

INTERNATIONAL WORKING MEN'S ASSOCIATION



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THE FIRST OF MAY -- DEMONSTRATION OF REVOLUTIONARY CONSCIOUSNESS

SINCE the First of May, 1886, 68 years have brought changes in the type of struggle the working class must carry out for the emancipation of humanity. In the 19th Century, oppression was a direct and brutal tyranny of the employing class, supported by the State, which protected its interests. In 1954, most of the world's workers no longer know their own "boss": yet their conditions have not improved. Statistics are not available on this question, but the "Boss" State controls an ever-increasing number of workers, absorbed by State-controlled or nationalised concerns. This evolution should logically prompt workers to consider the State in this new form, but skilfully-conducted propoganda tends to make them ignore it.

The evolution of relations between capital and labour fully confirms the position of those who drew up our doctrine and our tactics of struggle. The Chicago Martyrs, for exemple, who were executed proclaiming their undying opposition both to the employing class and the State, their Anarchist beliefs, not wishing -- as did the Marxists -- to dissociate the State and capitalism, and to strengthen the State in the false hope of seizing control of it to overthrow capitalism.

Long and conclusive experience has proved them right: all support or collaboration, in whatever form, direct or indirect, with the State only results in strengthening it and leads eventually to an even worse subjection of the world of labour.

The modern barons of industry and commerce, thanks to the power of finance and to the new means which application of scientific discoveries has made possible, have converted the State into a technical apparatus, which strives to give to countries, and through pacts, a unified control.

Through a strict system of collective regulation, the State, whether it fights against capitalism to substitute itself, or whether it supports the capitalist system, leads to the subjection of the workers. The absorption of the private sector by the State results in an even more effective domination than that of private capitalism: it is the coronation of State Socialism.

State or reformist socialism changed the road of the workers which, up to the end of the 19th Century, had been a struggle of conscious minorities to obtain greater freedom and well-being for the people. By launching out on the conquest of the political power of the State, by municipal or parliamentary collaboration, or yet again by secret intercourse with the proleteriat's classic enemy, finance, the political parties have brought the majority of the workers to the most facile solutions, to labour or political internationals under Marxist leadership.

Together, they have thus rejuvenated the State: nationalism, once weakened by the action of the International Working Men's

Association, our First International, today recruits blind and fanatical supporters among workers decoyed by a false internationalism; in the name of economic salvation of the State, communists and socialists are not afraid to enslave other peoples. This policy can be carried out only with the aid of armed force, to a point where budgets for the army, navy, air force and police absorb, through taxation on wages, half the energy expended by manual and intellectual workers.

Absorption by the State goes even further. When machine production became established, a century or so ago, in the more highly developed countries, socialists foresaw a new world, in which injustice and social inequality would be banished. These struggles of conscious minorities brought together scientists and workers; divided by their origins, they were united in the search for universal well-being. But, at the dawn of our own machiavellian century, politicians destroyed this growing unity. If science once represented a hope for conquering obstacles opposed to human emancipation, it is now - to the misery of the oppressed - devoted to channels which lead to the destruction of life.

How can it be that scientists involved in thermo-nuclear research have directed all their efforts towards total destruction? How is it that men of science, and certain physicists in particular, have abandoned the traditions of pure research to apply themselves to discoveries with a sole purpose: destruction, thus making themselves accomplices in methods of enslavement.

Their position doubtless arises from their ideological and economic integration with a State system: they arrive at total consecration to National Defence, even at the price of total destruction of people and freedom.

It is high time to realise where this exaltation of the State leads. Times have changed? Yes, but only insofar as forms which were present 50 years ago have now been pushed to their extremes. In this world, which is clouded by the concept of the "Messiah" State and the enslavement of thought to safeguard it, the road to salvation is one of not separating economic struggles from the development and strengthening of human consciousness -- ideas posed by the International Working Men's Association in its First Manifesto:-

"The Congress of the International Working Men's Association declares that this association, with the societies and individuals which belong to it, recognises as the basis of its conduct towards all men truth, justice and morality, without distinction of colour, belief or nationality."

The IWMA, spiritual heir of that First International, is the only hope of the world of labour. Is not the proof that our aims and principles are so directly bound up with our methods of struggle? No compromise with capitalism or the State: compromises always end by bringing results directly opposed to those which are sought.

No compromise, either, by taking part in wars -- a compromise almost everywhere put forward as the solution of the lesser evil. After all, what can we have in common with that terrible weapon of destruction, the atomic bomb?

We want to destroy the capitalist and statist structure of the world and the H-Bomb would be of no service to us whatever. We are interested solely in discoveries which can raise the well-being and culture of the people.

We can go forward, without betraying ourselves and without despair, despite the slowness of our way and the retreats inflicted on us by a coalition of repressive forces; conscious minorities must end by making the right prevail.

After so much experience and the confirmation that is daily given us through the setbacks suffered by all other systems, the International Working Men's Association reaffirms on this First of May its aims, its principles and its tactics: Against all collaboration with the employers or the State, against all war and all forms of nationalism, against all oppression and colonialism, through the direct action and universal solidarity of those who fight for emancipation.

For the IWMA Secretariat, R. LAMBERT, Secretary.

SPAIN

NEW PROOFS OF THE CNT'S CONSTANCY

WITH deep emotion we have received a letter written in one of the gloomy prisons of the Franco regime.

So that the courage of these brothers in the struggle for our principles and ideals may serve as an example for our future action, we republish the letter, assuring them of the complete solidarity of all members of the IWMA.

IWMA -- CNT

Prison X, Spain.

12th December, 1953

To the Secretariat of the IWMA. To all sections throughout the world affiliated to that international organisation. To all revolutionary anarcho-syndicalists throughout the world.

Comrades! Firstly, our most cordial greetings to the Secretariat of the IWMA and to all revolutionary syndicalist comrades affiliated to that international organisation. We want this greeting to express our determination to continue the struggle against Francoism, despite the terrible sufferings we endure in this cursed and suffocating penitentiary, convinced that we are not alone and that we shall finally triumph with your co-operation and that of all IWMA comrades. Thus, through our Intercontinental Secretariat of the CNT of Spain in Exile, we wanted to let you have evidence of the sympathy, spiritual identification and confidence of the anarcho-syndicalist comrades imprisoned here by the Franco-Falangist regime.

You cannot imagine our satisfaction at the resolution to recognise as the sole CNT of Spain, the National Committee of the CNT of the Interior which attended the VIII Congress of July 19, 1953, together with the Intercontinental Secretariat of the CNT of Spain in Exile, our sole representatives, since it is they who respect the statutes and principles of the IWMA.

It was time to find a solution to this problem and, in all justice, the one you have supplied: in our name, tell all sections of the IWMA throughout the world that there can be no doubt about this, that it was not a thoughtless action to find your solution, and also to avert the return of those troubles which have so greatly harmed the Spanish anarcho-syndicalists; comrades affiliated to the IWMA must not let their good faith be exploited by the intrigues of those who have lost their anarcho-syndicalist ideal.

In conclusion, we must only add that, despite the difficult situation in which we find ourselves through risking our lives, all comrades here imprisoned by Francoism will always work for the overthrow of this cursed and savage regime, led by Franco in the name of international fascism and the Vatican.

With a Long Live the IWMA, a Long Live the CNT, we remain yours for revolutionary syndicalism,

For the CNT of penitentiary X,
The Secretary.

Almost at the same time we received from our brothers who continue the struggle inside Spain, a number of stickybacks, of which we reprint the text of three. Their content leaves no doubt as to these comrades' perseverance in action to overthrow the vile dictator with bloodstained hands and his odious regime.

SPANISH PEOPLE!

The strength of a country lies in its people. Our people, in its struggles for independence, has defeated the most powerful coalitions. Franco and his regime cannot face an active insurrectionary

movement, which fights by means of intelligent sabotage, a force of opinion expressing general discontent. The CNT, always in the breach when Franco thinks to have beheaded it - or pretends to think so - is taking the initiative calmly, firmly without precipitancy. With time, with our action, with popular support, WE SHALL BE VICTORIOUS! You will be victorious, Spanish people, because the CNT is the people.

Franco and the Falange are the ruin and shame of Spain. Let us everywhere stir up the movement of opposition to tyranny.

Courage! Victory awaits us!

Spain, February, 1954 National Confederation of Labour
National Committee

WORKERS! SPANIARDS!

The present tyrannical regime which is bringing the ruination of Spain, and which is not Spanish but fascist, is condemned to death.

But only if we desire it. DESIRE IT! All united in action against the common enemy.

Let us act firmly, trying to avoid causing useless victims. RESISTANCE, active and passive, must show itself everywhere. Confidence in ourselves.

The CNT is acting. Swell its underground cadres. Support them.

For the freedom of Spain! For Peace!

For bread and well-being for all Spaniards!

Spain, February, 1954 National Confederation of Labour,
National Committee

TO THE PEOPLE

No tyranny exists which can resist the action of the people. Franco is neither omnipotent nor invulnerable. His regime must perish, like that of Mussolini, like that of Hitler.

Confidence in yourselves, Spanish people.

The FAI is everywhere watching, acting and struggling. Forward!

Spain, February, 1954 Iberian Anarchist Federation
Peninsular Committee.

FRANCE

THE VOICE OF REASON IS NOT SMOTHERED

SINCE the Liberation, the workers' struggles against the employers and the Government have almost always been diverted from their objectives, smothered or openly betrayed by the big trade union organisations: CGT, FO, CFTC.

Firstly there was the period of collaboration between the unions and the Government, lasting until 1947. Then the division of the workers into two organisations -- CGT and FO -- besides the CFTC. From the Liberation to 1947 the unions (united during that period) categorically opposed working-class demands, then after the split within the CGT, each organisation tried to divert the workers' struggles to the benefit of its own politics. The working-class has been divided into two great enemy armies. Strikes have broken on an "Anti-Russian" pretext, just as the workers' claims have been used to transform them into chauvinist "Anti-Boche" or anti-American movements. The attempt has been made to convince the workers they have a country - that of their

exploiters - and that they should defend it, either by supporting the Marshall Plan or economic agreements between the French bourgeoisie and the U.S.S.R.

That's what these union organisations, which are bound hand and foot to the two blocs dominating the world, have done.

To-day, the unions, the bosses and the governments have enchained the workers to a system of piecework which has not only greatly increased their exploitation, but has enslaved them still more to the system of production.

To-day, not only have the workers been divided politically for interests which are not theirs, but the unions and the employing class have generally increased wage differentiation, are creating new hierarchical grades, with the aim of splitting a privileged caste away from the broad mass of the workers.

The big union organisations have trampled underfoot all the principles for which millions of workers have fought so long, and for which many have given their lives.

What remains of the gains of 1936? Of the 40-hour week?

Union officials have become a General Staff, and the rank-and-file militants simple privates, "maids of all work." Malcontents have been expelled or silenced; the spirit of criticism has been replaced by that of docility. It is through seeing their strikes fail, through being misled, that the workers have become discouraged, and no hysterical cries of victory by the trade-union press will change the situation.

We think that workers conscious of this trickery must express themselves, that their struggle must no longer be entrusted to bureaucrats who are paid only to defend their own employer, that's to say the union.

We invite workers to discuss all these questions during the different meetings that we are organising. Our aim is not to create yet another union, still less another bureaucracy, but we want workers to express themselves, we want their unity to be achieved. We also want to prepare ourselves, so that in the coming struggles we shall be at the mercy of neither government promises nor the union bureaucracy.

BULGARIA

(IWMA) - THE SIXTH CONGRESS of the Bulgarian Communist Party was held in Sofia from February 25 to March 3. The National Theatre, at which it took place, was cordoned off a week beforehand as a security measure. The sessions were overloaded by the usual long reports and stereotyped speeches. Main question on the agenda was the second Five Year Plan.

In the midst of a flood of lies and falsifications, some interesting facts emerged. Presenting the projected plan, George Tchankoff admitted that the first Five Year Plan had not been achieved in agriculture, especially in breeding. The number of cows in 1953 was only 94.3% of the figure for 1939, horses 78.7% and sheep 76.5%. The increased yield from industrial crops (tobacco, cotton, sugar beet, etc), stressed by the Government, had not been achieved, either.

During this Congress, disturbing rumours announcing a new monetary reform have been spread. The population was seized by a panic which still persists. The rumours have, as yet, not been denied by the Government. The working class is openly showing its distrust of the Communist Party. Long demagogic speeches are powerless to disguise the system of slavery, poverty and the brutalisation of man which Stalinism is bringing about.

We beg you constantly to unmask the true, reactionary nature of this regime. It is only thus that the Western world could make an effective contribution to the liberation

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which we ourselves shall achieve. But we consider that the liberation of the peoples oppressed by Stalinism must also become, for all humanity, a moral liberation from Bolshevik reaction, the greatest danger for the world proletariat.

(FACB - from inside
Bulgaria)

