
AN OUTLINE HISTORY
OF THE
**AUSTRALIAN
COMMUNIST
PARTY**

by
L. L. SHARKEY



*TWENTY YEARS OF THE
COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL
O. KUUSINEN*

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Contents

HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION . . . By E. W. Campbell . . .	5
1. The Rise and Development of Trade Unionism in Australia (1850-1890)	5
2. The Rise and Development of the Labor Party in Australia (1890-1914)	9
3. The Rise and Fall of Anarcho-Syndicalism in Australia (1914-1919)	12
 AN OUTLINE OF PARTY HISTORY.	
From a Lecture by L. L. Sharkey to a National Party School	17
 CONGRESS REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE.	
From the 12th to the 13th Party Congress . . . By L. L. Sharkey	35
 A UNITED WORKING CLASS AND A NATIONAL FRONT FOR VICTORY.	
Resolution, 13th Congress, Communist Party of Australia, March 19, 20, 21, 1943	55
 TODAY AND TOMORROW . . . By L. L. Sharkey . . .	69
 TWENTY YEARS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL	
By O. Kuusinen.	72
 ON THE DISSOLUTION OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL.	
Statement of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, May 15, 1943.	81

Historical Introduction to L. L. Sharkey's "Notes on the History of The Australian Communist Party"

By E. W. CAMPBELL

L. L. Sharkey's notes on the Australian Communist Party can be better understood and appreciated if they are studied against the general historical background of the Australian Labor Movement.

It is the object of this introduction to provide a brief and connected picture of the development of the Labor Movement prior to the rise of the Communist Party.

To facilitate the use of this pamphlet for study the Introduction has been divided into three sections; L. L. Sharkey's notes will form a fourth section; and a series of Questions for Discussion have been appended to each.

The Rise and Development of Trade Unionism in Australia (1850-1890)

TRADE Unionism was introduced in Australia in the 1850's after the abolition of convictism in N.S.W. It was established in the main by non-socialist British workmen "who left England at a time when Liberal-Labor politics held almost unchallenged sway."

Pioneering Unions were Friendly Society of Carpenters and Joiners (1845), Operative Masons' Society (1850), and Amalgamated Society of Engineers (1852). These were craft unions based on the British pattern.

The first major struggle waged by the Trade Unions was for the 8-hour day. Former Chartist leaders James Stephens and T. W. Vine played a prominent part in organising building workers around this demand. Between 1855 and 1858 the 8-hour day had been won by all building trades workers in the Eastern colonies. Ten years later Marx included this demand in the Program of the First International, recognising its power of attraction for the as yet unorganised workers.

The gold rush which began in 1851 among other things created a vast scarcity of labor. Tradesmen's wages soared from 4/- to 5/- a day in 1850 to 25/- to 30/- a day in 1855. This may have contributed to the precedence given to hours in early

trade union agitation. It later gave an impetus to Trade Unionism when the gold rush had subsided and the labor market became less favourable to the workers. The latter combined in an effort to keep up the rate of wages.

Economic and political oppression, i.e., the licence system and the high handed and tyrannical methods of the authorities in dealing with the "diggers" evoked a rebellion on the gold fields. A Reform League was formed at Ballarat to fight for the abolition of the licence fee, reform of the system of gold fields administration and certain political demands adapted from the British People's Charter—Manhood suffrage, payment of members and abolition of the property qualifications for members of Parliament, etc.

Under extreme provocation, on December 3rd, 1854, the "diggers" revolted at Ballarat. A log palisade was thrown up and the "Republic of Victoria" proclaimed. The rebellion was crushed by police and soldiers next day, but nearly all the demands made by the "diggers" were subsequently granted. Eureka merged with the struggle for the 8-hour day in enriching the traditions of Australian labor.

When Company mining became the rule and the "diggers" lost their independent status to become wage-labourers, local unions made their appearance on the various fields. In 1874 twelve such bodies merged to form the Amalgamated Miners' Association of Victoria (later Australasia). By 1886 the A.M.A. had 51 branches and more than 13,000 members. It had waged 29 strikes and only lost one. In 1886 the General Secretary of the A.M.A. helped to organise the shearers in N.S.W. and Victoria. Three years later the Amalgamated Shearers' Union had 22,500 members. It later joined forces with the Queensland Shearers' Union which had a membership of 11,000 (ultimately became the A.W.U.). In the first three years of its existence the Amalgamated Shearers' Union waged 3180 strikes and forced recognition on most of the squatters.

In 1874 the Seamen's Unions were formed in Sydney and Melbourne. In 1882 Waterside Workers in Sydney became organised. Trolley and Draymen and Railway and Tramway workers likewise combined in Trade Unions. The latter had to overcome the bitter opposition of the colonial legislatures to Trade Unionism in the government services.

The Federation of Trades Unions preceded the Federation of the Colonies in Australia. By the middle 'eighties the various unions in each industrial centre were associated in Trades Hall or Trades and Labor Councils and closely knit Federal Unions had been established in a wide range of key industries. The Pastoral Workers, Seamen and Miners were organised in unions whose total membership was about 70,000.

From 1884 Intercolonial Trade Union Congresses were held almost annually and a suggestion was made in 1889 to establish an all-Australian directing body. Main discussions at these Congresses centred around gaining redress for economic grievances common to workers of all colonies. Undue stress was laid on the defensive aspect of trade unionism while Socialist aims were decried. The watchword of the movement at this time was "Defence and not Defiance."

The Trade Unions were not altogether indifferent towards politics (in the narrower sense). Extensive lobbying was carried out among bourgeois politicians and some working class candidates were actually put forward and elected. But the idea of a separate workers' party had not yet reached maturity.

Trade Union pressure on the Parliaments facilitated the passage of Trade Union Acts, which legalised the unions, protected their funds and made them competent to make contracts on behalf of their members. It also influenced legislation like the Victorian Shops and Factories Act and the Employers' Liability Act.

The economic organisation of the workers evoked parallel organisations among the employers (the latter were already organised politically in the various legislatures of the colonies). In 1878 eighteen Steamship Companies came together to form the Steamship Owners' Association of Australasia. This body joined with the Boot Manufacturers' Association in Victoria, setting up the nucleus of an Employers' Association in 1879. An Employers' Union was formed in N.S.W. in 1888, while Pastoralists' Unions were set up in subsequent years in the various colonies. In 1890 the Pastoralists' Unions united in a Federal Council.

The lines of class demarcation were becoming clearer in the new country. The struggle was moving towards a new phase. This was recognised on both sides and was most clearly expressed in a notice served on the Shipowners' Association by the Seamen's Union in January, 1886. The seamen had refused to man ships carrying free labor to break a Waterside Workers' strike then in process and they informed the Shipowners thus, "We are compelled to take this course owing to the struggle having assumed a new phase, viz., Capital v Labor."

Summing up: Trade Unionism, originating in the spontaneous attempts of the workers to do away with competition and to better their conditions, was, by 1890, firmly established in Australia. In most of the key industries strong, well functioning organisations had been built. Although the first unions had been based on the British craft pattern local conditions soon compelled the workers to go beyond this form. Amalgamated unions like the Miners' and Shearers' drew the semi-skilled and the unskilled workers into the movement. Victorious strikes had won

valuable economic concessions, notably the 8-hour day, and had forced legal recognition of the Trade Unions. These struggles also provided the workers with valuable, though limited, experience in the class struggle. Through Amalgamations, Federations, Labor Councils and Intercolonial Congresses, the unions were moving towards consolidation of the labor movement on a national scale. This shows how true was the observation made by Marx that "the trade unions, without being aware of it, become the focal points for the organisation of the working class."

So far the development of the labor movement in Australia had been spontaneous, and was not yet closely connected with Socialism. This represented a serious weakness. "Isolated from Socialism the labor movement becomes petty, and inevitably becomes bourgeois," wrote Lenin. "The spontaneous labor movement is pure and simple Trade Unionism, and trade unionism means the ideological enslavement of the workers to the bourgeoisie." Australian workers in the 'nineties had still to learn that "The struggle for high wages and short hours etc., is not an end in itself, but a means, a very necessary and effective means, but only one of several means towards a higher end; the abolition of the wages system altogether." (Engels). They had still to be brought to a realisation and understanding that "At the side of or above the unions of special trades there must spring up a general union, a political organisation of the working class as a whole" (Engels).

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. When did Trade Unions first develop in Australia?
2. Why was there no significant development before the 1850's?
3. What was the first great question to occupy the attention of the Trade Unions in Australia?
4. What influence did Chartism have on the early Trade Union Movement?
5. How and when did unionism extend to the miners and shearers?
6. What caused the rebellion at Eureka, and what was its significance for the Labor Movement?
7. How did the Trade Unions become "focal points for the organisation of the working class?"
8. What attitude did employers adopt and what counter measures did they take?
9. What was the attitude of Trade Unions towards Parliament?
10. What was their attitude towards Socialism?

The Rise and Development of the Labor Party in Australia (1890-1914)

THE long period of prosperity enjoyed by Australian capitalism was interrupted by economic crisis in 1890. The policy of concessions gave way to a policy of attack on trade unionism, wages and conditions. This precipitated the series of strikes and lock-outs, 1890-94, which represented the first great general conflict between Labor and Capital.

The workers were defeated chiefly because the employers were organised politically as well as economically. Besides their Employers' Associations they had at their disposal the State power, which they used to smash the strike. The workers were not organised politically. They had only their trade unions. These had been effective in the guerrilla warfare of the past, but now revealed their serious limitations in the first big pitched battle with the employing class as a whole. The trade unions lacked the cohesion which marked the employers' organisations. There was no centralised, authoritative directing body. Moreover, the unions were led by people who had no scientific Socialist understanding and whose guiding principle was "Defence and not Defiance."

One positive outcome of the 1890 defeat was the formation of a mass Labor Party. "The first step of importance for every country newly entering the movement is always the organisation of the workers as an independent political Party, no matter how, so long as it is a distinct workers' party" (Engels).

However, to become really separate from the bourgeoisie, and to preserve its independent working class character, such a Party must acquire a scientific Socialist outlook. William Lane and others tried, without success, to have the Labor Party adopt a Socialist objective. Conditions were not yet ripe for this. "Marxism is more easily, more quickly, more fully and firmly mastered by the working class and its ideologists in conditions of the greatest development of big industry" (Lenin: "What is to be Done.")

Big industry had not yet made its appearance in Australia. Nevertheless, it was bound to develop as Capitalism developed, and it was the task of the Socialists to remain within the mass movement to help the workers learn from their mistakes and to bring them onto the correct path of struggle for Socialism.

Australian Socialists, who were more utopian than Marxist, failed to carry out this task. Lane departed for South America in 1893 and the Socialist League soon afterwards withdrew from the Labor Party. Socialism became isolated from the mass movement and both were weakened in consequence.

Instead of developing as a Socialist Workers' Party the A.L.P. developed as a liberal bourgeois party, carrying out in Australia the measures enacted by the Liberal Capitalist parties in older countries. "The Labor Party has to concern itself with developing and strengthening the country and with creating a Central Government. In Australia the Labor Party has done what in other countries was done by the Liberals, namely, introduced a uniform Customs Tariff, a uniform Federation Act, a uniform Land Tax, and uniform Factory Acts" (Lenin).

Labor politicians and their supporters among the reformist trade union officials seek to preserve and strengthen this fundamental characteristic of the A.L.P. They vigorously oppose Socialism and endeavour to subordinate all forms of working class struggle to the purely Parliamentary.

One of the "achievements" of which the Labor Party boasts is Compulsory Arbitration. This is essentially a liberal capitalist and not a working class measure. It is true that the Arbitration system has contributed to the numerical growth of the labor movement. Workers in occupations where there is usually little organisation have joined Unions to get awards. But mere numbers count for nothing unless the movement has a conscious purpose, i.e., Socialist aims.

"The function of Arbitrationist legalism is to prevent strike struggles and to enforce the acceptance, by law, of a low standard of living. It will at once be seen that Arbitration is detrimental to the development of the class struggle and class consciousness and of that genuine and fundamental solidarity and perfected organisation necessary to the revolutionary struggle for Socialism" (L. L. Sharkey: "The Trade Unions").

Participation in the parliamentary arena, the electoral successes of the A.L.P. and the advent of compulsory arbitration did not cause the workers to entirely forego the struggles on the industrial front. Economic strikes became more frequent from 1908, when the unions began to recover from the effects of the 1890 defeats.

Northern coalminers (1909), metalliferous miners at Broken Hill, Tramwaymen in Brisbane (1912), and gas workers in Sydney (1913) were among those to engage in strike action. As in the 90's, the State power was again brought into play against the strikers. The anti-labor Wade Government in N.S.W. rushed a special coercion Act through Parliament to crush the coal strike. The miners' leader, Peter Bowling, was railroaded to gaol. The labor politicians were forced to make a show of opposition to this Bill, but their real attitude towards militant working class struggle was revealed by Holman, who said: "The organisers of the I.W.W. (Bowling was a member of the I.W.W.) can sink or swim so far as I personally am concerned." In the

1913 gas strike in Sydney the Labor Premier, McGowen, threatened to replace the strikers with scabs if they didn't capitulate.

This brought the discontent, which had been long gathering among the rank and file of the Labor Party, to a head. McGowen resigned to make way for Holman. Holman sought a way out by demanding "greater freedom of action" for the parliamentarians, and "less control" by the Annual Conference and the Executives. There ensued one of those internal conflicts which characterise the history of the Labor Party.

These struggles are rooted in the contradiction between the middle class character and outlook of the Labor Party and its mass basis in the trade union movement. Periodically, the membership, expressing an instinctive desire to free the movement of bourgeois influences and to bring it onto the correct path, have revolted against the leadership. However, chiefly owing to the absence of Socialist understanding, these struggles in the past have not succeeded. They have usually ended with the replacement of one set of opportunists by another. It is only in recent years that the perspective has improved in this regard. Now we find differences within the A.L.P. tending to develop more around questions of basic principles, with a growing left-wing favouring a united front with the Communist Party.

SUMMING UP: The 1890 defeat turned the workers towards politics, but these were still trade union and not Socialist politics. "By trade union politics is understood the common striving of all workers to secure from the government measures for the alleviation of the distress characteristic of their position, but which do not abolish that position, i.e., which do not remove the subjection of labor to capital." (Lenin, "What is to be Done.")

The Socialist League was quite wrong in thinking that the Labor Party had only to be formed to automatically develop into a Socialist Labor Party. On the contrary, it was bound to develop into a bourgeois Labor Party if the Socialists failed, as they did, to consciously work against this tendency.

The Australian workers made a "mistake" in rejecting Socialism in 1890. The socialists made a "mistake" in isolating themselves from the mass movement. Both the mass movement and Socialism were weakened in consequence, and both made many more "mistakes" in the following years.

However, the long period of reformist domination has opened the eyes of many workers, who have learned from bitter experience that the path to their emancipation does not lie through bourgeois parliaments.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What were the basic causes of the big strikes in 1890-94?
2. Why were the workers defeated?
3. What conclusions were drawn by participants?
4. How was the Labor Party founded?
5. What program did it adopt?
6. What attempts were made to give the Party a Socialist objective?
7. Why did these fail?
8. How did Lenin characterise the A.L.P.?
9. What events in the history of the Labor Party confirm Lenin's estimation?
10. What were the achievements of the Labor Party from 1891-1914 and how do you estimate them from a Socialist viewpoint?

The Rise and Fall of Anarcho-Syndicalism in Australia (1914-1919)

THE attitude of the Australian Labor Party to the imperialist war which broke out in August, 1914, was in every respect similar to that of the parties of the Second International which betrayed Socialism.

In its election manifesto (Sept. 15) the A.L.P. stated: "War is one of the greatest realities of life and must be faced . . . if returned with a majority we will pursue with the utmost vigor every course necessary for the defence of the Commonwealth and the Empire."

The Labor Government was returned with a majority and proceeded to carry out its "Win the War" program. Two measures introduced were the Crimes Act and the War Precautions Act. These still form the basis of much of the present day anti-working class coercive legislation.

No working class party in Australia with any mass influence took up an attitude consistent with that of the Bolshevik Party. The I.W.W., however, came closest to this. On the Sunday following war's outbreak the I.W.W. held a rally in the Sydney Domain under the slogan "War what for?" The war was denounced as a struggle for markets, raw materials and profits; a war in the interests of capitalism.

The I.W.W. first made its appearance in America in 1905 as an offshoot of the Socialist Labor Party. A branch was established in Adelaide in 1908 and another in Sydney in 1913. The latter branch became the Headquarters.

The I.W.W. subscribed to the theories of anarcho-syndicalism, or anarchist trade unionism (syndicate being the French term for T.U.). A brief summary of the "direct actionist" outlook of the I.W.W. can be paraphrased as follows:—

- (a) Capitalism is heading towards automatic collapse.
- (b) The task of the workers is to hasten this collapse by strikes, sabotage, slow working, etc.
- (c) Craft unions are obsolete and must be scrapped in favour of new industrial unions.
- (d) All forms of State power, including proletarian, are an abomination and must be abolished forthwith.
- (e) The general strike is the highest form of the class struggle and in itself sufficient to bring an end to capitalism.
- (f) The workers should prepare for the coming collapse of capitalism by building the foundations of the new society "within the shell of the old"; i.e., the industrial unions, which form the organs of struggle in the present will blossom forth as production syndicates, organs of administration, in the future society.

From this it can be seen how the I.W.W. departed from Marxism in—

- (a) Its attitude to political struggle.
- (b) Its attitude to the State.
- (c) Its attitude towards the formation of a revolutionary political party. The I.W.W. rejected the need for such a Party. All it aimed at was one big union of industrial workers, repudiating political and concentrating on economic struggle.

The I.W.W. grew rapidly on the basis of its opposition to the war and its denunciation of reformism. But because of its one-sidedness and sectarianism, because of its theoretical and organisational shortcomings, it was unable to mobilise the masses for a Socialist way out of the war and was incapable of providing a satisfactory alternative to reformism. When attacked by the Government it proved unable to wage a political struggle and went under.

In February, 1915, the Australian Defence League, a bourgeois patriotic organisation with which Hughes and Holman were associated, urged the Federal Government to introduce Conscription for overseas service. The I.W.W. came out against Conscription, as did the trade unions and various pacifist organisations. A united front was formed of all Parties opposed to Conscription. Socialists, Reformists and Pacifists spoke off the same platform against Conscription and took part in a common struggle to prevent its introduction.

The opposition to Conscription influenced Labor politicians and Hughes was unable to obtain the consent of a majority in Caucus for the proposal. He decided to submit the issue to a Referendum. Every possible step was taken to load the dice in favour of a "YES" Vote. The anti-Conscription press was subjected to rigid censorship, meetings were disrupted and speakers arrested.

In spite of all this the Conscription proposals were defeated by 1,160,033 to 1,087,557. This constituted a significant victory for the labor movement. It revealed the tremendous power latent in the working class, power which can be unleashed by the application of united front tactics. It proved that the working class was able to establish an alliance with the middle classes and successfully challenge capitalism. It is true that the struggle was not directed against the war as a whole, although the Socialists and the I.W.W. tried to turn it in that direction, but the workers had opposed and defeated the ruling class on one important aspect concerning the conduct of the war.

The Conscription struggle exposed Hughes, Holman and others as agents of the capitalist class. These traitors were driven from the labor movement. However, many more equally opportunist, equally dangerous elements, who did not openly expose themselves at this period, remained in the Labor Party.

Another Conscription referendum was held in 1917. This time the "NO" majority was increased. But the big event in 1917 was the N.S.W. general strike which broke out in August. It began in the Randwick Railway Workshops, when the Commissioner tried to introduce a card system of recording work, which the Unions regarded as a speed up device.

The underlying causes of the 1917 strike were the worsened conditions brought about by the war. The cost of living had risen by 30 per cent by the middle of 1917, whereas wages had only increased by 15 per cent. This means that real wages had fallen by 15 per cent. At the same time profits were rising. The strike at Randwick, taking place under these circumstances, was bound to extend.

At first only the workshop employees were affected, but soon the traffic branch joined in. From the railways and tramways the strike extended to coal mining and later to other industries. The Defence Committee consisting of reformist trade union officials did all within its power to confine the strike to economic issues.

The Fuller Government, however, recognised the political implications of a strike of this magnitude taking place in wartime. It put the struggle on a political plane and mobilised the employing classes and the State forces to break the strike.

Once again the workers were defeated, chiefly by the same means employed in the '90's. The unions also suffered from the same basic defects... "Defence and not Defiance" was still the watchword of the movement. The workers found that the political party which they had created after the defeat of 1890 was more a hindrance than a help to them in this struggle, because of its subordination to capitalist influences. The main activities of the Labor politicians were directed towards the dampening down of the struggle and getting the strikers to return to work.

In summarising the history of the war period we see that the Australian Labor movement was given the opportunity to thoroughly test the two extremes—Reformism and revolutionary syndicalism. Both proved their futility, because both are the products of spontaneity, which condemns the labor movement to bourgeois domination.

The common source of reformism and syndicalism is revealed by Lenin: "Both anarcho-syndicalism and reformism must be considered as the direct product of bourgeois world outlook. They both seize upon one side of the labor movement, raise this one sidedness to a theory and declare as mutually exclusive such tendencies or features of the labor movement as form the specific peculiarity of one or other period of one or other of the conditions of activity of the working class. Both the reformists and the syndicalists hinder the most important and urgent business of uniting the workers in big, strong organisations, capable of functioning well under all circumstances, imbued with the spirit of class struggle, clearly recognising their aims and trained in the real Marxist world outlook." Their own experience plus the influence of the Russian revolution caused the Australian working class to turn towards the formation of such a Party in post-war years.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What attitude did the Labor Party adopt towards the Imperial War?
2. What effect had the war on wages and conditions?
3. How and when did the I.W.W. make its appearance in Australia?
4. What were the main points in the I.W.W. program?
5. How did the theory and practice of the I.W.W. represent a departure from Marxism?
6. What were the positive benefits derived from the anti-conscription struggle and what were the shortcomings?
7. What were the basic causes of the 1917 strike?
8. Why were the workers defeated?

9. What are the chief conclusions to be drawn from the experiences of the Australian workers during the first world war?

An Outline of Party History

From a Lecture by L. L. Sharkey to a National Party School

THE formation of the Communist Party (October 30, 1920) was one of the decisive revolutionary acts of the Australian working class. The formation of the Communist Party in Australia was the outcome of the experience of the working class gleaned in the struggles and growth of the labor movement from 1890 to 1920. In this period, the working class experienced the limitations of "Liberal" labor governments and reformist trade unionism. It experienced the futility and bankruptcy of socialist sectarianism (Socialist Labor Party, Australian Socialist Party, etc) and anarcho-syndicalism (Industrial Workers of the World).

The formation of the Communist Party represented the victory of Marxism-Leninism over various petty-bourgeois-pacifist "Socialist" theories (Victorian Socialist Party, "Peaceful Revolution," "Fabianism," etc).

At last the Australian workers started to find the true path to their emancipation, i.e. along the lines of the theory and practice of Marxism-Leninism, embodied in the Communist Party.

The formation of the Communist Party was therefore one of the historical milestones on the road of the Australian working class toward its liberation.

The first four years of the Communist Party, which coincided with the world revolutionary crisis following the imperialist world war and the Great October Socialist Revolution in the former Tsarist Empire, were marked by:

- (a) The struggle to unite the revolutionaries, the A.S.P. and the Communist Party and the Anarcho-Syndicalists of the Industrial Union Propaganda League (former I.W.W.). Part of the membership of both these organisations was absorbed in the "United" Communist Party by 1923.
- (b) The hammering out, with the help of the Communist International, of a broad program for the Labor movement based on the struggle for their immediate demands and Lenin's united front tactics.

In the first period, the Party organ "The Communist" in its content was more of a theoretical organ, it dealt mainly with principles and wrote in an abstract fashion. Something of this was due to the need to explain Communist theory against the

ideas of Anarcho-Syndicalism and opportunism, and by the fact that the Party did not possess a theoretical organ.

One of the first campaigns conducted with fair success by the Communists was the Relief Campaign for the Russian famine, which resulted from the imperialist war, the imperialist intervention and the blockade of Soviet Russia. This campaign was led by the N.S.W. Labor Council and by J. B. Miles in Brisbane. By 1923 the Party was struggling on a broad program of affiliation to the A.L.P. and a comprehensive trade union program. It conducted a good campaign around the needs of the coal-miners and the miners' strike of that year.

This re-orientation by the Party, its turn towards the mass working class organisations, the commencement of work in the trade unions, marked a **new decisive turn** in the revolutionary movement of this country, away from the sectarian attitude of the I.W.W. and the Socialist sects which preceded the C.P., towards work in the mass proletarian organisations.

At first, big successes were achieved. The Party delegates led important trade union conferences and had the Party's right to affiliation to the Labor Party recognised at the N.S.W. Labor Party Conference in 1923, and participated in the strikes and unemployed struggles of the time. It strongly influenced the N.S.W. Labor Council and various trade union organisations. It initiated and led the fight for the establishment of the A.C.T.U., and its growing influence brought about the adoption of the "Socialisation" objective by the A.L.P.

THE LIQUIDATIONIST TENDENCY

The highwater mark of this period was passed in 1922-23. The reformist leaders, headed by Lang and Loughlin in N.S.W., commenced a bitter struggle against the Communists. The A.L.P. executive, despite the conference decision, removed Garden and Howie, Party leaders of that time, from the N.S.W. A.L.P. executive, expelled the Communists and prevented them, by means of the anti-Communist pledge, from attending A.L.P. conferences as Union delegates in future. Similarly, the fight was waged against the Communists in the unions by right wing bureaucrats.

The Party received a setback. The main causes were the organisational and numerical weakness of the Party, and the ideological and other weaknesses of its then leadership.

The world revolutionary wave following the Russian Revolution had receded and capitalism had achieved its temporary relative stabilisation (1924-29) and even entered a boom period. This again strengthened reformist illusions among the masses and strengthened the right wing, and gave it a basis to consolidate itself and deal blows to the young revolutionary movement. The

Party in N.S.W., forced into isolation, began to build a left wing in the trade unions and ran the first independent Communist Parliamentary candidates in 1925. These candidates polled a very small vote, 300 for J. S. Garden being the biggest vote recorded.

This situation caused a crisis in the leadership of the Party, which became liquidationist. G. Barrachi, who later again ratted in the tense situation at the outbreak of the present war, moved a motion that the Communist Party liquidate itself and join the A.L.P. as individual members "as the organisation of the Party in Australia was premature."

Barrachi received little open support, but practically the whole of the executive, including Garden, looked on as the leader of the Party (who was expelled), and Denford, former General Secretary, as well as most of the candidates who stood in the elections and others, left the Party and went over to reformism, in most cases seeking jobs in the A.L.P. and trade unions. To a lesser degree, the same thing happened in all the Party centres. Many prominent former militants outside the Party organisation acted in a similar fashion. The Left wing movement was at a low ebb at this time.

However, the liquidationists did not put an end to the Party. Some of the older foundation members, such as Comrades Miles, Docker, Jeffery and others, maintained the Party together with newer forces growing up in the Party (Wright, Sharkey and others). The later Right Wing-Sectarian group of Kavanagh and Jack Ryan also opposed the liquidationists at this period. The Party, despite everything, despite a developing new internal crisis, survived.

The Party conducted a number of international campaigns in the first decade of its existence. The more important of these were the solidarity campaign with the great Chinese national revolution, the "Hands off China" campaign, which exposed the armed violence of the British Imperialists against the Chinese people in their efforts to crush the revolution; assistance to the striking British seamen, many thousands of whom had left their ships in Australian ports, and solidarity also with the British General Strike in 1926, and the British miners, who continued the strike for a lengthy period.

Another big campaign, in which the Party was able to secure stoppages of work at a number of enterprises, was that conducted against the electrocution of Sacco and Vanzetti in the United States.

A considerable campaign was devoted to the Pan-Pacific Trade Union Secretariat, i.e., to the organisation of the workers of the Pacific countries in an international federation and especially in defence of the great Indian National movement.

In 1929 the Party entered an election campaign with its own candidates for the second time. The world economic crisis was then on the way and the Labor Government in Queensland was particularly reactionary; in conjunction with the C.I., what was called the "Queensland Resolution" was worked out, which included the running of candidates in that State. J. B. Miles, then living in Queensland, left industry to become a Party functionary (the Party usually had only two paid officials, the General Secretary and Editor, in its first ten years of existence) and lead this campaign.

In the 1927-29 period, the Party carried on a big campaign against the "Industrial Peace" policy of the bourgeoisie and the reformist leaders, who were holding "peace" conferences; against the Crimes Act, introduced by the Bruce Government, and also the Transport Act which was introduced after the defeat of the Watersiders in 1928 ("Dog Collar") and the literature ban against Soviet and overseas literature of a working class character. It also carried on a campaign in preparation for the great Miners' lockout (1929-30) and the Minority Movement developed a good campaign around the mining issues.

However, from 1926 the dominant leadership of the Party, headed by Kavanagh, was drawing the Party away from the mass movement. It would have nothing to do with work in the A.L.P., refusing to utilise oppositional and factional fights within the Labor Party; indeed, this leadership framed a rule that "Every Party member must declare his Party membership" in order to prevent work in the A.L.P. On the trade union question, this leadership declared that a Communist could only take office in a union when the majority of the union members accepted Communism and even then, Kavanagh declared, must return to work after two years!

J. S. Garden, who had been expelled, could declare with considerable truth that the Party had isolated itself from the mass movement of the workers.

This canker rendered the campaigns of the Party ineffective. This sectarianism was opposed by a strong group in the Sydney membership and comrades elsewhere. The leaders of the then C.C. were not particular as to the methods of maintaining their control. For the Xmas, 1927, Party Conference, they prepared by organising "new branches" in the far north of Queensland, each of which gave a proxy vote to members of the Kavanagh faction, who arrived at the Conference with from three to five votes apiece. Norman Jeffery, J. Ryan and myself were removed from the C.C. by this means, in order to preserve the majority of the ruling faction. Nothing was ever heard of most of these branches again!

No information about this internal struggle appeared in the Party press between 1926/28. It first became public in 1929.

The Sixth Congress of the Communist International, meeting in Moscow in 1928, had foreseen the coming of the World Economic crisis and had proposed measures, which were further elaborated at the Tenth Plenum of the E.C.C.I., to meet the new world situation, the historic end of "temporary, relative capitalist stabilisation." The C.I. had indicated the role reformism would play in the crisis, i.e., assist the bourgeoisie in every shape and form, resort to strike-breaking and splitting the workers, etc., in order to protect capitalism.

In this new situation, it was necessary to develop the sharpest struggle against the reformist leaders, and for the Party to independently lead the struggles of the masses. The former sectarian leaders became part and parcel of the international right wing which had appeared in the Communist parties at that time. Like Lovestone in the U.S.A., Kavanagh oracularly declared that "Australia was an exception" (theory of "exceptionalism"), that it would not experience the economic crisis (although the crisis was well advanced at this time), that "Moscow was 15,000 miles away" and did not comprehend the situation of Australia. Therefore, the C.C., with the exception of Moxon and myself, refused to implement the decisions of the Sixth Congress and the Tenth Plenum.

The struggle came to a head over the Federal Elections, 1929. The minority two members of the C.C. advocated that Party candidates be run, that the role of the Labor Party leaders, when they became the government, of suppressing the workers and placing the burdens of the crisis on the backs of the masses, be thoroughly exposed and that the Party's tactics be based on these premises. The majority decided to run no candidates and to support the Labor Party in the elections.

The struggle was carried down into the ranks of the Party. The literature ban of the Bruce government made it difficult for the Party members to know what the policy of the Comintern was. The C.C. refused to publish what material on the "line" did get into the country, and Moxon and myself published one of these documents on our own responsibility in order to acquaint the members with the viewpoint of our brother parties. We were censured for this by the C.C. majority, and threatened with expulsion if the offence was repeated. We gained the overwhelming support of the members, headed by Miles and Dixon, who were not on the C.C. Moxon and myself decided to appeal to the E.C.C.I. against this decision and cabled Moscow, receiving a reply endorsing our views. A letter which followed summed up the situation.

Here is an extract from the letter of the C.I. to the Australian Party members, dated October 13, 1929, which answered our appeal:

GLARING EXAMPLE OF RIGHT OPPORTUNISM

"Consequently, the decision of the majority of your C.C. to support the Labor Party in the last elections is a glaring example of grave Right deviation deserving the severest condemnation.

"The whole policy of the Party finds its crowning expression in the following statement of the 'Workers' Weekly' (August 2, 1929):

In this country there will be no strike on August 1. Not that Australian workers have less need than our fellow workers in Europe to demonstrate against imperialist war and the warmongers, but that in this country the lines of the struggle have not yet become so clear and the working class is only beginning to realise that its enemy is capitalism and the capitalist State.

The task of Militants in this country is not yet to lead the working class in a direct challenge to capitalism, but to popularise the basic ideas of the class struggle amongst the workers, their wives and children.

"To this we would add the following passage from the resolution passed at your last Party Conference in December, 1928:

"We must not lose sight of the fact that the way to the C.P. leads through this Left-wing . . . not because we want it to transfer these masses directly from the path of reformism and Labor Party illusions to our own revolutionary ideology and action, but because these masses still hesitate to do so.

"This transformation is not effected through political miracles, nor will we accomplish it through virtuous isolation of the C.P. from the masses, but it is a long and difficult process whose various phases we must help in speeding up.

"It must be said that such statements border on liquidatorism. They are a denial of the elementary principles of the role and functions of the Communist Party as laid down by the Communist International.

"In the light of these statements the decided Right deviation of the Communist Party of Australia becomes comprehensible. It also explains why the Party still has such poor organisational contacts with the masses and why it has made no headway on the road towards becoming a Mass Party of the working class.

"Apparently, the Party regards itself as being merely a propaganda body and as a sort of adjunct to the Left Wing of the Labor Party, whereas our conception of the role and functions of the Communist Party is that it should be the leader of the working class and the principal driving force in its political and economic struggles.

"Instead of this the Communist Party of Australia is content to trail behind the working class and to preach to 'The workers, their wives and children.' The Party grossly underestimates the intensity of the class struggle in Australia and fails to appreciate its role in this struggle.

"Clearly, as long as this state of affairs continues it is hopeless to expect the Communist Party of Australia to be anything more than a relative handful of propagandists . . . however ardent . . . isolated from the masses.

"We earnestly urge you, and the whole of the Party membership, to submit your policy and tactics to a thorough overhauling, and we are convinced that, if you really have the cause of Communism at heart, you will radically alter your course and henceforth pursue the line of the Communist International."

At the following Party Congress, Xmas 1929, the Rightwing leadership of J. Kavanagh, J. Ryan and E. Higgins, then editor of the "Workers' Weekly," was overwhelmingly defeated and a new C.C. elected.

Kavanagh and other right wing leaders published declarations repudiating their errors and promising loyal adherence to Party decisions. Despite pledges, factional opposition to the C.C. was continued, which ultimately led to the expulsion of Kavanagh and Ryan from the Party.

The new C.C. commenced to act energetically at once. Organisers were despatched to the coalfields, where the lock-out had been proceeding for nine months, without the semblance of action by the right wing C.C., other than material in the "Workers' Weekly." The Party raised the slogan of "All out" in the mining industry to assist the locked out men in the northern N.S.W. coalfield. It set about organising rank and file strike committees and vigorously exposed the reformist officials of the Union, and the Scullin Labor Government, which had promised to "open the pits" in its election propaganda, but, despite large financial donations by the miners to its election fund, had cynically dishonored its promise and supported the coal barons.

The struggle in the coalfields became intense. The N.S.W. government, the coalowners and the police chiefs began a reign of terror. Arrests, gaolings, batonings, the raiding of miners' homes and other forms of intimidation against the miners were practised on a large scale. The Party and militant miners began to organise a Workers' Defence Corps, in reply.

The government of Bavin then placed "scabs" in the mine at Rothbury. This resulted in a general march of the miners to the pit, where the police opened fire with their revolvers, killing one miner and injuring a number of others.

The Party's fight for a general stoppage was sabotaged by the reformists who eventually forced the miners back to work on the terms of the owners and the government.

This campaign laid the foundations of the Party's influence among the miners, and led to the election of Orr and Nelson and the strong position the Party still holds in the miners' organisations. Had the right wing C.C. been removed earlier, the victory of the miners might have been secured.

The right wing "theory" of "Exceptionalism" was refuted and the line of the C.I. and the new C.C. was confirmed with a vengeance. The economic crisis was now raging at its height. At least half a million were unemployed. The Party commenced to organise the unemployed in the Unemployed Workers' Movement (U.W.M.). The campaign of the unemployed was directed at an increase in the "dole," a rent allowance, provision of work at award rates, and against evictions, etc.

In every city and large industrial town there were unemployed meetings and demonstrations. Lang was now in office in N.S.W. and, besides the Federal Labor Government, there were also Labor administrations in Victoria (Hogan), S.A. (Hill), and Tasmania. These Labor governments commenced a reign of terror against the unemployed. Processions of the unemployed were everywhere batoned and anti-evictionists, who barricaded themselves in the homes of threatened workers, were forcibly ejected by the police with batons and sometimes drawn revolvers. Numbers were injured in these conflicts. Lang excelled in this bashing of the unemployed, and there were more workers in gaol for political offences at this period under Lang than ever before in N.S.W. Hogan and Hill vied with Lang in violence against the workless, as did the Tory governments of Queensland and W.A. However, concessions were often won and the Party secured wide recognition among the workers and grew rapidly as a result of its activity among the unemployed. Of Leftist and sectarian errors there were plenty of examples; such as cases of declaring the dole "black," and in relation to the police, when Party speakers often antagonised the rank and file police instead of directing their blows at the police chiefs and the governments.

The new C.C. set about establishing the first factory branches and, after its first year of office, was able to report that the Party membership had increased fourfold.

The C.C. also concentrated on work in the Trade Unions; the strengthening of fractions in the Labor Councils and unions, giving many leads to trade unionists; we were busy organising rank and file strike committees, shop committees, and vigorously, if often in a somewhat Leftist fashion, combating the right wing bureaucracy. The Party at this period conducted activi-

ities too manifold to be recounted in detail. Much was done to popularise the Soviet Union and the Five Year Plan at this time.

H. Moxon, who became General Secretary following the removal of the right wing from the leadership of the Party, revealed his own policies as Left-adventurism mixed with right wing errors. This led to a breach with the C.C. and Moxon's removal from the General Secretaryship and subsequent expulsion.

Comrade Miles was elected General Secretary in 1931, transferring from Brisbane, where he had headed the Party organisation, to Sydney, and I had succeeded E. Higgins as editor of the "Workers' Weekly."

THE LABOR GOVERNMENTS ORGANISE THE CAPITALIST OFFENSIVE

The analysis of those opposed to the right wing, that is, that the A.L.P. in office during the "depression" would further organise and develop the capitalist offensive commenced by the Bruce-Page government in 1928-29, was borne out in full.

This offensive was preceded by the "Industrial Peace" campaign of the bourgeoisie and the reformists, based on what was called "Mondism" in Britain, and "Fordism" in the U.S.A. The favourite theme of the reformists then was that "Ford had refuted Marx." Four big bankers came from England with "Industrial Peace" talk on their lips, but in reality to organise the attack on the Australian masses and their living standards.

The Party had considerable success in fighting against the "Big Four" and the fake "Industrial Peace" campaign, despite its being sponsored by Garden, then at the height of his power in the trade unions, and by the reformist leaders in general. We influenced the Sydney Labor Council and other important organisations to reject it and popularised the slogan "Class against Class." The "Big Four" were later followed by Sir Otto Niemeyer, who demanded that the Australian bourgeoisie and the reformists set their house in order, that is, destroy labor conditions and living standards, in order to meet their "obligations" to the British bankers by the payment of vast sums of interest and other moneys "owed" to the London parasites.

The voice of the masters was heeded by the Scullin-Theodore government, who put the capitalist economic experts to work formulating a plan for the economic offensive against the masses. Scullin and Theodore called together the State Premiers (Premiers' Conference) to discuss and adopt this "plan" which became known as the "Premiers' Plan."

The Party sounded the alarm and began an intense struggle against the Premiers' Plan with the slogan "Make the rich pay," pointing out that the aim of the Premiers' Plan was to place the burdens of the crisis on the backs of the poor.

Lang, N.S.W. Premier, who was the first signatory to the Premiers' Plan, and chaired the meeting at which it was adopted by the assembled Premiers and bourgeois "experts," and who hastened to put it into operation in N.S.W., commenced a demagogic campaign against the Premiers' Plan in words, and, put forward a "plan" of his own, the so-called Lang "plan," the main feature of which was not repudiation of debt, which the Party advocated, but the suspension of payments to London for three years.

Lang largely came into prominence way back in the early twenties by his bitter campaign against the Communists and the militants, which assured him of plenty of capitalist press publicity and support of the reformist Rightwing bureaucracy, who feared and hated the Communists. All through the Party's history this struggle against Lang and Langism occupied a prominent place. This struggle now reached new heights of intensity. Lang's wordy protests against the Premiers' Plan, despite his brutality against the unemployed and open breaking of strikes, won for him a great mass following. The greatest demonstration, in size, yet witnessed in Sydney, marched under the slogan: "Lang is Right."

The Party was correct in pointing out that Lang himself was a Premiers' Planner; that his attitude was demagogic and that he was utilising mass sentiment in order to increase his own bureaucratic control over the Labor Movement and to further his own personal ambitions, such as transferring to the Federal Parliament and becoming Prime Minister of the Commonwealth. But the Party did not sufficiently develop proposals of its own, aiming at carrying the mass movement beyond Lang, did not develop united front tactics sufficiently with the masses supporting Lang, did not link itself with and become an integral part of this mass movement, but was more intent on exposing Lang's treatment of the unemployed, his strike-breaking, his anti-Communism and signing of the Premiers' Plan. This often resulted in head-on collisions with the enthusiastic, though misled Langites; it was sectarian in many respects. The exposure of Lang was of course a political necessity, but the language in which it was often couched was more likely to repel the Langites, and united front tactics were often entirely neglected or incorrectly applied. Another example of this arose in connection with the struggle against the fascist New Guard. This organisation was formed because of the fears of the ruling class of the vast mass activity of the time, the continuous violent conflicts between the unemployed and the police, strikers and the police, and the mounting waves of mass discontent and activity. Upon the formation of the New Guard by Colonel Eric Campbell, the Party called for a united front against fascism and formed a committee to conduct the struggle politically, and to organise the defence of working class meetings.

The New Guards were everywhere attacking workers' meetings, assaulting speakers and starting riots. The Workers' Defence Corps, which had developed out of the unemployed and anti-eviction fights, took up the challenge and fought and repelled the New Guard attacks, and finally drove them from the streets. The Langites, who were always splitters, and had tried to destroy the unity of the unemployed by setting up their own organisations, also issued a slogan of building a Labor Army under their control to oppose the fascists. Instead of united front tactics with the Labor Army, instead of seizing the opportunity for the organisation of the vast masses behind Lang and bringing them into the fight against the New Guard and the bourgeoisie, the Party opposed the formation of the Labor Army.

Such were the sectarian mistakes that marred the undoubtedly great work and devoted struggle of the Party during the struggle against the Premiers' Plan and the reactionary policy of the Labor governments and pseudo-radical Langism. Despite these mistakes, the Party membership and influence grew enormously as a result of the Party's leadership and firm struggle during the stormy years of the depression.

In the period of the depression, the Communist Party had to defend its own legal position.

In 1926, the Bruce Government had amended the Crimes Act in order to outlaw the Communists. The older "sedition" clauses against "inciting disaffection against the Government or Parliament" and "to promote feelings of hostility and ill-will between different classes of His Majesty's subjects" for which one could be imprisoned for three years, were considered insufficient. In 1926, clauses about "revolution," "sabotage," and "violence" were inserted, making illegal an organisation which "encourages" these by its "constitution" or "propaganda." In addition, what has been regarded as a basic principle of British justice, the belief that an accused is innocent until proved guilty, was reversed. The accused is guilty until proved innocent. The "averment" of the prosecutor is "prima facie evidence."

Harold Devanny was convicted and sentenced to six months' imprisonment for asking for funds through the "Workers' Weekly" for the August 1st Anti-War Conference, 1932. No less than 64 trade unions were represented at this conference. The charge declared the Communist Party "an illegal organisation."

A big mass campaign was waged in defence of Devanny and the Party's legality. The High Court in December, 1932, by a majority of five to one, quashed the conviction. So was defeated the first attempt to ban our Party.

On numerous occasions the Party had to defend its right to speak in public places. Scores of members have been gaoled

or fined in the various "free speech" fights. In 1935 more than 100 were summonsed for selling literature or collecting money in the Sydney Domain alone. With the support of the masses, the Party has always succeeded in vindicating its legal right as an Australian workers' party.

THE STRUGGLE AGAINST WAR AND FASCISM

The victory of fascism in Germany in 1933 and the intensified preparations for a new world war, together with the partial lifting of the economic crisis ("the depression of a peculiar kind"—Stalin) confronted the parties of the Communist International with a changed situation and new tasks.

The Seventh World Congress of the C.I. decided upon fundamental changes in Party policy and tactics, and the period from the Seventh World Congress was dominated by the acute international situation. The Party's main slogan became "Against Fascism and War."

From its inception and, acting upon Lenin's injunction that, failing the success of the Socialist revolution in the main capitalist countries, the bourgeoisie would prepare new wars . . . the Party had persistently warned, organised and prepared the workers against imperialist war. Now the struggle against the outbreak of war was concrete and immediate.

The Party fought for an alliance with the Soviet Union and for international collective security against the aggressors, with particular stress on a Pacific collective security pact for the maintenance of peace and the security of this country. It fought relentlessly against reactionary legislation and all fascist tendencies within Australia.

The Party initiated a boycott of Japanese goods and organised strikes against the despatch of war materials to Japan. It came out strongly in support of Abyssinia, China and Spain, who were fighting fascist aggression. The Party organised an Australian detachment of the International Brigade to fight on the side of the Spanish Republic. A number of Party members (Bill Morcom, Bill Young and others) gave their lives in the fight against fascism in Spain. The Party fiercely combated the treacherous policies of the bourgeoisie and the reformist leaders, i.e., "appeasement," "non-intervention" and "isolation," the latter being the chief slogan of the right wing of the A.L.P. It exposed Munich and the plans of Chamberlain to strengthen Hitler and promote a Soviet-German war. The Party strove for the unity of the workers, and a People's Front movement as the key organisation against fascism and war.

In the period succeeding the economic crisis and the Seventh Congress, the Party very considerably strengthened its ties with the mass movement. It played an important, and often a

leading, role in the strike struggles of miners, seamen, sugar workers, etc. The Communists in the minefields, in conjunction with the leading Party committee, worked out the miners' program and led two general strikes for its achievement.

As a result of its increased work and improved tactics in the trade unions, the Party has won a considerable number of important trade union positions and is one of the major forces in the trade union movement at the present time.

In regard to work with the A.L.P., the Party everywhere intensified and broadened its struggle. In N.S.W., the Party initiated and led the fight which overthrew the Lang bureaucracy and made possible a Labor government in N.S.W., which in turn was a main factor in bringing the Labor Party to office in the Federal Parliament. The Party, together with the best elements in the A.L.P., in defeating Langism, did not succeed in completely defeating the right wing. With the assistance of the National Rightwing, the left wing was expelled from N.S.W. Labor Party and a new right wing leadership was installed. However, the general results of this long and difficult struggle in the Labor movement resulted in the coming to office of Labor governments in N.S.W. and at Canberra.

Besides building its contacts with the masses and more and more becoming indissolubly linked with the mass movement, the membership of the Party grew steadily in the period 1935-40, although not so quickly as it had done during the depression years.

The Party achieved a higher degree of organisational stability. Our press grew, its circulation increased many times over the 5,000 edition of the "Workers' Weekly" of the first ten years of the Party's existence. The Party grew rapidly in Victoria, where it had been very weak in the first ten years, and also in Queensland, particularly in the northern part, where the Party had led the struggle of the cane-fields workers. One of the organisational weaknesses, however, was insufficient attention to building the Party in the factories, the key problem of Communist organisation.

The defeat of the right wing, which represented reformist influence in the Party, the struggle against the Leftists and sectarians, a strong and persistent campaign against counter-revolutionary Trotskyite ideology and the expulsion of alien elements from the Party, led to the consolidation of the unity of the Party around its leadership and its political line, that is, to a considerable ideological and political advance of the Party membership. The Party had at last become a factor of considerable importance in the national life of Australia during the ten years 1930-40.

A feature of the growth of our Party, since the defeat of the right wing in particular, has been our growing influence within the trade union movement. This has been one of the strongest features of our work among the masses. The strength of our position arises from the fearlessness of the Party's leadership in the important struggles of the trade union movement, the correctness of the policies it has promulgated, and the capacity of our leading Party trade unionists. The trade unions are the most important mass organisations of the working class and the Communists must always strive to develop the good work in relation to the unions which is already becoming something of a tradition with our Party.

THE STRUGGLE FOR THE UNITED FRONT AND LEADERSHIP OF THE WORKERS

During the whole course of its existence, the C.P. has fought for the unity of the working class. The Communist Party arose because of the inadequacy of a policy of reformism as conducted by the craft unions, and the failure of the Labor Party to lead the workers against capitalism and to their liberation. The A.L.P. had demonstrated its limitations arising from its national-liberal bourgeois character. "The Labor Party does not even claim to be a Socialist Party," wrote Lenin in his article, "In Australia," in 1913. "Naturally," he continued, "when Australia is finally developed as an independent capitalist State, the conditions of the workers will change, as will also the Liberal Labor Party, which will make way for a Socialist Labor Party in Australia."

The Communist Party is that Workers' Party referred to by Lenin and it was faced with the fact that the majority of the workers still supported the "Liberal" A.L.P.

Whilst winning the workers away from the "Liberal" leaders, the Party had to assure the united front of the workers in the daily class-struggle. The Party always strove to apply the united front tactics of Leninism, which Lenin expounded in his "Left Wing Communism." These tactics also accelerate the process of winning over the majority of the workers to Communism. The Party therefore commenced to campaign for its own affiliation to the A.L.P., with the right of independent propaganda and organisation, shortly after its foundation. Affiliation was agreed to in N.S.W. at the 1923 Conference of the Labor Party, but repudiated by Lang and the right wing immediately afterwards. The fight for affiliation and the support for the return of Labor Party governments was continued right up until the outbreak of the world economic crisis, that is, more or less, the period 1920-28 (although the Kavanagh sectarians were sabotaging the Communist International's united front tactics from 1926 until their removal from the leadership at the end of 1929).

The Sixth World Congress of the Communist International, faced with the oncoming world economic crisis and the changed role of the reformists, that is, their change over to the position of organisers of the capitalist offensive, declared that in the new situation the workers could only be united "from below" and against the will of the reformist leaders. The Party, which at all times carries on the ideological and practical exposure of A.L.P. "Liberalism," sharpened its attack upon the Labor leaders' policies and class collaboration tactics.

This period of "united front tactics" from below continued from 1928-35, at the time when reformists of all countries, by their sabotage of the mass struggles, were facilitating the spread of fascism ("social fascism") and its corollary, war, and were conducting the capitalist offensive and sabotaging the mass struggle in defence of living standards. Then, the economic crisis having gradually lessened, and, above all, the fascists having been brought to power in Germany, the Seventh World Congress of the C.I. gave the lead for a change in our united front tactics, i.e., for the closest co-operation of all workers and parties who opposed fascism; for unity of the workers and for the People's Front. The People's Front embraced the middle-class and smaller farmers in order to defeat fascism and prevent the outbreak of a new world war, as well as prepare the way for the Socialist Revolution. The Communist Party, from its very foundation, had warned, organised and agitated, in season and out of season, against the new world war which was developing among the capitalist States; it made its main slogan, especially after the Seventh Congress, in 1935, "The struggle against fascism and war and the defence of the Soviet Union." This was to be realised on the basis of the united front of the working class and of all anti-fascists:—the People's Front.

This was a struggle for the united front from above as well as below, and was facilitated by the differentiations among the leaders of reformism, sections of which came over to the side of the fight against fascism: Spain, France, etc.

With the outbreak of the war between Britain and Germany, the A.L.P. leaders and the trade union reformists went over to a social-chauvinist position, i.e., supported the imperialist war. Naturally, the Party, which was whole-heartedly opposing the imperialist war, and the plan of the appeasers to switch the war against the U.S.S.R., could not enter into an alliance with the reformists, who were in close alliance with the bourgeoisie for the defence of British imperialism against the military challenge from its imperialist rivals, and who supported the plans of an anti-Soviet war.

At the same time, the Party fought against the so-called "National Unity" of the bourgeoisie and the labor reformists, and

was a big factor in preventing a coalition government. Such a coalition aimed at tying the labor organisations to the war policy of imperialism and the crushing of the Communist Party and the militant workers. Again, our united front tactics necessarily underwent a change, to the position of the fiercest opposition and exposure of the imperialist leaders of the Labor Party, and for unity from below of the workers against the imperialist war.

With the entry of the Soviet Union into the war and the consequent changed character of the war, the Communist Party once more was able to give the lead for the united front of the working class on the widest basis. The Party came out in support of the Federal Labor Government on the basis of an all-in war effort for the defeat of the fascist powers and the development of closer relations with the Soviet Union. This support for the Labor Government, because of the considerable strength of the Party in the trade unions, and our organisational and political growth, is an important factor making for the stability of the Labor Government.

It will be seen that the Party has had considerable experience in the application of united front tactics. The tactical attitude of the Party towards the leaders of the A.L.P. has varied, always in conformity with changing conditions. When the reformist leaders were conducting the capitalist offensive against the masses during the years of the economic crisis, when the reformist leaders supported the imperialist war, the Party denounced and fought them, independently giving the lead to the working class.

In certain periods and situations (the fight against fascism and war, against Hitler, etc.) support even for the right wing leaders of the A.L.P. facilitates the building of unity, facilitates the winning of the immediate objectives of the Labor Movement.

In its fight for unity and a class policy, the Party carries on a persistent struggle for the exposure of reformism; an ideological struggle; the teaching of Marxism-Leninism to the masses; criticism of the weaknesses and treacheries of reformism, of its policy of class-collaboration and alliance with the bourgeoisie. The exposure of the Rights is facilitated by the development of mass struggles on a united front basis. These experiences increase the militancy and accelerate the growth of political consciousness among the workers. Necessarily, our criticism, which should always be concrete and constructive, varies in its approach, its sharpness and content, in relation to the needs of a correct application of the united front in the given situation.

The united front tactic renders it easier to bring the workers into the struggle against the capitalist class. "The United Front," Lenin wrote, "facilitates and makes easier the process of the passing over of the majority of the working class to the side of Communism." The united front is one of the most important

weapons of the Party and the working class. Therefore the Communist Party always works for the unity of the workers, and does not hesitate to propose unity with the leaders of reformism, when conditions allow this to be done. We have not yet achieved full unity of the working-class on the basis of class-struggle, of Marxism-Leninism, under the leadership of the Communist Party, which is our goal.

Our struggle for the unity of the workers has proved long and complicated, our tactics have changed from time to time, and no doubt we have many difficult obstacles to surmount before working-class unity, in its true sense, is realised. But we have advanced considerably along the road towards unity!

At the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International, Comrade Dimitrov emphasised the differentiation proceeding within the ranks of the Social-Democratic Parties as a result of experience in the struggle with fascism.

Dimitrov emphasised anew our aim of the unification of the working-class within the four walls of one great, united workers' Party.

Differentiation within the ranks of the leadership of reformism and "Liberalism" within the working class movement means that the best elements can eventually join with the Communists to form the united working class party. There is also a hard Right-wing core, which is hopelessly bound to the bourgeoisie, which must be fought and its influence over the masses eliminated.

These differentiations within the Australian Labor Party are growing and Comrade Dimitrov's standpoint applies fully to the Australian Labor Movement.

Thus the aim of our united front tactics of uniting in one party all the progressive elements within the Labor Movement is being facilitated by history itself.

Such a united working class movement would be invincible and would proceed to solve all of the urgent and vital problems of the Australian masses. The United Front is the key to labor and the national advance and the pre-condition for Socialism.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What were the conditions which gave rise to the formation of the C.P. of A.?
2. What characterised the first two years of its existence?
3. What manoeuvres did the A.L.P. resort to in order to retain its grip on the masses?
4. What is liquidationism? What changed conditions led to its appearance in the Party?

5. What were the major campaigns waged by the Party in the pre-depression period?
6. Where was the Kavanagh leadership taking the Party?
7. How were the Right-wing defeated? What were the immediate results of the new leadership?
8. What were the main immediate aims of the Party in the years of economic crisis? How were the united front tactics applied then?
9. What were the changed circumstances from 1933 which brought about changes in our tactics? What were the new tactics?
10. Summarise the main aims of the Party in the immediate situation. Show how the realisation of these aims will advance the struggle for the ultimate objective. Outline the tactics pursued and state causes for same.

Congress Report on the Work of the Central Committee from the 12th to the 13th Party Congress

by
L. L. SHARKEY

THE 12th Congress of the Communist Party was held in Sydney on November 18th, 19th and 20th, 1938.

The Congress met in a tense atmosphere of struggle against fascist reaction and acute danger of the outbreak of world-wide war.

The Agenda of the Congress reflected this dangerous situation, and the resolutions that were carried defined the national and international situation, and gave clear, direct answers to the problems confronting the people.

The Agenda of the 12th Congress read:

- (1) The organisation of an Australian People's Front against reaction.
- (2) A program for peace.
- (3) Build the Communist Party.
- (4) Election of the Central Committee and C.C.C.

The Congress Resolutions laid down the basic lines of policy which the Party subsequently and still today, allowing for the great changes in world conditions, pursues.

The resolution on the problem of combating war states: "Australia . . . needs defensive agreements with our great democratic neighbors in the Pacific—the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R.—and also China, Dutch East Indies and South American States, and should strive to influence Empire policy along these lines . . . the Government to pursue a consistent peace policy and unite with all countries supporting collective action for peace." Because of the refusal of the ruling class and the reformists to adopt such a policy of collective security and united action, war was loosed upon the world. Because of this the line of collective action against the fascists was only realised during the course of the war itself. After the entry of the Soviet Union into the war, the aim of the policy of the 12th Congress of our Party was

realised, namely, a grand coalition of nations against the fascists, headed by Britain, the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A.

The 12th Congress demanded the removal of the U.A.P.-U.C.P. Government, which had followed the policy of appeasement, from office. This aim, too, was realised during the course of the war and a Labor Party Government took office in Canberra.

The Congress Resolution emphasised the need for the United Front of the working class—Communist Party and A.L.P. unity—as the basic starting point for the unity of the people in the struggle against fascism.

The Congress adopted a comprehensive plan for the defence and the improvement of the economic and social conditions of the toiling masses, which has been consistently carried out right up to the present time.

The Congress decided upon a resolution calling for the building of the Communist Party and the doubling of its then membership as the fundamental measure for strengthening the labor movement to meet the stern tests that lay ahead. The C.C. elected at the 12th Congress also consistently carried out this resolution, with the result that the goal aimed at of transforming the Party into a mass Party is being achieved.

In the period following the 12th Congress, up to the outbreak of war, the C.C. energetically pursued the directives of the 12th Congress in every way, realising the resolutions of the Congress in practice, indicating the appeasers and the reformist "non-interventionists" and fighting for an anti-fascist alignment of the democratic capitalist countries with the Soviet Union, as well as anti-fascist unity within Australia.

♦ PARTY POLICY AT THE OUTBREAK OF THE WAR

At the outbreak of the war, the C.C., for a brief moment, made an incorrect appraisal of the character of the war. We had developed such an intense campaign of hatred for fascism that we failed to note the imperialist motives that led to the declaration of war upon Nazi Germany by the Anglo-French Governments. At the same time, there was a failure to understand fully the significance of the Soviet-German pact. The Party statement was for support of war against the fascists by the British and Australian Governments, but at the same time calling for a struggle against the appeaser Menzies and Chamberlain Governments. However, the error in estimating the character of the war was short-lived and the Party quickly oriented itself on a correct Leninist estimation and policy.

In the first phase of the war, the so-called "phoney" war period, our fight aimed at preventing the spread of the war and

at liquidating it. At the conclusion of the Polish campaign, the Soviet Government had associated itself with a proposal for a peace conference. The peace proposals were rejected by the British and French Governments, and, with the invasion of France and the Low Countries by the Nazis, the peace slogan was no longer tenable and we raised the slogan of the People's Government. The C.C., at the head of the Party, endorsed and explained to the masses, again and again, the true significance of the actions of the Soviet Government in regard to Western Ukraine and White Russia (Poland) and Finland, which were undertaken at this time. History has proven us to be correct; these actions assisted the defence of the U.S.S.R. and were a major factor in preventing an invasion of Britain. A tremendous barrage of slander had been released against the Soviet Union and the Communist Party in regard to these actions and the Soviet-German pact. These slanders were the ideological accompaniment of the plan to "Switch the War," which reached its peak at the time of the Red Army's military action against Mannerheim's Finnish Whiteguards. An "expeditionary" force was about to be despatched by the Chamberlain Government to Finland to commence hostilities against the Red Army. The C.C. mobilised the Party to fight against war with the Soviet Union, pointing out to the people how disastrous such a war would be for democracy and progress and for our people. However, the quick defeat of the Finnish Whiteguards and the generous peace terms proffered by the Soviet Government frustrated the "Switch the War" policy.

The Party had raised the slogan of a People's Government. The aim of a People's Government was at once to enter into a military alliance with the Soviet Government and to build collective security and secure peace, to put an end to Chamberlainism, to "switch the war" policy and appeasement, and, in the event of further fascist aggression, to conduct a people's war against it. There was never any question, on our part, of appeasement or capitulation to fascism, but always the consistent application, in difficult situations, of an anti-fascist policy, before, and during the differing phases of this war. In England, a representative People's Convention was assembled which endorsed a similar program.

The Party, led by its C.C., demonstrated its adherence to the Leninist line in a reactionary war by placing itself at the head of the struggles of the workers. Leadership of mass political and economic struggles was the practical application in life of the Leninist line in regard to imperialist war. The Party, in this sphere, too, carried out its revolutionary tasks with honor.

◆ THE STRUGGLE AGAINST THE "MAIN CENTRE OF REACTION"

The 12th Congress of the Party designated the Lyons Government as the main "centre of reaction." Lyons was succeeded by Menzies, who developed a full program of appeasement of the Japanese imperialists. The C.C. energetically directed the Party campaign against the appeasement policy and the anti-democratic home policy of the Lyons, Menzies and Fadden Conservative Governments, demanding a collective security pact to cover the Pacific and for aid to China and Spain, in accord with the resolution of the 12th Congress. The C.C. launched the campaign for the boycott of Japanese goods, which was taken up by the Trade Union movement and resulted in the famous struggles of the waterside workers at Port Kembla and Sydney, who refused to load pig and scrap iron for Japan.

Demonstrations were also organised against the Nazi spy, Count Von Luckner, who was given freedom to spread Nazi propaganda by the reactionary government and welcomed with open arms by sections of the bourgeoisie, whereas earlier Egon Kisch, famous fighter for peace and against fascism, had been denied entry to Australia.

The C.C. line demanded a Labor Government to halt the reactionary home and foreign policies of the U.A.P.-U.C.P. coalition. The leaders of the Federal A.L.P. were very reluctant to take office at that time, recognising their own bankruptcy. It was only following an overwhelming electoral victory in N.S.W., a victory made possible by the long struggle of the Communists and trade unionists, which removed the discredited Lang bureaucracy, that at long last the Federal A.L.P. politicians took office. The Communist Party can take a considerable measure of credit for the defeat of the reaction, as consistently, for many years, we carried on an exposure of the U.A.P.-U.C.P. government through the Press, printed material and by means of public meetings, and, even more decisively, by a whole series of practical political and economic struggles.

The Party policy, when the character of the war changed, was for national unity around the Curtin Government (our policy in regard to an all-Party National Government is explained in the Draft Resolution).

The direction of the 12th Party Congress for consistent struggle to remove the main centre of reaction—the U.A.P.-U.C.P. government—was therefore fulfilled, but this struggle did not cease. The U.A.P. and the U.C.P. have sought by all means to defeat the Curtin Government, to instal at least the main reactionary leaders in a so-called National Government and to change national policy in an anti-working class direction. The bourgeois politicians realise the dangers for the bourgeoisie of the growing strength

of the working class, and of power, in a national crisis, being even nominally in the hands of the labor movement. Hence they launch attack after attack upon the government and organise provocation by industrial managements in order to create struggles which they then endeavor to capitalise politically.

◆ THE PARTY IS DECLARED ILLEGAL

The Party, throughout the major part of its existence, lived under the threat of illegality. The ruling-class has always been opposed to a legal C.P.

As part of the preparation for suppressing the workers in face of the oncoming economic crisis, the Bruce Government legislated the Crimes Amendment Act with the stated objective of attacking the C.P. of A. The Bruce Government, however, was deprived of office at the succeeding Federal elections, and its successor, the Scullin Labor Party Government, did not directly develop the attack under the Crimes Act.

After the fall of the Scullin Government, the Lyons Government recommended the attack on the legal status of the C.P. of A.

Harold Devanny, a Party member, was prosecuted for collecting funds for an "unlawful association," the C.P. This prosecution having been defeated in the Courts and by strong mass opposition, later on a similar attempt was made, this time by a prosecution of the organisation, "The Friends of the Soviet Union," which, if successful, was intended to pave the way for the outlawing of the Party. Once more we were successful in averting the blow and succeeded in beating back this new attack by the reactionary government.

Immediately before the outbreak of war, the bourgeoisie and the reformists had unloosed an unprecedented campaign of misrepresentation and slanders. This campaign was based upon the misrepresentation of the Soviet-German pact, which they themselves, by their undermining of Collective Security, by the Munich betrayal of Czechoslovakia, and the later refusal to enter into a military alliance with the Soviet Union at the time of the negotiations in Moscow with the British Mission, had compelled the Soviet Government to enter in order to avert isolation and to defeat the policy of "promoting a Soviet-German war."

It was this treacherous policy of the Chamberlain Government that left Britain to face the Axis alone in the early part of the war.

The campaign of slanders reached its climax at the time when the Red Army had to take military action against the Finnish Whiteguards of Mannerheim. The filth from the pens of such as Souvarine, the French traitor, the Quisling Trotsky, Eugene

Lyons, the impostor "General Krivitsky," the Nazi spy, Valtin or Krebs, was widely used even in the most "respectable" of the bourgeois Press organs. This "ideological" barrage aimed at the discrediting of Communism, once and for all, in the eyes of the broadest masses. It was accompanied by physical attacks on Party meetings and by the incitement of groups of misled soldiers and hooligans to assault the Communists.

The Party had found the correct line, after the initial confusion, in this period of the war. It defended the Soviet Union against all attacks and vigorously campaigned to expose the reactionary support for the Finnish Whiteguards. We attacked the reformist leaders, who were supporting the anti-Soviet and imperialist war policy of the bourgeoisie.

The Party, above all, placed itself at the head of the struggles of the workers, the strikes of the miners, metalworkers and others. The bourgeoisie learned that, under the leadership of the C.C., the C.P. could neither be intimidated nor cajoled into deserting its Marxist-Leninist principles.

It was in this difficult period, in these unfavorable circumstances for us, that the reaction at last achieved its long-cherished aim of illegalising the Party.

On June 15th, 1940, the Party and several fraternal organisations were proclaimed unlawful under the National Security Regulations. Widespread raids throughout Australia were made by the police on that day and succeeding days on the homes of Party members and supporters.

Emulating the fascist book-burners, all books and other literature and documents found were seized by the Menzies Government. Our press was closed down and the property of the Party was confiscated. The Menzies Government had struck its blows, which, it believed, would destroy the C.P. in this country.

The reactionaries were grievously disappointed. The C.C. had previously supervised and led the preparations of the Party organisations for the transference to conditions of illegal work. Owing to the illegal conditions, the Party Congress was postponed after agreement had been reached with the Party organisations, and the C.C. also met at longer intervals, after agreeing that a smaller committee of leading comrades direct the work, in order to meet the difficult illegal conditions of work. The Party continued to maintain its organisational and political unity and to reach the masses with its message of struggle against fascism and reaction everywhere.

◆ PERSECUTION

The Menzies Government, in its attacks upon Australian democracy and its strivings to crush the Communist Party, despite

its prohibitions and arrests of members, found that Communist activity was even increasing. . . Prime Minister Menzies announced more drastic measures for Communist Party activity, at the same time also threatening militant Trade Union officials and workers.

Two Communists, Ratliff and Thomas, who had served a sentence for Party activities, were seized and placed in a concentration camp, without charge or trial, among Italian fascists and Nazis. The C.C. at once raised the alarm throughout the labor movement and a strong campaign against these fascist tactics was waged. The two comrades concerned commenced a hunger strike, which drew considerable public attention to the case. A one-day stoppage of work in protest was called which, despite reformist opposition, met with considerable success, being one of the biggest political strikes the Australian proletariat has yet waged. The Menzies Government, however, clung to its victims, and it was only after the changed character of the war and the arrival in office of the Curtin Government that the release of these comrades was secured. The struggle for the release of Ratliff and Thomas constituted a political exposure of Menzies and hastened his downfall.

While the Ratliff-Thomas case was the outstanding example of fascist-like persecution of revolutionaries, there were numerous arrests, about fifty in all. In W.A., the persecutions were relatively the worst. The "liberalism" and lack of proper ideological and organisational preparation for illegality on the part of the leadership of the Party in that State was one of the prime causes for the heavier losses, as well as the attitude of certain of the reformist leaders, who acted as police informers, pointing out the Communist activists. The W.A. membership, however, stood up to these blows, consolidated the Party organisations, and emerged to rapidly build the Party. Their performance in winning the Party's Socialist competition, subsequently, is deserving of the highest praise.

Everywhere the fight against persecution, intimidation and provocation, although there were bad examples of lack of vigilance in other States besides W.A., steeled the Party ranks and led to a better understanding of the Party, to a higher political development, laying the basis for the rapid advance made by the Party when the objective conditions changed and became favorable.

There were a number of cases of desertions to the class enemy during the worst period of the drive against the Party, the most notable being C. Nelson, formerly President of the Miners' Federation, who announced himself for class peace and in support of the reactionary war, and later was convicted by a Royal Commission of receiving money from the Menzies Government.

Other deserters were Lloyd Ross, Secretary of the N.S.W. Branch of the A.R.U., who also supported the imperialists and developed a campaign of misrepresentation against the Party; G. Barrachi, the former liquidator, who had been readmitted to the Party following a visit to the U.S.S.R. and upon admission of his crime, again betrayed the movement at the critical moment of the Finnish crisis; J. N. Rawlings, also deserted at the same period, and a few others of less prominence. The C.C. issued statements from time to time exposing these renegades.

◆ REMOVALS AND EXPULSIONS OF C.C. MEMBERS

A number of former members of the C.C. itself also had to be dealt with in the period after the 12th Congress. These were: W. Orr, formerly Secretary of the Miners' Federation, who was removed from membership of the C.C.; W. Mountjoy was removed from the C.C. for liberalism and lack of vigilance in his leadership of the W.A. Party organisation; R. McWilliams was expelled for desertion of his post; E. Knight was also expelled for desertion, as was G. Gowland. There was also a noticeable fluctuation of the membership; a drift out of the Party; some of which, no doubt, was attributable to the difficulty of maintaining organisational contact under illegal conditions.

Despite these reverses, the Party undoubtedly maintained its political and organisational unity very well and was consolidated under the blows of the enemy.

◆ CENTRAL PARTY PRESS

The Menzies Government commenced its attack, aiming at the destruction of the Party Press, by prohibiting mention of a number of leading subjects in our columns, and as these prohibitions included reference to industrial disputes and the U.S.S.R., it can be realised how heavy was the blow dealt the "Tribune," the "Communist Review" and other organs. The C.C. decided against capitulation and to maintain the legal press as long as possible, and, with the loyal co-operation of the readers and Party membership, despite the emasculated content of our Press, continued to circulate it, compelling the Government to ban the papers on May 24, 1940.

The C.C. had made preparation for the transfer of the Press on to an illegal basis. The "Tribune" immediately reappeared, to be followed later by the "Communist Review." These organs were printed at secret plants, under very difficult conditions in the way of machinery and equipment. Necessarily, the papers were much smaller in size than when legal. In addition, numbers of leaflets dealing with the chief political questions, as they arose, were written and produced at these printeries.

The C.C. was able also, at the worst period of illegality, to produce pamphlets of a programmatic character: "Soviet Russia and the War," "The Coming War in the Pacific," and "What is this Labor Party?" which set out the Party's main policies in the imperialist stage of the war.

In the course of the struggle for the Party Press, a number of workers were gaoled for distributing or being in possession of copies of the illegal newspapers. These methods did not, however, deter the workers from buying or distributing our press, nor did the most intensive searching by the political police result in the uncovering of the printeries or the detection of the illegal apparatus. Our Press fulfilled its task of carrying the message of the Party to the masses with honor.

During the period in which the ban remained on the Party and the Press, the circulation of the "Communist Review" was about trebled and that of the "Tribune" almost doubled, despite the fact that the latter paper's mass circulation was now confined to N.S.W., the increase in circulation being particularly pronounced in the period after the entry of the Soviet Union into the war.

◆ COMBINING LEGAL WITH ILLEGAL WORK

Lenin always emphasised the need, in illegal periods, for the Party to make the utmost use of whatever legal opportunities exist for the furtherance of the Party's work: the combination of legal and illegal forms of activity.

The Party was able to carry on its work in the trade union movement without much hindrance and, in addition, to hold public meetings in the name of individuals, but not in the name of the Party. Stan Moran, assisted by other comrades, maintained the Party platform in the Sydney Domain right through the illegal period. Similar meetings were held in other centres.

The C.C. decided to take advantage of such legal opportunities in the 1940 Federal Elections and a large team of Party members contested as Independents, some of whom resumed public activity for the election period. The Party was well received and recorded a substantially increased vote; Fred Paterson, in Queensland, polling a record Communist vote.

Many other legal opportunities were similarly availed of in order to keep the Party message before the masses.

◆ THE WAR BECOMES A PEOPLE'S WAR

On June 22, 1941, the Nazis, despite the well-known peaceful policy of the Soviet Union and the existence of the Soviet-German pact, struck a treacherous blow at the U.S.S.R. Mr. Churchill at once announced support for the Soviet Union in the war forced upon it by the fascist bandits.

The C.C. instantly grasped the significance of the attack upon the Soviet Union and its entry into the war. This changed the character of the war into a war of independence on the part of the democratic peoples against fascist imperialist aggression, and it plainly revealed the aims of the fascists to conquer the whole of the world and to enslave all of the independent nations.

The C.C. at once decided for the fullest support of the war, which had now been transformed into a just, a people's war. The C.C. called for the closest relations with, and the fullest support for, the struggle of the Soviet peoples. It supported a number of movements whose aim is to send material aid, medical supplies, etc., and also to promote closer friendship and understanding between Australia and the U.S.S.R.

Mr. Churchill shortly afterwards signed a mutual aid Pact with the Soviet Union, which was later developed into the 20 years' Treaty of Alliance with the Soviet, a Treaty of a non-imperialist character. The U.S.A. and the Dominions immediately supported Mr. Churchill's policy in regard to the U.S.S.R. At last, the great United Front against the fascist enslavers, which the Communists had fought for since the accession to power of Hitler and the establishment of the fascist dictatorship in Germany in 1933, was coming into being. The path to the Grand Coalition against fascism was a zig-zag, marked by reverses and severe defeats, and established ultimately in conditions and in a fashion that could not be foreseen. The C.C. led the Party along the line of promoting and strengthening it in every way.

The enemies of our Party allege that the Party "somersaulted," but the policy of alliance with the Soviet Union against the fascists is, and always has been, our policy. It was those who had opposed collective security, who fought the peace policy of the Soviet Government, who were compelled to somersault. In the end it was the pro-fascists, appeasers and isolationists who were defeated and compelled to accept the policy of Unity against the fascists. Certainly the Party changed its line, just as Marx, Lenin and the Bolsheviks frequently changed immediate policy, but never the ultimate aim, Socialism. It is true that our reformist critics never change their fundamental line, namely, support for whatever policy the bourgeoisie is following: class-collaboration.

The C.C., soon after the Nazi onslaught on the Soviet Union, commenced the struggle for the Second Front in Europe as the speediest way to complete victory over the Nazis, a struggle which has developed to ever higher levels. The Second Front is not only a military demand but a political struggle, a political struggle against pro-fascism, Munichism and reaction. With the development of the Red Army's second winter offensive, the role of the Second Front in securing a speedy end to the war retains its full importance.

The C.C. put forward a concrete line for the winning of the war. This meant the fullest strengthening and support for the armed forces. Vast quantities of munitions had to be produced in order to equip the armies. Large numbers of workers had to be transferred to war production, overtime worked, women brought into industry, and continuity and increase of production assured. Production Committees and other measures were advocated in order to secure the necessary output. The C.C. gave the lead for the avoidance of strikes as far as possible, and fought against absenteeism and for a labor discipline imposed by the Trade Unions and the workers themselves. We supported all necessary and reasonable measures of the Federal Government in this direction.

In the struggle for production, the Party had to fight strenuously against groups of reformists in the major industries who set themselves out to sabotage the policy of our Party and of the Curtin Government. These reformist elements, who had spent their lives preaching Arbitration, class peace and "gradualism," suddenly became transformed into "strike leaders," creating big difficulties in the industries. The strikes fomented by these right-wingers helped the bourgeoisie, who were ceaselessly struggling to discredit the labor movement and unseat the Curtin Government, besides hampering the war effort and endangering the victory over the Axis. The Rights were assisted by the anarchistic, crude "militants" who lack political understanding and, consequently, cannot realise the gravity, for the labor movement, of the issues that hinge on the outcome of the war against fascism. The Trotskyite counter-revolutionaries, whose aim is the defeat of the Soviet Union at all costs, aided the disruptive campaign.

It must be said that too often Party members failed to stand up against the disruptors, failed to give a sufficiently strong lead to the workers and allowed themselves to be swayed by what seemed "popular." However, the Party on the whole fought strongly and often took the whole burden of the fight for the policy of the Government and for a correct attitude towards the anti-fascist war. Besides the struggle for more weapons and war supplies, the Party supported the financial policy of the Government in principle while criticising some features of it.

The C.C. gave the lead for the support of Mr. Curtin's proposal to send the Militia outside of the boundaries of Australia in order to drive the Japanese imperialists back to Tokio. On this issue, the right wing reformists came out in the open. The Langites in N.S.W., Fallon and the A.W.U. bureaucracy in Queensland, the Victorian State Executive of the A.L.P., all thought they saw an opportunity to gain control of the A.L.P. by raising a false "anti-conscription" cry and, at the same time, dealing a blow at the Communist Party and splitting and weakening the labor

movement. Some of these elements co-operate with the U.A.P. reaction and are prepared to bring down the Curtin Government because of their hatred of the progressive tendencies in the working class movement.

The extreme Rights, Fallon, Calwell and Lang, had an excellent stalking horse in the Centrists, the left reformists, Ward, Blackburn, Cameron, Boote, King, Crofts, etc. These latter elevate anti-conscription into a principle, a dogma. Because of their militant expressions in the past, these latter had influence with the more militant A.L.P. and T.U. rank and file.

The Militia proposal received the support of the majority of Labor Party State Executives and of the major Union bodies and was carried. The "anti-conscription" campaign of the Rights, assisted by the dogmatic elements, directed, as it was, at the People's War against fascism, was of a most reactionary and disruptive character. It threatened to split the labor movement and destroy the Curtin Government. It fitted in very well with the persistent campaign of the bourgeoisie to recover office and suppress the growing leftward swing of the labor movement. In these critical conditions, the C.C. led the Party in a vigorous fight to prevent a split in the labor movement, to assure a majority for the Militia proposal, to preserve the Curtin Government and to defeat the plans of the U.A.P.-U.C.P. on the one hand and the Fallon-Calwell-Lang disruption on the other. In the main, this campaign was successful.

◆ DEMAND FOR SUPPORT OF INDIA AND CHINA

The Communist Party has at all times vigorously supported the great national revolutionary movements of India and China, whose combined populations number almost half of the human race, for their complete independence.

The Communist Party, alone of Australian political parties, saw from the first the significance of China's resistance to Japanese plans for the conquest of China and its relation to Australia's own defence and security against fascist aggression. The C.C. gave the lead for the fullest support of the Chinese people in their just war against Japan, demanding especially a boycott of Japanese goods, the cessation of the despatch of war materials, including pig iron, etc., by the Menzies Government to Japan, as well as for adequate assistance to the struggling Chinese people and a collective security pact for the Pacific.

China has the trained manpower and holds the strategic position necessary to deal a mortal blow to Japanese military fascism. It is an urgent problem for the United Nations to speedily secure adequate supplies to China. Air transport can be used, but the reopening of the Burma Road would be a decisive factor in preparation for the despatch of the heavy military equipment, the

lack of which alone prevents the Chinese mass armies from overwhelming the Japanese invader and thereby making a decisive contribution to the victory of the United Nations in the Pacific.

The C.C., at the head of the Party, has insisted upon the political and diplomatic equality of China, and that China be given full representation on all war Councils and an equal voice in the making of military and other decisions. The abrogation of extra-territorial rights by Britain and the U.S.A. (Soviet Russia relinquished them immediately after the October Revolution) was an important step towards the recognition of China as a full and equal partner of the United Nations and of the end of her semi-colonial status.

◆ INDIA

As in respect to China, the Communist Party has always come forward as a champion of India's independence. China and India are near neighbors of Australia in the Pacific, and their future cannot but influence Australia's own destinies. Therefore the political situation in India must always be of concern to the C.P. of A. In the conditions of the war against fascism, the role of India has figured largely in the policy the C.C. has enunciated for the winning of the war against Japan. While opposing the tactics adopted by the Indian bourgeoisie led by Gandhi, which objectively assist the Japanese in their aim of the conquest of India, the C.C. has consistently stressed the need for India's liberation, for the establishment of a Provisional Indian National Government, fully representative of all Indians, as proposed by our Indian brother Party.

The C.C. has continually, at the same time, condemned the policy of the British Government in India and indicted it for the failure of the Cripps negotiations, the imprisonment of the Indian national leaders and the forcible suppression of the Indian freedom-desiring masses. This policy of the British Government also objectively assists the Japanese plan for the conquest of India. Malaya, Burma, the Dutch East Indies and other disasters all emphasise the dangers of the incorrect policy pursued towards the Asiatic peoples.

The C.C. has declared that if India was fully won to enthusiastic support of the struggle against the Axis enslavers by the recognition of her independence, and her vast manpower and resources fully utilised, India would constitute a decisive factor making for the victory of the United Nations in the Pacific. We have stressed this importance of India in opposition to those who have viewed the problem of Australia's defence only from the angle of the despatch of men and supplies from the U.S. and Britain to this country, and who neglect to raise the questions of India and China and their importance for speedy victory in the

Pacific, and the final liquidation of the menace to all Pacific countries of Japanese invasion.

◆ THE STRUGGLE FOR THE UNITED FRONT

The reformist leaders of the A.L.P., who had supported the bourgeoisie and its policy of "appeasement" and opposition to collective security by preaching "isolation," slandering the U.S.S.R. and opposing a united front against fascism, declaring that "Collective security meant war," supported the imperialist war and the plan of switching the war against the Soviet Union.

Following the 7th World Congress and the 12th Congress of our Party, the C.C. had been carrying out the line of the United front from above as well as below, for a People's Front against fascism, inclusive of the leading strata of the A.L.P. Necessarily, as the Liberal reformist leaders of the A.L.P., in the early, imperialist phase after the declaration of war, were supporting the plans of the most reactionary circles of the bourgeoisie, the C.C. had to make a change in policy in regard to the A.L.P. leadership. While fighting for the United Front from below, sharpest criticism and exposure of the A.L.P. leadership was conducted. At the same time, in view of the feelings of hatred of the masses towards the Menzies Government and the need, in this period, to expose the reformists by practical experience on the part of the masses, we demanded that the Labor Party take office. We opposed a National Government with the U.A.P., which stood discredited. The A.L.P. leaders, for a long time, resisted taking office because of their fears of the masses.

When the Soviet Union entered the war, the C.C. supported a United Front proposal made to the Federal A.L.P. by a number of Trade Union officials, who also proposed that Mr. Curtin should take over the Government. After the sweeping victory of the A.L.P. in the N.S.W. elections, for which the long fight of the militants against Lang's bureaucratic grip of the Labor Party machine had opened the way, the Federal A.L.P. leaders took over office. As the A.L.P. Government was, after the attack on the U.S.S.R., conducting a people's war and supporting unity with Soviet Russia, it had become necessary for us to alter our united front tactics in regard to the A.L.P. leaders and to support the Curtin Government and its measures directed towards winning the war.

The political situation is different to that of Britain, where the national united front can best be organised around Mr. Churchill, the leader of the Tories. In Australia it can best be organised around Mr. Curtin. The working class, having suffered so long under the Menzies Government, does not want the reactionary leaders of the U.A.P. in the Government.

After the Japanese aggression against Britain and U.S.A., the C.C. immediately, through a group of Trade Union comrades, again pledged support for the Curtin Government and proposed a United Front to the Federal A.L.P. Executive.

Although the United Front offer was not accepted by the A.L.P. the Party has succeeded in promoting better relationships with the Labor Party Federal Government and others of the A.L.P. leadership. We have been continuing the policy of building the United Front and promoting National Unity around the Curtin Government.

It must be said that the response of the Party organisations to the United Front proposal made to the A.L.P. was weak. It was not sufficiently followed up in the work among the masses. The United Front is still regarded by many Party members, it seems, as something in the nature of a "manoeuvre" and not yet understood as an all-important tactic for the mobilisation of the working class for struggle.

◆ TRADE UNION POLICIES

During the interval between the 12th and 13th Congresses, the C.C. as always, has continued to give close attention to the major Trade Union problems, wages and working conditions, the strike struggles and the organisational strengthening of the Union movement, as well as the political policy demanded in the changing conditions of the World War.

When the character of the war changed, the Party was faced with new and complicated tasks. The defeat of fascism demanded enormous quantities of military and other material. Greater production of these was imperative. In order to fulfill these tasks, labor discipline, continuity of work and co-operation with the managements was essential. The Party called upon the workers to combat the inefficiency, mismanagement and often corruption associated with capitalist control of industry, and declared that the Unions, shop committees and production committees should make the battle for the weapons to beat fascism a primary concern. Strikes should be confined only to situations that constitute a basic challenge to the Labor movement; negotiations and other measures should be utilised for the solution of the ordinary grievances and problems that continuously occur. The Party, of course, demanded that wages should be maintained in line with rising prices, that prices should be controlled, and pay increases granted the lower paid workers.

In the fight for this policy, the Party was faced with the sabotage of the Langsters, some of those associated with "Catholic Action," various reformist groups in Unions, notably among the A.E.U., A.W.U. and wharfies' officials, and on the jobs and, associated with them, the Trotskyite fifth columnists.

These elements gained a number of successes by means of playing upon the real grievances of the workers, by inciting backward workers to take strike action and to defy their Unions and act against the policy of the labor movement.

The employing class was often provocative, fomenting strikes in order to capitalise them politically to aid the reactionary politicians to undermine the Curtin Government. There can be no doubt of the co-operation between certain elements within reformism and the bourgeoisie for the purpose of disrupting and splitting the labor movement in order to hinder the growing strength of the workers. These reformist elements openly described the measures of the Curtin Government in connection with the war as "fascist" and did everything to discredit the policy of the Communists among the war industry workers. That their activity was detrimental to the labor movement and aided the fascist aggressors did not deter these miserable cliques.

The Party organisations on the job had a hard and bitter fight in order to implement the policy of ensuring increasing production. Some of the comrades displayed weakness in face of the disruptors when the latter had succeeded in stirring up the workers. It is a fact, however, that where a strenuous fight was made for our line, the Party's position was strengthened. There can be no doubt that the Party was instrumental in preventing widespread chaos in the war industries, and in assuring greater production, as well as frustrating the efforts of the reactionaries within and without the labor movement to destroy the Labor Government and weaken the working class.

The Party in this difficult struggle succeeded in substantially increasing its strength in the Trade Union movement, winning many new positions. Also successes were achieved in uniting and strengthening the Trade Unions. In this connection, the amalgamation of the Ironworkers' and Munition Workers' Unions, thus establishing a great Metalworkers' Union of 100,000 workers, was an outstanding achievement on the part of Comrade Thornton and the other comrades in these two Unions who took a leading part in bringing about this amalgamation, which has already served as a starting point and example for further unification of the craft unions. The Communists are thus strengthening the labor movement in this period, whereas the right wing disruptors are undermining its unity by their pseudo-militant "policy."

◆ THE STRUGGLE FOR THE LIFTING OF THE BAN ON THE PARTY

From the moment of the banning of the Party, the C.C. commenced the struggle for the raising of the ban.

Despite the fact that the Party consolidated and showed healthy growth in the illegal period and the Party Press appeared

regularly, the ban hampered the work of the Party. Contrary to the opinion of romanticists and leftists, the Communist Party has no desire for illegal conditions of work. An open legal Party has greater opportunity for growth and mass contact than an illegal one. The Communist Party only works illegally when there is no alternative course open to it, when the bourgeoisie contravenes democracy and outlaws the workers' Party. The Russian and German and other parties were compelled to work underground because of the brutal suppression by the Tsar and the fascists. The Menzies Government was increasing its pressure, announcing its intention of widespread arrests of Communist leaders at the moment of the Nazi attack upon the Soviet Union.

The changed character of the war and the accession of the Curtin Government to office created far more favorable conditions for the struggle for the legality of the Party. Nevertheless, it took more than a year of mass mobilisation and pressure on the Curtin Government, in which period hundreds of motions were passed by the working class and other democratic organisations, before the ban was finally lifted, although considerable freedom was given to the Party for activity prior to the raising of the ban. The Party Press, for example, had to be printed illegally right until the ban was raised.

The raising of the ban on the C.P. was not only a great victory for the Communists, but for the labor movement and Australian democracy over reaction and fascism.

The Party signed a formal declaration that it would carry out all measures necessary for the conduct of the People's War against fascism. This did not violate any principle or policy, as the Party has consistently itself proposed and advocated such measures since the People's War commenced.

◆ REORGANISATION OF THE C.C.

When the Party commenced to emerge from the deepest phase of illegality, the position and work of the Central Committee came under review.

Partly as a consequence of the needs of the illegal work, and also because of some unclarity as to the proper functioning of the Central Committee, the Centre was tending to become divorced from the practical direction of the work of the Party, its functions to be confined to discussion of the general policy and its leading members to acting in an advisory capacity to various Party organisations. In this situation the State Committees began to show symptoms of themselves tending to take over some of the functions of the C.C.

These tendencies struck at the basic principle of Party organisation—Democratic Centralism. A Party like ours, with such tremendous tasks to fulfil, needs a highly centralised General Staff

to assure oneness in policy and firm discipline. The Party can have only one leading organ—the Central Committee—and the C.C., to properly lead the work, must have the closest contact with the practical work and daily problems of the membership.

The existence of a State Committee in N.S.W., alongside the C.C. and together with the illegal conditions, had led to duplication and to the comparative isolation of the C.C. from the practical political work. Comrade Sharkey drew up a number of proposals to rectify this position; these proposals involved the abolition of the State Committee in N.S.W., the restoration of the departments of the Central Committee and the establishment of a Metropolitan Committee in Sydney. The C.C. adopted this plan, which was later endorsed by a N.S.W. Party Conference. It is agreed that the change has been a beneficial one, and all of the departments are functioning and are giving a detailed attention to the problems of their spheres of work which was not attainable by the previous organisation. The C.C. is now the centre of activity, as well as the leading organ for the definition of policy. There are still weaknesses in the work of various departments, but experience is tending toward a better understanding of the tasks of the Departments. Co-ordination of the work of the departments also needs improving, and with closer cooperation on the part of the State organisations, the C.C. departments will be transformed into really national centres of leadership. Centralisation of the work of the Party under the Central Committee has been retarded by the war situation and the difficulties of communication and transport, and there is still a need for a greater understanding on the part of State Committees of the leading role of the C.C. and the need for closer collaboration with it in the work. There cannot be a division of leadership in the Communist Party; there can only be one leading national political organ—the Central Committee.

◆ PARTY TRAINING

The C.C. laid it down, at the inception of the Party recruiting campaign, that the new members could only be retained provided they were speedily given political training and Party consciousness.

In the period of a rapid influx of new members, Party training and education acquire exceptional importance, in particular for the prevention of fluctuation. The C.C., therefore, campaigned for widespread Party training classes and prepared special elementary courses and a brief outline of Party history, as well as the booklets, "The Trade Unions" and "Australia Marches On," in order to give the new members a correct understanding of the Trade Unions and the A.L.P. and the perspective of our tasks in relation to the labor movement and the reformist leaders. It issued as well the "Glossary of Marxist Terms."

The development of higher Marxist-Leninist education for the raising of the theoretical level of the more advanced cadres is equally important. The development of central schools of the Marx House type fills a long-felt want in this sphere. The function of these schools in the first place is to cater for the advanced students and cadres, to raise the mass level of genuine Marxist theoretical understanding, dialectics, higher economics, history, etc., as well as assisting the general education in more "practical" subjects and current Party policy. Even yet there is some confusion as to the function of Marx House which must be overcome.

Generally, it is pleasing to record that there is a greatly increased interest in and development of Party training to be noted in the local organisations.

◆ WOMEN AND YOUTH

These two spheres of activity, formerly weak points in our work, have received considerable attention by the C.C., which has led to a strengthening of activity and organisation in these spheres.

The Socialist competition for the building of the Party stressed the need for the recruitment of women and young toilers and for the promotion of women to leading positions. Large numbers were recruited and many women comrades promoted to executive positions. In connection with youth, organisation was hampered by a number of incorrect ideas and tendencies. The need to broaden out youth organisation and get rid of the earlier sectarianism of Y.C.L. work was interpreted to mean the liquidation of a class youth organisation, the liquidation of the Y.C.L. From the earlier attempts to organise on politics alone there was a swing to the view that youth organisation should be based on sport, recreation and entertainment, instead of the correct position, i.e., the skilful combination of both. Confusion likewise existed as to the role of young Party members and their relation with the mass youth organisation. Many of these young comrades functioned as Party members without connection with the youth. Other young comrades who were active in youth work were snapped up as functionaries by the Party organisations, thereby "beheading the youth."

As a result of criticism of these and other erroneous views and actions and the appointment of Comrade Miles to personally supervise youth work, considerable progress has resulted and a really broad, mass national youth organisation, trained in the spirit of Marxism-Leninism, is taking shape.

◆ BUILDING THE PARTY AND SOCIALIST COMPETITION

As the objective situation developed favorably for the Party, the C.C. gave the lead for the building of the Communist Party. Party building was developed on the basis of Socialist Competi-

tion. Socialist Competition for the building of the Party commenced in N.S.W., where two recruiting drives took place immediately after the change in the character of the war. The C.C. then gave the lead for a National Party Building Campaign on the basis of Socialist Competition, setting as a goal 15,000 members by the end of 1942. Comrade R. Dixon supervised and led the detailed planning of the campaign on behalf of the C.C.

After a magnificent campaign, this goal was more than reached and the Party strengthened, not only in numbers, but in every aspect of its organisation and work among the masses. The establishment of the organ, the "Party Builder," played an important part in the success of the Party Building Campaign and the consolidation of the new membership.

The C.C. stressed the need to build the Party in the factories and workplaces, and this aspect of the Party Building drive has met with gratifying results. There are now several factory branches with memberships of more than one hundred and others close to the hundred mark, and a wide network of such branches now exists throughout the industrial centres. Basing the Party in the factories has an important bearing on transforming the Party into a really Bolshevik Party. The C.C. paid attention also to spheres where Party work had lagged: the youth, where we can now report the growth of a really mass movement; the country, where the Party is growing rapidly and also recruiting farmers; although the quota of women set by the Socialist Competition was not fully reached, very considerable results were achieved in recruiting, and also the promotion of women to executive positions in the Party and in the Trade Unions.

Considerable growth of the Party's strength in the Trade Unions has also been recorded. The Party is now emerging as a fully-fledged mass Party of the Australian toiling people, the indication being that the Party will advance even more rapidly in 1943.

The growth of a mass Communist Party in Australia and in Britain is a factor of the utmost importance, presaging a fundamental, revolutionary change in the labor movement and, consequently, in the politics of the nation.

The Parties of the Communist International were founded in order to develop mass Bolshevik parties in all capitalist countries. The Socialist Revolution failed, in Germany and other countries, at the close of the war of 1914-18, in spite of favorable objective conditions, because, besides the betrayals of reformist Social-Democracy, such Parties were lacking. This shows the tremendous significance that must be attached to the successful establishment of a mass Communist Party in Australia.

A United Working Class and A National Front For Victory

Resolution, 13th Congress, Communist Party of Australia,
March 19, 20, 21, 1943

A PEOPLE'S WAR

THE 13th Congress of the Communist Party of Australia declares that the preservation of Australian independence and democracy is bound up with the defeat of fascism on a world scale.

The people of Australia, immediately threatened by Japanese militarism, Hitler's gangster partner in the Pacific, must, whilst organising the maximum effort against the Japanese enemy, nevertheless think internationally and see our problems and tasks in relation to the world-wide war of the United Nations to defeat the fascist Axis.

The relations between the United Nations, and the relations between the Governments of the United Nations, and the peoples they represent, and the military strategy and tasks of the United Nations, are the concern of the Australian people.

The war waged by the United Nations against fascism is a people's war, a "war of liberation" (Stalin), a war for democratic ways of life—above all, it is a war waged in the interests of the working class and all progressive and democratic people.

THE CHARACTER OF FASCISM

Fascism is "the open terrorist dictatorship of the most reactionary, most chauvinistic and most imperialistic elements of finance capital." It is a "Government system of political gangsterism, a system of provocation and torture practised upon the working class and the revolutionary elements of the peasantry, the petty bourgeoisie and the intelligentsia. It is medieval barbarism and bestiality; it is unbridled aggression in relation to other nations and countries" (Dimitrov).

At a terrible price, hundreds of millions of people throughout the world are learning the real character of fascism. In Europe and Asia scores of millions have experienced the gangster rule and terrorist vengeance of the fascists. On the battlefields and in the conquered lands the fascists have murdered, tortured and herded into concentration camps millions of defenceless people.

The wholesale murder of the Jewish people in Europe is a blacker page in history than even that of the Czarist pogroms. "Fascism is unbridled chauvinism and annexationist war; Fascism is rabid reaction and counter-revolution" (Dimitrov).

Under Fascism there is no freedom of speech, no freedom of assembly, no free press, and no freedom of organisation. Fascism destroys the trade unions and other democratic organisations of the peoples, and gaols, tortures and murders their leaders. Church congregations are attacked, their leaders who refuse to become fascist agents are hounded and murdered.

The fascists loot the conquered territories to supply their war machine and to enrich the fascist cliques; they starve the conquered peoples to feed their slaves in Germany, Italy and Japan. Their aim is world domination, a world prison for the peoples of the type of Hitler's "New Order" in Europe.

There is nothing Socialist in Hitler's "National Socialism." "Fascism is a most ferocious attack on the mass of working people; fascism is the most vicious enemy of the working class and all working people" (Dimitrov).

Fascism was able to take control in the fascist countries because the working class was divided. The Labor Party leaders rejected the united front proposals of the Communists that would have enabled the working class to resist and defeat fascism. The farmers and the middle classes of the towns, deluded by fascist demagoguery and repelled by the lack of working class unity, were not won for the struggle against fascism.

"Fascism also attained power for the reason that it was able to penetrate into the ranks of the youth" (Dimitrov).

Congress therefore directs all Party members to explain, again and again, the role and character of fascism, so as to remove any doubts in the mind of the working and middle classes that this is a People's War, a war demanding of us the maximum unity and effort if victory is to be won.

FASCISM IS WAR

The path of fascism toward the present world war was marked by the seizure of Manchuria and Abyssinia, war on the democratic republic of Spain and the seizure of Czecho-Slovakia. At every stage of their drive to world war the fascists were encouraged by the appeasement policy of the ruling class of Britain, France and the United States. The efforts of Soviet Russia to establish a system of collective security to prevent war were frustrated.

The policy of appeasement was aimed at reaching an agreement with the fascist aggressors so as to divert the attack eastwards against Soviet Russia, the great stronghold of the working class.

This policy turned out, as Stalin warned it would, to be a fiasco for the appeasers in Britain, France, America, Australia and other countries. It proved disastrous for the small countries of Europe, for the people of France and for vast numbers of people from Indo-China to Burma, to the shores of Australia and the United States. That is the price exacted by history, a price not yet paid in full, for the failure of the democratic peoples to unite against fascism, put an end to appeasement, and enter into an alliance with the great peace-loving Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

SOVIET POLICY

Soviet policy, which in the pre-war period sought by the collective action of the democratic powers to preserve peace, was devoted, following the outbreak of war in Europe, to strengthening her own defensive power and to limiting the spread of the war. The action taken by the Red Army to check the Nazis in Poland, the agreements with Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania, the war with Finland, and the liberation of Bessarabia, these were all measures directed against Hitlerite Germany and in the interests of the liberation movement of the peoples of Eastern Europe.

The treacherous attack of Nazi Germany on Soviet Russia on July 22, 1941, brought with it a fundamental change in the character of the war. The most powerful force of liberation, Soviet Russia, now held the initiative in the struggle against fascism and victory over Hitlerism, and a people's peace became inevitable. "Great Britain and the United States . . . proved to be in one camp with the U.S.S.R. against Hitlerite Germany" (Stalin). In these circumstances there has taken place a rallying of the working classes and all progressive people to the cause of the anti-fascist struggle, resulting in a great strengthening of the democratic movement of the people.

HOW TO WIN THE WAR Full Collaboration and World Strategy

Today the world is divided into two great warring camps. Japan's attack in the Pacific, by drawing the U.S.A. into the war, completed the line-up of freedom-loving nations against fascism.

The Anglo-Soviet Treaty and the British-Soviet Agreement with the United States, which is the basis of the international anti-fascist front, has not yet resulted in that co-ordination of strategy on a world scale essential to victory. Narrow national or class interests must not be allowed to endanger the struggle of the United Nations. Alongside the fullest mobilisation of the resources of each of the United Nations, there must go a strengthening of the world anti-fascist front, a fully unified world

strategy and the planned distribution of manpower and supplies in accordance with such strategy.

This Congress declares that Hitlerite Germany can be defeated in 1943, thus opening the way for the speedy defeat of Japan. The Soviet Red Army, which has withstood the main weight of the Hitlerite armies since June, 1941, and is now in the process of defeating and destroying the fascist gangsters in Eastern Europe, has created the conditions of this victory.

What is required now is that Britain and the United States open a second front in Europe and join with the Soviet people in a final all-out effort to put an end to the Hitlerite power.

The great and successful winter offensive of the Red Army brought forth renewed attempts to divide the United Nations, and to revive and extend anti-Soviet influences within the nations allied with Soviet Russia in the people's war of liberation.

Congress calls upon the people of Australia to demand a Second European Front and to put an end, once and for all, to the influence of the pro-fascist elements which here in Australia, as well as in Britain and the United States, are sabotaging the war and trying to save Hitler's armies by opposing the opening of a Second European Front.

The opening of a Second European Front and the defeat of Hitlerite Germany will permit that concentration of Anglo-American forces and supplies in the Pacific that will ensure the defeat of Japan. Hence the need for the people of Australia to devote attention to the European theatre of war and to support the opening of a Second European Front.

In the war with Japan two steps are necessary which, if taken, will immediately relieve the situation in the Pacific and contribute enormously to the final victory over fascism.

First, India must be won for the cause of the United Nations. This demands the release of the Indian Congress leaders, and the reopening of negotiations for the establishment of an Indian Government that will unite the Indian people for war against the Axis powers. Artificially created religious and political divisions must no longer be used to bar the way to Indian liberation.

Secondly, the utmost assistance must be rendered the heroic Chinese people who have been waging war on the Japanese bandits for more than five years. China, which provides bases close to Japan, is a key to victory in the Pacific. Therefore, the reoccupation of Burma and the reopening of the Burma Road must be undertaken by the Allies.

Congress calls upon the Party to strengthen in every way the campaign for the freedom of India and for more aid to China.

THE AUSTRALIAN SITUATION

The defence of Australian independence, which is bound up with the defeat of Hitler in Europe, demands a maximum war effort, additional support from our Allies and military offensives to deprive the Japanese of bases from which they are preparing to invade this country.

Until the United Nations have defeated Hitler in Europe, which will enable them to prepare an all-out Pacific offensive to defeat Japan, the task of Australia is to hold on. For this the maximum war effort is required together with military offensives to deprive the Japanese of bases from which they are preparing to invade Australia.

This Congress declares its support of the Curtin Labor Government and urges all sections of the Australian people to close their ranks and form a great national front in support of the Government. The efforts of Menzies-Fadden-Hughes and the millionaire press to divide the people and undermine and destroy the Labor Government and form what they call a "National Government" must be defeated. The discredited U.A.P. and U.C.P. leaders who, when they were in office earlier, planned to leave sections of our country undefended, supplied pig iron to Japan, helped close the Burma Road, outlawed the Communist Party and tried to institute a reign of terror against the labor movement, would attempt to rule by means of a dictatorship if they were to come to power now. Their "National Government" would be a disaster to Australia. Therefore the Communist Party, along with Unions and the Labor Party, must continue their opposition, which has hitherto proved so successful, to the Menzies-Fadden-Hughes plan for a so-called "National Government."

The influence of the people's war and the more democratic policy of the Curtin administration has broadened democracy, even though, due to the demands of war, necessary restrictions such as control of manpower and limitation of travel have been introduced.

It is essential that the role of the working class in the organization of the national effort and in the determination of foreign policy, strategy and problems of national defence, be decisively strengthened.

THE LABOR PARTY

The Curtin Government, the national leadership of the Labor Party, represents most clearly the historic role of the Labor Party—the development of Australia as a unified, independent, capitalist nation. The war has hastened that development, leading to ratification of the Statute of Westminster, plans to change

the Constitution in order to increase the powers of the Federal Parliament, and Mr. Curtin's appeal, "without pangs," for United States aid, which does not involve the surrender of independence to the United States.

The Labor Party, however, is not fully united on national problems, as was revealed on the Constitutional issue when the Party was divided on the lines of State interests; on the Militia issue, when there was not only difference of opinion, but deliberate disruption by members of the Party. Lang, Calwell, Fallon, and many others try to disrupt the Labor Party and the War Effort, basing themselves on traditions which do not apply to the present situation (anti-conscription); others put forward Labor Party program points in an unclean, demagogic and disruptive manner.

The Curtin Government is hindered and the national effort harmed by a number of union leaders, sometime collaborators with Menzies (some A.E.U. leaders, Langites, etc.), who would not organise struggle against his Government but who now condone unnecessary stoppages and even instigate them. Today they pose as militants, and slander the Communists, stimulate discontent and direct it against the Government and the war effort. They are not concerned to improve the workers' conditions; their behaviour is fifth column in its effect and they are aided by the Trotskyite fifth column in this disruptive activity.

Hatred of the Soviet Union and of the Communists finds sharp expression in certain leading Labor Party circles, weakening unity of their Party and the war effort.

The Communist Party calls on the Labor Party rank and file and those leaders whose main concern is victory to combat and isolate these harmful influences, and to rally in a united front behind the Federal Government and its genuine supporters in the States.

The co-operation which has developed between the trade unions and the Government can be greatly strengthened through the Trade Union Advisory Panel, which must receive full support from the labor movement in helping the Government to organise for victory.

WORKING CLASS UNITY

A burning need of the moment is the united front of the working class, that is, unity in the cause of this war of liberation between the members of both Labor Parties, the great number of non-party workers, and the members of the Communist Party. "The first thing that must be done, the thing with which to begin, is to form a united front, to establish unity of action of the workers in every factory, in every district, in every region,

in every country all over the world. Unity of action of the working class on a national and international scale is the mighty weapon which renders the working class capable not only of successful defence, but also of successful counter-attack against Fascism."

"The Communists put no condition for unity of action except one, and that an elementary condition acceptable for all workers, viz., that the unity of action be directed against fascism" (Dimitrov).

The starting points for united action today include: Support of the Federal Labor Government against all the efforts of the reaction to bring down the Government and place its own representatives in control.

Action against all individuals and groups in the Labor movement who try to disrupt unity of the workers behind the Curtin Government.

Struggle for conditions of labor making for the highest level of production of war supplies and other needs, for a maximum war effort, for the removal of hindrances and for the formation of joint production committees and other forms of organisation which will facilitate increased production.

A firm stand for disciplined adjustment of grievances, for an end to unauthorized strikes and stoppages and avoidable absenteeism, exposure of employer provocation and drastic action by the Government against such employers and managers.

Exposure of black marketing and decisive action by the Government to punish the criminals and root out this evil. More effective action by the Government to control prices in the interests of consumers and small traders. Amendment to and relaxation of wage-pegging regulations to allow adjustments to lower income groups and correction of anomalies.

An increase of the basic wage, which lags behind the rising cost of living. Adjustment of taxation on the basis of ability to pay and what is left after the tax is paid.

Support of voluntary war services, the provision of amenities for our fighting forces, and improvements in the conditions of training, service and payment which are the responsibilities of the Government.

These are all matters demanding united action on the part of the Labor movement and response from the Government.

The splendid response to friendship movements with our great ally, Soviet Russia, can be extended and strengthened as an expression of international anti-fascist unity.

Barriers to unity erected by church leaders, on either religious or political grounds, must be broken down. The Communist

Party respects religious convictions and extends the hand of unity to workers of the Roman Catholic, Protestant and other faiths.

The A.C.T.U. should press on with the establishment of fraternal relations and collaboration between the trade union movement of this country, Great Britain, Soviet Russia, the United States and other Allied lands. A particular task is to develop contact and unity between the Australian Trade Union Movement and the Trade Unions of China and India.

The struggle for trade union unity in Australia must include the amalgamation of unions along the lines of industry, the extension of the Shop Committee Movement and the defeat of the disruptive elements.

A NATIONAL FRONT

A national front means co-operation between the Labor movement and all other anti-fascist sections of the nation, the rank and file and anti-fascist leaders of other Parties and mass organisations of the people, in support of the Curtin Government.

The most decisive thing in establishing the anti-fascist national front is the alliance between the working class on the one hand, and the working farmers and the mass of middle class people of the towns, who together form the majority of the population, on the other. The Trade Unions and the farmers' organisations must collaborate on questions of production, manpower, marketing and prices, for a maximum war effort and for unity behind the Government. Congress calls upon all Party members to direct their tactics towards drawing the farmers and middle classes into the anti-fascist national front.

The struggle for national unity does not await full working class unity, but must begin at once in the workplaces, with the organisation of joint production committees, and, in the localities, in the joint efforts of varied organisation and the local population to advance all aspects of the war effort.

The attitude of the Communist Party toward all other parties and independents is determined by their attitude to the People's War, to the working class and its parties at the present time, and by their attitude to the present Federal Government. It is the task of the membership of other parties to rid themselves of discredited leaders, and put forward genuine democrats and supporters of the cause of the United Nations.

The Curtin Government is the most national government possible at this moment; it commands the support of the people on a scale which would not be given to a Menzies-Fadden "National Government." But the Curtin Government is not a government of a national front. Such a government would be representative of the mass political and economic organisations

of all the people, comprised of tested leaders, Ministers devoted to the cause of victory over fascism.

The Communist Party declares for such a government, to further strengthen national unity and the war effort and bring victory nearer.

WOMEN FOR THE NATIONAL FRONT

The war has drawn thousands of women into industry and the auxiliary services. They are joining unions; they are taking part in voluntary war work, and have become more widely interested in national and international problems. Greater numbers take an active part in political life.

The increased participation of women in production and the growth of the Services has raised the economic and political status of large numbers of women. This progressive development has been aided by the policy of the Government expressed in the Women's Employment Regulations and later the adoption of the Women's Employment Act.

But it is the duty of every anti-fascist, above all the Communists, to draw ever more women into the national front for victory and to encourage and assist them to take responsibility.

It is the duty of the Labor movement, its trade unions and parties and other bodies, to bring greater numbers of women into leading positions, including election to Parliament.

YOUTH FOR THE NATIONAL FRONT

The war period has witnessed a growth of youth organisations in all States, in trade unions, factories and localities. All sections of the Labor movement should assist to unify and greatly extend this movement. The Communist Party, while in no way infringing the independence of these organisations, declares its support for them and its readiness to give assistance for their further development.

Collaboration has taken place between the youth of the Labor movement and other youth bodies. These united actions of the young generation, irrespective of Party or denomination, point the way to winning the whole young generation to the national front for victory.

ARMED FORCES; WOMEN'S SERVICES AND RETURNED MEN AND WOMEN

All movements to care for the men of the armed forces and the women of the services, to provide them with comforts and amenities at the Front, at battle stations and on leave, are deserving of the fullest support of the civilian population. The Labor movement has not yet exhausted the possibilities. Communists must be more vigorous in their support of these activities.

Every activity leading to more democracy in the army is in line with the character of the war. Democracy will not weaken discipline, but will strengthen it and raise morale. The right to democratically set up soldiers' committees and other service committees ought to exist in an anti-fascist army. Promotion in the armed forces and auxiliaries must be based solely on ability. Payment in the services should be on the basis of work and rank, irrespective of sex.

On leave and off duty members of the services should be free to participate in political activity.

Strengthening the bonds of unity between the members of the fighting front and members of the production front is of the utmost importance.

This Congress records its admiration of the devotion and courage of our Armed Forces in all theatres of war. The Forces are the spearhead of our struggle against fascism.

The care of disabled soldiers and dependants of those who have fallen in battle must be a first consideration of the nation. Problems of disabled soldiers and dependants exist dating from the last war which must be sympathetically solved.

New problems arise with the return of our fighters from the battlefields and other services in the present war. These will grow in number and acuteness as the war continues and after it ends.

Re-employment of the fit, and pensions and assistance for the disabled must be handled in a manner worthy of the sacrifice and service for our independence and the whole anti-fascist cause.

While recognising the value of organisation of women and men discharged from the services, it is essential to ensure democratic control and so combat the effort of reaction to use the ex-service organisations for their selfish class aims.

The moves to turn the organisations of returned women and men into political parties are attempts to put them in conflict with the organisations of the working people and so to serve the interests of exploiters and place seekers.

The interests of the great majority of the fighting services and auxiliaries and those discharged from the services lie with all who are and will be their fellow workers of factory, mine and farm. Their class interests are served by the Labor movement and its organisations, industrial and political. It is through these organisations that, on return to civil life, women and men of the services will best serve the interests of their class.

FIGHT REACTIONARY TRENDS

The Communist Party warns all anti-fascist people against the reactionaries and their agencies and calls for struggle to isolate

them and render them harmless. In addition to the monopolists, their political leaders and press, these include: the Sydney "Bulletin," with its long pro-fascist record and its bitter hatred of the Soviet Union; the Lang-Caldwell clique and their "Century," with a long record of disruptive action in the Labor Party; Fallon and his A.W.U. bureaucracy, enemies of the Curtin Government and our Ally, Soviet Russia; the Trotskyite fifth column with its pseudo-revolutionary phrases; "Social Credit" advocates who vilify the Soviet Union and the Communist Party and echo Hitler about the Jews and would act like the Gestapo; the reactionary pro-fascist Roman Catholic leaders who must be distinguished from people of the Catholic faith who work for victory; and all the "new political party" trends which are an expression of the decline of the capitalist class parties, and are attempts by reactionary cliques to find a basis in the sectional interests of groups of the population. All their roads lead to fascism.

POST-WAR PROBLEMS

The first essential is victory if progressive post-war plans are to be realised. No speculations, no conflicts about the post-war period can be allowed to weaken unity in the struggle for victory.

The aim of the Communist Party is Socialism, without which there can be no final solution of the economic and social problems of the working class and other working people; but Socialist planning cannot be the starting point when victory is won.

Victory over fascism will not automatically bring a new social order into being. Victory for the United Nations will, however, clear the path for a great working class advance, and the solution of the problems of the post-war period in the interest of the people.

An essential preparation for the post-war period is the further strengthening of the ranks of the working class, its organisations, its unity and its political understanding. There must also be closer connections between the working class and the farmers and middle classes of the towns and cities.

The Curtin Government must carry through the plans to amend the Constitution to give the Federal Parliament power to carry out reconstruction.

The demobilisation of the armed forces must be so organised that there will be work, or adequate maintenance till work is provided.

Effective reconstruction plans will provide against mass dismissals, for the change-over to new production in existing factories and the transfer of labor to the production of new capital and consumption needs, and for price control.

There will be ample scope to absorb labor in vast housing schemes, irrigation, other water supply and power projects, soil conservation and re-afforestation, rail unification, extension of education, building of schools and expansion of cultural activities.

Problems of agriculture and marketing of primary products are no less important. Practical land settlement schemes must be devised. A high standard of living for the masses will provide the best market. Control of marketing in which the democratic organisations of the farmers participate, and a system of guaranteed prices must also be part of the reconstruction plan.

The conditions of all rural workers must be determined through organisation into trade unions and the establishment of awards for all callings.

This war has again demonstrated that the Government can find vast sums of money. This can also be done for peaceful reconstruction. In place of war taxation, reconstruction taxation; in place of war loans, reconstruction loans; in place of bank credits for war, bank credits for reconstruction.

There must also be a National Insurance Scheme, a non-contributory scheme, financed from Government revenue, and providing for unemployment, sickness, invalid and retiring age pensions.

The post-war world will be greatly influenced by the role of the Soviet Union and of a free and mighty China. The friendly international relations established between this country and other anti-fascist nations must be further strengthened. The Australian nation and its Government must stand firmly for the Atlantic Charter and for its extension to all British possessions, for the provisions of the Anglo-Soviet Treaty and the participation of other nations in this Treaty. The spirit of the Atlantic Charter must be applied to the Australian aborigines.

THE FEDERAL ELECTIONS

The Communist Party will prepare for and take part in the Federal Elections with the slogans "Everything for the Victory of Democracy," "Return a Stronger Labor Government."

In unity with the members of the Labor Parties and other friends of the Labor Government, Communists will work for the return of greater numbers of supporters of Mr. Curtin.

The Communist Party is ready to confer with the Federal Labor Party and with candidates of the Labor Party and their committees for an agreement on program and the use of forces in the campaign.

At the same time, the Communist Party will carry on its own propaganda on all questions and, in a number of constituencies, will put forward Party candidates, if possible in agreement

with the Labor Party, at least for the exchange of preferences where both parties nominate.

ROOT OUT SECTARIANISM—FIGHT RIGHT DANGERS

Immediately the war changed, the Central Committee drew attention to the new possibilities for the United Front and a wider people's unity and warned sharply against sectarian dangers. Good results have been achieved, but the struggle against sectarianism is not ended.

Hesitation to approach people and distrust of workers and others associated with bad or doubtful leaders retards the united front and hinders unity of the people. Communists must work with anyone who will co-operate for the most simple aim in the interests of our class, of the people, and the war effort.

In varying degrees in the ranks of our Party there has been capitulation to harmful "Left" moods induced by employer provocation, to anarchist attitudes on private production, on avoidable strikes, stoppages and indefensible absenteeism. The influence of disruptors on backward people, over the Militia issue, penetrated our ranks. The presence of representatives of other classes in the Governments of the Allied Nations, the delay in opening a Second Front, gives rise to moods which influence some comrades. The delay in lifting the ban on the Party had similar effects.

Communists must learn to distinguish between listening to the masses to discover what to do in the interests of our class movement and the people's war, and capitulation to backward moods.

The attempt to justify this capitulation by reference to the "rank and file" (in the union or elsewhere) is opportunist. We must, when necessary, fight against the stream, for capitulation means defeat. Struggle for the line against all odds has brought us strength.

Certain tendencies that arose in relation to the very broad perspectives for unity and its practice, the elements of co-operation in production and with the Government, reveal the danger from the Right. This is to be guarded against, not by retreat from united action, but by study of the Party line, mastering Marxism, preserving the independence of the Party, the independence of the unions and of the whole Labor movement.

BUILD THE COMMUNIST PARTY

The attack on the Party found members united and prepared to continue the struggle. The Party was strengthened by casting out the few weaklings and disruptors. The outstanding feature of the Labor movement during the past twenty months is the great growth of our Communist Party and its influence. The

anti-fascist struggle led by our Party, the unflinching confidence in our great Soviet Ally, our leading role in the peoples' war, has greatly strengthened our numbers and organisation. The successful recruiting campaign to December 31, 1942, increased the membership of the Party to four times the numbers organised at the time of the ban, June, 1940.

The rapid growth of the Party, which will continue, and the desperation of all reactionaries, increase the danger of provocation. Against this the Party must be on the alert. The struggle for policy, for discipline, is intimately connected with the struggle against provocation.

Congress calls upon all Party members and organisations to widely extend their mass work, to increase the circulation of the Party press, and in every way to improve and extend mass agitation and propaganda.

All organs of the Party and individual members have the great task to strengthen the Party in every way, by gaining new members, by educating our recruits, by strengthening the organisation, by advancing the theoretical training of all members and in the new building campaign to make our Party still more worthy of our great teachers, Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin.

The Party calls upon anti-fascists to help strengthen the Party, to enter its ranks. The Party has no narrow aim of its own. The greater its strength, the stronger is the Labor movement, the stronger is the unity of the people, the stronger is the national front for Victory, the stronger is the prospect for a solution of post-war problems in the interest of all working people.

To-Day and To-Morrow

by
L. L. SHARKEY

SINCE the 13th Congress our Party has enjoyed one of the most valuable periods of its existence. Developing and elaborating its policy along the lines of the Congress Resolution, the Party has made an invaluable contribution to the national war effort, to the cause of the anti-fascist People's War. It has ever been in the forefront, fighting the would-be saboteurs of national unity and the disruptors of war industry and of the labor movement, under the slogan: "Everything for the People's War."

Our Party has shown itself to be an important national force and the most progressive force in the fight against fascism and all forms of reaction at home and abroad. As a result, its prestige stands high among the Australian people.

In the various Parliamentary campaigns and the Referendum, the Party played a role which helped considerably to consolidate and improve its position as a leading Party of the Australian people. In this period, as a result of joint activity, greater friendship and confidence has been established with the A.L.P. leaders and organisations, despite the vicious efforts of the Fallons, Langs, Cremeans and Lovegroves to prevent unity and disrupt it wherever it exists. The right wing is being smashed. Lang, expelled from the A.L.P., reveals himself ever more clearly as an enemy of the whole labor movement, allying himself with its worst opponents, while Fallon has been driven from the Federal Presidency of the A.L.P. and the situation of the Victorian reactionaries becomes ever more precarious. This means that the enemies of unity within the labor movement are being defeated and the basis for the united front and eventual unity of the labor movement is being broadened and strengthened.

The increasing prestige of our Party is marked by the election of our first M.P., Mr. Fred Paterson, and the rapid increase in the Party vote at each succeeding election, and the continued growth of Communist influence within the trade union movement.

A notable event in the growth of the Party and its fight to unify the labor movement was the amalgamation with the State Labor Party of N.S.W. The S.L.P. was an important left wing

group which had been expelled from the A.L.P. for its opposition to the right wing, and its stand for unity and Socialism. For a couple of years the S.L.P. existed as a separate Party and entered into a united front with the C.P. This led to proposals for amalgamation and at a unity conference held on January 16, 1944, the two parties united, taking the name "Australian Communist Party." This marked a great strengthening of the forces of Communism.

The Party, emerging from the illegal period and re-establishing its press, its publications and meetings, conducted a number of Party-building campaigns on the basis of Socialist competition. These campaigns were successful and in contrast to the few hundreds of members in the days of the struggle against the right wing, and when we had to mobilise the workers against the effects of the economic crisis, our Party today stands as a solid force of 20,000. We have the numbers and organisation to do great things for the Australian masses.

With the defeat of the world forces of reaction, the fascist Axis, with victory in the People's War, one of the most decisive events in human history, one of the milestones on the road to the New World, the Party will operate in new and vastly more favorable conditions. Immense democratic gains will have been made throughout Europe and Asia, with our brother Communist parties playing a leading role.

The Anglo-Soviet Alliance and the Teheran decisions lay the basis for an enduring world peace. The Communists will be foremost in their efforts to implement the Teheran decisions and preserve the world from new wars. The conditions for the defeat of potential war-mongers are much more favorable than after the first world war. The Communists support fully the establishment of international organisation for the prevention of war as agreed upon by the United Nations.

The Teheran decisions lay the basis for an international co-operation of an economic character for the purpose of preventing post-war depression and succoring war-devastated countries.

Within this international economic structure, our Party fights to prevent economic depression within Australia. The prevention of the return of pre-war conditions of unemployment and poverty is one of the vital immediate post-war tasks of the Communist Party and the Australian labor movement.

The A.C.P. has already prepared its economic and social Program for a prosperous life for the Australian masses, which has been widely distributed.

The Communist Party demands the utmost democracy and the repudiation of all laws or restrictions upon the freedom to express themselves of the Australian people, up to and including

the right to decide, peacefully and democratically, to change the existing social order and embrace Socialism when a majority so wishes.

It is on the basis of this broad Program, international peace, economic security and prosperity, unity of the labor movement and eventual replacement of the existing capitalist order by Socialism, that the Communist Party will operate in the post-war years.

We have grown strong in the hard fights of the past, we will grow stronger and achieve our great objectives of emancipation in the new world erected on the ruins of the enemy of mankind—fascism.

Twenty Years of the Communist International

by

O. KUUSINEN

THE First International laid the foundation for the international, proletarian struggle for Socialism.

"The Second International was the epoch of preparing the ground for a further spread of the movement among the masses in a number of countries.

"The Third International has gathered in the fruit of the labors of the Second International, has shed its opportunistic, social-chauvinistic, bourgeois and petit bourgeois rubbish, and has begun the realisation of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat."—Lenin.

I.

The founding of the Communist International took place twenty years ago in the glow of that revolutionary upsurge which began in Europe with the Russian February Revolution of 1917, whose climax was the great Socialist October Revolution. In 1918 in a number of European countries it reached the point of revolutionary explosions—in Germany, Austria, and Finland—and in 1919, immediately after the Congress of the founding of the Communist International—in Hungary, Bavaria, and Baltic countries and others. The Communist International was born in the fire of the Revolution.

The Communist International was founded on the initiative and under the leadership of Lenin and the Bolsheviks. From the first, the glorious Party of Lenin-Stalin, the pride of the international proletariat, was, is, and will be the leading party of the Communist International.

Why did this sublime task fall just to the Bolsheviks?

Because only the Bolsheviks maintained the position of unfalsified Marxism, waged a consistent and implacable war against opportunism, broke without any hesitation with the opportunists, and created a **workers' party of a new type**.

During the Imperialist War, "the Bolshevik Party proved itself to be the only proletarian party which remained true to the cause of Socialism and Internationalism."

The destruction of Czarism, that most powerful bulwark of European and Asiatic reaction, made the Russian proletariat, led by the Bolshevik Party, the advance guard of the international revolutionary proletariat.

The great Socialist October Revolution transformed the Russia of the capitalists and landlords into the great country of the Soviets, created a state which would be the basis of the struggles of the international proletariat, and gave a powerful impulse to the building of Communist Parties, in the centres of capitalism as well as in the colonies.

For these reasons the Bolshevik Party, under the leadership of **Lenin** and **Stalin**, became the initiator and founder of the Communist International.

At the **First Congress** of the Communist International, the foundation congress, the most important questions which were discussed were the problems of the bourgeois democracy and the dictatorship of the proletariat. On the basis of Lenin's theses and speeches, the Congress called upon the Communists to explain to the broad masses in all countries the necessity for the establishment of Soviet Power. This had an enormous propagandist importance, because the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat and Soviet power was the foundation of the **principles** of Marxism-Leninism. At the same time, this question was one of the greatest actual political importance in the situation at that time.

After the First Congress there was the danger that in the various countries, the ranks of the Communist Parties and the Communist International would be overrun by Social Democratic opportunists. These were the "Centrists" who, under pressure of the revolutionary working masses, gave lip service to the slogan of the dictatorship of the proletariat, but in deed, persisted in reformist positions. They hoped that by leaving the discredited Second International and joining the Third International they would retain the confidence and support of the workers, in order to continue their old opportunist policy.

Therefore in the first half of 1920 a large number of centrist parties declared that they wished to join the Communist International; among them were the Independent Social Democratic Party of Germany, the Socialist Parties of France and Italy, the Independent Labour Party of England and others. The Communist International, however, was on guard; Lenin and the Bolsheviks knew the Centrists too well. It was necessary to block the way to the Communist movement to these Centrist leaders, and at the same time help the honest members of these parties to recognise the manoeuvres of these leaders.

Lenin proceeded to act thus: This question was put to the **Second Congress** of the Communist International which met in

July 1920, and the 21 conditions for admission to the Communist International, which had been worked out by Lenin, were accepted. The Second Congress directed their guns first of all against the Centrists; but not only against them. The Congress also corrected the "Left" mistakes of the Communists who did not want to work in the reformist trade unions, who preached the boycott of parliamentary elections, etc.

Lenin helped in an effective manner to overcome this tendency. Already before the Second Congress, Lenin had completed his work: "**Left Wing Communism, an Infantile Disorder.**" This gifted work was a most important textbook of Bolshevik strategy and tactics for the Communists of the whole world.

The decisions of the Second Congress, and its main slogan—"Down with the Centrists"—called forth a furious battle in the ranks of the Centrist parties. Those who advocated the acceptance of the 21 conditions of the Communist International at the conference of the Independent Social Democratic Party of Germany in Halle achieved a majority and joined with the Communist Party. In France, at the conference of the Socialist Party in Tours, the majority of this Party declared itself for the Communist International and founded the French Communist Party. A number of Socialist organisations of other countries also affiliated themselves to the Communist International.

At the **Third Congress** the Communist International made an important forward step in the development of its Leninist policy. The main slogan of the Congress was: "Forward to the Masses!" In developing the tactical resolutions of the Third Congress, the Executive Committee of the Communist International worked out the theses of the **proletarian United Front**. On overcoming the opposition of the leftists, the Communist International began to put into practice the tactics of the United Front.

The **Fourth Congress** of the Communist International took place in November, 1922. The Congress further developed the tactics of the united front and issued the slogan of a workers' government. Lenin delivered his last report to the Communist International: "Five Years of the Russian Revolution and the perspectives of the world revolution." He emphasised that the most important task of the Communists of all countries is: to learn and again to learn. The foreign comrades, he declared, must "digest a large piece of Russian experience," "in order to understand properly the organisation, construction, method and content of revolutionary work."

The Sections of the Communist International were not yet able to assimilate to a sufficient extent the experiences of the Bolshevik Party when in Autumn of the following year a revolu-

tionary situation arose first in Bulgaria and then in Germany. Genuine revolutionaries were at the head of the Bulgarian Communist Party, Comrade Dimitrov and others, who boldly carried out the insurrection, which, however, suffered a defeat. But in Germany at that time the Communist Party was headed by opportunists and they compelled the Party to retreat without a struggle. Only the Hamburg organisation, which was led by Comrade Thaelmann, commenced the revolt; but the isolated Hamburg revolt was soon suppressed. The Communist International drew serious lessons from the German events.

Thus the first period of the revolutionary crisis of capitalism, the period of the proletarian revolts of 1917 to 1923, ended in a number of European countries with the defeat of the working class, with the victory and the consolidation of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the U.S.S.R.

II

In Europe the revolutionary wave began to ebb; the period of temporary stabilisation of capitalism commenced. At the same time the economic and political power of the U.S.S.R. increased.

According to the advice of Comrade Stalin the Communist Parties of the capitalist countries set themselves the task to strengthen their ranks and to Bolshevise their policy during the period of calm. In this period the Communist International devoted great attention to China, where the first stormy wave of the Chinese revolution rose (1925-1927) which awoke hundreds of millions of exploited and oppressed from their century-old lethargy.

The Communist International carried out the Bolshevisation of the Communist Parties in a constant struggle against the Right opportunists who attempted to drag the Communist movement on the path of reformism and against the ultra-left disorganising elements who strove to do away with the tactic of the united front. There were expelled from the Communist movement a number of Rightwing and "Left" leaders of factions who attempted to disintegrate the Communist movements of Germany, France, Italy, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Sweden, Norway and other countries. These enemies of Communism already at that time allied themselves with Trotsky, the traitor and agent of the capitalist intelligence services.

The Communist International waged an irreconcilable and Bolshevik struggle against Trotskyism. Under the leadership of Comrade Stalin the main blows were delivered to the Trotskyist Zinovievist anti-Soviet bloc at the VII-VIII Plenary Sessions of the Executive Committee of the Communist International (1926-1927). Trotsky, Zinoviev and their accomplices were expelled from the Communist International.

Contrary to the predictions of the social democratic false prophets and Bukharin who followed them, capitalist stabilisation became more and more shaky. In 1929 an economic crisis broke out which was the most severe in the history of capitalism. The savage offensive of the capitalists upon the standard of living of the workers led to a great sharpening of class antagonisms. The real danger of a new world war weighed heavily upon the world.

This international situation created new tasks and the Communist International adopted a new policy. It was necessary to organise the proletarian mass actions of the unemployed, the strike struggles of the works and factories against the offensive of the capitalists. The reactionary leaders of the reformist trade unions offered stubborn resistance to the waging of the proletarian struggle. This fact led to a sharpening of conditions in the trade unions and in a number of countries independent revolutionary trade unions were set up.

As a result of the strengthening of bourgeois reaction the social democratic parties adopted the policy of the "lesser evil" and thereby paved the way to fascism. In face of the growing danger of a fresh attack by the imperialists upon the Soviet Union, the leaders of the social democratic parties increased their incitement against the U.S.S.R. This was the reason for the sharpening of the struggle of the Communist Parties against the social democrats, in particular against those of their leaders who by means of pseudo-revolutionary phrases kept back the workers who were moving to the Left from joining the camp of the Communists.

In those years the greatest danger for the Communist Parties consisted in the opportunist capitulation to the enemy and the difficulties confronting the parties. Hence the Communist International concentrated its main attack against the Right danger, the bearer of which was the traitor Bukharin and the group of so-called "reconciliators" who in reality were masked Right-wing. Bukharin and his followers soon joined the Trotskyist band of spies and diversionists, the agents of fascism. In those years the ideological and political uniformity of the Communist Parties was consolidated, their members were trained in the spirit of Bolshevik irreconcilable enmity to opportunism, their militancy and readiness to self-sacrifice was steered. The unprincipled fraction-mongering which for a long time had prevented the growth of many Communist Parties, was exterminated; discipline in their ranks became stronger. At the same time the Communist Parties revealed strong sectarian tendencies which prevented a close approach to the masses.

The world economic crisis brought about the end of capitalist stabilisation and a sharpening of the class antagonisms. Discontent of the broad masses of toilers, in particular in Germany,

was growing. The German bourgeoisie was no longer able to maintain its power with the old methods of parliamentary democracy. The fascists utilised the split in the working class and the treason of Social Democracy, whose representatives held positions in various governmental organs. In 1933 the fascists came into power in Germany.

The international working class had to learn from these events, and actually did learn.

III.

The position of the Communist International, that the fascist offensive of the bourgeoisie not only hampered revolutionary development, but at the same time accelerated it, was soon confirmed by events. The furious attacks of the fascist barbarians have for the time being driven the indignation of the German masses into the greatest illegality, but at the same time called forth in other countries the most determined opposition of the working masses to fascism. The incendiary burning of the Reichstag and the resulting trial in Leipzig had already in 1933 led to a wide international movement for the freedom of Dimitrov, who came forward as a courageous accuser of the fascist regime. In France a powerful anti-fascist movement developed in 1934 with the February demonstration and the General Strike of the proletariat. In the same year, the workers of Austria and Spain opposed fascism in an armed struggle.

The last and most important factor in this movement was the drive of the working masses toward **unity of action**. The working masses perceived the vital necessity of a proletarian united front. Moreover, the growing danger of fascism and war, as well as the serious results of the economic crisis, induced the masses of the peasantry, the urban petit bourgeoisie and the working intellectuals to join with the working class in a common struggle against fascism; that is, for the creation of a broad, anti-fascist people's front. At the same time in colonial countries there emerged conditions for the growth of the broadest anti-imperialist national front.

These new tasks were put before the **Seventh Congress** by Comrade Dimitrov on the basis of the analysis which Stalin had given at the Seventeenth Party Congress of the C.P.S.U. (B). The Seventh Congress met in July, 1935, and was one of the most important turning points in the activity of the Communist International. To successfully carry out these tasks it was demanded of the sections of the Communist International that they determinedly overcome all sectarianism, boldly unite with the masses, apply skilfully the principal general conceptions of Bolshevism to the conditions of every individual country, and at the same time be implacable against opportunism.

The policy of the Seventh Congress of the Communist International had important results in a great number of countries. In France and Spain the Communist Parties achieved the establishment of a united front with the Socialist Party and the creation of an anti-fascist People's Front. The French Communists achieved the unification of the trade unions. This gave the united trade unions such enormous powers of attraction that they grew in membership from 900,000 to 4 million. In proportion as the French working class united its forces and developed the policy of the People's Front, it achieved an important improvement of its general situation.

In other capitalist countries the movement for the proletarian united front and the anti-fascist People's Front has not gone so far. But there is no country of any importance where this movement has not appeared. But nowhere is there still standing that impenetrable wall which the reactionary leaders of Social Democracy were formerly able to erect between the Social-Democratic and the Communist workers.

The reactionary leaders have not given up their resistance to the unity of the proletariat. On the contrary, one can say that this is their main function in the Labor Movement. This can be observed especially clearly in a country like England. The policy of splitting the working class is also carried on by the leading organs of the Socialist International and the International Federation of Trade Unions. The unceasing efforts of the Executive Committee of the Communist International to bring about their participation and even the modest beginning to realise international unity of action, for example for the defence of the Spanish people against fascist intervention, have up to now led to no practical results.

This stubborn resistance to the unity of action of the Labor Movement on the part of a handful of opportunist leaders can, however, not change the attitude of the Communist International. The Communists well realise that unity does not fall from the skies, that it must be fought for. And the better the Communists fight for unity, just so much more quickly will the working classes learn that unity is a vital necessity for the working class, that sabotage of unity can no longer be tolerated—and then they will achieve unity.

Comrade Dimitrov has repeatedly pointed to the necessity of seeking the concrete way to the People's Front in every country. All schematicism can only hinder the forward movement. And our Party is gradually learning that most difficult art of class strategy. The Communist Party of the U.S.A., for example, boldly participate in the broad movement of the democratic and progressive forces in their country, while at the same time furthering in the ranks of this movement the crystallisation of the

elements of a future People's Front. In this way the Communist Party has already become a not unimportant factor in the political life of the U.S.A.

During the last few years the heroic Communist Party of Spain has given the most brilliant example of the determined and correct application of the policy of the proletarian united front and the anti-fascist people's front. Since the commencement of the fascist revolt and Italian-German intervention the Communist Party has been active on the battlefields and in the rear as the most important organising and cohesive fighting agency of the defence of the people. Thereby it created the conditions for its own extraordinary rapid political and organisational growth.

In China, immediately at the beginning of the war, there arose the necessity of creating the anti-Japanese national front. The Communist Party of China was able by means of greatest political elasticity to carry out a correct tactical turn and to achieve an agreement with the Koumintang. The Chinese Communists are indefatigably working to strengthen the fighting capacity of their great nation.

The second imperialist war has in fact already begun. The fascist brigands select the victims of their aggression from the number of the least protected nations. They believed that they would succeed in easily breaking the resistance of the heroic Spanish and Chinese peoples. But it turned out differently. The fascist robbers miscalculated because they have not taken into account the new political factor, the People's Front and the national front.

The front of the Spanish people against fascism is not confined to Spain alone; it is extending to other capitalist countries, right to fascist Germany and Italy and there merges with the struggle of the masses for their own emancipation from fascist yoke.

The front of the Chinese people is not only confined to China but extends to other countries, in particular to Japan, where it merges with the struggle for emancipation of the toilers and all progressive elements against the fascist military clique and the semi-feudal oligarchy.

Every courageous resistance to the fascist aggressors in any given capitalist country, in any given corner of the world, is today assuming international importance, as it inspires and strengthens the anti-fascist forces in the other countries. Herein lies the tremendous importance of the heroic struggle of the Spanish and Chinese nations. Their struggle is the cause of the whole of progressive mankind.

This Stalinist idea is guiding the Communist International in its international struggle against reaction and fascism.

Fascism is setting its hope on war, for peace would kill it. But war also prepares its doom.

The chiefs of fascism plan the war against the great land of Socialism. The fascist armies, whose rank and file only wait for the opportunity of ridding themselves of their commanders, will never succeed in resisting the powerful Red Army of the country of victorious Socialism. Should, however, the fascists launch the war against the Soviet Union, then the international proletariat will prove by their deeds that by endeavoring to perpetuate the regime of slavery the fascists will only hasten the doom of capitalism.

The first imperialist war greatly accelerated the doom of capitalism in Russia. In the other countries in which no Communist Parties existed, the bourgeoisie was able to save its rule for a while. Today the international proletariat possesses Communist Parties in all the capitalist countries. In these days the glorious Communist International is celebrating its twentieth anniversary. Today there exists the Soviet Union, the great basis of the international proletarian movement.

We have nothing to fear in the approaching great decisive battles. Everything depends upon how we, the Communists of all countries, will fight. The Communist International always taught its Parties not to capitulate in difficult situations but to fight courageously like true Bolsheviks. Thus Lenin, the immortal leader of the international proletariat, trained the cadres of the Communist world movement. Thus Stalin, the leader of the toilers of the whole world, is training them today.

On the Dissolution of the Communist International

The statement set out hereunder was submitted to all Communist Parties by the Executive Committee of the Communist International on May 15, 1943. Upon receiving endorsement by these Parties, including the Australian Communist Party, the Communist International was dissolved forthwith.

The historical role of the Communist International, organized in 1919 as a result of the political collapse of the overwhelming majority of the old pre-war workers' parties, consisted in that it preserved the teachings of Marxism from vulgarisation and distortion by opportunist elements of the labor movement. . . In a number of countries it helped to unite the vanguard of the advanced workers into genuine workers' parties, helped them to mobilise the mass of the toilers in defence of their economic and political interests for the struggle against fascism and the war which it had been preparing, for support of the Soviet Union as the main bulwark against fascism. The Communist International revealed in good time the true significance of the "anti-Comintern Pact" as a weapon in the war preparations of the Hitlerites. Long before the war the Communist International tirelessly exposed the base undermining activity of the Hitlerites in foreign states, who masked these activities with outcries about the alleged interference of the Communist International in the internal affairs of these states.

But long before the war it became increasingly clear that, to the extent that the internal as well as the international situation of individual countries became more complicated, the solution of the problems of the labor movement of each individual country through the medium of some international centre would meet with insuperable obstacles.

The deep difference in the historical roads of development of each country of the world, the diverse character and even the contradiction in their social orders, the difference in the level and rate of their social and political development and finally the difference in the degree of consciousness and organization of the workers' conditioned also the various problems which face the working class of each individual country.

The entire course of events for the past quarter of a century, as well as the accumulated experiences of the Communist Inter-

national, have convincingly proved that the organisational form for uniting the workers as chosen by the First Congress of the Communist International, which corresponded to the needs of the initial period of rebirth of the labor movement, more and more outlived itself in proportion to the growth of this movement and the increasing complexity of problems in each country, and that this form even became a hindrance to the further strengthening of the national workers' parties.

The world war unleashed by the Hitlerites still further sharpened the differences in the conditions in the various countries, drawing a deep line of demarcation between the countries which became bearers of the Hitlerite tyranny and the freedom-loving peoples united in the mighty anti-Hitler coalition. Whereas in the countries of the Hitlerite bloc the basic task of the workers, toilers and all honest people is to contribute in every conceivable way towards the defeat of this bloc by undermining the Hitlerite war machine from within, by helping to overthrow the Governments responsible for the war, in the countries of the anti-Hitler coalition the sacred duty of the broadest masses of the people, and first and foremost of progressive workers, is to support in every way the war efforts of the Governments of those countries for the sake of the speediest destruction of the Hitlerite bloc and to secure friendly collaboration between the nations on the basis of their equal rights. At the same time it must not be overlooked that individual countries which adhere to the anti-Hitler coalition also have their specific tasks.

Thus, for instance, in countries occupied by the Hitlerites and which have lost their State independence, the basic task of the progressive workers and broad masses of the people is to develop the armed struggle which is growing into a war of national liberation against Hitlerite Germany.

At the same time the war of liberation of freedom-loving peoples against the Hitlerite coalition, irrespective of party or religion, has made it still more evident that the national upsurge and mobilisation for the speediest victory over the enemy can best and most fruitfully be realised by the vanguard of the labor movement of each country within the framework of its state.

The Seventh Congress of the Communist International held in 1935, taking into consideration the changes which had come to pass in the international situation as well as in the labor movement, changes which demanded greater flexibility and independence for its sections in solving the problems facing them, already then emphasised the need for the E.C.C.I., when deciding upon all problems of the labor movement, "to proceed from the concrete situation and specific conditions obtaining in each particular country and as a rule to avoid direct intervention in internal organisational matters of the Communist Parties."

The E.C.C.I. was guided by these same considerations when it took note of and approved the decision of the Communist Party of the U.S.A. in November, 1940, to leave the ranks of the Communist International.

Communists guided by the teachings of the founders of Marxism-Leninism never advocated the preservation of organisational forms which have become obsolete; they always subordinated the organisational forms of the labor movement and its methods of work to the basic political interests of the labor movement as a whole, to the peculiarities of given historical conditions and to those problems which arise directly from these conditions.

They remember the example of the great Marx who united the progressive workers into the ranks of the International Workingmen's Association and after the First International fulfilled its historical task, having laid the basis for the development of workers' parties in the countries of Europe and America, Marx, as a result of the growing need to create national workers' mass parties, brought about the dissolution of the First International inasmuch as this form of organisation no longer corresponded to this need.

Proceeding from the above-stated considerations, and taking into account the growth and political maturity of the Communist Parties and their leading cadres in individual countries, and also in view of the fact that during the present war a number of sections have raised the question of dissolution of the Communist International as a guiding centre of the international labor movement, the Presidium of the E.C.C.I., unable owing to the conditions of the world war to convene the Congress of the Communist International, permits itself to submit for approval by sections of the Communist International the following proposal:

To dissolve the Communist International as a guiding centre of the international labor movement, releasing sections of the Communist International from the obligations ensuing from the constitution and decisions of the Congresses of the Communist International.

The Presidium of the E.C.C.I. calls upon all adherents of the Communist International to concentrate their forces on all-round support for, and active participation in, the Liberation War of the peoples and States of the anti-Hitler coalition in order to hasten the destruction of the mortal enemy of the working people—fascism and its allies and vassals.

Signed by members of the Presidium of the E.C.C.I.: Gottwald, Dimitrov, Zhdanov, Kolarov, Koplonig, Kuusinen, Manuilsky, Marty, Pieck, Thorez, Florin, Ercoli, and immediately endorsed by the representatives of the following Communist Parties, who were living in exile in Moscow: Bianco (Italy), Dolores Ibaruri (Spain), Lehtinen (Finland), Pauker (Rumania), Rakosi (Hungary).

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