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CONTENTS

Communism:

Will Communists Fight for Democracy
"For Release of Labour Prisoners"
Ontario's June Strike Wave
Organizing for Potential Strikes
People's Movement Active in West
[><deletion: 1 line]
Militant Strike Action Demanded

General:

The Doukhobors Continue Fanatically Resolute
What is the Civil Liberties Union?

War Series
No. 45

COMMUNISM

WILL COMMUNISTS FIGHT FOR DEMOCRACY?

With Germany forcing Russia into a mutual protection alliance with the Democracies, the Communist Party of Canada is, for the second time since the war started, thrown into a state of utter confusion.

Originally, it will be recalled, this was a "War for Democracy". After Stalin's pact with Hitler it became an "Imperialist War". Now that Hitler is again the common enemy the war will have to be given a new label and the domestic war against "capitalism" waged with new slogans and tactics. Industrial strikes aimed at slowing up production of war machinery and tirades against recruiting and conscription will have to cease if Communists wish to escape the unforgivable sin of assisting Stalin's enemies.

A few reports from the Communist Party field begin to show the new order.

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“FOR RELEASE OF LABOUR PRISONERS”

(Winnipeg)

“Committee for Release of Labour Prisoners” have been formed under Communist direction in several cities throughout Canada. The aim of these committees seems to be the waging of a “nuisance” campaign of criticism against the Government, until it is forced to release all Communists and repeal Section 21, D.O.C.R.

A 32-page pamphlet entitled “They Fought For Freedom”, printed in Winnipeg, is being hawked around by sympathizers at five cents per copy. It contains a commendatory foreword by Mrs. Doris Nielsen, M.P. After recounting the trip to Ottawa of 15 wives and a number of children of interned “labour leaders” and the disappointing results of their hearings with Mr. Lapointe and the Special House Committee, the pamphlet strikes out with the usual Red propaganda on “dictatorial methods” of government, “suppressing the common people”, the “beginnings of Fascism”, the “political police, the R.C.M.P. have now full power to terrorize the population”, and the building up of “a mighty People’s Movement”. (This article is signed by Norman Penner of Winnipeg). Biographical sketches and pictures of a few internees round out the appeal.

A typical picture of one of these committees in action is given by the Officer Commanding “D” Division (Winnipeg). To quote:

A letter to the Editor of the Winnipeg Free Press and published on June 21, 1941, and signed “Committee for the Release of Labour Prisoners” per Norman Penner, criticizes the Government for allowing Regulation 21 D.O.C.R. to remain, this despite protests from widely diversified sections of the populace, also as to the tribunal which determines appeals in such cases and the fact that despite such tribunal the Minister of Justice in the final analysis is the sole judge as to whether or not an internee should or should not be released.

An open air meeting under the auspices of the Committee for the Release of Labour Prisoners was held on the evening of June 30 at which the release of interned labour leaders was advocated. Norman Penner read the resolution, Wm. Kardash, M.L.A. elect and M.J. Forkin spoke.[2]

An appeal is being made to the Prime Minister by means of postcards in an effort to effect release of the internees. This postcard reads as follows:

To the RIGHT HON. W. L. MacKENZIE KING
Prime Minister of Canada,
Ottawa, Ont.

As a Canadian citizen I most vigorously protest against the internment and detention by your government of anti-fascist labour leaders. I believe that your policy subverts and undermines our basic

democratic rights and therefore I demand that you immediately issue orders for the unconditional release of all anti-fascist prisoners.

(Name) (Address)

M. J. Forkin has been nominated as a candidate to contest the Ward 3 seat in the City Council. This election was occasioned through the disqualification of Jacob Penner (interned). Wm. Kardash, M.L.A. elect is to act as campaign manager and Forkin has stated that one of the chief planks of his platform is a request for liberation of Mr. Penner and other Communists or former Communists from internment.

It would appear that the present activity of this Committee is due to the turn of events in Russia, which they hope will favour their appeal at this time. Generally speaking the Communists feel that they have a safe approach to our loyal citizenry and will gain their sympathy now through Russia's entry into the war.[3]

ONTARIO'S JUNE STRIKE WAVE (Toronto)

The Ontario strike wave of May extended into June and expanded considerably. The former C.I.O. Unions that became affiliated with the Canadian Congress of Labour, through Communists within the Union, have carried on an intense organizational campaign throughout the Province in industries producing war materials. An outstanding feature of these strikes is to be found in the fact that among the Organizers representing the Unions affected are such [~~2 lines~~] as Harry Hunter, Harry Hamburg, Alec. Welch, Mike Fenwick, Arthur Williams and George Harris, to say nothing of C. S. Jackson who has now been interned.

The arrest of C.S. Jackson, organizer for the United Electrical and Radio Machinists' Union, came to them as a surprise, and has caused considerable trepidation as to their own safety in the minds of Communist sympathizers who have taken an active part in Trade Union activity and who are afraid that their connection with the Party has become known to the police.

[~~1 paragraph: 5 lines~~][4]

ORGANIZING FOR POTENTIAL STRIKES

Information received from our Hamilton Detachment indicates that the National Steel Car Company employees at that point are considering taking further strike action as they are not altogether satisfied with the Conciliation Board setup at the time of the previous strike at this plant.

It will be recalled that the Government put in a manager of this plant when it was decided that the Company could not see their way to comply with the Conciliation Board's finding.

For over two months there has been serious dissension between the Cape Breton coal miners and their local U.M.W.A. officers as a result of

the latter having accepted the rulings of the Government Conciliation Board without first referring them back to the workers. The workers, who have been pursuing a "slow-down" policy, are now threatening to go out on strike.

When Silby Barrett, International Board member for the U.M.W.A., urged the men to abandon their "slow-down" policy and obey their officers the men retorted by demanding the dismissal of the entire District Executive Board, including Barrett. John L. Lewis has ordered the Union members to be guided by Barrett, but if they refuse there may be serious trouble in the Glace Bay area.

As stated before, Communism is playing little or no part in the dissension.[5]

PEOPLE'S MOVEMENT ACTIVE IN WEST (Edmonton, Alberta)

The People's Party sponsored by the Communist Party of Canada (see "Bulletin" No. 41) is steadily spreading throughout the Prairie Provinces and is particularly active in Alberta through its People's Movement Committee. In the recent Federal by-election campaign it fought hard, if unsuccessfully, for the election of A. A. MacLeod (Editor "Canadian Tribune"), [~~deletion: 1 line~~], supported by Mrs. Dorise Nielsen, M.P. and William Kardash, M.L.A.

After the election, the People's Movement Committee held several organization meetings to decide upon the future action to be taken. It was considered that as the name of the organization was now well impressed upon the public mind, it should be followed up with an intensive campaign to build the movement into a province-wide organization and thence into at least a Western Canadian movement. After considerable discussion at a meeting held on June 3 at which Mrs. Doris Nielsen, A.A. MacLeod, Mel Doig were present, it was decided to call a Western conference to be held in Edmonton as soon as possible for the organization of the People's Movement Committee in all the Western provinces.

The new organization will function along the lines of the illegal Canadian League for Peace and Democracy. The campaign committee rooms will be retained as long as possible as the Headquarters of the People's Movement Committee, a library is to be established and special attention is to be given to drawing all trade unions into the movement. So far in Edmonton, the Hotel and Restaurant Employees Alliance, the Barbers Union, and the various packing plants' employees unions have promised their support to the new organization. In addition to trade unions, all left-wing organizations and the membership of those organizations that have been banned are to be approached with a view to having them take out actual membership or affiliate with this new body. Among the organizations that supported A. A. MacLeod in his campaign and which is likely to take part in the new People's Movement is the illegal organiza-

tion, Technocracy Inc. The ex-members of this Association were canvassed by a member of the Communist Party and promised in all cases to support the People's Movement Committee candidate, A.A. MacLeod, in the election. Already ex-members of the Ukrainian Labour Farmer Temple Ass'n are holding house socials, etc., under the guise of the P.M.C. and it is felt that they have been prompted in this by the sympathy shown to this outlawed organization by A. A. MacLeod and other People's Movement Committee speakers.[6]

The policy to be followed by the P.M.C. with respect to the Social Credit and C.C.F. parties was outlined by A. A. MacLeod before he left Edmonton. He advised that it would not be good political strategy to openly oppose the Social Credit and C.C.F. bodies because these organizations were of a left nature and commanded a large following that would be useful to the P.M.C. if they could ever gain control. Therefore, he suggested that the leadership of the P.M.C. quietly endeavour to influence the membership of the two farmer organizations into the P.M.C. and thus put the leadership of both the Social Credit and C.C.F. Parties in a position where they could not very well oppose affiliation with the P.M.C.

A point of interest with regard to the control of the P.M.C. was ascertained when [deletion: 1 line] Harry G. Swanson and James A. MacPherson, stated during a conversation with other Communists that the People's Movement Committee "takes its orders from the East", apparently meaning the National Executive Committee of the Communist Party in Toronto or wherever it happens to now be located. Furthermore, they stated that it was the policy of the Communist Party to keep Communists from being openly identified with the P.M.C. so as not to give it a Communist character.[7][Pages 8 to 12 are missing.]

MILITANT STRIKE ACTION DEMANDED

Government authorities, if not the general public, have long known the plans of the Communist Party to hasten the proletariat revolution through encouraging militant strike action in every industry. In Canada, since the outlawing of the Party, their organizers have had to work entirely under cover of legitimate trade unions, but their power for evil has been none the less effective for that. Strike after strike has been traced directly to C.I.O. organizers who are members of the Communist Party. Thanks to the police authority granted under the Defence of Canada Regulations, a few of these enemies of Society have been dealt with, but many more, relying for immunity upon their trade union membership cards and upon public influence manipulated through dupe "front" leagues and associations, remain at large to sow dissension and retard our war efforts.

A "Trade Union Letter", written and disseminated with great secrecy in Vancouver by these revolutionists, is particularly interesting because of its specific instructions on ways and means of developing "strike struggles". Most significant is its reference to "the danger of duration agree-

ments" and "increases in basic rates of pay". Although this "letter applies mainly to the British Columbia field the same tactics are being followed everywhere.

To quote in full:

Trade Union Letter

B.C. is at present observing the most important upsurge in the working class movement since the outbreak of the war. To date thousands of workers have received increases amounting to tens of thousands of dollars. Among these are: loggers in various camps, carpenters and other building trades workers, pulp and paper workers, civic employees, and many others.

This upsurge indicates the extent to which the working class of B.C. are re-acting to the new industrial activity and to the rising cost of living. This movement has arisen spontaneously out of the growing needs of the workers.

The present wave has by no means reached its height. Some important sections of workers are now moving into position to demand increases. Among the most outstanding of these are: the railroaders, sections of [13] shipyard workers, street railwaymen, some building trades, civic employees, foundry workers, steel workers, etc.

The pressure of objective conditions is also having a deep affect on unorganized workers, who are now clamoring for organization. The first opening in mining has already been made through the union vote in Bralorne. In lumber and saw mills the workers are prepared for organization, but in lumber the union is being bucked by the boss loggers association, with the result that there is little consolidation of the organization, and in sawmills practically a new start has to be made. In the maritime industry the desire for organization is stronger at present than at any time since the defeat of the Longshoremen's strike. This is reflected by the genuine movement from below among the seamen for unity of the two main seamen's organizations.

What have the workers gained from their demands? In all cases where workers asked for increases they won certain concessions. However, the trend of present agreements is far from satisfactory. The agreements between employer and employees have been characterized by three main features:

1. In many cases duration agreements have been signed. (shipyards, etc.)
2. In many cases the workers have been granted a cost of living bonus rather than an increase in the basic rate of pay.
3. In practically no new places since the war broke out has there been union recognition on the part of any employer.

How are we to explain the fact that labour, in some instances,

gained only small increases in the basic rate of pay—and in many instances received a cost of living bonus? How are we to explain the fact that workers have not secured recognition of their unions? The answer to these questions lies in an understanding of the main features of the present surge.

What is the main feature of the present wage movement? The most outstanding feature is the lack of militancy in the movement. With the exception of few small isolated actions no militant struggles have taken place.[14]

How are we to explain the lack of militancy and struggle among the workers? There are a number of factors which must be analyzed before any consideration can be given to the tactics necessary to quickly improve the situation.

1. The first and most fundamental reason for the lack of militancy and weakness in the sweep of the movement, is to be found in the fact that the basic sections of the B.C. proletariat the loggers, miners, and marine industries, have not to any extent entered the struggle. In all three of these basic industries there exists strong sentiment for struggle but it is not crystallized or organized. In the main, these industries are unorganized. The fact must impress itself upon each revolutionary worker that so long as these industries remain unorganized, and so long as they are not in the position to play their role in the labour struggles, that of the vanguard, the B.C. labour movement, will be incapable of widely effective working class action.

2. The second most important reason which has effectively tied labour's hands, is the encirclement of labour by Federal and Provincial orders and laws. The movement has not yet gained sufficient strength and militancy to break through this encirclement, although to some extent these orders and laws have been exposed.

3. The third most important reason is the reformist trade union leadership who hate and fear the workers' struggle and seek to collaborate with the bosses. They hide from the workers the fact that through militant struggle the workers could break through the capitalist front and receive basic wage increases, union recognition and better working conditions. These reformist leaders constantly warn the workers that they must under all circumstances observe the government anti-labour laws, and thus they help to prevent militant action.

4. The fourth most important reason is the failure of our Alliance to effectively play its vanguard role in leading the workers' struggles, giving conscious direction to it and raising it to higher levels through the application of truly revolutionary trade union tactics. The Alliance is isolated from many important sections of workers.

But even in many places where Alliance people have shared in the leadership there has been a tendency towards legalism and also a tendency to shy away from [15] struggle and ask only for what it is though the bosses would consent to without struggle. The fact that there has been little attention paid to developing the strike movement is **INDICATIVE OF THE RESPONSIBILITY CARRIED BY THE ALLIANCE FOR FAILURE TO DEVELOP THE STRIKE MOVEMENT.**

The development of the strike struggle movement is today the single most important task of the revolutionary movement. Nothing will serve more to educate the workers, expose the government's war policies, lay bare the role of social democratic and the reformist agents of the ruling class, than this. The strike movement in B.C. will electrify the labour movement, sharpen the class struggle and hasten new political alignments in the Province.

What is necessary to improve the situation? The following tactics are essential.

1. The Alliance must pick certain fronts in the wage movement where possibilities exist for the development of strike struggles. Every attention should be given to these fronts.
2. It is necessary to intensify all efforts to organize the unorganized in the basic industries (logging, mining, marine) and to bring them up to their natural position as the militant advance guard of the B.C. proletariat.
3. It is necessary to show workers the danger of duration agreements. It is important to win the workers to struggle for increases in their basic rates of pay. In order to consolidate the working class movement and the workers gains and to fight for more it is necessary to break through the bosses' stubborn refusal to recognize trade unions.
4. It is necessary to employ militant job tactics—short strikes, holidays, mass delegations, slow down strikes, etc., even though in some instances these may be in violation of certain existing anti-labour laws. It is necessary at this point to warn against adventurism; i.e. taking strike action under any and all circumstances regardless of how unprepared the workers may be or regardless of how unfavourable circumstances are. This warning should not, on the other hand, be [16] interpreted in such a manner as to stifle the militant leadership of our people. The course of action must, in the final analysis, be taken by the people on the spot after having taken into consideration all circumstances.
5. The Alliance must take energetic steps to overcome its isolation from considerable sections of important workers. The Alliance trade union organization must be established on a more operative

basis. Greater initiative is needed to lead the workers' struggles. Shop or industry papers should be inaugurated wherever possible to carry our line to the workers. Our people must work in such a way as to set an example for other workers to follow; we must strive to win the confidence of the workers and to lead them in their struggles.

6. In those unions where the reformists are seeking to prevent militant action, the sharpest struggle should be conducted against them in such a way as to win the support of the workers for our line. We need to intensify the struggle for inner trade union democracy and, as a guarantee against the labour misleaders, rank and file movements, such as the shop stewards' councils, etc., must be built.[17]

GENERAL

DOUKHOBORS CONTINUE FANATICALLY RESOLUTE

The general situation regarding alternate service work for Doukhobors has developed as follows: After the Conference at Blaine Lake, Sask., on April 24th, 1941, disagreements between the Military Board and Doukhobor representatives tivistiveswere continued. Meetings at the various Saskatchewan and Alberta settlements occurred almost daily and it was finally decided to call a general conference of all Military Boards and Doukhobor representatives from all Western Provinces to reach peaceful solution as to "How Doukhobors could be used for this country without insulting their religious principles."

This General Conference opened its sittings at Calgary, Alta., on May 8, 1941 and, after much talk, all Doukhobor delegates, with exception of John G. Bondareff of Blaine Lake and P. G. Makaroff, K.C., of Saskatoon, unanimously protested and rejected the proposition of the Military Board to accept work on the roads at .50 per day, plus clothing and board. The Conference broke up with no headway being made, the Doukhobors being told to return to their respective communities and work for solution and, failing solution, the young Doukhobors would be conscripted.

On May 18, 1941 some 3000 Doukhobors held a General Meeting at Brilliant, B.C. and unanimously rejected the proposition of the Military Board to do alternate road or any other kind of government work, their general excuse being:-

(a) Although work in itself is acceptable, the Doukhobors do not trust one word of the Government. Doukhobor boys could be taken for work and later transferred elsewhere, or even into the army.

(b) This alternate road work is "regimental work", just the same as service in the army. Doukhobor boys who are not steady in their Doukhobor ideals might be easily tempted to join some branch of military service.

(c) Any collaboration with the Government in war time means the first step towards surrender of Doukhobor exemption rights.[18]

(d) A few prosperous Doukhobors, such as Zibin, Vanjoff, and others who are playing safe from both sides, proposed to ask the Government to give them a certain stretch of road to work on, say 5, 10 or 20 miles close at hand, with only "one English Engineer" to instruct them, that the Doukhobors could do this work of their own free will, without pay, as a present to the country. This proposition was also strongly rejected by the mass of people.

(e) The Meeting was closed without any definite resolution being passed "officially" but "unofficially" the Doukhobors decided to gain time; i.e. find reasons and excuses one after another, to postpone their answer to the Government. They hope that world events will bring big changes in the near future, and the Government might decide to drop the Doukhobor question altogether.

John J. Verigin and his B.C. Doukhobor leaders estimate that a total of some 12,000 Doukhobors in Western Canada will resist any kind of Government Service. It was argued against them that their refusal to meet the Government half way might bring stern action by way of jail or interment camp, but they replied they were ready to accept their fate in upholding their ideals, that the Canadian Government had cheated them and they would stage trouble and to go jail or interment camp rather than make any compromise. Their decision in this regard seems fanatically resolute.

Fred Podovnikoff, [deletion: 1 line] was arrested by the B.C. Provincial Police a few weeks ago and sentenced to a term in Nelson Jail for failing to comply with National Registration.

(Since the above report was received there have been many arrests and convictions of Doukhobors in Langham, Blaine Lake and Yorkton districts of Saskatchewan, for failing to report for road work in lieu of military training).[19]

WHAT IS THE CIVIL LIBERTY UNION?

The Canadian Civil Liberties Union is one of many such unions which sprang up during the last decade in almost every country in the world where there is a Communist Party in operation. It is one of many Communist "Front Organizations" which spring up from one another, as necessity arises and circumstances permit during the onward march of the Communist Party.

The task of the Communists operating within the Civil Liberties Union is to endeavour to make of the Union an organization that will afford protection to the disguised Communist agitator operating within all sorts of bona fide respectable organizations, principally labour unions. In the performance of this task the main weapon is to be that of building up a public and political nuisance value by agitating public opinion. The suc-

cess of the Civil Liberties Union depends on the ability of its Communist members to attract to its ranks honest, well-meaning and liberal-minded people by hypnotizing them into believing that those who are being prosecuted or interned are being cruelly victimized at the instigation of those who will eventually, if not checked in time, deprive of their Civil Liberties all progressive-minded people.

The Canadian Civil Liberties Union was founded, in Montreal, upon instructions from the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Canada. It was founded in 1935, at a time when the Canadian Labour Defence League which formerly served the same purpose, ceased being effective because of having been too positively exposed as a Communist-controlled organization.

It is not by the number of Communists on the Executive Board of the Union, that the Communist Party controls the Union. The Communist Party controls the Union through the effectiveness of the few of its especially trained and well-guided members on the Executive Board, and a rank and file membership made up of Communists in a proportion of 3 to 1. And this is as the Communist Party purposely intends it to be and to remain. This composition of the executive Board insures a respectable front while the effectiveness of the few Communists on the said Board plus the composition of the rank and file membership make secure the Communist control of the Union.

When the few Communists on the Executive Board find themselves too much at variance with the non-Communist members of the Board on an [20] important question of policy, they demand, as they have a constitutional right to do, that the question be decided by a general membership meeting. This ensures a decision favourable to the Communists. Such a situation arose out of the distribution of a peace pamphlet by the Communists, shortly after the outbreak of the present war. Nine Communists, in Montreal, having been arrested under the defence of Canada Regulations, for the distribution of the said peace pamphlet, the Communists on the Executive Board of the Civil Liberties Union wanted the Union to defend them, while the majority of the Board were opposed. A general membership meeting was called and the Communists had their own way.

Anyone who attended the "National Conference" on Civil Liberties during Wartime held in the Mount Royal Hotel, in the spring of 1940, and arranged by the Civil Liberties Union, at the instigation of the Communist Party of Canada, must surely have come away convinced, without the shadow of a doubt, that the Conference was controlled by the Communists in a proportion of 4 to 1.

For the time being, the Canadian Civil Liberties Union is the most effective weapon of the Communist Party of Canada.

JEW FAMILY GIVES FIVE SOLDIERS

Although the small Jewish settlement of Kamsack, Sask. numbers only

15 families, in response to the call for recruits it gave 13 volunteers for active service overseas, reports "The Israelite Press" of July 4. These include all the five grown-up sons of the family Alfman. Their father came to Canada in 1904 and settled in Kamsack as a pioneer farmer.[21]