

THE SOVIET UNION—

Your Questions Answered

By MARGARET COWL

THE writer has spent a number of years in the Soviet Union and has studied conditions and the economic policies there. She has spent considerable time in different factories in a number of cities in the Soviet Union. She visited and stayed in the workers' rest homes in the Crimea and the Caucasus. She was present at various workers' meetings and conferences and demonstrations. She visited workers' homes, factory clubs, day nurseries, hospitals, workers' stores and dining rooms, palaces of labor, churches, courts, museums, libraries, theatres, movies, prisons, homes for the homeless children, villages, soviets in session, etc.

Upon her return to the United States, in 1932, the writer delivered twenty-five lectures on the Soviet Union in twenty American cities to working class gatherings. The workers at these meetings asked a total of 252 questions about the Soviet Union, twenty-eight of which are answered here.

1. Where Do the Workers in the Soviet Union Get the Capital with Which to Build the New Factories?

In all capitalist countries, when the worker is employed, only a very small part of what he produces by his labor is given back to him in wages. In the U.S.A. the worker gets next to nothing in social insurance. A great part of the worker's product of labor is pocketed by the capitalist-employer who owns the machines and factories. From such accumulated income, derived from the labor of the workers, the capitalist-employer installs new machinery, opens new factories, and increases the amount of profits.

In the Soviet Union, the tools, machinery, factories, etc., belong to the working class who use them. The workers ac-

quired all this through the October 1917 revolution. Under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party, the Russian workers smashed the bourgeois state; that is, the workers with the support of the peasants put an end to the rule of the capitalist-landlord class; they did away with the capitalist government, which was the political servant of the capitalist class under which thrives the exploitation of man by man. On the ruins of the bourgeois state, the workers set up their own class state rule—the proletarian dictatorship. This rule of the working class is expressed in the form of the Soviet Government, which is made up of workers, soldiers and peasants. Thus the workers dealt a death blow to the capitalist system of exploitation. Thus they were able to take away from the capitalist and landlords, the land, banks, factories with all the machinery, the railroads, etc., all of which had been created by the labor of the workers.

Now that the profit-making system has been abolished and the workers' state owns the means of production, the distribution of the labor product is different from that under a capitalist system. That part which the worker receives in money as wages is now greater than it was before the October Revolution. Another part the worker receives in the form of social insurance (social wages), such as full wages during illness, old-age pension, vacation with pay, a total of six or eight weeks' rest with full wages before and after childbirth, free sanatoria, free rest homes, free medical care, new homes at low rentals, day nurseries, etc. Still another part of the labor product is used to improve the factories, install better machinery, better ventilation systems, safeguards around the machinery, to build new factories, all of which safeguards the health and improves the working and living conditions of the working masses and their families.

Thus the worker in the Soviet Union by working for the whole working class, at the same time improves his own individual position.

Not through exploitation of any one section of the population.