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FROM THE CONTENTS

- Report on Activities of the E.C.C.I.* *Wilhelm Puck*
The Party and the Rural Proletariat *T. E.*
The Situation on the Unemployed Front *J. F. Scallan*
N.S.W. State Conference of A.R.U. *S. Parby*
The Seaman's Strike *R. Cross*
First Communist Conference in Australia *J. B. Miles*
Australia's Anti-Militarist Tradition *J. N. Rowling*
On the Question of Illegal Work

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*A Magazine of the Theory and Practice of
Marxism-Leninism.*

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CONTENTS:

	<i>Page</i>
<i>Report on Activities of the E.C.C.I. (Wilhelm Pieck)</i>	1
<i>The Party and the Rural Proletariat (T. E.)</i>	14
<i>The Situation on the Unemployed Front (J. F. Scullin)</i>	17
<i>The N.S.W. State Conference of the A.R.U. (S. Purdy)</i>	22
<i>The Seamen's Strike (R. Cram)</i>	28
<i>Anniversary of First Communist Conference (J. B. Miles)</i>	41
<i>Australia's Anti-Militarist Tradition, Part II (J. N. Rawling)</i>	46
<i>On the Question of Illegal Work</i>	56
<i>Book Review—</i>	
<i>A Handbook of Bolshevism</i>	71

The Communist Review

Vol. 2, No. 10

SYDNEY, N.S.W.

October, 1935

SEVENTH WORLD CONGRESS

Report of Comrade Wilhelm Pieck on the Activities of the Executive Committee Of the Communist International

The decisively important question of the Sixth World Congress was the question of the direction of international developments. Social-Democracy believed in the beginning of the epoch of organised capitalism and everlasting prosperity. The Right opportunists, too, within the Comintern, believed in the further consolidation of capitalist stabilisation. On the initiative of Comrade Stalin, the Sixth Congress laid down that the period of increasing acuteness of all capitalist antagonisms was commencing, of new revolutionary upsurge, of the shaking of capitalist stabilisation. This was confirmed by developments, and the Soviet power became a great power, a Socialist great power. The capitalist world is decaying steadily. The revolutionary movement in the capitalist world has grown steadily, the Communist Parties have grown, the historical turning of the masses from reformism to Communism has commenced.

* * * *

[Pieck then gave a survey of events since the Sixth Congress—the economic strike waves, the anti-imperialist and national revolutionary movements in China and India.]

* * * *

Soon after the Sixth World Congress, an unexampled wave of economic strikes commenced. The anti-imperialist and national revolutionary movement was strengthened in China and India. Capitalist production increased greatly, but exploitation was intensified enormously by rationalisation, and a great number of workers were rendered jobless. Social-Democracy became more and more a part of the bourgeois State and economic apparatus, and sabotaged in every respect the economic struggles of the proletariat. From this arose the tactics of the Communists, who opposed the bloc of Social-Democracy and

bourgeoisie by the policy of "class against class." These tactics far from being opposed to the united front, needed it as a prerequisite, and consolidated the Communist Parties, enabling them to come forward as an independent force in the class struggles.

In carrying out these tactics, a number of sectarian errors were committed. It was correct to draw a sharp line of demarcation between the Communist and Social-Democratic Parties. But it was wrong when the Communists in some places commenced to draw this line between themselves and the Social-Democratic workers, for instance, by the slogan of the "little Zörgiebel's." Had it not been for the violation of trade union discipline and the independent Communist strike leadership, the bourgeoisie would have been able to carry out their wage-cutting plans even at the time of the boom. Neither the Lodz strike nor the Ruhr struggle would have taken place. Many workers would have withdrawn disappointed from the class struggle. The Communists, as in 1914, once more saved the honor of the Socialist labor movement. But they did not succeed in securing their influence in the reformist trade unions and among the unorganised workers. The struggle of the Red International of Labor Unions against the autocratic claims of the reformist bureaucracy to the sole right of organising the economic conflicts was right. But the Strasbourg Conference of 1929 committed an exaggeration when it passed its resolution on the independent strike committee "in spite of and against the reformist trade unions." The instructions were wrong which laid down that the fighting committees should refuse to include any persons connected with Social-Democracy. The fight was right against the Brandler slogan of "force the officials," and against surrender when the bureaucrats oppose the strike in spite of the pressure of the members. It was, however, an error to assume that the rank and file could not and should not exercise any pressure whatever on the bureaucrats. It was right that the revolutionary minority should lead independent strikes, but they neglected the duty of playing their revolutionary part in the strikes conducted by the reformists under the pressure of the masses. The consolidation of the revolutionary trade union opposition was a correct and effectual measure against the policy of expulsion and splitting exercised by the bureaucrats. It was, however, a sectarian error when the R.T.U.O. was converted into new trade unions. This sectarianism had particularly disastrous consequences in England, where the trade unions have the oldest traditions. But,

in spite of all drawbacks, it is a fact that during this period, before the crisis, the Communists were the chief leaders of the strike struggles in a number of countries.

In the autumn of 1929 the world economic crisis set in, bringing great misery to the workers, the working peasantry, and the lower middle classes of the towns. The situation of the colonial peoples was made more desperate than ever. A mad armament race set in. Japan seized Manchuria as place d'armes for war against the Soviet Union. War broke out between Bolivia and Paraguay. In Germany, the most reactionary elements of financial capital established the Fascist dictatorship. At the same time, great class struggles loomed on the horizon. In Spain a mighty mass movement overthrew the Fascist dictatorship. In China a fresh wave of anti-imperialist and agrarian revolutionary movement brought about the formation of Soviets and the organisation of a Red Army. In Indochina there were peasant risings. In the great imperialist countries, too, the imperialist system commenced to totter.

The Twelfth Plenum of the Executive Committee in 1932 placed on record that the temporary stabilisation of capitalism is at an end, and that a transition is being made to a fresh series of wars and revolutions. The Soviet Union has shown the masses the sole means of escape from want and misery, the sole salvation from Fascism and war. It has been the task of the Communists to organise the struggle for even the smallest demands of the masses, to lead the masses in the struggle for their partial demands, against Fascism, to the struggle for the overthrow of capitalism, for the proletarian dictatorship. The first tactical task was to prevent the burdens of the crisis being thrust increasingly upon the masses.

The strategic centre of the struggle was in Germany. The Communists were successful in leading numerous actions of the workers and peasants, and in greatly increasing the unemployed movement in a number of countries against the will of the Social-Democrats. Thanks to these efforts the lot of many unemployed was alleviated. That this struggle for the unemployed was not carried further was due to the criminal sabotage of the Social-Democrats, and to the fact that the Communists, in spite of determined leadership, did not fully utilise all the possibilities and methods of struggle. The workers resorted with increasing frequency to economic strikes the more the illusion of a speedy end to the crisis, as spread by the Social-Democratic leaders, was dispelled. The strike movement, however, only set in when

the unemployed movement had begun to slacken. Hence, it was not possible to merge both movements in one mighty action against the whole working class. As the Communists had prophesied—the policy of Social-Democracy led to the paralysing of the fighting powers of the proletariat, and thus to an enormous intensification of want and poverty.

A number of great political struggles took place. Great demonstrations in the U.S.A., Germany, and Hungary, farmers' strikes and veterans' march in the U.S.A., the Spanish revolution, the seamen's strike in Invergoron, the mutiny in the navy in Chile, the peasants' rising in West Ukraine, the mutiny of the "Seven Provinces," etc. But these struggles did not develop into political mass struggles against the bourgeois State. There was a lack of organisation and co-ordination of forces, the Communist Parties were not strong enough to break down the sabotage of Social-Democracy, and the reformist trade unions against the struggle, and against the united front. There was a lack of united fighting organs elected by the masses on a broad basis. As the situation changed rapidly, the Communists performed wonders of political and organisational work. But they underestimated—as Stalin pointed out in 1925—the fact that the rank and file workers see in the trade unions their strongholds, whether they be good or bad. In the U.S.A. the Communists long regarded the American Federation of Labor as a blackleg organisation; they saw only its leader, Green, and overlooked the worker members. . . . In Germany it was not until the Hitler movement had swelled to a great size that the Communist Party issued the definite slogan for the defence of the workers' organisations and their funds, and later the slogan of the re-establishment of the free trade unions. A grave error was the underestimation of the Fascist danger, as also, on the other hand, the finding of Fascism where it did not exist. Wrong conceptions of the nature of Fascism prevented the timely issue of slogans in defence of the last remnants of bourgeois democracy against advancing Fascism, and the utilisation of the antagonisms within the bourgeoisie.

The backwardness of the work for winning over the allies of the proletariat among the masses of the peasantry and the lower middle class was seriously felt. The Communists were able to overcome the guild-like and haughty attitude of the old Social-Democratic parties towards the peasantry, but they failed to issue timely slogans against the price policy of the monopolist capitalists, which was ruining the peasantry, or against "interest

slavery." In many countries the Communist parties did not give sufficient support to the lower middle classes in their resistance against the trusts and banks which were sucking their blood—the Danat Bank, in Germany, for instance. The weakness of the working class, caused by its split, and by the treachery of Social-Democracy, gave the German bourgeoisie the possibility of drawing these strata for the time being over into the Fascist camp. The German Communists did not realise in time the significance of the yoke imposed by Versailles, and enabled the bourgeoisie to utilise for its own ends the hatred felt by the masses for the Versailles Treaty.

It is a very important question whether the toiling masses of Germany would have been able to prevent the Fascist catastrophe. Yes, indeed. But to do this the working class would have had to establish the revolutionary united front, and to break up the counter-revolutionary united front of Social-Democracy with the Bourgeoisie. It would have had to go over to the counter attack against the capitalist offensive. It would have had to refuse to permit the shattering of the Red Front Fighters' League; it should have so altered the policy of the Reichsbanner, and united the two organisations, that a powerful united revolutionary organisation would have been created. It would have had to force the Weimar government to disarm the Fascist bands and to tear up the Versailles Treaty. But the majority of the working class did not do this, but followed Social-Democracy blindly, and gave no heed to the warnings of the Communists. The Communists alone were not in a position to avert the catastrophe. The Communists strengthened to the utmost the struggle for the united front. They endeavored at any price to bring about an agreement with the Socialist Party and the General Trade Union Federation, with the aim of warding off Fascism, and defending the last remnants of democracy. But the Social Party and the Trades Union Federation obstinately rejected every proposal, even on July 26, 1932, even on January 20, 1933, when the Communists proposed the calling of the general strike. May the workers of Germany and the world proletariat judge who was to blame for the defeat. Many "left" revolutionists maintain that in spite of this the Communists should have taken up the struggle, in spite of the fact that this would have meant the complete shattering of the revolutionary cadres of the German proletariat. The Communists did not want, and still do not want, the revolutionary cadres to die out.

of pure heroic courage. They want them to organise fresh struggles and fresh victories.

The defeat of the German proletariat increased the arrogance of international reaction. But, in spite of the temporary slowing down of the growth of the revolutionary movement, the proletariat carried off considerable victories in a number of countries. The Chinese workers and peasants established their Soviet Republic. In Spain there was a mighty upsurge of the strike struggles and peasant movements. And it is of decisive importance that, precisely during the years in which the toiling masses of the capitalists were plunged into ever-increasing want and misery, and Fascism shattered the organisations of the German workers, the first Five-Year Plan was completed, and Socialism won the final victory in the Soviet Union. This world-historical victory has increased the forces of revolution and strengthened the will of the toiling masses of the whole world in the struggle for Soviet power. The bourgeoisie succeeded in creating the prerequisites for a transition from crisis to depression. But it has not succeeded in weakening the front of the world revolution, in shattering the Communist Party of Germany, or in creating the prerequisites for a fresh capitalist upsurge. The international relation of forces has not changed in favor of capitalism, but in favor of the proletariat.

The victory of German Fascism has not led, as prophesied by the Social-Democrats, to a lengthy period of reaction. On the contrary, as Stalin stated at the Seventeenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.: "The idea of the onslaught on capitalism spreads in the consciousness of the masses."

A great change took place among the toiling masses of the workers, especially the Social-Democrats. The first expression of this change was the spontaneous and broad united front of the world proletariat in defense of the Leipzig defendants, in which the courageous defense of Communism by Dimitroff played a historical role. The armed struggles in Austria and Spain have revealed the enormous militancy, the heroic courage, and the steadfastness of the working class. The Schutzbund heroes and the miners of Asturias have won undying glory. Shame and disgrace are the lot of those Social-Democratic leaders who fled from the battlefield, and those leaders of the Spanish anarchists who upheld the split front in the midst of the struggle. The uprisings in Austria and Spain were not victorious like the October revolution, for the reason that the Austrian and Spanish Social-

Democrats set aside the experiences gained in the Russian revolution. Their policy before the uprisings was not directed towards strengthening the proletariat, but the bourgeoisie. They did nothing to gain allies for the proletariat. On the contrary, the Spanish Government Socialists left untouched the land owned by the reactionaries and the Church, and gave the peasants no land. They left the apparatus of bourgeois power untouched, and did not fight for the dismantling of the reactionary bands. Austrian Social-Democracy abandoned one achievement after another, and permitted the Fascists to choose the hour of the battle. They made no attempt to form fighting mass organs, but, in Blanquist fashion, they left the armed struggle to the Schutzbund alone. We appreciate the great fact that both in Austria and Spain a number of the Social-Democratic leaders, under the pressure of the masses, resolved on the armed struggle against the bourgeoisie. The Communists aided them self-sacrificingly, but the experience gained in these struggles shows that the proletariat cannot achieve victory under Social-Democratic leadership. The revolutionary elements of the Schutzbund and of the Spanish Socialists drew the right conclusion and went over to the Communist Party, demonstrating thereby that they do not regard the struggle as ended.

When the Fascist danger arose in France, the French proletariat did not fall into the error of believing in the theory of the "lesser evil," but demonstrated in its repulse of the first Fascist attack the mighty power of the proletariat when it is united and does not evade the struggle. The magnificent anti-Fascist demonstration on July 14 of this year was an expression of the mighty influence exercised by the fighting spirit of the working class, gathering into the people's front the other strata of the toiling masses. The struggle of the French proletariat sets an example to the working classes of all capitalist countries. In England and the U.S.A. the correct united front tactics of the Communists have strengthened the proletariat and increased the influence of the Communist Party. In Poland a number of the Social-Democratic organisations have established unity with the Communists under the pressure of the masses, against the will of their leaders. The great wave of political strikes and peasant movements initiated by the Communist Party will contribute to the further revolutionisation of the Social-Democratic masses and to the further development of the united front in the form of an agreement for the struggle against Fascism, for the defence of

the legality of the trade unions and organisations of the Polish Socialist Party. The united front movement is breaking ground in all the capitalist countries in multifarious ways. The anti-labor policy pursued by the government Socialists in Czechoslovakia, and the Scandinavian countries, is arousing in the working class the consciousness that Social-Democratic ministers do not form a protection against Fascism, war, and capitalist offensive. Of special importance are the victories of the united front in the Fascist countries, in Germany, Hungary, Italy, and Poland. The united front does not signify the mere arithmetical sum of the forces of two parties, but is a symptom of the turning of the masses from reformism to the revolutionary policy, and is the first step towards overcoming the split in the labor movement, and creating a united, powerful revolutionary party of the proletariat.

The movement for a united revolutionary party will undoubtedly develop further, for the victory of Socialism in the Soviet Union has destroyed the foundations of reformism.

An event of paramount importance is the Chinese revolution, which adopted the Soviet form in the period under report. The heroic struggle of the Red Army and the successes of the Chinese Soviets in improving the standards of living of the toiling masses have become the model and banner of all oppressed and colonial peoples. The mighty upsurge of the international labor movement during the last few years and the growing will of the masses for the struggle for Socialism show that the revolutionary crisis is maturing all over the world.

The main lesson taught by the victorious October revolution is that we Communists must work indefatigably for the organization of the masses and the strengthening of the Communist Parties, and of their contact with the masses, for the strengthening of the Communist International. If we are not able to cope with this task, then no matter how severe the revolutionary crisis, still there is a possibility of the masses being again deceived by the bourgeoisie, and the establishment of the Fascist dictatorship in a number of further countries.

The period under report has brought a considerable organisational and political consolidation of the Communist Parties, and an increase of their mass influence. In the struggle against the Right opportunists and the "Left" sectarians, the Communist Parties have steered themselves against opportunist influences, and have learned to manoeuvre more efficiently against the

bourgeoisie and against reformism, and to adapt their tactics more to the actual conditions of the struggle in every country. The Communist Parties have attained a higher stage. This is shown in the heroic struggles of the Chinese Red Army, in the work of the C.P.G., the skilful tactics of the Communist Party of France, the October struggles in Spain, etc. The Communist Parties must utilise every possibility offered by the changes of viewpoint in the working masses, enabling them to be won over. It is impossible to fight against the bourgeoisie without fighting Social-Democracy, for the first prerequisite of this fight is to win over the Social-Democratic workers. The present situation demanded that criticism should be exercised more severely than ever against those Social-Democratic parties and leaders who endeavor to restrain the masses from the struggle by blackleg tactics. And our agitation and propaganda must be intensified against the bourgeoisie, especially against its reactionary Fascist parties. The unmasking of the social and national demagogy of the Fascists is one of the main tasks of our agitation and propaganda.

The workers are in favor of a united party, but frequently imagine its realisation too simply. A really united party can only be established after exhaustive conference, on the basis of a joint programme of strategy and tactics. The programme and tactics of Social-Democracy are bankrupt. The programme, strategy, and tactics of the Communist International have stood every test. Therefore we must struggle for the unification of all revolutionary forces on the basis of our programme, our strategy and tactics, and pass forward to the offensive against reformism all along the line. The Sections of the Communist International have grown numerically and politically in all countries. The organisational growth has not kept pace with the growth of influence. It has been handicapped by the extremely sectarian aversion of many sections to the influx of former Social-Democratic workers. This is due to a lack of comprehension of the change which has taken place among the Social-Democratic masses. The Austrian Party consists to-day of two-thirds of comrades who were members of the Social-Democratic Party a year ago, and are now faithful and devoted Communists. Even the delegation to the Congress contains a considerable number of comrades who were prominent functionaries of the Social-Democratic Party up to February, 1934. Precisely, the Austrian Congress delegation is the best proof of the decay of reformism and the victory of our slogans.

Work among the women and youth is especially important for our success. Of decisive importance for winning over the masses is the work in the trade unions and other mass organisations. Here a certain improvement may be recorded of late in England Hungary, Poland and U.S.A. The Communist Parties of Austria and Germany are showing great initiative in active participation in the restoration of the free trade unions, but many Communists still do not regard the Amsterdam trade unions as basic working-class organisations, which we must work to strengthen. It is important to utilise the possibilities of work in the Fascist trade unions of Italy and Austria, and in the Labor Front in Germany. With the greatest pride we can point to the endurance and steadfastness of the German Communists under the brutal terrorism of the Fascists, and to the fact that the Spanish and Austrian Communists not only stood in the foremost ranks at the barricades, but organised the united front after the defeat, and laid the firm foundations for the future victory. The glorious Communist Party of China has been fighting at the outposts during the period under report. It has 300,000 members, a Red army, and a great Soviet district. But it has not yet won over the majority of the toiling masses of Kuomintang China. The organisation of the proletariat in the industrial centres is one of its most urgent tasks.

A tremendous event is represented by the creation of the Communist Party in India. The greatest success attained by any party in the capitalist countries is that of the Communist Party of France. It has tripled its membership, and, thanks to its successful accomplishment of the united front, it has become an important political factor in France. The Communist Party in England has increased its membership, and has accomplished a united front with the Independent Labor Party. But it is still a small organisation. The Communist Party of the U.S.A. has commenced to extend its influence rapidly. It must grow further, strengthen its positions in the trade unions, and work more energetically than ever for the creation of a broad mass party of the workers and peasants as a coalition of all the anti-bourgeois organisations of the toiling masses. The Communist Party of Japan has organised on Bolshevik lines the struggle against the Japanese pirate raid in China. The pre-condition for further success is the determined elimination of all sectarian tendencies, and the resolute utilisation of all legal methods of struggle. The Communist Party of Poland has overcome the lengthy factional struggle, and has trebled its membership. It has increased its political influence and has carried out great mass movements.

It must utilise every legal possibility in defence of the last remnants of democracy, and in order to lead the masses in the struggle for the overthrow of the Fascist dictatorship, for Soviet Poland. The Communist Party of Czechoslovakia has led great mass movements, has consolidated itself politically and organisationally, and has done excellent work. It must develop the united front movement.

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union, under the leadership of Stalin, has achieved world-historical victories, and is fighting for the establishment of a classless Socialist State. It sets us the great example of how we have to fight and win. In many countries the Communist Parties are already powerful political factors, in many countries decisive factors of the Labor movement. This means that now there is no question either in foreign politics or home politics in which the Communists do not take a definite stand. The Communists must utilise every alteration in the policy of the bourgeoisie of their country, every antagonism among the ruling classes, in order to ward off reaction, Fascism, and the war-mongers.

The era of the Second International in the Labor movement is ended. A fresh upsurge and a new flourishing of reformism is no more possible. It is possible that the Social-Democrats may consolidate their position in individual countries, but we are experiencing a crisis of world reformism caused by a rebellion of the masses. The theories of the Second International are bankrupt. The theory of the Communist International has been confirmed by life. The crisis of Social-Democracy confronts the Social-Democratic workers and all honest functionaries with the question: "What will be the further course? We propose to all members of the Social-Democratic parties to pursue the only correct path: to march together with the Communists in a united struggle against Fascism, against war and capitalism, for Socialism. We propose the unification of all revolutionary forces of the proletariat into a united revolutionary party on the tried and tested theoretical basis of the teachings of Marx and Lenin. We Communists, of the whole world, have the task by means of the work of our own Party, to see to it that the bourgeoisie is robbed of any possibility to catch by demagogic means the masses which are disappointed by reformism. We must win the proletariat over to the united front for the revolution, for the struggle for Soviet power.

* * * *

[The Congress is interrupted. After the pause, Comrade

Pollitt opens the evening session. Comrade Henri Barbusse, greeted with stormy ovations, appears in the hall. Comrade Pieck continues his report.]

* * * *

As a result of the development of the general crisis of capitalism, of the increasing revolutionisation of the toiling masses, and of the symptoms shown in several countries of a political crisis, the basic pillars of capitalism are shaken. The Soviet Union promotes more powerfully every day the development of the struggle for emancipation of the world proletariat and the oppressed peoples. This shows that the victory of Socialism in one country leads to the victory of Socialism all over the world. The victory of Socialism gives us the certainty that our influence over the toiling masses of the whole world will grow with enormous rapidity. But the capitalist system will not retreat from the stage of the world's history without a struggle. It is weakened. But it has succeeded in emerging from the extremest depths of the economic crisis. Still, in spite of the armaments, it has not regained the pre-war standard. In the majority of countries there are unmistakable symptoms of the continuation of the depression. The brief increases of production, unequal in different countries and branches of industry, are likely to be accompanied by fresh onslaughts of the economic crisis. Faith in capitalism has vanished among great masses of the people, the authority of the Imperialists is weakened in the colonies. The situation shows the masses graphically the contrast between capitalism and Socialism. Under these conditions, the resentment of the masses against the capitalist regime is bound to grow rapidly, and the struggle of the oppressed against the oppressors must become rapidly more acute.

The whole development of capitalism drives towards the revolutionary crisis. The power of the bourgeoisie totters, for its reformist social basis totters and vanishes. Therefore, the bourgeoisie is driven in more and more countries, obeying necessity rather than its own inclination, into securing its rule by abandoning parliamentary methods for Fascist. But a Fascist dictatorship intensifies the contradictions of capitalism, renders the war danger more acute, and, at the same time, strengthens the anti-Fascist movement in all countries where there is still something left of parliamentary democracy. Our slogan is: Fight against Fascism!

We are convinced that war can be averted by the joint

struggle of the proletariat in the capitalist countries and of the Soviet Union. Should this not be possible, then war will bring tremendous misery to all toilers. It will lead to the open collision of all contradictory tendencies of the Imperialist system, and lead the toilers of all countries, and whole nations, to the utmost intensification of the class struggle. It will be the task of the proletarians of the whole world to fight together with the Red Army for the victory of the revolution, and for the conversion of the Imperialist war into the civil war against the bourgeoisie. The revolutionary crisis is not yet mature, but it is maturing in the whole world. No social order, no matter how corrupt it may be, will fall by itself. It must be overthrown. It is our task to organise the toiling masses who are rising against capitalism into the united revolutionary army of the proletariat, and to lead this army to the storm on capitalism.

Our World Congress must mobilise the forces of all proletarians for liquidating the split of the working class, and set up a broad united front of struggle against the capitalist offensive, Fascism, and war. It must show the proletarian the path to the only revolutionary Party on the firm basis of Marxism-Leninism. It is the call of the hour to consolidate the Communist Parties as the leaders in the struggle for the Soviet power. The world situation is extremely tense. Any day may confront us with the necessity of placing ourselves at the head of the movement of millions for their emancipation. We Communists show the masses the only way, the way of the Soviet power. We are marching into the struggle for freedom, peace, and bread, for Soviet power and for Socialism. Our main slogan is the fight for Soviet power. Our banner is the banner of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin. The leader of the world proletariat is Stalin. Communists! Weld the revolutionary class into a single army of millions! (Protracted applause.)

The Party and the Rural Proletariat

By T. E.

The Resolution on the Agrarian Situation adopted by the Fourth Plenum of the Central Committee, held in April last year, drew attention to the great decline in the conditions of the rural workers, and outlined the tasks confronting the Party in the country districts.

Despite the continued increase in the volume of agricultural production, and of the record wool cheque in 1933-34, the conditions of the rural workers are becoming still worse. Whereas the industrial workers are succeeding to a large extent in beating off further attacks against wages and conditions, the rural workers, except in the sugar industry, are falling easy victims to the rapacity of the capitalist farmers. The strike wave which has been surging throughout industry since the 1934 Plenum, with the exception of the sugar workers in North Queensland as yet finds no echo among the great mass of rural workers.

Why is this? It is certainly not because the rural workers of Australia are lacking in militant spirit, for they have shown in the Queensland shearers' strike of 1931, the cotton pickers' strikes in 1932 and 1933, and the struggles of the fruit-pickers in Mildura, Shepparton, Young, and Orange that the militancy of earlier times still lives.

It is because of the paralysing treachery of the Australian Workers' Union officialdom, which has almost completely disintegrated the forces of the rural workers, that the agrarian capitalists have been able to proceed so much farther in destroying the conditions of the workers than the industrial capitalists have been able to go.

In New South Wales, after long years of treachery on the part of the A.W.U. officials, culminating in the wiping out of the Rural Award, which gave the capitalist farmers an open season against the wages and conditions of rural workers, the A.W.U. has dwindled to about 5000 members. But the rural masses came under the influence of Langism, the militant vanguard of them much more strongly even than the militant vanguard of the industrial workers, with the result that the disintegration brought about by the A.W.U. officialdom has not been repaired. The treachery of Lang towards the rural workers of N.S.W., his failure to reintroduce the Rural Award, the application of the

permissible income regulations, and finally his suspension of child endowment payments, still further disorganised the ranks of the rural workers, although the spirit of militancy still stirs in tens of thousands of workers, unorganised and scattered throughout the country.

This militancy is now expressing itself in the growth of the unemployed and anti-war movements in the country towns, and in the growth of the Communist Party and its influence. But not yet has the Party succeeded in building organisations capable of defending the economic conditions of the rural workers, although since the Fourth Plenum considerable progress has been made in this direction.

Comrade Miles, in his article on "The Question of the Labor Party," in the last issue of the "Review," drew attention to "the great unevenness in our work from union to union and from district to district of our Party even in the same union." This applies very aptly to our work among the rural proletariat, where a most striking contrast exists between the level of work in the sugar industry in North Queensland and the fruit growing and canning industry in N.S.W. and Victoria.

No. 9 District has achieved an outstanding success in winning the leadership of large sections of the sugar workers, in establishing the rank and file committee movement, and in leading a number of strikes to victory in the face of vicious opposition from the A.W.U. officials and Labor Government. In this field, the workers are going over rapidly to supporting a militant trade union policy and leadership.

In other fields, although much work has been done, positive gains fall far short of our achievement in the sugar industry. In the pastoral industry, which is economically and politically more important than the sugar industry, our gains are very slight and tediously slow. Here our difficulties are much greater than elsewhere, because of the scattered distribution of the industry, ranging over thousands of miles of territory; the migratory nature of the occupation; and to the fact that the pastoral workers disperse among the villages, towns, and cities when the shearing season ends. Whereas in the sugar industry the Party has contact with some 9000 workers distributed around twenty odd mills along the coast, in the pastoral industry in N.S.W. and Queensland approximately 70,000 workers are distributed among thousands of sheds, very few of which work more than two or three weeks in a season. Under such condi-

tions, the P.W.I.U. is confronted with an exceedingly difficult task in working to reorganise the pastoral workers on a militant trade union basis.

Nevertheless, in spite of all difficulties, the P.W.I.U. is slowly forging ahead in N.S.W., whilst in Queensland a good beginning has been made with the formation of bush workers' committees in a number of the main pastoral towns. The establishment of a union paper, "The United Bushworker," is a worthy achievement. The paper, though severely handicapped by the post-ban, is proving a valuable weapon not only in propagating the principles of militant unionism among the pastoral and other rural workers, but as an active organising medium as well.

In N.S.W., the P.W.I.U. is a firmly established union, unhampered by legal preference restrictions, although many squatters and shearing contractors enforce preference to the A.W.U. It is able to go straight ahead recruiting members and organising branches in the principal pastoral districts, such as Bourke, Coonamble, and Moree. The rapidity of growth will depend on the ability of the union to develop the struggles of the workers in defence of wages and conditions; on the number and quality of organisers and job activists; on the quality and circulation of its paper; on the extension and consolidation of its branches and local centres in the country towns; and on the furtherance of the campaign for the united front.

In N.S.W., an examination of statistics supplied by the P.W.I.U. leads to the conclusion that the principal task is to win the overwhelming majority of the pastoral workers back to unionism. Over 30,000 of the pastoral workers do not belong to either the P.W.I.U. or the A.W.U. During the season, the old tradition of job organisation is still upheld, and every shed appoints a job rep., but this is the end of their organisation, as far as the industry is concerned. The P.W.I.U. must devote its main attention to the task of developing this job organisation into higher forms by first connecting itself with the largest possible number of sheds and carrying on consistent propaganda and agitation and then organising local conferences of pastoral workers to discuss the problems of the industry and plans for better organisation.

In Queensland, where the A.W.U. holds legal preference, the main fight is for trade union democracy. Here the Party fractions in the bush workers' committees must carry on an educational campaign amongst the militant pastoral workers to teach

them how to develop the rank and file committee movement and to carry its influence among the masses of pastoral workers. In this work, the experience of the sugar workers will be very valuable.

At Charleville, a strong rank and file movement has already begun to develop. At Winton, Barcaldine, and Dirranbandi, also, there are strong manifestations of rank and file activity which can be organised into a strong militant vanguard capable of breaking the power of the A.W.U. bureaucracy in the pastoral industry.

The triumph of militant unionism in the pastoral and sugar industries in Queensland will deal a smashing blow against the foul officialdom of the A.W.U. The political importance of this task requires that the best available agrarian cadres be assigned to the pastoral industry and to the leadership of the Party organisations in the pastoral districts. And, as Comrade Miles points out in the article quoted above, it is also necessary to raise "the ideological level of the Party in the backward areas and in the unions where we lag. . . ."

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The Situation on the Unemployed Front Has Changed

By J. F. SCULLIN

Unemployment has been a permanent feature of capitalist society since its inception, but with the advent of the general crisis of capitalism it has assumed tremendous proportions. Today the unemployed, numbering hundreds of thousands in every capitalist country, form an important section of the working class. The unemployed in all countries have waged heroic struggles against their respective capitalist Governments, the whole constituting a general struggle of the unemployed against capitalism. This struggle has developed from the position of small groups of unemployed in conflict with local authorities to the stage where both offensive and defensive broad mass struggles embracing thousands of unemployed, have been waged against state and national Governments; i.e., Britain against the means test; Canada, and at the moment of writing, U.S.A. against slave labor camps.

A similar growth has been witnessed in the development of the unemployed struggle in Australia. Here, as elsewhere, most unemployed action has been taken under Communist leadership, and our Party can claim responsibility for having developed the struggle to its present level. But this level is by no means high enough to successfully resist the fresh attacks being planned by Australian Governments. Whereas capitalist administration of unemployment was at first necessarily of a local nature, it has rapidly developed, and now capitalist plans for the enslavement of the unemployed assume a national character. The capitalists, incapable of solving unemployment, seek to use the vast army of workers in the interests of capitalism, for its maintenance and preservation, by forming from them a huge reserve labor army, trained and disciplined, which can be called upon to perform works of a national character, essential to the war plans and preparations of Imperialism, and also as a weapon with which to break down the conditions of the whole of the working class. This motive now underlies all unemployment relief legislation, and has done so for a long time. The first important step in this direction was taken when work for "the dole" was introduced.

Due to the uneven development of the struggle this is only now being introduced in S.A., but in N.S.W., Victoria, and Queensland it has long been established. With the coming to power of the Moore Government, it was put into operation in Queensland, and continued by the Forgan Smith Labor Government, and no big struggles have developed against it, but in N.S.W., and particularly Victoria, at the time of its introduction big unemployed struggles took place, and the first Victorian "dole strike" marked a turn in the development of unemployed struggles in Australia. Though much was gained as a result of these struggles, the unemployed were forced to accept work for "the dole." Had the consequences of accepting this principle been fully understood at the time, it may have been more successfully resisted.

Following this the two most important features of that part of the capitalist offensive directed against the unemployed have been the national drive towards concentration camps and the introduction of relief work into industry. The variation of the transport award to allow for the employment of relief workers on the tram per way, the right of contractors to employ relief workers on application to the employment council, the employment of relief workers on the railways, etc., are indications of

the development of this policy. In Victoria, the drive towards concentration camps is more marked than elsewhere. The Dunstan Government, which came to power raising high the slogan of "abolish the dole," supported by the A.L.P., is forming the spearhead of the attack in this direction. It can be said that the Victorian Governments have always led the way in the drive towards these camps. At first simple relief camps were established, but this year definite steps towards Fascism have been introduced. The Forestry Department has set up permanent camps where youths are employed on men's work for 36 hours a week for a £1 per week. Seven shillings and sixpence of this is deducted for food. These lads are under the care and guidance of welfare officers (semi-military control). Further than this, single men instead of being allowed to work their time straight out, are forced to remain in camp for three months, despite the fact that they only work three days per week. In some instances men have been refused permission to leave the camps over the week-end, under threat of dismissal. If men leave these camps they are struck off sustenance, even as they are struck off sustenance if they refuse to accept work in them. In almost every district mails are unofficially censored, and in one district a police thug is attempting to intimidate the men in the camps, and prevent them from holding meetings. These camps are prison camps in the initial stage of development. The element of outright violence is not yet present, but the Australian capitalist class will not hesitate to introduce it when they consider it necessary.

Just after the last big unemployed strike. At the same time as the Victorian Government raised the slogan of "Abolish the dole," and intensified the drive towards bush relief camps, it set up a medical board comprised of departmental doctors. The function of this board is to classify the unemployed into "employables" and "unemployables"—the former to be confined in the prison camps, the latter to be reduced to dependance upon benevolent societies. The higher rate of sustenance is to be abolished. The Government is stooping to the very lowest methods to strike as many off this rate as possible; i.e., if men refuse a bush call they are struck off sustenance. Recently 18 men were called from Heidelberg. When they arrived at the labor exchange the officer-in-charge told them all about the camp. He painted a lurid picture of the intolerable conditions and then asked the men would they accept the work. He obviously anticipated an answer in the negative, but the workers replied, "Yes, we will accept." It then transpired that they were not wanted and he

sent them home again, saying, "We will call you again in a few weeks." He attempted to provoke them into refusing, so that they would be struck off sustenance. The Victorian Press over the last few weeks has given much publicity to the statement of Dunstan that sustenance funds are running out. There is no intention, however, of the loan money, from which the "camps are financed," coming to an end. What is meant by "the abolition of the dole" should now be quite clear.

Of course the unemployed are resisting this attack. Mass walk outs, strikes, and activities by job organisations comprise the action, but as yet this has not become general enough to exert any great degree of pressure on the Government.

That this attack against the unemployed will be intensified in the very near future becomes apparent when we take cognisance of the general situation. The struggle for markets has become so intense that the capitalists are on the very verge of a new world war. Australia's isolated position from the world's markets places her at a disadvantage in this struggle, and is a factor which continually aggravates the situation, and drives the Australian capitalists to ever fresh attacks against the wages and conditions of the workers. It is inevitable that "the dole," which a long line of heroic unemployed struggles has raised to a comparatively high level, particularly in Victoria, will be attacked. The nature of the attacks being waged at the present time against the unemployed in the various states makes it clear that all these attacks are but part of a preconceived national plan for the enslavement of the workers.

Whereas, previously, the situation called for unemployed struggles of a local and state nature, the present situation will give rise to struggles of a national character. The recent Victorian strike, embracing 33,000 sustenance workers, indicates the possibilities in this direction, and shows the preparedness of the unemployed to struggle.

Such a development would open up tremendous possibilities for unity in action of employed and unemployed, and may even lead to the general strike. A national campaign for unemployment insurance (non contributory), would lay the best possible basis for a united front of unemployed and employed workers, the latter bearing, as they do, the burden of the unemployment relief tax. The capitalists are already talking of unemployment insurance, and see in it a means whereby, if left to themselves, they can shift the burden still further on to the backs of the workers. It would also act as a counter to the concentration

of camps, and the introduction of relief labor into industry, which is bound up with the present relief work scheme. The ranks of the unemployed must be welded together on an interstate basis if they are to successfully resist what Australian capitalism plans for them. This task devolves itself upon our party and demands a unified line on unemployed work. The danger of meeting a developing objective situation with no unified line has been demonstrated in many unemployed struggles. Confusion, lack of co-ordinated action, comrades who don't know what to do—all this weakens the forces and power of resistance of the workers. Even now there are comrades on unemployed work in different districts who do not know what the dole rates are outside their own state. This fact alone gives us some indication of what yet remains to be done.

At present the unemployed, under party leadership, are attempting to resist the application of this national policy of the capitalists. The raising of this struggle to a new and higher level is a concrete task confronting our Party. The struggle of the unemployed must be co-ordinated on an interstate basis and directed against slave labor and the other Fascist tendencies apparent in the present unemployment relief schemes. The lead towards this co-ordination of the unemployed struggle should come from the point where unemployed organisation has reached the highest level. Here a concrete scheme of non-contributory unemployed insurance, around which a national campaign could be waged, should be worked out. As a struggle for a uniform rate in the form of unemployed insurance would be largely dependant upon those sections of the unemployed at present on the lower dole rates, for which they do not work, or excluded from receiving assistance altogether, under the permissible income regulations, the struggle in its initial stages must necessarily take the form of mass protest meetings, demonstrations, etc. At the same time the demand for unemployment insurance should be made the major demand of all unemployed strikes.

The fulfilment of this task creates tremendous organisational problems for our Party in its unemployed work. These problems must be met, but if they are to be successfully solved, a recognition of the weaknesses in our unemployed work is essential. The first important steps towards improvement are firstly clarity on the main issues confronting the unemployed, and secondly the working out of new tactics to meet the changed situations on the unemployed front. The pre-congress discussion on unemployed

problems should be towards this end, and the congress of our party should mark a turn in our unemployed work which will result in the development of the unemployed struggle in Australia to a higher level, and facilitate the building of the united front.

The N.S.W. State Conference of the A.R.U.

By S. PURDY

In our pre-Congress discussion, and at Congress, the tendencies within the trade union movement will need to be carefully examined. Also, the application of our United Front policy and its influence in determining the direction of the trade union movement

We will need to carefully review recent experiences, and on the basis of same draw conclusions to help us more rapidly liquidate existing weaknesses and proceed at an increased tempo to the establishment of a people's front in defence of democratic rights and against imperialist war and Fascism, at the same time, not forgetting for one moment the need to develop unity in action in defence of existing living standards and for improvements.

The recent conference of the Australian Railways Union, N.S.W. Branch, held at Orange, September 2-5, and representing 21,000 railway workers, provides many important lessons relating to all these questions, hence the following brief review of conference, submitted as a contribution to our pre-Congress discussion:—

* * * *

The A.R.U. Conference was conducted in the spirit of militant unionism, and the recognition of the need for unity. At its conclusion, delegates expressed the opinion that it was the best ever, discussion being to the point, and policy on fundamentals clearly formulated.

When it is recognised that the rail workers have had their conditions severely attacked by both U.A.P. and Labor Governments, the militant spirit and recognition of the need for united action comes as no surprise. Dismissals, wage-cuts and rationalisation was the background of conference—the evils of the pre-

sent and the future, together with the dangers of imperialist war and Fascism.

Conference opened with a militant address to delegates by E. A. Barker. State president (later re-elected by an overwhelming majority), the concluding words of which read: "And now, in the words of Karl Marx, I leave you to your deliberations, and say, 'Workers, you have nothing to lose but your chains, and a world to win.'" It seems that the influence of these words remained with conference to the end.

The election of a new secretary, to fill the vacancy caused by the lamented death of Arthur Chapman, resulted in the appointment of Lloyd Ross, who received 36 votes as against 11 for Butler, ex-M.L.A. Prior to his election, Lloyd Ross was associated with numerous phases of militant working-class activity—activity which was well known to delegates. They wanted a fighting secretary, and got one. To quote the words of Jack Chapple in the September "Railroad": "He comes to us with the degrees of Master of Arts, Bachelor of Laws, and Doctor of Literature. But above all, he comes to us a fearless fighter and a champion of the working class. In his new sphere he will help to mould the age and to write the history of the future."

On the questions of industrial unionism and arbitration, conference determined future policy in no uncertain terms, as expressed in the following resolutions:—

"Conference declares that the uniting of the rail workers into one industrial organisation is the most urgent need of the moment. The continued division of the railmen into 49 different organisations is a source of great weakness, and constitutes a menace to the living standards and working conditions. The last twelve months have clearly demonstrated how the Railway Commissioners seize upon the opportunity to attack one section of the railmen after another.

"That the State Council and the Executive be directed to take all steps necessary for amalgamation with other organisations, and do everything possible to strengthen agreements for a common front against the Commissioners. We appeal to all railmen's organisations and to their executives to work together in order to hasten the coming of industrial unionism. To this end, Conference directs that—

"(1) The A.F.U.L.E. be once again approached, with a view to amalgamation.

"(2) Discussions be commenced with all other organisations covering railwaymen (excluding loyalist unions), the Labor Council, and the Land Transport Group, in order to try to arrive

at a basis for rail workers to be drawn into one amalgamated organisation.

"(3) That it be a recommendation to the annual council that the shop committee movement be encouraged along lines established by the N.S.W. State Branch policy.

"(4) That the propaganda and agitational campaign for one union of railmen be intensified, and materials be produced for distribution amongst rail workers, pointing out the advantages of one industrial union."

Conference reaffirmed its opposition to the system of arbitration, and directed that the executive take immediate steps to create a condition to precipitate a break with the courts. To this end the conference directed:—

"(1) That more intensive propaganda and agitation against arbitration be conducted by means of the 'Railroad,' pamphlets, meetings, lectures, classes, etc.

"(2) That all other unions and organisations covering railwaymen be approached, with a view to them co-operating and conducting a similar campaign amongst their members.

"(3) That this campaign be combined with that for closer unity, amalgamation, and the strengthening of the confidence of the workers in their industrial strength and organisation."

These two resolutions, together with the following one, expressed clearly the high degree of class consciousness of the delegates, together with a recognition of the limitation of capitalist parliaments and the need to rely on class solidarity and organisation as against class collaboration:—

"That, although the A.R.U. continues its affiliation with the A.L.P., it register dissatisfaction with the policy and practice of the Labor Party on the following grounds:—

"(1) That the executive consistently stifles the voice of the members, and prevents democratic control of the organisation.

"(2) That it has opposed the welding of a firm, united front for the struggle against war and Fascism.

"(3) That its entry into the last Miners' elections was an unwarranted interference with the domestic affairs of the union.

"(4) That its 'unemployed campaign' threatens to split the present unemployed organisation, and its Federal election appeal is directed against the Trades and Labor Council and State Council of Unemployed's financial appeal.

"(5) That the action of the Labor Government, when in office, in legalising rationing and subsequently introducing the Public Service Salaries Act undermined the wages and conditions of railwaymen.

"(6) That refusal to grant the A.R.U. direct representation on the A.L.P. Central Executive, also on the annual Metropolitan Provincial Conferences, occasions cause for condemnation.

"That Conference direct that the A.L.P. Executive be requested to state its position on these questions, and the measures it proposes to introduce to rectify same, the reply of the A.L.P. Executive to come up for discussion at the next A.R.U. Conference."

Whilst Communists recognise that the Labor Party is not a class party (admitted by J. T. Lang in "Why I Fight"), that its policy is dependent on Parliament (the executive of the capitalist class)—that it endeavors to make all forms of class struggle subservient to Parliament, and therefore by such a policy would make the workers subservient to the capitalist class—they will support the A.R.U. Conference resolution on the Labor Party line, we Communists oppose the principle of the unions affiliating to the Labor Party, but at the same time, recognise that many workers do not yet see eye to eye with us—that many militant unionists are still members of the A.L.P., having many illusions re the latter, therefore recognising that the urgent problem of the moment is the creation of unity in action, we can afford to be patient—we can afford to meet the A.L.P. workers—we can support without fear the A.R.U. Conference resolution on the Labor Party, knowing full well that the A.L.P. workers will learn in their own experience the reactionary character of the Labor Party, and in the meantime we will go full steam ahead, welding the united front still more firmly, satisfied that the A.L.P. members have made a progressive step in supporting the above quoted resolution.

The A.R.U. Conference left no room for doubt as to its attitude towards the Federal Government's attack on democratic rights. It unanimously carried the following resolution:—

"This Conference, representing the A.R.U. membership of N.S.W., declares its hostility to actions taken by the Federal Government against the Communist Party and the Friends of the Soviet Union under the Crimes Act.

"We delegates assembled recognise that this action of the Federal Government is an attempt to restrict the democratic rights of the workers, and as a development towards Fascism. We recognise that this action is merely the beginning of further attacks on all workers' organisations, including trade unions and the Labor Party, if it is allowed to be successful.

"We note that this attack on democratic rights is launched at a time when the war danger is most acute, and when the workers are faced with the need for struggle, in order to maintain their living standards.

"Therefore, in defence of democratic rights, and as a step to prevent our members and workers generally from being em-

broled in an imperialist war, and to safeguard living standards we demand that the above-mentioned actions of the Federal Government be withdrawn, and those sections of the Crimes Act aimed at working-class organisations be repealed.

"Further, we declare our willingness to unite with all organisations to ensure the realisation of the above demands."

Lettergrams were exchanged with the Miners' Central Council, which was meeting at the same time, in which were expressed fraternal greetings between both unions and the recognition of the need for a fighting workers' united front, especially against the war danger and the attack on democratic rights.

In the report of acting State secretary (J. F. Chapple), the notice of delegates was called to the ban on working-class literature, including the actions of the Postmaster General and railway authorities in relation to the "Soviets To-day."

Delegates were urged to reply to these actions "by building the sales of this worthy and instructive journal."

The acting secretary's report outlined the activities of the union, as part of the anti-war movement, in defence of the anti-war fighters, Kisch and Griffin. Later, conference vigorously reaffirmed its allegiance to the National Anti-War Movement (A.L.P. "inner group" please note when next speaking of "shaded organisations.")

Conference consolidated still further the unity between employed and unemployed. An extract from E. A. Barker's presidential address reads:—

"I want to refer here to the co-operation and assistance that has been rendered by the State Council of Unemployed and Relief Workers. This council controls all relief jobs, and when it was found that the Railway Department intended to engage large numbers of these men, they were directed to join the A.R.U., as the organisation covering the industry."

Further extracts from the acting State secretary's report read:—

"During the year, close co-operation and contact have been maintained with the State Council of Unemployed and Relief Workers, and it is pleasing to report that whilst the union has been able to render some little help in various ways, the State Council of Unemployed has also rendered many services to the union.

"Whenever relief work was threatened in the railway or tramway industry, the officers of the council were instantly on the trail, and promptly informed the union of any developments. So, too, when unemployed men were engaged to commence on railway or tramway work, the fact was reported to the union,

and assistance was rendered in organising the men into the A.R.U.

"This activity of the Unemployed Council was an important factor in preventing the introduction of relief works in the railway and tramway industries, and accordingly due thanks and appreciation are extended to that body, and, in particular, to its officials, Comrades W. H. MacKenzie, Tom Payne, and Mat Hade."

Later, conference carried a resolution affirming existing relationship, and which should help to strengthen the bonds of unity, particularly in the country towns between A.R.U. sub-branches and local unemployed and relief workers' councils.

Delegates report that questions of domestic policy were also dealt with in the same businesslike and thorough manner, and the way has been prepared for a still stronger union.

The A.R.U. Conference marks a further milestone on the road of progress. Policy has been determined in a courageous and militant manner. The basis has been laid for the union to go rapidly forward—towards its final objective, a Socialist society. Not only does the conference mark a milestone in its own progress, but in that of the whole labor movement. It was an inspiration, a guiding star, to other unionists, and undoubtedly its leadership will be followed.

Through keen debate and difference of opinion, a militant unity was maintained and consolidated. Sectarianism was noticeable by its absence. Delegates from all parts of N.S.W.—North, South, West, and Metropolitan—have spoken with a decisive voice. Leading trade union officials—minor trade union officials—men with enormous mass contact, influence and authority, have decided in favor of a progressive policy for their union—a policy which will have its effect on railworkers everywhere.

To those A.L.P. and non-party delegates, who, together with our members, were responsible for this most highly successful conference, we extend the hand of comradely friendship. We wish your union every success in the tremendous tasks ahead—its valuable contribution towards the creation of a fighting People's Front.

In this hour of danger to our class—when democratic rights are being attacked everywhere, nationally and internationally—when Fascism raises its ugly head—when Mussolini and Italian Fascism threatens to plunge the world into another mass slaughter—now, more than ever before, is unity in action necessary.

We conclude, along with your State president, in the spirit of Karl Marx: "Workers of all lands, unite!"

The Seamen's Strike

By R. CRAM

At the present time in Australia we are witnessing a rapid development of the strike wave. The growth of the movement is reminiscent of the timberworkers', miners', and other strikes of 1928-29-30. As yet the upsurge has not reached the dimensions and activity of the struggles of 1929, but already there is evidence of further growth in the seamen's strike, sugar workers' strike, mining stoppages, and the ferment amongst the unemployed. The degree of class-consciousness and organisation revealed is far superior to 1928-29-30, and the number of victories, both partial and absolute, are more numerous. This is traceable to the much greater role being played by the militant trade unionists in the conduct of the struggles, a role which in many cases has been so decisive that the reformist leadership has been completely pushed aside (rubber workers' strike, sugar workers' strike, Wonthaggi, etc.).

Not least of these movements, and the most important one of recent date, was the seamen's strike. Its importance arises from the fact that the shipping industry is one of the most decisive arms of Australian transport, and a very important factor in the whole life of Australian economy. This is demonstrated when we understand that the Huddart Parker, Howard Smith and other big shipping and coal companies are large, and, in some cases, dominant shareholders in many of the biggest Australian banks, which have a stranglehold on a great portion of the Australian industry and commerce. Then, if we grasp the fact that the present Federal Government is essentially a Government of finance capital, we gain a clear idea of the importance of the seamen's strike, in the counter offensive of the Australian workers against the attacks of the ruling class and its Government. This interlocking of the big shipping companies with finance capital, and vice versa, and their very close connections with the present Federal Government, inevitably caused the strike of the seamen, once it had assumed a broad character under independent leadership to take more and more the form of a political action directed right at the very heart of Australian capitalism, at the decisive sections of the bourgeoisie. A victory for the seamen under these conditions was fraught with great political importance for the Australian working-class.

Although only partially successful, the strikers, by their

solidarity and determination, have compelled the owners to refrain, at least temporarily, from victimisation, and have laid the basis for a further development of the movement, causing the ship-owners to tread warily in their campaign against wages and conditions.

There can be no doubt that the successful accomplishment of all the main demands put forward by the seamen would have given added impetus to the general offensive of the working-class in Australia against the attacks of the capitalists, helping forward the more rapid unfoldment of the strike wave, convincing broad sections of the correctness of militant leadership and tactics.

The fact that this was not wholly achieved is due, not to any lack of firmness and desire for struggle on the part of the seamen, but primarily to the federal officials of the union, who were completely out of step with the union membership, carrying through, in common with the bosses and the reformist bureaucracy, a line to undermine the strike, and get a return to work. And in this they succeeded to a large extent, due in the main, to the many weaknesses of the strike committee, but not without exposing the role they play to great numbers of the seamen and other workers.

The capitalist, with the aid of their reformist lackeys in the seamen's union, and particularly the general secretary, Johnson, who opposed the strike from the very commencement, have forced the seamen back to the ships, with the main questions of "deferred sailing payments" and "general free selection" still unsettled.

In achieving this success, the ruling class has very little cause to be jubilant. There is a weakness in their success, which explains the very mild and studied claims of the hired Press in connection with the return to work. The authority of the leaders of the strike committee is still very great, despite the success of Johnson. This is clearly seen in the voting for a return to work. The line of the strike committee was only defeated by a meagre 70 votes (approx.), indicating that almost fifty per cent. of the union membership in N.S.W., the biggest and most decisive branch in Australia, was still solidly supporting the continuance of the struggle. And this fifty per cent. embraces the best elements, the most virile types in the union. Therefore, with similar broad militant support in other key unions (A.R.U., Miners, etc.), it is necessary for the ruling class

and their Governments to manoeuvre and attempt to militant leadership first, as a prelude to a general smash the mass organisations of the workers, including unions. Hence, we find the Federal Government, faced with the immediate possibility of war, and further economic decline, confronted with the task of attacking the wages and conditions of the toilers to maintain the position of the capitalists, and spurred on by the gathering strike wave, learning the political lessons of the growing popularity of the R.I.L.U. methods of strike struggle, as reflected in the rubber workers, Wonthaggi sugar workers' and seamen's strikes, and is hastening to put in effect the long threatened move to declare the Communist Party and other militant bodies unlawful associations under the infamous Crimes Act. The bourgeoisie realise only too clearly the political implications of this change in methods of leadership taking place in the trade unions, its growing popularity, and the efficient organisational methods it brings to the workers, the lessons derived from the new forms of struggle by all sections of the toilers, and sees in the further continuance of a legal Communist Party a constant political threat, a dynamic leading and driving force giving political emphasis to all the struggles of the workers in the present period. Therefore, the Communist Party and other militant bodies must be suppressed to clear the way for the attack on conditions, and for the smashing of the mass organisations.

The incomplete victory of the seamen's struggle has, to some extent, strengthened the Government's hand, as it will tend to have a retarding effect on the immediate unfolding of the strike wave. But not to a great extent, as revealed in the recent extension of the sugar workers' strikes, Wonthaggi, unemployed Metal, etc. Nevertheless, a decisive victory for the seamen on the major questions in dispute, under independent leadership, would have given great impetus to the maturing strike movement amongst all sections of the workers, placing the state in the position of openly exposing itself to the broad masses as the direct weapon of the exploiters in attacking the working-class and protecting the interests of the capitalist class. Complete success for the seamen would inevitably have had a big bearing on the tempo of development of the United Front from below further exposing the splitters and betrayers, and drawing the comparison in practice between reformist and militant methods of organisation as a means of achieving results. Such lessons would have been learnt by very broad sections of the Australian

solidarity. Moreover, such a victory must have resulted in a higher degree, depending on the broadness of the movement being from it, in a greater strengthening of the political position of the Australian working-class, a further decline of the reformists and the A.L.P., and a serious set-back to the forces of Fascism and reaction.

A RESUME OF THE STRIKE.

The Huddart Parker Company's vessel, *Murada*, loading coke at Port Kembla, was late in sailing. The crew claimed deferred sailing rates and overtime. On arrival in Melbourne the owners disputed the claim, and the crew refused to take the ship to sea. To this action on the part of the men, the company replied by "logging" the crew, fining them, and issuing "bad" discharges. Such qualified discharges mark the holder, and leave him open for victimisation as an "undesirable."

Having been discharged in Melbourne, the crew of the "*Murada*," with Sydney as their home port, were compelled to pay their own fares back. The dispute was placed in the hands of the union, and pending a settlement the "*Murada*" was tied up. The question would, perhaps, have ended here, but for the further action of the owners, when in calling for a crew to man the *Zealandia*, they refused to accept a stokehold worker from the "*Murada*." The company persisted in their refusal to accept this man, despite the overtures of the union officials. This was correctly designated as victimisation, and a meeting of the union was held to determine what action should be taken. No finality was reached, and a further requisitioned meeting of the union was called by the necessary number of members, at which 200 were present, and which unanimously decided to extend the dispute to all ships belonging to the Huddart Parker Company. The *Zealandia* was tied up, and her cargo declared "black." When this cargo was shipped to the "*Taluue*," the crew left that ship, and so commenced a general tie up of the great bulk of the Australian coastal shipping.

A strike committee was formed, which included Herbert, the N.S.W. branch secretary, and McLaughlin, the vigilance officer. This committee was strengthened as each ship reached port and joined the men already out. The usual practice was to co-opt the ship's delegate. Further mass meetings of the union were held, and the issues involved were defined, and a decision reached to extend the strike to all ships on the basis of the following demands:—

- (1) "Murada" men to get clear discharges.
- (2) The loggings to be wiped out.
- (3) That the men's fares from Melbourne to Sydney be refunded.
- (4) That "deferred" sailing time be paid for, and that this contentious question be finally settled generally.
- (5) The granting of the seamen's interpretation of free selection, i.e., the owners to have the right of one pick from the line, and then the man selected to get the job irrespective of his discharges. (The present degrading practice is for the owners to select a man, go through his discharges, and if he has "bad marks" because of industrial activity, etc., to refuse to accept him. In a worst case victimise him.)

The strike spread rapidly, as the two last-named demands affected all seamen, and awakened a response to have them cleared up, once and for all. The strike committee's authority at this stage was very high. Although bitterly opposed by the general secretary of the union, who slandered the committee members, disowned the strike, and preached the most abject defeatism and open strike breaking, it was sufficient for the strike committee to telegraph the various ports stating the terms of the resolution carried in Sydney to get immediate action in the great majority of cases. Johnson was completely isolated in Sydney, and the State officials were temporarily with the strikers because of the mass pressure.

The situation was indeed becoming alarming for the capitalists. The strike was assuming the character of a general shipping stoppage, resolutions of solidarity were pouring in from the powerful Sydney Trades and Labor Council, Miners Federation, A.R.U., and a number of other unions and working class bodies. The miners gave immediate practical expression to their resolution by donating £250 to the strike fund, the printers contributed £50, and efforts were under way in all directions to support the struggle with cash. The political implications of the struggle, its important character in the workers' counter-offensive, was rapidly realised by the ruling class and the Government. A terrific press barrage was carried on, which was ably assisted by the reformists in and outside the Seamen's Union. It is interesting to see how the campaign of the bosses against the strikers and their elected strike leadership so efficiently and minutely fitted in with the line and activities of the reformist

bureaucracy, the Guild of Empire, and every other reactionary.

Valuable lessons can be learned by the militant workers from this efficiency, as the Strike Committee's main weakness was that it failed to reply to this campaign quickly and concretely enough, not only in connection with the strikers, but the general public also.

The claim of the bosses and their press was to the effect that the strike was only the action "of a small group of Communists who howl down their officials, and bludgeon the honest working seamen against their will." The Strike Committee was always referred to as the militant minority committee, a body outside the union. This line was augmented by Adela Walsh in a leaflet issued to the seamen speaking of the Russian workers as being "beaten into submission by violence by the militant tyrants."

A. Moate, the general secretary of the Marine Stewards' and Pantrymen's Association, rushed to the assistance of the owners with a statement that, "The strike was engineered by the militant minority for the express purpose of smashing the maritime unions." ("S.M.H.," 16/8/35 and all interstate papers.) He further threatened the expulsion of any member of the union who participated in the work of the Strike Committee, and instructed the stewards to sail with scab labor.

G. Moate, the president of the above union, added his voice to the pack by saying, "Our organisation was not going to be bludgeoned, sand-bagged, or fooled into participation in the strike at the behest of a mob in Sydney. The officials of the Seamen's Union have lost control to a mob of land seamen, unemployed, and the militant minority movement, which as a unit of the Communist Party has adopted an insane policy of revolution in this country," and ad infinitum (Melbourne Press and Brisbane "Courier," 18/8/35).

Let it be said to the credit of the great majority of stewards that they emphatically repudiated these strike-breaking slanders of their officials, and the stewards of the "Canberra" called an independent mass meeting and pledged support to the seamen and condemned their officials.

Turley, general secretary of the Waterside Workers' Federation, instructed his members "not to become involved in the seamen's dispute in any way, unless and until they are definitely instructed." ("S.M.H.," 16/8/35, and other papers.)

The spokesman for the Federal Government, Senator Bren-

nan, adds his voice to the chorus: "Who was it that declared the vessels 'black'? Not the governing body of the Seamen's Union. There is a Communist section among the seamen in Sydney who howl down the officers of their union. The watchword of these men is disorder, etc. The seamen, most of whom were honorable men, had seen fit, because of a false sense of loyalty (sic), to break an agreement under which they had been working since 1926, and to obey a direction which came from certain disorder-provoking elements within the union." ("S.M.H.," 19/8/35, and all papers.)

Couple these statements with that of the Prime Minister in threatening to apply the "Dog Collar Act" to the seamen as well as to the wharflies, the action of the N.S.W. State Government in striking all unemployed seamen off the dole, the statements of the capitalist press, that the unions generally were short of cash and couldn't render material aid of any consequence to the strikers, the propaganda that both sides were settling down to a long-drawn-out dispute, and link it up with the remarks and line of many of the seamen's officials, and a very clear picture is presented of the co-ordinated action of the bosses and a number of reformists to break the strike.

At the mass meeting held on 19/8/35, with over 2000 seamen in attendance, the strike leadership went from the Strike Committee to the officials by a very small majority. The statements and tactics of the officials are interesting and reflect a continuation, or more correctly, a culmination, of the bosses' campaign cited above. The bosses spoke of "Communists howling down their officers." At this meeting a lot of "drunks" would not give the officials a fair hearing, even going so far as to knock supporters of the officials' line off the platform. They were conveniently sober when members and supporters of the Strike Committee were speaking. This is an old Yankee trick, but it had a big effect on the more backward seamen, and fitted into the campaign the bosses had been waging.

The press had spoken of "outside bodies." So did the officials. Johnson said: "If members, or sections of members, persisted in electing outside bodies to take charge of their affairs, they could not expect the co-operation of their officials."

Casey, Queensland secretary, complained "of dual control of the union." Clarke, the Victorian secretary, bitterly attacked the Strike Committee, "of attempting to take over the duties of the officers of the union." Coupled with these statements were

such remarks as: "You can't fight the State forces with feather dusters." "The Government will introduce the 'Dog Collar Act' and employ scabs." "Crawl back on full bellies before you have to crawl back on empty ones" (Johnson). "The wharflies have refused to assist you"; "the offer of the miners and others is worth nothing, you can't win a strike on £250"; "the unions are bankrupt, their solidarity resolutions mean nothing," etc.

The powerful effect such statements would have on the strikers, particularly the more backward section, coming from their officials after reading exactly the same things in the capitalist press, can be easily imagined, especially as the Strike Committee had failed to get official union confirmation of many of the resolutions of support and assistance, a situation which was made worse by the fact that an incorrect report had been read to a previous mass meeting by the Strike Committee to the effect that the Sydney watersiders were supporting the strike. Although this was delivered in good faith, it was used by Johnson and some of the others as a basis for casting suspicion on the Strike Committee and inferring that all other support was bogus also. There can be no doubt that this unfortunate mishap had a very damaging effect, and was one of the best weapons used by the reformists in gaining the leadership of the strike.

How does Clarke square his statements in the "Seamen's Journal" of June 25, 1935, with his recent actions in helping to stampede the men back to work with only partial victory, in the form of "no discrimination against any seamen, since the beginning of the present dispute." And this with a catch in it, too. Judge Dethridge pointed out at the compulsory conference, that in view of the fact that the "Murada" men's claims had already been determined in the Small Debts Court in favor of the owners, from which there was no appeal, he considered the dispute as commencing from the "Zealandia" trouble. The owners can still victimise the "Murada" men, still carry out their interpretation of "free selection," yet Clarke, who was a party to this infamous trickery, writes in reviewing the struggles of the union:—

"The necessity for maintaining our conditions should be patent to all, and members must realise that only by close-knit organisation, coupled with a determination to use every weapon of aggression against encroachments by the owners, can our conditions be maintained and improved."

In the face of this statement about the need for "close-knit organisation," etc., Clarke played a leading role in splitting the

forces of the strikers, and already before arriving in Sydney for the meeting of the Management Committee, had led the attack on the A.C.T.U., ably assisted by the bosses' press and, unfortunately, also, by the mistakes of the Melbourne militants in this connection. We must agree that the A.C.T.U. had no right to claim leadership of the strike. This was the domestic right of the seamen. At the same time, the "left" abusive criticism by this advocate of "close-knit organisation" was having the effect of supplying the basis for the isolation of the unions affiliated to the A.C.T.U. from the seamen. In the light of later events, this cannot be looked upon as accidental. The seamen will remember and compare Mr. Clarke's militant words with his strike-breaking actions.

The tactical advantage gained by the officials at the mass meeting on August 19, 1935, was further capitalised by them at the meeting called by the Committee of Management for August 20, 1935. At this meeting, by the use of personalities, innuendoes, the preaching of defeatism and the assistance of the capitalist press, coupled with the fact that a larger body of backward seamen were in attendance, and that the compulsory conference to be held in Melbourne the next day would not recognise any representatives other than the officials, the threat of a £500 penalty for non-attendance, deregistration of the union, scab labor, and the "Dog Collar Act," and a refusal to accept an amendment from the Strike Committee as to the minimum terms of settlement to be discussed, the reformist officials succeeded in getting an ambiguous resolution passed empowering them "To obtain the best possible terms of settlement and report back to a further mass meeting on Friday, August 23, 1935."

From this point the leadership of the strike passed completely over to the reformists. The negotiations at the compulsory conference in Melbourne were held in camera, and as the "S.M.H.," August 22, 1935, put it, "the terms proposed for the settlement of the dispute were not disclosed, on the ground that it would tend to prejudice an agreement." The most extreme secrecy was observed, by collaboration between the owners and the officials, to circumvent the Strike Committee and give it no room to expose the terms of settlement to the mass of the seamen.

In the meantime the bosses had succeeded in getting the "Craigend" away with a scab crew, and were playing this up in conjunction with a lot of other lying propaganda about "hun-

dreds of seamen applying for jobs," "more ships to be manned by volunteers," etc., to create a stampede atmosphere in preparation for the acceptance of the owners' terms at the meeting on the Friday. That they succeeded to a large extent with this nefarious campaign is directly attributable to the weakness of the Strike Committee in not bringing out daily bulletins to counteract the bosses' poison. The owners were so sure of an immediate settlement when the Committee of Management reported back, that they commenced to load the ships and sailing times were advertised for Friday night.

But the meeting on Friday, August 23, 1935, was a stormy one, a great deal of hostility being shown to the sell-out terms, with many free fights throughout the meeting. An amendment for the rejection of the owners' terms was refused by the chairman, Clarke, and a motion of dissent from his ruling was carried, after a division, by a small majority. Uproar prevailed, and the Strike Committee leaders agreed to an adjournment until the next day.

The evening press "was surprised at the strength of the following of the militants who desired to continue the hold-up." Wharf laborers were again dismissed, and all loading of ships ceased.

After much heated debate, the adjourned meeting on the Saturday, with the men's morale undermined by the continual preaching of defeatism on the part of the officials and the constant barrage of propaganda in the bosses' press, coupled with the action of Mullins, secretary of the Sydney Watersiders, in having a motion for support of the seamen deferred until after the Friday meeting, giving the impression that the wharves would not support the seamen, the men, by a small majority (approximately 70), decided to man the ships. The responsibility for the incomplete success rests entirely with the reformist officials, as the men will clearly realise in the very near future, when the victimisation commences over the question of the right of free selection. The Strike Committee has made this matter quite clear. There can be no confusion as to who carries the responsibility for the failure to obtain full satisfaction, although it is quite possible that the official element will attempt to pillory the Strike Committee, and particularly its leaders. There is still a very powerful section of the union dissatisfied with the result, and we can say that the trouble over the questions in dispute are not finalised by a long way. This section will have something to

say in the question of the election of officials at the end of this year.

The strike holds a number of lessons for the militant working class, which must be assimilated if we are to overcome the many weaknesses revealed during the course of the struggle.

Some Conclusions and Tasks

We must draw some conclusions:—

(1) That the political importance of the seamen's struggle for the working class was, to a large extent, lost through the weak organisation and mistakes of the militant marine workers, particularly their under-estimation of the ability of the reformists to manoeuvre with the aid of the employers.

(2) That the reformist bureaucracy of the Seamen's Union and their prototypes in allied unions were exposed to wide masses of the seamen and other workers as agents of the employers within the workers' ranks, following the same line as the shipowners, the Government and the press, to force a return to work.

(3) That the solid and orderly return to work of the seamen, with the major questions still unsettled and certain to crop up again, coupled with the exposure of the reformists, has laid a fine basis for rapidly developing the work of winning the seamen for a militant trade union policy, without which a discredited official, due to the traditions of the union and the position he holds can still play a decisive role in defeating a struggle.

(4) The strike was not fully successful because of a combination of the forces of the employers, the Government, and the reformist officials, assisted by the weaknesses of the militants and the Strike Committee, and that the other forces would have been indecisive without the concrete assistance of the Federal officials of the Seamen's Union.

(5) The ability of Clarke to use the Melbourne seamen as a means of requisitioning the Committee of Management for the purpose of defeating the Strike Committee, linked with the fact that both Casey and Clarke could leave their respective centres with perfect confidence, leads us to the conclusion that the influence and organisation of the militant seamen on those waterfronts must be extremely weak,

and that this weakness was a big factor in the success achieved by the reformists.

(6) We must draw the further conclusion that Johnson wielded very little influence on the strike until the advent of the other Federal officials in Sydney, the Strike Committee having almost complete authority. The conclusion being that he is widely discredited, and that the Strike Committee's authority was undermined and the scope given to the Federal officials to manoeuvre and find a basis for their strike-breaking by the Strike Committee not paying sufficient attention to—

(a) Answering the bosses' propaganda and defining the issues for the strikers and the public, by daily bulletins (only two bulletins were issued), newspaper reports, union addresses, factory gate meetings, etc.

(b) Under-estimation of the importance of relief measures.

(c) Failure to work amongst the seamen from each ship as it tied up.

(d) Non-activation of all members of the Strike Committee and other sections of the strikers.

(e) Poor connections with the other ports and failure to supply them with current information.

Arising from these conclusions some important and very urgent tasks confront all Party districts and the militant seamen and marine workers.

In the first place, the chief task is to win the marine workers for a militant trade union policy as rapidly as possible. This is the most important question.

In connection with this work, emphasis must be laid on the question of winning the official positions, or of winning over officials who are honest and sincere, by commencing and carrying through a most painstaking campaign within the unions based on a constructive policy for building and strengthening the branches, and for coping with the immediate day-to-day questions affecting the members, particularly the question of wages.

To accomplish this task, there must be an immediate turn to the ships, the penetration of all vessels, and the building up of real organisation and connections amongst the working seamen. Within the branches of the Seamen's Union and the Waterside Workers' Federation must be built virile militant fractions, basing their activities on a concrete constructive policy and defence of

working conditions and wages. The circulation of the "Marine Worker" must be extended and the lessons of the strike and the problems of the seamen and waterside workers taken up and persisted with in a concrete and simple manner. Every Party District must make a real effort to develop a capable fraction to lead this work and to keep regular contact with the Marine Bureau in Sydney. The degree of fulfilment of these urgent tasks will determine the answer to the question: "Have we learnt the lessons of the Seamen's Strike?"

Secondly, the weaknesses of the Strike Committee, and the big influence this had on the conduct of the strike, must be taken note of and overcome in future struggles by:

(a) Answering the bosses' propaganda immediately the strike commences by all avenues possible, including addressing factory and workshop meetings, trade union branches, issuing of daily strike bulletins and leaflets to the public and the strikers, and by using the working-class press and any other press that will accept news.

(b) To cause the broadest activation, however small the job may be, of, firstly, all members of the Strike Committee; and secondly, as many of the rank and file strikers as possible. If this is done, broad contact is set up with the strikers of a personal character, they are interested and feel confident, and solid collective results are achieved.

(c) To lay down plans and commence activities in relation to relief assistance without loss of time. To be able to show how the workers are going to get even a small measure of sustenance is very important in holding the strikers together and stiffening their morale. Results are the things that count, and in connection with relief, large numbers of the strikers can be activated as well as many of their womenfolk. A study of Wonthaggi will confirm this.

(d) Where the strike is of a national or far-flung character, to establish connections with all the outlying centres and to keep them posted with daily accounts of what is doing, refutations of the bosses' lies, and what is being accomplished in the centre. This is not only very important organisationally, but also has a stiffening effect on the whole struggle and helps to counteract defeatism.

The Fifteenth Anniversary of the First Communist Conference in Australia

Some Early History

By J. B. MILES

Before the next number of the "Review" is on sale we will have passed the fifteenth anniversary of the first Communist Conference held in Australia. On Saturday, October 30, 1920, a conference was called by the Australian Socialist Party.

The influence of the Russian revolution, the propaganda of the Bolsheviki, the formation of the Third International, all exercised a profound influence in Australia. The workers in this country were already highly organised in trade unions, a number of Socialist propaganda groups had existed for many years, and during the war years and after the I.W.W. and other syndicalist groups exercised more or less influence among the militant workers.

The Labor Party, which had been for some time the alternative executive party of capitalism, like the reformist parties in all countries, had supported the war and the war Government. The conditions of the masses were such that they were moving to the left and the militant groups were having such a strong influence upon them that in the next year the A.L.P. took steps to call the All Australian Trades Union Congress to enable the unions to state what they wanted from the A.L.P. One result was the "Red Objective," around which a bitter struggle was waged at the subsequent A.L.P. Federal Conference. This gesture by the A.L.P. somewhat restored its prestige in the eyes of the workers. There was lacking unity in the ranks of the militant workers in this very favorable situation for the advancement of revolutionary organisation and struggle.

The first period in the history of the Communist Party of Australia is the period of struggle for unity.

Without much detailed research and access to records not readily available, it is not possible to determine exactly what bodies were represented at the conference on October 30, 1920. In the space at our disposal it is sufficient to indicate the main groups. The conference was called by the several years' old A.S.P., which had its weekly organ, the "International Socialist,"

and a number of branches. The A.S.P. opposed the war, responded to the Russian Revolution, and moved toward the position of the Third International, but could not cast off its narrow sectarian "purity." The A.S.P. published a manifesto, adopted at its conference in December, 1919, entitled "Australia and the World Revolution," with a sub-title, "A Statement of Communist Principles." This manifesto affirmed "our allegiance to the Communist International," but the confusion existing is evident throughout the pamphlet, for example, the A.S.P. "does not, as do other Socialist parties, make immediate demands."

There had been in existence for some time a group of Communists connected with the Trades Hall in Sydney, which claimed also to have support in Melbourne. This group comprised left elements from the Labor Party, others with syndicalist tendencies, and others who had tried unsuccessfully to broaden the A.S.P. approach to mass work. This group itself had peculiar ideas on mass work, in that it worked secretly, and prior to October 30, 1920, had issued a "Communist Manifesto" without signature or address. But its connection with the Trades Hall, including J. S. Garden, gave it a form of contact with the masses.

The manifesto issued by "the C.E. of the Australian Communist Party," which had no address or members to own it, was "adopted" with slight amendments by the A.S.P. and published on the front page of the "International Socialist" of October 2, 1920.

That a considerable number of those who took part in the early negotiations for Communist unity came from the ranks of the syndicalists is evident from the prominence of the I.W.W. leader, Tom Glynn, at the first meetings and subsequently.

The Socialist Labor Party (Judd) refused to participate in the conference on the ground that it was already the only party necessary in the interests of the workers.

The conference on October 30 endorsed the principles of the Communist International and decided "that this conference now forms a Communist Party."

It is amazing to-day to examine the files of the "I.S." and note the complete absence of any campaign for the conference and its objects. This lends support to the allegations against the A.S.P., which soon repudiated the conference, that they were concerned to exercise control and were out-manoeuvred by the other groups.

"Following the successful outcome of the conference called by

the A.S.P. to arrive at a basis of unified Communist activity, a Communist rally was held in Sydney Branch Hall on Sunday, October 31. Comrade J. S. Garden had been invited to take the chair, and was followed by Comrades Tom Glynn, C. W. Baker, G. Barrachi, and A. S. Reardon." Thus reads the introductory paragraph to a report in the "I.S." of November 6.

But again there is no evidence of a campaign to consolidate the results of the conference. In the issue dated December 4, the "I.S." published an appeal for a Communist Press on behalf of the C.P.A.

Behind the scenes a split had been maturing and on January 1, 1921, the A.S.P. paper appeared under the new name "International Communist," published by the C.P.A., while already the other faction had issued "The Australian Communist," organ of the "C.P.A."

The differences were mainly personal. In so far as they were due to doubts about the theoretical position of some and the past associations of others, these were magnified and led to sectarian groupings when the main issue was unity of the revolutionaries who claimed to accept the leadership of the Comintern.

Comparatively little was known in those days about the Bolshevik Party and the teachings of Lenin, and the English lack of interest in theory was equally evident in Australia.

Dated December 14, 1920, the A.S.P. notified the secretary of the C.P.A. that it withdrew its delegates from the Provisional Executive because "a dominant section of the Conference, who represent no one but themselves," have been scheming "to subvert the attempt on the part of the A.S.P. to bring about Communist unity to their own personal ends."

It is easy to see to-day that, no matter how doubtful some of the participants were, it required only confidence in the masses and in one's own determination to struggle for principles within the united party, to settle the questions who was fit to lead and who ought to be outside? But in view of the immaturity of all concerned, it is not surprising that one group refused to accept A.S.P. domination in order to fight sectarianism and bureaucracy from the inside, and that the sectarians looked with serious doubt upon such as J. S. Garden, W. P. Earsman, and especially Mrs. Adela Pankhurst Walsh, who, along with Tom Walsh, were members of the Provisional Executive signing the first statement against the A.S.P.

Two Communist parties existed in Australia, and in the fol-

lowing months a bitter controversy raged between the two factions.

It is to the credit of the comrades who adhered to the October Conference that they repeatedly negotiated and called conferences for unity, but the A.S.P. always resisted, until the rank and file of that body finally settled the question of Communist unity. The A.S.P. leaders became more reactionary in the course of their efforts to justify their sectarian position; one of them subsequently explained the collapse of the A.S.P. as due to the influx into that Party of untrained young workers who had little knowledge of "principles." But they did want to respond to the Comintern demand for unity, so they removed the foundation (themselves) of Reardon, Everitt and Co. into the C.P.A.

Delegates represented both groups at the Third Congress of the Communist International and in "The Communist," dated September 2, 1921, it was announced that the C.I. demanded that the two parties unite. A communication was later received from the E.C.C.I., the first clause of which drew attention to the absence of differences in principle, programme, or tactics; that differences arose only out of local differences, and demanding unity between the parties by the end of January, 1922. Comintern representation was suspended for both parties until Communist unity was achieved.

In the meantime, syndicalist elements, led by Tom Glynn and J. B. King, left the C.P. and formed the Industrial Union Propaganda League. A new paper, "Direct Action," appeared, bearing the date December 1, 1921. This movement did not exercise much influence.

The executive and the Conference of the C.P. of A., held during the holidays at the end of the year, tried to effect unity, but the A.S.P. refused to participate, stating it had appealed against the decision. This was followed by a call for a unity conference to meet on February 18, 1922. The C.P.A. invited the other C.P. (the A.S.P.), the Workers' International Industrial Union, the Industrial Union Propaganda League, Communist groups throughout Australia, and revolutionary groups working in unions.

The A.S.P. did not respond, but those who did decided to constitute the "United C.P. of A."

The members of the A.S.P. had begun to revolt against the continued refusal of the Executive to assist to bring about Communist unity. They demanded the resignation of Ray Everitt

from his position as editor of the "I.C." This he refused to do unless paid wages he claimed to be due to him. With the assistance of Reardon and others, he subsequently sold the plant and as the "Communist" of July 7, 1922, states, "The only printing works owned by the revolutionary movement in Australia passed into private hands to gratify the greed of Ray Everitt."

On July 15, 1922, at the Communist Hall, Sussex Street, Sydney, a unity conference was held between the U.C.P. and the A.S.P. Little difficulty appears to have been encountered, and the period of two Communist parties came to an end. Already the Comintern could exercise great influence upon the movement in Australia.

But while no breakaway parties have since been formed, the Party had to go through some trying times before it could enter the period of ideological and organisational consolidation of the last six years. Before the end of 1922, an unprincipled faction struggle took place in Sydney, but the Party was now much stronger and the Party Congress held at the end of the year overcame the tendency to disruption.

A review of the next period reflecting the influence of the relative stabilisation of capitalism in liquidationist tendencies, and ending in the expulsion of J. S. Garden, must be held over owing to pressure on space. Also the following period, in which, despite determination to maintain organisational independence, the Party was very much under the influence of reformism, and the Sydney Trades Hall. This latter period ended with the struggle against the right wing, which began at the end of 1929 and continued during 1930, with echoes at later dates. In 1930, the Party began to learn how to struggle against opportunism and for a correct line, and the coming Congress will reflect the growth of our Party and its connections with the masses, and demonstrate the unifying results of the ideological struggles carried on in the last period in the light of the teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, for the line of the Comintern.

Australia's Anti-Militarist Tradition

PART II (Continued)

"... Thirty, Forty, Fifty Years Ago"

By J. N. RAWLING

But, in addition to the more or less sham opposition to the war inside of Parliament, there was a great amount of real opposition outside. The war was unpopular, although the fact that it was a small war and demanded only relatively a few volunteers, prevented that unpopularity from extending and leading to action. The attitude was: if a man wants to go, let him go! Enlistment was not on a mass basis.

However, amongst the organised workers there was a latent opposition that was widespread; and the working-class Press was, in general, hostile to the war, and to British imperialism that was undertaking it. In Victoria, the widely-distributed and influential radical Labor paper "The Tocsin" led the opposition long before war was declared, and long before the sending of troops from Australia was mooted. "In no sense whatever," said that paper in its issue of May 18, 1899, "are Transvaal troubles Australian concerns. The only attempt made to justify our interference is the statement that many Australians are in the Transvaal, and that is as flimsy an excuse as could be concocted. The remedy is simple. If they don't like the Transvaal they can return to Australia. They have no tittle of right to expect their native land to embroil itself in a brawl with the Boers, the end of which cannot be foreseen, simply because they have left a free country and found another in which they are not so free, simply because they are foreigners." Through its columns the paper sought to counteract the influence of the meetings that were being organised in town halls in the capital cities by the jingoes spoiling for a fight—or massacre. Nor was "The Tocsin" ready to admit that Australia was freer than the Transvaal. "If one had to choose between Fitzgerald and MeEacharn, of Victoria (shipping magnate the latter, and active in demanding war—J. N. R.), and Kruger, of the Transvaal, we can hardly credit that the latter would be much the worse." ("Tocsin," 22/6/99.)

The first venture of Australian Imperialism (in the Sudan,

1885), the annexation of New Guinea a year before, the rapid growth of Australian industry, the victories over the unions in the 'nineties, and the hoped-for early achievement of Federation, were signs by which a prophet could have gauged the trend of imperialist sentiment, and predicted that the next war in which the British Empire should be engaged would find the ruling class our hypothetical prophet would have proved himself a true one. "Ever since the Sudan Contingent farce," said "The Tocsin"

(20/7/99), "the jingo-dingoes of Australia have been subject to periodical attacks of martial ardor. . . . But when the issue is one in which a mighty nation buckles on its armor against a handful of placid Dutchmen, merely for the sake of making it easier for British, French, American, and cosmopolitan boodlers generally to plunder their victims, the offer of Australian troops to tail up the raid becomes more than a folly—it is a crime. . . . So far as Victoria is concerned, no jingo-dingo in a high place has so far ventured to offer a Victorian Contingent for the Transvaal. 'The Tocsin' awaits anxiously the traitor who will make the first move. Meanwhile, it lies low and sharpens its sword."

But, common sense, we have no hesitancy in retorting at this distance, ought to have taught the Victorian anti-imperialists that "lying low" would not avail, but would be taken as a sign of weakness. Not "lying low," but being up and doing—mobilising and strengthening the latent opposition to the approaching war—would alone have been able to prevent the sending of a Victorian Contingent. Action by the Victorian Government, on the other hand, showed that it did not intend to "lie low." On the Thursday after the above statement appeared, the Yarra Bank on a Sunday. The seller was John White, an old man then, but one who had sacrificed much and fought hard in the interests of free speech and the working class movement. With J. W. Fleming, the anarchist, he had been largely responsible for keeping going the May Day processions and both of them were active in the anti-sweating agitation, which led to the passage of factory legislation. The persecution of "The Tocsin" continued for weeks, in attempts to cripple the paper. And it was not long before the Victorian Government offered troops.

Again, the churches were to the fore in mobilising opinion in support of the war and, in the words of Lowell, "patching fig-

leaves for the naked truth." Church papers took up the cry that the war was being fought in the interests of the poor "outlanders" in the Boer Republics, who were not given the vote. That, it will be remembered, was the official justification of the war. And, by the way, it still remains the justification that appears in the school history books. "The Mitre," official organ in Victoria of the Church of England, was one of those which would have Australians go and lay down their lives so that the "outlanders" might have the vote! "The one jarring note," said that paper (Oct. '99), "is the opposition of the Labor Party in every colony to the rendering of assistance to the mother country. And yet if war be justifiable, this is one which should approve itself to the working classes, for it is undertaken to achieve for fellow-workers (many of them Australians) in South Africa the liberties of which the Labor Party here are so rightly jealous." What this pious paper forgot was that if the Boer failure to give the vote to English and Australian miners were justification for a war, and for the slaughter of thousands, war would be justified by Australia on England! For the English workers in South Africa who were not given the vote would not, in many cases, have had the vote had they remained in England! So, voteless men in England and the sons of voteless women, had to fight in South Africa because Englishmen voteless at home were also voteless in South Africa! It must have been men like these churchmen whom Christian clergymen tell us Christ scourged from His temple.

One clergyman's voice was courageously raised against the war, as it was later raised against the Great War, conscription, and the approaching second world war. That clergyman was the late Rev. A. Rivett, who was then Editor of the "Murray Independent" (later called the "Federal Independent"). He used his paper in opposition to the waging of war upon the Boer farmers, and wielded his pen against British and Australian jingoism and pharisaism. "We make the Outlanders' deprivation of the franchise," he said, "the ground on which we send 50,000 troops to the Transvaal, whilst half of our own people in England have not yet got the franchise." But at the same time, on the occasion of the sailing of the first contingent, the Bishop of Newcastle was saying that "the very streets of Newcastle are consecrated by the feet of those noble heroes." So do clergymen differ in their interpretations of the Master's wishes!

At about this same time, J. A. Verhoef, one of the founders

of the Johannesburg Labor Party, was in Australia telling the truth about the position in the Transvaal. "The Outlanders," he said in a statement to the Labor Press ("Queensland Worker," October, 1899), "are divided into two classes. There is the working class outlander and the capitalist outlander. The working men do not complain about the Transvaal Government. The Boer law is as liberal as the English, and makes no distinction between Boer and foreigner." The whole war and the agitation that led to it comprised "a gigantic capitalist plot." This statement was widely published in Australia, and helped to crystallise working-class opinion in sympathy with the Boers.

In its issue of September 24, 1899, "The Tocsin" published extracts from Olive Schreiner's noble appeal for peace and protest against the war. "There is peace to-day in the land," she said, "the two great white races, day by day, hour by hour, are blending their blood, and both are mixing with the stronger. No day passes but from the veins of some Dutch South African woman the English South African man's child is being fed; not a week passes but the birth-cry of the English South African woman's child gives voice to the Dutchman's offspring; not an hour passes but on farm, and in town and village, Dutch hearts are minding about English, and English about Dutch. If the Angel of Death should spread his wings across the land and strike dead every man and woman and child of either the Dutch or English blood, leaving the other alive, the land would be a land of mourning. There would not be one household, nor the heart of an African-born man or woman that would not be wrung with grief. We should weep the friends of our childhood, the companions of our early life, our grand children, our kindred, the souls who have loved us, and whom we have loved. In destroying the one race he would have isolated the other. Time, the great healer of all differences, is blending us into a great mutual people, and love is moving faster than time. It is no growing hatred between Dutch and English South African born men and women that calls for war. . . . In the background we catch sight of misty figures; we know the old tread; we hear the rustle of paper passing from hand to hand, and we know the fall of gold; it is an old familiar sound in Africa; we know it now!"

One who was very active in opposition to the Boer War was Professor G. A. Wood, of the Chair of History, at the University of Sydney. Both he and Arthur Griffith were active in the Anti-War League founded by Griffith, who was then member for

Waratah in the N.S.W. Legislative Assembly. The 1902 Annual Conference of the N.S.W. Political Labor League, which began its sittings on January 27, received a deputation from the Anti-War League, consisting of Professor Wood, Mr. B. E. Stevens, and Mr. W. B. Melville. Professor Wood, principal speaker of the deputation, said that the League had been formed to do all it possibly could to prevent war, and especially the war in South Africa; that, while £200,000,000 had already been spent on the war, the recent speech from the Throne had stated that the present time was inopportune for any social reforms, although one-third of the population of London received less than 21/- per week per family, and 300,000 of them had only one room per family; and that the P.L.L. should urge that the imperial Government abandon its demand for the unconditional surrender of the Boers and that lavish compensation be given to the Boers for the burnt farms and the devastated country.

A few days later a public meeting was held in the Elite Hall, Queen Victoria Markets, called by the Anti-War League. There were present the President (Prof. Wood), W. A. Holman, M.L.A., G. S. Beeby (now judge), Arthur Rae (now active in the Movement Against War and Fascism), A. G. Stephens (the poet), Dr. McCarthy, and others. A petition was circulated, upon which were to be collected signatures, for presentation to the Imperial Government. It called for immediate cessation of the war, complete amnesty, compensation for destruction to Boer property, and immediate self-government for the Boers.

At the P.L.L. Conference on the following Friday (January 31), Arthur Griffith moved the suspension of standing orders to allow his moving that the President of the Conference be instructed to sign the Petition of the Anti-War League. His motion for suspension of standing orders was carried by 37 votes to 27. He then moved that, "The Conference direct the President to sign the Petition." Immediately, Mr. Johnson, of Orange, moved an amendment: "That this Conference desires to place on record its implicit confidence in His Majesty's Government in the conduct of the South African war, believing that the efforts being made, will result in an early, enduring and honorable peace."

The Chairman, however, ruled the amendment out of order, and discussion on the motion began. S. Smith, M.L.A., thought it should be left to individuals; he did not wish the impression to get abroad that the petition represented the views of the Labor Party. Clara, M.L.A., opposed the motion—"because it

had not been properly brought forward." A. Rae supported the motion, as did Holman, M.L.A., who said that, "it will be shown that the party cannot divide upon the question of this war." James Wilson, M.L.A., opposed the motion, but Johnson, of Orange, said that, "so long as we are a part of the British Empire we should support that Empire, right or wrong." Keegan supported the motion, but Kelly, of the Seaman's Union, opposed it.

The motion was lost by 36 votes to 35! The governing body of the Political Labor Party had gone on record as being in favor of the war of extermination that the British, with the aid of Australian troops, were carrying on against Boer farmers, their wives and children! The "Sydney Morning Herald," in an editorial, congratulated the Conference "on escaping a peril that threatened it with a decisive split in its own ranks, and the disapproval of no small majority of our people." And the "Herald," proceeding to attack the Anti-War League, just as it does to-day, said that, "This zeal to stop a war which we did not begin (did we ever begin any war?—J.N.R.), and to reward those who thrust this war upon us, is likely to be misrepresented in places where it will have more influence than in Australia." The "Herald" meant Europe, where there was much anti-British feeling. So, the "Herald" called for patriotic meetings and demonstrations in all the capital cities and the big towns.

The "Herald," of course, had always shown its patriotism. John Fairfax and Sons evidently felt they had something to gain by war, for, two years before, when they had subscribed £1000 to men's Contingent was mooted, adding their mite to the mites of other jingoes—for example, a Riverina squatter, £5,000; Walter R. Hall, of Potts Point, £5,000 ("more if required"); a well-known Sydney merchant, £3,000; Miss Eadith Walker, of Uralla, £1,000; P. H. Osborne, Carrandooley, £1,000; the "Daily Telegraph," £250; and so on.

On the following Monday (February 3), however, another attempt was made to have a motion carried by the Conference calling for the cessation of the war. This motion was carried by 39 votes to 25, an amendment pledging confidence in the British Government being defeated. The motion ran: "That this Conference believes that, with a view of terminating the war in South Africa, autonomy such as we enjoy in Australia should be immediately granted to the Transvaal and Orange River Colonies, that the ruined farmers be restocked, and an

amnesty be granted to Cape rebels and Boers in arms, and that the foregoing resolution be conveyed to the Federal Premier and Liberal Leader in England."

There began then an orgy of demonstrations to recreate or keep alive the sentiments of patriotism and jingoism which were necessary for the carrying on of the war. In Sydney, the Town Hall was made available for a public meeting on February 10, and the "Herald" published an avaianche of letters attacking the Anti-War League and Professor Wood. The latter was instructed to appear before the University Senate at its next meeting. The usual jingoistic speeches were made at the Town Hall, and the usual "Herald" leader appeared on the following day. Four thousand people were reported to have been present. John See, Premier, spoke, and "Yes-No" Reid, and the "Herald" desecrated Lincoln's Gettysburg speech by applying its sentiments to the imperialist brigandry in South Africa. All combined to express loyalty to a Government which had "avoided the final rupture with the Boer people as long as possible," and their determination that "that Government which had dragged us reluctantly and unpreparedly (as in 1914—J. N. R.), into a great war, must be broken in the sight of its people and the nations of the earth." ("S.M.H." leader, 11/2/02.)

The same issue of the "Herald," which reported the Town Hall meeting, announced that Professor Wood had been censured for his speeches, "which lacked the strict impartiality and freedom from passion," which should characterise a Professor of History. "Impartiality!" What a word! From 1914 to 1918, and again in 1922, on the occasion of a threatened Turko-British war, Professor Wood again lacked impartiality and freedom from passion. But he was not censured then—for then he supported war!

Patriotic demonstrations continued: in Melbourne, in Adelaide, in Newcastle, in Parkes, etc. In Newcastle the Adamstown and Wallsend Labor Leagues repudiated the motion carried at the P.L.L. Conference, John Estell, M.L.A., being one of the prime movers in the agitation which led to these decisions. Later, the Merewether Labor League also repudiated the Conference decision, another Labor M.L.A. being sponsor to the move: Alfred Edden, who explained that he had voted against the sending of a contingent at the beginning of the war, not because he was opposed to it, but because he thought it would soon be over, and we would have had another Soudan fiasco: that is the Australians would not have had a chance to fight!

October, 1935

In the meantime, the Anti-War League grew. The petition, outlined above, was got out, and signatures were being collected. At a meeting held at the "Worker" office on February 6, set out the objects of the League to be:

- (1) To substitute arbitration for war in international disputes.
- (2) To aid in bringing about international disarmament.
- (3) To forward the attainment of these ends by arousing the public sentiment of Australia to a recognition of the fatal effects of warfare on social and commercial life, and of the dangers to popular rule and freedom involved in militarism.
- (4) To assert the principles of freedom, foremost among which are the rights of self-government and the liberty "to think, to utter, and to argue according to conscience."

At the next meeting of the Anti-War League it was announced that the A.W.U. had instructed its president to sign the petition. So, in spite of the activities of the jingoes and their Labor dingoes the Anti-War League and anti-war feeling grew amongst the rank and file, and the Boer War itself was responsible for creating a lasting anti-war feeling among a large number of the workers of Australia.

We have seen, in a previous instalment of this series, how the prospect of the Government's use of the citizen forces against the workers during a strike or lock-out was the main basis for the Socialists' attack upon the compulsory training scheme. There has been plenty of warrant for anticipating such action. The example of the Swiss Citizen Army (upon which the Australian citizen forces were modelled) was presented by the Socialists. That army had been used in industrial disputes probably more than any other. But there was no need to go outside of Australia to find examples. Indeed, the use of the military against the workers was fairly common before Federation, and the memory of such use persisted. Nor did the citizen forces of the Federal Parliament oppose the use of the citizen forces against the workers. We have referred already to the official opposition by the Labor Party of Senator Rae's motion (in 1911) to prevent the citizen forces from being used in industrial disputes. Later on the Queensland Premier asked Labor Prime Minister Fisher to use the military against the strikers in Brisbane. While refusing then, Fisher said: "Whilst the Commonwealth Government is quite prepared to fulfil its obligations to the States if ever the occasion should arise, they do not admit the right of any State to call for their assistance in circumstances

which are proper to be dealt with by the police force of the State." In other words, use the police force first—if that fails, call on us!

Before Federation, however, each State had its own military and naval forces to use against the workers. So, Nordenfeldt guns "protected" the coal mines in Newcastle during the strike of 1853 and mounted troopers with drawn sabres attacked strikers at Circular Quay in 1890. The classic example of the use of the military against the workers was the attack upon the Ballarat goldminers at Eureka, in 1854.

In the 1890 strike, however, the military forces were used both in New South Wales and in Victoria. It was in the latter State that Colonel Tom Price made his infamous speech to the Victorian Mounted Rifles in Victoria Barracks, Melbourne. It was on Sunday—the Sabbath Day—August 31, 1890, that he addressed his men as follows:—

"Men of the mounted rifles, one of your obligations imposes on you the duty of resisting invasion by a foreign enemy; but you are also liable to be called upon to assist in preserving law and order in the colony. This latter task is now required of you in the event of circumstances requiring your aid. Should the necessity arise, I have no fear that you will do your duty like men and soldiers. I do not think your aid will be required, but if it is, let there be no half-measures in what you do. To do your work faintly would be a grave mistake. If it has to be done let it be done effectively. You will each be supplied with 40 rounds of ammunition—lead bullets—and if the order is given to fire, don't dare let me see one rifle pointed in the air. Fire low and lay them out—lay the disturbers of law and order out, so that the duty will not have again to be performed. Let it be a lesson to them. Treat any comments that may be levelled against you in the streets with the contempt which they deserve. Don't lose your heads or your tempers." The troops then marched off to divine service.

During the same strike, however, occurred an incident that deserves being brought into the light again—an incident that should have brought more honor than it has done to those who participated in it. It was concerned with an attempt to mobilise strikers to break a strike, long before the renegade Socialist, Briand, successfully tried the same tactic to break a railway strike in France.

The ships of the mercantile marine were all lying idle in Mel-

October, 1935

bourne harbor. The strike had successfully tied them up. Merchandise could not be moved. The Cabinet was at its wits' end. The ships must be got to sail. Captain Mann, senior naval officer of the Victorian Navy, was summoned to meet the Cabinet. He departed after the interview with the laudable ambition of breaking the strike.

He issued an order to the Victorian Naval Brigade that its members should "immediately return their arms, accoutrements, and uniforms into store and hold themselves in readiness to take their places on board such ships of the mercantile marine as should be placed at the disposal of the Government for services to be hereinafter specified." Captain Mann was going to break the strike by mobilising his naval brigade and have it man the ships!

But—the men of the Naval Brigade were, in the main, members of the Seamen's Union and the Riverside Laborers' Society. They gathered in the Chamber Room of the Trades Hall Council in full uniform and heard the order read out to them. What was their answer?

"Mutiny!—We will take the consequences. We are resolved to do neither. We will not surrender our arms, nor will we cross a plank for Captain Mann or the Government!"

And, according to an eye-witness, their determination was emphasised by the rattle of rifle-butts on the floor and the grasping of cutlasses. So ended ignominiously Captain Mann's attempt to break the strike by mobilising his navy. An episode that surely demands remembrance!—and a place in Australia's anti-militarist tradition!

(To be continued)



On the Question of Illegal Work

(1) The Struggle Against Bourgeois Terror

The accelerated tempo of Fascisation, which is common to all capitalist countries in one form or another, faces the Communist Party particularly acutely with the problem of the struggle against terror. The role of the terror in the system of the means of defence of the class domination of the bourgeoisie has been and will be growing every day, parallel with the sharpening of the class struggle. In some countries the bourgeoisie has already passed to open forms of civil war (Germany, Poland, Bulgaria, etc.); in others it is preparing such a transition with the aid of a whole system of terror against the mass revolutionary organisations and Communist Parties (Czechoslovakia, etc.). Now the majority of the Communist Parties is already working in fact in illegal conditions, although some are formally still legal. The bourgeoisie is passing "in its own way" to the second round of revolutions and wars. It has seriously taken into account the experience of the first round of revolutions and wars; during a number of years it built up special police and army apparatus to combat Communism. The state apparatus of the bourgeoisie took years to specialise; it worked out the most refined methods of devastating and destroying the vanguard of the working class—the Communist Party.

In this respect the Social-Democratic ministers and chiefs-of-police in Germany, the Labor ministers in Great Britain and the Social-Democrats in all countries have rendered the bourgeoisie a service of no little importance. Not only have they been at the back of the old patent spies and executioners of the working class, but they have introduced a "new stream" into the filthy trade of the secret services. They have enriched the apparatus of state by their direct acquaintance with the labor movement, with people and organisational forms. Throughout the world, Social-Democracy has played a most important part, the part of contractor of human material for both the police and army apparatus and the cadres of provocateurs. In this sphere also the role of the Social Democracy, as the main social support of the bourgeoisie, has found full expression.

In its police and army apparatus, and also in special fighting mass organisations, the bourgeoisie trained considerable num-

bers of well-trained cadres for the struggle against the revolutionary movement. The wave of terror started by the National-Socialists in Germany showed how the bourgeoisie can create, with the aid of demagogy and provocation, a mass pogrom complex among the petty-bourgeoisie it deceives, and in the swing of this mood direct the forces of the State apparatus and the Fascist gangs—throws hundreds of thousands simultaneously—to ferret out, catch, and destroy the Communists, the revolutionary workers. Mussolini did the same before the German Fascists. The Communist Parties now have to take into consideration not the "normal, regular" attack of the apparatus of the political police (which many of our comrades naively imagine to be only a few dozen detectives hunting around the town), but the carefully thought-out mass acts of terror on the part of very large police and army apparatus, which have whole terrorist organisations at their disposal.

The establishment of the Fascist dictatorship evoked a great wave of resistance and indignation among the workers of the whole world; it has caused an extreme strain in all the imperialist contradictions, but at the same time it found a reflection in the intensification of petty terrorist tendencies towards the working class among the bourgeoisie of the whole world.

The fight against terror has now become one of the principal, one of the most outstanding tasks of the Communists. It is now one of the main prerequisites for the mobilisation of the masses and the transition to higher forms of struggle, to the struggle for power. Whoever does not understand the whole importance of the fight against terror during the present period of development does not see the prospects of the fight for power, does not understand the role of the Party as the vanguard and organiser in this fight.

Underestimation of the importance of the struggle against terror of all forms of this struggle—the mass political campaign in defence of the C.P. and the revolutionary organisations, organisational measures for the protection and safety of the Party organisations, the mass fight against provocation—is unquestionably a Social-Democratic hang-over in our ranks. The basis of underestimation of the importance of the fight against terror, of the adaptation of Party organisation to illegality is legalism, the glossing over of the role of the bourgeois State as a class apparatus of violence.

The lagging of most of the Parties in the sphere of political struggle against terror, the inefficiency in reacting to each

attack on the toiling masses and the Party by an extensive campaign of protest and struggle, show how strong legalist superstitions still are in our ranks, how weak is the understanding in certain links of our Party that the Communist Party is a party of class war, and that we approach the revolution, not peacefully and painlessly, but by means of the fiercest class battles, breaking down the resistance of the bourgeoisie, which defends itself by all means at its disposal.

But if there are serious shortcomings in the sphere of political mobilisation of the masses against terror, there are no less serious shortcomings in the sphere of switching the Party organisations over to new methods of work in connection with the intensified terror. Too little attention is devoted to the work of safeguarding and protecting the ranks of the Party from the blows of the enemy, there is still too little care and thought in this sphere. The task before legal parties is not to let themselves be caught unawares and cut off from the masses at the moment when the most extensive and actual contact with the masses is necessary; to be able to hide from the enemy when it becomes necessary, but not to hide from the masses, to mobilise them with still greater energy to strike a blow at the enemy.

We must take the fact into consideration that the enemy will attempt to deliver blows of this kind at the most serious moments—during big class battles or in war time, when the bourgeoisie is particularly interested in paralysing the Communist Party, and when the interests of the movement require maximum activity on our part.

Wherever the Party is obliged to assume legality—which is determined by the concrete relation between our forces and those of the enemy—it must do so with a fight in every section of its mass work, for then the Party does not become isolated from the struggling masses, but, on the contrary, maintains live contact with them in illegality, maintaining a continuity in struggle. A classic example of this is the illegality of the Bolsheviks after the July days of 1917. An excellent example of the fighting transition to illegality has been given by the German Party.

The main point of the task of illegal Parties, both those which have recently been driven into illegality and those which have been working in illegal conditions for many years, is to work out methods for preserving the organisation, its cadres and apparatus from devastation as fully as possible, and at the same time to maintain live contact between the organisations

and the masses. This calls for working out special conspiratory methods for each Party; for a firm Bolshevik organisational policy, and, a point of particular importance, for an acquaintance with the methods adopted by the army and police apparatus in this fight against us. While the secret services make a systematic study of the Communist Parties and have recourse to the most refined methods of struggle against the Communists the latter devote very little attention to studying the methods of the enemy. And the police apparatus to-day have in their filthy formula: "Hold tight and don't let go." To-day the secret service, in accord with the general disintegration of capitalist society, employs the most disgusting methods of provocation; it builds up a whole system of various forms of provocation; it acts on a definite plan, which is frequently carefully thought out. To preserve the fighting ability of the Party organisations is to be able to understand the enemy's plans and to avert his blows. This means, first and foremost, to be able to fight against the enemy's most disgusting and most dangerous weapon—provocation.

(2) The Basic Principles of Illegal Work

The basic principle of the illegal work of the Communist Parties—worked out through decades of Bolshevik underground activity—is the ability to preserve the mass character of the Party in its underground activity during the most savage terror. The essence of illegality does not lie in hiding a small group of people from the enemy; it lies in carrying on uninterrupted mass work, and in having a constant influx of new help from the masses—this with the help of a strongly-welded hidden organisation. A strong illegal party is a party deeply rooted in the masses, and surrounded by large cadres of sympathisers and revolutionary non-party activists. The Communist Party, in general, does not recognise the Social-Democratic division into active (functioning) and passive (only dues-paying) members of the Party; but, despite many years of struggle, these Social-Democratic survivals still exist in a number of our Parties. These must be entirely outlived in the illegal Parties; here, every party member must be an activist, working in and leading a group of workers sympathetic to the Party. The basic difference between legal and illegal methods of work does not lie only in conspiracy. It lies in a different system of mass work; in the cohesiveness of the Party; in its ability to tie itself up with the masses, and to find a road to the masses through the hardest

conditions of terror. Underground work demands a different structural system; different systems of leadership, of connections, of cadres; different methods of recruiting and of holding new Party members; different methods of publicity and of distribution of publications. Thus, the essence of the thing is not only conspiracy itself; the task of conspiracy is to make all this work easier, and to secure its inviolability. Conspiracy does not exist of itself. Conspiracy is an inalienable, integral part of the methods of underground work; it pervades all branches of the work, the entire organisational structure. Conspiracy in a mass Communist Party exists only together with mass work; it degenerates in the absence of mass work, and under incorrect structure of party cadres. Conspiracy is a supremely organisational concept. If you hear complaints about lack of conspiracy in the cadres of this or that party, it means that that party's systems of work, of leadership, and of education of cadres, are no good.

Frequently, the question of transition from legal to illegal work is considered only from the administrative-technical point of view—is confined only to the preparation of an underground technical apparatus. Undoubtedly, the preparation of an underground apparatus and means of communication is necessary to secure the party's fighting ability in sharp moments. The experience of the C.P.G. has confirmed all the importance of this work; the pre-arranged resources made it easier for the Party to re-arrange its apparatus and to preserve its important connections. But—as is shown by the German experience and by the experience of a number of other illegal parties—this is not enough; this is only a part of the task. It is necessary to reckon with these facts: That, in the first place, no apparatus is long-lived; that in the process of the work, in consequence of detection and of the blows of terror, it becomes necessary to supplement the apparatus with new people—for which there must be trained, skilled cadres in reserve; and that, in the second place, it becomes necessary, in the process of the work, to reorganise the apparatus, and often the entire system, and that for this new forces are necessary. Thus, at once, the structure of underground apparatus runs up against the question of cadres and their rehabilitation and renovation. The sharper the terror, the sooner will the question of cadres come up before the apparatus. The creation of apparatus, without taking these things into account, leads, at a certain point, to a crisis in the apparatus; to the use of people who are known to the police; and,

through this, to raids which have the most grievous political consequences. Technical resources—quarters, secret meeting places, addresses, etc.—are exhausted just as quickly as the cadres.

What is the way out of this situation? In the first place, in preparation for underground work, it is necessary to break off decisively from the system of superfluous centralisation—the system that predominates at present. The problem of technical-organisational preparation cannot be solved by a small group of people. It is necessary to mobilise all the different links of the party organisation for this task, each of which carries on the work for itself, in its own field. Otherwise there will result an administrative game, instead of a serious organisational preparation. The task of the central body is to instruct, to check up on the carrying out of instructions, and to develop the tasks upon the organisations—and not to take impossible tasks upon itself, and shut off all possibilities of bringing up and training broader cadres. The objection may be raised that centralisation secures conspiracy. There is nothing more mistaken than such an opinion. Underground work demands the strictest isolation of the technical apparatus and resources. The same comrades cannot be used simultaneously for work in several technical apparatus. Similarly, it is impermissible to use the same address or quarters for different organisations. Tying them up in one big knot aggravates the danger of a raid. The more the preparative of the local organisations is developed, then, the more prepared will each organisation and each branch of party work be for underground activity, the less risk of breakdown there will be, and the more layers of cadres will be drawn into the new system of work. It is especially necessary to isolate, and to exclude from the general apparatus, the apparatus for the preparation and spreading of literature. As far as the role and functioning of the underground technical-organisational apparatus are concerned, it is necessary to curtail their functions and tasks as much as possible, and to struggle decisively against duplication of the existing legal clerical-secretarial apparatus. As in the old underground parties, so especially in the parties that are just going underground, there is always a tendency to make the apparatus into universal-service organs, and to pass on to them the most secret and responsible functions. Comrades carrying out political functions often entrust the most secret organisational work connected with these political functions to the technical apparatus (for instance especially secret correspondence,

secret ciphers, addresses); and besides that, they entirely neglect to check up on the execution of these tasks—they have no time to bother with such trifles. On the one hand, such practice overloads the apparatus; on the other hand, it makes the apparatus omniscient, and concentrates in its hands much more of the party secrets than is necessary. Every experienced underground worker knows that in underground work the more responsible comrades must carry out a number of technical-organisational tasks independently, and search out technical resources for themselves. Lordly disdain of this work is especially peculiar to comrades who have little underground experience, and legalistic and bureaucratic habits. What one meets most often in relation to the apparatus is stagnancy and conservatism, and inability and unwillingness to change people and methods of work in time. A case is known, for instance, of a certain party, much hampered by provocateurs, in which it became necessary to change the leadership; its technical station remained unchanged for over three years, and in it were carelessly concentrated all the connections, codes, etc. In another party, despite a whole series of raids, the secret meeting-place of the C.C. was not changed for over two years. Many more such examples could be cited. They all point to the same thing—lack of understanding of the fact that in an illegal party the technical apparatus are the most important and most sensitive nerves of the organisation; and that lordly disdain of them is very costly to the party. One must reckon with the fact that the work of the technical apparatus is very difficult; and that, when there is insufficient leadership and control, it is perfectly natural that many of the workers tend to follow the line of least resistance—all the more so since it is, in most cases, precisely the leading, politically responsible comrades who give the apparatus the most crying examples of neglect of conspiracy.

The central question for every party, and especially for the illegal parties, is the organisation of leadership. Clearness and unity of leadership are of decisive importance in the work of the illegal parties, where the problem of passing instructions downwards is especially complicated, and where it is almost impossible to change or correct instructions quickly. Underground leadership, which does not have those means of communication and co-ordination which are available to the legal, central, and district committees, is threatened to a great extent with conflicting directives. A **united directive centre**, unifying the political and organisational leadership of the party, is the first require-

ment for the functioning of underground leadership. The construction of this centre, and the structure of its executive or auxiliary organs are determined by the peculiarities of the work of each party; but the basic things that must be secured by a directive centre are: steady and continuous work, and the maximum elimination of chance. The experience of a number of parties has shown clearly all the harm done by division in the leading centre, parallelism, etc., and all the advantages of united leadership. Unity of the directing centre is necessary, not only in the C.C., but also in the district committees and in the heads of the C.C. (departments, committees, fractions, etc.) have many times given directives to organisations independently, over the heads of the district and section committees; these directives frequently contradicted the directives of the last-mentioned party authorities. This is especially true of the illegal parties. True, departments have now been formally abolished, and this danger thus seems to be past; but in actual fact, departments still exist in most of the parties in one form or another. If, for instance, four departments are replaced by an organisational department with five sections, the situation is not changed in essence; the greatest shortcoming of the organisational structure of the party still remains—that is, the accumulation of a mass of workers around the C.C. and in the central apparatus, at the expense of the local organisations.

The inflation of the central organs of the party is common to almost all the parties; it goes so far that in a number of cases more than half of the party workers (professional revolutionaries) are attached to the centre. Such a situation is intolerable in a legal party; and it is absolutely impermissible in illegal parties, where there is often no possibility of bringing the results of the work of the centre down to the lower bodies.* In the illegal parties the swollen central apparatus (in departments) can work at nothing but the study and working-out of problems and general information, unproductively. As a result of this, important numbers of workers are taken out of direct work, and occupy themselves with high reasoning about the work

* The tendency to inflate the central apparatus has been especially intensified in connection with the considerable numerical growth of the parties when the leading organs could not decide at once on the necessary changes in the system of leadership, and took the line of least resistance: they tried to satisfy the demands of the local organisations, and adapt themselves to the widening scale of the work, by enlarging the central apparatus.

instead of actually working—while the local organisations are deprived of qualified forces.

Not one C.P. can at present permit itself the luxury of creating organs that will only study problems. All the forces that are on hand must be thrown into direct work. The studying of problems can take place in the process of actual work, of actually instructing organisations — which are the basic methods of leadership in underground work. Only by this course is it possible to bring directives quickly and directly to the local organisations. The leadership of the illegal parties is numerically limited; and it spends most of its time and energy in tending to the swollen central apparatus—instead of coming closer to the work of the party organisations and giving them concrete instructions by means of a small, mobile, flexible corps of instructors which carries out its basic work in the localities.

The accumulation of an excessive number of workers in the centre overloads the technical-organisational resources, and at the same time forms a constant threat of breakdown.

A question of first importance for every illegal party is the creation of independent leadership in the local organisations—leadership which will be able to react immediately to events, without waiting for directives from the centre.

The strength of the Bolsheviks, before the revolution, as well as during the civil war, lay in the fact that their local cadres were able to orientate themselves at once in any situation, and further to take the correct position independently, without communication with the centre. All the C.P.'s must attain such a condition. Under present-day conditions of struggle, the active role of the party in contemporary events will depend on the independent initiative of the district and section committees. For most of the C.P.'s the time has already passed when it was possible to give instructions to their organisations in one day, by means of publication in the central organ, or even by telegraph or by mail. The sharper the situation, the more often the Bolshevik initiative and determination of the local committees will be the decisive factor in a number of concrete cases. The times of long circulars have also passed. Every local committee will be compelled more and more to work out plans of action for its own district immediately, on the basis of terse instructive directions. Special attention must be given to the question of the initiative and self-activity of the district and section committees.

The stability and fighting ability of the illegal parties are

built up, above all, by a strong system of local leadership—city committees, and above all, section committees. A party which has strong section committees can withstand the most brutal blows of terror with the least losses; for the basic losses resulting from the blows of terror are not so much on account of arrests, as on account of the loss of separate organisations and party members because of lost connections. The section committee is the leader of the most important acting link of the party—the cells, which carry on direct work in the masses. It is therefore, through its very nature, the decisive link in the system of leadership (especially in the illegal parties, and in critical moments). It is enough to recall the enormous role played by the sections in the Bolshevik party during abrupt political events and in revolution. In a number of C.P.'s there have been breaks at decisive moments between the correct line and its execution—breaks caused mainly by the weakness of the section. For instance, if the C.P.G. had had stronger sections at the moment when Hitler came into power, it would have been able to realise more successfully its correct line on the development of mass political strikes and demonstrations.

Systematic strengthening of the sections is the only possible way of keeping up firm connections with organisations and with units. All plans for securing reserve connections through to the units by the technical work of the central apparatus are illusory and dangerous. In the first place, in underground conditions, connections and their locations are very mobile, and change quickly; and the general creation of stable connections is impracticable. In the second place, the concentration of a large number of connections in the centre may lead to simply catastrophic consequences, in case of a raid. Connection with an illegal organisation is not an administrative concept; it is created and preserved only organically, in the process of actual work.

Every system of leadership, in the final account, runs up against the question of cadres. And in this question there is an essential difference between legal and illegal parties. In the legal parties, the cadres, as a rule, are more stable. Rapid changes of cadres, which has taken place and is taking place in a number of parties, comes mainly from an incorrect policy on cadres, from the inability to educate them, to divide the load of work among them systematically, to distribute the cadres, etc. In the illegal parties, under the blows of terror, the tempo of the

wearing out of cadres is much greater—because of the hard conditions of work, which demand great strain, as well as in consequence of arrests. In parties working under very bad conditions of terror, the shift in cadres of activists takes place very quickly—as for instance in Germany and in Poland. Exceedingly quick shift of cadres is undoubtedly the result of inexperience in underground work and of neglect of the elementary rules of conspiracy; but even in the absence of these anomalies the average turnover of cadres is pretty high, and demands a special formulation of the question of reproduction and advancement of cadres. The main shortcoming in the replenishment of cadres in the illegal parties is the accidental character of their advancement. After raids, the breaches are filled up hurriedly with the people who are on hand at the moment; and very often untested, unsteady people, unfitted for the work, get into the higher committees of the party. The result is the utmost disorganisation of the given link, instead of its reinforcement. The question of the individual composition and election of leadership is often solved hastily, impressionistically, with total neglect of the importance of organisational policy and of careful personal selection.

How can we avoid this situation, which to some comrades seems unavoidable? First of all, it is necessary to remove and transpose the workers, who are suspected by the police before their arrest, in this way saving the experienced cadres from destruction. Then it is necessary to prepare substitutes for the worn-out cadres; it is necessary to have constantly at our disposal a definite reserve of cadres for manoeuvring. When these conditions are observed, the initiative in the advancement and selection of cadres will always remain with the leadership of the party, and selection will be protected to the maximum extent from chance. A correct planned policy of cadres is possible even under the hardest conditions, and this has been proved by all the experience of the Leninist C.P.S.U. It is necessary to embed in the consciousness of the party from the very beginning the Bolshevik "organisational style" and to fight against every slip to the line of least resistance. We are living in a period of revolutionary upsurge. The terror of the present period is a straining of all the forces of perishing capitalism for the protection of the class rule of the bourgeoisie. It is not the terror of a victorious counter-revolutionary period of reaction. Hundreds of thousands and millions take part in the revolutionary struggle,

and ever new masses of the working class become involved in the struggle. The situation creates conditions extremely favorable for the growth of cadres as well as for the general growth of the party. Human material for cadres is supplied by the very scale of the class struggle; activists in the class struggle are material for the party. It is necessary only to wish and to know how to draw this element into the cadres. Whenever the policy of cadres is botched up, whenever it is torn away from live mass work, whenever the cadres are clogged up with accidental, non-proletarian elements, then inevitably the flow of live proletarian forces into the party and its cadres is stopped, and there finally results a crisis in the cadres. The education of cadres in illegal parties demands much more effort than in the legal parties. It is impossible for the illegal parties to arrange broad courses for the activist, or to provide him with much theoretical and propagandistic material. For this reason more attention must be devoted to the direct education of cadres in the work, and to giving the cadres concentrated theoretical and general political material. The harder the conditions for agit-prop. work, the higher must be the level of this work, and the more carefully thought-out the system. A theoretical organ, giving the activist a clear revolutionary perspective, and generalising on his daily work, is an urgent necessity in every illegal party.

The education of cadres in direct work requires two conditions: collective work and inner-party democracy. These requirements are often forgotten even in the legal parties; and in the illegal parties there is an even greater tendency to neglect both collective work and inner-party democracy. These tendencies are "justified" by the requirements of conspiracy. Such a stand is a profoundly mistaken one, for collective work and inner-party democracy are not confined to any one definite form—they can be adjusted in various forms, to fit every situation, even the most difficult. Take, for instance, the cases where an unwieldy party organ cannot come together. The party must not give up meetings, discussion, and division of work. Instead, it must decrease the particular organ numerically and have it meet less frequently—but keep on meeting, jointly working out a plan of work, and checking up on its execution. In those cases where it is not possible to call broad meetings together, there may be put into practice other forms (group consultations, etc.), for the expression by the party masses of their judgment of the work of the organisation, of the leadership, and of individual leaders. Without this it is impossible to develop in the activist a sense of

responsibility—the most important thing in all revolutionary work.

The structure of the leadership requires a combination of election and co-optation, to guarantee to the maximum extent the qualitative composition of the committees, and their connection with the decisive party organisations (with the proletarian sections and the largest factory cells).

The aim of the entire organisational policy of the party, of its entire system of leadership, advancement and education of cadres, is: maximum development of the mass work of the units, and especially of the factory cells. The work of this basis of the party, of these directly fighting links, which penetrate into the thick of the masses—this work determines the work of the party as a whole. The cell is not only a lower administrative division; the party unit is the basic lever of the party's influence on the masses. Every party directive remains a mere empty sound if it is **not brought down to the units, if the unit is not mobilised to carry it out.** The entire system of party leadership hangs in the air if its gear-teeth do not bring the units into action; and especially in an illegal party, **quick bringing of directives down to the units** and their execution by the units determine the success of daily work as well as of actions.

From this it ensues that one of the most important requirements, in the difficulty of underground communication, is timelessness of directives, with the view of bringing them **without fail** to the most important units. In checking up on the execution of each directive it is **most important** to find out whether it **reached the units, and how the units carried it out.** An illegal party has extra difficulties in the transmission of material and, because of this, in raising the political level of the units. Precisely for this reason, especially in the illegal parties, all possible measures must be taken, all forces and resources strained, to arm the unit politically—the basic strength of the party, which is in direct contact with the adversary, and which is struggling directly for the conquest of the masses. Through all the difficulties of illegality, there must be constant checking up by the section committees on the work in the shops; there must be systematic attention at least to the largest units, and direction of their work. The section and district committees must be constantly in touch with the work of the units. They must activate them, and attach active, experienced comrades to them to strengthen their work. The role of the cell is determined by its orga-

nisational form—the principles of which are action, ease of communication among the members, and the possibility of calling meetings. The numerical size of the cell cannot be determined mechanically, according to a plan common to the entire Party—it must fit in with the requirements of action and of conspiracy in the concrete situation. The cell is the part of the party which has advanced furthest into the masses, but it is on no account the most vulnerable point of the party organisation. On the contrary, when it works skilfully, the cell becomes the link of the party that is most protected **by the masses.** A cell which carries on daily mass work surrounds itself with a layer of non-party activists, and has its own system of transmission in the working masses. The scope of the mass work of the cell depends on its ability to develop the activity of the cadre of non-party workers whom it leads.

The relations of an illegal party with mass revolutionary organisations—both legal ones and those which spring up without official permission—make up a separate group of problems, of extreme importance.

Illegality is not something set and absolute. The extent to which the party must go underground depends on the co-relation of forces, on the activity of the party, and on the party's ability to get to the masses through the barriers of terror. Only a sectarian party, which is isolated from the masses, can be driven completely underground. A party which is tied up with the masses will always push itself up, will always be able to find itself a base in the mass organisations. We meet with two abnormalities in the relationships between the party and the mass organisations: the party organisations often melt into the mass organisations, lose their form, and cease to exist as solid, politically leading organisations; or, in other cases, the closed-up, sectarian party organisations are isolated from the mass organisations—the latter exist, so to say, parallelly. In the first case the party organisations lose their fighting ability, and become a sort of supplement to the mass organisation; they demobilise themselves entirely, from within—they virtually **liquidate** themselves.

We have met with such liquidative tendencies in the past in Finland, Hungary and Bulgaria.

In the second case, we have the reverse side of liquidation. The mass organisations are "rented out" to all sorts of accidentally emerging, altogether foreign elements, who often pull the mass organisations on to a course inimical to the revolutionary

movement.

In all possible forms of influence and leadership of mass organisations—depending on the character of the organisation and the general situation in the country—the following must remain an inviolable principle: **An illegal party never hides its face.** It speaks to the masses in clear Communist language, in its literature as well as its demonstrations. It continues and intensifies the recruiting of workers into its ranks. Only members of party units are accounted members of the party—and not all participants in mass organisations, as has often happened in practice. The party realises its leadership in mass organisations, and carries on work in them, through fractions; and fractions are built up not only in the leading centres, but in every link of the organisation. The necessity of involving all party organisations in work in the mass organisations should be emphasised with especial force, because in most cases party leadership of mass organisations is confined to the central fraction, and the local party organisations have no leadership or influence in the districts and sections of the mass organisations. The same thing is true to a large extent of the party's work in the trade unions, which constitutes a decisive section of the mass work of the party. Here, especially in the illegal parties, we meet most often with a gap between trade union work and the general daily work of the party organisations—with "independent" revolutionary trade union work. And on the other hand, the cells often act themselves as trade union opposition groups, instead of creating, and leading the work of a revolutionary trade union opposition.

Correct organisational policy in an illegal party makes possible also the correct application of the principles of conspiracy. A number of the most important principles of conspiracy have been mentioned above. Conspiracy is a method of preserving the party's secrets; it changes in accordance with the concrete situation. **But the basic thing under all conditions is—the strictest discipline in the work, and a sense of responsibility for the work that is being carried on, and for the preservation of the party organisation.** Responsibility in conspiratorial work must stand on a level with responsibility in carrying out the party line. Neglect of conspiracy must not go unpunished (regardless of who the guilty person is!). Regrettably, we meet with this phenomenon at every step; and it is often the most responsible comrades who give the most glaring examples of lack of conspiracy. Most often, when they violate conspiracy, comrades offer the excuse that they were in a dilemma: they were forced

either to give up carrying on the work, or to violate conspiracy. In other cases, inactivity is "justified" by the requirements of conspiracy. Both come to the mistaken conclusion that conspiracy throttles the work of the party. If that is so, then why is conspiracy necessary at all? In actual fact, there is no situation where it is not possible to work both actively and conspiratorially. In the first case we have a typical manifestation of petty bourgeois looseness and flippancy, screened under personal "heroism"; in the second—simply cowardice and opportunism.

We shall return to this question in connection with the study of the methods of work of the secret police, especially the methods of provocation, and the struggle against it; but we will take this up in our next article.

A Handbook of Bolshevism

"OUTLINE HISTORY OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE SOVIET UNION." By N. Popov. Vols. I and II. The Anvil Bookshop, 191 Hay Street, Sydney. Price, 3/- per volume.

This book is a handbook of Bolshevism. It is likely to prove one of the most useful weapons in the whole arsenal of our movement, for the story of the experiences, struggles, and triumphs of the Russian Communists is one so rich and varied that it provides a guide for our own everyday action at each step.

It is one thing to have the works of our leaders, Lenin and Stalin, but this book is the history of the movement and the party which created those works, and which they in turn influenced, formed and developed. Indeed, the struggle of Lenin against opportunism inside the movement, against the open enemies of the workers outside of it, is also the struggle of the Party, its history.

When we read this history it is easy to understand why the Bolsheviks are a revolutionary party of a different type, something new in world history. The early years of the Party are bound up with the struggle for the programme, with the understanding of the Russian reality which the working class were called upon to change. This struggle, which was led and inspired by Lenin, had first to smash the attempts to introduce English forms of opportunism, "economism" borrowed from the Fabians, and to insist upon the formation of an independent political, revolutionary, and class party of the workers as the leader in the Russian Revolution.

The Party had to be a conscious union of the advanced elements in the working class, bound together by revolutionary theory, aiming at the dictatorship of the proletariat in order to carry through the transition to Communist society. Against this conception all the opportunists fought desperately, from **Plekhanov** to **Trotsky**, not hesitating before splitting the newly-formed Party. Though Lenin's programme

has triumphed more fully than could ever have been dreamed in 1903, yet even to-day, in 1935, it is the fight to strengthen the dictatorship of the proletariat, which is the central point of the struggle against the enemies of the working class inside the Soviet Union, as the fight to achieve it remains the central task outside, in the capitalist countries.

The Bolsheviks were born and hardened in struggle. The great strike movement in South Russia, which accompanied the storms of the Second Congress, was the herald of the coming revolution. The Third Congress was already concerned with the question of how to bring victory to the working class, of the stages of the revolution, its tactics.

The questions of the agrarian revolution and the revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry, though argued by Lenin and the Bolsheviks with the greatest force and theoretical clarity, were immediate practical ones.

The year 1905 was an experience from which every revolutionary movement in the world has learned and can still learn. Here we see the Bolsheviks fighting for working-class unity and against Menshevik opportunism at the same time, here we see a mighty mass strike movement, culminating in armed insurrection, a great movement of town workers coinciding with a peasant upheaval, and the armed forces of the Tsarist state gradually slipping out of the control of their officers.

Once more we see the conflict between the Bolshevik idea of organised, conscious struggle and Menshevik reliance on spontaneity, leading to surrender or liquidation. The peasantry must be fought for, the army and navy must be fought for, Lenin insists. The failure of the revolution is largely the failure to win the leadership over the peasantry, including the peasant in uniform, due, not to any deficiencies or mistakes of the Bolsheviks, but to the fact that in the short period of the Party's existence the influence of Menshevism had only been shaken, but not destroyed.

No wonder this rich experience had its immediate effect on the world labor movement.

Bolshevism was no merely Russian phenomenon. Lenin understood clearly that 1905 was the herald of a coming period of wars and revolutions, and that the revolutionary battle for the dictatorship of the proletariat was now the central task of the world labor movement.

In the Second International, where opportunism and smug parliamentarism were firmly entrenched, the events of 1905, the appearance of the Bolsheviks were not welcomed. Yet events quickly proved Lenin right. The general strike became a general weapon of the workers in the next years, spreading from Brussels to Bombay. The militancy of the workers caused a left wing to organise in the International, weak and confused, but coming ever near to Lenin under the helpful fire of his criticism.

In Russia itself the struggle assumed a new form—for the preserva-

tion of the Party against the Menshevik and Trotskyist efforts to liquidate it. The Bolsheviks proved as strong in defeat as in the fight. By 1912 the tide had turned, the liquidators were expelled, a daily paper established, the Party's influence growing so fast that on the eve of the war it was able to claim with truth that it was supported by the majority of the industrial working class in the country.

The War, which destroyed the Second International, did not destroy the Bolsheviks. Lenin had long had in mind that it would be necessary to break with opportunism on a world scale, and he worked now for the consolidation of forces which would make the formation of a new International possible. This was only possible in the new circumstances, under the slogans of defeat of the fatherland, of converting the imperialist slaughter into a revolutionary struggle for Socialism. The main standpoints of the programme of 1903 were now to be put to the test, not in Russia alone, but throughout the world.

Bolshevism, which had all along understood the connection between theory and practice, between the Party and the masses, was able to lead the Russian workers and peasants successfully through two revolutions to the triumph of proletarian dictatorship, and put an end to the imperialist war. November, 1917, gave economically backward Russia the most advanced Government, politically, in the whole world.

How that politically advanced Government has made Russia into an economically advanced, Socialist country, while the capitalist world, under its reactionary bourgeois or Social-Fascist rulers, has economically decayed, is the story of Lenin's Party in the succeeding years.

Volume II of this history is no less fascinating and full of interest than the first. Here we see the class struggle being waged in new conditions, but against the same enemies. Now, however, the working class is ruling. Opportunism is no longer merely betrayal of working-class interests; it inevitably leads to counter-revolution. Zinoviev and Kamenev, the strike-breakers of 1917, the allies of Trotsky in 1925-27, become the inspirers of the shot that slew Kirov. Trotsky leads the snipers of the bourgeois advance guard in their counter-revolutionary struggle against the Workers' Republic.

Against these enemies, against the cowardly opposition of the Right wing also, the Party leads the working class and peasantry through the fires of civil war to the work of restoring the country's economic life. Stalin, as far back as 1925, is saying that the U.S.S.R. must and can become a country of metal, an advanced industrial country.

Under his leadership this has been achieved in ten years. The Socialist offensive has been victorious, and the building of classless society begun. The building of an impregnable citadel of Socialism stretching right across the capitalist world has proved a tremendous accelerator of history, has brought us face to face with a new round of wars and revolutions.

In this struggle, there is only one guarantee of ultimate victory for the working class—the assimilation of Bolshevik experience and the creation of mass Bolshevik Parties in all countries able to unite the working class for the storming of capitalism. This task also is advancing rapidly towards fulfilment. In the decisive battles against Fascism and reaction which are approaching, Bolshevik theory, determination, and organisation are the essentials of victory.

RALPH FOX (London).