

PROLETARIAT

ORGAN OF THE MELBOURNE UNIVERSITY LABOUR CLUB

A Minority Group Within the University

Editors—Ian C. Macdonald, Joyce Manton

Volume III. No. 1.

March, 1934.

CONTENTS.

	Page		Page
Current Notes	1	There Is No God	24
The Camp Meeting	8	Capitalism, Communism, and the Transition	26
Is Education the Solution?	11	Censorship in Australia	29
War in the Pacific	14	Our Spring	31
"Abolition of the Family"	17	Student Activities	32
What Is Happening in Cuba	20	The Reichstag Fire	34
Look Here, Stalingrad!	23		

CURRENT NOTES

1934.

THE closing months of 1933 were marked by a great increase in propaganda put forth by the ruling class throughout the whole world, stating that the end of the crisis is in sight. It is true that these bourgeois propagandists admitted that there is a long road to travel to the "prosperity" which they desire; but they nevertheless pointed to certain improvements in trade and production which, they said, marked the commencement of a general improvement in capitalist economy. How do these statements compare with the facts?

A host of events has shattered the illusions which the bourgeoisie has attempted to create. The crisis is deepening in Germany. Profound disillusion with the fascist regime exists among the great masses of the population. The working-class, despite the maintenance of the most ferocious terror, is rapidly gathering its forces and consolidating them. War preparations are being pushed ahead. The whole capitalist world has been shaken by the violent revolutionary events in France and Austria. The ruling class is having recourse, more and more, to naked white terror. The revolutionary upsurge in the Balkan States is evidenced by the fresh wave of terror there; for example, the shooting of the Roumanian railway workers, the torture of political prisoners on a gigantic scale, etc. Poland is the scene of constant fierce conflicts. The peasants, especially in White West Ukraine, are becoming more and more insurgent. In Ireland the workers are putting up a fierce struggle against the bourgeoisie and their fascist Blue-

shirt agents. In Britain, as elsewhere, the Reichstag fire trial has worked a great anti-capitalist outburst. In Spain, the working-class is continuing its persistent struggle against the forces of counter-revolution. In Italy, especially in the northern areas, numerous mass movements of workers and peasants, against the Mussolini regime, have taken place. In America the Roosevelt plan has proved to be incapable of solving the crisis of capitalism, but has resulted in a great intensification of the class struggle. In Japan the revolutionary crisis is rapidly approaching. The burdens of the Chinese war have opened wide the cracks in Japanese Imperialism. Fascist terror is more and more necessary to maintain capitalist rule.

In a number of colonial and semi-colonial countries great anti-imperialist struggles are taking place. The Cuban workers are preparing for the decisive struggles. In Palestine the Arab workers have made a powerful counter-thrust against British Imperialism, masking itself under the cloak of Zionism. In China the Soviets have again defeated the armies of the Kuomintang and the foreign Imperialists. In India revolts are constantly occurring.

All of these events indicate that the crisis in the capitalist system is producing violent convulsions within that system. The contradictions between capitalism and socialism are being accentuated. But the growth and strength of socialism in the U.S.S.R., together with its consistent peace policy and the revolutionary upsurge in all capitalist countries on the one hand, and the antagonisms between the

imperialist powers on the other, have so far prevented a renewal of armed intervention against the workers' republic. But the imperialist banditry of Japan in the East, and the savage threat on the European front, make the danger of war on the Soviet Union the main problem for the international proletariat.

Despite this situation, the U.S.S.R. has had numerous victories, of which the most important is the resumption of diplomatic relations with America.

From this brief outline it will be seen that 1934 is to be a year of storm. Wars and revolutions are already in progress. It will be possible to deal here only with some aspects of the crisis, with the acute threat of war, and with the latest developments in Australia.

Bankruptcy of Roosevelt Plan.

The tremendous wave of propaganda designed to confuse and obscure the real issues has now largely died down as a result of the exposure of the plan in practice. It was easy for Marxists to predict this failure. We knew at the outset that the ultimate result would be an aggravation of the crisis. From its inception it was obvious that it was designed to seize more profits for the big industrial and finance capitalists by crushing out their small, unorganized competitors, by impoverishing millions of farmers, and, above all, by conducting a nation-wide campaign against the working conditions and living standards of the working-class on an unheard-of scale. The shortening of working hours has meant a great intensification of labour. Ruthless wage-slashing, combined with inflation, has resulted in a sharp fall of real wages. The rapid extension of forced labour schemes for the unemployed shows clearly that American capitalism is making frantic attempts to improve its position at the cost of untold misery for the great mass of the population.

There has been a revival of industry to some extent. Especially in the steel, textile, and automobile industries there has been a sharp rise in production. But this is the result of two main factors—first, the wild speculation which is the result of inflation; and second, the increase in armaments and war preparations evidenced by the expenditure of hundreds of millions of dollars on naval building, the construction of scores of new aeroplanes, etc. This is the true face of the "recovery" which, it is alleged, has taken place.

It was recently announced that to the 4,400,000 families receiving relief last winter (i.e., about 20,000,000 people), there has been added a further 1,000,000. This does not include several million people who are receiving relief from private charity schemes. What is the significance of such facts as these?

They indicate that the crisis is not passing. In actual fact the true explanation is that American capitalism is making a prolonged and savage onslaught on the conditions of the whole population, particularly the workers, while at the same time increasing the production of the means of destruction. The outcome of the Roosevelt plan can now be seen to be an increase in the instability of American capitalism, and hence of world capitalism, and the preparation of an attempt at solving the crisis by an armed conflict.

In the closing months of 1933 industrial production again declined rapidly, following the increase which amounted, at its peak in the middle of June, to 50.8% more than at the beginning of 1933. At this time the index of monthly production (1928=100) was 89.4. In August it fell to 83.8, in September to 78.0. It has since continued to decline.

Of great importance is the fact that American capitalism is unable to increase its production in the basic heavy industries. In past crises it has always been the rule for an increase in engineering production and the building of new industrial establishments to herald the end of the crisis. No such move has yet occurred, and, despite the pressure which Roosevelt brings to bear on them, many of the trusts, especially the railway companies, are extremely unwilling to renew their stock, because, in the past few years, they have been working only 30-40% of their capacity. In addition, the increase in exports which was expected to follow inflation has not occurred, because of a general shrinkage of the world market and increased foreign tariffs. Actually a drop in exports can be noted. Thus it happened that, just when the plan seemed to be succeeding, it suddenly and "unexpectedly" failed.

It has aggravated the class-struggle to a very high pitch. The wave of strikes which broke out almost at the commencement of the plan has continued right up to the present day. These struggles are becoming wider in their scope, and there is an increasing tendency for those participating in them to follow revolu-

tionary leadership. Bitter struggles are taking place in the coal and steel industries. The main scene of these is Pennsylvania, where 100,000 miners fought against the steel code. This struggle extended to 14 other States. Martial law was declared in New Mexico, while virtual martial law existed in many other places. The following happened at the town of Ambridge. Armed guards in hundreds were made deputy sheriffs. They attacked unarmed strike pickets. In a struggle lasting 45 minutes seven workers were shot dead and forty seriously wounded. "In the words of the sheriff, the picket lines were shot out of existence."

Strikes among textile and clothing workers, among the meat workers in Chicago, in the automobile industry, and a widespread struggle involving several million farmers in the wheat-growing States, give the lie to the talk of recovery.

Not only the American capitalist class, but the ruling class throughout the whole world, watched the progress of the Roosevelt plan with great interest. They felt that its success would bring about a revival in world trade, and would be a severe blow to the rapid upsurge of the revolutionary movement. In this belief they were supported by the Labor parties. They attempted to convince the masses of the people that the Roosevelt plan was the only way out of the crisis. It was a "bloodless revolution."

The rapid worsening of the workers' conditions, the impoverishment of the farmers, the bodies of the murdered miners and steel workers in Pennsylvania, the growth of naval, military, and air expenditure, the militarization of the unemployed, all expose the plan in the eyes of the toilers as an attempt on the part of the bourgeoisie to force an even larger share of the burden of the crisis on the shoulders of the workers as a prelude to the armed conflict which is threatening.

British Optimism.

In many ways it seems that British capitalism has suffered less during the crisis than any other Imperialist power. In the statements of its diplomats there has been an air of guarded optimism.

There has been an increase in the number of workers employed. There has been a definite increase in production in the last six months. Largely as a result of the Means Test, which has reduced expenditure on unemployment in-

surance, the Budget has been balanced. Share quotations have risen steadily.

Since the war Britain has suffered from a chronic crisis in its economy and, even before the present economic crisis commenced, industrial production had not touched the 1913 level. Thus the crisis was less intense than in France, America, and Germany, only on the basis of the chronic stagnation of production. Stabilization at the present level has been attained in the following ways:

First, by abandoning free-trade and adopting an aggressive protectionist policy, Great Britain made use of its position as the only large importer of agricultural products (now that Germany, France, and Italy have made themselves self-supporting) to compel agrarian countries which supply Britain to take in return larger quantities of British products. Denmark, for example, must purchase 80% of its coal, iron, and steel goods from Britain. Thus Britain has practically succeeded in incorporating "independent" countries into its home market.

Second, Britain is the country richest in colonies, and has, thanks to the Ottawa Agreement a strong position in the Dominions.

Finally, following the abandonment of the gold standard, Britain has been able to stabilize its currency to a large extent by establishing a sterling "bloc" comprising about one-third of the world's population, and more than one-third of the world's trade.

As a result of these measures, British imports have been reduced by one-half in the past two years, while exports have risen slightly. Britain is now the greatest exporting country in the world. Nevertheless, its exports have fallen 50% during the crisis.

It will be seen that British optimism is based upon the exploitation of weaker competitors, and further oppression of the workers. The bourgeoisie themselves admit that a general improvement in capitalist economy is necessary before a marked improvement in British economy is possible. As in America, too, the export of munitions is very important at the present time.

This brief consideration of the state of the economic crisis in the two most important Imperialist countries leads us to the conclusion that capitalism is not passing out of the crisis. Desperate manoeuvres follow one another in quick succession. Sudden and dangerous rifts appear. The violent contradiction between

the contraction of capitalist economy and the rapid expansion of socialism in the Soviet Union makes the danger of war very great.

Threatening War.

During the past months the imminence of war has been frankly admitted by the bourgeoisie. They find it very difficult to hide the facts. The spokesmen of capitalism have, on a number of occasions, indicated clearly that they believe that the solution of the crisis lies in an armed conflict. Political manoeuvring is now completely subservient to the problems of the war, which has been prepared on a gigantic scale.

There can be no doubt that the chief danger is still the threat of intervention against the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union is passing from victory to victory. Out of the struggle of sixteen years the new society has arisen. Technically, the Soviet Union has taken a leading place in the world. Culturally, it is immeasurably superior to the capitalist world. The abolition of classes will soon be an accomplished fact. The standard of living will be trebled during the course of the second Five-Year Plan.

The proletarian dictatorship is showing to the toilers of the whole earth that this is the only way out for them.

The main danger point still lies in the East, where Japanese imperialism is continually making fresh provocations, seizing Soviet property, murdering Soviet citizens, and constantly threatening the Soviet border. To all these provocations the only reply has been a continuation of the peace policy which has always been an integral part of the Soviet's relations with the imperialist powers.

Despite the slander directed at the U.S.S.R. about "Red Imperialism," about the Red Army being an army of invasion (abuse which is hurled just as freely by the Labour Parties in the capitalist countries as by the diehards themselves), Soviet diplomacy has achieved some brilliant successes. These successes were built up on the basis of the international solidarity of the working class and not on the basis of its military power (though, of course, considerably strengthened by it). Only the consistent peace policy of the Soviet Union, only the widespread support given it by millions of class-conscious workers, have made it possible to utilize, in the interests of peace, the violent contradictions between the imperialist powers. Hence the recognition of the U.S.S.R.

by America, the non-aggressive pacts with Poland and France, and the re-opening of trade negotiations with Great Britain were made possible. Not only is the Soviet Union the bulwark of the world proletarian revolution. The international proletariat is the bulwark of the Soviet Union. The two are indissolubly linked. The fear of revolution is one of the main reasons why the imperialists have been prevented from conducting a new war of intervention.

A single instance will suffice. It could be multiplied indefinitely from every-day experience. Japanese imperialism is being compelled by the crisis to conduct violent military adventures in Northern China and along the Soviet border. It is attempting to solve the crisis at the expense of the workers and peasants in Japan and China, and also by seizing the rich territories of Eastern Siberia. But the very measures intended to solve the crisis have only served to intensify it. The revolutionary ferment among the workers and peasants has flared into open revolt in some places.

An incident reported in the press a few weeks ago revealed clearly the militancy of the Japanese proletariat. A train was leaving the central station of Tokio with troops for the Manchurian war zone. A crowd of 30,000 assembled to "see them off." In the "excitement" of the departure, so says the bourgeois press, many of the soldiers were prevented from leaving. *In other words, the Tokio workers held a fighting anti-war demonstration in the heart of the city and prevented troops from going to the frontiers of the Soviet Union.* No matter how the capitalists attempt to disguise the character of these events and prevent their occurrence, they occur again and again throughout the world. In 1932, 6000 people were arrested in Japan "for communism." In 1933, 9000. Mass terror, torture, and brutality of every description are nevertheless of no avail against a movement of such magnitude and such resourcefulness.

The same story is being told everywhere. The revolutionary working class is challenging the existence of capitalism ever more strongly. Unemployment, wage-cutting, worsening of working conditions, and war are all seen to be products of the same system.

Such are the contradictions of capitalism that the ruling class is driving on to the war which can only intensify the crisis. The only

genuine disarmament proposals, those of the Soviet Union, have been turned down almost without discussion. Disarmament conferences are still being used to mask war preparations. The desertion of Germany from the League of Nations reflects the increasing antagonism between France and Germany. Central Europe has become a powder-magazine, especially since the recent events in Austria. Britain, while pretending to vacillate on the question of German re-armament, is openly assisting Hitler to re-arm.

Munitions and war supplies of all kinds are being poured into Germany. Britain wishes to use Germany against the Soviet Union and against France. But at the same time British imperialism is threatened by America, and must therefore remain as friendly as possible with France. Hence its policy of apparent vacillation.

There can be no doubt regarding the undisguised preparations for war which are being carried out in every capitalist country. Secret preparations are also very extensive. We dealt in a preceding section with the effect which these preparations have had on capitalist economy, and showed the increasing economic decay which must inevitably result. There is no space here to deal with the matter in detail. It will suffice to quote Radek's summing-up of the position:—

"The imperialist powers are afraid of war, a war which, according to the well-founded presentiment of Baldwin, 'would lead to the collapse of capitalist civilization,' but at the same time they are doing everything possible to prepare this war."

This is the true analysis of the situation. The solution of the crisis lies in the hands of the working class.

Australia.

The Australian bourgeoisie has also conducted a campaign of "prosperity" propaganda. That there has been a slight upward trend in production covering a number of important industries cannot be denied. The building and engineering industries have improved during recent months. A part of this improvement can be ascribed to the acceleration of war preparations. Several factories are being built or planned, all of which will be capable of producing not only increased quantities of munitions, but also new varieties such as tanks, naval shells, the latest pattern machine-guns, etc., which were formerly imported. The

remainder of the increase must be ascribed to the necessity for replacing machinery and buildings which fell into decay during the earlier years of the crisis.

But no real evidence has been brought forward, or can be brought forward, to prove that the crisis is over, and that Australian economy will gradually return to its old level. Although the price of wool has gone up considerably, the main profit has been shared by the wool-brokers and the wealthiest graziers. The price of wheat is still at its former low level, and it is freely admitted that the position of the poorer sections of the farmers is becoming more and more disastrous. The discrepancy between the prices of industrial and primary products is still gradually increasing, with the result that the farmers are being even more severely exploited by the machine and fertilizer companies, which have reduced a large percentage of working farmers to a condition which is literally serfdom.

An investigation carried out during the past year by the Auditor-General's Department in South Australia revealed the following fantastic position of a number of farmers (taken at random from a group of 1500). Column I. contains the price which the farmer would have needed in order to clear himself of all debts (not to make a living), and Column II. the price actually obtained:—

No. of Settler.	I.	II.
1.	15/2	2/3
2.	24/9	—
12.	9/10	2/2
15.	2/8	2/3
21.	4/3	2/2

That these cases are not exceptional is shown by the Auditor-General's own words that "this group is roughly typical of upwards of 50% of the settlers in 1931, and of more than 50% in 1932." (His report goes up to June, 1933.) He revealed, also, that in the season 1932-33 there were 5.4% total failures among the farmers; 49.8% partial failures; while another 34.1% could pay only advances and interest. In all, 89.1% of the 1500 farmers of S.A. considered in the report were in desperate straits. And these conditions apply generally to the whole of Australia. Mortgages, loans, interest, rates, and taxes form a multitude of ways whereby bankers and industrial monopolists are squeezing the life-blood out of the toiling farmers of Australia.

The bourgeoisie in every State has been driven to make some sort of pretence of "relief." As reported in the "Age" of October 20, Argyle outlined the general proposals of the Government—facilitation of "negotiations" between farmers and their creditors, "voluntary agreements" between them, etc., etc.—all of which clearly foreshadow even worse oppression for the poorer farmers. For it is obvious hypocrisy to talk about a friendly agreement between debtor and creditor when the creditor has all the power on his side. The main aim of the Government is, in the simplest terms, to set up a committee of creditors over the properties of debtor farmers, the chief creditor to be president of the committee, and the committee to "direct" the affairs of the farmer, without any reference to his demands. [This state of affairs has existed in W.A. since 1931.]

The falseness of the "prosperity" propaganda is clearly shown by reference to a few facts of current Australian history. The Melbourne "Herald" of January 17, 1934, had a special section devoted to the prospects of Australian economy during 1934. On the basis of improved profits for the large monopolist group (it is quite frankly admitted that the larger interests have done "best" during the crisis) the economic "experts," business men, bankers, professors of economics, and the rest of the tribe continue to give quite a rosy hue to the picture of Australian capitalism. But at whose expense have these extra profits been obtained?

The attack on the working-class has been intensified. Just at the moment when the Federal and State governments had announced a remission of taxation on big agencies and industrial capital amounting in all to ten million pounds, the infamous Flour Tax was imposed, which, at one blow, lowered the living standard of the working-class enormously. The price of milk and tea has been raised. Food prices as a whole have remained at the same level despite wage-cutting. Further direct wage cuts have been inflicted, especially on the textile workers. The new Textile Award imposed wage cuts amounting to 50% in some cases. The meat workers have suffered a terrific drop in their wages, especially when it is remembered that many of them work for several months in the year only. A systematic policy of regression and replacement by sustenance workers is being carried out in the

railways. Many of the advantages gained during the Relief Workers' Strike have been gradually nibbled away. *In short, following the example of the bourgeoisie in Germany, America, Britain, France, Japan, and all other capitalist countries, the Australian bourgeoisie is continuing and intensifying its attack on the working-class.*

The workers have not taken these onslaughts meekly. On the contrary, they have responded by a number of strikes. A wave of strikes has spread over the whole country during the past few months. Meat workers, munition workers, miners, textile workers, wool and basil workers have all been on strike recently. The discontent has risen sharply, and increased militancy has been shown. More and more the workers have shown a desire for rank and file methods, although in most cases the trade union officials have succeeded ultimately in ending the strikes disadvantageously for the workers. An indication of this growing spirit can be seen in the success of militant candidates in the elections among the miners and tramwaymen, and the persistent struggle of the miners at Wonthaggi. So far, these struggles have been sporadic and rather brief in duration (except at Wonthaggi); but there can be no doubt that the Australian workers are now putting forward counter-demands to the attacks of the employers, and are not merely conducting a defensive fight.

So far it is not possible to say that any unity has been achieved between the industrial workers and the working farmers. There are great obstacles to be overcome. These obstacles are fostered by the capitalists in order to maintain the split between the two sections of the population whom they exploit. They tell the farmers that the only way to get out of their financial troubles is by lowering the cost of production. This, in capitalist phraseology, means, above all, wage cuts, for the industrial monopolists do not intend to forego their huge profits. Thus, according to them, low wages are necessary in order to make farms pay. The workers are led to believe that high wheat prices mean an increase in the cost of living. This is perfectly true. But, of course, the only correct point of view is that high wheat prices and high wages are both possible at the same time at the expense of the wheat merchants, flour-millers, machinery and chemical firms, etc., who at present profit greatly by paying low wages on the one hand, by buying their raw

materials cheap on the other, and by selling the finished food products, especially bread, at a relatively high price. This is exactly the case with the recent flour tax, which has benefited the farmers very little (often not at all), and the flour-millers a great deal. It is an urgent necessity at the present time to indicate to the workers and poor farmers that there is a basis of unity between them, and that the only slogan for them is to lighten the workers' and farmers' burdens at the expense of the capitalist class. Otherwise they will both be exploited. In view of the great war preparations going on in this country at the present time, it is necessary to bring this heavy and dangerous expenditure before the farmers as well as the workers, and agitate for a conversion of this money to relief of unemployment, farm debts, etc.

In view of the fact that 1934 is the centenary year of Melbourne, and is being hailed by the bourgeoisie as a year of "promise" and "prosperity," it is necessary to explain and expose the real character of the centenary celebrations. They are really designed to give greater profits to the big interests and, above all, to mask war preparations and spread war propaganda. The contrast between this propaganda and reality has been sufficiently exposed above. [This will be dealt with more fully elsewhere in this issue.]

Political developments of note have taken place in recent months. First, there is the above-mentioned increase in the militancy of the working-class, as shown by a wave of strikes, by the election of militants to high trade union positions, by the great success of the revolutionary candidate at the Flinders by-election, etc. In opposition to this there has been a marked increase in the organization of fascist forces and the fostering of fascist ideology. Statements by Kent Hughes and debates at the conference of Young Nationalists have been featured by the capitalist Press. At the next Premiers' Conference one of the points to be discussed is "Communism

and Revolutionary Activity." Revolution is breeding counter-revolution!

Of great importance are the developments within the Labour Party. Although it still influences the great masses of the workers, this Party has lost greatly in prestige. It has fostered disunity. It has assisted the Australian ruling class in a thousand different ways. Large masses of workers have become aware of this. At a meeting held by the Labour Party to protest against the flour tax, Scullin, the Federal leader, received a very bad reception from the workers present. Nevertheless, the Labour Party continues to manoeuvre under the slogan of "Unity." But this proposed "unity" is nothing but an agreement between the same old bureaucrats as to how the worker can be deceived. It is merely unity in words. The Labour Party still remains the same in its attitude towards the Soviet Union, towards the anti-war movement and revolutionary organizations. How to deceive the workers by using revolutionary phrases—that is the main problem confronting the Labour Party at present. Just as fascism is counter-revolution in its outspoken form, so is this left manoeuvring of the Labour Party a result of the increased militancy of the Australian proletariat.

We have dealt very briefly with some of the main features in the world situation at the commencement of 1934. On the one hand we see violent war preparations, intense nationalism, economic collapse, and white terror cloaked under hypocritical talk of prosperity, disarmament, and peace; on the other the growing revolutionary struggle of the proletariat, and the success of the Soviet Union. The danger of war, the danger of fascism—these are the main things confronting the working-class at the present time. Above all, the contradictions between the two systems, Socialism and Capitalism, are intensifying.

1934 will not be a year of fair weather and prosperity. Violent class-struggles and savage wars are the order of the day. The barometer indicates storm.

—Ian C. Macdonald.

Do You Know the Causes of War?

Come to the Easter Anti-War Conference.

--- SHORT STORY

THE CAMP MEETING

The following is the short story for which our prize of one guinea has been awarded. It deals with actual events which occurred in a relief workers' camp in Victoria a few months ago. Naturally, the names have been changed.

A number of entries were forwarded to us. They dealt with a variety of subjects. Most of the authors appeared to us to make the

NIGHT was falling at the relief camp at Woop Woop. The hum of the telephone wires overhead, the chirp of the crickets, and the croak of an old-man frog in the dam, were the only sounds that broke the silence of the evening; while the hum of the refuse pit and the B... O... of the big bull in the pen behind the tents created an atmosphere, compared with which the perfume exuding from a tannery was sweet-smelling.

Bob, hitching his seat a shade closer to the fire, asked:

"Well, are we all here?"

"No, not yet, there's a few to come," chorused the crowd round the open fire in front of the row of tents.

"Hey, come on, you fellows!" shouted Billy. "The sooner we start, the sooner you can get back to your cards."

"Righto, coming!" answered Frank, as he appeared from his tent followed by George, Ted, and Roy.

"That's 24. One missing—who is it?" questioned Bob.

"Oh! it's Clarkie—the father of 12," answered Charlie. "He's in bed."

"Blimey, he's always in bed!" chimed in several voices.

"Habit, boys, habit," philosophized Bob; "he must have spent a good part of his life in bed, to become the Daddy of a nation."

"Well, let's get to business," impatiently demanded Roy.

"Hullo! what's biting you, Roy? Cards going against you to-night?" questioned Mac.

"Picked him in one," chuckled Frank.

mistake of delivering statements concerning socialism and the working-class movement in a more or less abstract fashion. The following contribution is the only one which gave a really unforced picture of an incident in the working-class movement, showing how that movement does not move along rigid, stereotyped lines. This was the main reason for awarding the prize.

"Order! Order!" demanded Billy. "I move Bob take the chair."

"Second that," chorused the circle. "Set her going."

"Well," commented Bob, "I think we are all awake to the fact that Casson has sold us a pup."

"Hear, hear!"

"Too blasted right!"

"The least we were entitled to expect, when we were railroaded 250 miles away from home—up to this blasted hole—was that some effort would be made to fulfil their promises to us and make camp conditions livable. But, what's the real position? Why, there's nothing here. What's going to happen to us if it rains, with no drying sheds in camp?"

"I'll be crippled up with rheumatism," growled old Tom.

"How are we going to get on with our cooking if we get a bit of wind, with no fire-places in camp?"

"Yes, and smashing up wood with a pick, because they are too lousy to supply us with an axe, doesn't appeal to me," chimed in Billy.

"And get an eyeful of this," wrathfully demanded Charlie, pouring a dark brown liquid out of a billy; "this is supposed to be drinking water."

"Now, now! one at a time is good fishing," admonished Bob. "Give me a go."

"Sure! Order, boys!" commanded Billy.

"Well, it's evident we are all agreed that things are crook. Now, what's to be done about it? I suggest that we elect a committee right now to go and take up matters with the trump."

"Hear, hear!" heartily supported Billy. "I move that we elect a camp committee of five—a president and secretary and three others—to carry out any decisions arrived at by meetings of the gang while we are here."

"In the last camp I was in," he went on to explain, "we elected a committee. I was secretary, and we succeeded in getting things fixed up pretty good before we left. We used to think that camp was crook, but it was a paradise to this. We had drying sheds, a mess, and even lamps and enamel plates and pannikins were supplied. While here—well, the tents and bunks are all right, and it would be a good place to sleep if it wasn't for the Ghost Train."

(The Ghost Train was the express, which ambled past the camp, doing 55 m.p.h., at 1 a.m. each morning, creating the combined effect of an earthquake and a violent thunderstorm.)

Hear, hear! and chuckles.

"And Billy snoring," chuckled Frank, amid laughter, Billy being credited with all the night noises of the bull.

"We have to do more than sleep here, chaps—we have to live here," continued Billy. "Yes, live here for three months, and if we don't see to it that things are made comfortable for us, we can't expect anyone else to. The heads might think they hold all the cards; they certainly worked this deal from a cold deck, and we should let them know at once that it's no good to us, and we are going to take a hand ourselves. Elect a committee, and give it the job of getting on to the trumps bug at the toot."

"I'll second the motion," spoke up Mac. "We found on the dole work that the only way to maintain and improve conditions, prevent speed-up and slave-driving, and stop intimidation and victimization of workers the ganger got in the gun, was to have job committees. The need here is urgent, and those elected are going to have their hands full, so I hope the motion is carried and that we get a good, live committee."

"Anyone against the motion?" questioned Bob. "Hands up!"

"Not on your life!"

All for the motion. Carried unanimously.

Bill left the circle and returned with an armful of green wood, which he proceeded to place on the fire, douching the flame and causing a dense cloud of smoke.

"Leave the fire alone!"

"What the blazes are you doing?"

"Cut it out!"

A chorus of protests from the men to windward. "What's the matter with you?" snarled Bill. "Don't you want a fire?"

"Why the hell don't you get dry wood?" snapped back Paddy, making a dive at the offending green timber. "Gee! you're a flea. Sit down and stop mucking about."

"How did I know it was green?" excitedly shouted Bill. "That's the thanks I get for trying to do you a turn."

"Do us a real good turn, Bill," drawled back Paddy. "Go and bury yourself."

"Order!" "Chair!" "Sit down!" drowned Bill's excited reply.

"Now, Bill," admonished Bob. "Try and behave yourself."

"Why pick me?" barked Bill, "I——" "Order!" "Chair!" "Behave yourself!" reduced Bill to a sulky silence.

"Righto, next business, nominations for president," announced Bob. "I take nominations."

"I move Bob," spoke several voices at once.

"Any further nominations?"

"No race, Bob; you've got it all your own way."

"Next position. We want a secretary."

"Billy's the boy for that job," said Charlie.

"Too right," quoth Mac, "I nominate Billy." "I'll second that," announced Paddy; "if we give him plenty of work to do, it might stop him from making funny noises with that voice of his."

Billy's reply to this, "Funny noises, bunk! Do you know, boys, my voice won me my wife," was greeted with howls of derision.

"She had no ear for music," responded Paddy. "The poor girl must have been deaf," emphatically answered Bob.

"No, Bob, you're wrong," replied Billy, "I used to sing to her, 'I wish I had someone to love me,' and she married me to shut me up."

"And no darned wonder," unanimously voted the gang.

"Any further nominations?" demanded Bob. "Billy does me," said Mac. "But," emphatically, "he'll have to cut out snoring."

"Hear, hear!" applauded the mob.

"Now three cheers for the committee."

Bill again left the circle and, reappearing with his billy, proceeded to place it over the fire to boil.

"You're always thinking of your stomach," said Paddy.

"That's all right," replied Bill, "an army always travels on its stomach."

"So does a snake," said Bob. "But that is no reason why you should get snaky and muck up the meeting."

"Who is mucking up the meeting?" demanded Bill. "I'm not," he asserted indignantly, jerking himself erect, tipping contents of billy into the fire and smothering everybody in ashes and steam.

When the uproar had somewhat subsided, Bob demanded an explanation from Bill. "Listen, Bill, if you are not trying to muck up the meeting, then what the blazes are you doing?"

"Garn," defended Bill, "I didn't do it on purpose. Any of you mugs could see it was an accident."

"Chair! Chair! I demand that he withdraw," indignantly from Paddy. "He called us mugs."

"Yes," agreed Bob, "most unparliamentary. I'm surprised at you, Bill. Plain, ordinary mugs wouldn't come to a job like this. We're a lot of silly bloody mugs."

"Hurrah!"

"I'll move," announced Billy, "that Bill get on to his belly and do what the army and the snakes do—travel." Hearty "Hear, hears!"

"No, Gentlemen," ruled Bob, "just for this once we'll temper justice with mercy; let Bill off and get on with the business. Nominations for the committee."

"Mac." "Yes." "George." "Yes."

"We must have one of the card-sharps on. What about you, Frank?" "Sure, I'll be in it."

"Paddy." "No, you've got the best three there already. I'll move that Mac, George,

and Frank go on to the committee." "Hear, hear! I'll second that," from Charlie.

"All those in favour say, 'Aye!'" "Aye!" Against, —. Carried unanimously.

"Well, that's that," said Bob. "We will see the ganger in the morning and place the position before him. Let's see, we want an axe to start with—drying sheds, fireplace, and decent water. That right?"

"Yes," agreed old Alf, "and there's another thing, too. We want latrines at the camp. That blasted water has given me dysentery, and it's bad enough having to wear out your legs walking 300 yards to and from the station."

"Yes," concurred Bob, "we want latrines, and also some disinfectant; that refuse pit is beginning to walk!"

"Anything else we should take up while we are on the job?" enquired Bob.

"Yes, put it on him for a copper or some kerosene tins to boil water in. We can't wash our clothes in our billies," suggested Charlie.

"I'll take care Mr. Ka-Hent Hues doesn't catch me in another joke like this," growled old Alf.

"Huh, the Fascist without a shirt," snarled Paddy. "If I could have got my claws on him when our blankets didn't arrive, he'd have been a Fascist without a skin."

"Too right," agreed Mac. "It's just as well they arrived to-day. If they hadn't, there *would* have been something doing." Sentiments in which the whole gang, with memories of an extremely miserable night, heartily concurred.

"Every dog has its day, boys," commented Bob. "We'll have ours, and we'll deal with that gent then."

"Anything else?" . . . "No?" "Well, get the billy, Mac, and we'll have a cup of tea. I declare the meeting closed." —J. Hannan.

STOP PRESS

ANOTHER SHORT STORY COMPETITION.

Entries to be not more than 3000 words.

Pen names accepted.

Some small subscriptions that have just arrived make us again able to offer a prize of *One Guinea* for the best short story of working-class interest. We want to make this competition a regular feature in "Proletariat," as descriptions of events in the working-class struggle help to show that Marxism is not merely a matter of theory but is bound up with the vitally necessary day to day struggle of the workers. Whether we will be able to continue depends on the generosity of our readers. Any subscription, however small, will help us to keep going.

Send entries or subscriptions to — *The Editors, "Proletariat," Clubhouse, Melbourne University, Carlton, N.3.*

IS EDUCATION THE SOLUTION?

--- A DIALOGUE

MONTMORENCY and Williams had once been friends, drawn together by their desire to lessen the misery and chaos of the world. They had adopted, however, very different means of doing this. Montmorency wished to change human nature; and he believed this could only be done by means of education. Williams, on the other hand, thought there was nothing for it but a social revolution, for he considered that it was the social system, and not human nature, that was at fault.

Because of this difference, a certain coldness sprang up between them; but neither of them was content to let the matter rest at that. Each wanted to explain himself more fully, and felt that the other could not hear his point of view without eventually agreeing. While still in this state of mind they met, and very soon got to grips on the subject.

Montmorency: So you think, Williams, that I am following a dead-end by going in for education.

Williams: Yes.

M.: You are too uncompromising in your views. And what is more, you are extremely shallow in your thinking. You would do anything to advance the material welfare of humanity, wouldn't you?

W.: That is what I want.

M.: And yet you despise education.

W.: I don't despise it, Montmorency. I regard it as an extremely powerful weapon.

M.: Yes!—the most powerful of all weapons in the hands of the lover of humanity. Let me tell you this, Williams: every man, at the bottom of his heart, needs and desires something more than material welfare. It isn't just being alive that matters; it's self-development; it's changing from a nonentity into someone worth while. And that is what education can do for us. It can change people, by developing all their faculties, by making them use the intelligence, the sensitiveness, the powers, which are latent in them. It can enlighten them; open their minds to the beauty of the world; give them the gift of culture.

W.: That is what I admire so much in Soviet Russia. Education there is enlightening people; it is giving them all-round develop-

ment; and in particular it is making them feel that they are worth while, not mere nonentities. Soviet children are learning to respect themselves, to feel responsible; and responsibility is one of the keys of self-development. Do you know that those children have their own theatres and clubs, which they run themselves? And that the Young Communist League—whose members are from 15 to 18 years of age—has an important place in the building of Socialism? During the campaign to liquidate illiteracy, each of its members undertook to teach at least one other citizen to read and write. That is the way to make children develop all their faculties.

M.: Why, that's just why I am so interested in education; that's what I want to do with it. There is a world-wide movement to reform education. It aims at giving more liberty to the child; at making him responsible and self-reliant; and at making him learn by doing, instead of being spoon-fed by his teachers. You admit yourself that those things are worth doing; you say that they are being done in Russia; very well, if they can be done there, why not here?

W.: Because education is a weapon in the hands of society.

M.: Yes; it is a weapon, or rather a tool, by means of which society develops all the potentialities of the individual.

W.: No; it is a means by which society adapts the individual to itself.

M.: Prove that.

W.: I think history proves it. Take the education of a savage, for instance. The savage learns very little besides hunting, fighting, and a few tribal ceremonies. Why? Because that is all that his society requires of him.

M.: I don't consider that a fair example. If your rule does not apply to civilized races, it's not worth much.

W.: Then take the case of Athens and Sparta. There you had two very different forms of society, existing at the same time and within a short distance of each other. Sparta was a purely military state, autocratically ruled, always fighting for its life, and living only for war. Spartan children were trained

as soldiers — endurance, obedience, courage and physical strength were the qualities which were developed in them, because those were what their social system required. Athens, on the other hand, was a Republic, and later the head of an Empire, living by commerce—which is as much as to say, living by its wits. The Athenian had something like a liberal education; his mind was highly trained and critical. The Athenian was an intellectual; the Spartan was a soldier. Why? In each case because of the society in which they lived.

M.: Very well; for the sake of argument, I grant you that the form of society determines the form of education. Well, we want a system of education that will develop the highest powers of every individual. What is there in our society to prevent that?

W.: Class.

M.: What do you mean?

W.: As long as there is one class which has wealth and power and another which lacks them, the powerful class will try to keep the rest in subjection; and it will use education as a means to that end.

M.: Ah yes, I know what you are going to say. I am going to be told once more that modern society is divided into two classes—bourgeoisie and proletariat; and then you are going to point out that, as a general rule, the proletarian's education stops when he is 14, while the bourgeois goes on to a secondary school, and perhaps to a University. But you forget the scholarship system. By that system the cleverest children from the working class get the chance to go to a secondary school, and even to the University. Do you call that keeping them in subjection?

W.: That is one of the most powerful ways of keeping them in subjection. The worker who has had an education of that sort does not go back to his factory or his farm; he enters a profession, becomes bourgeois, and despises his old-time companions. By that means, the best brains are culled from the working-class, and drafted into the bourgeoisie. The scholarship system may raise the individual; but it certainly degrades the class.

M.: Come, come, you are exaggerating. You can't really believe that the bourgeois deliberately tries to keep the workman under. If that was what he wanted, why should he give him any education at all?

W.: Because education is his strongest weapon. Didn't one of your great educators

say: "Give me a child until he is seven years old, and I will make of him what I will"? Well, the bourgeois schools have the working-class children, not till they are seven years old, but till they are fourteen; and it's during that time that the mischief is done.

M.: Really, Williams, I'm surprised at you. Here are you, whom I've always thought to be a sane person, letting yourself be carried away by foolish ideas. You are representing the bourgeois as an ogre, a sort of child-eater. Do you really think the average teacher tries to degrade the working-class children whom he teaches?

W.: No. It is done unconsciously, probably with the best of intentions. But the result is the same. The child leaves school, not fit to rule himself and to become a responsible member of society, but fit to be ruled. He has not learnt to think for himself; he has learnt to be passive and imbibe knowledge. He has not learnt to grapple with the problems of life; his attention has been distracted from them. He has learnt nothing about his place in society or about the economic conditions with which he will have to struggle for the rest of his life.

M.: But I've told you—

W.: No; let me finish. I know what you are going to say. You want to say that this is exactly your own complaint against education, and that you intend to spend your life in trying to alter it. But doesn't it strike you that all these features of education are not accidental? Haven't you ever wondered why—in spite of that world-wide movement you told me about—education has not been altered yet?

M.: Oh, don't imagine that I under-rate the difficulties. We have an immense load of ignorance, stupidity, and inertia to contend with. All over the world there have been experiments, attempts, and theories about education. Leading educators and the thinking public agree that we want a radical change. And yet the stupid business of cramming children with undigested facts—the slavery to the exam—goes on. There has been talk of reform for years, but nothing is done. Well, that's the problem that I'm going to tackle. It's not a little thing; it's a whole life-work at least.

W.: There is only one way to do it.

M.: What is it?

W.: By revolution. Given a successful revolution, the reform that you want in education will follow—must follow.

M.: How do I know that?

W.: Because a Socialist society needs individuals who are fully developed, mentally and physically. They must have physique, because they are to be workers and builders of Socialism, and that is no light task; they need all their intelligence to grapple with the problems that face them. They must be practical people, not mere theorists. They must be at grips with reality, because they are living by new moral values, and creating a new culture. Above all, they need to be responsible and able to rule themselves.

M.: And how are you going to give them all this?

W.: By a new education, which can only follow the revolution, not precede it. Soviet Russia takes education more seriously than any other nation. Since the revolution there has been a tremendous growth in education all over the country, even in its most backward areas. Already illiteracy has fallen from 68% in 1920 to less than 1%.

M.: I have heard of this, and rather admired the rapid development of education in a country that used to be, culturally, somewhere on the level of the Dark Ages. But what we need here is not *more* education so much as a different type of education.

W.: Why, that is just where Russia has made the most remarkable advances. The worst thing about our educational system is that it makes the child passive by giving him a theoretical, not a practical training; he is usually engaged in sitting still listening to the teacher, or else reading or writing, instead of getting up and putting what he has learnt into practice. The Soviets have done away with that; they have a system called polytechnization, which unites theory and practice.

M.: I have heard of polytechnization, but I don't know what it means. Explain it.

W.: Well, the idea is to teach the child about the general processes of industry and agriculture, and the part they play in a Socialist state. He can't understand industry and agriculture without a scientific training, so he learns mathematics, physics, chemistry, and natural history, and the teaching of them is linked with real productive activity.

M.: You mean that the child learns to use tools, and to make things, at school?

W.: Yes. Every school has workshops and workrooms, and children begin by playing with tools, and naturally go on to creative labour.

So the child begins with the right attitude to work. He acquires both skill and understanding. He learns that his economic life—his importance as a worker—is inseparable from his political and social life as a builder of Socialism. So that instead of being a mechanical labourer he is a thinker. In this way, a perfectly new intelligentsia is being created—"an intelligentsia which possesses the culture of the intellect that is closely connected with labour and action. . . . These are people who think and reason for the sake of acting, and who act and build consciously and intellectually."

M.: It sounds very fine. In fact, it's just what I want to make of Education. But I fail to see why we must wait for a revolution.

W.: But it would be madness for a ruling class to train up its workmen in this way! Do you suppose that this new intelligentsia—an intelligentsia of action—would submit to be ruled? No; as long as the class division lasts, the ruling class must keep the workers "loyal"; it must teach them to respect the bourgeois method of living, to think highly of bourgeois culture, to believe in nationalism and imperialism. Teach the workers to think for themselves, to criticize their "betters," to accept responsibility, and there will be an end of class divisions.

M.: I agree with you. A man who has attained that perfection which mental and physical maturity bring can have no superiors, and will seek to have no inferiors. He will be satisfied only with equals. In a society built up of superiors and inferiors, such men have no place, except as the destroyers of society.

W.: Yes, and that is why our educators dare not try to produce such men.

M.: Do you know, I think that fundamentally we are aiming at the same thing. I too am trying to create a society composed of equals. But I have always thought that education is the only means; whereas you think that we must first have a social change, followed by a change in education.

W.: Yes, and the experience of the Soviet has shown the truth of my viewpoint. Just read this article, published in the "Student Vanguard." It is a report made by three American students who visited the Soviet Union in 1932. You will see how it bears out my contention:

"The impression we got from our study of Soviet education is that their system is complex and varied in form. This, however, is only to be expected, for besides the task of educating the youth, the government, faced with a tsarist legacy of millions of illiterates, and with a lack of greatly needed skilled and technical workers, was forced to institute a most comprehensive and necessarily multiform system of adult education. One of the things that struck us most on this tour through the U.S.S.R. was that almost everyone we met and everyone we spoke to was a student. Men and women, old and young—all are studying. One need not even talk to people, but need only to look at the kind of literature sold at the newspaper stands to realize how widespread is the demand for technical and political information. In the obscurest bookshops and on the smallest newspaper stands, one finds pamphlets and books on higher mathematics, physics, chemistry, engineering, politics, and economics; and these are not popular digests or 'Relativity Made Easy in 10 Lessons' stuff, but really rigorous text-books.

"Not only do 80 to 85 per cent. of the students receive stipends, but many of them, particularly 'Shock-brigaders,' are sent away to a summer resort or rest home for 2 months during the year at government expense. Other students may go to these resorts on payment of a very small fee. Student living expenses are further cut down by the reduction of rates they receive on railroad, trolley, theatre and cinema tickets.

"In addition to the government aid enumerated above, the students receive full workers' pay, workers' insurance, sick benefit

and so on when they work in shops, factories, mines or schools, during their practice period. It must be borne in mind that Soviet students never study theory alone, but always combine their theory with practice. Whether they be students of engineering, mining, physics or pedagogy, they always spend as much time working in their respective fields as they do in acquiring theory. Students usually study two and a half months of every semester (half the academic year) in school, and they work two and a half months either as common labourers or as engineers, according to the year they are in and the amount of theoretical knowledge they possess. Their practice is not a haphazard affair, but follows closely their theoretical studies.

"It is so arranged that the work they do during the two and a half months of practice is as far as possible an application of the theory they acquired during the two and a half months period of study. We found that even pedagogical students, in addition to their practice in schools, are also sent to a factory for a month every semester so that they may become acquainted with manual labour. This knitting together of theory and practice is not an accident. It is a direct outgrowth of Marxian teaching that theory and practice are not opposed to each other, but are complementary.

"The full implications of this we shall not go into, but one thing is certain, the Soviet student is not a creature apart from society (workers' society), but an integral part of it. He does not and cannot feel superior to his fellow workers, for he himself is a worker.
—N.S.S.

WAR IN THE PACIFIC

THE acceleration of the forces driving towards a new imperialist world war increases from day to day. Over the last six months a tremendous increase in this velocity has been remarked. What last year were only hinted at have now become incontrovertible facts. Veils have been dropped or cast aside, revealing war plans in all their naked brutality. Antagonisms the world over have intensified, have become so manifest that he who runs may read.

The Pacific presents itself as the threatening scene of a new world war. Here all possible antagonisms clash. Let us consider them.

The pound, the dollar, the yen—the depreciation of these in a race of recklessness, to undercut competitors by dumping goods at the lowest figure, has been an outstanding feature of capitalist economy during the past few months. The British and American interests (notably textile and chemical), which find themselves hard hit by Japan's lead in this

race, protest loudly and bitterly. But from Britain come equal protests against U.S.A.'s "unfair" subsidized shipping competition; in fact, the antagonism between Britain and U.S.A., which manifested itself openly at the World Economic Conference, has intensified during the past year. It is responsible in large part for Britain's temporary support of Japan's policy in the Pacific (in spite of the economic struggle between them), and is doubtless one factor in U.S.A.'s rapprochement with the U.S.S.R. Britain's heavy industries have a market in Japan, which must be protected against the encroachment of U.S.A.'s steel interests; they counterbalance for the moment Japanese attacks on British trade. Britain is also interested in Japan as a menace to the U.S.S.R. on the eastern front. But the alliance is essentially unstable and has in itself the germs of its own decay.

Unstable alliances of this kind entangle all the imperialist nations in the Pacific. Until recently the interests of Britain and Australia (read British and Australian capital) were assumed to be identical. Australian capital is of fairly recent growth, but long enough to have embraced both an anti-Japanese propaganda campaign, which enabled it to carry on war preparations, and a swing-over from that to a policy exemplified by Latham's Goodwill Mission. Australia has a favourable trade balance with Japan; the markets which Japan has been capturing in Australia are not for the most part those of Australian capital, but of European (including *British*). Hence the strengthening of the bonds between Japan and Australia will proceed coincidentally with the weakening of those between Japan and Britain. The time will come when the interests of British and Australian capital do not coincide. As yet, however, they are sufficiently in agreement to work as a political and military alliance.

On one point alone can the interests of all the imperialist powers be reconciled—that of hostility toward the growing power of the U.S.S.R. and the Chinese Soviets. Japan's intentions of conducting an interventionist war at an early date have long been flagrant. Britain and U.S.A. give support from the background—the press of both countries represents the U.S.S.R. as similarly preparing in imperialist fashion for this war. U.S.A., in spite of the treaty signed recently, would be by no means disappointed to see Japan's attacks

made on the eastern front of the Soviet Union; two enemies would thereby be weakened, and an opportunity opened for inroads on Japanese markets. In China the Kuomintang Government has signed a truce with Japan in order to direct all its efforts against the spreading Chinese Soviet Republics. In January we saw the accumulation of warships of U.S.A., Britain, and Japan assembled at Foochow, capital of Fukien, against the impending "rebel" attack. Foochow—the last strategic point on the Chinese coast not directly under the control of imperialist forces — was the centre of fierce competition among the very imperialists who were seeking to "save" it from the Chinese Soviets. The competition gives us a foresight of future clashes in the Pacific, on a much larger scale, between the same competitors.

Not only the revolutionary movement is attacked by these contending imperialisms. All China is marked out for division among them, and the growing national-revolutionary movement threatens to wrest from their grasp rich prizes of markets and raw materials. National movements in India, the Philippines, Indo-China, Malaya, Burma, etc., likewise directed against imperialist exploitation, form a great and growing menace to the hegemony of Pacific imperialisms.

And the fundamental antagonism underlying all these, the very source from which they spring, is that between the imperialist-capitalists and their own proletariat.

These antagonisms are reflected in the war preparations of the various Pacific powers, now no secret.

Japan, following on her conquest of Manchuria, has transformed it into an armed camp; the concentration there of troops (and with the troops, tanks and airplanes to an unprecedented degree), and besides this the provision of new railway lines of strategic importance, converging upon North China and Soviet Mongolia—these are now admitted war preparations. The Tanku truce, referred to above, set Japan free to attack Soviet Mongolia on withdrawing troops from China. (The situation was becoming rather hot; Britain and U.S.A. approve Japan's advances to the northwest, but not the threatened limitation of their interests south of Manchuria.)

The Soviet Union's response to these preparations has been primarily to pursue her steadfast peace policy, making agreements so far as is possible with one or other of the im-

perialist powers, thus dividing the hostile bloc. This policy has undoubtedly deferred for a time the Pacific war. A testimony from Col. P. Etherton (late H.M. Consul-General in Chinese Turkestan; Assistant Judge of H.M. Supreme Court of China, and late officer commanding 51st Anti-Aircraft Brigade, London Air Defences) is interesting: "War is the last thing Moscow wants to-day. Had Russia harboured any designs of territorial expansion, half a hundred incidents would have sufficed to set the Red Army marching. In fact, Russia's policy has been both moderate and non-aggressive." But the effrontery of Japanese-imperialist aggression has also been prepared for by a military reorganization of the Soviet Far East. Red Army troops in the area between Lake Baikal and the sea have doubled in numbers since 1931. Communications and supplies are being improved, and there is no doubt that Japanese capital's bid for empire will meet with stout resistance.

U.S.A., alarmed at the rapid fortification of islands, mandated and otherwise, by Japan, is indulging in a costly aerial survey of the Pacific. The U.S. seaplane flight from 'Frisco to Honolulu has acknowledged military significance—U.S.A. is seeking islands suitable for landing-grounds in a future Pacific war. If these are unprocurable in other ways, it has been suggested, she may endeavour to acquire them in return for cancelling part of the British and French war debts. The new U.S.A. naval building programme involves an expenditure of 380,000,000 dollars.

Britain, too, has her plans. Besides the consolidation of her position in Tibet and Western China, they comprise the provision of an impenetrable armament barrier between Malaya and Australia. Singapore (already one of the world's strongest military stations, an air base and naval base) and Darwin are being further fortified. Naval bases in the Dutch East Indies, built with British capital, are under British control. The new Imperial air-mail, which will link Britain more closely with the Pacific, is in the hands of Imperial Airways Ltd., a firm heavily subsidized from the British war budget. The Singapore Conference co-ordinates naval activities in the Pacific.

At present, as already stated, British and Australian capital can work hand in hand in their war preparations. In addition to those recorded in previous issues of "Proletariat," the increase of one and a half million pounds in the "Defence" vote has enabled the estab-

lishment of a new cordite and projectile factory at Maribyrnong, the provision of 36 fighting-planes and 24 seaplanes from England for immediate shipment to Australia, and a general boom in the Government armament industry. The Controller-General of Munitions Supply reports, on his return from Europe, that our provision for munitions compares favourably with provision overseas. Little wonder! Australia has been organized to become munition and equipment supplier of British and Australian armaments in the Pacific. So far have the plans advanced that the co-operation of the people is needed. This is the reason for Defence Week. Militarization, to be perfect, must include militarization of the minds of the people. This will be the hardest task for the warmongers: it calls forth all their energies, and so far these have found only a meagre reward. Defence Week failed to arouse public enthusiasm for war, even when disguised as the sacred cause of "defence."

By raising the cry "necessity of defence," imperialism and its agents hope to win support for their war plans from the masses of the people who realize that they have nothing to gain by war, and who are anti-war in sentiment. The defence catch-cry is thus used the world over. Japan "defends" herself against the "Russian menace" with a war expenditure of £93,000,000; she also has to "defend" herself against U.S.A.'s bigger navy. Simultaneously U.S. warmongers are urging the necessity of "defence" against the threat presented by the figures representing the number of line and engineering officers above the rank of lieutenant - commander, respectively: Britain, 2172; Japan, 1602; U.S.A., 1597. This in all seriousness (see "New York Times," 1/1/34).

In the initial stages of its existence, the Defence of Australia League urged the Australian people to "defend" themselves against "threatened" invasion by Japan — who has close at hand, in Manchuria and the adjacent regions, a far more attractive source of markets and raw materials than Australia affords. The press took up the Yellow Peril propaganda, and, following British cables, deplored Japan's dumping on Australian markets. Then on the discovery that Japan's purchases from Australian capital over 1932-33 were almost three times her sales, the anti-Japanese talk was abandoned. Instructed by such manuals

as M. H. Ellis's "The Defence of Australia" (Sydney, 1933), which proves that a Japanese invasion of Australia is impossible, the war propagandists learnt caution. Some decided to be frank; Sir George Pearce stated: "Most people consider aggression means a direct attack on the country, but there is a far greater and far more probable threat against the Australian people, and that is an attack on their trade."

So this is what we have to defend. "Defence" means defence of trade, defence of profits, *at the workers' expense*. Each penny spent on war preparations (and the "Defence" vote was £4,500,000 this year), each pound spent for battleships, airplanes, cordite factories, munitions generally, and the upkeep of the whole military establishment, is so much more from the workers' income, so much the more an attack on their living conditions. Actual warfare makes these still worse. This is abundantly proved in Japan, where wages have been cut and the factories are equipped with machine guns to prevent strike actions—which nevertheless occur. The Japanese anti-war movement is based on resistance both to imperialist war and the attacks on living con-

ditions which war brings. It has therefore the support of wide masses of the Japanese people, and so strong is that support that the renegade Trotsky recently advised the Japanese militarists not to be too precipitate; the Japanese people wished for peace, and war might mean revolution. His advice amounted, in fact, to this: "Delay your attacks in Asia until you have stamped out the workers' anti-war movement at home—that is the only guarantee for success."

That the majority of the people of the world are opposed to war, we know. The very foundation of the League of Nations testified to their weariness and disgust with war. That it still has the support of many not yet aware of its role is due to the same opposition to war, as yet largely uninformed and unorganized. Only the clearest exposure of the causes of war and the propounding of concrete measures of opposition to it can establish a strong and effective organization against war. The development of such an organization becomes increasingly imperative with the present trend of events in the Pacific.

—J. Hunter.

"ABOLITION OF THE FAMILY"

"Abolition of the family! Even the most radical flare up at this infamous proposal of the Communists." (Marx and Engels: "Communist Manifesto.")

MARX made a very wide and careful study of the forms of the family that existed in primitive societies, intending to write a book on the subject. His purpose was to show the origin of the monogamic family, and why it is that it has now reached a stage when it is ready to develop into something new. Before he could write this book, however, he died, and his work was carried on by Engels. The general outline of the history of the family given by Engels in his "Origin of the Family" is borne out by the discoveries of modern anthropology.

Primitive Forms of the Family.

At the beginning of man's history, when he first began to break away from the animal world, he lived in forest country, spending part of his time in the trees and having very little more understanding of his environment than his animal relations. But gradually he began to increase his control over nature by making and improving weapons for attacking animals,

digging for roots, and so on. By degrees, therefore, the gap between him and the animals widened. The discovery of fire and the use of fish as food then caused him to leave the forests and follow rivers and settle on sea-coasts. The changed mode of life and the changed environment naturally caused him to have a different thought-world (a different ideology), just as it caused a change in his physique.

Even before he left the animal world, man had learnt the value of living in a tribe; that is, of co-operating with other animals of the same species for the purpose of resisting attacks and getting food. The size of these tribes was determined by two factors: firstly, they had to be large enough to meet hostile attacks with fair hope of success; and, secondly, they had to be not so large that they would exhaust the food supply. Within these tribal associations of fairly rigidly determined size, therefore, primitive man lived.

At this earliest stage of his development, he recognized no family relationships. There was free sexual intercourse within the tribe, every woman belonging to every man, and vice versa. But gradually the increasing complexity of the problems man had to face as he developed his control over nature increased his mental powers, and made him more dependent on them. He observed that some members of the tribe were not developing as rapidly as others. Being dependent on the tribe in his struggle to survive, he had to try to find the reason for this.

Slowly and painstakingly, he discovered that the less developed members were the children of incestuous sexual relationships, and so he proceeded to eliminate the possibilities of such relationships. The first barrier he erected was that between different generations, excluding the possibility of sexual relationships between ancestors and descendants. This marked the origin of the family, there being, say, four different groups representing four different generations, and sexual intercourse being permitted only within the group. All the members of the other groups were regarded as possible ancestors or descendants; that is, as possible family relations, and therefore as unsuitable mates.

With their increasing control over their environment, and their growing expertness at securing an adequate food-supply, the members of the tribe began to grow more numerous. Village communities were established, and large communal homes built. Often, however, the tribe was too large to live in one household, though hundreds sometimes lived under one roof.

At this stage of its development, the tribe was facing the problem of how to prevent sexual relations between brothers and sisters. This was difficult, for, while it was obviously known when children had a common mother, it was just as obviously not known when they had a common father. The fact that it was necessary for the tribe to split into two or more household groups, because of its increasing size, helped the savage to solve this problem.

What happened was this: Descent could be traced easily enough through the female line. Therefore, it was a simple matter to collect groups of women of common maternal descent and establish them as the permanent occupants of the different communal households. Their

brothers through maternal descent were also, of course, known, and the taboo between them and their sisters recognized. These brothers became impermanent members of their sisters' households, living with them only until they reached the age of marriage. Then they left their family home and went to live in another communal household, accepting all the women of that household as wife, and being accepted by them as husband. The children of these relationships were forbidden to marry, as they were descended from a common female line, and at the same time possibly had a common father. The daughters of the relationship remained as permanent inhabitants of the communal home; the sons left it for another at the age of marriage.

These permanent groups of blood relations, or *gentes*, were the classic form of the family in all primitive societies. In a more or less preserved form, they still exist among backward races, and traces of them can be found in the early literature of Greece and Rome. This literature shows that they once existed in Greece, Rome, Germany, and among the Celtic tribes.

Origin of Monogamy.

When people were living in a state of primitive communism, the establishment of the *gens* and the constant increase in the number of relatives with whom marriage was taboo, brought about a certain amount of pairing; that is, it was not unusual for a man to have a principal wife or a woman a principal husband for a certain length of time. The bond between them, however, was very loose, either party being able to dissolve the relationship at will. The pairing family, therefore, was not the same as the modern monogamous family.

Indeed, the main difference between all primitive forms of the family and the monogamous family is that the primitive families had a natural origin, existing because of their eugenical value; whereas the monogamous family came into existence solely because of a change in the economic basis of primitive society. Its economic basis is proved by the fact that it exists only in those societies that have passed out of primitive communism.

Why did some societies pass completely out of primitive communism and others not? The reason is that some of them were established in territory that was naturally rich, whereas others were not, and naturally the tribe that

lived in rich territory could adapt the products of nature to its own ends and increase its control over its environment in a way that was impossible to the others. The early tribes that inhabited the Old World were able to leave their old primitive hunting life behind them, and establish a new form of society, simply because their material environment provided them with tameable animals, which they learnt to breed. A constant and ever-growing supply of food was thus provided, and the daily necessity for hunting was gone. The growing of grain to feed the flocks and herds marked a further advance.

Now, these tribes had been living in a state of primitive communism; that is, they lived together in a group of *gentes*, in communal households, and did the productive work of the community together. The women did the work of the house—cooking, sewing, weaving, etc.—and owned the tools and utensils that were necessary for this, while the men hunted for food, owning the weapons necessary for their work. Men and women, therefore, both took part in the productive life of the society, being equally responsible for the well-being of the community.

When men began to breed animals, and to grow grain, however, their share of the communal wealth was immeasurably increased; and whereas in a hunting society the property communally owned by the women had been equal in importance to that owned by the men, it now looked very meagre by contrast.

In the communist society, inheritance did not constitute a problem. What little property there was, was passed down from generation to generation through female lineage, male lineage being unknown.

Now, of course, everything was altered. There was a large and increasing amount of wealth in the community, owned by the men. The old custom whereby men had to leave their family communal home on reaching the age of marriage seemed more and more impossible. They did not want to leave so much wealth behind them, especially as they knew that the men of the *gens* they were entering were not anxious to have a new arrival come to claim common ownership with them. Soon they came to regard inheritance through female descent as intolerable. The desire to keep their property in their own family led them to break up the *gens* and establish the monogamic family. "At this early stage we

can already see that the emancipation of women and their equality with men are impossible, and remain so, as long as women are excluded from social production and restricted to domestic labour." (Engels: "Origin of the Family.") Restricted as she was to domestic labour, however, there was nothing for it but for the woman to be taken by her husband to his home, there to be jealously guarded so that he would know that she could bear no other children than his.

Monogamy, therefore, came into existence as a direct result of the private ownership of property; it is as much a part of such ownership as class society is. It is natural, then, that it should be sanctified by the church and legalized by the state, these being institutions which are also products of the same society.

Abolition of the Family.

The time has now come when the private ownership of the means of production is a destructive force in society. In one country, therefore, this property has already been taken out of private hands and given back to the community; and in most other countries there is a Communist Party that works for this end.

With the abolition of the private ownership of property, there is naturally no longer any problem of inheritance, and the basis of the monogamic family is destroyed. Therefore, the legally enforced "faithfulness" of a wife to her husband comes to an end, and also the dependence of the children on the father. The marriage ceremony becomes a matter of simple registration, and can be cancelled at will by either member. Legal compulsion has gone.

Moreover, the development of large-scale industry makes it a foolish waste of labour power for woman to continue the old drudgery of housework. Most of this work can now be done outside the home, with infinitely less expenditure of energy, by modern industrial methods. Add to this the fact that children may receive expert attention and tuition at communal crèches, and it becomes obvious that the old foolish shut-in family life of women can at last come to an end. Woman becomes once more a productive member of the community, and the equal of man.

This will have far-reaching effects. The monogamic marriage to-day is supported by three kinds of compulsion: the compulsion of law, of economic pressure, and of moral prejudice. When all these kinds of compulsion have gone, will monogamy go, too, or will a

new monogamy, a spontaneous one, arise, founded on genuine attachments between people? In other words, if we were not forced by social conditions to have monogamy, should we choose it?

It is an everyday thing for love to spring up between man and woman, and for this to lead to sexual intercourse. If there were no compulsion whatever, would their relationship naturally tend to become a permanent one? Would this man and woman wish to live and work together, and to have their friends and interests in common? And would their children prefer to live with their parents, or to leave them?

We cannot answer this question. Only the future can answer it. All we can say is that such marriages and such families will be far more possible under Communism than under any other social system, because of the equality of the sexes, and the eliminating of the barriers that now exist between them. Men and women will be pursuing the same studies, facing the same tasks and the same problems; it will be possible for a friendship and comradeship to exist between them that is very rare nowadays. Engels, therefore, considers it is possible that monogamy "not only will not disappear, but will rather be perfectly realized."

And what if this does not happen? What if monogamy has no roots in human needs, and could never appear spontaneously? Then

let it go. "If like a man of inferior body," argued a Russian revolutionary, "the family must always lean on an outward crutch for support, then it is better that it go down into dust."

In any case, the family will lose its importance in one respect. We shall not see everywhere "men and women studying, planning, scheming, achieving, investing, sacrificing with the purpose, somewhere in the foreground of their minds, of eventually having families of their own on which to lavish their acquisitions, and with which to share their triumphs." This does not mean that we shall become individualists and work only for ourselves; the stress will still be on the social group, but this social group will no longer be the family. It will be much larger—ultimately the whole of mankind will be the object of our labours. With this change will come a new morality and a deeper sense of social responsibility. Already it is happening in Russia. "Russian youth," says Maurice Hindus, "is not taught to deny the family or to regard it in the same light as private property and religion, as a symbol of a brutal age fit for the garbage pile of history. It is merely being habituated to the belief that the big tasks, the big adventures, the big glories, lie outside of its portals; are to be found only at the doorstep of what they regard as the largest, all-embracing, and noblest of all families—the collectivist society."

—J.M.M.

WHAT IS HAPPENING IN CUBA

"The front of capitalism will not necessarily be pierced where industry is most developed; it will be broken where the chain of imperialism is weakest, for the proletarian revolution is the result of the rupture of the chain of the imperialist front at its weakest point. . . .

Where is the chain going to be broken next? It is not impossible . . . that it may be in a country where the revolution has for its enemy a foreign imperialism, deprived of all moral authority." (Stalin.)

American Interests in Cuba.

Cuba's industries are largely financed by American capital, and it in turn supplies America with primary products and raw materials. It is therefore a colony of American imperialism.

The extent of America's domination is revealed in the fact that capitalists of the

United States have a total amount of 1760 million dollars invested in Cuba ("New York Times," Feb. 5, 1933). Many American companies, for instance, have enormous sums invested in the sugar industry, and to a lesser extent in the tobacco-growing trade. Add to this the fact that 70% of Cuba's sugar was exported to the United States, and the extent of America's interest is obvious. Cuba's position, moreover, makes it an important strategic and military base for the United States.

We cannot be surprised, then, if we find the United States taking care to safeguard its interests in Cuba by controlling the chief positions of authority. For instance, if we look behind the scene to discover how the notorious Machado kept office as President of Cuba from 1924 to 1933, we find that he was closely connected with American Imperialism. He

himself was the general manager of the Cuban Electric Company before he was elected as President, and was also one of its largest shareholders. Not only this, but the man who was instrumental in placing him in power was Henry W. Catlin, American representative of the great Electric Bond and Share Co., which controls the Cuban Electric Co. Machado's position was made more secure in 1928 by the appointment of his son-in-law to the position of joint manager of the Havana branch of the Chase National Bank, from which his Government received its financial support. No wonder, then, considering the source of his power, that Machado assured Wall Street: "Under my rule, no strike in Cuba will last more than 24 hours."

The Economic Crisis in Cuba.

The economic crisis has brought about a steady decrease in the export of sugar. This is due primarily to the diminished consumption in America and Great Britain, owing to the crisis. But not only has the sugar export fallen off to a very considerable extent; the Cuban exporters have also had to face an enormous reduction in the prices they receive. In 1932 they were receiving less than one-fifth of the price in 1923.

Because of the smaller export, great stocks of sugar were accumulated in Cuba. Machado's method of meeting the situation was typical of his class. In order to reduce the sugar reserves, and to exert some influence on the raising of prices, his government resolved to restrict the amount produced. An injunction was issued to this effect, the result being that the output of sugar declined from 5,136,000 tons in 1929 to 2,000,000 tons in 1933, and consequently there was a budget deficit of about 8 million dollars in 1932-33. One of Machado's methods of balancing the budget was to put higher import duties on articles of consumption, and make large cuts in the salaries of civil servants.

The result of this policy was an increase in prices and a decrease in wages, the workers' wages being cut in some instances as much as 70%. The restrictions on sugar production, moreover, caused a number of sugar-refining plants to close down, thus increasing unemployment. The unemployed—of whom there were about 500,000 at the beginning of 1933—received no relief, as there is no social insurance in Cuba.

The restriction on the sugar output had an equally harmful effect on the small land-

holders and tenant farmers, as the sugar-refining industries refused to work up sugarcane produced by these people, finding it more profitable to work only on what was produced on their own plantations, or on those of the large land-owners. The petty-bourgeoisie of the towns were also hit hard by the crisis.

The inevitable result of such an attack on the standard of living came with the revolutionary events of August and September, 1933.

The Beginning of the Revolution.

In 1930 and 1931, the upsurge of the revolutionary movement had already begun. Thus, on March 20, 1930, 200,000 workers took part in a general strike, and in August, 1931, 50,000 took part in a solidarity strike supporting the tramwaymen of Havana, and protesting against police terror; while for three months at the beginning of 1932, 15,000 tobacco workers were on strike in Havana. Following this came a wave of strikes on the plantations and in the sugar-refining factories, as well as revolutionary mass demonstrations of thousands of unemployed. Furthermore, at this stage the petty-bourgeoisie became aggressive, refusing to pay taxes and high rates for electric current, etc.

The students also were a significant element in the ranks of the militants, many of their leaders being imprisoned or killed when open revolution broke out.

Another section which supports the Communist Party of Cuba is the negro population, which is fighting for independence and self-determination, and sees in the revolutionary workers its real leaders.

The Treachery of the "National Opposition."

The movement of the middle classes in the towns and the country is only slightly connected with the revolutionary movement of the proletariat. It is led chiefly by the bourgeois land-owners and forms a so-called National Opposition to American imperialism. When Machado was in office, the real purpose of its struggle against him was to gain an advantage for the Cuban capitalist against the American financier. It was a struggle that lasted from the beginning of Machado's rule to the end, despite the efforts made by American imperialism to unify the ruling classes of Cuba.

The National Opposition endeavoured to mislead the revolutionary movement of the workers, and to use them as tools against Machado. For this purpose they formed a "revolutionary" society, the "A.B.C.," which countered the terrorist activities of Machado

by using similar methods. To this organization they attracted large numbers of the petty-bourgeoisie (including many students), many small farmers, and sections of the politically backward workers. The A.B.C. exploited the discontent of the people, their propaganda against Machado being readily listened to.

By using such methods of camouflage, the bourgeois land-owners hoped to show the American imperialists that Machado's position was untenable, and that he must be replaced by someone more suitable to themselves.

In an attempt to prevent the revolution, Machado employed terrorist methods. In 1931 an extra guard was formed, and, together with the police, the army, and the rural guard, it attempted to suppress the revolutionaries. The methods adopted were characteristically fascist, and served only to increase the hatred of the people against their oppression.

In August, 1933, the situation was tense. The entire population felt that the overthrow of Machado could not be delayed much longer. Strikes broke out.

Open Revolution.

On August 7, 1933, Machado, at the instigation of the American ambassador, had it announced by wireless that he had resigned from office. At once, 10,000 people assembled in front of the Capitol in Havana, and began to march to the Presidential Palace to celebrate the event. When they reached this building, however, they were greeted by Machado's police, who opened fire. Open revolution broke out, and Machado was forced to flee.

Machado gone, the American ambassador had another puppet elected—Cespedes. Strong in the knowledge that he was supported by the United States, the new President followed the same policy as Machado, while the Cuban people, finding their conditions were in no way improved, again became dangerously restless. The result was that on September 5, open revolt again broke out, and the Cespedes government was thrown from office.

The Bourgeois Junta.

Now, however, power was assumed by a Junta led by a professor, a lawyer, and the man who had led the military uprising—Sergeant Battista. This Junta is still in office, though it is scarcely likely to last much longer than the previous governments. It also attempts to aid the bourgeoisie at the expense of the workers. The plantation workers are now demanding that the great estates and plantations be divided; the workers are demanding

bread, increased wages, and the right to form unions. Almost the entire population is demanding the end of the rule of American imperialism. This was demonstrated on September 7, when thousands of people massed in the streets of Havana to celebrate International Youth Day, having forced the Junta to grant permission after its initial refusal. On this day, the demonstrators carried red flags, and slogans reading: "We pay no debts to Yankee bankers," "Drive the Marines out of Guentana," "Let's have no government that will deal with Yankee extortioners."

The United States was not slow to interfere. When Cespedes was overthrown, Roosevelt rushed thirty warships, together with planes and marines, to Cuban waters. The American forces of intervention were established in order to prevent the workers from seizing the plantations and mills.

New Stage of Revolution.

The significant thing about the present situation in Cuba is that the workers are not only making economic demands, but are also agitating for political power. Besides demanding an eight-hour day, social insurance, etc., they are struggling for workers' control. There is a genuine upsurge of the proletariat, for it is obviously the workers who have created a condition favourable to the ultimate overthrow of Capitalism and Imperialism in Cuba.

The latest reliable reports that have reached Melbourne indicate a growing discontent with the Junta. There is a great increase in the number of workers' committees in the factories. These are called "soviets" by the workers themselves, and are in fact the germs of soviets. All the trade unions in existence are red trade unions, with the exception of the railway workers' union. The peasants are disappointed with the new government. Students are demonstrating against high fees, and on one occasion demanded the resignation of certain reactionary professors. A number of violent assaults that have occurred indicate that the revolution is proceeding to a higher stage.

And, above all, the organized revolutionary workers are rapidly gaining ground among the masses of the people. The Communist Party of Cuba, which aims at giving a scientific leadership to the struggle, is continually increasing its influence over the workers and peasants. To quote Gomez: "Its prestige has increased steadily as the sole revolutionary party, as the militant vanguard of the proletariat of Cuba."

—E.W.

LOOK HERE STALINGRAD!

LOOK here Stalingrad
 Come through on those tractors!
 What's the matter down there
 Forgetting the job you took on
 in the face of the whole world?
 Comrades! Workers!
 A pretty mess you are making of things—
 Give an account of yourselves.

So wrote Red Putilov's steel workers in
 Leningrad
 in an open letter to the tractor plant on the
 Volga.
 Fiery words blazoned across the face of
 "Pravda."

Remember how you vied with Kharkov Ros-
 tov Cheliabinsk
 for the site of our first tractor plant
 How your drowsy one-horse town woke to life
 when you won?
 And now. What are you doing?
 You are bringing disgrace on us all
 Making us the laughing stock
 of the Exchanges in New York and Europe.
 "Stalingrad, a white elephant," they say.
 "Russians can build but not run their giants."
 They are wrong? Prove it!
 Can you not feel in their scorn
 the swift training of machine guns
 along the borders to the East and West!
 On guard, comrades
 To work in a new way!

Five years in Four
 So we have sworn
 Have you forgotten?
 This year we open 518 new factories—
 Kharkov's tractor works, Moscow's Amo;
 Clear the Urals, Siberia's wastes, for
 Magnitogorsk Kuznetstroi;
 And you, proletariat of Stalingrad?
 You hear our black earth crying out for steel
 horses

We of Red Putilov challenge you
 It is our right
 We've kept our steel pledge
 Sealing our land's new foundations
 We call you
 As we once called you
 To the barricades
 For our deathless October
 Brothers, to the fight for technique!
 On to the front of socialist construction!
 To work—in a new way!

Consternation
 Shame in Stalingrad
 Along the Volga floats the black banner
 Shop meetings, heated discussion,
 fresh brigades forming
 Finally these words back to Red Putilov
 "Dear Comrades you are right
 We shall answer
 Not with words
 But . . . Tractors."

Mac . . . Natasha . . . old Michael . . . and the
 entire country
 Watch for daily reports in "Pravda"
 Yesterday forty tractors
 To-day forty-six
 To-morrow Fifty
 sixty
 sixty-five
 Stalingrad is coming through!
 BREAD
 SOCIALISM
 Answering Putilov the whole earth
 Not with words
 But
 Tractors.

—Myra Page.
 (Selection from a forthcoming novel,
 "So This Is Moscow.")

THERE IS NO GOD

RELIGIOUS people say the Communists will never succeed in obliterating the belief in God from their minds. According to them, this belief is a deep-seated instinct—an integral part of human nature, and those who lack it are unfortunates—spiritual sub-normals, who do not know what they are missing. Any attack on God springs from a deficiency—an inability to know him—and should be regarded with pity.

The Communists reply that they really do understand what "spiritual" insight is, but deplore its existence, regarding it as one of the greatest enemies of human progress. They quote Spinoza: "Religious prejudices and superstitions transform people from rational beings into beasts, since they altogether prevent the use of one's reason to differentiate truth from falsehood." They want people to see that though the belief in God certainly exists, it has become unworthy of mankind, being nothing more nor less than *the inevitable complement of ignorance and fear*. To them, religion is a dope which offers a way of escape from the task of grappling with harsh facts; in other words—"the peace of God which passeth all understanding."

The roots of ancient religion lay in the savage's fear of the forces of nature. To him they were unknown powers, over which he had no control. He could not tell what they would do next, or understand why they should threaten him with destruction. When they spared him, he was grateful, and offered them gifts. Soon, too, he learnt to offer up sacrifices in order to placate them, and predispose them to continue sparing him. If the savage's activities had rested at this, the human race would almost certainly have been destroyed at an early stage of its evolution, through its inability to cope with its environment. Even if it had not been destroyed, it would certainly never have progressed beyond the state of savagery.

Fortunately, however, in the struggle to survive, primitive man slowly and laboriously gained some degree of understanding and control of his environment. This gradual emergence from an animal state resulted from the making and improving of weapons and tools with which he could control his environment; and not from any religious inspiration. The

fact that religion is a conservative factor in human life is apparent even at this early stage.

As man proceeded to strengthen himself in the face of nature, its powers became less mysterious and terrifying to him, and the ancient gods lost their power.

But at that period of man's history, when he passed beyond the stage of merely *appropriating* the products of nature, and learned how to *increase* these products through his own efforts—that is, at the stage when he began to assume real control over nature—at that stage, class society first came into existence. With the necessity for more work, a slave-class made its appearance; with the necessity for central control, a master-class came to power. Therefore, as soon as men were freed from the fear of nature, a new fear was born in them—the fear of having the means of life taken from them by other men. There was, therefore, still room for a god.

But now he was no longer a personification of the forces of nature; after all, the forces of nature were no longer very fearful. What was fearful was human nature, with its terrible new power, which it used for the exploitation of others. And not only did men fear each other; they also feared themselves—the harsh prompting in them that said: "Enslave other men, or you will be enslaved yourself." They became sin-ridden; conscious of their imperfections, and unable to grapple with them. How natural, then, that they should build a new God, and how natural that this new God should be—the perfect man; the one who forbade killing and stealing and adultery; the one who said expressly: "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's ox, nor his ass, nor his manservant, nor his maid-servant." How natural, too, that with the establishment of class society and the consequent need for institutions of government, a priest caste should arise and sanctify the existing system. Frequently, indeed, we find that the priests themselves were the recognized rulers; in Egypt, in the early history of Israel, and among the ancient Britons and the Brahmins of India, we find the priests in power. The kings or chieftains of the tribes were their puppets. But whether they were the recognized rulers or merely tools in the hands of these rulers, their social function always has been, and still is,

to uphold class society, and to keep the exploited class passive in their subjection.

And so we see God again acting, not as an uplifting inspiration to men, but as a conservative force in their minds—the chief character in an imaginary world where they retired for “spiritual” consolation. Men could not make God’s commandments the simple accepted customs of their society, for that society was based on the direct antithesis of these commands—on class; that is, on slavery and robbery and all their consequent evils. Therefore, underlying the belief in God and the pretence at wanting to do his will, there is always the sneaking knowledge that this is impossible—that, at the best, one can do no more than establish a sort of compromise, for the forces of society are pulling in a completely opposite direction. A typical expression of this antithesis between what social life actually is and “what God wants it to be,” is the manner in which exploitation and charity go hand in hand.

Throughout its history, class-society has turned some strange somersaults, and naturally enough its God has done the same. Every ruling class that has existed has gone through a period when it has developed the forces of production and felt confident of its power over society, and its ability to exploit the slave-class. Confidence in itself and in the future has made it feel in a position to dispense with God; this has invariably happened in the periods when the ruling class has felt itself to be the progressive force in society. The time comes, however, when the property relations accepted by the ruling class act as a fetter on the forces of production they have developed. The ruling class loses its grip; it becomes reactionary; the progressive force now lies with the dispossessed class, which suffers through the dislocation of society, and has nothing to lose by changing the existing property relations. When this period comes, naturally and inevitably, the ruling class becomes God-conscious again; and just as inevitably the uprising class becomes atheistic. It holds the future in its hands—God is superfluous.

Previously, the overthrow of class rule has always led to the establishment of another class rule. The reason for this is that the forces of production have never before been sufficiently developed for society to be able to dispense with a slave class. That time, however, has now come.

With the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, therefore, and the establishment of a classless

society, God enters upon a new phase of his existence. Society no longer lives a life independent of man’s control. “Fear of the blind force of capital—blind because its action cannot be foreseen by the masses—a force which at every step in life threatens the worker and the small business man with ‘sudden,’ ‘unexpected,’ ‘accidental’ destruction and ruin, bringing in their train beggary, pauperism, prostitution and deaths from starvation: this is THE *tap-root* of modern religion.” (Lenin: Religion: p. 19.) When the “blind” force of capital is understood and destroyed, and social planning takes the place of economic anarchy—when society no longer controls man, but is controlled by him, then the basis for the belief in God has gone.

You may say, the God that is based on fear may vanish, but what of the God of the scientist—the Power that must surely be behind the wonders and the harmonies of the physical universe?

He is a myth of the bourgeois philosophers, says the Communist. Of course, there is a great degree of harmony in nature, for everything that is inharmonious is ruthlessly destroyed. If you like, the physical world is wonderful—but then, it has produced us who can control it, so we must be more wonderful. Why God?

And what of the Christian God—the God of love?

The Communist replies: “The working-class must turn the whole world into a single concern working for itself, make the brotherhood and freedom of the people a realized fact” (Lenin: Bourgeois Democracy and Proletarian Dictatorship). With Communism, the God of love will go, for there will be no reason to exalt to the heaven that which has become a simple custom on earth. The God of love is a product of class society, being the projection into a divine form of that which it is impossible to attain in class society. Christians should remember that, for every good turn they do an individual, the colossal forces of Capitalist economy do him a thousand bad ones. Their Christian love, therefore, is no more than a mawkish kindness—the inevitable complement of the brutality of Capitalism. Their “spiritual” life is a wretched and fanciful compensation for their barren material life. It will be unnecessary in a Communist society. God will disappear; for man, for the first time, will have full control of his life.

CAPITALISM, COMMUNISM AND THE TRANSITION

THE evolution of man from the brute world is at the same time the evolution of human consciousness and organized knowledge. Step by step humanity has built up its experience of the world into a series of sciences, reflecting with ever-growing accuracy the processes of Nature. The barriers of ignorance and the no-man's land of superstition which lies beyond them have been gradually pushed back, winning for science new fields of whose very existence primitive man was unaware.

At an early stage in the development of science the universal reign of law was established in relation to inanimate Nature. Mechanics, physics, astronomy, and with them mathematics, were the first fields in which experience and experiment brought to man the knowledge of natural law. The extension of this knowledge to the field of living organisms was a much later development; to man himself, later still; to human society, it has begun, but has yet to fight its way to recognition. And the fight is all the harder because, in the actual growth of human society, the field which the onward march of science must bring under the sway of natural law is already encumbered with not only the superstitions of the past but the institutions of the present. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that from the first the study of society has been at once the expression and the inspiration of acute struggles within society itself.

Political economy, or economics as it is now generally called, is the science of the laws governing the production and exchange of the material necessities of life in human society. These laws can be studied in the actual working of a given period, or as they operate over a long succession of periods: that is, as laws governing production and exchange in a given social system, or as laws governing the change from one system to another. The study of these two sets of laws can be carried on independently up to a certain point. But just as in biology the development of the foetus could only be fully understood in relation to the stages in the evolution of man, so in economics the significance of existing factors can only

be fully grasped in relation to the historical development of society.

It is not merely a question of tracing the origin or the first forms of a particular thing, such as money. Money as a medium of exchange can be traced back to the cowrie and the cow; bank notes and credit in general can be traced back to the certificates of gold deposited with the merchant houses; but money in action, the functions and effects of the use of money, can only be understood in relation to the changing forms of production and exchange within society. It is the same with every other economic factor; just as in zoology there are no final, permanent forms, so in economics nothing is final and unchanging. And the forms of one economic system have not only derived from the past but also lead on to the future, bring into existence conditions through which the old system is destroyed and a new system arises.

It is this fact of constant and universal change in Nature and in human society which gives science in general, and economic science in particular, its *practical* aim. "Abstract" science is an illusion of the laboratory scientist who does not know and does not care who will eventually make practical use of his discoveries, in contrast to the "practical" science of the technical expert who is directly associated with production. In the last analysis all science is practical: man is constantly striving to increase his knowledge of natural laws in order to use that knowledge for practical aims, in order to use natural laws to enable him to adapt his surroundings to his needs. In economic science this purpose is openly avowed, from the earliest Mercantilist treatises to the latest works of Sir Josiah Stamp and Mr. Maynard Keynes.

But economics is the science of the laws of production and exchange in human society—not human society in the abstract, but actual human society, which as it exists to-day is divided into classes. The practical aims of the science are therefore not the same for all members of society. The class which holds a privileged position in the existing system approaches economics with the fundamental assumption that the main features of the present

system are eternal; that no system based on other presuppositions can "work." From this it draws the logical conclusion that any economic science which puts forward an analysis showing the possibility and even certainty that some other system will arise is the product of ignorance or mere charlatanism. Because of this, the economics of the privileged class is incapable of a scientific analysis of the laws of production and distribution in capitalist society. It remains a superficial account of statistical trends, of the machinery of production and distribution, without any understanding of cause and effect; like the pseudo-science of medicine in the Middle Ages it abounds in quack remedies and superstitions. But the presentation of these quack remedies and superstitions in pseudo-scientific form has a practical aim: to maintain the existing system; to gloss over the growing conflicts within society and to present a "theoretical" solution, within the system, of contradictions which are inherent in it.

The subject class—in existing society, primarily the industrial working class, the special product of the existing system—can have no such aim. From the early stages of large-scale industry, when its effects on the working class began to be evident, the desire for a new system which would remedy the defects of the old found expression in the writings of the utopian socialists, giving the first vague outlines of a new economic system. But the economics of the subject class was first made into a science by Marx. Marxist economics is not only the scientific analysis of the existing system; just because it explains the facts and relations of capitalist production, it is also able, on the basis of this analysis, to show the laws of motion within society. The analysis reveals within the existing system factors which make for the destruction of capitalism and its replacement by a new system. Precisely because of this, it is the economics of the subject class, the class whose practical aim is the abolition of the effects of capitalism and therefore of the capitalist system itself.

And because Marxist economics is scientific, because it shows the laws of production within the existing system and sees that their operation must inevitably change the system; in a word, because it understands the facts, it has no need to explain the facts of the world today by invoking supernatural forces like "Bolshevism," "economic blizzards," "lack of confidence," "America's short-sightedness"

and other psychic entities which are the stock-in-trade of the economists of the privileged class. The latter are totally unable to explain on the one hand the condition of the capitalist world to-day, and on the other the new organization of production and distribution in the Soviet Union. They cannot explain them because the explanation is completely outside the range of their economics. Capitalism has reached a stage in which the completely unscientific character of its economic pseudo-science has become manifest. Capitalist economists flounder helplessly among the new facts of a period of capitalist decline which obstinately refuse to fit into the conceptions and "laws" which were at best a superficial description of the system in its earlier stages.

The new facts which have emerged in the final stages of capitalism are not, however, outside the range of Marxist economic science. In fact they come as a confirmation of the whole theory of Marxism. The ultimate test of the natural laws as they are formulated by man from his experience is whether he can use them to shape his surroundings to his needs. The laws of capitalist economics have broken in the hands of those who tried to use them to shape society: the governments of the privileged class. But working class economics is to-day proving its validity by solving in practice the contradictions which are more and more deeply undermining capitalist society. The economics which first carried through a complete analysis of capitalist society and discerned within it the factors which would destroy it, was also able to foretell the process of change and the basic features of the new society which would take its place. And men were able to use this science, this knowledge of the natural laws of social development, in order to bring about the new society, just as they are able to use the laws of chemistry to create artificial fertilizers or explosives, and with equal certainty. So it is that now the movement of society can be seen not merely as an interpretation of past history, not merely as a deduction from an analysis of existing society, but in concrete reality.

The purpose of this book is to outline "the historical movement going on under our very eyes." As the starting point of the process it is necessary to take the existing capitalist system—but not because it is the primary stage in the history of man. On the contrary, the nature of the capitalist system and its place in history cannot be fully understood unless

it is at least realized that it is only one link in a long chain of economic systems. So far as this development is known, it began with the system of primitive communism, survivals of which have existed up to recent times in the village communities of India, Russia, and other countries; and it continued with the successive emergence over the greater part of the world of the tribal system, the dynastic and slave-owning system, and the feudal system, which in turn have paved the way for the existing capitalist system.

In all these different systems, after the stage of primitive communism, society has been divided into classes. This division into classes had its basis in the functional division of work at a time when there was as yet but little technical development in production. In *Anti-Dühring* Engels points out that:—

“The division of society into an exploiting and an exploited class, a ruling and an oppressed class, was the necessary outcome of the low development of production hitherto. So long as the sum of social labour yielded a product which only slightly exceeded what was necessary for the bare existence of all; so long, therefore, as all or almost all the time of the great majority of the members of society was absorbed in labour, so long was society necessarily divided into classes. Alongside of this great majority exclusively absorbed in labour there developed a class, freed from direct productive labour, which managed the general business of society: the direction of labour, the affairs of State, justice, science, art, and so forth.”

The division of society into classes, and the successive economic systems which replaced primitive communism, have steadily helped forward the development of man's productive powers; and this growth has been enormously accelerated under capitalism. In “The Communist Manifesto” of 1848, Marx and Engels wrote:—

“The bourgeoisie, during its class rule of scarce one hundred years, has created more powerful and colossal productive forces than all past generations together.”

The productive forces in the world to-day, however, are probably a hundred times greater than they were in 1848.

But precisely because the division of society into classes arose from the low productive level of primitive society, and because the technical development of society has now reached a stage in which only a small portion

of the time of society need be absorbed in labour, the historical justification for the division of society into classes has disappeared. This does not mean that class society no longer exists. On the contrary, within the capitalist system, still dominant in five-sixths of the world, class divisions have reached their most extreme form and are continuously widening. It is therefore only through the destruction of capitalism that a new, classless society can arise. The study of capitalism as one phase in a succession of systems of production and exchange therefore involves a study of the factors within it which lead to its destruction; and, secondly, an examination of the process of transition—the parallel destruction of capitalism and building up of the new classless society—as well as the general character of the new social order.

When Marx first put forward his scientific analysis of the existing system, and showed its place in the series of changing systems of production and exchange, the conclusions reached were necessarily incapable of proof by the only finally conclusive method: application in practice. Now, however, not only are the factors making for change more obvious and insistent; through the Soviet revolution of 1917, and the subsequent transformation of the system of production and distribution in the area covered by the Soviet Union, a mass of data has been accumulated with the aid of which economic science—necessarily, as already explained, the economic science of the working class—can test the theoretical conclusions already reached and formulated by Marx, and at the same time develop them in more concrete and detailed form.

And because economic science has a practical aim, an examination of the data accumulated in the experience of the Soviet Union must necessarily be followed by the application of the conclusions reached to other countries, particularly to countries in which the capitalist system has reached its highest development: that is to say, Britain, Germany, and the United States. The concrete, detailed application of the laws of social change depends on the concrete, detailed circumstances in which they operate; above all, the rate of change, the length of the transition from one system to another, depends on the special stage of development reached within each country, as well as the general stage reached in the process of change viewed as a whole.

That the statement of economic laws is necessarily also a statement of political aims does not make it less "objective." In the last analysis, politics is the struggle of classes in society, and the basis of that struggle, however much it may be covered up in abstract phrases, is always the mode of production and distribution of the material necessities of life, which is also the subject matter of economics. Science which is not practical does not exist; practical economic science is political economic science. The conception of non-political economics is itself the product of an abstraction, and a false abstraction at that—the abstraction of products from their production; and the attempt to formulate economic laws in relation to products without reference to their producers, the attempt to represent and explain as relations between things processes which are really relations between persons.

It is because of this abstraction that the economics of the privileged class finds itself helpless to explain a situation in which the relations between persons stand openly revealed, when the development of the system itself tears asunder the veil of things and reveals the natural laws of production and dis-

tribution operating in and through a brutal struggle between classes. But the brutality of the typhoon and the earthquake does not disprove their reality, nor does it make it any the less necessary for man to study their causes and effects. Man's knowledge of all the forces of Nature, of the conditions which give rise to them and the laws of their operation, is the basis on which he can adapt himself to them, and progressively bring them under his control. So it is also with the natural laws of social development, as Engels pointed out in *Anti-Dühring*:

"The forces operating in society work exactly like the forces operating in Nature: blindly, violently, destructively, so long as we do not understand them and fail to take them into account. But when once we have recognized them and understood how they work, their direction and their effects, the gradual subjection of them to our will and the use of them for the attainment of our aims depends entirely upon ourselves."

—Emile Burns.

—From "Capitalism, Communism and the Transition" (London: Victor Gollancz Ltd.).

CENSORSHIP IN AUSTRALIA

DURING the past three or four months the Customs Department of the Federal Government has been swiftly and silently at work, engaged in a wholesale censorship of "seditious" books. In other words, this "democratic" government has been occupied in stupefying the minds of its subjects by preventing them from coming into contact with ideas from abroad. The facts are as follow:

As early as July last year, consignments of books which had already been purchased by Melbourne booksellers were held up by the Customs officials, and, after examination, selected volumes were sent to Canberra for inspection. There, after some months' delay, all these works were banned as "seditious literature." The fact that the books were subjected to no further sifting at Canberra, all those selected by the Customs officials, and no others, being censored by the Government, indicates that here (as elsewhere) the word of the permanent official is law. The Book Censorship Board, by the way, has just decided to lapse, as it has no work to do. These

banned books have already been destroyed, and the supplies already in Melbourne are beginning to run out.

It is impossible to get a complete list of these books; but the following works have already definitely been prevented from entering Victoria. The list differs slightly in different States:—

The Communist Manifesto. Marx and Engels.
 The State and Revolution. Lenin.
 The Task of the Proletariat. Lenin.
 The Paris Commune. Lenin.
 Letters from Afar. Lenin.
 What is to be Done? Lenin.
 Imperialist War, 1914-1918. Lenin.
 Towards the Seizure of Power. (2 Vols.) Lenin.
 The Only Way Out. Emile Burns.
 The Crisis, Tariffs, and War. Palme Dutt.
 The Bolsheviks in the Tsarist Duma. Badayev.
 Memoirs of a Bolshevik. Piatnitsky.
 The Second Five-Year Plan. Molotov.
 The Class Struggle in Britain. (2 Vols.) Fox.
 Conditions of the Working Class in Britain. Hutt.

Gathering Storm. Myra Page.
 Storm Over the Ruhr. Marchevitz.
 Barricades in Berlin. Neukrantz.
 Roar China. Tretiakov.
 Bill Haywood's Book.
 Ten Days that Shook the World. John Reed.

A conspicuous feature of this censorship is the silence with which it is being carried out. Ban "Red Heap" or "Brave New World," and the liberal press will protest loudly against this flagrant interference with the "liberty of the subject." But this far more sweeping confiscation is greeted with silence; hundreds of students may never have heard of it. This makes it all the more important to bring to light the facts of the censorship, and make their significance plain.

What is their significance? To the worker it is that an attempt is being made to render the struggle against worsening conditions a blind one. Censorship cannot stop this struggle, for it is bred by economic oppression; but if knowledge of the causes and development of this oppression, and of the methods for scientific struggle against it, are prevented from reaching the workers, then their struggle is made ineffective.

So out go the Communist Manifesto and any other books from which the workers can find what capitalism is; out go books like "What is to be Done?," which give them methods of organization against it; out go novels like "Gathering Storm," which are a literary reflection of working class life and struggles. All these are condemned and destroyed by the government before they can reach the workers.

And what is the significance of the censorship to students? It is that an attempt is being made to limit them to a one-sided view of social theory. Certain sources of knowledge which they need for discovering the truth about the nature of the State, the economic system, and so on, are forbidden by the Customs officials. The necessity of these books for an all-round knowledge of social theory is revealed by the fact that a number of them appear on the University syllabus. Thus, the "Communist Manifesto," "The State and Revolution," and Stalin's "Leninism" are recommended as text books in Modern Political Institutions, while the Manifesto is recommended for Economic History, and "The State and Revolution" for Political Philosophy. Also, despite the neglect of con-

temporary authors by the English school, those students who are interested in literature, not as an academic subject, but as a vital social force, must feel the loss of the censored working-class novels.

The bare text of "The Communist Manifesto," "The State and Revolution," and sections of "Leninism," are being printed in Australia, and therefore they will continue to be available for a time; but commentated and full editions of these works are becoming very rare. Moreover, though nothing has been done so far to prevent the distribution of these books provided they are printed within the country, it is hard to tell how complete the government intends its ban to become, and how quickly it intends to carry it out. So far, for instance, books published by Gollancz are still being admitted.

But it is clear that the government will attempt to continue and even to increase its censorship, for it cannot relieve the economic conditions of the workers, and it is these conditions which give rise to the class struggle, and the consequent need for revolutionary literature. This also explains why the ban on "seditious" literature is being enforced at the present time, when some of the censored books have been freely admitted for years. As long as only a few of these books came into Australia, the government did not trouble to ban them. But the economic crisis was followed by a great increase in the demand for revolutionary literature, which, during the last five years, has been pouring into Australia. This literature is being read by all kinds of people, and the demand for it is still growing. The government has taken alarm: hence the censorship. This censorship, therefore, is only one more manifestation of the crisis in capitalism and the consequent intensification of the class struggle.

The crisis explains, moreover, why in Melbourne, and more especially in Sydney, books dealing with the real nature of war are so conspicuous on the censorship list. The power of capital in Australia is attempting to maintain itself, not only against its own workers, but against its economic rivals in other countries. The final step of economic rivalry is war. Hence the war-fever which this class is attempting to stimulate in connection with the "defence" of Australia; and hence the ban on any kind of literature which might cool this fever by showing that the workers are being

asked to kill one another in order to preserve the conditions of their own exploitation. This is why such books as "The Attitude of the Proletariat Towards War," and Lenin's analysis of the last imperialist war, are banned in Sydney.

This censorship, then, is a weapon in the hands of the forces that lead to fascism and war, and the fight against it is part of the fight

against fascism and war. The University must be one of the centres of this fight, for the University, of all institutions, is surely the one that is particularly concerned with freedom of thought. We students, therefore, must use every means in our power to drag this surreptitious censorship into the open, and to organize protests against it.

—Q.B.G.

OUR SPRING

BRING us with our hands bound,
 Our teeth knocked out,
 Our heads broken,
 Bring us shouting curses, or crying,
 Or silent as to-morrow.
 Bring us to the electric chair,
 Or the shooting wall,
 Or the guillotine.
 But you can't kill all of us.
 You can't silence all of us.
 You can't stop all of us—
 Kill Vanzetti in Boston and Huang Ping rises
 In China.
 We're like those rivers
 That fill with the melted snow in spring
 And flood the land in all directions.

Our spring has come.

The pent-up snows of all the brutal years
 Are melting beneath the rising sun of revolution,
 The rivers of the world will be flooded with strength
 And you will be washed away—
 You murderers of the people—
 Killers and cops and soldiers,
 Priests and kings and billionaires,
 Diplomats and liars,
 Makers of guns and gas and guillotines,
 You will be washed away,
 And the land will be fresh and clean again,
 Denuded of the past—
 For time has given us
 Our spring
 At last.

—Langston Hughes.

—From "International Literature."

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Melbourne.

THE New Year's work will soon be commencing at the University. Several hundred Freshers will be brought into contact with a new sphere of activities. Those students completing their courses are faced with the problem of "What they are going to do next." For the students as a whole there are problems of increasing complexity to be considered—both in Australia and overseas. What is the position of the majority of the students in relation to international events, and to the rapidly changing Australian situation?

It must be admitted that the students as a body are lagging far behind the rate of development of the class struggle here, and have no accurate conception of the real nature of recent international moves. Above all, interest in and knowledge of particular student problems are practically non-existent. It is perfectly true that there are several fairly active societies in the University which hold regular meetings, debates, discussions, and even study classes. But these societies embrace a very small minority of the students, and, without exception, approach the problems which they deal with in an abstract manner without any correlation with the specific problems of the students at this University. An example will suffice to prove this. The Labour Club has on a number of occasions dealt with the subject of how war is being prepared at the present time, in whose interests it is being prepared, and has pointed the way to struggle against the war danger. Its propaganda has been substantially correct. It has insisted on the importance of the working class as the main force opposed to war. But this is not sufficient to interest and organize the masses of the students. It is also necessary to point out the part students should play in opposing war, the relationship of war to cultural reaction and decay, the prostitution of literature and art to the service of the imperialist bourgeoisie, etc.

From another angle it should be possible to organize considerable opposition to war. The Melbourne University Rifles is a military body organized for the purpose of training officers. At the time of writing this body is encamped at Portsea, with a total of three hundred men—the highest number since the introduction of voluntary training. Many of these students

have been deceived by bourgeois "defence" propaganda. Some are quite definitely antagonistic to war, but nevertheless take part in preparing for it. It should not be very difficult to convince them that this talk of "defence" is only a bogey used to conceal further preparations for an imperialist war. This work has not yet even been started by the Labour Club, although it would prove very fruitful.

Another question closely linked with that of war is the question of fascism within the University. There are indications that a fascist group will be formed during the coming year. Our information suggests that there is a controversy between the organizers as to whether the club should follow the "German" or the "Italian" brand of fascism. It is obvious that such a controversy can result only from a complete ignorance of the true nature of fascism, for German and Italian fascism are in essence the same. The difference between them depends upon the fact that Italian capitalism was stabilized temporarily under the rule of Mussolini precisely because world capitalism as a whole underwent a process of relative stabilization following the tremendous crisis of the immediate post war years, while Hitler came into power during a terrible economic crisis which has deepened under his regime. Of course, Italy is now being very hard hit by the crisis, and despite all the demagoguery of Mussolini (who now declares that fascism is different from capitalism*), the Italian ruling class is attempting to solve the crisis by the only methods known to the bourgeoisie—by attacking the living standards of the workers and pushing forward to war.

*Mussolini in his speech at the recent celebrations of the eleventh anniversary of the Fascist march on Rome stated: "We come to the last question. Can the corporative principle be applied in other countries? There is no doubt about it. As there is a general crisis of capitalism, solution by the corporative state seems to be necessary in other countries." The "Manchester Guardian" ridiculed this Fascist tripe very aptly when it remarked: "Does Fascism want to save Europe by its example? With its low wages and vast unemployment it will take years to do this." Not, of course, that Fascism will ever solve Europe's problems. But the "Manchester Guardian" is a bourgeois paper and the British bourgeoisie may some day have recourse to Fascism.

Fascism is the most violent form of capitalist dictatorship. It represents the height of anti-working class terror and chauvinist nationalism—both products of capitalist decay. White terror and bloody war: that is the true formula of fascism.

A campaign against the growth of fascism in the Melbourne University will therefore be necessary. Besides pointing out those aspects already mentioned it should be possible to conduct an exposure of the cultural reaction which follows from fascism—an exposure not only of the obviously reactionary character of the campaign against revolutionary intellectuals, but also the disguised reaction which is contained in much current literature. Discussions should be arranged on such topics as "Fascism and Italian Literature" (the aping of Nietzsche, glorification of intense individualism and nationalism and the creation of "heroic" types), and "Humanism" in its various forms, which serve as a cloak for literary reaction. These discussions should pass over to consideration of such subjects as education and philosophy. Great use can be made of the Soviet Union as an example of the application of Marxism to all problems of life. In the School of Education and the Teachers' Training College nothing is taught regarding the principles lying at the root of socialist education. The profound significance of polytechnical education is not mentioned. *Above all, the essential class character of education is totally ignored.* All these problems should be raised by the Labour Club during the coming year. The task is certainly a big one, but is absolutely necessary before any organization can be built up on the vital issues of war and fascism.

The same remarks apply to "Proletariat." It is quite correct for us to deal with political and economic problems, and even some of the theoretical problems of the working class movement, but these must be linked up with subjects of special interest to students and teachers. In this issue an attempt has been made to do this to some extent; but much is still to be done. The delay in publishing the present issue is partly due to financial diffi-

culties, but mainly to improper organization and lack of support. Those who should be the chief supporters of the paper—the students—are those least interested. The reasons have been outlined above.

Sydney.

The Labour Club in Sydney has much the same problems as those facing us in Melbourne. It is characteristic that they are able to sell 100 copies of "The Soviet To-day" in the University, while they are unable to interest more than a few students in current student affairs. However, towards the end of last year an excellent start was made with the publication of "Student," a regular organ which is distributed free in the University. The first issue contained a note regarding certain irregular proceedings in the election of student representatives. This sharp comment won considerable favour among the students.

New Zealand.

The fact that we have very little news to report indicates the weakness of the student movement in Australasia. There is practically no contact.

A Labour Club with twenty-five members has been formed in the Auckland University. Further suppression of student papers and radical thought is being carried on systematically in the Universities.

In **America** the National Student League has grown to large proportions. In the City College of New York big demonstrations in support of the Cuban revolution were held. The vast expenditure in war and intervention in Cuba were very effectively contrasted with the general poverty of the students and raising of fees. A strong movement developed against the Officers' Training Corps. Numerous students were dismissed as a result.

English Students are active in the anti-war movement. Good support has been given to the unemployed hunger marchers. In one demonstration a very effective slogan used was: "Scholarships, not Battleships."

Australian students should learn from the experience of their colleagues overseas. It is time to take a hand in events instead of looking on.

Do You Know How to Prevent War?

Come to the Easter Anti-War Conference.

THE REICHSTAG FIRE

ON the 27th February, 1933, at about 9.15 p.m., the streets of Berlin were illuminated by the leaping flames of the burning Reichstag building, symbol of German constitutional government. Watching the flames, Hitler turned to Sefton Delmer, Berlin correspondent of the "Daily Express," and made the cryptic statement: "You are witnessing the beginning of a great new epoch in German history. This fire is the beginning."

Through a unanimous press, and by means of wireless announcements, speeches and posters, the Communists were immediately accused of having wilfully set fire to the building. It was announced that Van der Lubbe, who was found in the building and arrested, had in his possession a membership booklet of the Dutch Communist Party, and that he had made a full confession. On the following morning, Ernst Torgler, chairman of the Communist fraction in the Reichstag, who was Communist faction in the Reichstag, who was accused of complicity, voluntarily presented himself at Police Headquarters to deny the charges levelled against him by the Fascist authorities. He was arrested on the spot. On March 3rd, three Bulgarians—Dimitrov, a leader of the Bulgarian Communist Party; Popoff and Taneff—were also arrested. The burning of the Reichstag was to have the character of an international Communist plot. In the days after the fire, the Fascist propaganda instigated a great wave of atrocities against Communists, Socialists, and Pacifists.

What was the background of this? And what was the hidden meaning of the statement Hitler made to Sefton Delmer? Germany was suffering more than any other country from the economic collapse. This led, on the one hand, to a steadily increasing oppression of the workers by a series of governments ruling by "emergency decree"—those of Brüning, Papen, and Scheicher; and on the other to the increasing militancy of the workers, as demonstrated, for example, by the Berlin traffic strike of November, 1932. On January 28th, 1933, Hitler agreed to join in a government of "national concentration" with the industrialists and Junkers, whom he had so furiously denounced. Hitlerism, which so far had been making rapid strides, was now on the wane, while, with the Communists and the rank and file of the Social-Democratic

workers, anti-fascist feeling was running high. Election day, March 5th, was drawing close, and bourgeois papers abroad were predicting a greatly increased Communist vote and a sharp decline in the National Socialist vote. Now was the time to act! The National Socialists must be given power, and the Communists exterminated at all costs. The Berlin police passed under National Socialist control, and plans for bloody revolution were suddenly "found" in Karl Liebknecht's house (despite the fact that in previous searches "nothing incriminating" had been found). And while the press campaign against the Communists was its height, when every effort was being made in a desperate attempt to convince the people of the terrorist nature of the Communist Party, the cry went up: "The Reichstag is in flames."

From the outset it was clear that the National Socialists had everything, and the Communists nothing, to gain by the fire. As the "Temps" of March 1st pointed out, "That the Communists had nothing to gain by the fire, and everything to lose, is obvious from what actually did occur." Further, as was pointed out by the German Communist Party in a statement issued on March 25th: "Anyone who has even the slightest knowledge of Communism, of the teachings of Marx and Lenin, of the decisions of the Communist International, and of the German Communist Party, knows that the methods of individual terror, arson, acts of sabotage, and so forth, do not belong to the tactical methods of the Communist Movement." On the other hand, the Nazis desperately needed a provocative act which would drive the Communist Party into illegality and disrepute, and enable its election activities to be ruthlessly suppressed. This fact, even without further evidence, made it fairly clear that the Nazis themselves were the criminals.

But further evidence was to hand, and it convinced the World Committee for the victims of Fascism that Dr. Goebbels concocted the plot. Capt. Goering directed it, and Heines, a murderer and prominent Nazi functionary, led the incendiary group. Here are a few outstanding facts, selected from the full account of the Nazi conspiracy that is given in "The Brown Book of the Hitler Terror."

Dr. Oberföhren, chairman of the Nationalist group in the Reichstag, and a well-informed confidant of Hugenberg's, wrote a memorandum in which he set down what he knew of the preparation and plans made by the Nazis for the burning of the Reichstag. When this became known in Germany, through a reference to it in the "Manchester Guardian," Goering puts his justice machine into action, with the result that Dr. Oberföhren was soon found dead in his flat. He had "committed suicide"—so the Government report stated. Two other persons who knew the secret of the Reichstag fire—Erik Hanssen and Dr. Bell—were also murdered.

It was stated that Van der Lubbe was a Communist, though the Leyden Young Communist League reported that he had been conducting counter-revolutionary activity for some time, and that he resigned from the Party in April, 1931, in order to forestall his expulsion. The first reports also stated that he had in his possession when arrested a membership booklet of the Communist Party, and some Communist leaflets. But so incredible was it that a criminal would carry such convincing proof of his political party when executing a political crime, that this piece of evidence was allowed to lapse.

The fire was lighted simultaneously at many points, and it has been estimated by experts that at least ten persons must have been concerned. All made successful escape except one half-wit. Further, a considerable amount of incendiary material must have been used, and the chief fire brigade director (Gempp) stated that, on entering the Reichstag after the fire, he had seen large quantities of unused incendiary material lying around. How was this smuggled in? Here Goering and Goebbels found themselves in difficulties, and the court took the defensive. First, judges, prosecuting counsels, and defending counsels made a desperate attempt to prove that Van der Lubbe had committed the crime *alone*. Again, efforts were made for some days to prove that incendiary material was not used, but some mysterious liquid fuel, which could have been smuggled through the closely-guarded doors. But, as these attempts failed, it became clear that there remained only one means of entrance for the material and exit for the incendiaries, and that was the underground passage which connects Goering's house with the Reichstag.

Gempp also stated that the fire brigade had been summoned too late, and that Goering had expressly forbidden him to sound a general call for reinforcements to fight the fire. Needless to say, he was later ignominiously dismissed from his position. Finally, there is the interesting fact that, although the election campaign was at its height, the principal Nazis—Hitler, Goering, Goebbels, and others—all happened to be at Berlin on the night of the fire. Goering burnt the Reichstag well, but he left an inextinguishable trail behind him.

The trial commenced at Leipzig on September 21st. The counter-trial held at London and Paris had found the Nazis guilty, and the Communists innocent, so that Nazi "justice" was put on its mettle. For eight months the accused had been in prison, and five of these months they had spent in chains. But they were not broken, and Dimitrov's first words were a fighting challenge: "I am here not as the accused, but as the accuser." This is the spirit with which the four Communists faced the court throughout.

It was Dimitrov's courage and intellect which forced Goering himself to appear in court. Before the onslaught of this drug-addict, the alleged "objectivity" of the court's procedure was shattered. Not only did he rave about Communists, and how *he* had suppressed them, but also he made some bad mistakes. For example, he declared that he first knew of the fire at 9 o'clock; that is, at a time when only those preparing to start the fire could have known of it. Before the whole court he roared that the accused were Communists, and therefore guilty. When Dimitrov attacked him with penetrating questions, he shouted threateningly: "You wait until you are outside the power of this court."

Dimitrov calmly replied: "Are you afraid of my questions, Mr. Prime Minister?"

Whereat Goering—a witness—ordered his removal from the court.

All the Fascist witnesses were failures, being proved perjurers by the accused. Grothe, the witness on whom the Nazis had staked all, committed perjury so often that even the Bench reluctantly reprimanded him. Ex-Major Weberstedt thought that Lubbe both had and had not a cap on, when he had seen him in the Reichstag. Heines and Schulz had previously been sentenced to death for murder. Heisig, a Nazi detective, who was sent to Holland to investigate the affairs of Van

der Lubbe, returned and made statements about the depositions of two Dutchmen—Albada and Uink—which were later denied on oath by these men.

This repeated lying disturbed the Government so much that orders were issued to German newspapers not to publish more than sixty lines daily. The well-known American jurist, Garfield Hays, Soviet journalists, and other foreign reporters who did not write "favourable" reports, were excluded from the court.

Such travesties of justice have been staged before under capitalist rule—Sacco, Vanzetti, Mann, etc.—but never before, perhaps, has there been such world-wide realisation of the guilt of the accusers. The voice of the inter-

national proletariat was raised in such protest that it caused Fascist justice to hesitate, to cower, and to pronounce Dimitrov, Torgler, Taneff and Popoff *not guilty*.

But Fascist justice still went on. For months the four Communists were kept in gaol, and in danger of their lives. Their accusers, however, stood condemned by the workers of the world, who continued to raise protests against them. The result of this was that, suddenly and secretly, the acquitted Bulgarians were taken by 'plane to Moscow. Torgler, however, as a German subject, is still in close confinement, waiting further justice at the hands of the Nazi government of Germany. It rests with the workers of Germany to see that he gets it. —E. Vanshel.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We wish to thank all friends who contributed entries to our short story competition. We hope to conduct similar competitions in the future when our finances permit.

Our appeal for funds did not bear much fruit. Only one donation (£1) was received. We thank this comrade very heartily for it.

We would like to draw the attention of our readers and subscribers to the state of our finances. We are urgently in need of support if we are to expand, or even to maintain publication. We can record a growth in our circulation from 2200 to 2600 approximately for our last issue. To maintain this means a heavy burden on our slender resources. So we again appeal for assistance. Donations of all sizes will be welcomed.

Publications Received:

As evidence of our firm position at the present time we publish the following list of magazines and papers which we receive regularly:—

"The Labour Monthly"—A magazine of International Labour. This is edited by the well-known Marxist writer, Palme Dutt, who contributes the Notes of the Month to the magazine.

"International Literature"—Organ of the International Union of Revolutionary Writers. This is a quarterly magazine, containing short stories, extracts from forthcoming novels, poems and articles of criticism by revolutionary writers.

"The Student Vanguard"—Published by the English revolutionary students.

"The Student Review," which is the mouth-piece of the National Student League in the United States.

We receive a number of journals from the Soviet Union, of which the most important are:—

"The U.S.S.R. in Construction," which in pictorial form depicts the mode and rate of development of Socialism in that country.

"The Soviet Culture Review," which is a monthly magazine devoted to the practical and theoretical problems, together with the achievements, of Socialist culture.

"School in the U.S.S.R."—A new magazine which again deals with all aspects of Socialist education. Here, for the first time, it is possible to obtain a complete view of the Marxist approach to education.

We also receive such newspapers as the "Daily Worker," organ of the Communist Party of Great Britain; several French and German anti-fascist papers, the organ of the Communist Party of New Zealand, and occasional copies of the "Daily Worker," which is the organ of the Communist Party of U.S.A.

This list indicates the widespread interest which "Proletariat" has aroused. We wish to extend our contact, and hope to exchange with other magazines in the near future.