, was arrested and accused of having by his speeches incited the workers to revolution and against the State.

The government has by no means succeeded by these terrorist measures in damming the revolutionary wave in Cyprus. The masses are fighting with revolutionary means, and in Nicosia a crowd demonstrated before the government buildings, which were finally set on fire and burnt down. Revolutionary mass movements are also reported from Limassol and Larnaca. In Limassol the British Commissioners house was burnt down. The Greek "patriots" and the clergy are endeavouring to get the movement into their hands in order to betray it. This is proved by the Greek Prime Minister Venizelos, who is in the service of British imperialism, and who declared:

"I can only express my deepest regret at these excesses, which were certainly not desired by the leaders. But they ought to have known that when one pushes a thing too far, the moment comes when one is no longer master of the situation."

The Greek bishops and archbishops in Cyprus themselves are already speaking of the possibilities of reconciliation in order to call off the movement.

The British government has sent strong forces to Cyprus and proclaimed martial law, but the revolutionary movement cannot be destroyed thereby. The working population of Cyprus is continuing its revolutionary anti-imperialist fight against British oppression and for the independence of Cyprus.

The British and the international proletariat fully support the demands of the working population of Cyprus.

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**AGAINST COLONIAL OPPRESSION. THE
NATIONAL GOVERNMENT IN BRITAIN
AND COLONIAL OPPRESSION BY J.
SHIELDS (LONDON). *The International
Correspondence, Vol. 12 , No. 2 , 14th
January 1932***

Ever since the formation of the National Government in Great Britain, the unceasing attacks and persecution against the workers in Britain itself have been accompanied by widespread application of the most ruthless terror and suppressive measures against the workers and peasants in the colonies and throughout the British Empire.

Brutal shootings, arrests, imprisonments, deportations, etc., have become the order of the day. By these means the bourgeoisie is seeking to crush the growing revolt and force down the masses to a lower level of existence.

In **India** the most incredible terrorism is being applied by the government against the workers and peasants on a wide scale. In rapid succession during the past few weeks, a whole series of drastic ordinances have been brought into operation, the provisions of which are being put into effect by the forces of the armed police and military.

In **Bengal**, the **United Provinces**, and the **North West Frontier Province**, a crushing drive has been launched against the Indian masses. Martial law rules, special tribunals have been appointed with powers to pass the death penalty, magistrates have been given extraordinary powers, organisations have been proclaimed, and the police and troops have been given a free hand to shoot, arrest, etc., as they think fit.

Another brutal massacre along the lines of Amritsar has been perpetrated in the North West Frontier Province resulting in the killing of 16 members of the Red Shirt Movement and the wounding of over 50 others, Peshawar and the surrounding district is groaning under a reign of armed military terrorism. Even according to official admissions the number of those arrested in the Province already totals over 1200. Many of those have been tried on the spot and given heavy sentences, others have been deported from the area.

In the United Provinces where the **no rent movement** has become widespread, and in Bengal, troops and police are continually engaged in village raids, house to house searches, etc., for the purpose of rounding-up “suspects”.

The terrible repressive measures have not succeeded in destroying the revolutionary ferment but have resulted in intensifying the hatred of the Indian masses against British imperialism. As the economic and agrarian crisis sharpens the revolt of the Indian workers and peasants grows, and with it increasing mass disillusionment in Gandhi and the reactionary congress leaders who are striving to restrict and restrain the revolutionary tide.

As in India, so also in other parts of the empire, terrorist measures have been increasingly applied against the workers and peasants.

With the adoption of the Cosgrave Coercion Act, **Ireland** has been placed under the heel of unbridled oppression. The Revolutionary Workers Groups, republican organisations and other bodies have been banned in the Irish Free State. A strict prohibition of the working class and republican press, is being enforced, and the administration of “justice” has been concentrated in the hands of the Military Tribunal which sits in secret with complete power to pass any sentence against political prisoners.

Already a number of prisoners have had sentence passed

upon them. In the case of the brothers Gilmore who were charged with being members of the Republican Army, each of the accused were sentenced to five years imprisonment. No appeal against the Military Tribunal's decisions is permitted, and only heavily censored press reports give an inkling of the "frame-up" character of the whole of the "trial" proceedings.

It is in this atmosphere that a "democratic" general election will be staged in the Irish Free State in February, with candidates from the Revolutionary Groups and other banned bodies being absolutely prohibited from standing.

In **Cyprus**, the crushing burdens placed on the shoulders of the population finally led to a revolt against British rule on October 23 of last year.

The insurgent masses of Cyprus were under the dictatorship exercised by the British governor, Sir Reginald Storrs, who had further added to the prevailing poverty and misery by imposing heavy new taxation and tariffs.,

Big mass demonstrations took place on the streets of the towns, some government buildings were seized and the house of the governor was burned.

British troops, warships, aeroplanes, etc., were hurried to the spot to drown the revolt in blood. The troops fired upon the crowds and took a toll of killed and wounded.

In **Canada** the persecution of the working class movement has become more intense. There the Communist Party has been declared illegal and its leaders have been convicted and sentenced to 5 years in prison. Hired thugs are being used to assist the police in breaking up workers demonstrations and attempting to drown the cries of the starving unemployed who are fighting for relief.

A similar development is being witnessed in Australia where a fierce campaign against the communists is in full swing, fascists have been organised in gangs to attack workers meetings, and as part of the drive towards endeavouring to

force the Communist Party into illegality a bitter press campaign and manufactured “bomb outrages” have been got up.

All these events make it clear that British imperialism is compelled to have recourse to increasing violence and the more open use of its class dictatorship in order to hold down the masses within its possessions.

The happening in India, in Burma where over 6000 have been penned into jail, in Canada and elsewhere, are a warning to the British, working class of what will happen in Britain itself ere long unless the fight against the National Government is rapidly intensified and developed on the widest possible scale.

It is the task of the working class of Britain to link up their struggle with that of the oppressed colonial toilers and make common cause and common solidarity in the fight against the common enemy.

This can be done by connecting up the fight against the wage cutting and starvation offensive of British capitalism with the fight against British imperialism as a whole, supporting the fight of the oppressed colonial workers and peasants and, raising an energetic campaign for the withdrawal of all British troops from the colonies.

**THE WAR. British Imperialism
Strengthens its War Front, By William
Rust (London). *International Press
Correspondence, Volume 12, No. 14, March
24, 1932***

The recent session of the Assembly of the **League of Nations** revealed very clearly the role of the League as a war-making machine and the increasing activity of the “National” Government in helping Japan in its war on the Chinese people.

The British Foreign Minister, **Sir John Simon**, not only resisted the criticisms which the smaller Powers directed against Japan, he also utilised the opportunity in order to discuss a new agreement with France on the question of the anti-Soviet bloc and the fight against America on the question of War debts and Reparations.

Simon first of all explained that the Assembly could not discuss Manchuria because a Commission was now investigating the position there. (Incidentally, at that moment the Commission was being feted in Tokyo!) Throughout the entire proceedings, Simon showed a peculiar amnesty to keep Manchuria out of the discussion and to convey the impression that insufficient facts were at hand in order to make a decision on any aspects of the imperialist war.

Why this anxiety? The argument about the Commission is obviously a mere subterfuge which cannot be justified even by the previous decisions of the League itself. The plain fact about Manchuria is, that it is under Japanese domination and is being used as a base for war preparation against the Soviet borders. The great legal luminary, Simon, resorted to the cheap lawyer’s trick of arguing that a Commission has the case in hand precisely in order to avoid ‘an open discussion on this plain

fact.

But Simon at the same time also unwittingly exposed the true purpose of the Commission, which, far from being a source of information regarding the situation in Manchuria, is used by the leading statesmen in order to prevent that situation from being known and discussed.

The thin diplomatic veneer covering Simon's pro-Japanese attitude can be so easily seen through that even the Geneva correspondent of the Liberal "**Economist**" could not refrain from observing that:—

"Sir John Simon's insistence on the importance of keeping an open mind until the Assembly is fully informed suggested that he cannot say whether China invaded Japan, or Japan invaded China" (March 12th).

Later in the proceedings, Simon made the following profound statement on the role of the League:—

"The first duty of the League was mediation. The League could not pronounce a judgement on matters in controversy but it might make a declaration reaffirming the fundamental principles of the League" (March 8th."Times").

Dear, dear, what is this "controversy"? Only the fact that an imperialist war is raging in the Far East for six months, that tens of thousands of Chinese men, women and children have been massacred and that the frontiers of the Soviet Union are threatened. To describe this opening phase of the world war as a "controversy" upon which judgement cannot be pronounced is nothing else than thinly concealed encouragement to Japan to go ahead with its murderous war plans.

This is so obvious that the already mentioned correspondent of the "**Economist**" is again moved to protest. He writes:—

"Nothing has been more striking or more painful during the proceedings of the special Assembly than the disquiet caused by the role played by Great Britain and the other Big Powers

on the Council There is a general suspicion that Manchuria is being sold for peace and quiet in Shanghai and that the so-called impartiality of the Great Powers is an excuse to avoid as long as possible, if not altogether, a pronouncement against Japan.” (March 12th.)

It is, of course, characteristic that the Liberal “Economist” limits its comments to such misgivings. But the workers cannot leave the matter at that. Fighting is not raging at the moment but there is no “peace and quiet” at Shanghai. The Japanese remain in occupation and the Chinese people continue to suffer untold horrors from the war devastation. The meaning of the agreement between France, Britain and Japan on the Shanghai question is clearly revealed in the “peace” terms which these Powers are now trying to force on China and which have been accepted by the treacherous Kuomintang Government.

They provide for the retention of Japanese forces in Shanghai itself and the abandonment of the Chinese boycott of Japanese goods. The Chinese troops are to be held back in the positions 12-15 miles from Shanghai to which they were driven by the Japanese advance.

In other words, the proposal put forward by Britain and the other Powers are that the anti-imperialist struggle of the Chinese people is to be broken and decisive military positions are to remain under imperialist control.

The deal over, Shanghai which gives Japan a free hand in Manchuria, fits in admirably with the war plans of British imperialism. Japanese imperialism well understands that its job is to organise provocation against the Soviet Union.

This anti-Soviet policy pursued by Simon in the East—was strengthened by the discussion which he had with Tardieu on building up the anti-Soviet bloc in Europe. The bitter words between France and Britain over war debts and reparations have now given way, at least for the time being, to fulsome declarations on the necessity for cooperation and

understanding. “The whole of France aspires to a general entente with that noble country, Britain” said Tadiou on Feb. 23rd.

Whether this “general entente” will be set up on a lasting basis is by no means certain but Britain has already agreed with the main outlines of a scheme for the formation of a Danube Federation, i.e. the creation of an Eastern European bloc of states, as an integral part of the French military system organised on the continent against the Soviet Union. If there was any doubt as to the meaning of the secret conversations between Simon and the French delegation at Geneva it has been finally dispelled by the leading article in “**Le Temps**” of March 10th which after referring to these conversations, writes’ :—

“Consideration of the important problems of the present day make it clear that the harmonising of French and British policy is the basis of any solution. Whatever the question may be, whether reparations, the debts between nations, ‘frozen’ credits, disarmament, security, the reconstruction of Central Europe **or the relations between the civilisation which is called ‘capitalist’ and the pseudo-civilisation of the Soviets, no permanent solution can be found without such an agreement** (my italics). If the two great Powers act separately ... the forces of disruption and destruction will make their way in.”

To complete the picture it is only necessary to emphasise that the war policy of British Imperialism against its imperialist rival and the Soviet Union also goes ahead quite independently of France. Britain occupies a dominating position in many of the European states (**Esthonia, Latvia, Finland, and Lithuania**) as well as France. **Hungary** is a well-known sphere of British influence. In the Near East British military preparations are being speeded up. The aerodromes in **Persia** and **Iraq** can be used as a base for the bombing of the oil wells

of the Soviet Union. **Afghanistan** and the N.W. frontier of **India**, which border on the Soviet Union) are recognised points of attack and British military and air force activity have been greatly increased during recent months.

British Imperialism is building its war front against the Soviet Union in all parts of the world.

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**THE WAR OF THE KURDS IN NORTH
IRAQ. By J. B. (Jerusalem). *International
Press Correspondence, Volume 12, No. 18,
April 21, 1932***

A few days ago a member of the British Parliament requested information from the government regarding the situation in North Iraq, where fighting has been going on for some time past. The answer which he received shows that the news contained in the English press regarding a regular war against the Kurds inhabiting the district of Iraq adjoining the Turkish and Persian frontiers is in accordance with the facts. The Kurdish tribes are waging a stubborn fight not only against the Iraq expeditionary troops commanded by British officers, but also against British aeroplanes, and they have even succeeded in shooting one of them down.

The fights against the Kurds in North Iraq reveal the inner contradictions of British imperialism. These fights have been going on for over a decade. The Kurdish revolts, which are repeatedly suppressed by expeditions, break out with almost unfailing regularity every Spring. Even the official descriptions given by the British authorities regarding the original source of these outbreaks have to admit that the Kurdish tribes, even during the time of the war, were armed with weapons of British origin. The Kurdish Sheiks formed valuable auxiliary troops in the fight against the enemies of England in the world war. Since then, the officers of the British secret service have been continually in touch with these sheiks in order to incite them against the Turkish Republic. It has been repeatedly ascertained that English, and also French, officers were behind the revolt in Kurdistan against Mustafa Kemal Pasha, and that these revolts were intended to exert pressure on the Turkish

government in order to induce them to comply with the desires of the organisers of anti-Soviet intervention.

British imperialism intended to set up an autonomous Kurdish buffer State in Iraq. This “autonomous” State, as was repeatedly emphasised in the urgent petitions by Kurdish notables to the League of Nations, was to secure the Kurdish national minority rights against the attacks of the “Arab” State by nominating special British officials in the Kurdish district and garrisoning it with British troops. The purpose of this persistent agitation for an independent Kurdish State was all too apparent. It was a question of setting up in Kurdistan a direct British administration and to have a pretext for its military occupation.

The endeavours of the British imperialists in North Iraq are, for the rest, only a part of the operations that are being carried out in all the advanced frontier districts of the Near and Middle East. The English have in a similar manner sought and obtained pretexts for separating the North-West province of India and subjecting it to a direct military dictatorship, just as in the same way the military occupation of Kashmir is already being carried out.

Just as in the other cases mentioned, the imperialist plans cannot be carried out otherwise than by making war on the native population. Owing to the desperate situation of the native mountain tribes, small outbreaks, often instigated by British agents themselves for their own purposes, develop into general revolts against which, as is shown by the case of the recent Kurd revolt in North Iraq, all means of modern war-technique must be employed.

The Iraq government is endeavouring to conceal the truth regarding the extent of the fighting in North Iraq, and the command of the British air forces only give reports regarding their own losses. So far as can be seen from the Arab press appearing in the neighbouring countries of Iraq, North Iraq is

the scene of an insurrection which in extent exceeds the former insurrections. The expeditionary troops must have suffered considerable losses, judged from the great number of wounded which have been transported to the hospitals in Baghdad. The Kurdish partisan detachments, headed by Sheik Barsan, are being pursued far into the mountains. But the fighting is not confined to them. Whole Kurdish villages in which only women, children and old folk have been left behind, are being destroyed by bombs and aeroplanes and the population exterminated.

This little colonial war deserves attention because by means of it a new attempt is being made to push forward the imperialist troops into the neighbourhood of the Soviet frontiers. The British military actions in the North-West province of India mean at the same time an advance into Afghanistan territory. The military occupation of Kashmir is intended to create a basis for an attack on Tibet, and later on the Central Asiatic Republics of the Soviet Union. Through Kurdistan, Persia and Turkey are to be threatened on their most vulnerable frontiers; from there it is not far from Soviet Armenia and Soviet Azerbaijan. Already once, in 1920, British troops made this “promenade” to Baku. At that time they were forced to retreat. Behind the fights against the Kurdish mountain tribes there is to be seen a part of the preparations for the great war of intervention for which the imperialists are directly heading.

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**THE WAR. BRITISH IMPERIALISM
STRENGTHENS ITS POSITIONS IN THE
NEAR EAST. By J. B. *International Press*
Correspondence, Volume 12, No. 32, July
*21, 1932***

The crushing of the revolt of the Kurds, led by Sheik Ahmet of the Barsan tribe, which engaged the attention of the British military forces for over six months, means an important strengthening of the military power of Great Britain at an important strategic point: at the triangle formed by the three countries Persia, Turkey and Iraq. The fight against the Kurds was conducted with utter ruthlessness. The official English report admits that the British troops advanced into districts which had been devastated as a result of prolonged bombardments. Big garrisons are being left in the captured territory and preparations are being made to build fortifications. There is thus fulfilled an old wish of the members of the British General Staff who are interested in war in Near Asia. In Kurdistan, which is difficult of access a basis is being created for undertakings which are directed against Turkey and Persia and also against the Soviet Union.

These measures, however, do not complete the new British war preparations in this important area. In September next, as a result of the decision of the League of Nations to accept Iraq into the League, this country is to be evacuated by British troops with the exception of some detachments of the Royal Air Force. A few weeks ago, the orders recalling the British troops stationed in Iraq were not only cancelled, but nine big aircraft and new special troops from Egypt were sent to Iraq and distributed over the whole country. The pretext which the British High Commissioner in Iraq, Sir Francis Humphrey,

made use of in order to justify the sending of fresh troops was the great excitement among the native masses, which had even spread to the native army commanded by British officers. As a result of the imperialist measures and the effects of the economic crisis, indignation against the rule of Great Britain and of the British vassal, Feisal, is increasing not only in the towns but also in the open country and among the masses of Bedouins. The British troops are to serve to crush any outbreaks of discontent. At the same time, however, the new troops which are now being stationed in Iraq are certainly busily at work strengthening the British war positions. Even in the British press it is being suggested that the formal evacuation of Iraq (solemnly promised and repeatedly confirmed) should be postponed for the time being, at least until such time when a sufficiently good land connection has been created with Egypt by the construction of the railway between Haifa and Baghdad, i.e. for a further four to five years.

The building of this railway also clearly shows the real bellicose intentions of British imperialism. Whilst it had hitherto always been maintained that this railway was to be a line "within the British Empire", negotiations are now proceeding for an extension of this railway line to Teheran, i.e. into the interior of Persia. It is interesting to note the reason which is put forward to justify the desire to extend the railway line: Persia is now flooded with Soviet Russian goods, as British and European imports in general can only reach Persia by a roundabout way round the Arabian Peninsula to the Persian Gulf. A direct railway connection creates the possibility of ousting Soviet Russian goods from the Persian market. It is therefore openly admitted that the construction of this railway is directed against the Soviet Union; it is clear that not the alleged commercial but strategic motives play the decisive role.

It is of course not sufficient for the British imperialists to

build fortifications from which they can, launch attacks on the Soviet Union. It is also to a great extent a question of securing the hinterland. Hence the increased activity of British, policy in other parts of Asia, especially the attempts to increase the power of British imperialism in those districts through which the Haifa-Baghdad railway is to run. The British imperialists are endeavouring to get the few ports on the coast of Arabia fully into their hands. Control of the Arabian littoral means at the same time domination of the whole of Arabia. In this connection the British attempts to compel Imam Jihje—who up to now has not only rejected an negotiations with Great Britain but has also gone so far as to refuse Englishmen permission to enter his territory—to submit to their desires deserve special attention. At the same time, increased pressure is being exerted on Ibn Saud (Ibn Saud's inner difficulties are taken advantage of by the English in order to induce him to comply with their desires). The aim of British policy in this connection is to convert Ibn Saud's country into a colony directly dependent upon Great Britain.

[p. 661]

**THE ELECTIONS IN GREECE. By Rostas
Gryptos (Athens). *International Press
Correspondence, Volume 12, No. 43,
September 29, 1932***

Athens, 26th September 1932.

The elections to the Greek Chamber of Deputies took place yesterday (Sunday). Exact details are not yet available, but it is already clear that the Vendselos Party will have the majority over the Populairist Party of Soldaris and that the communists have made considerable progress. The Communists have had no members in the chamber up to the present, but it is now thought that have won several seats.

The elections were held at a time of crisis of the whole of Greek economy. In addition there is a credit crisis and a collapse of the State finances, which, after prolonged and desperate appeals for help to the League of Nations and the British capitalists, led to the official bankruptcy of the State and the abandonment of the gold standard.

The immediate results were a doubling of the price of all goods and the employment of dictatorial customs measures which throttled imports, whilst the world crisis and the economic retaliatory measures of the other capitalist States ruined the export trade.

The only way out of this crisis left to the bourgeoisie was a savage and ruthless super exploitation of the working class and of the whole toiling population. This is the path which was actually pursued. In all branches of production wages were reduced by 30 to 50 per cent. Where the eight-hour day existed it was abolished. Many thousands of women and children had to take the place of the men.

The peasants are actually dying of starvation; they have sold their cattle and are absolutely ruined. Greece is the relatively most heavily taxed country in the Balkans. The villages are tyrannised by the tax officials and gendarmes. The relief measures adopted by the government for the peasants, i.e. a provisional moratorium for their debts to **private** creditors, led to an immediate bankruptcy of small businessmen and tradesmen, especially in Macedonia and Thessaly.

The author and bearer of this programme is Venizelos, who had the overwhelming majority of the Parliament and Senate behind him. At the elections in 1928 he indulged in a passionate, monstrous and shameless demagogy. He promised the working masses that within four years he would so transform the whole of Greece that it would not be recognisable. The four years have passed. ... In these four years peasants were killed by gendarmes because they could not pay a tax of 28 drachmae. There were big miners' strikes resulting in killed and wounded. Nearly a thousand revolutionaries are permanently confined in the prisons, where they are perishing. Three Macedonian revolutionaries were shot.

The Communist Party is illegal in reality. Its press is confiscated in the post; all its functionaries are persecuted. The revolutionary trade unions are dissolved. The notorious "Communist law" gives every gendarme the opportunity to proceed against everybody ruthlessly. Fascist laws against the State officials, against the freedom of the press and for the fascisation of education have been issued.

Nevertheless, this savage policy of depriving the toiling masses of their political and economic rights in no way rendered easier the path of the Greek bourgeoisie. The last twelve months has been marked by a number of big miners' strikes, peasants revolts, hunger marches (which in the autumn and winter of 1931/32 embraced the whole of Thessaly and the

whole of Macedonia), strikes in the towns, indignation on the part of the petty bourgeois strata, demonstrations of the small tradesmen in Macedonia and Thessaly and strikes of officials.

The crisis and the rising of the working masses led by the proletariat in the towns caused a rapid differentiation in the political camp of the bourgeoisie. The parties which in the four years of Venizelos' rule were absolutely united in the policy of economic and political suppression of the working population, opened a systematic fight against Venizelos. Due to the inner contradiction between the remnants of feudalism (monarchist party) and the various strata of the bourgeoisie, the fight assumed exceedingly acute forms. Venizelos tried to make use of these contradictions by opening a new big campaign on the eve of the elections against those who "undermine the Republic". Under the same pretext of "defending the Republic" he organised the **military League**, with branches in the whole of Greece.

Venizelos expressed this intention of carrying out a change of the Constitution as a basis for the **military fascist dictatorship**. On the other hand, discontented and monarchist officers and non-commissioned officers, headed by the ex-dictator **Pangalos**, have organised an anti-Republican opposition within the army.

The Communist Party of Greece is the only Party which organises and leads the resistance of the proletariat and shows the working population the revolutionary way out of the crisis. It was under the leadership of the Party that there was set up the **united front of the workers and peasants** for the election campaign, which realised in broad revolutionary action the united front of the struggle of the masses from below against the reformist, agrarian and Trotskyist leaders.

The Party organised a series of meetings in nearly all the towns of Greece. In spite of all persecutions, the united front put forward 107 candidates and contested every constituency.

The election fund of the united front war raised exclusively from contributions of workers, peasants and members of the middle class. Many peasants offered wheat and food because they had no money.

In face of this splendid action the Government resorted to desperate measures in order to throttle it. Most of the candidates, all members of the central election committee and most of the members of the local election committees are in prison charged with high treason. The election funds were confiscated. The fight was continued, however, by the rank and file members of the united front.

[p. 904]

**THE BALKANS. The Communist Election
Victory in Greece. By Kostas Grypos
(Athens). *International Press
Correspondence, Volume 12, No. 44,
October 06, 1932***

Never before in Greece have elections been carried out under conditions of such terror against the working masses as in the Parliamentary elections which took place on September 25 last. The oppressive measures which during the preceding period of four years were the usual methods of Venizelos, were tremendously intensified on the eve of the elections. Thousands of proletarian fighters are in prison or banished. The delivery of the Communist press through the post is prohibited, so that large districts of the country are without any Communist paper. Most of the 106 candidates of the **united front of the workers and peasants**, led by the Communist Party, were arrested.

The central committee and many local election committees were arrested on the charge of “high treason” on account of the slogan “Right of self-determination for the Macedonian people up to complete separation”, and the Communist central organ in Athens and the district organ in Salonica were persecuted. Special permission had to be obtained from the local authorities in order to hold any election meeting. In many districts, chiefly in the agrarian districts where the influence of the Communist Party is relatively weak, participation in the election was rendered almost impossible by the prevailing terror. In Macedonia, the fascist bands on the day of the election closed and partly plundered the election committee rooms of the Communists. The Communist election helpers at

the polling booths were all arrested and detained for 24 hours.

All this did not prevent the Communist Party from carrying on a magnificent agitation before the election. Over 130,000 working people were mobilised under the Party flag. The terror in Macedonia, Thrace and Thessaly collapsed as a result of the resistance of the masses. In these provinces the Communist Party mobilised larger masses than any bourgeois party. Also in Athens and Piraeus thousands of working people took part in the big legal meetings and in the illegal street demonstrations. The working youth actively participated in the election agitation; they put forward four of their own candidates. Many quite rural districts, especially, in Thessaly, (Mytilene, Macedonia and Thrace, took an active part in the fight. The agrarian party, whose programme is indistinguishable from that of Venizelos, was compelled to come before the peasants with a demagogic Communist mask and declare: "When we seize power we will bring Communism".

The final results of the elections are as follows: Liberal party (Venizelos) 100 seats, formerly 218; Monarchist People's party (Saldaris) 96, formerly 16; Progressive party (Kafendari) 15, formerly 3; Communist Party 10, formerly none, and, a senator returned in Thessaly; the agrarian party; 10; the "peasants and workers' party (Papanastassiou 6, formerly 18; the national radical party 5 and the other parties 6. The complete figures of the votes cast for each party are not yet known. It is certain, however, that the Communist Party of Greece, under conditions of frightful terror, has increased its poll **2½-fold** compared with the last election in August 1929. It has thereby polled the highest vote in the history of the Party and sent its representatives into Parliament and the Senate; a thing it was unable to do at the last election. But the most characteristic feature of this election is that the Communist Party has achieved the position of **third or second**, and in some cases even **first**, party in nearly all the **proletarian**

districts which are of great importance in the political and economic life of the country. Thus it has advanced to the third party in the capital town of Athens with over 7000 votes and two seats, as third party in Salonica with over 7000 votes and three seats. It has won half of the total votes of the Jewish nationality of Salonica and captured one of the two Jewish seats.

Characteristic of the turn of the masses to Communism is the collapse of the Republican party of Papanastassiou, which was able to retain only six seats. In order to catch votes, Papanastassiou recently changed the name of his party from Republican Union to “workers and peasants party”. The agrarian party suffered a similar collapse. It had, on the one hand, actively supported all the measures of Venizelos against the poor peasants, on the other hand, however, it came before the various strata and categories of the peasants with a number of mutually, contradictory programmes and demands. But with all this demagoguery it was unable to return more than 10 candidates, of whom several have already announced their allegiance to Tsaldaris and Kafandaris, so that it is very questionable whether the party will be able to form a Parliamentary fraction.

The rest of the Republican parties have suffered a severe defeat. Not even the Republican leaders Kondyliou and Zavitsanos have been elected. The leaders of the reformist trade unions, who months ago founded a “socialist” party, ran their candidates on the lists of the Papanastassiou party, the agrarian party, and in Salonica even on Venizelos’ party. In spite of this they did not obtain a single seat.

Whilst in the proletarian and progressive districts of North Greece and Thessaly the Communist Party has become the most important factor after the Venizelos party, in the backward, mainly agrarian, districts of Peloponnes, Epirus, Rumeli and the islands, the monarchists received nearly all the

votes of the masses who are disappointed in Venizelos.

The big success of the Communist Party is to be appreciated all the more as for two years it was torn by fractionist struggles, and it was only a short time ago, with the active support of the Communist International, that it obtained a united leadership and was able to liquidate fractionalism. The recent even more splendid election success of the Communist Party of Bulgaria shows, together with the election success of the Greek party, the rapid turn of the oppressed working population of the Balkans to Communism.

p. 925.

BRITISH TERROR IN CYPRUS.
International Press Correspondence, Vol.
12, No. 45, 13th October 1932

London, September 30, 1932.

The British section of the League against Imperialism has received a letter describing current incidents under the murderous imperialist rule in Cyprus where terror has been intensified since last year's revolt. In the unarmed rising of last year no Englishman, soldier or civilian, was harmed, but ten Cypriots were killed and 100 wounded.

Thousands of arrests have been made since. Every inhabitant of **Limassol** who owned an Underwood typewriter was recently arrested because the officer in charge of the British military forces had received a letter written on an Underwood machine. The whole of the Greek population of Cyprus were subjected to a special punitive tax of £34,000. Recently in the village of Pissouri, near Limassol, 60 British soldiers led by a sergeant, called all the men of the village together and after tying them up, flogged them in order to force them to denounce the person who had set fire to a customs station.

Failing thus to elicit the information they required, they took the 12-year old son of the British headman, bound a rope about his head and began twisting this rope by two wooden sticks until it sank nearly half an inch into his flesh, in order to make the boy's father give the desired information. Detailed reports of this and of the rape of two women were filed in the office of the Archbishop of Limassol.

Only a fortnight ago a Cypriot hotel-keeper at Limassol, named Apostolides, died in consequence of a beating

administered by a British naval officer for alleged “insolence”. So enraged have the population become that the British authorities are beginning to fear for a fresh and more serious upheaval than that of last year. In order to save their faces the British authorities have instituted proceedings against the officer involved in this last case.

[p. 963]

THE SITUATION IN CYPRUS. Letter from Limassol. International Press Correspondence Volume 12, No. 53, December 01, 1932

Following the curfew introduced immediately after the revolt of October 23, last year, the imprisonment and the savage beating up of hundreds of poor villagers and town dwellers and, the brutal sentences ranging from six months to ten years imprisonment, not to mention exile and deportation, martial law still continues to obtain in Cyprus. and hangs like a sword over the inhabitants, and especially over the Communist Party.

The closing down of the Asbestos mines and copper mines, the merciless exploitation of the peasants by usurers and the growing world crisis, resulting in a disastrous drop in the price of the staple products of Cyprus, plunge the population into deepest misery. Hundreds of young workers in the towns are out of work, and on top of this the government has dismissed 152 employees, who will be added to the army of 28,000 unemployed in Cyprus.

White terror is raging all over the island. The **Communist Party**, however, is still carrying on energetic and courageous work among the masses in town and country, not shrinking from any sacrifice. The Party. is now illegal. On the eve of October 23rd last, the Party distributed an appeal in commemoration of the revolutionary movement last year and urging the population to carry on an unceasing fight against British imperialism. Under an emergency law passed by the provisional government any police officer can interrogate .any person at any time of day or night. Nobody is allowed to be out after 11 o'clock at night without special permission.

Following the distribution of the above mentioned appeal

the police arrested ten comrades at Nicosia, eight at Larnaca, eight at Famagusta and two at Kontea. The ten arrested at Nicosia were so brutally mishandled by the police that they were detained in order to allow time for them to recover from their injuries.

There is an embargo on all foreign revolutionary papers. On November 7, the anniversary of the Russian revolution, appeals describing this great event and pointing out that only the Communist Party can lead the workers in their fight for emancipation, were distributed all over the island. The police made fresh arrests, but in spite of all their efforts no incriminating material was discovered. Our illegal activity is followed with interest and sympathy by the great majority of the population.

On the 12th and 13th of this month the Bishop of Paphos was tried before the Court of assize on the charge of having in speeches, delivered in three different villages, attempted to incite to disobedience against the king. The trial resulted in the accused giving a written undertaking to remain a loyal subject and not to repeat the offence. The undertaking given by the Bishop is an eloquent example of how the nationalist leaders have abandoned the struggle against British imperialism.

[p. 1141]

INTERNATIONAL STRIKE WAVE.
Barricade Fights in Greece. By Kostas
Grypos. *International Press*
Correspondence, Volume 12, No. 56,
December 15, 1932

Two weeks after the outbreak of the first big strike in Greece the tremendous strike wave has not only lost nothing in intensity, but on the contrary has increased in extent and assumed **exceedingly sharp forms**. As is to be seen from the frantic declarations of the Ministers, as well as from the nervous, panicky, column-long reports of the whole of the capitalist press, the situation in the country is **extraordinarily tense**. In the present article I will confine myself to giving only the most important of the items of news, which follow swiftly one after the other and speak for themselves.

In addition to 2,500 tramwaymen, 1,500 gas workers, and over 1,000 bakers assistants in Athens, the bakers assistants and textile workers in Piraeus have gone on strike. Up to now only the strike of the tobacco workers in Agrini has been settled, following the granting of the whole of the workers' demands. Most of the organisations of the State employees, the railway workers von all lines in the country, the gas workers of Piraeus, the dock workers of Salonica, the most important trade unions in Patras, and a whole number of smaller trade unions have already unanimously adopted strike decisions at their general meetings, elected strike committees and also in many cases paid their contributions to the strike fund.

All the ruthless measures of the government, including the persecution of the strikers and the Communists, the arrest of the whole of the civil servants' committees, the strict prohibition of any meeting of State employees, and of the

railwaymen in particular, have been unable to check the powerful movement. Special measures have been adopted against the Communists, who are playing an important role in all these strike preparations and strikes. The Communist Party, which up to now has, been leading a semi-legal existence, is now threatened by the Minister for the Interior with complete illegality. The “**Rizospastis**”, the daily central organ of the Party, has been prohibited, the whole of its editorial and printing staff arrested, and its offices sealed. Nevertheless the Party was able immediately to issue a smaller daily edition of the “**Rizospastis**” and to publish the Communist weekly organ of Salonica as a daily. Seven of the ten Communist members of Parliament are in prison; two of them, were arrested during the street and barricade fighting in Athens.

As the whole of the bourgeois press is forced to admit, up to the present **not a single strike-breaker** has been found among the tramwaymen and gas workers. The many hundreds of unemployed tramwaymen and gas workers, some of whom have been out of work for years, who do not receive any unemployment benefit and are actually starving, have not only not performed blackleg work, but stand in one front with their striking fellow workers, take their place in the picket line, and actively participate in the barricade fights.

The government is having the bread for the population of Athens and Piraeus baked by soldiers. The few street cars which have left the depots are driven exclusively by airmen, sailors and naval officers. It is only by having the dangerous work in the gas work, performed by sailors, who are compelled thereto by military discipline, that it is possible to secure a limited supply of gas to the town. After a special leaflet of the strikers addressed to the sailors had been distributed by the young Communists, in spite of the greatest difficulties, and 20 sailors lay in hospital with burns sustained in performing the dangerous unaccustomed work in the gas works, it came to a

big mutiny. Even the arrest and imprisonment of four, and then 50 sailors proved unable to restore discipline. As the bourgeois press writers, who slander the sailors in the most contemptible manner, admit, fresh mutinies are to be expected.

It came to extraordinarily fierce fights between the bakers and the police. Some bakeries which were working with the aid of strike-breakers and under police protection were demolished by the strikers. Many strikers and police have been more or less severely injured in the uninterrupted street fighting. A striker named **Adamopulos** was so savagely beaten by a policeman that he died on the spot. This did not prevent two eminent medical professors from certifying that Adamopulos died as a result of a chronic illness, and not from the injuries he received. Immediately after Adamopulos' death it came to great demonstrations of the strikers, who brought his corpse from the mortuary to the trade union house. It was only after fierce fighting that the police were able to bring the corpse back. The cruel death of Adamopulos has increased the indignation of the masses and welded the strike front more closely together.

It came to fierce forms of fighting in the case of the tramwaymen. Uninterrupted struggles, extending over years, by the tramwaymen against the obdurate electricity company, which is working mainly with English capital, have imbued the tramwaymen and their families with strong self-confidence and militancy, which find expression in their present strike. For the first time in the history of their fights there are absolutely no strike-breakers. **Moreover, it is the first time that their wives and older children have taken part in the street and barricade fights to such an extent as at present.** Of the few agents of the electricity company who ventured to enter the works and depots, 11 are already lying in hospital. 37 of the street cars, which were driven exclusively by sailors and airmen, were, as the government announces, completely

demolished by “strikers, communists and other workers”. As the whole of the bourgeois press writes, “the public no longer venture to travel by the street cars”.

The main fights, however, are taking place outside the tram depots. Already on the second day of the strike it came to **barricade fighting** in Kalithea, at which the Communist member of Parliament Nefeludis, who fought at the head of the strikers against the police, was mishandled and arrested. On the fifth and sixth day it came to **fresh and fiercer barricade fighting**. Hundreds of strikers with their **wives and older children** erected barricades in front of the Agia Trias tramway depot in Piraeus, and fought for hours against a large body of police which arrived in 40 motor lorries. One worker was severely injured, many were slightly injured and 300 strikers were arrested. In spite of this the police could not accomplish anything, so that the chief of police had to order the withdrawal of all the blackleg cars which were running.

Astonished beyond measure at the heroism and fighting spirit of the workers in the barricade fights in Agia Trias, the whole of the capitalist press are publishing column-long reports and demanding in their leading articles still more brutal and bloody measures against the strikers. It came again to barricade fighting in Kalithea and in the Piraeus Street in Athens.

The Prime Minister Tsaldaris, who at the beginning of the strike declared: “I shall not negotiate with the strikers until they return to work”, has now been obliged to receive a delegation of workers in his private house, it is true, without result. With the slogan of “life or death”, untimidated in spite of the wholesale arrests and injuries, the tramwaymen, together with their wives and children, are continuing the fight until final victory.

It is too early yet to sum up the result of the events in Greece. The strike of the railwaymen and civil servants, which

is expected to break out shortly, will enormously swell the strike wave and give it greater impetus, so that the Tsaldaris Government, which is already shaky, will in all likelihood be overthrown. The Communists, even where they do not possess the majority on the strike committees, have won the complete confidence of the broad masses, of strikers by their active participation in the street and barricade fights, and today are playing the most prominent role on all strike fronts. The next and most important task of the red trade unions and of the revolutionary trade union opposition is, by means of mass pressure, to break the last desperate resistance of the trade union bureaucracy of the railwaymen and post-office employees. In this way this powerful strike wave, which is shaking the whole country, will not only remain a unique and magnificent chapter in the heroic history of the Greek proletariat, but will be followed by a whole **series of events of the very greatest importance**, which will play a decisive part in the immediate future of capitalist Greece.

[p. 1198-1199]

**THE FIGHT FOR HEGEMONY IN THE
MEDITERRANEAN. By J. B. *International
Press Correspondence, Volume 12, No. 58,
December 29, 1932***

The steady worsening of the relations between French and Italian imperialism has led to a feverish competition in armaments. Each side is endeavouring to outdo the other in regard to naval armaments, to increase the air forces, to prepare a military base in the event of war. The Italian “Stampa” recently published precise calculations as to how many days a French army would require to reach the plains of the Po, and how many days would be required for the Italian army to cross the chains of mountains forming a barrier to the Rhone valley. The imperialist governments of France and Italy are quite aware that a war between the two States could not be confined to the Franco-Italian frontiers, but that the fight for the hegemony of the Mediterranean is bound to draw in all the Mediterranean countries.

Italy has gained a certain advantage over France through its connections in the Balkans (Hungary, Albania, Bulgaria—Treaties with Greece and Turkey) and France is now hastily endeavouring to catch up to its rival. There was Herriot’s journey to Madrid, where he attempted to isolate Italian imperialism in the Western part of the Mediterranean. There is also the attempt to grant greater support, including material support, to the French allies on the Balkans, especially Yugoslavia, partly at the cost of Rumania.

At the same time French imperialism is displaying increased activity in Asia Minor. French diplomats a few months ago resumed negotiations with Turkey. After several interruptions an agreement was arrived at which settles the question of Turkey’s claims to those parts of the Baghdad

railway line passing through French mandatory territory, and also the complicated problem of the property rights of Turkish subjects in French mandatory territory. Negotiations are also proceeding regarding a fresh settlement of the Turkish debts, and in fact regarding the possibility of French credits. The French government hopes by this means to be able to sever the threads which are being spun between Turkey and Italy.

A loyal attitude on the part of Turkey in the event of an imperialist war between Italy and France is all the more important to the latter as the French mandate in Syria is in, no way stabilised. Some years ago, in connection with the Italian claims to Syria, there was talk of Italy sharing with Turkey the territory which is at present under French administration, Italy receiving the Southern portion, including Lebanon, Turkey receiving the Northern portion of Syria. It is of special importance to French imperialism to consolidate its rule in Syria, as in the event of a war with Italy, Syria can play a strategically very important role.

The latest imperialist manoeuvre, the Franco-Syrian draft treaty, deserves special attention in connection with the French endeavours permanently to secure its domination of Syrian territory. Under the cloak of "Syrian independence", French rule is to be established still more firmly in Syria than British imperialist rule in Iraq. The division of Syria into several parts will be perpetuated if the draft treaty finds acceptance. Moreover, the military occupation, will hardly be reduced, and "independent" Syria, when the Treaty has been concluded, will possess no more freedom than at present.

In particular French imperialism preserves itself the right to guard the oil pipe line through Syrian territory. After long negotiations French firms, which have acquired 25 per cent of the shares of the Mosul oil wells, have decided, along with the American shareholders who likewise possess 25 per cent of the shares, to lay a pipe-line of their own to a Syrian port, separate

from the English pipe-line, to Haifa. The French press does not seek to deny that this oil is to serve to create a reliable fuel basis for the French fleet in the event of war.

Finally, there should be noted the intensive efforts of the French diplomats to improve French relations in the Arab Peninsula. This also represents in the first place an attempt to oust the Italians from their position in Arabia.

All this indicates that the struggle of French imperialism to maintain its hegemony in the Mediterranean has reached a new stage.

[p. 1255-1258]

**THE SITUATION OF THE WORKING
MASSES IN THE CAPITALIST COUNTRIES.
The Situation of the Working Class In
Greece. By Kostas Grypos. *International
Press Correspondence, Volume 12, No. 57,
December 22, 1932***

1. Introduction.

The present descendants of the ancient Greeks are one of the poorest peoples in the world. The diet of the Greek workers and peasants consists of bread, cheese, onions and olives. Ten years of uninterrupted wars (1912-1922) have, it is true, extended the sphere of action of Greek capitalism and brought in enormous war profits, but they have at the same time left behind as a legacy, 1½ million refugees from Asia Minor and Thrace, for the moot part poor expropriated petty bourgeois, peasants and workers and small traders, who are scattered over the whole of Greece and delivered over to ruthless exploitation by international finance capital. A further direct heritage from the war is the general post-war crisis of Greek capitalism, which of course, is influenced and complicated by the international economic crisis. A characteristic feature of this crisis is the chronic agrarian crisis, which commenced immediately after the war and in the last four years has assumed disastrous forms. In trade and industry the first phase of the crisis (1922 to 1923-24) was followed by the relative stabilisation, which lasted till 1928-29. This new phase of the crisis, which commenced in 1929, involved not only agriculture, trade, industry and shipping, but since last year has extended to credit, finance and State finances. The currency has

lost half its value, and the tariff walls are being raised to insurmountable heights. The deficit in the trade balance is growing, imports and exports are declining, and the deficit in the State budget will amount to 600 million crowns.

What is the situation of the working population in these circumstances? According to data derived from official sources, out of a population of 6,204,084 (1928 census) **250,000 are unemployed.** Kotzias, the chairman of the big merchants' organisation in Athens, estimates the number of those who "lack the barest necessities" at 700,000. There is hardly any unemployment benefit in Greece. The unemployment benefit which has existed hitherto for the tobacco workers is about to be done away with. The eight-hour day is recognised only in a very few industries, and even there it is not strictly observed. In a whole number of industries there exists a legal ten-hour day. Women and children work for ridiculously low wages. When even a reformist in the Labour Office of the League of Nations was appalled at the misery of the working Greek children, Mr. Vurlumis, a member of the government and wholesale fruit-dealer by profession, replied: "What are we to do with the children who have nothing to eat at home? We let them work!" Thousands of young people are working without any pay, "because they are learning".

Professor Svolos, wrote as follows in the "Eleftheron Vima" of June 2, last:

"It is clear that a State whose citizens are compelled to work right from their earliest childhood, and thereby become crippled as a result, a State in which the national industry is based mainly on low and often starvation wages, in which tuberculosis and malaria play havoc with the life and health of the individual, and, finally in which civilisation has not yet extended its power beyond the narrow circle of the rich classes and the central districts of the capital town and a few other towns, should have far greater obligations to fulfil towards the

working population.”

This capitalist professor sees that the danger is greater than ever.

The lot of the peasants is even worse than that of the town workers. The small peasant is only nominally the owner of his property; in reality everything he has belongs to the agrarian bank, the money lender and the State. Professor Andreadis wrote in “Le Capital” of February 1932:

“The Greek tax-payer is weighed down mainly by the burden of direct taxes, and then by the indirect taxes, which are imposed on the most necessary articles of consumption, including bread, and are worse than in any other country in Europe.”

This enormous misery of the Greek working masses has not failed to call forth resistance on their part. The Greek workers replied to the first outbreak of the crisis in 1929 with a wave of strikes in which 60,000 workers took part. In the first seven months of 1932 the strikes reached almost the same extent. Important sections of the working class, such as the tramwaymen, railwaymen, tobacco workers and civil servants, joined in the struggle. Hardly any strike ends without collisions with the police, wholesale arrests, killed and wounded. The peasants flee to the mountains in order to avoid paying taxes, beat up the tax collectors and set fire to the tax offices. The hunger marches of the peasants have shaken and are shaking the whole country, in particular Thessaly and Macedonia.

The general revolutionisation of the toiling masses is shown by the results of the elections held on September 25, when the Communist Party achieved a big success and made considerable progress towards winning the majority of the proletariat and the toiling masses.

**THE SITUATION OF THE WORKING
MASSES IN THE CAPITALIST COUNTRIES.
The Situation of the Working Class In
Greece. By Kostas Grypos. *International
Press Correspondence, Volume 12, No. 58,
December 29, 1932***

2. The Tobacco Workers.

The men and women workers engaged in the tobacco industry constitute an important part of the Greek, and also of the neighbouring Bulgarian, proletariat. They occupy a prominent place in the history of the Balkan proletariat. The first strike of the tobacco workers broke out in Salonica in the time of the Turkish feudal rule, after the revolution of the Young Turks in July 1908. At that time the first “solidarity fund” was founded by Jewish tobacco workers. The tobacco workers also formed the main strength of the “Socialist Federation”, which helped to bring to birth the proletarian revolutionary movement, in Macedonia. In 1912 there took place the first Congress of the tobacco workers of Eastern Macedonia. Since 1918, the tobacco workers have formed the main portion of the Greek proletariat. Numbering 55-60,000 and possessing a firm socialist ideology, they dominated central and Eastern Macedonia, Thrace, Thessaly and Agrini, and played a considerable role in Piraeus and Mytileni. The tobacco workers’ union was founded at the beginning of 1919 at the first Congress of the tobacco workers in Volo. Since then hardly a year has passed without a strike of the tobacco workers. The period of relative stabilisation of Greek capital was accompanied by a broad offensive of the tobacco workers

in order to improve their economic position. By means of this struggle, which found its strongest expression in the big strike of 1924, they achieved an agreement with the State according to which the daily wages of the tobacco worker must amount to seven-twenty-fifths of an English gold Pound, and those of the working woman to 40 per cent of the man's wages.

A further result of the fierce struggles was the founding six years ago of the tobacco workers insurance, the first insurance of this kind in Greece. The tobacco workers had to pay the same contributions as the employers, i.e. 6 per cent., and later 7 per cent., of their wages. It is mainly an insurance against sickness, and only partly against unemployment.

The following conditions accompany the unemployment insurance of the tobacco workers: in order to qualify for unemployment benefit a tobacco worker must have worked 125 days, but benefit is only paid for 60 days in the year.

The present phase of the crisis of Greek capitalism, which commenced in commerce and industry in the year 1929, has had disastrous effects on the tobacco industry. Greek tobacco, which in 1929 constituted 53 per cent. of the total production of oriental-tobacco, in 1931 constituted scarcely 37 per cent., being ousted by Bulgarian and Turkish tobacco. From 1929 to 1931, the area under tobacco declined by 31 per cent., output receded by 46 per cent., exports by 14 per cent., whilst since 1927 the prices fell by 70 per cent. Between 1929 and 1931, the number of tobacco planters in Thrace and Macedonia declined from 73,983 to 51,494, i.e. by 31 per cent.

The disastrous crisis caused the employers to launch a fierce offensive against the rights that had been won by the tobacco workers. But the workers immediately replied with a counter-offensive. In 1929 a general strike of the tobacco workers broke out, during the course of which it came to barricade fighting in Agrini. By this means the workers not only repelled the attack of the employers, but also succeeded in

getting the period of unemployment benefit extended from 60 to 75 days, and the qualifying period reduced from 125 days work to 100 days.

Nevertheless, since 1930 the employers, taking advantage of the rapidly growing unemployment and the dissolution of the tobacco workers' union, following a decision pronounced by the Courts, succeeded in depriving the tobacco workers of the economic rights they had won. The agreement, according to which the daily wages of the men workers should amount to 7/25ths of a Pound (105 Drachma) was broken. The gates of the tobacco factories were opened to workers who were paid 85, 70, 60, and last Summer 30 and even as little as 18 drachmas a day. This means a wage reduction of 40 to 65 per cent. Sick benefit is only granted to workers who have worked 100 days. The others can simply die in the street. Maternity benefit has been done away with. The convalescent home in Thassos has been closed. Over 3000 women tobacco workers do not receive any sickness and unemployment benefit although they have to pay 6 per cent. of their wages into the insurance fund. Everywhere the eight-hour day is exceeded. All trade union action in the factories, even the payment of trade union contributions, is prohibited. Hundreds of tobacco workers are in prison and in exile. Finally, a month ago the government issued an order doing away with payment of unemployment benefit to the tobacco workers, whilst at the same time rendering generous financial aid to the tobacco manufacturers.

The black spectre of hunger is haunting the tobacco districts of Eastern Macedonia, Thessaly and Thrace. Not only the tobacco workers, but the whole of the working population of these districts are drawn into the vortex of the crisis. Last Summer over 3000 tobacco workers carried out a determined strike struggle. The monstrous brutality with which the government is proceeding against the tobacco workers will not

prevent them from again engaging in a general strike.

3. The Industrial Proletariat—Miners—Seamen.

After the end of the wars, which for Greece lasted until 1922, Greek capitalism, thanks to the huge profits it acquired, and by exploiting the cheap labour of the refugees, was able to build up an industry far and away beyond the pre-war level. Greece is today the most industrialised country in the Balkans, although as yet it does not possess any heavy industry.

It is absolutely impossible to ascertain the exact number of the Greek industrial proletariat, as the State statistics are very poor. According to the latest census of all workers and employees who were at work on 4th September 1930, the number of workers, employees and State officials, both men and women, was 350,000. Of these, 161,000 are industrial proletarians, 8,000 miners, 25,228 transport workers, 40,235 tobacco workers (of whom 16,661 are women), 66,781 office and bank employees, and 45,000 civil servants. Seamen and agricultural workers are not included in this census.

One cannot speak of social insurance in Greece. Only the 45,000 civil servants come under a system of insurance which is as inadequate as was that of the tobacco workers.

After the outbreak of the crisis in 1929, the capitalists started a fierce offensive against wages and the miserable insurance which existed in the case of the tobacco workers and civil servants. Owing to the lack of organisation of the Greek workers and the fact that the big trade unions had been converted by the reformist leaders into an appendage of the State, and also owing to the great weakness of the red trade unions, the Greek bourgeoisie were able for the greater part to realise their programme. There is no branch of industry in which wages have not been reduced by at least 30 per cent.

Wages in the textile industry have been reduced 40 to 50 per cent. Up to 1929 there existed a legal nine-hour day in the textile industry, which was extended to ten hours until 2 months ago, when it was finally extended by law to **11 hours**. The collapse of the carpet industry has brought tremendous misery to the carpet weavers, mostly young women.

The “Power” electric company in Athens is a ruthless exploiter of the electric and transport workers. This exploitation has assumed a **colonial** character (military drill, speeding up, engagement of large numbers of temporary workers, dismissals etc.). The repeated attempts of the “Power” company to reduce wages, by more than 6 per cent, have fortunately been frustrated by strikes. Similar measures were adopted against the railway workers, who, in addition to a 6 per cent. wage cut, have had their holidays reduced by half, and many of them have been dismissed. It is now announced that the European railways intend to have the international trains running on Greek territory manned by their own staff, so that about 1500 Greek railway workers can be dismissed. For dock workers there has been introduced a State “Autonomous Harbour Board”, which rationalises work according to a fascist-military system, i.e. thousands of workers who had worked in the docks for years have been dismissed, and wages have been reduced by 30 per cent.

In the Greek mines in Naxos, Chalkidike, Lavrion etc., which for the greater part are run by foreign capital, over 10,000 proletarians are employed under the most frightful wage and working conditions. Accidents with killed and wounded are, of course, a daily occurrence. As a result of the earthquake in Chalkidike, which destroyed the Stratoniki mines, about 1000 workers were rendered unemployed and are delivered over to starvation without receiving any relief or compensation.

The seamen, who constitute a strongly developed and

militant part of the Greek proletariat, have since May 1930 been forced to accept wage cuts amounting to 40-50 per cent. There are 7000 unemployed seamen in Piraeus and other big seaports. As Greek shipping has been severely hit by the crisis in the last seven months and many very big ships are lying idle in the docks, unemployment among the seamen will increase tremendously this year.

4. Refugees—Civil Servants—Unemployed.

The, immigration of refugees from Asia Minor, East Thrace and of Greeks from Bulgaria to Greece, constitutes a special and unprecedented social-political phenomena. 1½ million people were suddenly torn from their old surroundings, and settled in North Greece, in the sterile, malaria-ridden mountain districts. This settling in Greece meant a sudden proletarianisation of the masses of refugees who, for the main part, consisted of urban petty bourgeois and peasants of all categories. This new proletariat, devoid of all class consciousness, was unable to play a revolutionary role in the years so critical for Greek capitalism following the disaster in Asia Minor. By means of the first agreement regarding the exchange of population, according to which compensation amounting to the value of the property left behind in Turkey was to be paid to the refugees, the Venizelos party fostered the illusion among the masses, consisting mainly of petty bourgeois, that they would regain their former material basis, and no longer be looked down upon as “mere workers”. The League of Nations supported this agreement so long as it appeared necessary to it in order to secure the so-called refugee loan, amounting to millions of English pounds. In June 1930, following a new agreement between Venizelos and Mustafa Kemal Pasha, all further payments of compensation to refugees

ceased. The profound ferment among the masses of refugees shows that they are no longer the reactionary wall which they constituted hitherto, but that they are now rapidly taking their place in the revolutionary movement of the workers and peasants.

The present situation of the masses of refugees has become worse. The barracks in which they live, the cattle and farming instruments of the peasants are mortgaged to the European and American capitalists, to whom they have to pay compound interest. The camps of the refugees in the towns, a heap of dirt, tumble-down huts and rags, certainly constitute at the moment the most miserable human habitations in the whole of Europe. There are absolutely no sanitary arrangements. Water for drinking and washing is brought by motor lorries and distributed in tin buckets. Prostitution and venereal diseases are rife. The economic crisis which has prevailed in Greece for three years has, of course, greatly aggravated the desperate position of the masses of refugees.

The number of **civil servants** in Greece is about 45,000. A special category of them are the so-called "auxiliary" officials; who for years have lived under the constant threat of dismissal. The first declaration of the Tsaldaris Government consisted in the announcement that it would dismiss without compensation most of the auxiliary officials. When Venizelos came into power in 1928, he promised the civil servants that the Government would provide the sum of 180 million Drachma for the purpose of increasing their salaries. But Venizelos not only did not grant the 180 million but reduced the salaries of all civil servants by 6 per cent., although the salaries had already lost 40 per cent. of their purchasing power owing to the depreciation of the drachma. Promotions were practically abolished on grounds of economy. Most of the 13,000 elementary school teachers do not earn even 2,000 drachma a month (about £3). The Federation of Civil Servants was

dissolved and any centralised organisation of the civil servants was prohibited. A special law forbids them to strike, and a further law provides that any civil servants going on strike are to be immediately called to the colours and placed under military law.

The civil servants however have not tamely submitted to this offensive. A considerable part of them are led by the Left All-Greek Civil Servants' Committee, which recently held a successful national Conference at which it was decided to organise the fight of the civil servants. A few months ago there took place a strike of the post, telegraph and telephone employees, which compelled Venizelos to resign.

There are no official statistics in Greece regarding **unemployment**. The factory-statistics for 1930 show a 30 per cent. increase in unemployment compared with 1928, and the crisis has developed even more rapidly since 1930. In addition, the number of workers who are employed only two or three days a week is very high.

There is no State unemployment relief in Greece. Led by the Communists the unemployed movement enforced some trifling relief from the municipalities.

The only hope of the unemployed is their more systematic and strong mobilisation under Communist leadership. The slogan: "Unemployment relief out of the military budget", which is rousing the masses of the unemployed, will in the near future form the basis for more intensive fights of the unemployed together with the employed workers.

5. The Situation of the Toiling Rural Population.

More than 50 per cent. of the national income of Greece is

derived from agricultural production. According to the last census, held in 1928, out of a total population of 6,204,683, 3,598,716, i.e. 58 per cent. belong to the rural population. Further, Greece differs from the rest of the Balkan States in that it does not produce sufficient corn for its own consumption; its main products are four **luxury products**—tobacco, sultanas, wine and olive oil—the greater part of which is exported.

The present stage of the chronic agrarian crisis, which has existed since the end of the war, is expressed in the reduction of the area under cultivation, declining production, falling exports and the drop in the price of all agricultural products.

In the case of **tobacco** there was a decline in the production, the exports and prices already in 1928. Since 1929-1930 the area under tobacco has declined by 38 per cent., output has fallen by 46 per cent., exports by 14 per cent., while prices have declined by 70 per cent. since 1927.

Before the war Greek sultanas accounted for 75 per cent. of the world output. After the war Greece's share in the world output of sultanas was reduced by 30 per cent. owing to development of sultana production in other countries, especially in California and Australia. The position in regard to sultana production is rendered still more difficult by a law which came into force in 1930, according to which 20 per cent. of the harvest must be retained in the country and delivered over to the spirit industry. This constitutes a legalised robbery of thousands of vine-growers for the benefit of a few spirit, filling firms.

In 1929 to 1931 the export of **wine** declined by 68 per cent. The **olive oil output** of Greece, which forms 18 per cent. of the world output, declined by one half in the period from 1929/31, as did also prices.

60 per cent. of the peasants are engaged in grain production. In 1928 grain production amounted to 356,129

tons, and in 1930 to only 264,200 tons. The decline of grain production is due to the backward methods of farming and the exploitation of the peasants by the Greek fertiliser industry, which enjoys a sort of monopoly, although its products are not only useless but even directly harmful, as was officially stated in Parliament. As a result, Greece is compelled to **import** 5-600,000 tons of grain a year, an item which accounts for 40 per cent. of the deficit in the trade balance.

The following quotation from the “Oekonomikus Tachydromes” of April 1932 gives a general picture of the decline of agricultural production:

“Last year the output of grain declined so much owing to natural disasters, that the crops did not suffice to meet the peasants’ requirements in the way of food for themselves and fodder for their cattle. A great part of the vines were destroyed by frost. The harvest which was got in remains unsold as a result of the crisis, and prices are steadily falling. There is also no demand for tobacco, olive oil or wine. They lie unsold in the warehouses and peasant houses, and their prices are constantly sinking..”

Various so-called “autonomous protection organisations”, which were founded by financial and industrial capital with the support of the State, have the task of rescuing the peasants and promoting national production, i.e., increasing the exploitation of the working rural population to the utmost limits. These institutions have in their hands the export monopoly for sultanas and a very considerable part of the tobacco industry and commerce.

A further fact tending to worsen the situation is the difference between the prices of industrial and agricultural products. Whilst since 1928 wine has fallen in price by 30 per cent., sultanas by 50 per cent. and tobacco by 70 per cent., bread has continually risen.

The exceedingly high taxes complete this depressing

picture. Last year and in the current year the taxes amount to 50 per cent. of the net income of the working peasants. When the peasants hear of the arrival of the tax officials, they flee to the mountains.

A further form of oppression is forced labour for the municipalities. Refusal to perform this work is punished by fines.

This whole situation is leading to a rapid differentiation in the villages. The small peasants form a vast mass who never possess actual cash but only the paper money of the Agrarian Bank. Last year, 31 per cent. of the Macedonian and Thracian tobacco planters completely abandoned the cultivation of tobacco.

There are no statistics regarding the landworkers, hardly any of whom are organised. Thousands of charcoal burners, tree fellers etc. are working on the big forest lands, belonging to the State, the monasteries and the landowners. There are no fixed rates of wages. The workers undertake 15 hours hard work in return for a sum arbitrarily fixed by the employers which only suffice to purchase a piece of bread.

The agrarian crisis vividly reveals all the class contradictions in the rural districts and causes a rapid revolutionisation of the poor and middle peasants and agricultural workers. There is no district in Greece without hunger-marches of the peasants. The tax collectors' offices are set on fire. The slogan: "Free maize!" resounded last Autumn and Winter throughout the whole of Macedonia and Thessaly; granaries were stormed, in Thessaly. Hundreds of revolutionary peasants have been sent to prison or banishment islands.

The Communist Party of Greece is exerting every effort in order to mobilise the working rural population for the fight. The chief weapon in this fight in the rural districts is the landworkers trade unions and the fighting committees of the

working peasants.

[p. 1255-1257]

THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN TURKEY AND THE TASKS OF THE C.P. OF TURKEY.

By Fachri. *International Press*
Correspondence, Volume 13, No. 22, May,
19, 1933

In the following article we shall attempt to analyse the fundamental questions now confronting the revolutionary working class of Turkey.

The Class Nature of Kemalism.

The Kemalists are opposing their economic system to both socialism and capitalism. They designate their system as **Kemalist etatism**. This must be thoroughly exposed. Kemalist Turkey is a capitalist country in the full sense of the word, albeit a backward capitalist country with feudal remnants.

Kemalism has promoted the capitalist development of Turkey, which the old regime of the Sultan, aided by world imperialism, attempted for a long time to hamper. To-day the commencement of the development of monopolist-finance capital can already be observed, although at present capitalism in Turkey is still very weak.

The position of the exploited classes in Turkey is still worse than in the advanced capitalist countries, because labour legislation is entirely lacking. For instance, a worker who has been incapacitated for work owing to an accident in the factory, is simply dismissed without receiving any compensation whatever. And still the Kemalists assert that

there is no capitalist exploitation in Turkey.

The propaganda of etatism carried on by the Kemalists is at bottom nothing else but a masking of their policy of granting government subventions to the backward capitalist undertakings of the Turkish bourgeoisie at the cost of the majority of the people and by their increased exploitation.

The Nationalism of the Kemalists and their policy towards the Imperialists.

The Communists of Turkey have written in a declaration:

“In a period of extreme intensification of the struggle for raw material sources and markets, in a period when the general crisis of capitalism has enormously sharpened and relative stabilisation has come to an end—in such a period the realisation of economic independence on a capitalist basis is impossible for a backward country like Turkey, which is economically and financially dependent upon other countries.”

The Communists must incessantly **demand** of the Kemalists that they conduct a real fight against imperialism, and for the independence of Turkey. But what value can be attached to this demand of the Communists, if our comrades at the same time continually repeat that this is “impossible.”

The Kemalists themselves pose before the masses as genuine anti-imperialist fighters. The C.P. of Turkey denies this, and is perfectly right in doing so. But they must not represent the Kemalists merely as tools of world imperialism. In Turkey there exist direct agents of world imperialism—the feudal landowners and the bourgeois compradores, who are reinforced by a continual influx from the ranks of the Kemalists. It would, however, be incorrect to lump the Kemalists together with these elements. As representatives of national bourgeois Turkey, the Kemalists are conducting a

double policy against the imperialists: at one time they capitulate to the imperialists, at another time they offer resistance to them. It must be realised that in each case they act in the class interests of the national Turkish bourgeoisie. We must not be afraid of openly admitting that the Kemalists are nationalists.

There exist certain objective **contradictions** between the interests of the national Turkish bourgeoisie and those of the imperialists. The imperialists are conducting a policy of expansion, of subjecting Turkey to their hegemony. It is French imperialism in the first place which is endeavouring to subject Turkey to its influence, to compel the Turkish bourgeoisie to be satisfied with playing the role of compradores, or agents of French imperialism.

The Turkish national bourgeoisie is defending its role as an independent exploiter of the toiling masses of Turkey, without, however, objecting to the participation of foreign capital in the exploitation of the toiling masses. It is even seeking to obtain favourable conditions of agreement with the various imperialist countries, thereby making use of the antagonisms among the various capitalist countries themselves; as well as between them and the Soviet Union. This bourgeois class character of Kemalist nationalism must be correctly exposed.

But in their criticism of Kemalism the Communists must not simplify this question. The masses will not trust them if they indiscriminately lump the Kemalists together with the venal agents of imperialism and deny that there exists any antagonism between them. It is the duty of the Communists to dissociate themselves from the agents of imperialism. They must show their independent features by criticising the Kemalists precisely for evading a determined fight against these elements and against the penetration of foreign capital, which constitutes a basis for reactionary movements of revolt.

If the C.P. of Turkey thus exposes the Kemalists, their fight

against the Kemalists and the reactionaries will be understood by the masses and they will be able to mobilise these masses for the anti-imperialist struggle.

The Kemalists systematically and consistently defend the class interests of the Turkish bourgeoisie. However, the conditions are not favourable for this class policy, and are becoming more and more difficult. The basis of the Kemalists is being undermined from two sides: on the one hand by the penetration of imperialism, on the other hand by the development of the class struggle and the revolutionary movement of the toilers. Foreign capital, in particular French capital, is penetrating the country more and more (before all under the cover of joint stock companies) and is developing into a great danger for the independence of the country.

If it were not for the existence of the Soviet Union and its support of the independence of the Turkish people, the Kemalists would have been compelled long ago completely to capitulate to world imperialism. Then the revolutionary movement in Turkey would be faced with the chief enemy in the shape of world imperialism, which is a far more formidable enemy than the Kemalist bourgeoisie.

The Dictatorship of Violence of Kemalism.

After the upheaval the Kemalists established the rule of the bourgeoisie not in the form of a peaceful bourgeois democracy, but in the form of an open, undisguised violent bourgeois dictatorship. The Communists must sharply expose this character of the Kemalist regime and must raise again and again the demand for the most elementary democratic rights for the workers and peasants: freedom of the press, of elections, freedom of assembly, right of combination, etc. If the Communists do not give prominence to this fight against the

dictatorship of violence of the Kemalists, they will lose one of the most important weapons in their hands in the sphere of revolutionary mobilisation of the broad toiling masses who have not yet clearly realised the anti-democratic character of Kemalism.

The Communists must fight against the anti-democratic regime of Kemalism not from the standpoint of bourgeois democracy, but from the standpoint of a workers' and peasants' democracy. In this respect it must be emphasised that here it is a question not only of the formal rights of the toilers, but of the possibility of the masses really utilising these rights. It must be shown to these masses, on the basis of concrete facts, what a genuine proletarian democracy means under the conditions of the proletarian dictatorship in the form of the Soviet Power.

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**THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN TURKEY
AND THE TASKS OF THE C.P. OF TURKEY
(Conclusion). *International Press
Correspondence, Volume 13, No. 23, May
26, 1933***

**The Agrarian Policy of the Kemalists and the
Tasks of the C.P. of Turkey in the Peasants'
Movement.**

The Kemalists do not possess any fascist organisations; their party relies on the police and the army, the overwhelming majority of which consists of peasants. In the rural districts, where the Kemalists are supported by the big peasants, they are carrying out the original capitalist accumulation by violent means, by ruthlessly expropriating the small and middle peasants. As a result, a sharp class differentiation is taking place in the rural districts, which is bound to have an effect upon the soldiers. Hence the peasant question is the weakest spot of Kemalism.

In a number of districts in Turkey we are witnessing a mass movement of the peasantry. In numerous localities the peasants refuse to pay taxes, as a result of which their land and property are seized. In their work the Communists must give prominence to the slogans of the C.P.T. in the sphere of agrarian policy, in particular to the demand for cancellation of all debts. The general slogan of "refuse to pay taxes" would be premature at the present moment. It would be better to attempt to put forward concrete demands on the tax question separately in each district, making use of every concrete case of refusal to pay taxes or of distraint in order to mobilise the peasants against the tax collectors and representatives of the authorities.

The Communists, by exposing the peasants' policy of the Kemalists, must sharply oppose the employment of troops and gendarmes for crushing the revolutionary peasants' movement.

Mass Work of the C.P.T. in the Labour Movement.

The main task of the mass policy of the Party is the correct struggle for the **partial demands**, which help to establish **living contact with the masses**. It is very important to react quickly to events which rouse the masses to indignation, and to link up the slogans and demands of the Party with these events in every factory and every locality. The Communists must develop their own strike strategy. The **strike** movement, the **unemployed** movement and the peasant movement are the main forms of the mass movement in Turkey. In addition to the partial demands, the question of **central slogans of action must be put forward**.

It would not be advisable to demand that all workers should join the Kemalist trade unions, for this would involve the danger of many workers coming under the influence of the class enemy. We must, however, strive to get these trade unions converted into real **revolutionary trade unions** by setting up opposition groups, which fight for winning the majority of the workers and removing the Kemalist leadership of the Kemalists. If, however, we possess a sufficiently strong opposition group in one or the other local organisations, and if we have the prospect of capturing this organisation with the help of the workers, then it is advisable to call upon the workers to join this particular trade union.

In general the Communists must propose to the workers that they set up independent revolutionary mass trade unions.

In striving to win the legal mass trade unions, the Party must not fall into the illusion of legalism. The Kemalists are

afraid of the mass organisations of the working class and the conversion of the trade unions into free class organisations. If strong pressure is exerted the Kemalists will probably be compelled to make certain concessions. But the Communists must not neglect the task of setting up their own illegal trade unions or illegal trade union opposition groups. Of course, the illegal organisations will not be able to draw in numerically broad masses. But the most important thing is that they are closely connected with the working masses and develop a constant activity among the masses.

Questions of Party Construction.

The C.P. of Turkey must consolidate its local organisations and the local committees in the most important places in the country. The existing Party cadres must reinforce these Party committees. The local committees must learn to develop their own initiative and to work independently whenever there is no connection with the Central Committee; then the class enemy will not be able to destroy the organisations of the C.P.T.

Particular attention must be devoted to the struggle against **provocateurs** and spies. Conspiratory methods must be adopted. The Communists must not cherish any legalist illusions.

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Precisely at the present moment, when we are witnessing a revolutionary upsurge in Turkey which is expressed in a number of mass actions of the workers and of the revolutionary peasants, it is the main task of the C.P.T., in the course of these mass struggles, to prepare the toilers for the great revolutionary fights.

**THE FRESH WAVE OF PERSECUTIONS IN
TURKEY. By F. International Press
*Correspondence, Volume 13, No. 31, July
14, 1933***

During the last few months the Kemalist government has carried out a number of fresh manoeuvres in order to facilitate an agreement with international finance-capital. After Turkey joined the League of Nations the Turkish government came to terms with French imperialism with regard to the questions of the Turkish state debt, the Anatolian railway, and, finally, the prolongation of the concession for the Ottoman Bank, which represents one of the key positions of foreign capital in Turkey.

The Kemalist government thereby hopes to overcome the difficulties resulting from the aggravation of the economic crisis. At the same time the government is carrying out a number of measures which are directed against the toiling population and are aiming at casting the whole burden of the crisis upon the shoulders of the toilers. Ruthless exploitation of the peasants by means of taxes and usurious interest, wage reductions, worsening of labour conditions, fiercest crushing of every attempt of the workers in the towns to organise themselves—this constitutes the inner-political activity of the Kemalist government, which of course is arousing increasing dissatisfaction and resentment among the masses. Great unrest in the agricultural districts, workers' demonstrations against the Kemalists in the towns (as, for instance, as a protest against the increase in the price of bread decreed by the Kemal government) prove the growth of mass resentment. The Kemal government is replying to these outbreaks of dissatisfaction by reprisals, above all against the revolutionary workers and its advance-guard, the Communist Party.

Immediately before May 1st wholesale raids directed

against revolutionary workers took place in Constantinople and in a number of provincial towns. Many houses were searched, several hundreds of workers arrested, and many of their number were mishandled. In spite of numerous protests and the hunger strike carried out by the Communist prisoners, the most ruthless, medieval treatment of the political prisoners is being continued in the Kemalist prisons. The Kemalist newspapers are filled with incitement and calumnies against the Communists in order to “justify” the reprisals of the Kemalists. The Turkish bourgeoisie also knows how to make use, in its fight against the Communists, of various groups of petty-bourgeois renegades, before all the Trotskyist opposition group of Hikmet Nasim. This group has not only a hand in the campaign of calumniating the Party, but it has been ascertained that members of this group have frequently been, used as police spies. This is of course discrediting the group, which still claims to be a Communist one, among the workers. Hence the police proceeded recently to arrest members of this group also in order to mislead the workers. Actually, however, the arrested “oppositionists” (members of the Nasim group) as soon as they have made their depositions and told everything they know about the Communists, will soon be released. With regard to the leader of this group, the well-known Turkish poet **Hikmet Nasim** (in former years he had been frequently arrested by the police, then he was released, designated himself as Communist for a time, but afterwards came forward as a speaker in Kemalist meetings), the Kemalist government intends to treat him in the same manner as the British government did with the petty-bourgeois renegade Roy: Hikmet Nasim, is to be brought to court in order to represent him before the masses as a “revolutionary leader.”

This manoeuvre is intended to render it more difficult for the C.P. of Turkey to expose this renegade and to arouse fresh illusions among the honest workers about the Nasim group.

The C.P. of Turkey is continuing its struggle with undiminished energy against the Kemalist dictatorship, in spite of all calumnies and reprisals. It is carrying on the struggle against the reprisals of the Kemalist government, for the release of all arrested workers and revolutionaries. In this campaign the Communists of Turkey are counting upon the support and solidarity of the international proletariat.

p. 689-690.

THE SITUATION IN CYPRUS. *International Press Correspondence, Volume 14, No. 4, January 26, 1934*

Cyprus, an agrarian country with impoverished agricultural resources, is passing through an acute economic crisis, the terrible consequences of which are weighing heavily on the shoulders of the peasant and the working masses generally. Peasants are being driven every day into the financial abyss by the execution of a tremendously increasing number of distrains on movable and immovable properties. Issued by the court for the recovery of debts and interest due by them to usurers, merchants and other exploiters. The result of this situation is that, on the one hand, peasants are expropriated of all their property, which passes into the hands of their creditors, and on the other hand, a handful of exploiters are being developed into a class of feudal parasites, willing to hire ruined peasants to work on their farms for starvation wages.

In this desperate situation a large number of peasants with their families are compelled to leave the country and go to the towns in search of work. In the towns one often comes across the heart-breaking spectacle of peasants going about with their poorly-dressed wives and bare-footed children following them, to inquire for work from building contractors.

The bourgeois papers (the Communist organ has long been banned) every day publish news characteristic of the utter ruin of the rural masses. Every day one hears of suicides from financial causes, fainting of children in schools from hunger, ejection of families from their homes, bankruptcies, and so on.

In Cyprus there are no labour laws at all. Labour is entirely at the mercy of capital, and the workers live under the worst economic and social conditions. There is no unemployment

benefit, no compensation in case of accidents nor any relief at all., The government. which consists of high-salaried officials, does nothing to relieve this unprecedented misery of the labouring classes, their sole care being how to suck wealth out of the country. (It is a fact that the salary of each British official in Cyprus is equal to the income of sixty working men.)

The employed workmen are in no better position than the unemployed. They receive starvation wages of 1s., 1s. 6d., 2s. a day for 14-15 hours' work, under the worst social conditions mentioned above.

Several attempts have been made by the workers to obtain official registration and recognition of their unions, but the government has always opposed such attempts, alleging that the unions include Communist members. The workmen; nevertheless, have now formed secret unions which carry on their activities underground. In Cyprus, liberty of speech, of press and of combination are unknown.

The workers' indignation and resentment culminated in the strike last summer, in which 1,000 persons took part to demonstrate against the cruel exploitation to which they are subjected. The workers succeeded in getting certain promises from the employers which, however, were afterwards broken.

There is one party that alone struggles with all possible means against tyranny, exploitation and bourgeois rule, the **Communist Party**.

The masses have realised this and constantly show their sympathy for the Communist Party, which is steadily increasing its membership. This has caused the government to enact more rigorous laws against Communism, in addition to the Defence orders which have been in force since October, 1931. One of these Acts contains the following provision: "Any person found in possession of any books, newspapers, documents. cards or emblems which **imply** membership of an unlawful association, such person shall be deemed to be a

member of an unlawful association and shall be guilty of a **'felony'** “.

The definition of what constitutes a seditious publication covers everything except religious and reactionary publications.

Among the most recent victims of the government's repressive measures are twelve of our comrades who have been arrested on the vague charge of conspiring for the overthrow of the existing regime. The accused have been committed for trial before the Assize Court, which will be held in February or March next, and in the meantime are being held in custody.

In spite of all these drastic measures however the Communist Party of Cyprus is daily increasing in strength and working more actively for the overthrow of imperialist rule.

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**THE XIII PLENUM OF THE EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST
INTERNATIONAL. Discussion on the
Reports of Comrades Kuusinen, Pieck and
Pollitt. The Communist Parties in the
Fight for the Masses. *International Press
Correspondence, Volume 14, No. 15, March
05, 1934***

....

Comrade Ferdi (Turkey)

Since its foundation the Kemal Republic has been carrying on with remarkable consistency an unchanged foreign policy in entire agreement with its nationalist and bourgeois character. The nationalism of the Kemal party which, at the head of the toiling masses, with arms in its hands and with the moral and superior support of the Soviet Union against the attempts of the foreign imperialists to subjugate Turkey, achieved its national independence, clings with both hands to its alliance with the country of socialist construction. We Communists fight against the nationalism of the Turkish bourgeoisie in so far as it is directed against other nations and leads towards the destruction or the violent assimilation of the non-Turkish peoples of Asia Minor. The nationalism of the Kemalist bourgeoisie embodies its desire to retain the monopoly of the exploitation of the native workers and of the natural resources of the country in Turkey.

The Kemalists are fully aware of the fact that the independence of Turkey is linked up with the existence and the

friendship of the Soviet Union, and that if it were not for this they would not be in a position to offer even the slightest resistance to the underhanded attempts of imperialist capital to subjugate them anew. That is the secret of Angora's continuous loyalty to its alliance with the Soviet Union.

If the Kemal dictatorship is driven by its nationalism to seek the support of the Soviet Union, we see that its bourgeois character, the pursuance of a capitalist policy, drives it to throw itself into the arms of international finance capital and the Imperialist Powers that dominate it. Still, that does not take place without shocks. The imperialists who still own important key positions in the economy of Turkey have not yet given up the hope of forcing the Kemalists to their knees. Therefore they are compelled to continue along this path with the greatest caution.

However, French imperialism, in view of the critical situation in Europe, thought it necessary to show that it is more friendly disposed to Kemalist Turkey than it was heretofore. After the question of the ottoman government debts was regulated in a manner that was favourable for Turkey, and after trade relations were set up between the two countries, we have been experiencing a veritable idyll between the two countries for the past six months. Disturbed by the rapprochement, Hitler Germany expressed itself in favour of advancing money to Kemalist Turkey; the speeches of Hindenburg and von Papen revived old memories of the former comradeship in arms and concluded an economic agreement with Turkey which is very advantageous to it. It can therefore be seen that the growing seriousness of the international situation since Hitler's advent to power and the feverish tempo of arming for war have noticeably improved the situation of Turkey with regard to the imperialist Powers. From a humble petitioner it is beginning gradually to push forward to a State whose friendship is desired.

Be that as it may, the government of Angora is seriously counting on the possibility of a war and is making systematic preparations so as not to be surprised by events. The accelerated tempo of **fascisation** in the most important capitalist countries must naturally bring about repercussions in such a backward country as Turkey. If the Kemalist dictatorship saw its social basis shrink to a great extent in consequence of the prolonged agrarian crisis raging in the country, the Kemalist party, on the contrary, under the pretext of making good the harm brought about by the crisis, was able to benefit by the general upheaval of the economic conditions, to consolidate its rule and to extend its control to the most important branches of production. This concentration is expressed in a number of nationalisation measures and protectionist provisions.

But there is also another side to the medal. Not only are the costs of this economic policy being paid for by the already heavily burdened taxpayers and the broad masses of consumers, but the concern of the Kemalists for the profitability of these undertakings causes them to reduce the cost of production to a minimum, i.e., to pursue a policy of low wages, relatively high prices, through tariffs and the quota system, and to force down the prices of the agricultural products destined for export even below the international prices, so as to be able to compete with the countries that export similar agricultural products and to keep exports at a level which will make it possible to have a favourable balancing of imports. The consequence of this policy is the expropriation of the small producers by the large landowners and the large export firms, forcing the purchasing power of the peasantry down to the lowest level and the most extreme contraction of the home market, a big drop in the standard of living of the workers and an increase in unemployment.

The Kemalists could force these difficult conditions upon

the population only by means of a system of the most ferocious terror and oppression, by nipping every agitation of the workers and the toiling peasants in the bud with unbelievable brutality. In view of the fact that at the beginning the People's Party employed its measures, of oppression above all against reaction and clericalism, that it played a positive role in the victorious war for national independence, that it placed itself at the head of the armed anti-imperialist struggles of the toiling masses of Asia Minor and that up to now it has proved loyal in its friendship to the Soviet Union, the C.P. of Turkey believed that it could not qualify its nationalist dictatorship as a fascist dictatorship, but declared it to be a masked dictatorship, a parliamentarism of the bourgeoisie and the large landowners directed against the people. Kemal's People's Party has been pursuing an uninterrupted policy of terror, particularly since 1927. Arrests, terrible sentences, and the most subtle provocations are on the order of the day. It is striving physically to annihilate the Communist Party, it has gradually abolished all the independent political and trade union organisations of the working class. It directs its entire economic policy against the propertyless masses, who are subjected to the most terrible exploitation by the industrialists and the landlords, and it does this while making use of nationalist ideology, which is being very persistently propagated by its intellectual agents. We often come across the demagogy: "Neither capitalism nor socialism" and "general interest precedes private interest."

All these confused ideas aim at lulling the class consciousness of the workers and awakening nationalist feelings in them, in order to befool them, and in that way to make them put up with exploitation without offering any resistance. By its merciless criticism, the C.P.T. exposes the falseness, inconsistency, and the spirit of advertising of all the nationalist propaganda. It popularises its programme of action,

the resolutions of the Twelfth Plenum, and the splendid success of socialist construction in the Soviet Union. It points out the contrast between the condition of the proletariat which exercises its dictatorship in the Soviet Union and the condition of the proletariat in the capitalist countries, as, for instance, Turkey. At the same time, the Party is constantly striving to free the workers from nationalist ideology and to bring them under its own influence.

In the course of the past seven years, owing to the persistent efforts of its responsible functionaries and with the active support of the C.I., the C.P.T. has become a real proletarian party, as far as its membership is concerned, as well as its leading cadres. It is at present the only Party which has undisputed influence among the working class and marches at the head of its revolutionary movements. But at the same time it must be admitted that it is not yet strong enough to consolidate all the existing movements.

As is generally known, the Kemalists—just like the Italian fascists—tolerated the opponent political parties at the beginning and established its open dictatorship only two years later. Just like the other oppositional parties, the C.P.T. was able to lead a semi-legal existence from 1923 to 1925 and possessed a legal press. But it committed a serious mistake in not utilising this circumstance in order carefully to prepare for its final and complete transition to illegality. The consequence of this was that when the first wave of terror broke over the country in 1925, and every possibility for legal work disappeared, its entire body of experienced functionaries—who were already known to the police beforehand—was broken up and a large number of them was arrested.

It took two years before the C.P.T. could again become an effective force and a political factor in Turkey. The hunger strike of the Communist prisoners in Constantinople, which lasted more than fifteen days, and the workers' demonstrations

which were brought about by this strike, made a great impression in Turkey and compelled the government to give in, Another no less important event was the turbulent demonstration of our comrades in the court house and before the judge after the announcement of the sentence. This manifestation ended in a bloody collision between the workers and the gendarmes, in which several persons were wounded.

The trade union movement is the weakest field of the work of our Party. There is no fractional work in the Kemalist trade unions and there are no serious attempts to form independent class, militant trade unions.

Only a few timid attempts have been made to form trade union groups in a small number of factories. Continuous work is still lacking. Nothing has been done to set up the Young Communist League again.

Contacts with the peasantry and the work in the countryside are extraordinarily weak, just as they always were. Our work among women is just as poor.

Besides, the general tasks which have been set down in the thesis of the Plenum with regard to fascism and the war danger, and which' bind all sections, the C.P.T. is confronted with the following urgent tasks:—

Besides, the Party work in the narrow sense of the word, intensive trade union activity must be developed. Illegal trade union groups and independent class struggle trade unions must be formed so as to launch the struggles for the immediate daily demands of the workers through them and to initiate a broad campaign for the legalisation of the workers' organisations. A struggle is to be waged in the Kemalist trade unions in which workers are organised and an attempt is to be made to capture the leadership through patient fraction work, and, if this succeeds, to call upon the masses to join these trade unions in order to convert them into independent trade unions. All possibilities for legal activity are to be exhausted. In the

provinces we must organise groups of Communists and conduct systematic propaganda among the peasants, and propagate the idea of forming peasants' committees to fight against the heavy burdens of taxes, for the cancellation of usurious debts and to organise resistance against forced auction sales, etc. We must organise the agricultural day labourers in independent trade unions and lead their struggles for daily demands.

The Y.C.L. must be reconstructed in the shortest possible period as an autonomous organisation working under the control of the Party. A responsible comrade should be appointed to carry on systematic work among the toiling women. The struggle against provocateurs, improvement of the technique of conspiracy, perfecting the illegal press, which has made good progress recently, are further important tasks of our Party. (Applause.)

[p. 395-396]

**THE GROWTH OF FASCISM IN GREECE. By
K. G. (Athens). *International Press
Correspondence, Volume 14, No. 20,
March 29, 1934***

The systematic fascisation of Greece began with the taking over of the government by Venizelos in the year 1928. He paved the way for open fascism and did all he could in order to shift the main burden of the crisis on to the toiling masses by means of ruthless wage cuts, monstrous taxation and brutal enforcement of the tax decrees.

Venizelos endeavoured at the same time to crush the political forces of the toilers. He issued the “anti-Communist law,” which forced the C.P. of Greece almost into illegality, threw thousands of workers into prison or sent them into exile. The International Labour Defence was prohibited just as was the Unitary Trade Union Federation, the large tobacco workers’ trade union and many other revolutionary workers’ organisations. But neither the workers nor the servants were intimidated by these measures.

Last year Venizelos gave place to his worthy successor Tsaldaris, who was called upon to accelerate the establishment of open fascism.

The two bourgeois blocs are proceeding along separate lines. The camp of Venizelos attempted a putsch already on March 6, 1933. The present government party has similar designs, for which purpose it is effecting changes in the officers’ corps and gathering its adherents round the War Minister General Kondylis. Another group is aiming at power gathered round General Metaxas.

Apart from these strivings of the bourgeois parties and groups in the last quarter there arose the idea of the so-called “*Third Situation*,” a movement which is directed against all

existing bourgeois parties and is intended to become a purely fascist movement on Hitler's lines. The sponsors of this idea are big bankers, Ministers and higher officers. A large sum has been placed at the disposal of this "third situation," and the newspaper "*Hestia*," which maintains good relations with the British Embassy, has taken over the ideological work of preparation.

All the groups which advocate fascism need fighting troops for the realisation of their aims. Four fascist fighting bands have arisen in Greece in the course of the last six years.

The fascist organisation "*Iron Peace*" formed by the followers of General Pangalos after the overthrow of his military-fascist dictatorship. This organisation played a certain role only in Athens and Piraeus. It could not become a mass organisation; during strikes its members acted as strike-breakers.

The followers of the exiled King George II intended some years ago to set up a monarchist-fascist movement with Prince Ypsilantis at the head. But their attempts failed.

The "*Yellow Shirts*," a fascist organisation which is known only in Athens, attempted to come into contact with the proletariat, but encountered fierce resistance, Yannaros, the chief editor of the monarchist paper "*Esperini*," was its founder.

Ex-Minister *Mercuris* has founded a national-socialist labour party, but in spite of Hitler's agents in Athens they were unable to gain many followers and the organisation did not even venture to run candidates at the last parliamentary elections.

Some years ago the National Union of Greece E.E.E. was founded in Salonica. This organisation, which found adherents in some towns of Macedonia and later also in Athens, is based on the model of the German "*Stahlhelm*." The members are trained by reserve officers and non-commissioned officers. The

E.E.E. also attempted to establish a footing among the workers and the masses of impoverished refugees. The members of the E.E.E. in Salonica and Athens organised numerous attacks on workers which resulted in many killed and wounded. One of their vilest acts was the pogrom in Salonica in 1931, in which the Jewish colony was burnt and many working Jews were killed and wounded.

The E.E.E. gradually won the confidence of the capitalists. The Venizelos group then generously financed the E.E.E. had them trained by officers and supplied them with arms, so that to-day they are regarded as a fighting troop of a broad fascist movement and are employed as such. The differences between the government and the Opposition led to the splitting of the E.E.E. organisations in Athens and Salonica into Venizelists and Tsaldarists. At the Salonica congress the fascist band was converted into a “party” (with a programme similar to that of the Hitler party) which did not need to take seriously the prohibition of its organisation in Salonica, for it was able to take part unhindered in the municipal elections and received 700 votes.

The reason why the decisive capitalist circled do not yet make use of the E.E.E. fascists as the core of a broad mass movement lies in the degree of their inner disintegration and the level of their cadres and the hatred which the working masses display towards this band of murderers.

Greek capitalism is more and more aiming at bridging the differences in its own camp with the aid of fascism and completely subjugating the masses of the working population by means of terror.

In view of this danger it necessary to mobilise the masses in whole country under the leadership of the Communist Party in order to resist the threatening fascist attack.

**DODECANESE IN THE CLUTCHES OF
ITALIAN FASCISM. By Kostas Grypos.
International Press Correspondence,
*Volume 14, No. 23, April 13, 1934***

Mussolini's terror and economic exploitation on the twelve islands of the Aegean Sea have become so unbearable that some weeks ago the population of two of the islands, **Kastellorizo** and **Symi**, rose in revolt. A sudden enormous increase of the customs duties (the sums thereby extorted are to serve allegedly to support the victims of the earthquake on the island of Koss, for whom Mussolini refused any relief from abroad) was the occasion which gave rise to the movement of the masses. The whole of the population of Symi demonstrated on January 12, demanding the restoration of gratuitous medical treatment and the cancellation of taxes imposed on medicaments. The fascist militia which is employed on all the islands to "maintain law and order" endeavoured in vain to disperse the demonstration. As the masses did not give way, De Stephani, the deputy governor of the Dodecanese, was compelled to deliver a pacifying speech from the balcony of the town hall.

On February 15 a second huge demonstration of the whole toiling population took place in protest against the 100 per cent. increase of customs duties on articles of mass consumption. This time things did not go off so smoothly. A strong military detachment which had been brought from Rhodes to Symi after the first demonstration of January 18 brutally attacked the demonstration. Ten women were arrested and only released after several hours of detention. As a result of these events the deputy mayor had to resign from his post.

The revolt on the island of Kastellorizo, situated near the coast of Asia Minor, assumed even greater dimensions. At a huge meeting at the beginning of February, attended by the whole of the toiling population of the island, the cancellation of the 100 per cent. increase in customs duties and the immediate dismissal of the hated mayor Lakerdis were demanded. Three people were arrested at the meeting and conveyed to the prison of Rhodes. On February 18 a second revolt broke out. With the exception of Mussolini's agents, almost the whole of the population of the island assembled in front of the governor's house, repeated their demands, including the release of the three prisoners. The fascist militia replied to these demands by firing on the meeting, wounding twenty persons, mostly women and children. These shots were at the same time the signal for increased terror on the island. Many inhabitants made their way at night by boat to the coast of Asia Minor in order to escape the terror.

According to later reports, revolts have broken out also on the other islands of the Dodecanese. The Italian government denies these reports, but has to admit the revolt on the islands of Kastellorizo and Symi and the rising indignation on the other islands.

Since the Italo-Turkish war of 1912 the twelve islands of the Aegean Sea have been under the rule of Italian imperialism, and particularly since the establishment of Mussolini's fascist dictatorship they have been subjected to cruel economic and cultural oppression and terror. On these twelve islands, which represent an important strategical basis in Asia Minor, Italian imperialism is carrying on a policy of settling hundreds of Italian families amidst a purely Greek population. On all the twelve islands "commissars" and "deputy mayors" are the representatives of the Mussolini government, which succeeded in bringing over to its side the corrupt elements among the native mayors, as, for instance, Lakerdis of Kastellorizo, the

bought agent of Italian imperialism and hated dictator of the island, who since the rule of the Turks has kept his position against the will of the population. Troops are permanently stationed at Rhodes, the largest of the islands, whilst on the other islands the fascist militia terrorise the population.

By means of corruption and violence the Dodecanese have up to now remained under the heel of Italian imperialism, which suppresses the Greek population, imposes the Italian language on it, fascises the schools and ruthlessly suppresses any movement aiming at union with Greece or directed against the fascist rule.

The revolts in Kastellorizo and Symi indicate that the small heroic population of the twelve islands in the Aegean Sea is offering resistance to the fascist dictatorship of Mussolini. The toiling masses have shown their fighting determination. The international proletariat must support them in their struggle for the right of self-determination up to complete separation, both against Italian and Greek imperialism.

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**FASCISM, SOCIAL DEMOCRACY AND
COMMUNISM. Comrade Petkov (Greece).
International Press Correspondence,
*Volume 14, No. 25, April 23, 1934***

The fascist organisations in Greece are showing increasing activity. The Communist Party and the revolutionary trade unions are mobilising the working class in the struggle against fascism and they have met with certain successes. In Salonica, for instance, successful protest strikes of one hour or half-an-hour were organised in the tobacco factories against the murderous activities of the local fascists. Further, mass demonstrations and protests were organised in all towns throughout the country, particularly in Piraeus, Athens, Larissa, and Kavalla. Political and anti-fascist slogans were adopted by the workers in numerous economic struggles.

However, the anti-fascist work of the Party and the unions is not entirely satisfactory and the most important deficiencies are:—

(1) The political anti-fascist strikes which have been organised are not in proportion to the rapidity of development of fascism and bear no effective relation to the number of economic struggles.

(2) The Party has not yet organised any effective work within the fascist organisations themselves. Our press does not react energetically enough to the chauvinist propaganda and the demagoguery of the fascist organisations.

(3) Although the Party decided months ago to form anti-fascist mass organisations, this has not yet been done. The few anti-fascist organisations which exist are sectarian in character and unstable.

(4) The Party and the unions do not expose sufficiently the assistance rendered by the reformists to the development of fascism. They have not succeeded in winning the broad masses of the reformist and unorganised workers for a united front anti-fascist struggle.

(5) The work of the Party for the mobilisation of the masses to protect the oppressed national minorities from the attacks of racism is insufficient. This applies in particular to the Jews, who are threatened with a repetition of the pogroms which took place in 1931.

(6) The Party has not succeeded in carrying the anti-fascist struggle into the factories and amongst the transport workers, and it has also failed to connect up the economic struggle of the workers with the anti-fascist struggle.

The Greek bourgeoisie is now arming feverishly for war. Evidence of this is offered by the policy of economic autarchy, the increased activity of the armament industry and the increased armament propaganda in the bourgeois press.

Loyal to its international principles, our Party conducts a persistent struggle against these war preparations and our press carries on an uninterrupted campaign of enlightenment concerning these preparations. Our work in the army has increased and our strength also. Every day our central organ publishes two columns of letters from soldiers and sailors. However, with isolated exceptions, we have not yet succeeded in connecting up the partial struggles of the workers and of the unemployed with the struggle against war. Our anti-war work is still too weak, particularly in the war industries themselves and amongst the transport workers. We did not succeed in organising even one action on the part of the transport workers against the sending of military equipment to Japan. Our work in this respect must be strengthened as also must our co-operation with the other communist Parties of the Balkans.

The situation of the working class and of the toilers in

general has deteriorated this year. The wages of the seamen have been forced down by about 30 per cent. The unemployment support won by the workers in hard struggles has been practically abolished. In the rural areas the activities of the bailiffs have become a mass phenomenon.

The working class has offered energetic resistance to the attacks made upon it. In the first nine months of 1933 no less than 337 strikes took place as compared with 199 in 1932. The number of striking workers involved reached 60,000. The most important strike took place in Kavalla, where the workers occupied the factories. This struggle began as a strike amongst the tobacco workers and then developed into a local general strike with the enthusiastic support of the overwhelming mass of the population and solidarity strikes took place in all the most important tobacco centres.

An important feature of the strike struggles in 1933 was the increasing role played by the revolutionary unions, 237 of the 337 strikes, or 70 per cent., were led by the revolutionary unions whilst in 1932 only 117 strikes, or 58 per cent. were under the control of the revolutionary unions. 40,000 workers took part in the strikes under the control of the revolutionary unions as compared with 31,500 in 1932.

Apart from the growing strike movement amongst the workers, there have also been strikes amongst the artisans in Kavalla and Xanthi and amongst the employees of the motor-bus company in Athens. There was also a strike of university students and some very important actions on the part of the State employees.

During the last three months of 1933 the strike movement extended rapidly. An important feature is that the movement is seizing on decisive sections of the proletariat despite all the efforts of the reformists to prevent the outbreak of strike. A political mass strike took place in Alexandropol under Communist leadership. Big class struggles are maturing in

Greece and the Party and the unions are mobilising their forces to organise these sectional strikes and prepare the way for a political general strike.

The Party was able to achieve these successes, thanks to the assistance rendered by the Communist International in 1931 in the liquidation of the unprincipled fractional struggle which had shaken the Party for two years, Party discipline was restored and a merciless struggle conducted against both Right and "Left" wing deviations. In its whole policy and activity the Party is guided by the appeal of the Executive Committee of the C.I. and the directions of the Twelfth Plenum. However, the Party is not blinded by the successes which it has achieved and it is well aware of its failings. Owing to the insufficiency of the work of the Party in stressing the political nature of strike actions there was a great disproportion between political and economic strikes. Despite the increasing role played by our revolutionary unions, many strikes developed spontaneously and were led by us only after their outbreak. And finally, we did not succeed in organising the sectional strike movements into one powerful and effective whole.

It would be a great error to assume from the fact that our own influence is increasing that we have therefore necessarily caused any decisive weakening of reformist influence and that in consequence the work for the destruction of the mass basis of social fascism is now no longer so important.

The situation in this respect is rather peculiar in Greece in that there is no social democratic party. The individual social fascist trade union leaders who came forward as candidates for parliament at the last elections in September, 1932, received hardly a thousand votes throughout the country, but nevertheless they have great influence on the workers and control the unions of the decisive sections of the proletariat (railwaymen, dockers, seamen, metal workers, electrical workers etc.). On the one hand we achieved successes in

weakening their influence, we won the majority in important trade unions, for instance, the postal employees and the tramwaymen in Athens and the textile workers in Piraeus, but on the other hand, we lost control of two important unions, the gas workers in Athens and the miners in Aliverion.

The Party recognises the correctness of the appeal of the E.C.C.I. concerning the united front, but it has not succeeded in utilising it sufficiently carry the united front into the factories and expose the reformists. Negotiations were conducted with the reformist leaders, but they were not accompanied by the necessary work amongst the masses.

At the moment an attempt is being made by the social fascists, jointly with the agrarian party, to win the radicalising masses by forming a new "Left" Party. That represents a serious danger for us and it must be countered by an intensification of our enlightenment work. At the same time the Party must not neglect its struggle against the government and against the reckless demagogy of the bourgeois opposition.

Since last August we have succeeded in organising a series of actions in the rural areas against the activities of the bailiffs in their effort to distrain for overdue taxes, etc. Many thousands were embraced by these actions. Twenty strikes of landworkers have taken place, embracing about 2,000 workers. Cases of land seizure by the peasants are on the increase. However, in general these actions are more or less spontaneous and the Party work in the rural areas is not in accordance with the favourable situation existing there. One of the results of this is the disproportion between the strike movement in the towns and the movement in the rural areas. The work of our village cells is not good and insufficient attention is being paid to the immediate demands of the peasants.

There has also been considerable confusion in the Party concerning the complicated question of seeking allies for the proletariat from amongst the population of the rural areas. The

Party must now fundamentally improve its work in the rural areas and conduct a great campaign of enlightenment among its members concerning the character of the bourgeois-democratic revolution and its speedy development into a proletarian revolution. Basing itself on the landworkers and the village poor, the Party must seek to establish the hegemony of the proletariat in an alliance with the main masses of the rural population.

Our work amongst the unemployed is sporadic and is conducted usually during the winter only. In the first eight months of 1933, 159 actions were carried out by the unemployed workers, and 45,000 workers took part in them. However, despite these gains we have not succeeded in organising permanent committees of the unemployed workers.

The chief weakness of the Party and the unions is the lack of any close connection with the workers in the big factories. Another unsatisfactory feature is the disproportion between the influence of the Party and its organisational strength, for instance, in Athens we received 10,000 votes, but the circulation of our Party organ reaches no more than 2,000, whilst we have only 400 organised members in the town.

We have very much to do. We must intensify our fight against reformism, strengthen our groups in the big factories, prepare the Party ideologically and organisationally for the approach of illegality, and intensify our anti-fascist and anti-war struggle. Our work in the rural areas, amongst the women, and amongst the oppressed nationalities must be radically improved and we must afford greater support to the Young Communist League and make it into a real mass organisation. We must work for the ideological and organisational development of our Party and continue a merciless struggle against all deviations for the Bolshevist consolidation and unity of the Party. Only in this way shall we be able to win the majority of the working class, establish an alliance with the

peasant masses and the national minorities under the hegemony of the proletariat and set up the revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the working class and the peasantry. (Applause.)

[p. 647-648]

THE NEW GREEK STATE BUDGET By Gr.
International Press Correspondence,
Volume 14, No. 31, May 25, 1934.

The Greek Minister of Finance, **Loverdos**, has submitted the State Budget for 1934-35 to parliament, with the comment that it shows a deficit of “only 100 million drachmas.” A brief analysis of the Budget shows its outspokenly anti-popular character.

The revenue of the 1934-35 Budget is estimated at 10,240 million drachmas, the expenditure at 10,582 million. This would mean a deficit of 342 million drachmas. But it must be borne in mind that one item figuring under “receipts” is the interest left unpaid to the foreign creditors in accordance with the partial moratorium: 1,417,000,000 drachmas. One can well imagine, therefore, what the cancellation of the moratorium would mean to Greek State finances.

On the **revenue** side, the indirect taxes are to bring in 6,866,000,000 drachmas, or 80 per cent. of the total revenue, while the direct taxes are calculated at 1,700,000,000 drachmas, or 20 per cent. of the revenue. It is a well-known fact that the indirect taxes are imposed on the most important articles of consumption, so that they are mainly paid by the tolling masses. At the same time, the greater part of the direct taxation has to be paid by the peasants, small tradesmen, handicraftsmen, etc. (land, income, turnover taxes, etc.), so that it may be stated that 90 per cent of the taxes are paid by the toiling masses. Last autumn the government imposed fresh taxes to the amount of 500 million drachmas. These taxes included a tax on tobacco consumed in the country itself, an income-tax which aroused the small tradesmen to revolt in many places, a new tax on the salaries of employees and civil servants, an increase in the tax on mineral oil. All these new

taxes are paid almost entirely by the working people. At the same time the taxation of the capitalists has been further reduced by a lowering of the death duties, etc.

As regards **expenditure**, the Budget of the three War Ministries (army, navy, and air) swallows up a total of 1,871 million drachmas. This sum does not, however, include the secret war funds of the so-called “defence treasury,” nor the sum spent by various Ministries for war purposes, as, for instance, the building of roads and bridges, chiefly of a strategic character, by the Traffic Ministry. The sum total of official military expenditure has been increased by 90 million drachmas compared with last year.

One hundred and sixty million drachmas are provided for the foreign creditors in excess of the sum provided last year. The total sum provided for the payment of interest on the and redemption of foreign debts amounts to 1,557,430,246 drachmas, or 15 per cent. of the whole Budget. This year the landowners receive 150 million drachmas by way of compensation for their “expropriated” estates. The expenditure for the Ministries of the Interior and Justice, together with the expenditure for the parliament and senate, will amount to something over one million drachmas (10 per cent. of the Budget). Salaries for officials and civil service officials amount to 3,007,000,000 drachmas.

The total expenditure for the administration and maintenance of State power, for military expenses, for payments to foreign creditors, for compensation to the Greek landowners, amounts to 7,591,115,758 drachmas, as compared with 7,500,626,349 drachmas in the Budget for 1933-34, or 85 per cent. of the whole Budget.

As compared with this, 1,573,982,773 drachmas fall to productive and cultural expenditure, as compared with 1,591,750,135 drachmas in 1933-34, equivalent to only about **15 per cent. of the total Budget**. Of this, 415 millions are to

be expended for so-called productive work as compared with 397 millions in 1933-34. 320 millions as compared with 354 for other work (chiefly for the Ministry of Traffic), and 107,538,850 drachmas for the Agricultural Ministry as compared with 108,919,577, a miserable sum for an agrarian country like Greece. For education 18,636,310 drachmas are estimated in place of the 18,192,310 drachmas of the 1933-34 Budget. It is only necessary to compare this wretched sum with the official military Budget of 1,871,000,000 drachmas to gain a clear idea of the culture of Greek capitalism.

For the public health service 161,626,354 drachmas have been estimated as compared with the 139,339,361 drachmas for the previous year. 100,584,800 drachmas for public welfare service as compared with 117,430,300. Finally, 248,910,003 drachmas have been allotted to the refugees' settlements as compared with 236,802,629 drachmas.

This is the new Budget of Greek capitalism—a Budget of cruel robbery of the toiling masses, for the benefit of the Greek and foreign capitalists, and of the insane preparations for war.

[p. 513]

**THE LABOUR MOVEMENT. The Strike of
the Greek Seamen By Kostas Grypos.
International Press Correspondence,
*Volume 14, No. 33, June 08, 1934***

Reports are coming in from the various ports of Europe, Africa and America regarding the last outbreaks of the strike of the Greek merchant seamen, which commenced in some English ports at the beginning of March and then spread to all the Greek ships coming into harbour.

The Greek mercantile fleet is one of the most important branches of Greek industry. The fact that it was capable, under the severe conditions of the economic crisis, of standing the competition of English and Norwegian shipping is solely owing to the circumstance that the Soviet Union has chartered the larger part of the Greek ships and because the exploitation of the crews is monstrous. The pay, the food and the living quarters provided the Greek seamen are the worst in the world. No medical attention is provided. If a seaman falls sick whilst on a voyage he must simply wait till the ship puts into port. The position of the Greek seaman is so indescribably bad that some months ago the London "Times" strongly criticised the inhumane conditions in the Greek mercantile marine. This was, of course, not out of sympathy for the Greek proletarians, but in order to show by what means the Greek ship-owners are able to compete with their English rivals.

In the most remote ports of the world there are unemployed Greek seamen who are handed over to misery and despair. The unemployment benefit which the Greek government grants to the unemployed seamen is a mockery. The unemployed seamen abroad obtain support from the Greek Consulates only when they enforce it by agitation under the leadership of functionaries of the Red Seamen's Union.

But this degree of exploitation of one of the oldest and best developed sections of the Greek proletariat would be impossible were it not for the active co-operation of the reformists and reactionary leaders of the seamen's union, who live on the sweat of the seamen and are prepared to commit any base treachery at any time. A year ago the result of this co-operation between the ship-owners and the reformists was a regulation of wages which legalised the misery of the seamen.

It was precisely against this regulation that the present strike, which is now approaching its end, broke out—of course against the will of the reformists and mainly under the leadership of the Red Seamen's Union. The striking seamen have almost everywhere put forward the same demands: (1) increase of pay to 7 to 7½ English pounds a month; (2) eight-hour day; (3) improvement in the exceedingly bad food and its control by a ship's committee; (4) abolition of the fascist penal regulations, and granting of trade union liberty; (5) unemployed seamen to be granted benefit to the extent of 40 drachma a day, free sleeping accommodation and food, and medical aid for themselves and their families; (6) engagement of seamen to be under the control of delegates elected by the majority of seamen; (7) general amnesty for working-class fighters in Greece.

No matter into what ports the Greek ships put in, everywhere the Greek seamen have ceased work; for instance, the crew of 17 merchant ships in Buenos Aires, over 20 in Rotterdam, all ships in the Italian ports, 56 in the ports of the Soviet Union, all ships in the English ports, and also in Marseilles, Bordeaux, Antwerp, Danzig, etc.

The ship-owners, whose position has been profoundly shaken by the strike, have received fullest support from the Greek government. In Piraeus and other Greek harbours all meetings of seamen were prohibited and several seamen were arrested. Also in the foreign ports the authorities of all

capitalist States have given the most active support to the Greek ship-owners and Consuls. In the German, English, and American ports whole crews were arrested and, after long journeys through various countries, handed over to the authorities in Piraeus, where they were brought before the court as “mutineers.” In Antwerp a Greek seaman was sentenced to one year’s imprisonment. Of course, in the ports of the Soviet Union the case was just the opposite; the Red Seamen’s Trade Union and clubs came to the aid of the strikers, supported them in every way and thus helped to bring about their victory.

Greek harbour officials were sent to England in order to terrorise the strikers and thus break their front. The Minister of Marine drew up a fascist Bill enabling the ship-owners to instantly dismiss any striking seamen, and on the other hand rewarded every strike-breaker by not allowing him to be dismissed during the whole of the following year.

Nevertheless, all these measures proved unable to compel the striking seamen to return to work. The strenuous efforts of the reformists to come to the aid of the ship-owners proved abortive in face of the fighting spirit of the seamen. The fact that the wages settlement, on account of which the strike broke out, was their own creation did not prevent the reformists posing from the first day of the strike as the “saviours” of the seamen. They sent their representatives to London in order to do everything on the spot to throttle the strike. The most cunning trick to which they resorted in order to hold back the indignation of the seamen consisted in convening an extraordinary “Congress” of seamen, to which, however, the representatives of the Red Seamen’s Union were not admitted. Nevertheless, the representatives of the unemployed seamen spoke in the name of the Seamen’s Union and exposed the reformists.

The Seamen and Harbour Workers’ International played a leading role in all foreign ports, and through its

sections helped the strikers financially and by the provision of free meals, as well as by big solidarity demonstrations. Thanks to the good agitation amongst the foreign unemployed seamen, blacklegging was prevented, in spite of the enormous unemployment. The secretary of the International was arrested in an English port and then expelled from the country. One of the leaders of the English seamen, **Pat Murphy**, was sentenced in Cardiff to 2½ months' imprisonment for actively supporting the seamen in their strike. Needless to say, the greatest support was accorded the Greek seamen in the Soviet Union ports.

In the first days of the strike the first victories were reported from English ports. Since then nearly all the striking ships succeeded in obtaining the full or partial fulfilment of their demands, especially increases in pay. In a few ports, such as Danzig, the authorities and the Greek Consul permitted ships to sail with incomplete crews, which is contrary to law, whilst the striking seamen were left behind to starve. This strike, which broke out against the will and the frantic efforts of the reformists and in spite of the terror of the State, has raised the prestige of the Red Seamen's and Harbour Workers' International. Messages of greetings came from ports all over the world. Hundreds of seamen have entered the Red Seamen's Union. In the next few weeks there will take place the All-Greek Red Congress of seamen.

[p. 883-884]

FASCISM AND ANTI-FASCISM IN GREECE.
by Kostas Grypos. *International Press*
Correspondence, Volume 14, No. 42,
August 03, 1934

Throughout the whole post-war period in Greece there has never been a purely parliamentary democracy in existence because both the army and the navy were always more or less directly a weapon in party politics, whilst the beginnings of fascism in the State apparatus accompanied the Greek Republic from the moment it left its cradle in 1924.

Greek democracy managed to keep its feet, though uncertainly, but this modicum of success was purchased at the price of democracy. Venizelos developed his parliamentary power into a five-year parliamentary dictatorship and encouraged the development of fascism in the State apparatus with his notorious anti-Communist law, the legal gagging of the State officials, the active support of the fascist bands, etc. The successor of Venizelos, the government of the people's party of Tsaldaris, of General Kondylis, General Metaxas and Admiral Chadyikyriakos, did its utmost to further this development of fascism in the State apparatus at an intensified speed.

Under Tsaldaris the anti-Communist law was used energetically and its provisions were made even more rigorous by a series of amendments facilitating the banishment of revolutionaries, practically abolishing the possibility of appeal against the sentence of banishment, placing all the banished men and women in a single concentration camp on a small island, concentrating all the banished Communists in one special fortress prison, stifling still further the revolutionary working-class press, and prohibiting all the revolutionary trade unions and all revolutionary organisations with the exception

of the Communist Party itself, which is permitted at least to maintain its legal name, as this freedom is expressly provided for in the Greek Constitution. The working class and the State officials have had their wages and salaries still further reduced and their constitutional rights still further cut down.

Under Tsaldaris the fascist bands found the same protection and encouragement as they had been accustomed to under Venizelos. The fascist organisation E.E.E. (National Union of Greece), which was founded in 1928 by former officers, ex-soldiers and intellectuals, tried a march on Athens in July, 1933, and for this purpose the government supplied them with railway facilities. The failure of the march was due to the action of the working class of Athens, which lost two dead and suffered many wounded in the resultant fighting. The upshot of the struggle buried the hopes of the fascists to make their organisation into a mass one.

However, the intense economic crisis which affects all branches of the economic system and the State finances, the internal antagonisms in the camp of the bourgeoisie and the energetic resistance of the working masses under the leadership of its revolutionary advance guard, are compelling the regime of the capitalists and rich landowners in Greece to adopt an open fascist dictatorship. The efforts in this direction have taken two forms: on the one hand the preparations for a *military fascist dictatorship* connected with one group of the bourgeoisie or the other, and secondly, the attempts to found a *mass fascist movement* along Mussolini or Hitler lines to overthrow the old political world and create a new “non-party” national front.

The military fascist dictatorship has many sympathisers in Greece as in all other Balkan countries, because this form is the safest and is not likely to indulge in dangerous demagogic experiments, because it does not provoke the working masses to the same extent as open fascism, and because it facilitates

the struggle of the capitalist groups behind it against their competitors. Thus we observe that both the government under Tsaldaris and the opposition under Venizelos are feverishly preparing their own brands of the military fascist dictatorship. The leaders of the Tsaldaris brand are to be Generals *Kondylis* and *Metaxas*, whilst the proposed leader of the Venizelos brand of the military fascist dictatorship is *General Plastiras*, who at the moment is in banishment. The officers corps in the army, navy and air force are ranging themselves around these two opposing camps. Amongst the masses, and particularly amongst the fugitive colonies, fighting organisations are already being formed and even armed to a certain extent, such as the royalist “Political Association” of Tsaldaris, and the “Democratic Guards” of Venizelos, etc. At least once a week Tsaldaris and General Kondylis threaten their enemies with the “dictatorship,” whilst in the press and in the senate the Venizelos supporters, who have boycotted parliament for weeks now, answer with the threat of civil war, should the dictatorship be proclaimed.

However, a one-sided military fascist dictatorship has the disadvantage that it does not set up any united bourgeois front against the masses of the working people and that as a result of the disruption in the camp of the ruling classes more and more toilers tend to go over to the camp of the Communists. For this reason serious bourgeois circles are beginning to call for an entirely new fascist mass movement to open up a new era of salvation for the Greek capitalists and rich landowners. About six months ago this desire was loudly expressed in the columns of the capitalist newspaper “*Hestia*.” Big bankers like Koryzis, Loverdos (the brother of the Finance Minister), high military officers like General Masarakis, the Greek Professor Dr. Luros, and many others, form the backbone of this movement and have already contributed ten million drachmas to a fund for the purpose. It is reported that the special shirts to be worn by the

supporters of this new movement have already been ordered, but what the colour is to be is not yet known. An interesting factor is that the newspaper “Hestia” maintains the closest and most friendly relations to the British Embassy in Athens. It is well known that the British government is urgently interested in securing order and internal stability in Greece, and as its direct connections with the Venizelos party are not sufficient to obtain this aim, it is also supporting the foundation of this new fascist mass movement.

All these fascist and military-fascist attempts express the wish of the capitalists of Greece, but the final word of the working masses of Greece has not yet been spoken and *the anti-fascist movement* is spreading amongst the masses of the people. The Committee against Fascism and War founded at the initiative of the Communist Party (Amsterdam movement), together with the All-Greek youth and Women’s Committee, succeeded within a few months in founding a strong anti-fascist mass movement. Not only all the left-wing unions, but many of the reformist unions, against the will of their leaders, a number of small tradesmen’s organisations, and almost *all the organisations of the State officials*, are taking an active part in the anti-fascist movement. Hundreds of intellectuals, including many doctors, lawyers and whole groups of students have openly signed the anti-fascist programme, a circumstance which caused the “Hestia” to remark that the intellectuals of Greece seemed to have more to do with the police (as victims) than with the intelligentsia (the fascist capitalist brand).

The *first anti-fascist congress* was an alarm signal and mobilised tens of thousands of toilers all over the country, but at the last moment it was prohibited by the authorities. In defiance of the prohibition 2,500 delegates to the congress attempted to hold the congress. Fierce street fighting which lasted for hours took place and 400 delegates were arrested. A group of 210 delegates held a skeleton congress in a wood near

Athens. Later on a number of them were arrested in Volo and Salonika on their return from Athens. The *Youth Committee* succeeded in holding its congress illegally, although the *women's* conference was prohibited. The anti-fascist weekly newspaper "*Anti-Fascistiko Metopo*" and the illustrated anti-fascist newspaper "*Anti-Fascistas*" have both reached very large editions.

Although a series of strikes has been carried out with antifascist slogans, for instance, the strike of 1,400 boot and shoe workers in Athens, which was definitely a political and anti-fascist protest strike, the anti-fascist work in the factories is still insufficient and is not in accordance with the other anti-fascist activities. The Communist Party and the Committee against Fascism and War are therefore concentrating their efforts on improving the situation in the factories.

This growth and popularisation of the anti-fascist struggle has compelled a number of the big capitalist newspapers, such as the "Akropolis," the "Anexartitos" and others which have worked up large circulations by anti-capitalist demagoguery, to take up an anti-fascist line in order not to lose their subscribers. As a result these newspapers contained extremely sharp criticisms of the happenings of June 30. In general the happenings in Germany have made a deep impression on Greek public opinion and it is already clear that Greek fascism, if not killed, has at least been very seriously damaged as a result. Big governmental newspapers like the "Proia" wrote of "medieval barbarism in Germany," etc., whilst in a leading article the biggest oppositional newspaper "Elephtheron Vima" strongly advised the Greek people to keep clear of any such catastrophe as has been brought over Germany by Hitler fascism.

It is already possible to say that as a result of the development of the anti-fascist movement and as a result of the contradictions in the capitalist camp itself, the chances for a

mass fascist movement in Greece have been considerably reduced if not completely destroyed. The fascist bands of the E.E.E., the monarchist yellow-shirts, and the Pangalos "Iron Peace" clique, are already in a state of disintegration, and the movement sponsored by the "Hestia" has not dared to show its face for months.

On the other hand, the danger of a *military fascist dictatorship* is growing. It is made all the more dangerous by the fact that its agents speak of everything, "the maintenance of law and order and the State authority" and so on, but never about fascism unless to condemn it. The anti-fascist working-class movement, under the leadership of the Communist Party, is opposing military fascism as it opposes fascism in general. It exposes the fascist nature of many of the "anti-fascist" slogans which are put forward particularly by the reformist, agrarian and Trotskyist leaders, and it popularises the slogan, "*Fascism will not be permitted to succeed!*" together with the slogan, "*General Strike against military fascism!*"

[p. 1077-1078]

**THE BALKANS. *International Press*
Correspondence, Volume 14, No. 54,
*October 19, 1934***

Letter From Belgrade By M. G.

It is a popular axiom in Yugoslavia that none of the Serbian kings and rulers have died a natural death during the past century. The popular opinion has once again been vindicated. King Alexander has joined the long line of assassinated rulers.

The military fascist dictatorship which rules Yugoslavia was established on January 6, 1929. The abandonment of the methods of the democratic parliamentary dictatorship and the adoption of an open fascist dictatorship by means of violence, the attempt to crush the movement of the workers and peasants and of the oppressed national minorities with the sword, and the opening up of an offensive along the whole line against the workers, peasants and oppressed nationalities, were the characteristics which placed the coup d'état of King Alexander in the same category with the seizure of power by fascist movements in other European countries. However, the military fascist dictatorship of King Alexander and his henchmen had several peculiarities all its own which have considerably influenced the development of the class struggle in Yugoslavia.

The most important of these peculiarities are, first of all, that the military fascist regime in Yugoslavia is the representative expression of the dictatorship of the dominant Serbs within a State comprising various nationalities.

Secondly, the dominant Pan-Serbian bourgeoisie adopted the weapon of an open fascist dictatorship at a time when the bourgeois democratic revolution was not completed. The

dictatorship is directed therefore not only against the working class and against the peasantry, but also against the oppressed national minorities, the Croats, the Slovenians, the Macedonians, the Montenegrins, and the Albanians, etc.

Thirdly, when it adopted the weapon of an open fascist dictatorship the Pan-Serbian bourgeoisie was unable to use a united and organised fascist movement enjoying mass support, because such a movement did not exist in 1929, and all efforts to create one since have failed. The Pan-Serbian bourgeoisie had to use the influential officers' clique (the so-called "White Hand" organisation) and the court clique around King Alexander. The military fascist dictatorship was unable to solve any of the problems whose solution King Alexander had promised in the manifesto he issued when he carried out his coup d'état on January 6, 1929; it was also unable to provide the Pan-Serbian bourgeoisie with a reliable mass basis, and, as the indignation and dissatisfaction of the working class and peasant masses increased rapidly as a result of the intensification of the economic crisis, there were signs at the end of 1931 of a crisis in the camp of the dictatorship itself. The unpopular General **Petar Schivkovitch**, who was the first Prime Minister of the dictatorship, had to resign, and King Alexander made an attempt to legalise his regime in the eyes of the masses by drawing up a fascist constitution. The increasing pressure necessitated the opening of other safety valves and "elections" were ordered, to replace half the members in parliament and in the senate, the other half being "appointed" by the king himself.

However, all these measures proved insufficient to prevent the further development of the revolutionary resistance of the masses of the workers and peasants against the dictatorship, and the influence of the Communist Party rapidly increased; 1932 was a year in which the revolutionary movement of the workers and peasants developed rapidly. There was mass

resistance on the part of the peasants against the forced sale of farms, etc., for unpaid taxes. Whole villages rose against the Serbian oppressors, and State stores were raided and their foodstuffs distributed amongst the starving masses. In the towns the strike movements on the part of the workers increased, and in the second half of 1932 and the first half of 1933 the wave of strikes caused the whole edifice of the military fascist dictatorship to shake to its foundations. In the coastal districts of Croatia (Lika and Northern Dalmatia) an insurrectionary movement broke out and was crushed with brutal violence. The Croat guerilla groups were led by the Croat fascist leader **Pavelitch**, who is in the services of fascist Italy, but it is significant that the struggle was opened up by the armed attack by the "Utaschi" on the police barracks Bruschna in Lika shouting the slogans: "Long live an independent Croatia! Long live Communism!" In prison it was also noteworthy that thousands of captured Croat peasants and members of the "Utaschi" needed no more than a talk with the imprisoned Communists in order to win them over to the alliance of the revolutionary workers, peasants and oppressed peoples.

During the past few months the differences of opinion in the camp of the ruling fascist clique on the best means of maintaining the fascist dictatorship and combating the advancing revolutionary movement have greatly intensified. New fascist organisations have been formed, "Boj" and "Yugoslovenska Akeiya," and these bodies are formally in opposition to the official fascist party, "Yugoslovenska Narodna Stranka." These new organisations and "movements" are striving to get a foothold in the working masses by means of forthright social demagoguery. On the other hand, the activity of the armed fascist bands of the military fascist dictatorship, "Narodna Obrana" and "Techetnitzki," have increased considerably of late. There were indications that these

organisations, with the king at their head and supported by the military, were about to make another coup d'état along Bulgarian lines.

In this situation King Alexander, who also controlled completely the foreign political connections of the country, took various measures directed towards a strengthening of the position of Pan-Serbian Yugoslavia in the Balkans and in Central Europe. Above all, the Yugoslavian government succeeded in weakening the position of its greatest enemy—Italy—in the Balkans. The pro-Italian government in Bulgaria was ejected by means of a coup d'état and a pro-French government put in its place. The over-zealous colonisation of Albania by Italian imperialism helped Serbian imperialism to strengthen its positions in Albania and to improve its relation to King Achmed Zogu. The intensification of the contradictions between German and Italian imperialism gave King Alexander a high trump in his hand and with this trump card it was his intention to prevent the threatening rapprochement between France and Italy, which was to take place at the expense of Yugoslavia. In the question of the restoration of normal relations with the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia proved a hard nut for France to crack. King Alexander harboured dreams of one day becoming the king of all the Slavs and he was unwilling to abandon this illusion and recognise the Soviet Union; so that he offered obstinate resistance to all the French proposals in this direction.

King Alexander was very unpopular with his own people. He was notorious as a despot, a tyrant, and the direct cause of the brutal terror which crushed the whole country. His ambitious nature made him the ideal tool of the most reactionary, chauvinist and imperialist section of the ruling Pan-Serbian bourgeoisie, Alexander's elder brother Georg was forced to abandon his rights to the throne in favour of Alexander. Since 1924 Georg has been interned in a cloister in

Nisch. Shortly before the beginning of the world war Alexander's father Peter was sent to a hospital and kept there away from all influence on politics. Ugly tumours have been spread about the nature of his father's death. Alexander always sought to buy over his political opponents, and if this method failed he would then adopt the most ferocious brutality. In 1917 he caused one of his best officers, Apis Dimitrievitch, well known for his connection with the Serajevo assassination, the leader of the "Narodna Obrana" and of the liberal officers' organisation, to be shot.

At Alexander's personal orders well-known and popular Communist leaders like **Mark Sef Lius, Diura Diakovitch**, and five secretaries of the Young Communist League were flung into prison and murdered there. At Alexander's orders the leaders of the Croat people, **Stepan Raditsch, Bassaritchek**, and others, were assassinated in the Yugoslavian parliament in Belgrade, and the Croat leader **Predavitz**, who had escaped the massacre in the parliament building, was later murdered on the streets. Characteristic for the regime of police oppression and medieval brutality which Alexander Karageorgivitch established over Yugoslavia is the fact that in his political testament he appointed the commandant of the gendarmerie, the notorious oppressor of the Macedonian people, **General Tomitch**, as the representative in the Regency Council of Prince Paul.

Since the existence of the Yugoslavian State Alexander energetically opposed any amnesty for the tens of thousands of political prisoners. Yugoslavia is the only country in Europe where no Communist political prisoner has been amnestied since 1918. Thanks to his brutal exploits the hatred of the working class against the bourgeoisie in Yugoslavia was concentrated on the person of Alexander, as also was the hatred of the oppressed peoples and national minorities against the Pan-Serbian oppressors, and the hatred of the peasants against

the rich land-owners and speculators.

King Alexander was the central figure of the military fascist dictatorship of the Pan-Serbian bourgeoisie. There is no doubt that his assassination will greatly accelerate the development of the crisis in the camp of the dictatorship. The intensification of the terrorist measures which has taken place throughout the country since the assassination will not succeed in holding up the development of the revolutionary movement and of the progress of disintegration in the camp of the fascists. The immediate consequence of the assassination of Alexander will be an intensification of all the internal contradictions in Yugoslavia.

The Communist Party of Yugoslavia strongly condemns all terrorist actions and equally strongly condemns those provocateurs who are attempting to exploit the assassination in order to plunge the people into a world war once again. The Communist Party will utilise the increased disintegration in the fascist camp as a result of the assassination in order to mobilise the forces of the revolutionary workers and peasants.

It will depend on the activity of the Communist Party and on its leadership of the revolutionary movement of the workers, peasants and oppressed peoples to what degree the masses will be able to utilise the increasing disintegration in the camp of the ruling classes in order to deliver the final blow against the military fascist dictatorship.

The Assassination of the King of Yugoslavia and Its Political Background By R. Bridgeman (London) (International Secretary of the League Against Imperialism)

The shooting of King Alexander of Yugoslavia and of the

Foreign Minister of France at Marseilles on October 9, and the consternation created by this outrage, have created a new situation, which may have far-reaching results.

The reasons for this royal visit to France were the desire of the French government to demonstrate the undiminished solidity of the alliance with Yugoslavia and to help France's ally to come to terms with Italy. This is rendered necessary by the rearmament of Germany, by the Polish-German-Hungarian rapprochement and by the consequent collapse of the former Franco-Polish alliance. Apart from the anti-Italian feeling which has been visibly growing in Yugoslavia, there has been evidence that King Alexander was co-operating with the German Nazis.

After the assassination of the Austrian Chancellor, Dollfuss, Alexander had opened his frontiers and granted asylum to the Nazi insurgents who fled from Austria and had even provided them with passports valid for return trips to Czechoslovakia and Hungary. Alexander gave Goering, the Prussian dictator, a magnificent reception when he visited Belgrade a few months ago; he had allowed freedom to the German Youth organisation in Yugoslavia, while any movement of his own national minorities—Slovenes, Croats and Macedonians—was fiercely repressed. A commercial treaty between Germany and Yugoslavia has recently been concluded. There was, in fact, abundant evidence which had thoroughly alarmed the vigilant **Barthou** that Hitler and Alexander were drawing nearer together. Moreover, Alexander had territorial ambitions not only as regards Albania, where he was continually coming into conflict with Italian imperialism, not only in the direction of Salonica to obtain access to the Aegean, but in Austrian Carinthia and in the Slav hinterland of Trieste and Fiume, because of his desire for naval supremacy in the Adriatic.

After the world war, 1914-1918, the victorious bloc of

imperialists dictated new frontiers in Europe to suit their own interests. A series of imperialist vassal States was founded: Poland, Rumania, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia and Greece.

The conquerors shamefacedly betrayed their pledges to grant national self-determination and to protect the rights of national minorities. Over 40 millions of people in Europe were robbed of their right to national freedom, including Ukrainians, White Russians, Germans, Alsatians, Catalans, Basques, Hungarians, Slovaks, Croats, Slovenes, Macedonians, Albanians, Montenegrins, Thracians, Bulgarians and Moldavians.

In no other part of Europe is so large a part of the population subject to government by an alien race as in the Balkans, which can be considered as a typical example of the oppression of minorities.

Forty per cent. of the 17 millions of inhabitants of Rumania belong to oppressed nationalities. More than 50 per cent. of the total Yugoslav population of 14 millions belong to oppressed nationalities. In Bulgaria, in the district of Petritch alone, live over 200,000 Macedonians who are brutally oppressed. In Greece there are Macedonians, Turks (in Thrace), Bulgarians, Kutzo-Valachs and Jews who are deprived of their most elementary rights.

Apart from the manufacture of war material, there has been hardly any industrial development in the Balkan countries. They have been hit very severely by the fall in the value of raw materials, particularly as they are weighed down under the burden of immense loans "granted" by foreign imperialists for military purposes.

In no other part of Europe is the standard of living of the working class as low as it is in the Balkans.

In Yugoslavia the disastrous effects of the world crisis have been heightened by an agrarian crisis. Poverty and starvation are the lot of the peasants and agricultural labourers

in Yugoslavia to-day, while the large landowners, and the richer peasants are shifting the burden of the crisis on to the shoulders of the poor peasants and workers by raising rents, lowering wages and lengthening the working day. The prices of agricultural produce are continually falling, whilst the big industrialists are able to maintain high prices for industrial goods by means of cartels, so that the peasant has to pay three times as much for what he buys to-day as he did before the war, any double as much as in 1929. At the same time, the banks and moneylenders are exploiting the peasants and forcing them to sell their land.

Between January 6, 1929, when King Alexander abolished parliamentary government and established his own single-handed dictatorship, until January 1, 1934, 285 political trials took place in Yugoslavia, 1,278 men were condemned to 3,468 years of imprisonment, 10 life sentences and 15 death sentences were passed, and 140 Republicans, Socialists and Communists were put to death without trial.

It is a grim and shocking record—the record of a fascist dictatorship, with the king and a small camarilla of military officers as the executive.

Last November, when 196 political prisoners at **Mitrovica** were on hunger strike, which had reduced several of them to the point of death, the Civil Liberties Press Panel addressed a telegram to the Yugoslav Minister in London, appealing to the Yugoslav government to grant the reasonable demands of the prisoners, which were:—

- (1) Not to be flogged.
- (2) The right to receive medical attention.
- (3) The right not to die either of starvation or of cold.

The information as to their condition had been obtained by **Maitre Willard**, the well-known French lawyer who had assisted the defendants in the Leipzig trial, and had been expelled from Germany because of his activity on behalf of the

accused.

The **League Against Imperialism** has always made it clear that it is the terrorism of alien imperialist governments which is responsible for the terrorist outrages by individuals, such as the shooting of King Alexander or of the Archduke Francis Ferdinand, and that the struggle against imperialism cannot be successfully carried out by individual acts, however heroic and self-sacrificing the motive behind them may be. The League entirely condemns political murder, because it is not by the individual act but only by the conscious mass action of the workers and peasants, and of the youth especially, that subject nations can be set free.

The only real solution of the national question witnessed in the post-war period is the system of the **Soviet Union** formed in the territory of the former tsarist empire. This system guarantees absolute equality, voluntary co-operation and economic development for the various nations united in it and makes possible the development of national culture.

The League demands **the right of self-determination** for all the national minorities in the Balkan countries, including the right to sever themselves from the country to which they are attached, and warns the workers against the slogan of a "Balkan Confederation," which is being demagogically advocated by some of the imperialist Powers. It demands also complete equality and protection against all forms of national oppression, such as those which have been practised in Yugoslavia and other Balkan countries, such as the attempts to destroy the language of the national minorities and to impose the use of the Serbian language.

The League demands complete freedom of the mother tongue in word and writing.

The League protests against the sending of soldiers from the national minorities to other parts of the country, and against the occupation of the territory of the country, and against the

occupation of the territory of the country, and the occupation of the territory of the national minorities by soldiers of foreign nationalities.

There are more than 400,000,000 people subject to British imperialism to-day throughout one-quarter of the world. They are oppressed and exploited, just as the national minorities in Europe are being oppressed and exploited.

The League calls on British workers to join hands with the oppressed peoples within the British Empire, in the Balkans, and wherever one country is subjected to the rule of another, with a view to the overthrow of the imperialist system and the liberation of the conquered nations.

Increased Monarchist Propaganda in Greece. By K. Grypos

The year 1924 saw the overthrow of the royal house of Gluecksburg and the setting up of a Republic in Greece. The monarchy had to payoff the disastrous military events in Asia Minor and be the scapegoat in the eyes of the working masses. Naturally, that part of the bourgeoisie which is monarchist (the landowners, a part of banking capital) and which gathers round the People's Party of *Tsaldaris*, did not abandon hopes of a royalist restoration.

For ten years, however, this party was compelled to adapt itself to the new conditions. Sentimentality had to give way in face of hard reality, thanks in no small measure to the great bankers (Loverdos, Eflambios and others), who acquired great influence in this party in the post-war years. But ex-Prince *Nicholas*, uncle of the dethroned King *George II*, eagerly continued his intrigues abroad during the whole of this time.

The taking over of power in 1932 by *Tsaldaris* party, however, changed the situation in favour of the monarchists.

For the first time in ten years the democratic camp of Venizelosists had to yield up the reins of government, and the failure of General *Plastiras*' putsch on March 3, 1933, reduced the number of democratic officers in the army. The Minister for defence, General Kondilyis, a renegade from the Venizelos camp, together with the monarchist General *Metaxas*, acquired a dominating influence over the armed forces.

The monarchists considered the time favourable for intensifying their propaganda. The ex-king issued a proclamation to "his Greek people." Agents of the royal family made frequent visits to Greece. In governing circles of Greece there was a talk for some time of the great intriguer Nicholas being made President of the Republic. These first reports were received with great hostility owing to contempt in which the royal family of Gluecksburg was held by the Greek population. The Venizelos camp also commenced a fierce fight against the restoration and a demagogic campaign for the defence of the Republic.

The last five months, together with the tremendous intensification of the political crisis and the quarrels over the new election of the President for the next five years, brought an unprecedented increase of monarchist propaganda. The occasion was the engagement of the British Prince *George* to the Greek Princess *Marina*, daughter of Prince Nicholas. All at once, the whole of the governing press in Greece filled its columns with melodramatic descriptions of this event.

But at the same time the Greek press has suddenly become interested in other sprigs of royalty. After eleven years the Greek government discovered for the first time that the eleven-year-old Crown Prince of Yugoslavia, who in the meantime has been proclaimed King Peter II, following the death of his father, has a birthday. And the Greek government decorated him with an order on this happy occasion. A few weeks ago the Crown Prince and Princess of Sweden were in Athens and were

received with the greatest honours by the government and the President of the Republic.

The increased monarchist propaganda, however, is not confined to the ideological field. Various monarchist fighting organisations have been formed. The largest of these is the National Patriotic Union, which issues the newspaper "Hellinismos" and is financially supported by the big monarchist capitalists *Philon* and *Beis Mavromichailis*. This organisation is closely connected with the ex-chief of the secret police *Polychronopoulos*, who, is in prison on account of his complicity in the attempt on the life of Venizelos, and with the monarchist-fascist organisation "Iron Peace," which recently attempted a putsch.

This fresh campaign of monarchist propaganda does not centre round the person of ex-King George II, but of the recently engaged British *Prince George*. It is known that in the last few months the British government have repeatedly attempted to bring Greek foreign policy, which through Tsaldaris is under the influence of France (the Balkan Pact), back into the British camp. An inducement like the monarchist restoration, accompanied by the greater inducement of a gift to Greece of the Island of Cyprus, would be more than enough for the Tsaldaris camp. Seventy years ago British imperialism pursued the same policy by accompanying the enthronement of its agent the Danish Prince Wilhelm with the "present" of the Ionian Islands.

The Venizelos camp has no fundamental objection to a restoration of the monarchy in the person of a British Prince. It is also significant that of late there has been constant talk of the well-known Anglophile politician, *Michailokopulos*, taking part in the government.

It is probable that the most democratic officers will strongly resist any monarchist restoration, and other political leaders in the opposition camp cannot remain indifferent. A

monarchist restoration, however, will find its deadly enemy in the ranks of the *working masses*. They have already proved this on every occasion and will offer sharp resistance to any attempt of this kind.

[p. 1429-1432]

ANTI-FASCIST UNITED FRONT IN GREECE

**By Komos. *International Press*
Correspondence, Volume 14, No. 60,
December 01, 1934**

The Communist Party of Greece is able to record great achievements in the setting up of the united front. In reply to the united front agreement of the parties (C.P. of Greece, Socialist Party and Agrarian Party), and of the trade unions (C.G.T., C.G.T.U., autonomous trade unions), the fascist organisations decided to set up a national united front and to call a Congress for November 17 and 18. There exist great differences of opinion between the fascist leaders, but the setting up of the anti-fascist united front of the toilers struck such terror into the heart of the government, of the general staff and of the ruling class, that every effort was made to weld the fascist organisations into a united front. The fascist congress was to represent the first step in this direction. The Communist Party immediately called the attention of the workers to this action. The representatives of the anti-fascist parties and of the trade unions met together and adopted a joint decision in which they denounced the organisation of the fascist Congress as a provocation of the toilers and called upon the masses to prevent the holding of this Congress. This decision was signed by the four parties forming the united front: the Communist Party, the Socialist Party, the Social-Democratic Party and the Agrarian Party, as well as by the three trade unions. A committee consisting of the representatives of the anti-fascist parties interviewed the Minister for the Interior, protested against the calling of the fascist Congress and demanded its prohibition. Following the proposal of the representative of the Communist Party, the reformist railway workers' union decided to carry out a half-hour's strike on November 17. The

strike was 100 per cent. solid and the meetings of the strikers discussed in detail the question of the fascist Congress.

These joint anti-fascist actions aroused a great response among the toiling masses, but filled the ruling class with terror. When the representatives of the parties and trade unions held a joint meeting, the premises of the meeting hall were suddenly raided by police, the delegates searched and their names and addresses taken.

A few days ago the fascists belonging to the "Triena" organisation organised a regular raid on the premises of the central organ of the Communist Party "Rizospastis." About 30 hooligans forced their way into the premises and began to smash everything. The editors and officials who were present offered resistance and drove the fascist heroes out of the building. The police hastened to the aid of the fascists. Two hundred policemen occupied the building. A regular pitched battle ensued, in which the Communists courageously defended themselves. The police, under the command of the Minister of the Interior, who personally conducted the "crushing of the revolt," proceeded in the most brutal manner. After a battle lasting 2½ hours the police emerged victorious, Twenty-one persons, all of them Communists, were wounded, three very seriously. All the Communists on the premises were arrested, the rooms ransacked and destroyed. The Public Prosecutor himself estimated the damage at 200,000 drachmas.

The bourgeois papers attempt to put the blame for this affair on to the Communists. The Communists are said to have provoked the fascists. The working class, the toilers and intellectuals are highly indignant at this brutal action of the police and the fascists. The parties of the working class at once issued a joint protest declaration. The trade unions are preparing for a strike. In Kalamata a demonstration of 2,500 toilers took place. This monstrous provocation by the fascists, who aim at robbing the toilers of the last remnants of their

liberties, will not remain unanswered.

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**THE C.P. OF GREECE FOR THE UNITED
FRONT By I. Komos (Athens).
*International Press Correspondence,
Volume 14, No. 64, December 22, 1934***

The bourgeois-landlord government of Greece, entangled in serious home and foreign political contradictions, is attempting to maintain itself by means of a savage offensive against the toiling masses. This offensive is expressed on the one hand in a constant lowering of the standard of living of the toiling masses and on the other hand in a systematic attempt to deprive them of their few remaining liberties.

The constant rise of the index for articles of daily necessity from 17 points last year to 22, the cutting down of wages and the increase in the number of unemployed, the abolition of the rent restriction acts, the new taxes—these are some of the measures tending to lower the standard of living of the toiling masses.

The toiling masses of Greece have given a fitting reply to these measures: more than 100,000 workers struck work in the first nine months of 1934, i.e., the same number as in the whole of 1933, as compared with 80,000 during the whole of 1932. In 1932 50 per cent. of the strikers were under the leadership of the red trade unions, in 1933 65 per cent., and in the first six months of 1934 already 70 per cent.

It was in this situation that the Second Plenum of the C.P. of Greece was held. The main item on the agenda of the Plenum was the offensive of the exploiters and of fascism and the struggle for unity of action of the toilers. In a resolution the Plenum stated:—

“The situation of our country is developing towards fierce

outbursts of the people which will shake the foundations of the bourgeois-landlord Greek government.”

The correctness of this statement is confirmed even by the bourgeois newspapers, which openly declare that the situation in Greece is worse than that in Spain. The Second Plenum clearly set forth the tasks of the Party.

“All efforts of the C.P. of Greece and of all revolutionary mass organisations must be directed towards extending the mass struggles of the workers and toilers and raising them to the level of the anti-fascist tasks of the moment.”

The Second Plenum emphasised the necessity of strengthening the anti-fascist struggle; whilst at the same time the economic partial struggles of the workers and peasants must not be neglected. It designated as false the view that the political and anti-fascist tasks exclusively dominate this period.

The Second Plenum was held at a time when the open invitation of the C.P. of Greece and of the C.G.T.U. to all reformists and agrarian organisations and parties to join the anti-fascist front, and the proposal submitted by the C.G.T.U. to the two reformist trade union federations to set up trade union unity were accepted and led to the signing of a Pact on October 5 against the bourgeois dictatorship, to a number of united front actions in many localities, and a number of joint meetings. It is true, the leaders of the reformist organisations, have not yet carried out the terms of the Pact, nor have they shown any great desire to adopt the proposals of the C.P. of Greece as a whole. But the successes achieved up to now are quite considerable, and therefore the Second Plenum, whilst sharply criticising the attitude of the reformist leaders, emphasises the role of the C.P. of Greece as the advance-guard and the champion of the united front struggle of the toilers against the exploiters and the fascists.

The Plenum approved of the work of the Political Bureau and of the Party in general and called upon all organisations to

increase their efforts in order to follow the example of the organisations of **Drama, Katerini, Levadia**, of the railway workers of **Macedonia**, and the workers of **Athens**, who have established the united front.

Finally the Plenum emphasised the great role being played by the **anti-fascist groups of ten**. As is known, the raid of the fascists and of the police on the **Rizospastis**, the central organ of the C.P. of Greece, was courageously repelled thanks to the presence of the members of the anti-fascist groups of ten. In general, good results, have been achieved in Athens with the setting up of the anti-fascist groups of ten.

The Second Plenum also dealt with the agrarian demands of the Party, criticised the shortcomings and recorded the progress made in the organisational work of the Party and issued a draft of statutes of the C.P., which will be published and submitted to discussion in the Party press.

It is now necessary, as the Plenum states, “for the whole Party, unanimously and resolutely, to raise the organisational and mass work to such a level that it shall meet, the demands set by the historical requirements of the present situation.”

[p. 1727]