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# THE COMMUNIST REVIEW

DECEMBER, 1934

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ORGAN OF  
THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE  
COMMUNIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA  
605 GEORGE STREET, SYDNEY

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**The Communist Review**

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SYDNEY, N.S.W.

December, 1934

**The United Front Proposals a  
Basis For Party Activity**

By PAT CLANCY

During the month the Communist Party has made united front proposals to the Labour Party. So far, no reply has been received from the Executives of that Party.

The proposals of the Communist Party cover the most important and vital political and economic issues facing the working class at the present time. The proposals of the Communist Party are put forward in order to achieve the most rapid mobilisation of the working class for the struggle on the economic front, against Fascism and war, and for the release of Thaelmann and the Anti-Fascists of Germany and Spain. They are put forward at a moment when the Labour Party leaders are representing themselves to be the "Labour movement" and attempting to brand Communists and militant Unionists as "splitters." The reformists who repudiate Marxist principles are the perpetrators of the split in the working class, and the Communist Party cannot hide its identity and submerge Marxist-Leninist principles by organisational unity with the Labour Party. But the unity of the workers in action on the issues immediately confronting us can and must be preserved. It is to secure this unity in action and to defeat the capitalist offensive and carry on the struggle against Fascism and war that the C.P. once more approaches the A.L.P. The split in the working class, caused by Social-Democracy, opened the door to Hitler in Germany. That the working class are learning from the German experience, little doubt can be entertained. The united front has won big successes in France, Spain, the U.S.A. and other countries.

The united front offer is made at a moment when the atmosphere is charged with the fumes of approaching war, when heroic struggles are being waged against Fascism in Germany and in Spain and the Anti-Fascist wave is rising throughout



Europe.

In Australia, the growing revolt of the workers, small farmers and the unemployed against the wage reductions, increased taxation, and the further lowering of the relief standards which is causing further poverty and misery in the ranks of the toilers and producers, is evoking fresh attacks from the capitalists. More and more of the small farmers throughout Australia are being robbed of their holdings by the capitalists who call in the aid of the Governments per medium of the Agricultural Bank and Forestry Departments. The position of the farmers losing their farms is not brought about by their inability to produce, but by the inability of the workers to buy that production. The workers are forced to new low standards of living per medium of the boss-class Arbitration Courts, which are aided by the opportunist Trade Union leadership. When the toilers and producers, the political and legal aspects of the and bullets, as evidenced by the struggle of the Ingham sugar workers. The unemployed, in raising a protest against their deplorable conditions, are victimised and refused work and rations. Alongside the attacks on the material conditions of the toilers and producers, the political and legal aspect of the capitalist States are changed to carry out further suppressions against the working class. The convicting of Paterson for endeavouring to put into effect the "right of free speech" at Blackall (Q.); the assault and gaoling of the Communist candidate at Clermont (Q.); the Police Dictatorship Bill in N.S.W.; the refusal to allow Egon Kisch, delegate from the World Movement Against War and Fascism, and Griffin, New Zealand Anti-War delegate, to land in Australia, coupled with the words of Attorney-General Menzies that "the Government would take all the necessary steps to establish its authority; we will fight to the last ditch, and exercise all the powers we possess" to prevent Kisch and Griffin from landing, are concrete illustrations of the extent to which the bosses and their lackeys will go to suppress the struggles of the masses.

It is against this suppression that we must direct the fight. The whole forces of the working class must be welded into a mighty fighting front against the capitalists, Fascism, and war. Every member of our Party must study the proposals for united activity submitted to the Labour Party Executives so that in the everyday work amongst the toilers they can start to build up

the united front from below. There must be no hanging back awaiting a reply from the Labor Party Executives, but, on the contrary, our efforts must be intensified in building organisation in the factories, workshops, and industries, amongst the unemployed and small farmers, and in every working-class organisation.

For the local Party organisations to discuss and endorse the united front proposals is not sufficient; every member must understand clearly the importance of such proposals, and by correct organisational work amongst the toilers build in practice the fighting united front directed in struggle for improved living standards and against Fascism and war.

## An Eventful Anti-War Congress

By L. SHARKEY

The Australian bourgeoisie, preparing the ground for its participation in the New Imperialist World War and for intervention in the Soviet Union, decided, in connection with the 100th anniversary of the City of Melbourne, to stage a great patriotic and militaristic display to attempt to re-establish a warlike sentiment in the minds of the people, disillusioned as a consequence of their experiences during and following the First Imperialist World War.

To this end the Duke of Gloucester was invited, memorials to the dead soldiers were dedicated in Sydney and Melbourne, and pageants organised. Before the eyes of the 300,000 or more unemployed on their Relief Work pittance and small dole, thousands and tens of thousands were spent on decorations, displays, guzzles, the Air Race, and ceremonies by the very people who for years have been saying that no further money could be spent to relieve the condition of the unemployed or to restore the depreciated wages of the working class.

Synchronising with the Centenary and the visit of the Duke were personages who received less of the spotlight but were none the less important because of that. Sir Maurice Hankey,



Secretary of the Committee of Imperial Defence, was likewise an arrival, and in his connection, it was openly stated that he would prepare the ground for the discussion of Empire Defence when the Empire Prime Ministers visit London in connection with the King's Jubilee next year. Besides Hankey the Centenary visitors include Field-Marshal Lord Milne, the mechanisation expert of the British Army, and whose period of office as the Chief of the Imperial General Staff had twice been extended, and Sir John Cadman, who organised the petroleum supplies of the Allies during the late War. Oil, of course, is giving the Australian imperialists considerable concern at the present time, owing to the lack of supplies in Australia.

When these facts and many others are taken into consideration, and one also views the tense world situation, the position in Europe, the crisis in China, the Japanese threat to the U.S.S.R. in Manchuria and the war in South America, it is plain enough that the Centenary, the visit of the Duke and of Hankey and Co. are part of British and Australian imperialism's war preparation.

This was realised by the militant workers and the Anti-War Movement beforehand. To counteract the chauvinist displays, it was decided to wage a week of struggle against War and Fascism, coinciding with the Centenary celebrations, and to hold the Second National Anti-War Congress in Melbourne at the same time. In this manner was organised the counter-demonstration to the chauvinistic pageants of the imperialists.

The World Committee Against War and Fascism decided to delegate the famous author Egon Kisch to represent it at Congress. The New Zealand Movement despatched Gerald Griffin to Australia as its representative.

These two men were to visit Australia to speak against war and fascism, and also Kisch intended to collect materials for a book on Australia. The visit of international delegates horrified the war-mongering bourgeoisie. They feared the exposure of their guilt in connection with war preparation. They attempted to suppress the voices raised in protest against imperialist war by hustling Kisch and Griffin out of the country as rapidly as possible. But they had overestimated the efficiency of their legal apparatus in the case of Kisch, and it was found possible,

much to their chagrin, to bring Kisch ashore, at any rate temporarily. They are now busily engaged in perfecting their legal machine in order to prevent similar occurrences in the future. Griffin, given a "dictation test" in Dutch, was straight away returned to New Zealand. He, however, returned immediately, illegally. An immense interest has been created as a result of the campaign around Kisch and Griffin; indeed, it was the main topic in the newspapers for days, relegating the Duke of Gloucester and the grasshopper plague into the background. Both men have succeeded in delivering their anti-war and anti-fascist message to the broadest masses. The capitalist press and politicians are now attempting, in face of the laughter of the whole population at their inability to lay hands on Griffin, to claim that Griffin is being impersonated, the real Griffin is not in the country, despite the fact that his luggage is in the hands of the police, having been seized on the ship. They can rest assured that it is the real Griffin. Griffin has since blown this canard sky-high by his appearance in the Sydney Domain.

The Anti-War Congress itself, assembling in Melbourne, was a big success, more than 300 delegates representing 250 organisations being in attendance. Numerous telegrams were received from organisations and from individuals during the Congress, voicing support for the aims and objects of the Conference and protesting against the exclusion of Kisch and Griffin.

This has been followed by the great demonstrations in Sydney at which Egon Kisch spoke, at which enthusiasm reached boiling-point, and the scene at the Sydney Domain meeting was described by the Sydney "Herald" as "an amazing one," and the big mass gathering in the Melbourne Stadium, where Griffin spoke.

The campaign around the National Anti-War Congress and Kisch and Griffin was certainly a splendid answer by the Anti-War forces to the plans of the Australian imperialists, and one that must have far-reaching effects in the future.

That the working class was not deceived and swept off its feet by the outburst of "patriotism" we have abundant evidences. The outstanding evidence of this was the magnificent stand taken by the 4,000 Melbourne Tramwaymen, who conducted their strike for better pay and for the remedying of their numerous grievances during the celebrations. That the



reformists were able to partially strangle this militant manifestation is another crime, another demonstration of the role of the Social-Fascists in aiding the bourgeoisie in their campaigns. The miners of the South Coast, N.S.W., also expressed themselves by demanding payment for the loss of time occasioned by the holiday proclaimed on the arrival of the Duke. In the Northern mining district similar hostility was displayed. Many resolutions expressed the fact that the working class to-day is learning from its past experiences to estimate the gew-gaw displays organised by the imperialists and to penetrate beneath the surface for the hidden motives. A further significant symptom expressing the mood of the masses was the refusal of the Lithgow branch of the Returned Soldiers' League to participate in the reception to the Duke, despite pressure on the one hand and the enticement of free passages to Sydney on the other; for which their local branch of the R.S.L. was disbanded.

All of these manifestations of proletarian discontent have taken place without any lead from the social-chauvinist A.L.P. leaders and Union bureaucrats, indeed, in face of their tacit opposition. The "Labor Daily," for example, wrote an editorial declaring that "kingship stood for liberty," and was interested in the betterment of the economic condition of the masses, and vied with the yellow press in reports and photos of the Royal offspring.

The task which now confronts us, if the utmost advantage is to be gained from the campaign conducted in opposition to the bourgeoisie, is to carry further the Anti-War fight. This cannot only be achieved by the fight in connection with Griffin and Kisch, but also must be further developed by sending Nugent and Rae to New Zealand and waging a campaign around this visit on a broad scale in the working-class organisations and amongst the petty-bourgeoisie. A vital task is organisational consolidation. Despite its widespread support, the Anti-War Movement in Australia still lacks a broad organised mass basis, either of individual membership or of an affiliated character. Organisations that are affiliated are not drawn into the work and activated sufficiently. The present situation offers an unprecedented opportunity to secure not only a rapid advance in individual membership but also of securing an increase in the number of affiliations of sympathising organisations, Union branches, and so forth.

A blow has been struck against War and Fascism by the

week of struggle which has counteracted the agitation of the bourgeoisie around the Centenary. The fight has not been won, finally, against War and Fascism, and it would be suicidal to rest on that which has been achieved. A wide united front was established in connection with the Anti-War Congress and the fight against deportation; this united front against War and Fascism must be deepened and strengthened. The Australian workers have shown that they respond to the Anti-War and Anti-Fascist appeal similarly to the workers of France, Spain, Austria, and Britain who carry the fight on to the streets the moment they perceive the menace of the Fascist monster. Kisch delivered the message of the European workers, the lesson we must heed, when he stated, "Stand together in the united front against War and Fascism and victory will be yours."

## The Soviet Union Enters The League of Nations

By BELA KUN

The Soviet Government has accepted the invitation of 34 member States of the League of Nations to enter the League. In the League of Nations meeting a decision to accept the Soviet Union as a member State was adopted with 39 votes in favour, 3 against, and 7 abstentions. The first proletarian State in the world, which 18 States under the leadership of the big imperialist Powers once attempted to crush by armed intervention in order to drown Socialism in blood, has now entered the League of Nations as a victorious socialist great Power. The proletariat of the Soviet Union, the advance guard of the international working class, is in possession of State power in its land. It has become a factor of world politics with which world imperialism, despite its bitter hatred of the Soviet Union, must reckon in all its calculations. The imperialists of the world must reckon with the Soviet Union all the more because the Soviet Union has forces at its disposal such as no capitalist State has. The Red Workers and Peasants' Army of the Soviet Union is under the



control of a workers and peasants' government and based on a population of 170 millions of people, amongst whom the last vestiges of class differences are rapidly being liquidated. This Soviet proletariat has as its ally the whole of the international revolutionary working class, and the working masses in the imperialist countries and in the colonial and semi-colonial countries. The Soviet proletariat has already proved irrefutably not only that the socialist order is superior to the chaos of capitalism, but that it is the only way to abolish this capitalist chaos which brings such misery in its train for the working masses.

The very existence of the Soviet Union is a bulwark against imperialism. It is the first State in the history of the world that has used its whole power, both economic and otherwise, in the interests of the whole of the working people instead of to maintain a system of exploitation and oppression against the working people. The October Revolution and the Soviet socialist State showed for the first time how imperialist war can be defeated. The Soviet Union has steadfastly used its growing powers in the struggle for peace not only in favour of the peoples of its own territory, but in favour of the working people all over the world. The invitation to the Soviet Union to enter the League of Nations, an arena where up to the present the weapons for a new imperialist war have been forged without let or hindrance and plans for a new division of the world war drawn up, is a victory for the unswerving policy of peace pursued by the Soviet Government, although it is by no means a final guarantee for the maintenance of peace.

Two of the great Powers did not take part in the invitation to the Soviet Union to enter the League of Nations, the two military-fascist States *Germany* and *Japan*, both of which had previously resigned their membership of the League. They withdrew from the League of Nations because they felt that in view of the intensification of all the imperialist contradictions and under certain circumstances even the League of Nations might hamper the outbreak of new imperialist wars. Up to the last minute both these countries were violently hostile to the entry of the Soviet Union into the League because they both regard the Soviet Union as the only country which is determined to oppose fascism and war to the very last. But not only fascist Powers refused to take part in the invitation to the Soviet Union. States in which the classical forms of bourgeois

democracy still prevail, like *Switzerland* and *Belgium*, also refused to give their names to the invitation. This fact shows clearly that the question of fascism or bourgeois democracy is not the decisive point which determines the attitude of the capitalist countries towards the Soviet Union, but rather the immediate and temporary foreign political interests of the States concerned, the momentary attitude of the leading imperialist States or groups of States to the question of war or peace. However, the foreign political interests of the imperialist Powers and their attitude towards war and peace can change at any moment. Only such persons and parties in the working-class movement who support not only the momentary peace policy of the bourgeoisie, but also and at all times its preparations for war and its war policy can pretend that the international proletariat can regard the maintenance of peace as guaranteed and the danger of imperialist war a thing of the past as a result of the alteration in the composition of the League of Nations.

It is not only the danger of war in the Far East where *Japan* is threatening the Soviet Union, and it is not only *German* fascism which is coming to a closer understanding with *Polish* fascism, which represents an immediate danger to the peace of the world and to the bulwark of peace, the Soviet Union. Who would care to give a guarantee that there are not States amongst those who signed the invitation to the Soviet Government who will be at the head of the preparations for war at the next change in the world political situation? The only guarantee of peace, the only secure and certain guarantee, is the Soviet Union and its allies, the international proletariat and the working masses of all countries. The leader of the world proletariat, *Comrade Stalin*, declared in his speech to the Seventeenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union:

"The strength of the Soviet Union is due also to the fact that it enjoys the support and assistance of the international proletariat. The working class of the Soviet Union is a part of the international proletariat. It is its advance guard. Our Republic is a child of the international proletariat and there can be no doubt about that. If we had not had the support of the workers in the capitalist countries,



we could not have retained power and we should not have been able to create the conditions for the building up of socialism, and in consequence we should never have been able to achieve the successes we have achieved. The international alliance of the workers of the Soviet Union with the workers of all capitalist countries, the fraternal alliance of the workers of the Soviet Union with the workers of the world, is the keystone of the strength and power of the Soviet Union."

This alliance of the workers of the Soviet Union and the workers of the world in a joint struggle for peace is the real guarantee for the maintenance of peace. Only this alliance can consolidate and extend the victories of the proletariat, and one of these victories was the invitation of the Soviet Union to join the League of Nations. This alliance, which is based on the proletarian internationalism of the revolutionary working class, and on the revolutionary Communist Workers' Parties which carry on the struggle for unity of action against fascism and against imperialist war, must be extended and strengthened in order that the Soviet Union may continue successfully its struggle for peace in a capitalist environment, and in order that the source of all imperialist war, capitalism, may be destroyed.

Now as before the entry of the Soviet Union into the League of Nations, the workers in the capitalist countries will take their alignment purely from their alliance with the proletariat of the workers and peasants' State. They will continue to keep their eyes on the one country which is the ally of the international proletariat in its struggle. Although the bourgeoisie and their ruling classes may be in favour of the maintenance of peace temporarily, and may seek a rapprochement with the Soviet Union temporarily, their enmity against the proletariat and against all the toilers and their hunger for further profits at the cost of the workers and for new territories at the cost of other countries remain implacable. As Stalin declared, "We take our alignment now as in the past from the interests of the Soviet Union." The interests of the Soviet Union, which is threatened by a new imperialist war and by those who are arming most feverishly for it, the fascists, are the interests of the workers of the world as a whole. The defence of these

interests is the task not only of the Soviet proletariat, but of the workers of all countries. The defence of the common interests of the workers of the Soviet Union and the workers of the world demands the intensification of the struggle against imperialist war, the intensification of the work to secure unity of action in the ranks of the workers in the capitalist countries, and unity of action between the international proletariat and the workers of the socialist continent, the Soviet Union.

This unity of action against fascism and war and for the defence of the Soviet Union and for socialism, is the real guarantee of peace.

## The American Armaments Inquiry —A Signal of Approaching War

By R. PALME DUTT (London)

"A rain of gold is pouring into the pockets of bourgeois politicians who represent an exclusive international gang which is instigating rivalry in armaments among the people and fleeing these confiding, stupid, dull and submissive peoples like sheep.

"Armaments are regarded as a national matter, as a patriotic matter; it is presumed that every one strictly keeps the secret. But the shipbuilding yards, the ordnance works and the dynamite works and small arms factories which are instigating rivalry in armaments among the people represent international enterprises, in which the capitalists of various countries, working in complete accord, fool and fleece 'the public' of the various countries."—Lenin, "Armaments and Capitalism," June, 1913. "Collected Works."

On the eve of the world war of 1914, during the critical months of 1913 and of the first half of 1914, the exposure of the international "Armaments Ring" aroused widespread anger and



indignation. It was shown that the great armaments firms of all the leading countries, closely interlocked and directly representing in their shareholding lists the main body of the ruling classes, the millionaires, royalties, Cabinet Ministers, Generals, Admirals and Bishops, were engaged in coining gold out of the approaching war, were in combination with all the Governments and General Staffs forcing up armaments and war preparations by every device of trickery and corruption, and were supplying arms alike to friend and future "enemy," which were destined to be used against the workers who made them—as was demonstrated during the war, when British soldiers were killed by British Vickers shells from Vickers guns, and British ships were mined by British-made submarines. This exposure before the outbreak of war aroused widespread anger. But it could not avail to prevent or hinder the outbreak of war, because the exposure, as conducted by a group of progressive Liberal and Labour publicists, was not accompanied by any political line to show how to fight and defeat the war plots of the bourgeoisie.

To-day, after twenty years of pacifist speeches, "disarmament" conferences, and Kellogg Pacts of "renunciation of war," the bourgeoisie is revealing the same picture of itself, as coining gold out of the approaching war, and out of every international antagonism, still more greedily, shamelessly, corruptly, cynically, in disregard even of their own pretences of "patriotism," preached to the subject class, seeking only the maximum profit, fomenting discord, carving up the world by "gentlemen's agreements," as a single arena for their spoils, and extracting as much even as one million per cent. from war industries already before the outbreak of war.

Once again a great "exposure" of this scandal, which can no longer be concealed, is forcing itself on public attention—and this time the "exposure" is directly led by the foremost imperialist Government. The very fact that this "exposure" is staged at the present moment, that these issues of the universal trafficking in the instruments of mass-murder have become so dominant as to force themselves into the centre of attention, is a sign of the ever-closer approach of war, of how closely the atmosphere in many respects resembles that of 1913. But this time there is in existence a powerful revolutionary working-class movement throughout the world, trained in the principles

of Marxism-Leninism, which can make correct use of the revelations and lead the fight against the war-makers.

The American Armaments Inquiry has laid bare one corner—one tiny corner, for direct governmental intervention has been invoked to hold back the most important documents and revelations—of the present orgy of profiteering war preparation on the part of the world bourgeoisie.

The resulting poison-stench from this hell's brew of corruption and open war-fomenting has aroused disgust and anger throughout the world. The popular reaction has gone so far that the chairman of the Inquiry, Senator Nye, has had to draw back in alarm at the possible outcome and put a brake upon the inquiry:

"For a week we have had to proceed carefully in order to prevent this hearing from having exactly the opposite effect to that intended."

Yet never was it more necessary to utter a warning to draw the correct conclusions from these revelations, and not be led astray by the sensation-hunting of the capitalist press, which seeks to drown the universal significance of what has been revealed in detail—controversies about the role of this or that financier, ambassador or crowned head.

What is the object of the American Government, the leader of imperialist war preparation, in promoting this inquiry? The main object is clear. The inquiry has been in fact promoted as a direct part of war preparations.

First, the organisation of modern war requires that the State shall establish a close unified control over and even to a considerable extent directly take over the most important war industries. The inquiry is calculated to prepare public opinion for this direct step of war preparations by the appearance of launching a broadside against the "private" armaments firms. Thus, as in all the technique of war preparation, the most direct war measures are covered under a "pacifist" cloak.

Second, the revelations serve the purposes of American imperialism as an ideological weapon of war preparation against all the other imperialist Powers. All the other imperialist Powers are revealed as conducting a web of Machiavellian intrigue and war fomenting. On the other hand, the American Government, even though its subordinates are revealed as



involved, appears as the crusader leading the campaign for the exposure of these evils.

The other imperialist Powers seek to make equal use of the results of the inquiry for the purposes of inter-imperialist conflict. In each country the evidence injurious to its own interests is either suppressed, slurred over or angrily refuted, while the evidence involving other countries is greedily seized on and emphasised. Thus the German press, while reporting at length the revelations on other countries, has completely suppressed the evidence on the secret air-war preparations of Germany. Similarly the London "**Times**" (closely associated with Vickers) has completely suppressed all references to Sir Basil Zaharoff and his drawing of £150,000 commission from America over one deal or his acknowledgment of "cheque for 321,497 pesetas on Madrid, with which I am doing the needful"; and also suppressed the name of the Soley Armaments Company. The British financial press seeks to find profit from the inquiry in the hope that foreign purchasers will draw the conclusion that they can have better confidence of discretion in dealing with British armament firms:—

"Since there is no likelihood of a governmental investigation on this side, the American inquiry is likely to be a bull point for the shares of British firms. Foreign customers placing orders will feel assured that here, at least, their orders will be executed in strict accordance with the law, and that there will be no danger that their confidential correspondence will be broadcast."—"Financial Times," Sept. 12.

"The American inquiry will thoroughly alarm foreign purchasers of munitions, who not unnaturally object to having their business correspondence broadcast for the benefit of ignorant and fussy Senators. It will make them chary of placing munitions orders in the United States, and the British armaments trade will benefit."—"Evening Standard," Sept. 11.

But from the very indiscretions of this inter-imperialist conflict, which the American Armaments Inquiry only reflects and intensifies, the peoples of the world can draw an invaluable arsenal of information and agitational material for their fight

against all imperialism, not merely against this Power or that Power, but in every imperialist country against their own Government and ruling class.

What are the most important political lessons that can be drawn from the inquiry?

First, the inquiry lays bare **the direct interest of the most influential ruling circles of the bourgeoisie in war**. Here all the solemn "peace" speeches of the bourgeois statesmen are turned upside down, or, rather, right way up. Peace and disarmament are despised as illusions; any prospect of international co-operation is a calamity; every sign of discord is a joyful source of profit. In the words of the managing director of a British armaments company:

"In spite of all the dreams of the idealists, who imagine that homo sapiens is filled with honour, justice, love and self-sacrifice, Japan is going to take a still larger slice of China, and comparatively shortly, while the getting is good."

In the words of the representative of an American company:  
"The unsettled conditions in America have been a great thing for me."

And again, with reference to the Bolivia-Paraguay war:  
"Unfortunately for us it looks as though the trouble they were having is going to be settled amicably."

Every advance of the war danger sends armaments shares soaring, in which all the leaders of the bourgeoisie hold investments; every deal greases the palms of a host of greedy politicians, go-betweens, diplomats, and military and naval representatives.

Second, the inquiry lays bare the **complete inter-connection of the Governments, General Staffs and armaments firms** in the promotion of war and war preparations. The Liberal myth of the sole guilt of the "private" armaments firms as the "villains of the piece" in the midst of a blameless capitalist world is blown sky-high. All work together; all draw their profits and pickings together. A navy cruiser is dispatched to assist in touting orders for a firm. The direct control by the British Government of the operations of the British Armament firms is thus stated by **Captain John Ball**, managing director of the Soley Armaments Company:—

"We are to a very great extent controlled by the varying



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policy of the Government. Stocks we control are of such magnitude that the sale of a big block of them could alter the political balance of power of the smaller States, involving corresponding complications from the point of view of finance and industry. . . . Under these conditions we have to submit to fairly strict control by the authorities concerned.

"If all the money in the world is on the table, business cannot be done if it is against the policy of the British Government."

Thus, the operations of the armaments concerns are a common concern of the Government, of "finance and industry," and of the managers of the armament concerns—i.e., of finance capital as a whole.

Third, the inquiry lays bare the international character of the war promoting and war profiteering of the bourgeoisie—"international enterprises," in the words of Lenin, "in which the capitalists of various countries, working in complete accord, fool and fleece 'the public' of the various countries." The same picture of the "exclusive international gang" of twenty years ago appears again to-day in still more developed form. Thus, Vickers and the American Electric Boat Company, in normal competition, divide the world between them into spheres; and, whichever gets the order, a share of profits is paid to the other. A similar division of world spheres is revealed between Imperial Chemical Industries and Dupont de Nemours; "salesmen are to give equal prominence to the products of both countries." This co-operation between the two giant war trusts of Britain and the United States goes on alongside the sharpest British-American imperialist antagonism. Thus, whatever form of war develops, whichever side wins or loses, whatever the particular form of discord, the ruling strata of the bourgeoisie in all countries always win, so long as capitalism is able to maintain its rule.

Finally, what are the practical conclusions that must be drawn from the results of this inquiry? The bourgeois Liberal, Labour, and Social-Democratic politicians and press endeavour to draw the conclusion that the corruption and villainy of the "private" armament firms is hereby established, and that the solution must lie along the lines of the "nationalisation" (!) of

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the armaments industry, or even of its supposed "international control" (!).

On the contrary. This conclusion runs clean counter to the evidence. For the evidence has precisely established the complete unity of the State apparatus and the armament firms in all the operations of the armaments industries. The proposed "solution" is to carry this process still further, and to ask the very Governments which are responsible for the evils to "control" themselves. This propaganda directly assists the next steps of war preparation of the bourgeoisie.

The inevitable conclusion to which the evidence points is that, since the Governments, General Staffs, State apparatus and armaments manufacturers are revealed as an effective unity in the organisation of war, the only effective opposition can lie along the lines of mass struggle against the Government and the bourgeoisie in their organisation of war, i.e., the disorganisation from below of war preparations, the impeding of the transport of munitions to the theatres of war and of potential war, the political struggle against the imperialist Governments, the struggle to convert imperialist war into civil war.

For the purposes of this fight our agitation should make the fullest use of the rich stores of material made available by the American Armaments Inquiry; for the exposures made possible by this material, if brought home to the widest general understanding, destroy beforehand every "moral" plea under which the next war is being prepared and will be waged.

## The Melbourne Tramway Strike

By S.P.

The recent strike of the Melbourne tramwaymen, whilst not securing their full demands, was successful in forcing concessions from the Victorian Government. The struggle developed as a result of consistent agitation for higher wages and better working conditions on the part of the Melbourne Tramway Militant Groups.

Due to this agitation, the Tramway Union Executive approached the Tramways Board for an increase in pay of 1/- per day during the Centenary celebrations. The Board replied



with a vague offer of 50 per cent. of the extra profits made during the Centenary.

The militants on the Union Executive were successful in getting a mass meeting of Tramway employees called to discuss these propositions. At this meeting the militants got the endorsement of an amendment to the original Union demand, for a 2/- per day permanent increase, no shift to exceed eight hours and the cessation of the practice of evading the award payment for two consecutive weeks of night shifts by the sandwiching in of a single day shift. It was also decided that a stopwork meeting be held on October 16 to hear the Tramway Board's decision.

The stopwork meeting, with approximately 4,000 in attendance, decided, almost unanimously, for no resumption of work until the demands had been granted, in face of the refusal of the Tramways Board to negotiate until work was resumed.

After being on strike from Tuesday to Friday, both days inclusive, the Tramways Board agreed to pay £8,000 bonus if work was resumed, negotiations to then take place in relation to the other demands, same to be concluded within two weeks, with any matters still remaining in dispute to be referred to the Arbitration Court. This offer was accepted by the strikers, and the trams recommenced running on the Saturday.

The strike, in winning the £8,000 bonus, was a victory for militant unionism. Despite the first decision of the Tramways Board to refuse to negotiate until work was resumed, the solidarity of the strike forced it to capitulate.

Whilst the aim of the strike was to secure economic demands, it was predominantly political in character.

In the first place, it was aimed directly against the Victorian Government.

It was a clear-cut issue between the Tramway workers and the Victorian capitalist State apparatus.

Secondly, its political character was further emphasised in the fact that it interfered with the welcome being accorded the Duke. For weeks Melbourne and Victoria were flooded with chauvinistic propaganda, unprecedented efforts being made to whip up enthusiasm for his visit. The Tram strike cut across this jingoism like a knife.

The day before the Duke's arrival the main topic of conversation was not the Duke, but the Tramway strike.

On the day that this most conspicuous representative of

British and Australian capitalism arrived in Melbourne the Tramways were at a standstill. It is a most significant fact that amongst the Melbourne Tramwaymen are 1,100 returned soldiers. A fitting answer to the war preparations of British and Australian imperialism!

That the bourgeoisie recognised the political characteristics of the strike is evident in the fact that immediately it became known that a strike was likely to eventuate it was circulated through the press that scabs would be called for, and the strikers were condemned in the most harsh terms.

The "Sydney Morning Herald" of Oct. 18, reporting on the dispute, reads as follows: "The Board held a meeting in the afternoon, and resolved to give the men an opportunity to return to work by Friday. If the response is not sufficient to begin a normal service, the Board proposes to call for volunteers." Cameron, of the Tramways Board, is reported in the same paper as saying, in reply to representations on behalf of the men: "I think it is outrageous for you to come to us while the employees are on strike. You are nothing more than a lot of gunmen and racketeers, pointing a pistol at the head of the Board." When this statement was reported back to the strikers, it was greeted with hoots and derision.

Despite the threatened introduction of scabs and the vicious terms used against the strikers, it did not prevent them from enthusiastically declaring for struggle. Support from other sections of workers, and the public generally, was growing.

That this was recognised by the Government is expressed in the "Sydney Morning Herald" of Oct. 18, which states: "Grave fears are entertained that, if the Board decides to call for volunteer labour, employees at the power houses will strike in sympathy."

The above clearly denotes the feeling in favour of the Tramwaymen, and it is significant that scabs were not called for, despite the complete stoppage of the Tramway service.

The offensive and aggressive nature of the struggle was also a noteworthy feature. It was not a strike in defence of present conditions, but for wage increases. Its aggressive character is expressed in the fact that the recommendation of the Union Executive for 1/- per day increase during the Centenary celebrations was turned down in favour of the demand for 2/- per day permanent increase.



This strike exposes in all their bankruptcy the leaders of the A.C.T.U. Here we find workers prepared to take the action they did—prepared to fight for improved conditions against the capitalist State, in face of a barrage of chauvinistic propaganda; and the reformists still continue to advocate a policy of reliance on Arbitration. Even whilst the last A.C.T.U. Congress was being held and it was apparent that the Tramway strike was developing, the reformist bureaucrats refused to allow it to be discussed, much less give a militant lead on the question.

This strike, although being predominantly political, and expressing clearly the radicalisation of the Australian workers, was marred by a number of mistakes and weaknesses which had the effect of preventing a complete victory.

There was insufficient confidence in the rank and file to develop their initiative and lead the struggle to victory. Flowing from this weakness follows too much reliance on the reformist officials and an underestimation of their ability to manoeuvre and their willingness to betray the workers. At the commencement of the strike the rank and file were very enthusiastic and were showing initiative to develop relief organisation.

In almost all depots, committees were established to give leadership and organise relief. One amazing example of initiative and activity is given by the Brunswick Depot, where only 80 men are employed. Here, by the Thursday, over £100 had been raised for the relief of the strikers.

Another instance was the Malvern Depot, where a similar sum had been collected and the organisation was patterned after the Wonthaggi example, with a propaganda committee, relief committee, boot shop, barber's shop, fishing and rabbiting expeditions. This activity would have developed and grown, together with the enthusiasm, had the strike continued, and the leadership devoted its attention towards this end.

The central strike leadership, comprised of the Union Executive, with two representatives from each Depot Committee, in its efforts to broaden the strike to the Railways should have concentrated its main attention towards agitation and organisation around demands in which the Railwaymen were interested.

For months a campaign had been conducted for the restoration of the 10 per cent. wage cut, which had received enthusiastic and wide support from the Railway workers.

It is obvious that it was on this basis that the Railmen should have been approached for an extension of the strike.

This was not done. In the attempt to broaden the struggle and stop the electric trains during the Duke's visit too much reliance was placed on the Melbourne Trades Hall Disputes Committee. This body is one of the most reactionary in Melbourne, and it was useless to expect an extension due to its efforts. This could only be achieved as indicated above, and with intensified activity on the part of the Tramwaymen.

Due to the militant pose of Abfalter and Stapleton, reformist Tramway Union officials, they disarmed the militants and so were in a position to betray the strike at a later date.

This opportunity arrived when negotiations were opened with the Trades Hall Disputes Committee. It should be remembered that the militants and the strikers did not wish to hand the struggle over to this body, but were merely seeking its co-operation.

When notified of this decision, the Disputes Committee intimated that it did not suit them. They demanded full charge of the dispute, otherwise they would not assist.

Despite the opposition of the militants on the Union Executive and the decision of the rank and file to only ask the co-operation of the Disputes Committee, the reformists on the Union Executive, who were in a majority, and Abfalter and Stapleton particularly, agreed to hand the strike over, lock, stock and barrel, to its leadership.

The reason is clear. Here was the opportunity for Abfalter, Stapleton and Co. to betray the strike, at the same time maintaining the prestige they gained by their militant pose in the course of the struggle. From then on the Disputes Committee concentrated the attention of the strikers towards the negotiations taking place between it and the Tramways Board, the question of an extension being completely sabotaged.

The militants, whilst playing a prominent role, did not do so to a sufficient degree. The strikers were accepting and looking for militant leadership and the militants should have come to the fore more boldly, not allowing the reformists on the Union Executive so much rope.

The reformists were able to sense the temper of the men, and posed temporarily as militants. They were allowed to play



a dominating role in the leadership, and by so doing, building their prestige and winning the confidence of the strikers. This put them in the favourable position of being able to betray the strike by handing it to the leadership of the Disputes Committee, as mentioned above.

Since the strike the Tramwaymen employed on the Railway Department tram service from Brighton to Black Rock are demanding an increase of 3/4 per day in wages—the Tramwaymen are gaining confidence in their own ability and organised strength. In the event of future negotiations not being to their satisfaction further struggle can be expected.

In preparation for same and to ensure 100 per cent. victory, militant influence and organisation need to be strengthened. Permanent Depot Committees must be established throughout the Melbourne Tramways and the militants must make a sustained drive to improve their position in the Union, defeating the reformists and winning the Union apparatus for militant leadership.

## Organisational Questions

By R. CRAMM

In dealing with the organisational forms necessary for successful work in a big works of the character of Eveleigh, it is as well to understand that the basic link, the point of departure for our Party activities, is the Department Unit. A unit made up of comrades from all parts of the industry cannot possibly function as a unit in the true sense of the term, cannot work in such a big undertaking in general. Such a unit could only, in reality, act as an organising committee for the planning and building up units in the various departments to which the comrades are attached. Therefore, in commencing to build the Party in the big enterprises it is as well to remember to concentrate on one department at a time and get a unit formed, using this base as the point of departure for penetrating further departments.

A Department Unit, when formed, should meet every 14 days and an instructor should be attached to it to lead the work in the same manner as outlined for the small factory in last

month's "Review."

Assuming that we have penetrated several departments and have succeeded in forming units, the problem then faces us of co-ordinating their work. A little thought will indicate that this cannot be done correctly through the Section or District Committee. The process of getting reports from each instructor and from each unit would be too long and complicated and would be found in practice to end in hopeless confusion.

The most logical thing for the Party Committee to do would be to form a Factory Bureau or Executive. This bureau could if police conditions permit, be elected at an aggregate meeting of all members of the Department Units; or, it could be formed by each Department Unit electing its Sec.-organiser to represent it on the Bureau. We think that under any conditions the latter method of building the bureau is most desirable. If the latter method is adhered to, comrades in one department remain unknown in general to comrades in another department. Hence, not knowing each other, they cannot talk and make known the personnel of the units in other departments. Further, if there is a spy in one of the Department Units, he is unable to tabulate the names of all members in the industry.

Let us presume that we have five Department Units. Each one elects its representative. The Section or District Committee calls them together and attaches a member of the Party Committee to the Bureau to act as the instructor, to be responsible to the Committee for all the Party work in the enterprise. As the other comrades who make up the Bureau will be full-time workers in industry and will not be able to devote as much time to co-ordinating and checking up on the work as one would like, it would be beneficial if the instructor from the Party Committee was made full-time secretary of the Bureau, planning and leading its work unhindered by any other major Party tasks. Such an important job warrants a full-time Party functionary.

At the Bureau meetings, the happenings in each department, the work done, the weaknesses evident, etc., will be discussed, co-ordinated, and plans made for improving the activities.

Whilst this method of guiding the work places the Party Committee in the position of knowing just what is happening in each department, at the same time it will be necessary for the



Party instructor to the factory Bureau to meet every 14 days with the instructors to each Department Unit for the purpose of unifying all the work, exchanging experiences, checking up, and so on. This brings the Party Committee into direct contact with each basic unit, allows the Committee to get several interpretations of the work being done in each department.

The factory Bureau should meet at least once weekly, and more often if certain campaigns and happenings warrant it.

The above method of working does not absolve the Party Committee from collective responsibility for leading and guiding the work. It doesn't matter how good an individual may be, he will make mistakes. Therefore, from time to time the Party Committee must put on its agenda for discussion the work of a certain department unit, taking each in turn, inviting the Sec-organiser of the unit and the instructor to be present, so that a clear picture of the work being done can be gained by all members of the Committee. This will overcome the tendency to be deceived by false or inflated reports and will give the Committee a check on its member who is leading the work.

As the Party develops towards a mass Party, it will be found necessary to create several units in one department. These units would be set up in different sections of the shop, wherever five or more comrades were working together. Also where factories work night and day shifts, it may be found beneficial to have a unit formed in each shift. Should such a situation present itself, comrades will be faced with the problem of co-ordinating the work of a number of units in a given department. Here, the best thing to do would be to build a department Bureau on the same lines as the Bureau co-ordinating the work of the whole enterprise. To such a department Bureau would be attached a responsible instructor, by the Party Committee. The instructor need not be a member of the Party Committee. He would come under the leadership of the Party instructor leading the work of the factory Bureau.

Besides the connections outlined above, each Department Unit or Department Bureau must attempt to establish connections with the other departments situated closest to them. The Sec-organiser in a given department, should anything occur of such a nature as to warrant immediate action throughout the enterprise, must have channels organised through which he can send coded messages to the organiser in another department,

telling him the news and indicating what to do. At the same time he should ask him to send the word on to the next department, and so on.

The question that will be asked is: "How are these connections to be built up?" With the limited experience at our disposal we would say that the best way to build them would be to recruit members to the Party and the M.M. from amongst the haulage drivers in the yards, or workers who travel from department to department as breakdown gangs, etc. Such workers who could be trusted could be given the message to pass on to the comrade we wish to receive it. Furthermore, in many factories, it is often possible to effect contact with the different departments during the lunch hour or at the finish of a shift and so on. No hard and fast rule can be laid down, as that method which would suit one enterprise would be useless in another, and vice versa. Comrades will have to be guided, to a large extent, by the circumstances existing in the given industry.

Before concluding, we wish to point out that one of the most important tasks of a Department Unit is to agitate and organise for the building of a Shop Committee in each department. This Shop Committee should, if possible, be elected from a mass meeting of all sections of workers in the department. Nevertheless, if we have not done sufficient work to convince the workers that this form of committee is best, we should not sectarianly oppose the formation of a Shop Committee elected on a craft union basis, because, after all, any working-class organisation in the factory is better than none at all. Still, we must consistently campaign and lay the ideological grounding amongst the workers for the changing of such a committee from a craft basis to an industrial basis. To achieve this we have got to prove to the workers in practice that demands can be won in the shop, by actually leading the work to gain the concessions. Empty talk and academic windbagging will not convince the workers. Results are necessary.

If we succeed in setting up Shop Committees in the various departments, each committee will elect delegates to form a Works Council to co-ordinate the activities of all the committees in the works. Such a Works Council will deal direct with the general manager of the works, should a departmental manager refuse the requests of the department Shop Committee. In this way the pressure of all the workers in the enterprise, providing



all delegates are agreed, can be brought to bear on the management to achieve results.

If the matter in dispute is of a vital character, it will be found advisable, before acting, to call mass meetings of the men in each department to get their endorsement. Should the majority favour the proposals of the Works Council, they can then be applied.

(Next month: "How to Build Cadres.")

### Party Work in District 3

Party work in District 3 has been improved in the past year, and particularly in the last few months.

The widespread mass support and increased vote for the Party in the recent Federal Elections was the result of the mobilisation of the Party forces with improved methods. More collective discussions on political issues are held, and classes for leading functionaries are conducted with regularity. Notwithstanding the improvements made, there are many serious shortcomings calling for attention and the combined effort of all comrades to overcome them.

The weaknesses arise mainly from the lack of trained cadres to specialise and guide the work in the various spheres of activity and be personally responsible to the District Committee. While it has to be admitted that insufficient attention has been paid to the training of functionaries, we must not overlook the fact that a laxity and indifference to Party directives have been shown by many comrades entrusted with the task of directing particular phases of our work; they have not availed themselves of the possibilities (though limited) for developing their political understanding, and improving their methods. Added to this is our failure to train the membership in the task of checking up on their work, which not only ensures the detection of shortcomings and weaknesses, but is itself one of the best means of developing a better understanding of Party tasks and methods of work. The need for closer personal attention to the work in the lower organs of the Party has been recognised and talked around, but we have not yet succeeded in organising and

training sufficient comrades to be able to direct the lower organs. Country centres, in particular, have been neglected or the comrades sent out were unable to develop the work. Some examples of good concentration work are to be recorded, but the lessons to be learned from the methods of work that get results, have not been carried into the more backward units of the Party, that they may learn from the experiences and improve their methods. Reams of directives, which in themselves are good and set down some practical and detailed tasks, are sent out, but their significance is not clearly understood by the rank and file, and they are, for the most part, passed over.

The role of the Party as the educator, organiser, and stimulator of action of the masses in their various activities in the struggle against capitalism is not sufficiently clear to most new members as well as to some old members who tend to a state of fossilisation. This fact is reflected in the mechanical treatment of directives; for instance, units were called upon to endeavour to get returned soldiers in their area interested in the R.S. Section of the Anti-War Movement. Some reports informed the D.C. that the unit members did not know any returned soldiers who were interested. A tendency to treat the united front proposals in a similar manner, without endeavouring to locate A.L.P. members and win them to the support of the united front proposals is also noticeable. To overcome this a drive must be made to convince the membership that the Party's role is to convince the rank-and-file workers, and other people, even the most backward and confused individuals, of the correctness of its policy and the need for Communism. We cannot expect to find ready-made supporters. The masses must be convinced of the need for the Party, and the united front of struggle.

We must adopt as our slogan, to be given practical effect to between now and our District Conference: "A better organised, a broader and better-trained leadership, with better methods of work and a clearer understanding of our revolutionary objective on the part of all Party members."

The D.C. Secretariat calls upon all members of the D.C. to individually and collectively give a lead in a self-critical discussion in the "Workers' Weekly," in bulletins, in discussion, etc.,



on the tasks of the Party, and methods of Party work, with particular attention to the question of leadership.  
District 3 Secretariat, per M.H.

## The 1917 Strike — Some Lessons For To-Day

By "NUGAFONOS"

(Continued from last issue)

In 1907, too, the S.L.P. adopted the 1905 preamble of the Industrial Workers of the World and assisted in launching the first Sydney I.W.W. Club in October of that year. This was the Detroit I.W.W., and was looked upon as the industrial wing of the political party. It was distinct from, opposed to, and opposed by the anti-political Chicago, I.W.W. The former was, by 1916, known as the W.I.I.U.—the Workers' International Industrial Union.

The aims of the I.W.W. were to expose the futility of craft unions and to organise the workers into industrial unions and into one big union. The 1905 preamble of the I.W.W. laid it down that "the toilers must come together on the political as well as on the industrial field." The propaganda of the S.L.P. and the I.W.W. had a good deal of effect. In 1908, the Melbourne Trades Hall Council asked its Executive to report on the advisability of "organising on the lines of the I.W.W." And in the same year, a motion, sponsored by the Newcastle Labor Council at the Trade Union Congress, that the constitution and preamble of the I.W.W. be adopted, received considerable support. The trend towards industrial unions may be seen in the federation of the coalminers of N.S.W. and Victoria in July, 1908—and the leader of the new Federation, Peter Bowling, was an open believer in the I.W.W.

As stated before, the hall mark of the revolutionary parties in 1917 was their sectarianism. The S.L.P. had always prided itself upon its lily-white purity. It was for socialism, and it sought to recruit socialists. Its aim was to convert a majority of the working class to socialism and to organise them, once

converted, for the "inauguration" of socialism. Although its doctrines were nominally based on an acceptance of the fact of the class war, the utopianism of its belief in the gradual and peaceful merging of capitalism into socialism meant in reality the denial of the class struggle.

Nevertheless, the S.L.P. and the I.W.W. (later W.I.I.U.), which it supported, by their insistence on the futility of craft unions and by their consistent propaganda for industrial unionism, were powerfully helpful in building the undeniable militancy of the workers during the decade preceding 1917 and in forwarding that fight against craft unionism which resulted in so many amalgamations, federations, and united activities during those years. An index of the influence of the S.L.P. during those years is given by the figures for the 1917 Federal Elections. It ran three candidates for the Senate in N.S.W., and their combined vote was 32,692—an index, too, of the militancy of the workers: over thirty thousand votes in one State for a socialist party in the middle of a war!

But, just as we found in the case of the A.S.P., the press of the S.L.P. gives no reflection of any organising work by it in connection with the grievances and demands of the railwaymen which led to the 1917 strike. The official organ of the S.L.P. then was "The People," published in Sydney. It was a monthly. In the July issue we find no sign that the approaching industrial storm was even expected, let alone prepared for. The same remark applies to the August issue, although, before it was on the press, the strike must have been a foregone conclusion. The September issue was the first issue after the beginning of the strike. In it, three articles were devoted to the strike. The first one, "The Great Strike," praises the "grand unselfishness, comradeship and solidarity of Labor which Australian workers have shown to their fellow-workers of the world." The second, the editorial, hails the strike as the final defeat of craft unionism and the triumph of the "ideas and principles of industrial unionism." The third was headed: "Why an injury to one is an injury to all." It points to the obvious lesson: the necessity for solidarity. Such solidarity will be attained when the workers are "organised on sound and scientific lines, such as those laid down by the Workers' International Industrial Union."

There was pervading the articles a certain Olympian aloofness. Admiration is expressed, as from afar, of the magnificent



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gestures and splendid struggle of the workers. But there is, also, the disappointment that the workers have not used the wonderfully efficient weapon that the S.L.P. had to offer them—"You are putting up a great fight with your out-of-date craft-union weapons," the writers seem to say, "but we have a more efficient weapon, the O.B.U., which we will give you and teach you to use when you are willing to accept it. In the meantime, we admire you immensely. You are wonderful."

So much for the S.L.P. and its W.I.I.U. In the meantime, the I.W.W. had split in America (in 1908) and that split extended as far as Australia. The Chicago I.W.W. was "anti-political"—it wiped out the word "political" from its preamble. In Australia, the anti-politicals made headway. The Adelaide local was given a charter from Chicago, as the headquarters of the I.W.W. in Australia, in May, 1911. Thence came a charter for the Sydney local. In 1914, there were four locals: Adelaide, Sydney, Broken Hill, and Port Pirie. In 1915, Melbourne and Brisbane saw locals established, and, in 1916, locals were set up on the West Australian goldfields, at Fremantle, and in northern Queensland. The influence of the I.W.W. grew and the circulation of its weekly organ, "Direct Action," reached a high figure. As the Labor Governments began to reveal that no trust could be placed in their promises, the influence of the I.W.W. became stronger and stronger. Its influence was probably strongest at the time of the first conscription referendum campaign in 1916. It led that campaign and foresaw and warned that an attempt would be made to introduce conscription long before any other organisation. It was due to its share in that campaign and also to its success in the industrial field that the Unlawful Associations Act was passed, making it an illegal organisation.

On the industrial field, the activities of the I.W.W. took upon themselves the character of a persistent guerilla warfare. Not only organisation of the workers into industrial unions and into One Big Union was the aim of the I.W.W., but also the carrying on of this war against the industrial employer as well as against the capitalist class as a whole and its State. Its attitude was summed up in the name of its paper: "Direct Action." So such slogans as these were common: "Fast workers die young," "A little sugar in the concrete will make a few more jobs for the unemployed." Sabotage became associated with the three letters: I.W.W. The propaganda for revolution was being waged

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continuously.

It was because of its active participation in the everyday struggles of the workers at the same time that it propagated its principles of industrial unionism that the I.W.W. grew. And it had some success within the existing unions. We have already instanced the miners. In 1915, an I.W.W. ticket was run in the A.W.U. and received considerable support. In the same year, its union tickets were recognised by the Barrier miners.

But the rot of sectarianism was in it. The Unlawful Associations Act killed the organisation, and, although the effects of its propaganda lasted, it ceased to be a leader of the workers—simply because it had no basis in the masses of the workers and in the existing trade unions.

(To be concluded.)

## Lenin's Thesis on The Agrarian Question

(Concluded from last issue)

In countries where large landholdings are insignificant in number, while a great number of small tenants are in search of land, the distribution of the large holdings can prove a sure means of winning the peasantry for the revolution, while the preservation of the large estates can be of no value for the provisioning of the towns. The first and most important task of the proletarian state is to secure a lasting victory. The proletariat must put up with a temporary decline of production so long as it makes for the success of the revolution. Only by persuading the middle peasantry to maintain a neutral attitude, and by gaining the support of a large part, if not the whole, of the small peasantry, can the lasting maintenance of the proletarian power be secured.

At any rate, where the land of the large owners is being distributed, the interests of the agricultural proletariat must be the primary consideration.

The implements of large estates must be converted into state property absolutely intact, but on the unflinching condition that these implements be put at the disposal of the small peasant gratis, subject to conditions worked out by the Proletarian State.

If just at first, after the proletarian coup d'état, the immediate



confiscation of the big estates becomes absolutely necessary, and, moreover, also the banishment or internment of all landowners as leaders of the counter-revolution, and relentless oppressors of the whole rural population, the Proletarian State, in proportion to its consolidation, not only in the town, but in the country as well, must systematically strive to take advantage of all the forces of this class, of all those who possess valuable experience, learning, organising talent, and must use them (under special control of the most reliable communist workers) to organise large agriculture on socialist principles.

7. The victory of socialism over capitalism, the consolidation of socialism, will be definitely established at the time that the proletarian State Power, after finally having subdued all resistance of the exploiters and secured for itself complete and absolute submission, will reorganise the whole industry on the base of wholesale collective production and a new technical basis (founded on the electrification of agriculture). This alone will afford a possibility of such radical help in the technical and social sense, accorded by the town to the backward and dispersed country, that this help will create the material base for an enormous increase in the productivity of agricultural and general farming work, and will induce the small farmers by force of example and for their own benefit to change to large, collective machine agriculture.

Most particularly in the rural districts real possibility of successful struggle for socialism requires, in the first place, that all Communist Parties inculcate in the industrial proletariat the necessity of sacrifice on its part, and readiness to sacrifice itself for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, and that the consolidation of the proletariat be based on knowing of the proletariat how to organise and to lead the working and exploited masses, and on the vanguard being ready for the greatest sacrifices and heroism. In the second place, possibility of success requires that the laboring and most exploited masses in the country experience immediate and great improvement in their position, caused by the victory of the proletariat and by the defeat of the exploiters. Unless this is done the industrial proletariat cannot depend on the support of the rural districts, and cannot secure the provisioning of the towns with food-stuffs.

8. The enormous difficulty of organisation and education for the revolutionary struggle of the agrarian laboring masses placed by capitalism in a condition of particular oppression, dispersion, and often a mediaeval dependence requires from the Communist Parties

special care for the strike movement in the rural districts. It requires enforced support, and wide development of mass strikes of the agrarian proletarians and semi-proletarians. The experience of the Russian Revolutions of 1905 and 1917, confirmed and enlarged now by the experience of Germany and other advanced countries, shows that only the development of mass strike struggle (under certain conditions the small peasants are also to be drawn into these strikes) will shake inactivity of the country population, arouse in them a class consciousness and the consciousness of the necessity of class organisation in the exploited masses in the country, and show them the obvious practical use of their joining the town workers. From this standpoint the promotion of unions of agricultural workers, the co-operation of communists in the country, and woodworkers' organisations are of great importance. The communists must likewise support the co-operative organisations formed by the exploited agricultural population closely connected with the revolutionary labor movement. A vigorous agitation is likewise to be carried on among the small peasants.

The Congress of the Communist International denounces as traitors the socialists—unfortunately there are such not only in the yellow Second International, but also among the three most important European parties, which have left the Second International—who are not only indifferent towards the strike struggle in the rural districts, but oppose it (as does Kautsky) on the ground that it might cause a falling-off of the production of foodstuffs. No programmes and no solemn declarations have any value if the fact is not in evidence, testified to by actual deeds, that the communists and labor leaders know how to put the development of the Proletarian Revolution and its victory above everything else, and are ready to make the utmost sacrifices for the sake of this victory. Unless this is a fact, there is no escape, no barrier against starvation, dissolution and new imperialistic wars.

The Communist Parties must make all efforts possible to start as soon as possible setting up Soviets in the country, and these Soviets must be chiefly composed of hired laborers and semi-proletarians. Only in connection with the mass strike struggle of the most oppressed class will the Soviets be able to serve fully their ends, and become sufficiently firm to dominate (and further on to include in their ranks) the small peasants. But if the strike struggle



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is not yet developed, and the ability to organise the agrarian proletariat is weak because of the strong oppression by the landowners and landed peasants, and also because of the want of support from the industrial workers, and their unions, the organisation of the Soviets in the rural districts will require long preparation by means of creating small communist centres of intensive propaganda, expounding in the most popular form the demands of the communists and illustrating the reasons of these demands by specially convincing cases of exploitation, and pressure by systematic excursions of industrial workers into the country, etc.

(Lenin's Thesis on the Agrarian Question, adopted at the Second Congress of the Communist International, 1920)

