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PRINCIPAL CONTENTS

V. I. LENIN AND THE
FIRST OF MAY — N.
Krupskaya

STAKHANOV AND CUR-
RENT ANTI - SOVIET
MISREPRESENTATIONS
—L. Sharkey

THE SEAMEN'S STRIKE
—R. Dixon

ROY HOWARD'S INTER-
VIEW WITH STALIN

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Stakhanov and Current Anti-Soviet Misrepresentations

By L. SHARKEY

Since the birth of the Soviet Union in 1917, the enemies of the working class movement, open and concealed, have attempted to keep concealed from the gaze of the toiling masses of the world the great historical processes developing in the Soviet Union, its tremendous successes and achievements. With a wall of lies and veritable fog of misrepresentation and distortion, the bourgeoisie and their agents in all sorts of disguises strive to conceal the very nature of the Soviet Government.

Naturally enough, the screen of lies that composes this mental "cordon sanitaire" changes from time to time and as far as possible is adapted to the changing situation in the Soviet Union, and the changing international situation. When the Soviets first seized power, the world bourgeoisie and its propagandists attempted to "laugh it off," declaring that a government based on the proclaimed principles of the Soviet Government was "against human nature" and consequently they spent the first year or so of the existence of the Soviet Government predicting that if its downfall did not take place in time for the early morning editions of the daily press, it certainly would take place later in the day, or, at any rate, not later than next week. Then came the civil war, forced upon the Soviet working class by the imperialists, who armed and aided the White Guards to raise rebellion and themselves provided armies of intervention. The bourgeoisie, fresh from the slaughter of millions in the greatest massacre of history, dripping with blood and dirt, pictured the "typical Bolshevik" as a bewhiskered individual indiscriminately hurling bombs, and the new-born Soviet Republic as a land of bloodshed, murder and terror. At the same moment the bourgeois reaction in Germany, Italy, Hungary, and other countries, following defeat of the proletarian revolution, were murdering and torturing thousands of defenceless working-class men and women. The bourgeoisie always abrogates the international agreement regarding prisoners of war and always murders out of hand, prisoners from the proletarian ranks who have fought in one way or another, not necessarily even with arms in their

Contents

| | Page |
|---|------|
| STAKHANOV AND CURRENT ANTI-SOVIET MISREPRESENTATIONS (L. Sharkey) | 1 |
| V. I. LENIN AND THE FIRST OF MAY (N. Krupskaya) | 15 |
| AUSTRALIA'S FIGHTS FOR FREEDOM, DEMOCRACY, AND PROGRESS (J. N. Rawling) .. | 20 |
| ROY HOWARD'S INTERVIEW WITH COMRADE STALIN | 29 |
| YOUNG COMMUNIST LEAGUE MOVES AHEAD IN VICTORIA (W. Robertson) | 38 |
| MILITANT MILITARISM AND ANTI-MILITARIST TACTICS OF SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY (V. I. Lenin) | 42 |
| THE SEAMEN'S STRIKE (R. Dixon) | 52 |

hands, for the aims of their class. Then came the "horror" stories connected with the Volga famine, when natural causes, accentuated a thousandfold because of the imperialist blockade of the country and the fearful destruction perpetrated by the White Guards, who, in their retreat, destroyed the crops, the bridges, the railways, the factories, and carried off everything they could lay hands on, a practice followed by armies of imperialist intervention; for example, in Siberia, the Japanese invaders carried off the engines from the riverboats. When the famine was overcome and Lenin proclaimed the New Economic Policy, allowing a restricted and temporary return of capitalism, whilst retaining State power and the basic industries, the "commanding heights of industry," as Lenin described them, in the hands of the working class; every little ignorant scribbler in the capitalist press was now just as sure, as he had been a few previously, that "Socialism was against human nature," that that Lenin "had ordered a return to capitalism, proving finally the unworkableness of Socialism and Communism." The writer worked in an enterprise at this period where a faked quotation, culled from the Riga lie factory, or some such authority, "renouncing Communism" was painted over the door. The "starvation" and "murder stories" persisted up till recently, reinforced by the "dumping" and "slave timber," "burying priests alive" and such like campaigns from time to time.

But with the visits of workers' delegations and the testimony of honest visitors, together with the enormous successes of Soviet industry and the rapid rise in the material well-being of the Soviet masses, these old cradle tales of the "starving Russians" and the "Boshevik bombs," have worn thin, and it is now necessary for the masses in the capitalist world, if they are to be further deceived about the Soviet Union, to be drenched in more "subtle" propaganda.

Now that unemployment has vanished from the U.S.S.R. for the last five years, that wages have rapidly risen, that enormous cultural progress has been made, scientific investigations advanced, the country changed from a backward peasant one to the second place among the industrial nations of the world, and now that the Stakhanov movement is raising the productivity of labor beyond anything known in the capitalist world, we are informed that it is because the Soviet Union is once again "reverting to capitalist methods," and that the Stakhanov results are obtained by the familiar speed-up and slave-driving methods of capitalism.

If that were the case, then the obvious question is: why does not capitalism get the same result in England, Australia,

America, Germany, etc., why does it not solve the unemployed problem and ensure a progressively rising economic and cultural standard in the capitalist countries? The increasing prosperity and strength of the Soviet Union is obtained precisely because it is a Socialist country with a planned economic system and has renounced capitalism and all its works.

There are no capitalists in the Soviet Union owning the means of production. Political power is in the hands of the working class. The great landowners, bankers, and industrial capitalists were expropriated in 1917. They were followed by the kulaks and Nepmen during the Five-Year Plan. By 1937, the "remnants of classes" will have been abolished. The schools, press, wireless, and literature teach Socialism to the masses. These decisive factors at once disprove the latest furphy about an approach towards capitalism.

On what do the professional poisoners of the mind of the masses attempt to base their latest fables? Mainly that the workers do not receive uniform, equal rates of pay. The bourgeois propagandists and their reformist Social-Democratic aides-de-camp pretended that Socialism meant a "dull, drab uniformity." On the basis of this caricature, invented by themselves, they now accused the Bolsheviks, the truest disciples of Marx, who smiled at such phantasies, of having departed from it. In our ideological struggle with the bourgeoisie and their agents, the "Gotha Programme" gives us all the weapons and ammunition necessary to rapidly dissipate these latest fables. We, however much we despise the weakness and futility of the "defenders" of Marxism-Leninism, such as the leader-writers of the "Sydney Morning Herald" and Solomon Brigg in the "Labor Daily," must equip ourselves to combat and to explain in simple terms, Marxism-Leninism to the masses in connection with the questions involved. The questions arise in connection with what actually exists in the U.S.S.R. at the present time: Did Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, teach that it was possible to jump from capitalism to Communism overnight: Here is what Marx taught in the "Gotha Programme" on this, and Lenin in his "State and Revolution":

"What we have to deal with here is a Communist society, not as if it had **developed on a basis of its own**, but, on the contrary, as it **emerges from capitalist society**, which is thus in every respect tainted economically, morally and intellectually with the hereditary diseases of the old society from whose womb it is emerging. In this way the individual producer receives back again from society, with

deductions, exactly what he gives. What he has given to society is his individual amount of labor. For example, the social working-day consists of the sum of the individual's hours of work. The individual working-time of the individual producer is that part of the social working-day contributed by him, his part thereof. He receives from society a voucher that he has contributed such and such a quantity of work (after deductions from his work for the common fund) and draws through this voucher on the social storehouse as much of the means of consumption as the same quantity of work costs. The same amount of work which he has given to society in one form, he receives back in another.

"Here, obviously, the same principle prevails as that which regulates the exchange of commodities so far as this exchange is of equal values. Content and form are changed because under the changed conditions no one can contribute anything except his labor and, on the other hand, nothing can pass into the possession of individuals except individual objects of consumption. But, so far as the distribution of the latter among individual producers is concerned, the same principle prevails as in the exchange of commodity-equivalents, i.e., equal quantities of labor in one form are exchanged for equal quantities of labor in another form.

"The equal right is here still based on the same principle as bourgeois right, although principle and practice are no longer at daggers drawn, while the exchange of equivalents in commodity exchange only exists for the average and not for the individual case.

"In spite of this advance, this equal right is still continually handicapped by bourgeois limitations. The right of the producers is proportional to the amount of labor they contribute; the equality consists in the fact that everything is measured by an equal measure, labor.

"But one man will excel another physically or intellectually, and so contributes in the same time more labor, or can labor for a longer time; and labor, to serve as a measure, must be defined by its duration or intensity, otherwise it ceases to be a standard measure. This equal right is an unequal right for unequal work. It recognises no class differences because every worker ranks as a worker like his fellows, but it tacitly recognises unequal individual endowment, and thus capacities for production, as natural

privileges. It is, therefore, a right of inequality in its content, as in general is every right. Right can by its very nature only consist in the application of an equal standard; but unequal individuals (and they would not be different individuals if they were not unequal) are only measurable by an equal standard in so far as they can be brought under an equal observation, be regarded from one definite aspect only, e.g., in the case under review, they must be considered only as workers and nothing more be seen in them, everything else being ignored. Further, one worker is married, another single, one has more children than another, and so on. Given an equal capacity for labor, and thence an equal share in the funds for social consumption, the one will in practice receive more than the other, the one will be richer than the other, and so forth. To avoid all these inconveniences, rights must be unequal instead of being equal.

"But these deficiencies are unavoidable in the first phase of Communist society, when it is just emerging after prolonged birth-pangs from capitalist society. Right can never be higher than the economic structure and the cultural development of society conditioned by it.

"In a higher phase of Communist society, after the tyrannical subordination of individuals according to the distribution of labor and thereby also the distinction between manual and intellectual work, have disappeared, after labor has become not merely a means to live but is in itself the first necessity of living, after the powers of production have also increased and all the springs of co-operative wealth are gushing more freely, together with the all-round development of the individual, then, and then only, can the narrow bourgeois horizon of rights be left far behind and society will inscribe on its banner: 'From each according to his capacity, to each according to his need.'

"I have dealt for some considerable time on the 'Whole proceeds of labor' on the one hand, and on 'equal right' and 'equitable distribution' on the other, to show how mischievous it is, on the one hand, to force on our Party again as dogmas, ideas which at a certain period of time had some meaning, but have now become out-of-date non-sensical phraseology, while, on the other hand, perverting again the realistic conceptions, in which it has been instructed with such enormous difficulty and which have at last

taken root in it, by means of ideological phraseology about 'rights' and other nonsense of the democrats and French Socialists."—Marx, "Critique of the Gotha Programme."

Here is Lenin's analysis of the transitional Socialist stage (from "The State and Revolution") :—

"In the 'Critique of the Gotha Programme,' Marx goes into some detail to disprove the Lassallean idea of the workers receiving under Socialism the 'undiminished' or 'full product of their labor.' Marx shows that out of the whole of the social labor of society, it is necessary to deduct a reserve fund, a fund for the expansion of production, for the replacement of worn-out machinery and so on; then, also, out of the means of consumption must be deducted a fund for the expenses of management, for schools, hospitals, homes for the aged, and so on.

"Instead of the hazy, obscure, general phrase of Lassalle's—'the full product of his labor for the worker'—Marx gives a sober estimate of exactly how a Socialist society will have to manage its affairs, Marx undertakes a concrete analysis of the conditions of life of a society in which there is no capitalism, and says:

"What we are dealing with here (analysing the programme of the Party) is not a Communist society which has developed on its own foundations, but, on the contrary, one which is just emerging from capitalist society, and which therefore in all respects—economic, moral, and intellectual—still bears the birthmarks of the old society from whose womb it sprung."

"And it is this Communist society—a society which has just come into the world out of the womb of capitalism, and which, in all respects, bears the stamp of the old society—that Marx terms the 'first,' or lower, phase of Communist society.

"The means of production are no longer the private property of individuals. The means of production belong to the whole of society. Every member of society, performing a certain part of socially-necessary work, receives a certificate from society to the effect that he has done such and such a quantity of work. According to this certificate, he receives from the public warehouses, where articles of consumption are stored, a corresponding quantity of products. Deducting that proportion of labor which goes to the public fund, every worker, therefore, receives from society as much as he has given it.

"Equality' seems to reign supreme.

"But when Lassalle, having in view such a social order (generally called Socialism, but termed by Marx the first phase of Communism), speaks of this as 'just distribution' and says that this is 'the equal right of each to an equal product of labor,' Lassalle is mistaken, and Marx exposes his error.

"Equal right,' says Marx, we indeed have here; but it it still a 'bourgeoisie right,' which, like every right, **pre-supposes inequality.** Every right is an application of the same measure to different people who, in fact, are not the same and are not equal to one another; this is why 'equal right' is really a violation of equality, and an injustice. In effect, every man having done as much social labor as every other, receives an equal share of the social products (with the above-mentioned deductions).

"But different people are not alike: one is strong, another is weak; one is married, the other is not; one has more children, another has less, and so on.

"... With equal labor,' Marx concludes, 'and therefore an equal share in the social consumption fund, one man, in fact, receives more than the other, one is richer than the other, and so forth. In order to avoid all these defects, rights, instead of being equal, must be unequal.'

"The first phase of Communism, therefore, still cannot produce justice and equality; differences—and unjust differences—in wealth will still exist, but the **exploitation** of man by man will have become impossible, because it will be impossible to seize as private property the **means of production**, the factories, machines, land, and so on. In tearing down Lassalle's petty-bourgeois, confused phrase about 'equality' and 'justice' in general, Marx shows the course of development of Communist society, which is forced at first to destroy **only** the 'injustice' that consists in the means of production having been seized by private individuals, and which is **not capable of destroying at once** the further injustice consisting in the distribution of the articles of consumption 'according to work performed' (and not according to need).

"The vulgar economists, including the bourgeois professors and also 'our' Tugan-Baranovsky, constantly reproach the Socialists with forgetting the inequality of people and with 'dreaming of destroying this inequality.' Such a reproach, as we see, only proves the extreme ignorance of

the gentlemen propounding bourgeois ideology.

"Marx not only takes into account with the greatest accuracy the inevitable inequality of men; he also takes into account the fact that the mere conversion of the means of production into the common property of the whole of society ('Socialism' in the generally accepted sense of the word) **does not remove** the defects of distribution and the inequality of 'bourgeois right' which **continue** to rule as long as the products are divided 'according to work performed.'

"But these defects,' Marx continues, 'are unavoidable in the first phase of Communist society, when, after long travail, it first emerges from capitalist society. Justice can never rise superior to the economic conditions of society and the cultural development conditioned by them.'

"And so, in the first phase of Communist society (generally called Socialism), 'bourgeois right' is **not** abolished in its entirety, but only in part, only in proportion to the economic transformation so far attained, i.e., only in respect of the means of production. 'Bourgeois right' recognises them as the private property of separate individuals. Socialism converts them into common property. **To that extent**, and to that extent alone, does 'bourgeois right' disappear.

"However, it continues to exist as far as its other part is concerned; it remains in the capacity of regulator (determining factor) distributing the products and allotting labor among the members of society. 'He who does not work shall not eat'—this Socialist principle is **already** realised; 'for an equal quantity of labor, an equal quantity of products'—this Socialist principle is **already** realised. However, this is not yet Communism, and this does not abolish 'bourgeois right,' which gives to unequal individuals, in return for an unequal (in reality unequal) amount of work, an equal quantity of products.

"This is a 'defect,' says Marx, but it is unavoidable during the first phase of Communism; for, if we are not to fall into utopianism, we cannot imagine that, having overthrown capitalism, people will at once learn to work for society **without any standards of right**; indeed, the abolition of capitalism **does not immediately** lay the economic foundations for such a change.

"And there is no other standard yet than that of 'bour-

geois right.' To this extent, therefore, a form of State is still necessary, which, while maintaining public ownership of the means of production, would preserve the equality of labor and equality in the distribution of products.

"The State is withering away in so far as there are no longer any capitalists, any classes, and, consequently, no class can be suppressed.

"But the State has not yet altogether withered away, since there still remains the protection of 'bourgeois right' which sanctifies actual inequalities. For the complete extinction of the State, complete Communism is necessary."

In connection with Communist Saturdays, Lenin said in December, 1919:

"If we ask ourselves what distinguishes Communism from Socialism, we must say that Socialism is the society which grows directly out of capitalism, it is the first form of the new society. Communism, however, is a higher form of society, and it can only develop when Socialism has been completely consolidated. Socialism implies work without the help of capitalists, social labor with strict accounting, control and supervision by the organised advance guard, the foremost section of the workers; for that reason both the norms of labor must be laid down. The fixing of these is necessary because capitalist society has bequeathed to us such tendencies and such habits as absence from work, distrust of social economy, old habits of the small farmer which are prevalent in all peasant countries. All of this takes place in spite of an actual Communist economy. We call Communism the system in which people act in fulfilment of social obligations without any special apparatus of coercion, when unpaid labor for society has become universal." (Vol. XXIV, p. 651, Lenin's "Works," Russian edition.)

In "Anti-Duehring," Engels writes as follows in regard to the demand for equality:

"The demand for equality in the mouth of the proletariat has, however, a double meaning. It is either—as was the case at the very start, for example in the peasants' wars—the natural reaction against the crying social inequalities, against the contrast between the rich and the poor, the feudal lords and their serfs, surfeit and starvation: as such it is the simple expression of the revolution-

ary instinct, and finds its justification in that, and indeed only that. Or, on the other hand, the proletarian demand for equality has arisen as the reaction against the bourgeois demand for equality, drawing more or less correct and more far-reaching demands from this bourgeois demand, and serving as material for agitation in order to rouse the workers against the capitalists on the basis of the capitalists' own assertions; and in this case it stands and falls with civil equality itself. In both cases, the real content of the proletarian demand for equality is the demand for the abolition of classes. Any demand for equality which goes beyond this of necessity passes into absurdity."

In his recent interview with Howard, Comrade Stalin gave the following answer to a question on "Socialism" and "Communism" ("International Press Correspondence," No. 14):

"HOWARD: Admittedly, Communism has not been achieved in Russia. State Socialism has been built. Have not Fascism in Italy and National-Socialism in Germany claimed they have attained similar results?"

"STALIN: 'State Socialism' is not precise. Under this term, many understand a state of society in which a certain part of the wealth, sometimes quite a considerable part, passes into State ownership or control, while in the great majority of cases the ownership of plants, factories, and lands remains in private hands. Many understand 'State Socialism' in this way. Sometimes a system is concealed behind this term, under which a capitalist State, in the interests of the preparation or the conduct of war, takes upon itself the maintenance of a certain number of private enterprises. The society which we have built can in no sense be termed 'State Socialism.' Our Soviet society is Socialist because the private ownership of factories, plants, land, banks, means of transportation has been abolished in our country and replaced by public ownership.

"The social organisation which we have created can be termed Soviet; the Socialist organisation is not yet quite completed, but in it is the root of the Socialist organisation of society. The foundation of this society is public ownership, State ownership, namely, ownership by the entire people, as well as co-operative-collective farm property.

"Neither Italian Fascism nor German National-Socialism has anything in common with such a society; primarily because the private ownership of factories,

plants, land, banks, and means of transportation remain untouched there, and therefore capitalism in Germany and Italy remains in full force.

"Yes, you are right: we have not yet built a Communist society. It is not so easy to build such a society. The difference between Communist and Socialist society is probably known to you. In Socialist society a certain inequality in regard to property still exists. But in Socialist society there is already no unemployment, no exploitation, no oppression of nationalities. In Socialist society, everyone is obliged to work, even though he is remunerated for his labor, not yet according to his requirements, but according to the quantity and quality of labor expended. Therefore, wages still exist, and unequal, differentiated wages at that. Only when we succeed in creating an order of society under which people receive from society for their labor, not according to the quantity and quality of their labor, but according to their requirements, will it be possible to say that we have built up a Communist society."

There are thus two phases, the Socialist and the Communist. Inequalities still exist in the first, but all are workers; everyone is becoming an employee of the State, and it is only the higher stage when "the State will wither away" and the watchword "From each according to his capacity, to each according to his need," will be realised—Communism. Marxism means by "equality" a classless society, and that is fast being realised in the Soviet Union and without classes, without a privileged class enjoying a monopoly of the means of production; exploitation of man by man cannot exist, and is abolished.

We note from that reply by Comrade Stalin and a review of the actual position and achievements in the U.S.S.R. that everything that Marx and Lenin demanded of the first stage—Socialism—has been amply fulfilled in the Soviet Union. Hence the efforts of the bourgeoisie and reformist reactionaries to seize upon this or that detail or upon this or that transitional organisational form in industry or agriculture to build up a case to the effect that Marxism has been repudiated can get them nowhere in face of the decisive facts: the social ownership of the means of production, political power in the hands of the proletariat, the liquidation of the kulaks as a class, etc., etc.

Other arguments adduced to show departure from Marx are hardly serious, such as the remarks of one wiseacre who feels in the marrow of his bones that, having witnessed the Soviet

proletariat playing football and dancing the Rumba, that Communism is irretrievably doomed, or the remark of Miss Portia Holman, who, reporting favorably of what she saw in a recent tourist visit, says the Russians are too cheerful, laughing, and merry to "make good material for industrialism," thereby giving the lie to Dunningham & Co., who said that no one ever laughed in the Soviet Union. Certainly, the working class have nothing to laugh about in regard to capitalist industrialism, but the once superstitious and solemn half-starved Russian peasant, now transformed into a Socialist worker and collective farmer, is a merry worker precisely because Socialist industrialism is bringing about his economic liberation, just as Soviet power has assured him of political and social freedom. A Sunday paper has discovered a new "evidence" in that "love," it says, "is returning in the Soviet Union." Had the person responsible for this screed read Engels' "Origin of the Family," he would have known that Engels, more than half a century ago, showed that marriage under Socialism would be purified of the economic and social motives that enter into it under capitalism and that marriage would be based upon and endure as long as mutual affection.

A second set of falsifications are developed around the question of proletarian dictatorship. And here we have especially to note the line of reformism, which is to lump proletarian dictatorship with Fascist dictatorship. The State is always a dictatorship of a class. The bourgeoisie still rule in a number of countries with the aid of bourgeois democracy, of Parliament, whilst in others more directly threatened by proletarian revolution they have substituted Fascism, in which the armed and terrorist function of the bourgeois State, instead of being concealed, is brought forward in its sharpest form—Fascism.

The deception here is to prate of the dictators, Mussolini and Hitler, in the same breath as Comrade Stalin, and unfortunately the leaders of the Labor Party play a leading role in this regard, refusing to recognise the truth about the position of the proletarian dictatorship.

The Fascists made no decisive changes in the bourgeois State in the way of giving the people greater control—just the opposite. They trampled on the concepts of bourgeois liberalism. The Fascist dictators did not take the means of production away from the capitalists, but, on the contrary, strengthened capitalist control over production and the lives of the masses.

The Soviet Government acted exactly the opposite. The Soviets, the "workers' councils," are the Government; the

capitalists have been driven away.

The bourgeois dictatorship, in its democratic or Fascist form, is the dictatorship of the exploiting minority, keeping the masses in subjection, whilst the proletarian dictatorship is the suppression of the exploiting minority by the majority of toilers. The bourgeois State strives to strengthen itself against the masses; the proletarian dictatorship prepares the conditions for its own "withering away," its own ultimate abolition. The leaders of the Labor Party, with their false claim of the "extinction of democracy" in the Soviet Union, do but plead for "democracy" for the White Guard hangmen and stranglers of the overthrown Tsarist régime. Their cry that Communism stands for rule by a minority is a false cry. The Soviets are a million times more democratic than any bourgeois republic, Lenin declared at the very inception of the proletarian dictatorship.

The Communists aim to lead the workers, small farmers, employees, and all toiling people, the vast majority in society, to establish their own absolute rule, or "dictatorship," in place of the absolute rule of the bourgeoisie and their Fascist hangmen.

We must on each occasion hurl back in their teeth the misrepresentation of our aims as the establishment of "the rule of a minority." Marx pointed out as long ago as the publication of "The Manifesto of the Communist Party" that Communists fought to "win the battle of democracy" in the interest of "the great majority."

Much of the latest campaign of misrepresentation of the Soviet Union centres around the Stakhanov movement. The Stakhanov movement is not something that we must excuse, but is the most glorious event since 1917. Russians, we were told by the bourgeoisie, were not a race adapted to industrialism. Their "national characteristics" were against industrial efficiency. Therefore, the "grandiose" Five-Year Plans must fail because of this "slothfulness." Not being materialists, they did not understand the difference in behavior of people subjected to brutal and backward despotism, crushing all initiative like the Tsars, and the same people, when transformed in a new Socialist environment, which brought forward all their latent talents. This bourgeois "theory" in connection with "national character" can be described as "bosh."

The Stakhanov movement now breaks all industrial records; it is not a capitalist speed-up method, but the grand upsurge of Socialist initiative, bursting all the bonds and limitations imposed in class society. The Soviet Central Executive defines the Stakhanov movement:

"The Stakhanov movement means reorganisation of work on a new basis, rationalisation of technical processes, a division of labor suited to the needs of production, the freeing of specially skilled workers from subsidiary and preparatory duties, better arrangement of workplaces, a rapid increase in the productivity of labor, and a considerable rise in the earnings of manual and non-manual workers."

All will agree that such a method of organisation is sane and rational, and when it is harnessed to Socialist enthusiasm in a country where useful labor is looked upon as the most honored occupation, a matter "of honor, of valor" (Stalin), and the giant resources of modern industry and science, the result must be the amazing achievements of the Stakhanovites. Lenin spoke of the vast productivity that slept in the lap of Socialist labor. The Stakhanov movement heralds the awakening of this sleeping potentiality.

But its world-historic importance lies in the declaration of Comrade Stalin: "The Stakhanov movement prepares the conditions for the transition to Communism."

We are then not apologists, but victors! Lenin said that when Socialist production could surpass capitalist production in efficiency, in productivity, then it would indubitably have proven in practice the correctness of our claim that the Socialist mode of production is a higher form than the capitalist, and the world victory of Socialism would be assured.

This is now the task—to bring the knowledge of what the Stakhanov movement really means: Socialism is not inefficient, inferior to capitalism in producing the necessaries and luxuries of life, but is immeasurably superior.

We are on the offensive in connection with the Stakhanov movement; it is another glorious victory for international Communism.

V. I. Lenin and the First of May

By N. KRUPSKAYA

THE celebrations on May 1 have always played a great part in our country for the organisation of the masses of the workers, for rousing them to class-consciousness, and for gathering them around the Party. Every May Day has reflected, as in a mirror, the position of the labor movement at a given moment. The articles and speeches of Lenin with reference to May Day, taken in chronological order, sharply illuminate the successive decisive stages of our labor movement, and his role as leader and organiser of our Party.

1896. The labor movement had commenced to develop. The Party did not yet exist. But in Petersburg the "Militant League for the Emancipation of the Working Class" had already been organized—a group of revolutionary Socialists. Lenin was in prison. With chemical ink he wrote a leaflet to the workers, and succeeded in getting it out of the prison. Two thousand copies were hectographed and circulated in 40 works and factories in St. Petersburg. This leaflet was entitled "The Workers' Festival of May 1." ("Lenin's Works," Russian edition, Vol. I, p. 452.) This leaflet was written in a very popular language. It did not contain any foreign words, not even the words "proletariat" or "Socialism," but spoke clearly and comprehensively of the international struggle of the workers under the slogan "Workers of the World, Unite!" In the year following, Lenin was sent to banishment in Siberia.

1900. The labor movement had commenced to grow everywhere in the industrial centres. Lenin, after his term of banishment had expired, went abroad in order to publish the newspaper "Iskra" ("Spark"), which was to carry to the whole of Russia the initiative for the growing struggle for unity of action. In November, 1900, Vladimir Ilyich wrote the preface to the pamphlet "May Day in Kharkov," which was published by the "Iskra" in January, 1901 (Vol. IV, p. 47). This pamphlet, too, was written in an extremely popular style, though obviously addressed to strata of workers on a higher level of class-consciousness—to the body of labor functionaries which had come into existence in the course of the years just elapsed.

This preface makes suggestions for the celebration of May 1. Not only the number of participants is important, but the efficient organization and the class-consciousness of the demonstration. The May Day demonstrations must be headed by a powerful revolutionary leadership, capable of leading the actions

of the workers; an organisation extending over the whole of Russia was necessary, the Party.

Lenin went on to deal with the character of the practical demands. These demands had not to be of a narrow craft nature; they had not to be the demands of individual categories of workers. One demand which had to be put forward was for the eight-hour day, a demand made by the whole of the proletariat; and this demand was not to be put to the individual employer, but to the State power in its totality.

1901. In an article entitled "Gao! Directives and Gao! Verdicts," published in No. 10 of the "Iskra" (Vol. IV, pp. 285-289), Lenin described the cruel treatment by the Tsarist Government of the workers of the **Obuchovo** works, who had demanded the reinstatement of 26 of their fellow-workers discharged for "absenting themselves from work" on May 1. The article closed with the statement:

"The Government, after already taking revenge on the participants in the demonstration by means of the police and soldiery, is determined to have them sentenced for rioting as well. To this we reply by gathering together all revolutionary forces, by bringing over to our side all who are suppressed by Tsarist despotism, and by the systematic preparation of the uprising which will embrace the whole people."

1904. At the Second Party Congress, the organisational question led to the split into Bolsheviki and Mensheviki. In Russia, revolutionary events developed. On February 9, 1904, war was declared with Japan. Workers and students' meetings and demonstrations against war commenced. Strikes among the workers commenced, too. The Russian troops suffered a defeat. . . . And now Lenin wrote a leaflet for May 1 (Vol. VI, p. 337).

This leaflet was written in fiery language, and emphasised that the war against Japan will expose the whole criminality of tsarist despot rule, which had initiated the war in order to seize upon fresh territory and to enslave more peoples. The war will open the eyes of even the least class-conscious workers. The leaflet pointed out the joint interests of the Russian and Japanese workers in their struggle against capital.

1905. Lenin drew up a draft for a May Day leaflet. This leaflet bears the title "The Tasks of the Proletariat in the Revolution. Plan for a May Day Leaflet" (Vol. XXX, p. 129). This draft contains three variations, and gives expression to Lenin's train of thought, at the time of the Third Party Congress. In all three variations he spoke of the peasantry and the coming

revolution. In the first variation he deals with the proletarian struggle for the republic and for Socialism, and makes the statement that the Russian revolutionary proletariat will march at the head of the revolutionary world proletariat. The second variation deals with the armed uprising and the aims of the struggle. The third adds a point on the world historical importance of the Russian revolution.

1912. The years of the revolution and of the subsequent reaction were over. The movement was on the upsurge again. In January, 1912, all parts of Russia were represented at the **Conference of the Russian Social-Democratic Party in Prague**. From this moment onwards our Party broke off finally all formal connection with the Mensheviki.

In January, 1912, Lenin published an article in the legal "Nevskaya Syesda" ("Star of the Neva") (Vol. XV, pp. 518-522) entitled "The Economic and the Political Strike." Writing under the name of **Ivan Petrov**, he stressed the necessity of linking up the slogans of the international solidarity of the proletariat with the practical day to day demands which had moved into the foreground by the course of events. This viewpoint was violently opposed by the liberals and the liquidators, who were anxious to castrate the revolutionary content, the militant spirit of the May Day demonstrations.

"The 'Sozialdemokrat' contains an article by Lenin under the title, "The Revolutionary Upswing," giving a survey of the events of the May Day strikes (Vol. XV, pp. 535-538). This article deals with the approaching revolution and the necessity of setting up the slogans appropriate for the given stage, the slogans for the eight-hour day, for the confiscation of the land of the large landowners, and for the establishment of the republic. Lenin defined these questions even more sharply in an article published in the same number of the "Sozialdemokrat," under the title, "The Slogans of the All-Russian Conference of the Russian Social-Democratic Workers' Party in January, 1912, and the May Day Movement." (Vol. XV, pp. 539-543). In this article Lenin severely condemns Trotzky, who was endeavoring by means of protestation of "conciliation" to prevent the working class from taking part in revolutionary actions and to narrow down the whole character of the struggle.

1913. The "Sozialdemokrat" published an article by Lenin under the title, "The May Day Celebrations of the Revolutionary Proletariat" (Vol. XVI, p. 484). In a survey of the events of the May Day celebrations on May 1, 1913, Lenin writes that this May Day had demonstrated to the whole world that the proletariat of

Russia had once again turned to the path of revolutionary struggle.

1915. A few months had passed since the declaration of war. The resume of an address by Lenin on "1st May and the War" has been preserved (Vol. XXX, p. 224). This is profoundly interesting. Lenin states that war represents a tremendous crisis, and that "every crisis signifies: (a) an acceleration of developments; (b) an intensification of antagonisms; (c) the appearance of these antagonisms; (d) a collapse of all decaying elements," etc.

Lenin linked up the question of the May Day celebrations with the question of the crisis caused by the war. He pointed out that objective conditions were ripe for socialism. The crisis passed through by official Marxism (1895 to 1915), completely eaten up by opportunism, must be utilised for the consolidation of revolutionary Marxism.

1917. This was the first anniversary of May Day after the defeat of the rule of despotism. On May 1 Lenin addressed the workers of **Petrograd** on the Marsfeld (Vol. XX, p. 712). The speech has not been preserved.

1919. On May 1 Lenin spoke in the **Red Square in Moscow**. A chronicle of his three speeches has been preserved (Vol. XXIV, pp. 268 to 271). He dealt with Soviet Hungary, Soviet Bavaria, and the retreat of the British and French intervention from Odessa and the Crimea. His conclusions were: Socialism is triumphing, Socialism is no Utopia, all available forces must be concentrated on building up Socialism.

1920. All over the country the **Subotnik** (volunteer work done in leisure time) was carried out on May 1. In the morning Lenin took part in the Subotnik, working with a number of others in the Kremlin at transporting firewood. At 2 o'clock in the afternoon he took part in the laying of **the foundation stone of the monument for Karl Marx**, and delivered a speech. At 3 in the afternoon he gave an **address** at the unveiling of the monument "**Emancipated Work**," after which he spoke at meetings in the Moscow districts of Samoskvorechye and Baumann. In the evening he delivered speeches at the opening of the "**Workers' Palace Sagorsky**" and at a meeting of the workers of the Prochorov Factory (Vol. XXV, p. 698).

The results of this Subotnik were summed up by Lenin in an article, "**From the First Subotnik on the Moscow-Kasan Railway to the May Day Subotnik All Over Russia**." This article was

printed in the paper issued for this day only, "**The Subotnik on May 1**." Lenin refers in this article to the new Socialist work discipline, to the new forms of social contract, to the reshaping of human being. "We shall attain the victory of Communist work," are the closing words of the article (Vol. XXV, pp. 255-256).

Australia's Fights for Freedom, Democracy, And Progress

By J. N. RAWLING

V—Bligh of the "Bounty" and Another Mutiny

THE 1808 "revolutionists" had, of course, to represent their mutiny as a rising of the people against tyranny. It was this wholly fictitious odor of popularity that clung to the episode which inevitably drew attention to the actual tyranny—that of a Governor who was answerable to nobody in Australia and so far away from England that he was practically answerable to none at all—and helped to give rise to a protest against it. In this alone were the acts of Macarthur and his clique conducive to progress. Otherwise, the "Revolution" was nothing more than a mutiny amongst officers of the Corps and their cronies, of whom Macarthur was ringleader, and a mutiny in which the bulk of the population played a passive role, their sympathies, in the main, being with Bligh. The latter, in his evidence at the later trial, said that, when the soldiers came looking for him, he hid, with the idea of getting away to the Hawkesbury, where he was confident of rousing the farmers to action in his defence.

The mutiny was planned and prepared for—it was not spontaneous. And there is reason to believe that the planning took place on the night of January 24, the eve of Macarthur's trial, at a Corps mess dinner at which the Macarthur party, together with six of his seven judges of the morrow, spent a convivial evening. At the trial next day, the six officers, appointed to act with the Judge Advocate, usurped the functions of the court and defied the Judge Advocate and the Governor. It was evident that Macarthur was determined to use his trial as a point from which to attack the Governor and to bring about his deposition.

When he was thus defied by the six officers, Bligh sent for Major Johnson, Commanding Officer of the Corps, but he was "too sick" to appear—but not too sick to ride into Sydney later and go straight to the Barracks. There he agreed to act against Bligh and released Macarthur, who had been rearrested. It was then decided to arrest the Governor and, so the story ran later, Macarthur and others drew up a "request" to Johnson so to act, and this was signed by officers of the Corps and others. But it later leaked out that the signing took place after the arrest, when it had dawned on the conspirators that it was necessary to

try to furnish some mass basis for their action. On the other hand, the Petitions and Memorials of the free settlers, sent to England after the deposition of Bligh, show that, not only was there no popular demand for action against Bligh, but, in the words of one of the Petitions, "not twenty of the inhabitants were consulted before the arrest took place." ("Historical Records of Australia," Series I, Vol. 7, p. 138.) These petitions bear evidence of Bligh's popularity among the farmers, of their hatred and fear of Macarthur, and of the unpopularity of the "revolutionary" regime.

However, Bligh was arrested and declared deposed, and Major Johnson assumed the title of Lieutenant-Governor, with John Macarthur as the power behind the throne. The rum-traders and rich pastoralists were firmly in the saddle.

VI—"Australia's First Patriot"

The first Governors, as has already been pointed out, were autocrats, and were meant to be nothing else. They were naval officers in charge of a huge prison. They wished to maintain the colony as a huge prison, and frowned on anything that would tend to alter its prison character—even the finding of a route across that excellent prison wall, the Blue Mountains. It is one point to the credit of John Macarthur that he envisaged New South Wales as something other than a prison—a place to make his home. In the first years, very few looked upon the new country as a home. It was a place where one was forced to stop or else a place where one could make money easily and then return "home."

It was in Governor Macquarie's time that the change came. Macquarie was sent out to clear up the mess left by the feud between Bligh and Macarthur. By his policy of building and road-making he helped to bring some self-respect to a colony where he found few roads and many ramshackle dwellings and public buildings. Moreover, the first generation of Australian-born had grown to manhood and womanhood—people who had no "home" but Australia. The farmers, as we have already seen (see "C.R.," April), were looking forward to self-government. Protest was in the air. Macquarie was destined to be the last of Australia's absolute despots.

The man who was the first to see something of the destiny of the new country was William Charles Wentworth. He was born at Norfolk Island in 1793, so that he was just five years younger than the colony itself. He grew with it and looked upon it as his home. He became the spokesman of the new Australian people. Having been sent to England for his education, he

competed, at the University of Cambridge, for the Chancellor's medal for the best poem on Australasia, and gained second place. In it he voices the love of a new land in the southern seas, while England was for him "a foreign strand"!

Wentworth, in his poem, described with the fervor of the native-born the beauty of Sydney Harbor, the

". . . placid bay,
Where Sydney's infant turrets proudly rise,
The new-born glory of the southern skies;"

and told of the Blue Mountains, whose secret paths he had helped to track, until

"The boundless champaign [plains] burst upon our sight,
Till, nearer seen, the beauteous landscape grew,
Op'ning like Canaan on rapt Israel's view."

And, 115 years ago, this young poet of a young country voiced a nationalism which must have struck horror into the hearts of the Cambridge dons who were to award the prize, and sang of Britain's successor:

"And Australasia float, with flag unfurled,
A new Britannia in another world."

It is not to be wondered at that the prize went to Wentworth's rival, Praed, who painted an Australasia where nothing existed but happiness and virtue, even in convict ships, where convict belles and madonnas excited the pity of rough sailors and warders and in the happy hunting-grounds of the blacks, who all quickly became Christians and lived on terms of brotherhood with gentle whites and noble missionaries with "silvered hair," arms uplifted, and "moistened eye, fixed in deep rapture on the golden sky."

In 1819 he published a book on his native country: "A Statistical, Historical, and Political Description of the Colony of New South Wales and Its Dependent Settlements." In it, he ascribed the slowness of Australia's progress to the lack of good Government. New South Wales, he said, was the only one of Britain's colonies which had neither representative Government nor even trial by jury. Wentworth suggested a Constitution, under which there should be set up a Legislative Council with a paid membership. Members should possess a property qualification of 500 acres freehold, and electors one of 20 acres freehold, a leasehold of £5 per year, or a household of £10 per year. Trial by jury should be established, as well as a Supreme Court or Circuit Courts. Thus did Wentworth supply the blue-prints of reforms

he later helped to achieve. When old and respectable, Wentworth became a reactionary, but that does not alter the fact that he was Australia's first patriot, who helped to wrest from officialdom and reaction many of the democratic rights that are to-day being filched from us.

VII—The Fight for Constitutional Government

The constitutional history of N.S.W. can be divided into five periods: (1) 1788-1823. During this period the Governor was supreme in the legislative, administrative and judicial spheres. He was responsible to no one in Australia, and had no official advisers. He was under the British Secretary of State for Home Affairs. (2) 1823-1842. In this period, the powers of the Governor were partially limited as the result of the existence of a legislative council, whose members, however, were nominated and not elected. (3) From 1842 to 1850, the Legislative Council was partly elective and partly nominee. There was a property qualification for the electors. (4) From 1850, there have been two Houses—the Legislative Council (nominee) and the Legislative Assembly (elected). The powers of Parliament have been added to and the franchise extended since then. (5) In 1901, New South Wales entered the Commonwealth, having to hand over to the Federal Parliament certain powers hitherto possessed. During the last twenty-five years, and especially since the War, many of the rights and liberties that our fathers had gained and enjoyed have been taken from us.

Each step made in the attainment of democratic rights has been made only as the result of struggle and sacrifice upon the part of our fathers. None was made voluntarily by the authorities.

We have already mentioned that in Macquarie's reign, N.S.W. was losing its character of a vast prison. Its people, free and convict or ex-convict and the sons of both were also becoming politically minded. Commissioner Bigge, who came here to prepare a report for the British Government, noticed that N.S.W. was unlike any other British colony in that the colonists looked upon it as their home. The days of the rule of the adventurer were gone. A new and stable community had grown up that sought for a measure of self-government. Agitation to that end began. Public meetings were held, and petitions prepared.

One such meeting was held in the beginning of 1819, and appointed a committee to draw up a petition to the Prince Regent. That petition was drawn up and then signed by 1260

persons. It asked for trial by jury, the replacing of military administrative officers by civil, and freer trade. The first mentioned demand was the one that agitated most minds. The reports of such meetings, the troubles between emancipists and exclusives, about which we shall have something to say later, the discontent with Macquarie's autocracy, and other matters of a troublous nature forced the Home Government to send out Commissioner Bigge in 1819.

The result of his report was the "New South Wales Judicature Act, 1823." By it, a Legislative Council was set up to consist of five, six, or seven members, to be appointed by the Home Government, that is in reality by the Governor here. The Council could not initiate legislation, and the Governor could oppose its decisions if supported by one of its members or without even him in case of "rebellion or apprehended rebellion." Moreover, the Chief Justice had to certify that any proposed legislation was in harmony with English law. The Council had little power, it will therefore be seen. But—the day of military rule had ceased, and civilians were having some say in government. In 1828, the Act of 1823 was amended to increase the number of councillors to 10 or 15, and to add unofficial members. This move was made, also, in reply to agitation in which W. C. Wentworth, who had returned to N.S.W., was the principal leader. That campaign, concerned also with freedom of the press and trial by jury, will be touched on later.

In 1842, the Legislative Council became partly elective. Of its 36 members, twelve were still to be nominated by the crown and the remaining 24 were to be elected: five to represent Port Phillip, and one to represent Melbourne and eighteen to represent Sydney and the other districts to the north of the Murray. It was not yet responsible government. The Governor was still his own Prime Minister, he had independent control over finance, had the right to introduce measures into the Council, and wielded in it a big influence through his twelve nominees, who formed themselves into the Governor's party. Moreover, the franchise was a limited one. But it was another advance, and one won as a result of discontent and agitation. This was the period of Chartist agitation and the beginning of the working-class movement in England. In 1832, the Reform Act had given the vote to the middle class in England, and in 1839 Lord Durham's report, drawn up as the result of rebellion in Canada, advised giving a measure of self-government to the Canadians.

In 1848—the year of revolutions in Europe—Lord Grey,

whom we have met before, proposed a new constitution that roused the people of N.S.W. to fever heat. It proposed a system of double election. There were to be district councils elected by property owners and these were to be local governing bodies. Then the district councils were to elect the members of the Legislative Council! It was to include a clause empowering the Governor to issue warrants requiring district treasurers to pay the sum assessed the district and, failing the payment, the Governor could order the sale of his property and the property of the other councillors and of other inhabitants! Nothing more reactionary has ever been proposed constitutionally in Australia! Would the people of N.S.W. stand it!

Meetings of protest against Earl Grey's proposals were held all over the colony and the "Sydney Morning Herald" was the mouthpiece of the protestants. Never less than three columns did it give when reporting a meeting and, in reporting the big Sydney meeting held on January 19, 1848, it gave up ten columns in addition to a leader—17,000 words! That meeting was held in the Royal Victoria Theatre, and was addressed by W. C. Wentworth, James Martin, James Norton, Stuart Donaldson (later first Premier of N.S.W.), James Macarthur (son of John Macarthur), Charles Kemp and Robert Lowe (afterwards Lord Sherbrooke).

In announcing the meeting in its issue of January 1, the "Herald" said its object was "to preserve to the colonists one of the dearest and most inalienable of the birthrights of British subjects." Earl Grey was charged with attempting to foist upon them a "scheme alien to the notion of Englishmen, and adverse to the settled usages of the colonists." How was the proposal to be resisted? The "Herald" commended Lowe's passive resistance proposal—the proposal of Assembly, consequently the district candidates for the House of Assembly, consequently the district councils can return no members. There will be no candidates for the district councils, consequently the people can return no councillors" ("S.M.H.," 22/1/48). Perhaps there might be "a few craven dullards" offering themselves as candidates, but the above plan, it was anticipated, would make the proposed constitution unworkable. The colonists themselves would suffer, it was admitted, but "their ancestors suffered in the same struggle, and they suffered with a heroism and a fortitude which their Australian descendants, if the occasion shall require, will joyfully emulate" ("S.M.H.," 22/1/48). So it will be seen that Granny in her unregenerate youth was capable of a little revolutionary enthusiasm. "And they," it concluded, "like their

fathers, will eventually win the day." In this the "Herald" filled also the role of a prophet.

The Royal Victoria Theatre meeting was a huge success. All classes were represented, said the "Herald"—"landowners, the magistracy, the learned professions, the farmers and graziers, merchants, shopkeepers, mechanics, laborers," and Grey's proposals were "disapproved—despised—condemned—loathed—abhorred—spurned by that mass of human beings, as though the thousands of bodies were animated by one soul." Five resolutions were carried unanimously: (1) Viewing the proposed constitution with "the utmost apprehension and dismay"; (2) protesting against the deprivation of the franchise, "our inalienable right"; (3) averring the proposals must remain ineffective because "so repugnant to the wishes and so adverse to the interests" of the community; (4) protesting against being "made the subject of theoretical experiments in legislation"; and (5) protesting that "the erection of Port Phillip into a separate colony affords no sufficient reason for such innovations."

Of the speakers, William Charles Wentworth was the most prominent. There is to be noticed in his speech, as well as in much of the propaganda of the time, reflection both of the Puritan agitation that resulted in the bourgeois revolution of the 17th century and of that of the English middle-class radicals in the first half of the 19th century that led to their gaining control of the Parliamentary machine by means of the Reform Act of 1832. "The right of franchise has always existed in the Anglo-Saxon community and is clearly traceable for at least a thousand years. It was confirmed in the Great Charter [i.e. Magna Charta, 1215—J. N. R.] of Great Britain and in twenty subsequent charters, and finally in the Petition of Rights [1628—J. N. R.] and the Bill of Rights [1689—J. N. R.] at the Revolution. It is a principle that the rights which these charters conferred on British subjects should be carried by them into all colonies planted by Great Britain, and therefore the audacious attempt to take away from us the right of elective franchise is nothing less than a gross invasion of our constitutional rights."

So said W. C. Wentworth in 1848—and what he said could be paralleled from the speeches of the Puritan lawyers of the 17th century, the American revolutionaries of 1776, and the bourgeois radicals of the first half of the 19th century in England. In all four cases there was much talk of the liberties of the whole people, when the fight was really and immediately for

the interests of a section. The Puritans fought for power for merchant capitalists with words of liberty upon their lips—and the masses of England rallied to fight and die for them. Washington mobilised the masses of the Thirteen States to fight for the right of the American bourgeoisie to exploit them—under the noblest slogans, and the industrial bourgeoisie of 19th century England, whose idealistic phrases are still quoted, were carried to power by the workers to whom they had promised everything, and whom they treacherously betrayed. In the 17th century, the few who wished to rouse the masses for their own emancipation—the Levellers and Fifth Monarchy Men—were crushed by the bourgeoisie in power; the workers of the new United States found their conditions worse under the new republic than in the old colony; and the English workers were crushed and broken for a generation by their masters whom they placed in power!

But still these were all necessary steps in progress, and each victory was one over reaction. By the dialectical process of history it is required that the oppressed classes help successive classes to power until they themselves are strong enough and capable enough of seizing power for themselves. In the 17th century, the victory was over feudalism—and the workers were not sufficient in numbers to play an independent role. Eighteenth century America was an undeveloped country—its workers could play no independent role. In 19th century England, however, the workers were numerous enough and strong enough, if they had had insight enough, to play an independent role—and came very near to playing it. But, as events proved, history and industrial developments had not been able to teach them the necessity.

So, in Australia, in 1848, it was a middle-class battle that was being waged, but one that was a necessary step in our progress towards a real democracy. This period in Australia's history was its 1642, its 1775 and its 1832. The agitation of the whole people saved the vote for its enfranchised section which later was to be extended until it embraced the whole people. The clarion call for resistance to the reactionary proposal was made by the "Sydney Morning Herald":

"The alarm has spread through the length and breadth of the land. . . . A people so thoroughly imbued with the instincts of a free nation **deserve** to be free; and in spite of all the blunders and artifices of men in office, **must, will be free.** . . . The colonists are unanimously of opinion that the proposed transfer of the elective franchise

from the general constituencies to the municipal councils would be subversive to their fundamental rights as British subjects, and they are unanimously determined to neutralise such transfer by passive resistance. . . . Britons never shall be slaves. And when a misguided Minister of State presumes to cavil at the sentiment and to whisper his belief that we should be none the worse for having a yoke put upon our necks, and a fetter or two round our limbs, our differences are forgotten in the twinkling of an eye and the chorus bursts from our lips in one loud harmonious shout, 'Britons in New South Wales, as well as Britons in the United Kingdom, **never shall be slaves.**' We are unanimous, too, in the conviction that the constitution manufactured for us in Downing Street, plausible as are the terms in which it is propounded, contains the undoubted elements of slavery; and therefore—so say we all—we will have none of it. We are also agreed as to the means of resisting it. We are agreed, first, that we will commit no violence; we will have no tumult; we will respect and keep the peace; we will be loyal to the Throne; but at the same time we will be honest to our country and to ourselves. When the new constitution comes to us in legal shape—and our own impression is that it will so come—the colonists will have nothing to do but echo and re-echo the watchword: **'To your tents, O Israel.'** We shall retreat to our homes and leave the constitution to shift for itself. We will hear of no candidates for legislative dishonors; we will listen to no proclamation appointing polling places for the return of electoral colleges; we shall be deaf as adders and dumb as stones. We can be no parties to our own degradation. We must not hold out our hands to be hand-cuffed, nor open our mouths to be gagged."

(To be continued)

Roy Howard's Interview with Comrade Stalin

WE reprint here the complete report of the interview given by Comrade Stalin to Roy Howard, the head of the Scripps newspaper chain, on March 1, 1936:—

HOWARD: What will, in your opinion, be the consequences of recent events in Japan in regard to the situation in the Far East?

STALIN: So far it is difficult to say. Too little material exists for this. The picture is insufficiently clear.

HOWARD: What would be the attitude of the Soviet Union if Japan should embark upon a serious military drive against the Mongolian People's Republic?

STALIN: If Japan ventures to attack the Mongolian People's Republic, seeking to destroy its independence, we will have to assist the Mongolian People's Republic. Litvinov's assistant, Stomonyakov, has already informed the Japanese Ambassador in Moscow of the fact, after pointing out the invariably friendly relations which the U.S.S.R. has entertained with the Mongolian People's Republic since 1921. We will assist the Mongolian People's Republic in the same way as we helped it in 1921.

HOWARD: Would a Japanese attempt to seize Ulanbator necessitate positive action by the U.S.S.R.?

STALIN: Yes, it would.

HOWARD: Have there recently been any new Japanese activities in this region which are construed by the Soviet Government as of an aggressive nature?

STALIN: The Japanese seem to be continuing to concentrate troops near the frontier of the Mongolian People's Republic, but so far no new attempts at frontier clashes have been observed.

HOWARD: The Soviet Union appears to believe that Germany and Poland have aggressive designs against the Soviet Union and are planning military co-operation in the realisation of these designs. Poland has, however, protested its unwillingness to permit any foreign troops to use its territory as a base of operations against a third nation. How does the Soviet Union envisage such an aggression by Germany? From what position, and in what direction, would the German forces operate?

STALIN: History shows that when some State is intent on making war against another State, even though it be not

adjacent, it begins to seek frontiers across which it could reach the frontiers of the State it desires to attack. Usually the aggressive State finds such frontiers. It finds them either with the aid of force, as in 1914, when Germany invaded Belgium in order to deal a blow at France, or it "borrows" such a frontier as Germany did with regard to Latvia, for instance, in 1918, when the Germans attempted to break through to Leningrad across Latvia.

I do not know what specific frontiers Germany could use for her purposes, but I think that those willing to "lend" her a frontier could be found.

HOWARD: Seemingly the entire world is to-day predicting another great war. If war proves inevitable, when do you think it will come?

STALIN: That is impossible to predict. War may break out unexpectedly. Nowadays wars are not declared. They simply start. But, on the other hand, I believe that the position of the friends of peace is growing stronger. The friends of peace are able to work in the open, basing themselves upon the force of public opinion. They have at their disposal such instruments as, for instance, the League of Nations. This is an advantage for the friends of peace. Their strength lies in the fact that their activities against war are based on the wide masses of the people. There is no people in the world desiring war. As regards the enemies of peace, they are forced to work secretly. This is a disadvantage to the enemies of peace. However, there remains the possibility that on account of this very fact they may embark upon a military adventure as an act of desperation. One of the newest successes of the friends of peace is the ratification of the Franco-Soviet Pact of Mutual Assistance by the French Chamber. This pact represents a certain obstacle to the enemies of peace.

HOWARD: If war should come, where is it most likely to break out? Where are war clouds most menacing—in the East or the West?

STALIN: In my opinion, there are two focal points of war danger—one in the Far East, in the zone of Japan. What I have in mind are repeated statements of Japanese military men containing threats against other States. The second focal point is in the zone of Germany. It is difficult to say which is the more menacing war danger. They both exist, and both are smouldering. Compared with either of these principal focal points of war danger, the Italo-Abyssinian war represents an episode.

At the moment, perhaps, the situation in the Far East is the

more menacing, but the centre of danger may shift to Europe. Evidence of this is provided, for instance, in Herr Hitler's recent interview given to a French newspaper. In this interview Hitler seems to attempt to say peaceful things, but this "peaceableness" of his he so thickly intersperses with threats against France and the Soviet Union that nothing remains of "peaceableness." As you can see, even when Hitler desires to speak of peace he cannot dispense with threats. This is symptomatic.

HOWARD: What situation or condition, in your opinion, furnishes the chief war menace to-day?

STALIN: Capitalism.

HOWARD: In which specific manifestations of capitalism?

STALIN: In its imperialistic annexationist manifestations. You remember how the first world war broke out. It broke out as a result of the desire to redivide the world. To-day the background is the same. There are capitalist States which consider themselves cheated during the previous redivision of spheres of influence, territories, sources of raw materials, markets, etc., and which would again desire to redivide them to their own advantage. Capitalism in its imperialistic phase is a system which regards war as a legitimate method for settling international disputes—a method which is legitimate in fact, if not legally.

HOWARD: May there not be an element of danger in the genuine fear, existing in what you term the capitalist countries, of an intention on the part of the Soviet Union to force its political theories on other nations?

STALIN: There is no justification for such fears. If you think that the people of the Soviet Union have any desire themselves, and moreover by force, to alter the face of the surrounding States, then you are badly mistaken. The people of the Soviet Union naturally desire that the face of the surrounding States should change, but this is the business of the surrounding States themselves. I fail to see what dangers the surrounding States can see in the ideas of the Soviet people if these States are really firmly seated in their saddles.

HOWARD: Does this statement of yours mean that the Soviet Union has to any degree abandoned its plans and intentions to bring about a world revolution?

STALIN: We never had any such plans or intentions.

HOWARD: You appreciate, no doubt, Mr. Stalin, that much of the world has for long entertained a different impression.

STALIN: This is the product of misunderstanding.

HOWARD: A tragic misunderstanding?

STALIN: No, comic. Or perhaps tragi-comic. You see, we

Marxists believe that revolution will occur in other countries as well. But it will come at a time when it will be considered possible or necessary by the revolutionists in those countries. Export of revolution is nonsense. Each country, if it so desires, will make its own revolution, and if no such desire exists, no revolution will occur. For instance, our country wanted to effect a revolution and did effect it, and now we are building a new classless society. But to assert that we desire to bring about a revolution in other countries by interfering with their way of life means to speak of something that does not exist, and which we have never preached.

HOWARD: At the time of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A., President Roosevelt and Litvinov exchanged identical notes concerning the question of propaganda.

Paragraph 4 of Litvinov's letter to President Roosevelt said that the Soviet Government undertakes "not to permit the formation or residence on its territory of any organisation or group, and to prevent the activity on its territory of any organisations or groups or of representatives or officials of any organisation or group, which has as its aim the overthrow or preparation for the overthrow of, or the bringing about by force of a change in the political or social order of the whole or any part of the United States territories or possessions."

Why, Mr. Stalin, did Mr. Litvinov sign this letter if compliance with the terms of Paragraph 4 is incompatible with the interests of the Soviet Union or beyond its control?

STALIN: Execution of the obligations of the paragraph you quote is within our control. We have been carrying out and will continue to carry out these obligations. According to our Constitution, political emigres have the right to reside in our territory. We accord them the right of asylum in the same way as the United States accords the right of asylum to political emigres. It is perfectly obvious that when Litvinov signed this letter he assumed that the obligations contained in it are of a reciprocal character. Do you, Mr. Howard, regard it as conflicting with the Roosevelt-Litvinov agreement if there are Russian White Guard emigres in United States territory conducting propaganda against the Soviets and in favor of capitalism, and they are receiving material assistance from American citizens, and sometimes they represent terrorist groups?

Obviously these emigres enjoy the right of asylum which exists in the United States, too. So far as we are concerned, we would never tolerate a single terrorist in our territory, regard-

less of the question of who he contemplates as the victim of his criminal attack. Apparently the right of asylum receives a broader interpretation in the United States than in our country. Well, we do not complain. Perhaps you would object that we sympathise with those political emigres who arrive upon our territory. But are there no Americans sympathising with White Guard emigres who conduct propaganda in favor of capitalism and against the Soviets? Then what is the point at issue?

The point is not to assist these persons, not to finance their activities. The point is that officials of both countries should not interfere with the internal affairs of the other country. Our officials are honestly carrying out this obligation. If any one of them be guilty of not doing so, let us be informed. If things should go too far, and the deportation of all White Guard emigres from the United States should be demanded, this would be an attack upon the right of asylum existing in the United States and the U.S.S.R.

Here we must recognise certain reasonable limits for claims and counter-claims. Litvinov signed his letter to President Roosevelt not in a private capacity but as the representative of our State, just as President Roosevelt did. Their agreement represents an agreement between the two States. In signing this agreement, both Litvinov and President Roosevelt, as representatives of two States, had in mind the activities of the agents of their States who should not and will not interfere with each other's internal affairs. The right of asylum promulgated in both countries could not be affected by this agreement. Within this framework, the Roosevelt-Litvinov agreement should be interpreted as an agreement between representatives of two States.

HOWARD: Did not Browder and Darcy, American Communists, appearing before the Seventh Congress of the Communist International in Moscow last summer, appeal for the overthrow by force of the American Government?

STALIN: I admit I do not recall the speeches of Comrades Browder and Darcy. I even do not recall what they spoke about. It is possible they said something of this nature. But it was not the Soviet people who created the American Communist Party. It was created by Americans. It exists in the U.S.A. legally: it nominates its candidates at elections, including the Presidential elections. Comrades Browder and Darcy may have made one speech in Moscow, yet at home in the United States they made similar and doubtless even more determined speeches hundreds of times. American Communists have the opportunity

freely to preach their ideas. It would be absolutely wrong to hold the Soviet Government responsible for the activities of American Communists.

HOWARD: But in this instance is it not a fact that their activities took place on Soviet soil, contrary to the terms of Paragraph 4 of the agreement between Roosevelt and Litvinov?

STALIN: In what do the activities of the Communist Party consist? How do they manifest themselves? These activities usually consist in the organization of the working masses, in organizing meetings, demonstrations, strikes, etc. It is perfectly clear that the American Communists cannot perform all this in Soviet territory. The American workers are not here, in the Soviet Union.

HOWARD: I take it that the gist of your thought, then, is that an interpretation can be made which will safeguard and continue good relations between our countries?

STALIN: Yes, absolutely.

HOWARD: Admittedly Communism has not been achieved in Russia. State Socialism has been built. Have not Fascism in Italy and National-Socialism in Germany claimed they have attained similar results? Have not both been achieved at the price of privation and the sacrifice of personal liberty for the good of the State?

STALIN: "State Socialism" is not precise. Under this term many understand a state of society in which a certain part of the wealth, sometimes quite a considerable part, passes into State ownership, or under its control, while in the great majority of cases, the ownership of plants, factories, and lands remains in private hands. Many understand "State Socialism" in this way. Sometimes a system is concealed behind this term, under which a capitalist State, in the interests of the preparation or the conduct of war takes upon itself the maintenance of a certain number of private enterprises. The society which we have built can in no sense be termed "State Socialism." Our Soviet society is Socialist because the private ownership of factories, plants, land, banks, and means of transportation has been abolished in our country and replaced by public ownership.

The social organization which we have created can be termed Soviet; the Socialist organization is not yet quite completed, but in it is the root of the Socialist organization of society. The foundation of this society is public ownership, State ownership, namely, ownership by the entire people, as well as co-operative-collective farm property.

Neither Italian Fascism nor German National-"Socialism" has anything in common with such a society, primarily because

the private ownership of factories, plants, land, banks, and means of transportation remains untouched there, and therefore capitalism in Germany and Italy remains in full force.

Yes, you are right: we have not yet built a Communist society. It is not so easy to build such a society. The difference between Communist and Socialist society is probably known to you. In Socialist society a certain inequality in regard to property still exists. But in Socialist society there is already no unemployment, no exploitation, no oppression of nationalities. In Socialist society everyone is obliged to work, even though he is remunerated for his labor not yet according to his requirements but according to the quantity and quality of labor expended. Therefore wages still exist, and unequal, differentiated wages at that. Only when we succeed in creating an order of society under which people receive from society for their labor, not according to the quantity and quality of their labor, but according to their requirements, will it be possible to say that we have built-up a Communist society.

You say that in order to build our Socialist society we sacrificed personal liberty and suffered privations. In your question appears the notion that Socialist society negates personal liberty. This is incorrect. Of course, in order to build something new, one has to economise and accumulate means and temporarily limit one's requirements, and borrow from others. If you want to build a new house, you save money and temporarily limit your requirements, otherwise you will not build your house. This is all the more true when the building-up of a quite new human society is concerned. It was necessary temporarily to limit certain requirements, to accumulate the necessary means, to strain our forces. We acted precisely in this way, and built a Socialist society. But we built this society not for curbing personal liberty, but in order that the human personality might feel really free. We built it for the sake of real personal liberty, liberty without inverted commas.

It is difficult for me to imagine what "personal liberty" can be had by an unemployed man who goes hungry and cannot find a means of using his labor. Real liberty exists only there where exploitation has been annihilated, where no oppression of some peoples by others exists, where there is no unemployment, no poverty, where a person does not tremble because to-morrow he may lose his job, his home, his food. Only in such a society is a real, not illusory, liberty, in the personal and in every other sense, a possibility.

HOWARD: Do you view as compatible the coincidental

development of American democracy and the Soviet system?

STALIN: American democracy and the Soviet system can exist simultaneously and compete peacefully. But one cannot develop into the other. The Soviet system will not evolve into American democracy or vice versa. We can exist peacefully together if we will not indulge in too much mutual fault-finding in all kinds of trifles.

HOWARD: A new Constitution is being elaborated in the U.S.S.R., providing for a new system of elections. To what extent can this new system alter the situation of the U.S.S.R., since, as before, only one party will come forward at the elections?

STALIN: We shall probably adopt our new Constitution at the end of this year. The commission for elaborating the Constitution is functioning, and will soon finish its work. As has already been announced, the elections under the new Constitution will be universal, equal, direct, and secret.

You are misled by the fact that only one party will come forward at these elections. You do not see how there can be an election struggle under these conditions. But obviously election lists will be put out not only by the Communist Party but by all kinds of public non-party organisations. And we have hundreds of such. We have no parties standing in opposition to one another, just as we have not got a class of capitalists and a class of workers exploited by capitalists opposing each other. Our society consists exclusively of free working people of cities and villages—workers, peasants, and intelligentsia. Each of these strata may have its special interests and express them through numerous existing public organisations. But as soon as there are no more classes, as soon as boundaries between classes are effaced, as soon as only a few but non-fundamental differences between various strata of Socialist society remain—there can no longer be a nourishing ground for the formation of parties struggling among themselves.

Where several classes do not exist, there cannot be several parties, since party is part of class. Under National-“Socialism” there is also only one party. But nothing will come out of this Fascist one-party system. The position is that in Germany capitalism remains, classes and the class struggle remain, and it will, despite everything, break into the open—and this means, too, the struggle of parties representing opposing classes—just as it broke out, let us say, in Spain. In Italy, too, one party, namely, the Fascist Party, exists. But for the same reasons it will fare no better there either.

Why will our elections be universal? Because all citizens, with the exception of those deprived by the courts of the right to vote, will have the right to vote and the right to be elected.

Why will our elections be equal? Because neither the differences with regard to property (differences partly still existing) nor the differences of race or nationality will give any privileges or cause any disadvantages. Women will enjoy the right to elect and be elected equally with men. Our elections will be really equal.

Why will they be secret? Because we want to give the Soviet people absolute liberty to vote for those they want to elect, to elect those they trust to ensure their interests.

Why direct? Because direct election on the spot for all representative bodies, right up to the supreme representative bodies, are a better guarantee of the interests of the working population of our boundless country.

You think there will be no election struggle. But there will be. And I foresee a very animated election struggle. There are quite a number of organisations in our country which function poorly. Sometimes it happens that this or that local government body does not know how to satisfy one or another of the many-sided and ever-increasing demands of the working population of town and countryside. Have you, or have you not, built a good school? Have you improved living conditions? Are you not a bureaucrat? Have you helped to make our labor more effective, our life more cultured? Such will be the criteria with which millions of voters will approach the candidates, casting aside those who are unfit, striking them off the lists, advancing better ones, nominating them for elections. Yes, the electoral struggle will be animated; it will proceed around numerous very sharp questions, mainly practical questions, having first-rate significance for the people. Our new election system will spur on all institutions and organisations and will force them to improve their work. Universal, equal, direct, and secret elections in the U.S.S.R. will be a whip in the hands of the population against poorly-functioning organs of Government. Our new Soviet Constitution will, in my opinion, be the most democratic institution of all existing in the world.

Young Communist League Moves Ahead in Victoria

By W. ROBERTSON

A SERIOUS weakness of the labor movement in Australia has been its failure to tackle seriously the organising and training of the youth. Prior to 1930 there were no political youth organisations, with the exception of a handful of members of the Young Communist League. Since then, the development of a revolutionary youth movement has been very slow, despite the radicalisation of large numbers of Australian youth, and it has been only recently that we have been able to record the real turn towards a mass Y.C.L.

The decisions of the Sixth Congress of the Young Communist International were received not without hesitation by the members of the League in District 4. A leading member of the District Committee argued that such a bold policy towards the youth was not practical, that it was impossible to bring into the League masses of youth who were as yet not prepared to carry out all the activities of a class-conscious young Communist.

This attitude was decisively rejected, but even though clarity was achieved on the District Committee, the real fight was yet to come, to convince the membership of the League to change the character of their activity. A thorough and persistent campaign had to be set in motion to acquaint every member fully with all the implications of the new line, together with the test of our theoretical conclusions in practice.

With the popularisation of the results being achieved in one or two places, the membership began to comprehend the full significance of the change. At first only members here and there grasped the fundamentals, until, unit by unit, the whole organisation became filled with enthusiasm for the decisions of the Sixth Congress.

In general, the steps taken to broaden each unit were that they should grow into clubs or branches, taking up varying types of indoor games and social activity. The first steps were taken in Richmond.

Richmond Unit had always been a typical example of League organisation. The best and most consistent comrades met regularly week by week to organise the sales of "The Young Worker," discuss the latest directive of the District Committee, collect dues, and do very little else in the way of gaining real contact and influence with the masses. Numbers of recruits were gained

from time to time, but very seldom did they remain active members of the organisation.

The Richmond comrades commenced by deciding to run a picnic. All the youth that they had contact with were invited along. An enjoyable day was spent, and on the return journey all those present were told that a Y.C.L. club was being formed, and asked to come along.

We were delighted when the first meeting was attended by 14. A hall was secured for one night a week, a pair of boxing-gloves secured, and the club soon grew to 21. One evening, on arrival at the hall where the club meeting is held, our members found that a local social club was just concluding a business meeting. All the young people present were invited to stay the evening, and the majority did so. On completion of an evening's enjoyment, the guests were told it was a club of the Young Communist League that they were attending, and the question of whether they would like to join was soon raised. Six immediately replied that they would join.

Sectarianism dies hard—it has been a characteristic of our organisation for such a long period—but nevertheless it dies swiftly under the hammer-blows of the real application of the Y.C.I. decisions. The results obtained in Richmond were quickly transmitted to all other units, and in this connection "The Y.C.L. Organiser" (a six-page roneoed weekly publication) proved very valuable.

All sorts of methods are being used to attract non-party youth to the League. On the last day of February, a fancy-dress ball was held. A considerable degree of initiative in advertising and arrangement of novelties was displayed, and a very pleasant Saturday evening was attended by some 350 people. This success put still greater heart into the work, and the next venture on a district scale was a moonlight launch-trip on the River Yarra. While the attendance on this occasion only reached 80, many non-party youth were quite delighted, and immediately wanted to join the League.

The whole organisation is now engaging in new and youthful activity, with varying degrees of success in different suburbs. The last meeting of the Fitzroy branch was attended by 37, and by the time this article reaches Fitzroy the branch is expected to have a membership in the vicinity of 100. In Coburg, Oakleigh, South Melbourne, Glenhuntly, and Essendon progress is being maintained. In Brunswick, the comrades have made the centre of their activity a popular class, which has an attendance weekly of between 20 and 25. A drama group is moving ahead

nically, while a mouth-organ band is in the process of being organised.

While the development from units to branches and clubs has been the first step in the reorganising of the League, another step is being taken by the formation of teams of all shapes and sizes. Both men's and girls' basket-ball inner-League competitions are being organised, and the present indications are that between 25 and 30 teams will commence in the winter competitions. Table tennis and debating teams are in the process of formation, and in both these sections of activity it is intended that a Y.C.L. team will enter the regular associations.

The Easter Camp of the Workers' Sports Federation was attended by many of our members. Some 400 young people were present, and mainly due to the efforts of our members, the unanimous opinion is that it was the finest camp ever held. Different kinds of teams were organised and Socialist competition developed. The food, cooking, and general management was considered excellent. As a result of our participation in the camp, it is expected that between sixty and seventy young people will immediately join the Y.C.L. Many members were amazed at the mass of talent present and the youthful energy that was released for a few days gives a glimpse of how rapidly we can grow when that energy is directed in the interests of the working class.

Whilst it is beyond doubt that considerable success has been achieved in changing the content of our work and adapting the form of our organisation to meet the requirements of the youth in this direction, it is equally true that attention to this side of activity only will not lead to the building of a united youth league. In the past three months altogether too little attention has been paid to political campaigns of the League. Without paying practical attention to the fight for peace, for democratic rights, for the economic demands, and to the campaign against Fascism and its attempt to utilise the Berlin Games, the fight for our goal will be greatly hampered. But at least, we now have some organisation through which the desires of the young people can find expression.

I must here say a word or two about Communist Party members in the Y.C.L. Previously the role of the Communists played no great part in the life of the League because the organisation was composed entirely of class-conscious young Communists. But now the situation is entirely different. Numbers of youth who have very vague ideas about Communism are members of the League, and the Communists have to be convincing in

their leadership in the same sense as they have to be so in the trade unions. They have to break down any tendencies to be arrogant, to command, or to regard youth who are not class-conscious as being "one step behind them." The best example of how Communist Party members should assist the Y.C.L. is again at Richmond, where the gymnasium instructor is a Party member and, together with other members, a leading organiser of the branch who shows how things should be done by doing them.

What are the results of the three months' work since Xmas in Victoria? First, and foremost, a complete shattering of that sectarian fear of the masses which has held us back for so long, and in its place the development of a fine feeling of enthusiasm, and a spirit of Socialist competition between the teams, groups, and branches—a feeling that our victory is being organised.

Secondly, the adaptation of the forms of our organisation to suit the activities and desires of our members, the building of live, active, virile clubs in the place of stagnant cells and units.

A great reduction of the very high fluctuation in our membership, the doubling of the active membership, and, together with this, the development of an energetic leadership that now tackles the problems of the younger generation in a Communist fashion.

However, the first beginnings must not go to our heads, we must keep our vision clear to conquer the difficult road that lies before us. The ruling class has not yet felt the sting of an angry younger generation. Soon the municipal councils will think twice about closing the parks on Sunday; soon the Government will have to take into account what the unemployed youth desire; soon they will feel the rapier thrusts of a youthfully determined organisation, the decisions and leadership of which will shatter the veil of hypocrisy and deception now being used to drag the youth into a filthy epoch of degeneration, reaction and war.

Militant Militarism and the Anti-Militarist Tactics of Social-Democracy

By V. I. LENIN

[From Volume IV, "Selected Works"]

THE diplomatists are in a state of agitation. "Notes," "dispatches," "declarations" are coming down like hail; the Ministers are whispering behind the backs of the crowned dummies who are "consolidating peace" with glasses of champagne. But the "subjects" know full well that when ravens flock together there is a corpse about. And the Conservative Lord Cromer declared in the British Parliament that "we are living in a time when national" (?) "interests are at stake, when passions are inflamed and there is the danger and possibility of a conflict, however peaceful" (!) "the intentions of the rulers may be."

Sufficient inflammable material has been accumulating of late, and it is still mounting up. The revolution in Persia threatens to break down all the partitions, the "spheres of influence" set up there by the European Powers. The constitutional movement in Turkey threatens to wrest this appendage from the clutches of the European capitalist robbers; furthermore, the ancient "questions"—the Macedonian, the Central Asiatic, the Far-Eastern, etc., etc.—have now been raised in an acute and threatening manner.

Meanwhile, with the network of existing open and secret treaties, agreements, etc., the slightest filip by any "Power" will be sufficient to "fan the spark into a flame."

And the more formidably the Governments brandish their weapons at each other, the more ruthlessly do they suppress the anti-militarist movement in their respective countries. The persecution of anti-militarists is growing in extent and intensity. The "Radical-Socialist" Cabinet of Clemenceau-Briand does not lag behind the Junker-Conservative Cabinet of Bulow in the matter of oppression. The dissolution of the "youth organisations" throughout Germany, which followed the introduction of the new law on unions and meetings, prohibiting the attendance of persons under twenty years of age at political meetings, has extremely hampered anti-militarist agitation in Germany.

As a consequence, the controversy over the anti-militarist tactics of the Socialists, which subsided after the Stuttgart Congress, is now being revived in the Party press.

What at first sight seems a strange phenomenon presents

itself: in spite of the obvious importance of this question, in spite of the clear, strikingly manifest harmfulness of militarism, it is difficult for the proletariat to find another question on which there is so much vacillation, so much discord among the Western Socialists as in the controversy over anti-militarist tactics.

The principles of the premises for the correct solution of this problem were laid down quite firmly long ago, and they do not give rise to any differences of opinion. Contemporary militarism is the result of capitalism: it is the "living manifestation" of capitalism in both its forms: as a military force used by the capitalist States in their external conflicts (external militarism, as the Germans put it) and as a weapon in the hands of the ruling classes for the suppression of all movements—economic and political—of the proletariat (internal militarism). A number of international congresses (the Paris Congress in 1889, the Brussels Congress in 1891, the Zurich Congress in 1893, and finally the Stuttgart Congress in 1907) in their resolutions, gave a fully formulated expression of this view. The connection between militarism and capitalism was most fully explained in the Stuttgart resolution, although in accordance with the agenda ("On International Conflicts"), the Stuttgart Congress was more concerned with that aspect of militarism which the Germans call "Militaris Nach Aussen"*. The following is the passage of that resolution bearing on it:

"Wars between capitalist States are, as a rule, the result of their competition on the world market, because every State strives not only to safeguard its old markets, but to win new markets, and in this connection the subjugation of foreign nations and countries plays the principal part. These wars are also caused by continuous rivalry in armaments, called forth by militarism, which is the principal weapon of the class rule of the bourgeoisie and of the economic and political subjugation of the working class.

"Wars are facilitated by nationalist prejudices, which are systematically fostered in the civilised countries in the interests of the ruling classes for the purpose of diverting the proletarian masses from their own class tasks and forcing them to forget their duty of international class solidarity.

"Thus, wars are rooted in the very nature of capitalism; they will cease only when the capitalist system is abolished, or when the enormity of human and monetary sacrifices, caused by the development of military technique and the

* External militarism.

outburst of popular indignation called forth by armaments bring about the abolition of that system. The working class, from which the soldiers are mainly drawn and by whom the material sacrifices are mainly borne, is particularly a natural enemy of war, since wars conflict with the aim it pursues, namely, the creation of an economic system based on the principles of Socialism, a system that will really bring about the solidarity of nations."

II

Thus, the connection between the principles of militarism and of capitalism has been firmly established among Socialists, and there are no differences of opinion on that point. However, the recognition of this connection does not concretely define the anti-militarist tactics of the Socialists and does not solve the practical problem of how the struggle against the burden of militarism is to be carried on and how wars are to be prevented. And it is precisely in the answers to this question that one notes considerable divergence in the views of the Socialists. At the Stuttgart Congress these differences could be observed in a particularly palpable manner.

At one extreme we find German Social-Democrats of the Vollmar type. They argue that since militarism is the child of capitalism, since wars are a necessary concomitant of capitalist development, there is no need for any special anti-militarist activity. That is exactly what Vollmar declared at the Essen Parteitag. On the question of what the Social-Democrats are to do in the event of a declaration of war, the majority of the German Social-Democrats—with Bebel and Vollmar at their head—persistently maintain that Social-Democrats must defend their fatherland from attacks, that they are in duty bound to take part in a "defensive" war. This postulate led Vollmar to declare in Stuttgart that "all our love for humanity cannot prevent us from being good Germans" and led the Social-Democrat deputy, Noske, to proclaim in the Reichstag that in the event of a war against Germany "the Social-Democrats will not lag behind the bourgeois parties and will shoulder the rifle." From this position Noske had to take only one step more to declare: "We want Germany to be as well-armed as possible."

The other extreme is represented by the small group of followers of Herve. The Herveists argue that the proletariat has no fatherland. Hence, all wars are waged in the interests of the capitalists: hence, the proletariat must fight against every kind of war. The proletariat must reply to every declaration of war by declaring a military strike and insurrection. This is

what the anti-militarist propaganda must amount to in the main. Hence in Stuttgart, Herve proposed the following draft resolution:

"The congress demands that every declaration of war, from whatever quarter it may emanate, be answered by a military strike and insurrection."

Such are the two "extreme" positions on this question held among the Western Socialists. The two diseases, which still cripple the activity of the Socialist proletariat in the west, are reflected in them "like the sun in a drop of water": opportunist tendencies on one side, anarchist phrasemongering on the other.

First of all, a few remarks about patriotism. That the "proletarians have no fatherland" is actually stated in "The Communist Manifesto"; that the position of Vollmar, Noske, and Co., is a "flagrant violation" of this fundamental proposition of international Socialism is equally true. But it does not follow from this that Herve and the Herveists are right when they assert that it is immaterial to the proletariat in which fatherland it lives; whether it lives in monarchist Germany, republican France or despotic Turkey. The fatherland, i.e., the given political, cultural and social environment, is the most powerful factor in the class struggle of the proletariat, and if Vollmar is wrong in establishing a kind of "truly German" attitude of the proletariat towards the "fatherland," Herve is not less wrong in treating such an important factor of the proletarian struggle for emancipation in an unpardonably uncritical fashion. The proletariat cannot treat the political, social and cultural conditions of its struggle with indifference or equanimity, consequently, it cannot remain indifferent to the destiny of its country. But it is interested in the destiny of its country in so far as it affects its class struggle, and not by virtue of some bourgeois "patriotism," which sounds altogether indecent on the lips of a Social-Democrat.

The other question is more complicated—the attitude towards militarism and war. It is obvious at the very first glance that Herve confuses these two questions unpardonably and forgets the cause and effect as between capitalism and war; if the proletariat had adopted Herve's tactics it would have condemned itself to futile work; it would have used all its fighting preparedness (he talks of insurrection, does he not?) to fight the consequences (war) while allowing the cause (capitalism) to continue.

The anarchist method of reasoning is revealed here in full

measure. The blind faith in the miraculous power of every "action directe." The abstraction of this "direct action" from the general social and political situation without analysing it in the least—in a word, the "arbitrary mechanical conception of social phenomena" (according to K. Liebknecht's expression) is obvious.

Herve's plan is "very simple": on the day of the declaration of war the Socialist soldiers desert, and the reservists declare a strike and stay at home.

But "a reservists' strike is not passive resistance; the working class would soon pass on to open resistance, to insurrection, and this latter would have more chance of success, because the active army would be on the frontier of the country."—G. Herve, "Leur Patrie."

Such is this "effective, direct and practical plan," and, certain of its success, Herve proposes to reply to every declaration of war by a military strike and insurrection.

As is clearly seen from the above, the question here is not whether the proletariat should, when it deems it expedient, reply to a declaration by a strike and insurrection. The controversy centres round the question as to whether the proletariat should be bound by an obligation to reply to every war by insurrection. To adopt the latter policy means depriving the proletariat of the choice of the moment for the decisive battle and leaving that choice to its enemies. It is not the proletariat that is to choose the moment of struggle in accordance with its own interests, when its general Socialist class consciousness is at its height, when it is well organised, when the ground is favorable, etc.; no, the bourgeois governments could provoke it to an uprising even when the conditions were unfavorable for it, e.g., by a declaration of such a war as is specially capable of calling forth patriotic and chauvinist sentiments among broad strata of the population; a war that would isolate the rebellious proletariat. Moreover, one must not forget that the bourgeoisie—which in every country, from monarchist Germany down to republican France and democratic Switzerland, fiercely persecutes anti-militarist activities in peace time—would come down ruthlessly on any attempt at a military strike in the event of war, at a time when a state of war, martial law, courts martial, etc., are in force.

Kautsky is right when he says of Herve's idea: "The idea of a strike against war was prompted by 'good' motives. It is noble, heroic, but it is heroic folly."

The proletariat may reply to the declaration of war by a

military strike if it finds it expedient and appropriate; it may, among other methods of achieving the social revolution, resort also to military strike; but it is not in the interests of the proletariat to bind itself down to the "tactical recipe."

That is precisely the way the Stuttgart International Congress answered this controversial question.

III

But while the views of the Herveists are "heroic folly," the position of Vollmar, Noske and their adherents of the "Right wing" is, on the other hand, opportunist cowardice. Since militarism is the offspring of capital and will fall with it—they argued in Stuttgart, and especially in Essen—there is no need for special anti-militarist agitation: no such agitation should be carried on. But—was the rejoinder made to them in Stuttgart—the radical solution of the labor and women's problems, for instance, is also impossible so long as the capitalist system prevails; nevertheless, we are fighting for labor legislation, for the extension of civil rights to women, etc. Special anti-militarist propaganda must be conducted all the more energetically because cases of the intervention of military forces in the struggle between labor and capital become increasingly frequent, and the importance of militarism, not only during the present struggle of the proletariat, but also in the future, at the moment of the social revolution, becomes increasingly obvious.

The need for special anti-militarist propaganda is supported not only by proof, based on principles, but also by important historical experience. Belgium in this respect is in advance of all the other countries. The Belgian Labor Party, apart from the general propaganda of the ideas of anti-militarism, has organized groups of Socialist youth, the "Young Guard" ("Jeunes Gardes"). The groups of the same district form the district federation; all the district federations in their turn, are united in a national federation, with the "General council" at their head. The organs of the "Young Guard"—"La Jeunesse-c'est l'avenir," "De Caserne," "De Loteling," and others—have a circulation of tens of thousands! The Walloon Federation, consisting of sixty-two local groups with 10,000 members, is the strongest of all the federations; in all, the "Young Guard" now consists of 121 local groups.

Simultaneously with agitation in the press, intense oral agitation is carried on: in January and September (the months when recruits are called up) popular meetings and processions are organized in the principle cities of Belgium; at open air

meetings outside the premises of the mairies,* Socialist speakers explain the meaning of militarism to the young recruits. The "general council" of the "Young Guard" has set up a "grievances committee," the function of which is to collect information concerning all cases of injustice in the barracks. This information is published daily in the central organ of the party, "Le Peuple," under the heading, "From the Army." Anti-militarist propaganda does not stop at the doorstep of the barracks: the Socialist soldiers form groups for the purpose of carrying on propaganda in the army. At the present time there are about fifteen such groups ("Soldiers' Unions").

Following the Belgian model, anti-militarist propaganda is being carried on in France,† Switzerland, Austria, and other countries, such propaganda varying in intensity and in form of organisation.

Thus, special anti-militarist activity is not only particularly necessary, but practically expedient and useful. Therefore, inasmuch as Vollmar opposed it, pointing to the possible police conditions in Germany and to the danger of the party organisations being smashed on this account, the question was reduced to a concrete analysis of the conditions in the given country, to a question of fact and not to a question of principle. Although, in this connection, too, Jaures was quite justified in saying that as German Social-Democracy, in its youth, had survived the hard times of the Anti-Socialist Law and the iron hand of Prince Bismarck and has now become incomparably bigger and stronger, it need no longer fear persecution by the present rulers. But Vollmar is doubly wrong when he tries to argue that special anti-militarist propaganda is inexpedient in principle.

Not less opportunistic is the conviction of Vollmar and his followers that it is the duty of Social-Democrats to take part in a defensive war. Kautsky's brilliant criticism completely demolished these views. Kautsky pointed out that sometimes, especially in a moment of patriotic intoxication, it is utterly impossible to be clear as to whether the given war was called forth by defensive or offensive aims (the example quoted by Kautsky: did Japan attack or defend herself at the beginning of the Russo-Japanese war?). Social-Democrats would be entangled in the

* Mairie: Town Hall.—Ed., Eng. ed.

† An interesting feature of the work carried on by the French is the organisation of the so-called "soldier's sou"; every week a worker pays one sou to the secretary of his union; the sums gathered in this way are sent to the soldiers "as a reminder of the fact that even while in soldier's uniform, they belong to the exploited class and that they must not forget this under any circumstances."

meshes of diplomatic negotiations if they took it into their heads to determine their attitude towards war on the basis of such a criterion. Social-Democrats may even find themselves in the position of having to demand aggressive wars. In 1848 (the Herveists, too, would do well to remember this) Marx and Engels considered a war on the part of Germany against Russia to be necessary. Later on they attempted to influence public opinion in England in order to induce England to go to war against Russia. Incidentally, Kautsky constructs the following hypothetical instance:

"Let us assume," he says, "that the revolutionary movement gains a victory in Russia and that, under the influence of this victory, power passes into the hands of the proletariat in France; on the other hand, let us assume that a coalition of European monarchs is formed against the new Russia. Will international Social-Democracy protest if the French Republic then comes to the assistance of Russia?"—K. Kautsky: "Our Views on Patriotism and War."

Obviously, in this question (as also in views on "patriotism") it is not the offensive or defensive character of the war, but the interests of the class struggle of the proletariat, or rather, the interests of the international movement of the proletariat that represent the only possible point of view from which the question of the attitude of Social-Democracy towards a given phenomenon in international relationship can be considered and solved.

To what lengths opportunism is capable of going in these questions, too, is shown by the recent utterance of Jaures. In expressing his views on the international situation in an obscure German liberal bourgeois newspaper, he defends the alliance of France and England with Russia against the accusation of anti-pacific intentions and considers this alliance to be a "guarantee of peace"; he welcomes the fact that "we have not lived to see an alliance of England and Russia, two ancient enemies."

In her "open letter" in the latest issue of "Die Neue Zeit," Rosa Luxemburg gives an excellent appraisal of this view and a sharp retort to Jaures.

First of all, Rosa Luxemburg states that to talk of an alliance between "Russia" and "England" means "talking in the language of bourgeois politicians" for the interests of the capitalist states and the interests of the proletariat in foreign politics are diametrically opposed to each other, and it is impossible to

speak of harmony of interests in the domain of foreign relations. If militarism is the offspring of capitalism, then wars, too, cannot be eliminated by the intrigues of rulers and diplomats, and the task of the Socialists is not to create illusions on this score, but, on the contrary, always to expose the hypocrisy and the impotence of diplomatic "peace measures."

The main point of the "letter," however, is the appraisal of the alliance of England and France with Russia, which Jaures praises so much. The European bourgeois enabled Tsarism to repel the revolutionary onslaught.

"In trying now to transform the temporary victory over the revolution into a final victory, absolutism is resorting above all to the tried method of all tottering despotic Governments—to successes in foreign politics."

All the alliances of Russia at the present time mean:

"... the Holy Alliance of the bourgeoisie of Western Europe with Russian counter-revolution, with the stranglers and executioners of Russian and Polish fighters for freedom; they mean the strengthening of the bloodiest reaction, not only in Russia, but also in international relations. . . . That is why the most elementary task of the Socialists and proletarians of all countries is to oppose the alliance with counter-revolutionary Russia with all their might. . . ."

"How is one to explain," asks Rosa Luxemburg, addressing herself to Jaures, "the fact that you, who once delivered brilliant speeches in the French Chamber opposing the Russian loan, you who but a few weeks ago, published in your newspaper, 'l'Humanite,' an ardent appeal to public opinion against the bloody work of the courts-martial in Russian Poland, will strive 'in a most energetic fashion' to make the Government of the bloody executioners of the Russian revolution and of the Persian uprising an influential factor in European politics, to make the Russian gallops the pillars of international peace? How is it possible to reconcile your peaceful plans, based on the Franco-Russian and Anglo-Russian alliances, with the protest recently made by the French Socialist parliamentary fraction and by the Administrative Committee of the National Council of the Socialist Party against Fallieres' visit to Russia, with the protest which fervently defends the interests of the Russian revolution and bears your own signature? If the President of the French Republic wanted to refer to your ideas about the international situation, he would

declare in reply to your protest: whoever approves of the aim must approve of the means, whoever regards the alliance with Tsarist Russia as a guarantee of international peace must accept everything that strengthens that alliance and fosters friendship.

"What would you have said if Socialists and revolutionaries had been found in Germany, in Russia and in England, who, 'in the interests of peace,' had recommended an alliance with the Government of the restoration if the Government of Cavaignac, or the Government of Thiers and Jules Favre, and had lent such an alliance their moral authority? ! ! . . ."

This letter speaks for itself, and the Russian Social-Democrats can only congratulate Comrade Rosa Luxemburg on this protest of hers and on the defence of the Russian revolution before the international proletariat.
August (July), 1908.

The Seamen's Strike

By R. DIXON

IT was under the most difficult circumstances that the seamen decided to reject the Dethridge award and oppose its application in November of last year. Not only were they undertaking a struggle against the most powerful and rapacious financial interests in Australia, who control the capitalist press and govern the governments, but they had also to contend with the opposition, sabotage, and treachery of their own officials, Johnson, Clarke, and Casey and other reformist officials, particularly Monk and Crofts, of the A.C.T.U. That the seamen were able, under these adverse conditions, to continue the struggle for three months is a tribute to the magnificent solidarity which marked the struggle from the first to the last days—solidarity which was inspired and kept alive by the militant leadership. That they suffered defeat is no fault of their own—it is the responsibility of a section of the reformists who prayed, conspired and worked to bring about defeat.

It was these latter who, after viewing the destruction they had wrought, in a self-satisfied air said: "I told you so!" "The seamen should never have fought." No! They should be worthy of their enslavement and, like the Johnsons, Clarkes, and Monks, grovel before their masters, thankful to be exploited and happy in their oppression. They should go through life wishing for better things, but avoiding, as a plague, any action to enforce better things.

What abject, cowardly, soulless creatures are these reformists! What hidebound, hypocritical traitors!

The seamen had to fight. That which the Dethridge award sought to destroy was won by struggle. Their organisation was built in struggle. They were not afraid to fight. Could anything be more contemptible than the suggestion that at a moment when the conquests of decades were crashing about their ears that they should slink away, whining like whipped curs? Is it not better to chance defeat in the struggle, to refuse to suffer the infamies of capitalism in silence, than to submit, like broken, hopeless wretches, without protest?

The seamen fought and lost—but from their struggle much is to be learned. That which is most important, however, that which must sear its way into the brain of every worker, is this: that the canker which is gnawing at the very vitals of the Australian labor movement, which counsels retreat and cowardly submission, which would sacrifice the working class on the

altar of class collaboration, that canker must be cut out, root and branch, if the labor movement is to survive and realise its great mission in history. We have drawn attention to this fact before. The seamen's strike has greatly sharpened the issue, has raised it with more directness and bluntness than ever before. A brief review of the strike will prove this beyond all doubt.

The Beginnings of the Struggle

The Dethridge award, scheduled to come into operation as from December 1, 1935, was delivered early in November. The officials, scheming for its acceptance, proclaimed that it contained more "gains" than losses. Actually it provided for:

- (a) Wage reductions averaging £8 per month;
- (b) The maintenance of the 56-hour week;
- (c) Seamen doing the work of waterside workers in the event of the latter striking;
- (d) The application of certain penal clauses, which aimed at depriving the seamen of the right to strike.

Dethridge gave the shipowners all they wanted and more. The seamen were to be put through the whole gamut of wage-cuts, long hours, strike-breaking—and, if they should revolt against this, gaol awaited them. It was this that Johnson, Casey, and Clarke told the seamen was to their advantage.

As the facts began to leak out, the opposition of the seamen grew. Realising this, the Seamen's Committee of Management frantically grasped at the idea of a plebiscite of the membership, to be conducted with the annual ballot, to determine the attitude to the award. This would have meant the deferring of any decision until the end of February, 1936, three months after the award had come into operation. Their efforts were of no avail. At stop-work meetings in New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia, on November 26, 1935, the award was decisively rejected—at the Sydney meeting, Johnson rallied only five votes out of a meeting of 1500 for his infamous proposals.

A general shipping strike was now inevitable. Nothing was done by Johnson and Clarke, however, to carry out the decisions of the mass meeting to organise resistance to prevent the award from being applied. Despite this, the seamen began to leave the ships, and by Monday, December 2, seven ships were idle in Sydney. On Tuesday, December 3, meetings of the seamen in all ports voted solidly for strike. (On this occasion, Johnson secured three votes out of 2000 at the Sydney meeting.)

On the same day, Lyons threatened the seamen with the

Transport Act, giving them 48 hours to return to work. This served only to strengthen the determination of the strikers and to arouse the opposition of the workers everywhere. At this stage victory was within grasp. The amazing solidarity of the seamen, the enthusiastic, spontaneous support from other sections of the working class, made necessary only the organising of this movement into a solid front and the seamen would have been in a position to dictate terms. The immediate problem was to obtain the support of other maritime unions and to seek guarantees from all trade union centres of assistance. This was not the line of Johnson, Casey, or Clarke, however. If in the first place they tried to get the seamen to silently accept the award, they now set their course to isolate the strikers and precipitate an early collapse of the struggle.

The shipowners mobilised the capitalist press to swing public opinion against the strikers. It was Johnson who supplied them with the ammunition. Thus, the press utilised to the full that fact that the officials were opposing the strike; it made great capital out of the argument of Johnson that the award improved conditions, that it meant an "increase of 25/- in wages"; that the seamen sought arbitration and now rejected it; that it was impossible to fight the Government and shipowners, etc., etc. Later, when Johnson, after provoking the seamen, was thrown out of a meeting, the press seized upon his concocted story of robbery to detract from the real issues; it featured his statements against extension to the miners. On any issue of the struggle and at every stage statements were obtained from Johnson to attack the strike. During the whole struggle only several statements were made officially by the shipowners on the issues in dispute. They had no need, for Johnson was more effective, and missed nothing.

Coincident with his efforts to distort public opinion Johnson was working frenziedly to isolate the seamen in the trade union movement. It was his attitude and statements that Moate used to trick the stewards into rejecting solidarity action with the seamen. When, on Thursday, December 5, the A.C.T.U. called a conference of unions to consider the dispute, Johnson attended as the self-appointed seamen's delegate, and engaged in fulsome praise for the infamous Dethridge award and denunciation of the strike.

This conference, on December 5, was actually packed by Monk and Crofts against the seamen. It was supposed to be representative of maritime unions and other organisations directly or indirectly affected by the strike. No representatives were invited from the miners, however, although miners

began to cease operations in the first stages of the strike, whilst in the later stages there were actually more miners "on the grass" than striking seamen. Nor were representatives invited from the metal unions despite the fact that hundreds of their members engage in ships repair work and were, therefore, directly affected. On the other hand, representatives were present from the taxi-drivers and coachmakers and other small unions whose members were less affected than the miners and metal workers.

The meaning of this picking and choosing is to be found in the resolution of the conference which tacitly condemned the strike and recommended to the seamen that they return to work forthwith and apply to the court for variations of the award. Needless to say, the seamen decisively rejected the proposals. But Monk and Crofts had done their work well. By excluding a representative of the miners and metal unions, they evaded a real examination of the issues and were able to deal a staggering blow at the seamen without opposition within the conference. We say staggering blow deliberately, for not only did the shipowners' press, and the "Labor Daily," use the decisions of the conference to condemn the strike but other unions were very strongly influenced. At the stop-work meeting of the Sydney waterside workers on December 11—the most important and largely attended meeting in years—the decisions of the Melbourne conference were successfully used to crush the move to call the wharf workers out in sympathy with the seamen.

Thus were Johnson, Monk and Crofts responsible for stifling any extension of the dispute to other maritime unions. Thus, were they successful in preventing that line up of working class forces which would have confronted the shipowners with a solid bloc and unquestionably have put the seamen in the position to dictate terms.

The conference of unions convened by the A.C.T.U. could have created the conditions for a successful conclusion to the struggle, but it took the path which led to defeat. Instead of unity, a grave division was precipitated in the ranks of the workers—a division which placed the shipowners in a very strong position and encouraged them to greater efforts to break the strike.

Combating Sabotage

Already in the first stages of the dispute a broad strike committee had been elected in Sydney, charged with the task of conducting all negotiations, organising relief, publicity, picketing, and other activities in connection with the strike. John-

son refused to submit to the decision of the union members or subordinate himself to the strike committee. As a result, there was dual leadership—the one trying to bring the strike to a successful conclusion, the other (Johnson, Casey, Clarke) sabotaging and trying to break the struggle. Both the owners and the A.C.T.U. officials exploited this breach to the limit. At the time of the conference with the maritime unions, the A.C.T.U. leaders were loath to have anything to do with the elected strike leaders, even though they were fully aware that Johnson had not the confidence of the seamen. Their action, however, created a furore amongst the workers generally, particularly when the seamen so decisively rejected their proposals. The trade unions began to demand a change in policy.

In Sydney, where the seamen's strike committee was functioning successfully, strong support was forthcoming. On the day of the Melbourne conference, December 5, the central council of the Miners' Federation carried a strong resolution pledging support for the seamen, congratulating them on their stand, and allocating £250 towards the relief fund. The same evening, the New South Wales Labor Council denounced the threat of the Government to invoke the Transport Act and called upon all unions and working-class organisations "to give moral and financial support," and proposed "that the transport groups be called together for the purpose of organising for action."

Confronted with such opposition to their policy and with threats of action from the miners, the A.C.T.U. leaders were forced, very reluctantly, to enter into negotiations with the strike committee and concede some recognition to J. Keenan. On Wednesday, December 11, a conference was held in Sydney, attended by Monk and Crofts of the A.C.T.U. and representatives of the N.S.W. Labor Council, to which J. Keenan and other members of the seamen's strike committee were invited. After the award had been explained and strong criticism levelled at the A.C.T.U., Monk and Crofts gave the unconvincing reply that they had been "misled" by Johnson. The truth was, however, that they had not turned a finger to acquaint themselves with the real situation.

Despite this forced admission of error from the A.C.T.U. leaders, no real change took place in their attitude towards the strike. Before the conference concluded, Crofts sought from the seamen an assurance that they would be content with financial support. Keenan replied, stressing the importance of finance, but also drawing attention to the resolution of the New South Wales Labor Council pledging "moral" support, which the seamen expected.

On their return to Melbourne, Monk and Crofts set their face resolutely against extension. They circulated the calumny that Keenan had stated on behalf of the seamen that only financial assistance was required. Even in this connection, however, very little was done. It was only towards the end of December that the A.C.T.U. forwarded £100 which had been collected for relief—this, despite the fact that to provide even the most meagre relief, £2000 weekly was necessary. In N.S.W. there was also much sabotage going on. The "Labor Daily" was carrying on a particularly vile campaign against the strike committee, whilst the Labor Council officials were hindering support. Although a decision was made on December 5, 1935, to call a conference of transport unions, this was not done until January, 1936. Delay also occurred in the issuance of collection lists, which were held up for more than a fortnight after the Council decision.

Thus, whilst the reformists were prepared to move or carry high sounding resolutions, their activity was directed toward stifling assistance.

In the latter half of December it became apparent that the seamen's position was becoming difficult. The line of the reformists had considerably limited support and blocked the road to extension, the Government was acting with greater determination to break the strike, whilst the shipowners' appeal for scabs was meeting with considerable success. This latter has also something to do with the attitude of the reformists, and particularly with the role of Johnson. His denunciations of the strike and calls to the seamen to return to work, the decisions of the A.C.T.U. conference with maritime unions recommending the seamen to return to work, the vicious slander of the strike committee—these things could not fail to influence wavering, backward elements in the ranks of the workers into accepting work. This, of course, cannot explain the large number of scabs nor even a majority of them. This much is certain, however, that a firmly welded united working-class front in the struggle would have made the obtaining of scabs infinitely more difficult.

But to return to the position of the seamen. Extension of the dispute was now essential if defeat was to be avoided. The manning of the ships with scab labor gave more point to the line of extension. Waterside workers were called upon to unload the cargo of "black" ships, metal workers to repair them, miners to provide coal for them, and so on. Many unions were thus affected. The miners particularly were becoming restive.

The Miners' Decision

As early as December 11, the Northern Miners' Management Committee had carried a resolution which, after congratulating the seamen on their splendid fight, declared:

"Further, we warn the shipowners and coal owners and the general public that should any attempt be made to introduce non-union labor into ships, we will unreservedly advise our members not to produce coal for any purpose whatever, and do our part in assisting the seamen to bring the fight to a successful conclusion."

This was followed by requests from the Broken Hill and Wonthaggi branches of the Miners' Federation for the calling of a Central Council meeting to deal with the situation. Resolutions came from isolated lodges in Northern N.S.W. and Queensland urging a general stoppage. Then, at Newcastle on December 19, at a conference of representatives of unions operating in the mines carried a resolution in connection with the seamen's dispute, recommending to "each district and union branch to give financial and moral support to the seamen." Further, it directed the members of the unions represented "to refuse to supply coal for scab ships," and on adjournment decided to meet on January 3, 1936, three days before the collieries reopened after the Xmas vacation, to review the position of the seamen.

These developments could not but impress the seamen. They were faced with the fact, however, that the retention by Johnson of the secretaryship of the union was a serious menace in the event of extension. To remove him had its disadvantages, but his open, unashamed treachery and the damage he could still do made his removal necessary. Hence, a special meeting of the seamen on December 27 decided unanimously to recall Johnson and to elect J. Keenan in his stead. Although directed to, Johnson refused to hand over union property, and with the aid of a strong police guard—no doubt, the reward for "services faithfully rendered"—retained the general office of the union.

The removal of Johnson was the signal for a bitter press campaign against the strike committee. The "Labor Daily" deserves particular mention. It expended its venom against Keenan, and the militants in general. It became an open forum for Johnson whenever he desired to attack the strike or the militants.

It was predicted by the press that the removal of Johnson was the beginning of a bitter internal struggle which would sink the strike. The seamen and their leaders, however, were

determined to avoid, as far as possible, any such struggle, being satisfied with the removal of Johnson.

When the representatives of the combined mining unions met on January 3, 1936, they were confronted with two important facts: first, that already thousands of miners were idle as a result of the seamen's dispute, and that more would become involved daily; second, that coal stocks throughout the Commonwealth were low, there being sufficient in New South Wales to maintain the railways transport at ordinary levels for not more than three weeks, whilst Victoria could not continue even for that length of time.

The representatives of the unions assembled quickly realised that in order to end the serious position developing in the industry, drastic steps were necessary, and that the shortage of coal stocks provided the opportunity to turn the situation to advantage for both the miners and seamen. Hence, they unanimously decided to recommend to aggregate meetings of the members of all mining unions "to stop the entire production of coal in the Commonwealth by the withdrawal of the total membership of the combined mining unions. . . ." In addition to this, "all land and marine transport unions" were to be approached "to seek assistance to remove all licences from the waterfront"; representatives of the A.C.T.U. were to be called in and discussion opened with the Labor Party, the aim being to unite all forces in a combined drive to bring the struggle of the seamen to victory and against the Lyons Government.

The aggregate meetings were arranged for January 8. On the eve of the meetings, the combined mining unions met with representatives of the A.C.T.U., Monk and King. These latter, from the beginning, evaded making any definite statement as to their attitude. On leaving the conference, however, Monk issued a statement to the press viciously attacking the miners, declaring that they had acted without consulting others and that their decisions did "not bear the stamp of constitutionality."

Unconstitutionality became the banner around which were rallied those opposed to extension. The "Labor Daily" and the "Sydney Morning Herald" chanted it to the miners in unison, whilst the A.L.P. executive, in reply to the deputation from the combined mining unions on January 7, used the occasion to carry a resolution declaring that "owing to the widespread nature of the seamen's dispute, this executive believes that the machinery of the A.C.T.U. should be invoked to enable any proposed extension of the dispute to be submitted to all unions likely to be affected, before any further action is taken."

To this form of propaganda was added statements to the effect that if the miners struck, no support would be forthcoming from other unions, and they would be starved back to work; that the 1917 struggle, when the miners struck in support of others and were left to fight the battle after the rest had returned, would be repeated, etc.

Everything those opposed to extension had was thrown in to turn the scale against the seamen. Success attended their efforts. The miners' leaders were unable to overcome the confusion and doubt which had crept in, and in the ballot on January 8 the proposal for an all-out struggle was rejected by 5,852 votes to 1,158.

Thus, when the stage was set for one of the greatest victories in the history of the labor movement, which would have placed the trade unions in a most powerful position to demand a restoration of conditions, the reformists threw a spanner into the works. Their policy of isolating the seamen was now secure.

There is no questioning the support of the miners for the seamen. In this they never wavered for a moment. The action of the Wallarah miners, who on January 8 voted solidly against the policy of "all out" and on the next day, January 9, voted just as solidly for strike when called upon to provide coal for scab ships, is clear evidence of this. What the miners were not decided upon, however—and this is where the militants erred—was the extent of this support. Hence, the reformists, using their powerful propaganda machine, were able to swing the miners against the policy of all out.

The decision of the miners was extremely serious, for it turned a situation favorable to the workers to their disadvantage. The owners were not slow to seize upon this to press home their advantage. The B.H.P. forced the miners to call off the fight against the mechanisation of the Lambton B Colliery, whilst at a number of other points retreat was necessary.

Meanwhile, the position of the seamen had become untenable. All roads to extension had been effectively blocked, the collection of relief was very poor, and, on the other hand, the owners were manning the ships with scabs. The essential thing now was to get the men back to work with their organisation intact in order that they could renew the struggle at a later date. Once again the reformists proved a stumbling block.

In the discussion with the combined mining unions, on January 7, Monk agreed to propose to the A.C.T.U. executive

that it temporarily shift its headquarters to Sydney, and that conferences of Federal unions be called without delay. Procrastination marked every move of Monk and Crofts. The executive was not transferred to Sydney. It was not until much pressure was brought to bear by the seamen and the miners that the conference of Federal unions was called. Even then, efforts were made to exclude the seamen's representative, Keenan, the officials going so far as to enter into discussion with Johnson once again.

On January 24, an interview was arranged with the shipowners to discuss terms—representatives of the A.C.T.U. and seamen being in attendance. No satisfactory terms were forthcoming, the shipowners demanding that the seamen virtually capitulate. Menzies was interviewed relative to lifting the licences, but without satisfaction.

When the seamen heard the proposals of the shipowners they unanimously rejected them, and urged the A.C.T.U. to convene a further conference of Federal unions with a view to assistance. This conference was duly called on February 10. After almost fruitless discussion on the question of extension and relief, a further interview was arranged with the shipowners, who refused to budge from their earlier proposals, which were, in effect, that the men take out licences and resume under the terms of the Dethridge award, and where vacancies occurred they were to have the first preference in the pick up.

The results of the Melbourne discussions and the dangerous position of the strike left the strike committee no alternative but to recommend that the struggle be called off. To try and continue in the circumstances would have been suicidal. The seamen would have been eliminated from the ships and their organisation so hacked about as to be of no further value to themselves or the workers generally. The retreat had to be sounded, and on Wednesday, February 19, the strike committee proposed that the strike be called off. Even at that late hour there was bitter opposition to the proposal. The seamen were so divided on the issue that the meeting was adjourned until the following day before the decision was arrived at, by a small majority, to accept the strike committee's recommendations.

Thus was closed one of the most heroic pages in Australian working-class history. The seamen never faltered, but neither their determination nor solidarity was sufficient to overcome the isolationist policy of their reformist leaders.

To-day, two months after the strike was declared off, the shipowners continue to attack. They aim to retain a large

number of scabs as a standing reminder to the seamen that they were the victors and to help foster the defeatism being shown by the reformists. But their efforts will be of no avail. If, after the defeat of the 1917 general strike and later, in 1928-29, the waterside workers and timberworkers, the reformists poisoned the labor movement with deadly defeatism, which still held sway in many industries, it was because there was absent a virile Communist movement to inspire the confidence of the workers in their own strength and organisation, even in the most adverse conditions. To-day, the contact, influence and leadership which the Communists exert in the trade unions is the guarantee that defeatism will not strike deep roots. This is why the mass of the seamen regard their retreat as manoeuvre which will give them a temporary breathing space in which to reorganise their forces in order that they may renew the attack later.

The seamen have received a heavy blow, but, like the miners, their recovery will be quick. The time is not far distant when they shall once again take their place in the foremost ranks of the fighting detachments of the Australian working class.