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WORKING CLASS COMMUNISM:

A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

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The history of working-class movements in the Twentieth Century has so-far been written as the history of parties and trade unions, rather than as the history of the working class itself. This review of the secondary literature on the Communist workers' movements in several Western countries attempts to extract the existing information on which workers were Communists and begins to analyze the factors that made some workers Communists. The Communist movement has not been chosen because it has been either perfectly revolutionary or an accurate reflection of the class consciousness of Western workers, as indeed it has not been. Rather, the Communist movement has been the largest radical movement in the West in the past half-century, and thus has more to contribute toward an understanding of the sociology of working-class radicalism than the study of even - more - radical movements, such as anarchism, syndicalism, and Trotskyism, which always remained relatively small.

This review concentrates on the socio-economic and ethnic factors in Western Communism and deliberately ignores the important problem of how the development of the Soviet Union affected Communism in the West. This topic is capably discussed in many of the books under review here, as well as in surveys such as World Communism (Ann Arbor, 1962, paperback) and European Communism (London, 1952), both by Franz Borkenau, From Lenin to Khrushchev: The History of World Communism, by Hugh Seton-Watson (New York, 1963, paper), and the foreign relations sections of E. H. Carr's A History of Soviet Russia (Baltimore, 1966, 1969, paperback; New York, 1958, 1960); and in Isaac Deutscher's excellent biographies on Stalin (New York, 1967, paperback), and on Trotsky as The Prophet Armed, 1879-1921, The Prophet Unarmed, 1921-1929, and The Prophet Outcast, 1929-1940 (New York, 1965, paperback).

The United States

Histories of Communist Parties everywhere fall into a few general categories: the official Party histories, tendentious, dull, defaming or ignoring former Party leaders who have since fallen from grace, about as analytical as a company-sponsored history of a Southern textile mill; the witty, anecdotal, Social Democratic histories of Communism, emphasizing the ironic cases in which the Communists acted in a racist or non-militant manner and attacking the CPs from the right or the left as fancy dictates; the serious, academic histories, usually hostile and mainly concerned with the minutiae of factional struggles and Russian dictation; and finally the rare-but-informative studies of the social composition of Communist Parties.

For the United States, William Z. Foster's History of the Communist Party in the United States (New York, 1952) serves as the official Party history. Irving Howe and Lewis Coser's The American Communist Party: A Critical History (New York, 1962, paperbound) provides the light reading. Theodore Draper's two volumes, The Roots of American Communism (New York, 1957) and American Communism and Soviet Russia (New York, 1960, paperbound) examine in over-abundant detail factionalism and Russian influence through 1929. An important work by James Weinstein, The Decline of American Socialism, 1912-1925 (New York, 1967) attempts to prove that the Socialist Party before and during the First World War was more radical than Communists have since maintained. Weinstein contends that the destruction of the SP due to the illusion among the Eastern European language federations that a Bolshevik-style revolution was possible in the United States destroyed the only mass Socialist movement that the United States has ever seen. Nathan Glazer's The Social Bases of American Communism (New York, 1961) analyzes the birth and development of the Communist Party of the United States of America (CPUSA, although it had other names in the earlier period) in terms of the ethnic groups and the occupational categories which joined. David Shannon's The Socialist Party of America: A History (Chicago, 1967, paperbound) does a fine job of showing the social composition of the pre-war SP and the conflicts that led to the split in 1919 in terms of the social forces involved. Shannon's work on the CPUSA from 1945 to 1956, The Decline of American Communism (New York, 1959) is less successful than his book on the SP or Draper's books, but provides details of the later period which supplement Howe and Coser.

The early Communist Party in the United States was predominantly made up of foreign-language-speaking immigrants from Eastern Europe. The Slavic members were concentrated in unskilled jobs in heavy industry. The Jews were mainly young, recent immigrants in the New York garment industry. The Finns were farmers and miners in the Middle West. Since most of these early Communists neither voted nor belonged to trade unions, they had been alienated by those elements in

the Socialist Party that stressed electoral politics and working within the AFL unions. The more-reformist elements in the SP were mainly found among the small-town, middle-class native Americans and the immigrants from the earlier waves of immigration, such as Milwaukee Germans and older Jews in the New York garment industry.

The SP underwent a demographic shift in the years 1917-1919, with Eastern Europeans joining the foreign-language federations in large numbers under the impact of the Russian Revolution; and many native American Socialists were dropping out of the Party, both from the Rightist, small-town middle-class elements which tended to favor the war, and from the Leftists concentrated among Oklahoma tenant farmers, facing extreme repression after the abortive "Green Corn Rebellion", and the Western miners. These native American Leftists never joined the Communist Party in large numbers, and this was a severe blow to American radicalism.

Further study is needed to sort out exactly why such groups as the Western miners and Oklahoma tenant farmers dropped out of the organized socialist movement. Several factors converged in those years, including fantastic repression, new opportunities in the war boom, and the creation of a Communist Party with almost-exclusively foreign membership and a preoccupation with events in Europe that could not have been particularly appealing to native American radicals.

In the long run the Communist Party served to integrate immigrant members into American life, but it could do this only by providing a secure setting in the foreign-language clubs at first. Later it was able to break up the language groups by teaching the members English in Party schools and by involving the members in union organizing and political work among workers outside their ethnic groups. This process of integration is part of the reason for the popularity of "Browderism" in the 1930s and 1940s, with its support for Roosevelt and slogans like "Communism is Twentieth Century Americanism". This process of integration could be regarded as completed after World War II, when most people quit the Party and became indistinguishable Americans, active in their unions and liberal politics.

There are no adequate histories of Communist trade-union activities. Max M. Kampelman's The Communist Party Versus the CIO (New York, 1957) and David Saposs's Communism and American Unions (New York, 1959) are merely Cold War polemics written to justify the expulsion of Communists from the CIO. One must be satisfied with general party histories and histories of the labor movement and the individual unions. The main works on the labor movement containing material of interest concerning the Communists are Irving Bernstein's well-written History of the American Worker, of which two volumes have already appeared (The Lean Years, 1920-1933 (Baltimore, 1966, paperbound) and The Turbulent Years, 1933-1941 (Boston, 1970)), and Art Preis's Labor's Giant Step (New York, 1964), which covers the history of the CIO. Preis reads like an editorial in the Trotskyist Militant, for which he was a

reporter for many years. If Bernstein had Preis's politics or if Preis could write like Bernstein, we would have a fine book. As it stands the two supplement each other nicely, Bernstein attacking CP labor policy from the right and Preis from the left.

The most-important locus of Communist trade-union activity in the 1920s was among Jewish garment workers in New York City. There was a virtual civil war in the garment industry from 1924 to 1928 involving the old Socialist leaders of the unions and their supporters who were mainly the older, more-skilled workers against Communist challengers who were strongest among younger, less-skilled workers. Bernstein has several fascinating chapters on the conflict. Melech Epstein's Jewish Labor in the USA (New York, 1969) provides the background of the conflict, describing the conditions in Europe that led to immigration and the economic changes that the garment industry was going through, as well as bringing the history of the garment unions up to 1950. Donald A. Robinson's Spotlight on a Union: The Story of the United Hatters, Cap and Millinery Workers International Union (New York, 1948) gives a detailed history of Communist-Socialist rivalries among the hatters, emphasizing the disruption caused in that industry due to the decreased wearing of hats in the 1920s.

In general, Communist strength in the garment industry owed much to the political concern of these workers with events in their homeland. Many identified deeply with the Bolshevik Revolution, and wanted to do the same thing in America. In addition, the economic conditions of the industry were quite unstable in the 1920s. New techniques were rationalizing production and reducing the skills required. Work was being contracted out to small sweatshops, where union protection was ineffective. High wages in New York City compared to the small towns nearby was leading to the dispersal of the industry, and the New York garment unions were forced to agree to lower wages or else see their jobs disappear. The Socialist union leaders were becoming more and more friendly to the employers, anxious to keep unionized employers in business. Under these conditions, the Communists were able to win control of the three largest ILGWU locals in New York City, only to lose control after a disastrous strike in 1926 that was unnecessarily prolonged for purely-political reasons.

The only union in the garment industry of which the Communists were able to get and keep control beyond the 1920s was the Furriers. This was partly because the Communists led a successful fur strike in 1926 which won the first 40-hour week in the garment industry. Epstein points out that Communist control was facilitated because the fur industry was compact, concentrated in a small area of New York City, and because the furriers were ethnically homogeneous, composed mainly of Jews from Bessarabia and Greeks. The Communist dual-union policy from 1929 to 1934 did not wipe out earlier Communist gains in fur as it did in the other garment industries. Good close-ups of the fur industry are given in Philip S. Foner's The Fur and Leather Workers

Union (Newark, 1950) and in Sandor Voros's American Commissar (Philadelphia, 1961). Voros tells in his autobiography of the cut-throat competition for work in the highly-seasonal fur industry and the harsh conditions of poverty faced by the unskilled fur workers. He also gives a description of the functioning of the Hungarian section of the CPUSA, from which several later leaders of the Communist government in Hungary emerged. Foner describes in abundant detail the struggles in the fur industry between the Communists (whom he idealizes) and the Socialists and gangsters (whom he shows in constant coalition, perhaps unfairly).

The fur industry had had earlier experiences with an IWW union, and this was characteristic of Communist trade-union activity. Communists tended to be active in the same areas in which the IWW had been, and sometimes were able to take over IWW unions as well as recruiting many IWW members. The same factors of transiency, harsh conditions, and recent immigration that made for IWW strength also favored the Communists. One such group was immigrant textile workers, among whom both the Communists and the IWW were able to conduct long and violent strikes with little success in terms of lasting organization. The major Communist textile strikes in the 1920s were in Passaic, New Jersey in 1926 by Polish, Hungarian, and Italian workers; in New Bedford, Massachusetts in 1928 by Portuguese, Italian, and Slavic immigrants; and in Gastonia, North Carolina in 1929 by native white Southerners.

These strikes and their defeat were typical of Communist union activities before 1934: Wherever there was a chance of success the strikes were taken over by the established trade unions; only where failure was certain did the AFL keep out and let the workers appeal to the Communists. This restricted Communist-led strikes primarily to declining industries (like textiles, garments, and mining) faced with chronic over-production, high unemployment, and competition from abroad as well as from new fuels and synthetic fabrics. Speed-ups, low wages, and anti-union employers made the workers angry, but small production units, low skill, and the easy availability of strike-breakers made them powerless. As in the garment industry, the Communist dual unions of 1929-1934 isolated the Communists from the big organizing drives of the first years of the New Deal by the established unions.

During the first years of the Depression, a new generation of Communists emerged at City College in New York, mostly Jewish, second-generation Americans, the children of small-businessmen and workers. The influx of Jewish students and white-collar workers into the CPUSA came in two waves, corresponding to two periods of Party history. The first wave brought in an important group of future Party leaders during the Leftist "Third Period" between 1929 and 1934, including John Gates and Joseph Starobin. After 1934, during the Popular Front period of support for the New Deal, there was a further, more-massive influx of Jewish white-collar workers and professionals.

This growth changed the Party's class composition from 5% to 41% middle-class between 1932 and 1938, and its concentration in New York City from 22.5% to 47% between 1934 and 1938. This can be seen as a specifically-historical phenomenon, the reaction to the rise of fascism in Europe and to the successes of the Soviet Union in the Five Year Plans at a time when America was undergoing the Depression. It was also a stage in the integration of Jewish immigrants into American life, with a resurgence of attenuated radicalism coming with the high rate of unemployment among educated white-collar workers. There was a great deal of elitism involved, many going out of New York to work as CIO organizers to lead the "real" workers, seeing themselves not as part of the working class, but as bourgeois intellectuals.

The long-term importance of this movement, though, is that for the first time a significant number of white-collar workers were beginning to act as class-conscious members of the working class, organizing unions among teachers, social workers, and librarians. This is made clear in the literature on the New York City teachers and their unions, as in Robert W. Iversen: The Communists and the Schools (New York, 1916-1964 (New York, 1968); and Bella Dodd: School of Darkness (New York, 1954). Iversen is the most informative, though his book is filled with naive anti-communism. Zitron writes as a Communist, and is quite unanalytical. Dodd was the legislative liaison of the Teachers Union with the New York State Legislature, and was a power in the CP in New York. She wrote this book after returning to the Catholic Church and testifying before Congressional investigating committees about her former Communist associates, but nevertheless tells much of interest about the Communists in the Teachers Union.

Communist strength in the Teachers Union was based chiefly on the most-oppressed teachers: the substitutes, who were underpaid, denied paid vacations and job security, really full-time teachers but given a substitute classification to help the schools through financial squeezes; college instructors and teaching assistants, underpaid and denied faculty status or tenure, but doing much of the undergraduate teaching; and WPA teachers, who escaped unemployment by taking subsistence wages from the WPA. Whatever may have been the subjective illusions of these workers about their social role, their consciousness was determined to an important extent by their objective social position, and they were being radicalized along with other workers in the same situation of insecurity and poverty.

With the rise of the CIO in the mid-1930s, the Communists got their first chance to influence large sections of workers in basic industry. Communist strength in the CIO came from three main sources: Slavic immigrants who had always been employed in heavy industry and who took an active part in the CIO at the shop level from the beginning, often rising quickly in the ranks due to their long union-organizing and political experience; formerly-unemployed workers who had gone through the Communist unemployed groups and now had jobs and

valuable organizing experience; and finally trade-union organizers, many from the New York area, whom the CP sent out to help the CIO since there was a super-abundance of Communist teachers and social workers. To these three groups were later added the opportunists who joined the CP to get union positions in the unions in which the CP was influential.

The only union outside the garment industry with respect to which a good deal of information exists on Communist activity is the National Maritime Union, set up in the mid-1930s as an industrial CIO union appealing mainly to the unskilled, as opposed to the old craft unions which mostly attracted skilled seamen. The NMU is best described in Joseph P. Goldberg's Maritime Story: A Study in Labor-Management Relations (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1958), which includes a fine history of IWW and Communist activities among seamen and much of interest on socio-economic conditions of the industry and its workers. Other works on the NMU include Frederick J. Lang's Maritime: A Historical Sketch and a Workers' Program (New York, 1943), which is interesting for its Trotskyite approach, and Richard O. Boyer's The Dark Ship (Boston, 1947), an impressionable account of Communist seamen during the Second World War.

The seamen were a unique group of workers, the only United States workers with wide international contacts, both on the ships, on which many foreigners worked, and in foreign ports. US sailors smuggled in Communist literature to Nazi Germany, and over a thousand fought in the Spanish Civil War on the side of the Loyalists, more than any other occupational group in America. The unskilled seamen to whom the NMU appealed were overwhelmingly single male down-and-outers with long periods of unemployment and wide experience as migrant workers. They were thus part of the classic IWW constituency. The CP was the direct successor of the IWW in organizing unskilled seamen, using much the same methods and involving many individuals who came from the IWW to the CP. A big factor in the Communists' strength was their appeal to black and foreign workers. The Communist Marine Workers Industrial Union, active in the 1929-1934 period, had its chief strength among the black seamen and longshoremen in Philadelphia and New Orleans, inheriting a previously-IWW union of black longshoremen in Philadelphia. The craft unions were anti-black and anti-foreign and had succeeded in getting a national law restricting foreign employment on US mail subsidy ships. The CP in the NMU and the National Union of Marine Cooks and Stewards did much to integrate ships and promote blacks to other jobs than the menial posts they had traditionally occupied. The difficulties of the Communists in the NMU came during World War II, when the Communist fraction in the union split apart over whether to extend the wartime no-strike pledge to the postwar period as the current Browder line demanded. The militance of the rank-and-file in the NMU turned against the Communists, and in 1948 Joe Curran was able to sweep the Communists from office.

The research on the relations of the CPUSA with blacks is quite limited, leaving many questions about the kinds of blacks to whom Communism appealed. Wilson Record in The Negro and the Communist Party (Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 1951) and in Race and Radicalism: The NAACP and the Communist Party in Conflict (Ithaca, New York, 1964) gives a picture of how the CP line toward blacks varied, but offers little on the sociology of black Communism. William A. Nolan's inaccurate diatribe, Communism Versus the Negro (Chicago, 1951), includes more information on which blacks joined the Party and its fronts than does the more-temperate Record. In addition there is much of value in The Black Workers and the New Unions, by Horace R. Cayton and George S. Mitchell (Chapel Hill, 1939), which includes a tantalizing chapter on Birmingham, Alabama, where the CP had a large black membership in the 1930s. The Communists built their strength among Alabama blacks first in a tenant farmers' union, then through organizing among the unemployed in the Birmingham area. Their dual union, the Steel and Mine Workers Industrial Union, had a significant black membership in Birmingham in the early 1930s, and there was a large Communist fraction in the CIO Steelworkers' Union later. It is significant that of all the areas of the South the Communist Party did best in Birmingham, for Birmingham was the most-industrialized area of the South, and its work force was 70% black in iron-ore mining and 40 to 45% black in the steel mills.

Other trade unions in which the CP had considerable influence among blacks included the United Auto Workers, in which the CP promoted the idea of a guaranteed post for a black on the UAW executive board as an issue in its fight against Reuther in the late 1940s. The CP's strongest base of strength, Ford Local 600, at the River Rouge Plant, was also the largest local in terms of black membership, and this was probably no accident.

The CP was strong among blacks employed by the WPA in Harlem in the 1930s and 1940s, especially among black writers and theater people in the Federal Theater Project there. The aftermath of this is discussed in Harold Cruse's The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual (New York, 1967), which denounces the CP for suppressing black cultural nationalism while encouraging Jewish cultural nationalism at the same time. The CP published the magazine Jewish Life, while not allowing blacks in the Party to put out their own cultural magazine. Cruse headed the CP in Harlem in the late 1940s, and gives a fascinating picture of Communist activity among black intellectuals.

Great Britain

As with the CPUSA, the historians of the Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB) have concentrated on its formation and growth through the 1920s. Henry Pelling's survey, The British Communist Party: A Historical Profile (New York, 1958), is hostile, superficial, and

sensational, but the only work that covers the whole history of the Party. Walter Kendall's The Revolutionary Movement in Britain, 1900-1921: The Origins of British Communism (London, 1969) argues for Britain, as Weinstein for America, that the revolutionary groups would have been better off continuing their own autonomous development rather than coming under Russian domination. Kendall is informative on the relations between the early British Communist movement and the Russians, though a good deal of his story of smuggled money is spy-novel material. Kendall is at his best in his chapters on the shop stewards' movement in the Clyde Valley around Glasgow.

The official Party historian, James Klugmann, has so-far issued two volumes covering up to 1927 in his History of the Communist Party of Great Britain (London, 1968, 1969). Klugmann's style is to include many quotations from contemporary Party documents and to take his interpretation from what the Party said at the time. This allows a historian with few original ideas to write very-large books. Of course it would be worthwhile to have a compendium of what the CPGB said in the 1920s, if only one could be sure that Klugmann wasn't leaving out the most-interesting things.

The best book on early history of the CPGB is L. J. MacFarlane's The British Communist Party: Its Origins and Development Until 1929 (London, 1966). MacFarlane manages to be sympathetic and analytical at the same time. He is able to see the CPGB in all the ambiguity of its dual role: part of a world Communist movement controlled by an increasingly-Stalinist Russia, but at the same time an authentic part of the British working-class movement. MacFarlane is among the first who have managed to be historians of Communism rather than vilifiers or apologists.

The early CPGB drew many cadre from the shop-steward movement among the munitions, ship-building, and machine-building workers on the Clyde River in Scotland. All the above writers treat it briefly, and it is given more-extended discussion in Branko Pribicevic: The Shop Stewards Movement and Workers' Control, 1910-1922 (Oxford, 1959). The movement was a response of the skilled metalworkers to dilution of their monopoly on certain jobs by the introduction of new machine processes that could be carried out by semi-skilled workers. The skilled workers were in a strong bargaining position since they were essential to war production, but the pro-war trade leadership did not adequately protect their positions. Consequently, a movement developed based on unofficial shop stewards who led several wildcat strikes during the First World War. The movement was destroyed after the War with the failure of a general strike in Glasgow in February 1919, and the economic crisis which curtailed the bargaining power of the workers from 1921 on.

Glasgow radicalism was a deep-rooted phenomenon that continues today to give the CPGB one of the highest votes it gets anywhere. This radicalism is a compound of several factors: the brutal expulsion of

the Scottish peasantry from the land in the Nineteenth Century to make way for sheep pastures and hunting estates which resulted in peasant revolts as late as the 1880s; the presence of radical Irish immigrants in Glasgow industry, particularly in relatively-unskilled work; some of the worst slums in all Britain; and rapid growth of the Clydeside war industries, which accentuated all the other problems.

The Sociology of British Communism, by Kenneth Newton (London, 1969), while overly theoretical and not as interesting as Glazer's social analysis of the CPUSA, nevertheless gives some indication of the main groups involved in the CPGB. Among the first members of the CPGB were Jewish garment workers. The condition of the Jewish garment workers is quite-well explained in the section on the United Clothing Workers' Union in Shirley W. Lerner's Breakaway Unions and the Small Trade Union (London, 1961). These workers faced much the same sort of situation as the garment workers on the Lower East Side of New York: small shops with sub-contracting that made for long hours and weak unions; discriminatory legislation which served to restrict new Jewish immigration; and hostility from the native workers. Thus the Communist policy of dual unions found a ready response among the garment workers of London's East End in 1929. They resented control of the national garment workers' union by Catholic, anti-Communist Irishmen who seemed to have no will to struggle against technological innovations that were resulting in speed-ups for the workers.

Although the CPGB was strongest among the miners in Scotland and Wales after their big strike of 1926, in England the Party was strongest in London and in the metal industry. Newton suggests that the large plants and skilled work force of the metal industry were reasons for Communist success there, but since there is no study that treats Communism in the British metal industry in depth, one can only speculate. The main growth of Communist strength in the metal and aircraft plants around London came in the period of wartime expansion (1939-1941), when the Party's policies were anti-war and industrially militant. Nevertheless, the Party was able to keep its membership strength in this industry after Party policies switched with the invasion of the Soviet Union to supporting the War and opposing strikes. This switch away from militance did cause the Party some losses, including Dick Beech of the Chemical Workers' Union, who instead followed the more -anti-war policies of the Independent Labour Party. The Chemical Workers' Union was able to greatly increase its membership through effective strikes during the War, when other unions refused to support strikes.

Large sections of the English working class have never been reached by Communism, and perhaps as much can be learned about Communism by understanding why these workers failed to become Communists as by understanding why others became Communists. Universally, three of the most-important factors seem to be concentration (the number of workers of a single industry in a locality and their percentage in the

local population — the higher, the more likely to be radical), sex (the higher the percentage of men employed, the more radical), and religion (the less, the more Communists). This means that small towns that aren't single-industry towns aren't likely to have many Communists, and industries like textiles that employ many women are likely to be less radical than industries like mining or metal that employ mostly men. Minority-group status is a source of many frustrations that can lead to an abnormally-high number of Communists, and this is true in Britain not only for Jews, but also for Indians and Greek Cypriots who have made up 10% of the Communists in London. This is related to thwarted nationalism which existed and still exists among the Scottish and Welsh, and has served to intensify working-class radicalism in Scotland and Wales.

The question of the conservatism of women is a complicated one. There have been many groups of women who have not conformed to the conservative pattern and have fought militant strikes or have supported revolutionary politics. Usually there was something special about these women, such as particularly-proletarianizing circumstances, or ethnic problems, or anti-clericalism as a powerful social force. The male radicalism relationship holds in all of the countries discussed here, and seems to be part of a broad problem of the relation of women to the working class in this historical epoch. Women workers generally worked during the time of their lives before and after their years of child-bearing and child-raising, so that they were not considered and did not seem to consider themselves permanent workers. The whole society united to say that the man's income was primary and that the woman's was only secondary, even though it was obvious that women were a permanently-large percentage of workers and their incomes were needed to maintain their families. Women were generally more religious than men, and more inclined to see the church as the key institution outside the home, as opposed to men, who had alternative institutions that they regarded as their own and effectively excluded women from, such as the tavern (where not only drinking, but also political discussion and planning for union organization went on), the trade union, and the political party. Due to all of these factors, women were less inclined to join unions, to vote Communist, or to identify themselves primarily as workers. It is to be expected that women, as they become more integrated into the work force, will begin to act more and more like workers with their own special interests that they will actively defend.

Coal mining has been the largest industry in Britain in the Twentieth Century, and it has also been the largest source of CPGB members. In 1932 over half the total Party membership were coal miners, but these were predominantly in Scotland and Wales. Due to the relative abundance of books on coal miners, some of the factors involved in radicalism versus conservatism in miners can be explained. R. Page Arnot, from the same school of history writing as Klugmann, with long

quotes and little analysis, has come up with few ideas of interest on radicalism and the coal miners in the five volumes he has devoted to the subject: The Miners: A History of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain, three volumes (London, 1949, 1953, 1961); A History of the Scottish Miners from the Earliest Times (London, 1955); and South Wales Miners, 1898-1914 (London, 1967). Arnot has long been a leader of the CPGB, and it is not surprising that he has devoted special attention to the Scottish and Welsh miners. A Communist has been the president of both the Scottish Miners' Federation (Abe Moffatt, from 1942 on) and the South Wales Miners' Federation (Arthur Horner, 1936 on). In addition, the first Communist elected to the House of Commons was elected by the Scottish mining district of West Fife in 1936.

These districts of radical miners would have to be compared with a conservative mining district, and a truly - excellent history of one such district exists in The Derbyshire Miners: A Study in Industrial and Social History, by James Eccles Williams (London, 1962). Although this is an official history, sponsored by the Derbyshire Miners' Federation, just as Arnot's works were sponsored by the appropriate unions, Williams has shown how a detailed treatment of the miners' lives enriches a trade-union history. His work is a model for any historian who would like to go beyond dull histories of trade-union leadership fights and contract negotiations to look at the daily lives, families, religion, hobbies, working conditions, and political views of the workers of an industry.

While Arnot gives little information on the religious life of Scottish and Welsh miners, Williams shows its importance to the Derbyshire miners. Primitive Methodist lay ministers often became leaders of miners' unions there. This influenced the unions in a pacifist and class collaborationist way, although the social-protest elements of Primitive Methodism should not be underrated. The role of religion was gradually declining even in Derbyshire, but the religious ideology provided an integrating set of ideas that led to a smoother transition to the Labour Party from Nineteenth Century liberalism in Derbyshire than in either Scotland or Wales. The Midlands coal fields were also more modern and mechanized than those of Scotland and Wales, which meant that the Midland miners earned more and that the Midland miners were the best equipped to survive the general crisis of the British coal industry.

As noted above there are certain general reasons that lead one to expect greater radicalism among miners than among other groups of workers: They tend to be concentrated in single-industry towns where economic and political struggles are more-tightly connected; mining is almost exclusively a male occupation; its dangers give miners' strikes a particularly-fierce aspect, for when safety issues are involved they are literally fighting for their lives; and finally, mining is extremely sensitive to economic fluctuations even in the best of times. From 1920 onward the British coal-mining industry was declining, leaving huge numbers of miners unemployed and isolated in mining towns where no

other work was available. A renaissance of anti-English nationalism among the Scottish and Welsh miners made them particularly radical. The mining industry was much more isolated from other sources of employment in Scotland and Wales than in the English Midlands, where there were iron, steel, and textile industries nearby. Hence the Scottish and Welsh miners suffered more during unemployment and it was more difficult for their wives to find work.

Although the CPGB was never a mass party, it has consistently had greater influence in the British working class than the CPUSA has had among American workers. The CPGB has generally been quite strong at the shop-steward level in big metal-workers' unions, on the docks, and in Scottish and Welsh mining. The CPUSA has never had such strong membership support on the lower levels of the unions.

France

France is the first country with a mass Communist Party in this survey. Unfortunately, French historians have been less involved in labor history than the Americans and British, and are oriented to the institutional history of unions and parties that is increasingly outmoded among English-speaking historians because of the influence of E. P. Thompson.

Three good, recent general histories of the Parti Communiste Francais (PCF) exist. Jacques Fauvet's Histoire du Parti Communiste Francais, two volumes (Paris, 1964, 1965) is of the hostile - anecdotal school. An official work by the History Commission of the Central Committee of the PCF, Histoire du Parti Communiste Francais (Manuel) (Paris, 1964), conforms to the dullness and inaccuracy which are expected in official histories. An anonymous two-volume Histoire du Parti Communiste Francais is of particular interest because it was put out by PCF members hostile to the Thorez cult in orthodox party history.

Besides these, there are two recent works on the formation of the PCF. Robert Wohl's French Communism in the Making, 1914-1924 (Stanford, 1966) is a detailed political history of the splits in the French Socialist Party (Section Francais de l'Internationale Ouvriere: SFIO) and the CGT. He, like Weinstein and Kendall elsewhere, sees the French CP as an alien form imposed on the French Left, and shows how the growing rigidity and request for complete domination of the Russian CP in the Comintern drove out those French CP leaders of any independence and integrity.

The other recent work on formation of the PCF is Annie Kriegel's Aux Origines du Communisme Francais, 1914-1920: Contribution a l'Histoire du Mouvement Ouvrier Francais, two volumes (Paris, 1964). Kriegel has a companion volume on the growth of the Confederation Generale du Travail, 1918-1920, which tries to use statistics to show

the differential growth pattern by region and union and how these relate to radicalism. Unfortunately in both works the statistics are not brought to life by enough information about the differences between the workers' movements in different regions and occupations. She does have, in Aux Origines, a long section on the railroad strike of 1920 that contains the most-interesting information in the book, but is still inadequate in explaining the differences in radicalism between the different categories of workers and the different railroad lines. One learns no more from the official history of the Railwaymen's Union (Federation Nationale des Cheminots CGT), Les Cheminots dans l'Histoire Sociale de la France, edited by Joseph Jacquet (Paris, 1967), which can only suggest that the reason the Nord and Est railwaymen didn't strike in 1920 was the devastation caused in those areas by the War and the fact that "they were perhaps less-well-informed by their leaders" than the others.

One group which contributed a considerable number of leaders and members to the French Communist Party that played no important part in the US or British parties was the anarchists. This tells something about the relative stage of development of the French economy, for anarchism has been the ideology of a declining artisan class. France had many more small workshops than the US, Britain, or Germany, and much more of a spirit of individualism among the workers. Kriegel carefully documents the history of the small anarchist grouping led by Raymond Pericat that was based mainly on the Paris building workers, but was able to play a leadership role in the big 1917 strikes in the Loire Valley munitions and metal industry. In 1919 Pericat led a small ultra-left communist group.

Henri Manceau's Des Luttes Ardennaises (Paris, 1969) is a history of the workers' movement in the Department of Ardennes since 1750, and gives an excellent picture of the difficulty of transition from artisan to industrial proletariat for one group of workers. He reports that many in the early PCF in the Department were young metal workers who had been anarchists before joining the Party and who afterward were a source of much difficulty for the Party due to their libertarian spirit. Even as late as the 1950s the Ardennes was a center of Leftism in the PCF, and leaders were expelled for this. Throughout the Nineteenth Century and well into the Twentieth, anti-clericalism was an important issue for the workers of Ardennes because the employers made a practice of hiring only Catholic workers who had been recommended by a priest for their docility. The struggle for strong unions was necessarily opposed to religion. In contrast to the metal industry, the Sedan textile industry is shown by Manceau to have had a heavy concentration of women workers still deeply religious and small employers who were influenced by Christian Social ideas and relatively good to their workers in a paternalistic sort of way. Thus there was not the bitter class conflict that existed in the metal industry in which the factories were owned by far-away trusts.

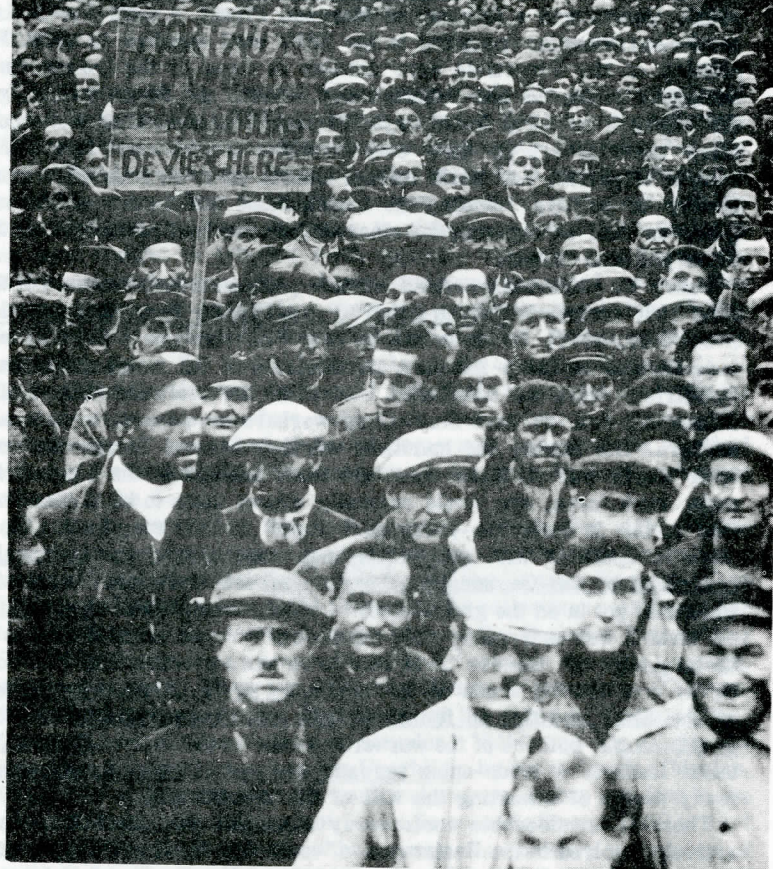
A surprising result of Annie Kriegel's analysis of the split in the SFIO was that many of the pro-Comintern delegates represented the peasant members of the Party. The peasants were more affected by the War than any other class in society: over half the dead and missing were peasants. Many veterans joined the SFIO in a militant mood, contemptuous of the old reformist parliamentary politicians. In many rural departments the countryside was pro-Communist and the towns, with their lawyer - notary - schoolteacher - postman socialists, were anti-Communist. Among the most-revolutionary elements in the Party, alongside the youth movement and the Parisian intellectuals, were the peasants of Lot-et-Garonne Department, led by Reynaud Jean, who was consistently elected to Parliament from the Department. These peasants combined a traditional hostility toward the Government and the Military with a revolutionary anti-urbanism which in this case was directed against capitalism although it was somewhat similar to other peasant sentiment that was hostile to the workers and socialism. Gordon Wright's Rural Revolution in France: The Peasantry in the Twentieth Century (Stanford, 1964) suggests that the PCF did well only among the marginal smallholders, share tenants, and landless laborers in parts of the Massif Central and in the Southwest of France, long centers of rural Leftism. His book tells much more about peasant Rightist groups than about the Left, but this is only fitting since the Left was outnumbered two-to-one by the Right among the peasantry.

In the 1920s the PCF had considerable success in Alsace-Lorraine, where there was much resentment against the refusal of the French Government to grant provincial autonomy and the use of the local German dialect in official business. The PCF formed an electoral alliance with Alsatian clerical autonomists, but when the Party line changed to "class against class" in 1929, several Alsatian Communist leaders, including the mayor of Strasbourg, were expelled from the Party for refusal to follow the new line and break their alliance with other autonomous groups. As a result the PCF lost its especially strong position there.

The PCF, unlike the American and British parties, started big and then declined in membership through the Twenties and early Thirties. All three parties grew rapidly from 1934 on, with the Popular Front policy of supporting bourgeois reformist governments like Blum's in France and Roosevelt's in the US. The PCF policies from 1934 to 1938 were to the right of the SFIO, being willing to subordinate any need for changes in the French socio-economic structure to an alliance with any group, however conservative, that would support a policy of alliance with the Soviet Union against Nazi Germany. This policy led the PCF to oppose the continuation of the massive sit-down strikes of June 1936 beyond the signing of the Matignon Accords between central employers' associations and the newly-united CGT. Nevertheless the PCF had such good organization that it was able to expand its trade-union base very rapidly and become the dominant force in the French working class by



French working class children, June, 1936.



"Death to wholesale butchers and those responsible for the high cost of living."
French workers, June, 1936.

the time of the Stalin-Hitler pact in August 1939. The organized French working-class movement up to 1936 was largely composed of skilled workers, with relatively-weak trade unions. Only in 1936 (almost exactly as in the United States), with the sitdown strikes, did the basic mass of the French industrial proletariat and the low-paid department store clerks organize into the CGT and get trade-union recognition. The Communists were able to win them as supporters because for the most part the SFIO was satisfied to remain an electoral association based largely on the petty bourgeoisie, and the old CGT leaders were content to remain the leaders of the skilled craft workers.

The story of the June 1936 strikes and their aftermath is narrated vividly in Daniel Guérin's Front Populaire : Revolution Manquee (Paris, 1963). Guérin was a follower of Marceau Pivert, a semi-Trotskyist, semi-Luxemburgist operating in the SFIO until expelled in 1938. The politics of the Pivertists were similar to those of the International Socialists in the US and Britain today. Guérin and Pivert tried to get the workers to form Soviet-style horizontal associations that would allow them to act on their own initiative outside the hierarchical control of parties and trade unions. Guérin gives an unusually-frank picture of politics, showing the inadequacies and errors of his own group as well as exposing the class-collaborationist politics of all the other political forces.

Henry W. Ehrmann provides another picture of the aftermath of the June 1936 strikes in French Labor : From Popular Front to Liberation (New York, 1947). He shows that by 1939 PCF strength in the CGT was concentrated in heavy industry, particularly in the metal and defense industries, while the reformists controlled the craft and white-collar unions as well as such blue-collar workers as miners, sailors, and dockers. The mining and maritime workers became Communist only after World War II. Since these are basic industries with a primarily male work force, one would normally expect them to be Communist. One factor in their non-Communist status in 1939 may be that these were occupations with old unions that were set up and continually controlled by non-Communists. The Communists were most successful when they got in on the ground floor of a union when it was first formed or when it was undergoing a big expansion. We need detailed studies of these groups of workers to be able to be more precise. The PCF vote in the coal-mining areas of the Nord and Pas-de-Calais overtook that of the SFIO in 1936, so it may well be that a lag existed between the switch in the politics of the workers and the installation of Communist union leaders. A trade-union bureaucracy that is long entrenched has many means of thwarting the will of the membership.

There is considerable controversy about just when the PCF became actively involved in the Resistance in World War II, whether right after the Nazis invaded in the summer of 1940 or after the Soviet Union was invaded in the summer of 1941. Whichever it was, by the end of the War the Communists were the largest group in the Resistance, and their

Maquis in the rural areas of France spread their influence to many areas where the Party had been weak or non-existent before. After the War their vote greatly increased again, and they held ministerial positions in the Government until 1947. When the Force Ouvriere, financed by the CIA, split off from the CGT in the late 1940s, the Communists remained in control of the CGT and the lion's share of the organized workers. The Party's vote stabilized at about 25% in France as a whole, and it became clearly the strongest party in the French working class. However it has lost its dynamism and relies more and more on institutions like the trade unions for its base, rather than making gains among new groups.

Germany

The history of the German Communist Party (the Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands: KPD) is better covered than any other Western CP due to the existence of the German Democratic Republic. Not only have sizeable resources been expended in the GDR on the gathering of materials and writing about the German workers' movement, but this has stimulated the West Germans to write in rebuttal. This exchange has been fruitful in bringing forth opposing viewpoints on Germany's working-class history. The subject has been approached on both sides as the history of institutions, with the main question being: "Which party, the SPD or the KPD, is the true leader of the German proletariat, and which state, the Federal Republic or the Democratic Republic, is the best for the German workers?" Relatively few books deal with the German workers themselves, aside from their unions and parties. The methodology of "revisionist" Social Democrats is essentially identical to that of "orthodox" East Germans except for more-frequent reference to Lenin in the East.

The main survey on the East German side is the eight-volume Geschichte der Deutscher Arbeiterbewegung, available in English in a condensed early version, Outline History of the German Working-Class Movement (East Berlin, 1963). Both are by collectives working under the direction of the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party (SED). The three best surveys from West Germany are: Die Deutsche Arbeiterbewegung, 1844 bis 1914, by Hedwig Wachenheim (Cologne, 1967); Hammer or Anvil: The Story of the German Working-Class Movement, by Evelyn Anderson (London, 1945); and Geschichte der Deutschen Arbeiterbewegung: Ein Überblick, by Helga Grebing (Munich, 1966). The split in the German workers' movement that resulted in the establishment of the Independent Social Democratic Party (USP) in 1917 and the KPD in 1919 was more than in any other country the product of conflicts fought out within one party, the SPD, and the trade unions that were closely connected to it. Thus the histories of the prewar Socialist movement are of more interest in Germany than elsewhere for their

ability to explain the origins of German Communism. We are served well in English with accounts of short periods of the SPD's history: The German Social Democrats and the First International, 1864-1872, by Roger Morgan (Cambridge, England, 1965); The Outlawed Party: Social Democracy in Germany, 1878-1890, by Vernon L. Lidtke (Princeton, 1966); German Social Democracy, 1905-1917: Development of the Great Schism, by Carl E. Schorske (New York, 1955; paperbound 1965); The German Social Democratic Party, 1914-1921, by A. Joseph Berlau (New York, 1949). The main point that emerges from these surveys of the German workers' movement and histories of the SPD is that both the SPD and the trade unions were controlled by a growing bureaucracy that represented primarily the skilled craft workers. During the period 1870-1914 the basic industrial proletariat were growing rapidly, but their interests were not adequately represented by the SPD and the trade unions. The SPD wasn't willing to lead a general strike against unequal suffrage in the states of Northern Germany, where the voting power of the workers was actually being curtailed in the first decade of the Twentieth Century. The trade unions weren't willing to spend money to support organizing strikes that were needed to bring the unorganized, unskilled workers of heavy industry into the trade unions. When large numbers of unskilled workers were present in unions like the German Metalworkers' Union (DMV), they found that these unions were controlled by representatives of skilled metal trades whom it was impossible to dislodge. Even after the upheaval of the First World War and the German Revolution the skilled workers still dominated the DMV. (See Fritz Opel: Der Deutsche Metallarbeiter-Verband Während des Ersten Weltkrieges und der Revolution (Hanover, 1957).)

Since the miners were the only occupational group whose voting pattern showed a Communist predominance in the 1920s, it is essential to understand why they came to be dissatisfied with the SPD and the reformist trade-union leaders. The earlier discussion of the general reasons for miner trade-union radicalism is relevant to Germany. Johann Fritsch has written an orthodox, East German account of the politics of the German Miners' Union leaders before the First World War, Eindringen und Ausbreitung des Revisionismus im Deutschen Bergarbeiterverband (bis 1914) (Leipzig, 1967). From Fritsch and the surveys, it is apparent that the miners were poorly organized before the War. Although masses of miners joined unions in big strike waves, they quickly left again. Many miners were organized into Catholic trade unions and were supporters of the Catholic Center Party, particularly in Western Germany, where the mine-owners were mostly Protestant and the Prussian state had a tradition of hostility to the Catholic Church. The bourgeois Catholic Center Party could thus pose as the protector of the interests of the Catholic miners against the Protestant employers and state. This gradually broke down, as the Catholic unions proved unwilling to fight hard enough for the interests of the miners.

After the War, many previously-Catholic miners jumped straight to the KPD, skipping the intermediate step of the SPD, which almost all workers in the non-Catholic sections of Germany went through. (See Johannes Schauff: Die Deutschen Katholiken und die Zentrumspartei: Eine Politisch-Statistische Untersuchung der Reichstagswahlen seit 1871 (Cologne, 1928).)

Another factor was the changing composition of the Ruhr miners from old, established miners with guild traditions, religious faith, and comfortable homes with gardens and goats to recent immigrants from the farms of Eastern Germany and Poland, living in slums, wanting to save enough to return home and buy a farm, with no resources to fall back on in times of unemployment. This shift is shown in the work of Wilhelm Brepohl, Industrievolk im Wandel von der Agraren zur Industriellen Daseinsform Dargestellt am Ruhrgebiet (Tubingen, 1957), which traces the pattern of settlement in the Ruhr and shows how the big wave of immigration just before World War I settled in certain areas of the Ruhr that later proved to be the largest sources of Communist votes. Areas of the Ruhr that had been urban earlier and settled more slowly remained Catholic Center or Socialist.

The German mine-owners were among the most-hostile employers toward unionization, and refused to recognize the unions until compelled by the Military to deal with representatives of the workers during the First World War. The story is ably told in Gerald D. Feldman's Army, Industry, and Labor in Germany, 1914-1918 (Princeton, 1966). At the end of the War, when socialization of the mines appeared imminent, the mine-owners signed a recognition agreement with the labor unions and established an eight-hour day, but as soon as the unions had been sufficiently weakened by the chaos of the split, the occupation of the Ruhr by French troops in 1923, and the inflation, the mine-owners revoked the agreement.

Another heavily-Communist workers' group in the Weimar Republic were the port and dock workers. Helmut Kral's excellent analysis of the situation of the ship-builders before the First World War, Streik auf den Helgen: Die Gewerkschaftlichen Kämpfe der Deutschen Werftarbeiter vor dem Ersten Weltkrieg (East Berlin, 1964), shows how they became alienated by the anti-strike policies of the SPD and reformist trade-union leaders. The main difficulty arose over a huge strike in 1913 that was not called in a manner pleasing to the national leadership of the DMV, who refused to support the strike financially. The strike failed. As a result many dock workers quit both the union and the SPD, since the SPD supported the position of the trade-union leadership. Another source of resentment among the dock workers, concentrated mainly in Hamburg and Bremen, was the unwillingness of the SPD to fight to prevent the weakening of the representation of workers through unequal suffrage in municipal government elections.

The results of the events described by Kral are shown by another fine book, Richard A. Comfort's Revolutionary Hamburg: Labor Politics

in the early Weimar Republic (Stanford, 1966). Comfort shows in detail how the Hamburg trade-union movement was dominated by the traditional craft industries such as building workers, tobacco workers, and printers in spite of the numerical preponderance of workers in mass industries such as the factory, dock, and harbor industries. During the First World War, the workers in the harbors and factories grew more and more restive over the anti-strike policies of the unions and over the bad food-rationing system. When the revolution came in November 1918, the majority of workers supported Communists in the workers' councils, and it was only by relying on the more-conservative soldiers and the terroristic Freikorps that the National Government was able to put down the Hamburg workers. In the 1920s the Hamburg unions were retained by the Socialists, but the Communist Party was preferred by most of the harbor and factory workers in the elections.

Ossip K. Flechtheim's Die KPD in der Weimarer Republik (Frankfurt am Main, 1969, paperbound) has an interesting chapter on the sociology of the KPD. He shows that the skilled-unskilled dichotomy is not wholly adequate to explain the split, since many skilled workers supported the KPD (plumbers in Berlin and cutlery workers in Bolingen and also in Remscheid), while many unskilled workers supported the SPD (textile workers in the non-Catholic areas of Germany in particular, but the workers in the small towns of Northern Germany in general). This shows the need for precision in analysis. In general, however, the KPD was the party of the basic factory proletariat, while the SPD was the party of the craft workers and some of the white-collar workers. Skilled workers in basic industry and mining were often Communists, since many were in situations similar to that of the Clyde Valley metal workers, facing insecurity due to new technology and greater use of semi-skilled machine operatives. Richard Muller's Vom Kaiserreich zur Republik, two volumes (Vienna, 1924) shows that the Berlin shop steward movement that led several militant strikes during the First World War and contributed many members to the KPD was dominated by skilled turners. These workers had the same situation of high bargaining power but insecurity from the increasing employment of semi-skilled workers as did the Clyde metal workers.

An extremely-fascinating picture of an unusual aspect of the early Communist movement in Germany is furnished by Max Hoelz in his autobiography, From White Cross to Red Flag (London, 1930). Hoelz was the leader of several Communist uprisings that took place in the chaotic conditions of postwar Germany. He led a Red army in the mountainous Vogtland in 1919 that stole from the rich and gave to the poor like Robin Hood or someone out of Hobsbawm's Primitive Rebels. Among Hoelz's finest exploits was the burning of all the law books and files from the town hall of Falkenstein in the village square. In March 1921 Hoelz was the leader of the military forces of the Communist uprising in the Mansfeld region of Central Germany.

One of the finest studies of the sociology of the rise of Nazism,



**Civil
War,
George
Grosz, 1928**

William Sheridan Allen's The Nazi Seizure of Power: The Experience of a Single German Town, 1930-1935 (Chicago, 1965, paperbound) gives a good picture of what life was like for German workers in a typical Northern German small town where there were almost no Communists. His town was quite placid, the only large industry being the railroad, whose workers were considered civil servants and were thus secure against unemployment, paid wages which were regular if low, and able to look forward to receiving a nice pension on retirement. Thus the Social Democrats were not challenged in the workers' movement there until the Depression, when the KPD tried without much success to stir

up interest among the unemployed.

There was a larger Communist movement in Germany in the 1920s than in any other Western country. The reasons for this are complex, but several ideas seem relevant. First, Germany had lost the War, and was forced to pay heavy reparations. Since Germany still remained a capitalist country, the heavy taxes these reparations necessitated came from taxes on the little people, the workers, the small-businessmen, and the peasants, rather than on the large corporations. (American loans played a large part in German reparations, but only from 1924 on.) Germany had no colonies, and there was a temporary decline in German investments abroad. This meant that any economic elbow that the workers in the Western countries had from colonialism and from super-profits in the less-developed countries were absent in Germany. German industrialists, particularly in heavy industry, were certainly not "corporate liberals" by any stretch of the imagination. They were tough, anti-union repressive capitalists who did all they could do to squeeze their workers. Any idea of keeping the class struggle within the bounds of a "pluralist, democratic society" seemed ridiculous to most workers in the heavy industries in which the Communists were concentrated, although it was quite appealing to the Socialist workers in light industry and the small towns. Finally, Germany more than any other country had a real Socialist mass movement before the War. The SPD got a third of the vote nationally in 1912. This SPD experience had raised certain expectations in many workers about what a Socialist society would be like. When the Weimar Republic turned out to be just a capitalist society governed by Socialists, the betrayal seemed to be intolerable, and the KPD grew.

The major problem now facing those who would like to understand the history of the German working class is the Nazi experience. We need to know what effect the twelve years of Hitler's rule had on the workers at the shop level. To what extent were institutions like the German Labor Front and the vacation association, Kraft durch Freude, successful in overcoming the radicalism of German workers? Has the quiescence of the West German workers since the Second World War been a fluke, owing to the unpopularity of Communism because of the anti-worker policies of East Germany, or is it the sign of some deeper process that took place during the Third Reich?

Conclusion

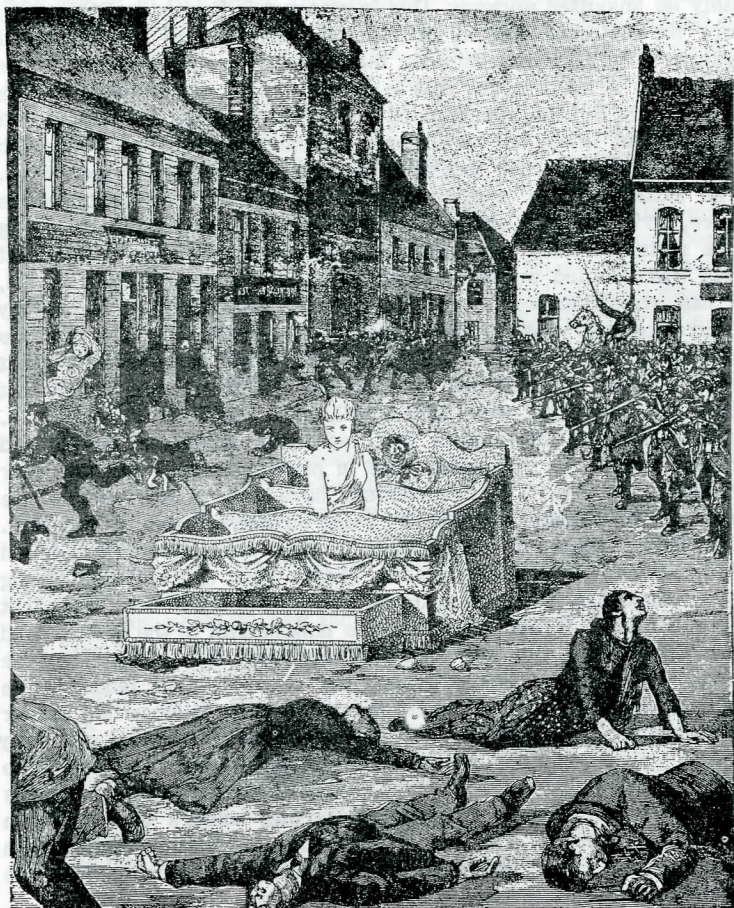
Obviously the Communist Parties were not exactly alike in their recruitment from country to country, since they never gained a mass base among the workers of Britain and the United States, and they did gain such a base in Weimar Germany and in France after 1934. Still, the pattern of working-class radicalization in the last fifty years has some universal components. The round of radicalization in the late Nineteenth Century that brought about the creation of the socialist

parties and the craft unions was based mainly on skilled craft workers who were reacting to the destruction of artisanship in the Nineteenth Century. The creation of the Communist Parties was associated mainly with the rise of industrial unions in heavy industry and mining, based mainly on unskilled workers. This is clearest in France and Germany, where the CP was able to influence the majority of the industrial workers. It is also noticeable in the United States, where the CP was able to play a much larger role in the CIO than it did in the AFL. It is least clear in Britain, where there was no trade-union split along craft and industrial lines, but where there was nevertheless a concentration of Communists in such industrial occupations as mining and metal.

The skilled-worker component of Communism is the strongest in France, Britain, and Germany, where the CP has always been strong in the metal industry since the shop-steward movements of the First World War. Skilled workers reacted sharply to threats to their status, and had strong unions to back up their opposition to new technology that threatened to wipe out their monopoly of certain jobs. The wartime problems of the unskilled workers in the metal industry were great enough so that the unskilled followed the skilled in huge strikes that rocked the munitions production of all three countries in 1917-1918. The shop-steward movements that led these strikes in Britain and Germany played an important role in providing cadre for the later Communist parties. The Communists have done poorly everywhere among skilled workers who weren't being threatened, such as printers.

The ethnic aspect of Communism is most noticeable in the United States, where CP membership has always been concentrated among Eastern European immigrants, Jews, and blacks. It has been important also in Britain, if one considers the nationalism of the Scottish and Welsh. In France, the key examples have been the Alsatians and the Italians. The largest ethnic group, the Bretons, have tended to be conservative, religious, or even fascist in their nationalism rather than Communist. In Germany, the nationalism of Polish workers, many of whom worked in Ruhr and Silesian mining, has been channeled into religious and conservative paths, although there were some instances of co-operation between Communist German miners and Poles in Silesia in the 1920s. The factors that make for radical nationalism rather than for conservative nationalism among minority groups are obviously complex and need further study.

One need not conclude from the fact that the Russian-line Communist Parties have become more and more conservative in the past fifty years that the "end of ideology" is upon us. There can be no question that Russian-line Communism is thoroughly bourgeoisified; but new social forces (students, unorganized white-collar workers, minorities, women, industrial workers both organized and unorganized who are dissatisfied) remain outside any consensus and may provide the basis for a new radicalism more successful than that studied in this paper.



"At every bloody uprising she flowers into grace and truth": from La Femme 100 Têtes, Max Ernst, 1929.

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