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COMMUNIST ★ REVIEW ★



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SHOULD WE TO ENLIST?

By L. Harry Gould



UNION POLICY AND A.C.T.U.

By R. Dixon



A WELLSIAN ODYSSEY

By G. Baracchi

MARCH

1939

COMMUNIST REVIEW

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

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THE NEWS REVIEWED

DECEITFUL DEFENCE PROPAGANDA

"The magnitude of a lie is always a certain factor in making it believed, for the great masses of a nation are at the bottom of their hearts more apt to be merely demoralised than consciously bad. Consequently, in their primitive simplicity of mind, they more easily fall a prey to a big lie than to a small one, since they themselves often tell petty lies, but would be restrained by shame from too big a one."

—HITLER ("Mein Kampf")

EVIDENTLY the Nazi bible has won quite a few converts in U.A.P. circles in Australia.

"Lies of magnitude" are certainly being broadcast wholesale in connection with the government's defence programme.

The greatest of these concerns the purpose behind Britain's rearmament.

Samples are culled at random from recent speeches of Stevens, Hughes and Bruce.

The N.S.W. Premier, Mr. Stevens tells us that,

"The threat to the world's peace springs very largely from the weakness of the nations that desire peace," and that "Their unpreparedness is the temptation that sets aggressors on the move."

Mr. Hughes, the ardent war time conscriptionist who now, by the irony of history, stands at the head of the campaign for voluntary enlistment, assures us that,

"... a factor exercising enormous

influence in preserving world peace ... is the rearmament effort of Great Britain."

"... the prestige of Great Britain arises pari passu with her armed strength, and this applies to Australia."

"It is not by charm of manner or by sagacity that diplomats are able to impress the representatives of other countries but by the armed force behind them which lends to their lightest word a potency that may well prove to be irresistible."

Whilst Mr. Bruce, Chamberlain's ambassador to Australia, joins the chorus with,

"The world is rapidly rearming morally and physically under the leadership of Britain, and is rapidly approaching defensive deterrent strength, before which any aggressor will pause."

These three statements are only variations of the one central lying theme—that Britain is arming to defend democracy and peace and

our salvation from fascism and war lies in supporting the Chamberlain—Lyons programme.

What is this weakness of the peaceful nations which Mr. Stevens professes to see as a factor which encourages aggression.

It cannot be military weakness be-

cause the following is the balance of forces which existed prior to September last year.

(See Table on p. 131.)

It cannot be economic weakness because the following reveals the overwhelming strength of the democracies.

ECONOMIC STRENGTH*

Commodity	Peace Bloc	Fascist Bloc
	Million Tons	Million Tons
Coal	873.4	222.6
Pig Iron and Ferrous Alloys	69.9	18.9
Steel Ingots and Castings	91.4	26.9
	Tons	Tons
Copper (mining)	770,000	—
Zinc (smelter)	662,000	198,000
	Million Bush.	Million Bush.
Wheat	2,068.5	547.2

* Table compiled by Labor Research Department, Britain, on basis of Monthly Bulletin of Statistics of the League of Nations and the Economist Commercial History of 1937.

It cannot be financial weakness because the democratic countries between them control about 80 per cent of the world's gold reserves.

Assuming that Mr. Hughes is correct in his assertion that diplomats are able to impress representatives of other countries according to the degree of armed force which they command, assuming, as he does, that such force lends irresistible potency to their lightest words, then it is obvious that Mr. Chamberlain had sufficient backing at Munich to cause Hitler to capitulate without going to war.

If armaments alone constitute, as Mr. Bruce claims, a defensive deterrent, before which the aggressors

will pause, why, it might be asked, did they not pause at the borders of Czechoslovakia?

Czechoslovakia's defences were well nigh impregnable, as German military experts have since admitted. Had she not been deserted by her allies Britain and France, had a united stand been taken against Germany then, there is no reason to doubt that the Nazis would have been compelled to retreat.

From the foregoing it must be obvious that the spread of aggression is in no way due to any military or economic weakness of the democratic countries but is due to the absence of a united front of these countries against the fascist powers.

TABLE

	DEMOCRATIC PEACE BLOC				FASCIST WAR BLOC				Total
	Britain	France	U.S.A.	Sov. Union	Germany	Italy	Japan	Total	
Population	47,000,000	42,000,000	128,000,000	170,000,000	387,000,000	87,000,000	43,000,000	71,000,000	181,000,000
Number of Effectives who could be mobilised	9,000,000	9,000,000	20,000,000	35,000,000	73,000,000	13,000,000	8,000,000	13,000,000	34,000,000
Naval Tonnage	1,296,353	511,817	1,163,240	250,000	3,221,410	147,271	429,000	802,262	1,378,533
Capital Ships	18 Existing 5 Under con.	6 Existing 3 Under con.	15 Existing 4 Under con.	4 Existing — Under con.	43 Existing 12 Under con.	6 Existing 4 Under con.	4 Existing 4 Under con.	9 Existing 2 Under con.	19 Existing 10 Under con.
Aircraft Carriers	6 Existing 5 Under con.	1 Existing 2 Under con.	4 Existing 2 Under con.	— Existing — Under con.	11 Existing 9 Under con.	— Existing — Under con.	— Existing — Under con.	3 Existing 3 Under con.	4 Existing 5 Under con.
Cruisers	59 Existing 17 Under con.	— Existing — Under con.	30 Existing 10 Under con.	4 Existing 4 Under con.	83 Existing 33 Under con.	6 Existing 7 Under con.	— Existing — Under con.	35 Existing 3 Under con.	63 Existing 10 Under con.
Torpedo Boat Destroyers	129 Existing 33 Under con.	68 Existing 10 Under con.	216 Existing 36 Under con.	25 Existing — Under con.	438 Existing 79 Under con.	35 Existing 27 Under con.	114 Existing 42 Under con.	112 Existing 15 Under con.	261 Existing 84 Under con.
Submarines	54 Existing 18 Under con.	75 Existing 11 Under con.	85 Existing 22 Under con.	150 Existing — Under con.	364 Existing 51 Under con.	36 Existing 23 Under con.	81 Existing 30 Under con.	57 Existing 5 Under con.	174 Existing 58 Under con.
Air Force	2,000 Existing 65,000 Men	1,500 Existing 50,000 Men	2,885 Existing 32,000 Men	4,500 Existing 100,000 Men	10,885 Existing 247,000 Men	2,600 Existing 130,000 Men	2,200 Existing 50,000 Men	1,670 Existing 21,000 Men	6,470 Existing 201,000 Men
	115,000	415,000	170,000	1,300,000	2,000,000	1,000,000	550,000	400,000	1,950,000

The main responsibility for the absence of such a front rests with the Chamberlain government.

The wars in Spain and China are not isolated events; they are part and parcel of the second imperialist war.

This war, which has been started by the aggressor States, Germany, Italy and Japan, already involves over five hundred million people. In the final analysis it is being waged against the capitalist interests of Great Britain, France and U.S.A., since its object is a repartition of the world colonies and spheres of influence.

The mere rearmament of Great Britain is not going to deter the fascist powers and turn them aside from their plans.

Britain, despite all that Bruce and Co. might have to say to the contrary, is becoming weaker and not stronger. Her prestige is declining and not increasing as Hughes would have us believe. And all this is directly traceable to the policy of appeasement.

This policy has seen Manchuria sacrificed to Japan in 1931, Abyssinia to Italy in 1936, Austria and Czechoslovakia to Germany in 1938, and now most recently of all Spain to Italian and German fascism.

And have the fascist powers been appeased? Have they been led to deviate one inch from the path of war and plunder?

On the contrary each retreat on the part of the democratic States, each successive failure to make a united stand, has been followed by

fresh demands and new aggressions by the fascists.

Emboldened by her successes in Manchuria, Japan is now engaging in an attempt to conquer all China. Similarly emboldened by success in Abyssinia and Spain, Italy is striving now to dominate the Mediterranean and is making demands against French colonies. Whilst Nazi Germany is so far from being appeased that the demand for the return of her pre-war colonies is intensified.

The object of the propaganda peddled by Bruce and Co. is to create a belief that this policy of "appeasement" will soon end and that Britain will, on the basis of her increased strength, take a firmer stand against aggression. This is designed to allay the people's distrust of Chamberlain and Co. and inveigle them into supporting the armaments programme.

This is nothing short of deliberate falsehood. Britain has had opportunities in the past for taking a firm stand when conditions were much more favorable for success than they are likely to be as time goes on.

It is not too late even now to make common cause with America and the Soviet government. The democracies still have it in their power to render war impossible for the fascist nations if they would utilise their combined economic and financial power.

But the Chamberlain government has set its face against such a united front and there is no reason to ex-

pect a voluntary reversal of this in the near future.

Whilst Chamberlain and Co. deplore the "excesses" of the fascist States and fear any accession of strength to the latter, they fear even more the working-class movement in Europe and the movement of the colonial peoples for liberation and regard fascism as an excellent antidote to these "dangerous movements."

The major question in national defence today is not that of more

and better armaments but of a more effective policy for peace.

The tables in the preceding pages show the overwhelming strength which is still commanded by the democracies.

The main obstacle to these forces being employed in the cause of peace is the Chamberlain government. Therefore the main task confronting the forces for peace and democracy within the Empire is getting rid of this incubus.

● DICTATOR AND PRESS ●

HAVE you noticed a spate of travel ads. in certain Australian papers recently?

Ads. which proclaim that "Italy is Europe's Touring Country No. 1?"

Ads. which portray the attractions of Rome and Florence and hold out the inducement to tourists that the special exchange rate greatly enhances the buying power of their currency in Italy, and so on?

No doubt you have noticed these and quite possibly concluded that the need of the dictators for foreign exchange has something to do with them.

This may be so, but it is not unlikely that a far more sinister purpose underlies their appearance.

Dissemination of propaganda is a vital part of the fascist conspiracy against the world. Elwyn Jones in his book, "The Battle for Peace," exposes some of the favorite methods employed by them towards this end.

"The Nazis," he writes, "have worked out a system of bribery of the press of various countries. Often it is done by direct corruption." "... But a more subtle method is often used to bring newspapers under complete control. This is done by the establishment of a central advertisement bureau which feeds advertisements to the newspapers. As the flood of new German advertisements runs fuller and fuller, it is not difficult to encourage existing newspapers, firstly to take a political line sympathetic to that favored by their advertisers, and secondly to expand on the strength of their advertisement income. After a while the Nazi advertisers may decide to cut off the whole of the profitable flood and the newspapers which have been lured into dependance on that particular source of revenue are neatly caught."

Substantially the same methods are employed by Italian fascism to

bring pressure to bear on the foreign press.

This is borne out by an article which appeared in the well known Dutch weekly "Haagsche Post," and which is quoted from at length by Elwyn Jones.

Written by the Editor and entitled "Dictator and Press," this article states:

"The millions spent by the dictators on this news propaganda do not appear to be wasted. It is not restricted to the control of news agencies at home. New papers are started abroad and old ones are subsidised with funds from the dictator countries. No country is entirely free from such publications. Furthermore, where that is possible *the lever of advertising is used to exert pressure . . .*"

" . . . But it does not stop there. Germans who used to advertise with us, because it paid them to do so, were told by 'the powers that be' that this was not considered 'desirable,' and calmly broke their contracts. We ourselves were informed

• THEY BOTH CAN'T BE RIGHT •

ON the front page of the Sydney "Sun" on Thursday, February 16, there appeared side by side two reported interviews, one with Lord Nuffield, the other with Sir Hugh Denison.

The remarks of both centred around defence and foreign policy, and each claimed that Chamberlain was right, but either Nuffield or Denison must be wrong, as the

that such restrictions would be removed 'if only we would say the word.'

"Italy also has withdrawn her travel advertising with us after a correspondence which, if reproduced in facsimile, might interest our readers and be an eyeopener to them."

"The problem of dictator influence upon the press beyond the borders is one of immense importance and should no longer be a closed book to the public in the free countries, which values and understands the importance of a truly free press."

Therefore, do not be surprised if you discover the same papers which carry those innocent little travel ads, also carrying nice little fairy tales about the glories of fascism.

In any case, armed with the above knowledge, you will be able to estimate at their true worth articles which treat in any way sympathetically with the cause of the dictators.

You can gamble with certainty that these, whoever might be the author, are inspired from Rome, Berlin or Tokio direct.

following will show.

Sir Hugh Denison tells us that "Those who condemn the British Prime Minister, Mr. Chamberlain, for the policy of appeasement do not know what they are talking or writing about . . ."

" . . . I was in London in that critical week in September and I had the opportunity of seeing how the heart of the Empire reacted . . ."

" . . . I cannot understand either politicians or reputable newspapers condemning Mr. Chamberlain . . . What on earth do they know of the situation . . . They talk and write anti-Chamberlain propaganda with not even the most rudimentary knowledge of the facts.

"They talk about what they choose to call Germany's bluff. The German Army would have walked through Czechoslovakia in 24 hours, and Britain and France at the moment were neither of them strong enough to prevent it."

Lord Nuffield, however, was unkind enough to dispose of this fable in one paragraph and in reality shows us that it is Sir Hugh Denison who does not know what he is talking about.

"Britain is now prepared," states Nuffield. "At the time of the September crisis, its army and navy were at the highest efficiency peak ever attained."

"In the air, maybe, we were a little on the weak side, but still we could have given them a nasty knock."

Who is right, Denison or Nuffield? From the tables printed earlier in these notes it is obvious that on this point Nuffield is right, Britain and France were strong enough to have called Hitler's bluff, and it was a bluff despite what Denison has to say to the contrary.

Had Britain and France taken as strong a stand as the Soviet Union was prepared to take then Hitler would not have dared to cross the

borders of Czechoslovakia in September.

There would not have been war. On the contrary the peace front would have gained immeasurable strength from such firm united action.

Czechoslovakia would have been saved from fascism, would have remained a bulwark for peace in Europe.

Her in no way mean forces, if they have not passed immediately to the side of the aggressors have been lost irretrievably to the cause of peace.

Czechoslovakia's industries, including war industries which could have been serving the side of peace and democracy are now serving the cause of fascism and war.

The Chamberlain policy of appeasement is similarly sacrificing forces for peace in every part of the globe, especially in Spain and in China.

And we are expected to believe that the British armaments programme will counter-balance these losses and deter the fascists from ever attacking the Empire.

Can Britain continue to concede such ground to the dictators and yet ensure the maintenance of peace for the peoples of the Empire?

Decidedly no; the present policy on the one hand encourages the spread of aggression and brings closer the danger of war on a world scale, on the other hand it saddles the people with a colossal armaments burden, which would not be necessary if a policy of collective security was pursued.

THE SOVIET PEOPLE

J. D. Blake

I.—HIGH LIVING STANDARDS

This is the first of a series of three articles on the Soviet Union. We invited Comrade Blake to contribute them because he has visited the U.S.S.R. on two occasions separated by a fairly considerable interval of time; because on both occasions he remained there for more than a brief period; because he has only very recently returned from the Soviet Union, being, in fact, the latest Australian to have done so; and, last but not least, because he is a leading Communist. All these circumstances, taken together, should combine to make these articles authoritative.

BEFORE saying anything about Soviet living standards, it is necessary to remark that much of what has been recently said in Australia in support of the Soviet Union is behind times in relation to actual Soviet development.

The tendency to speak only of industrial, agricultural and social developments in the Soviet Union in terms of general principles overlooks the most essential feature of contemporary Soviet life; this feature is the growing abundance and prosperity throughout the country and the consequent sweeping changes in the living standards, the cultural level and the general mental outlook of the people during the past year or so.

It is almost invariably the case that as soon as a discussion on Soviet living standards begins, the old question is asked, "How many roubles do you get for the pound sterling?" Hence the first thing it is necessary to say is that no conception of Soviet living standards can be gleaned from discussions about the exchange value

of the rouble on the international money market, for the simple reason that the rouble has no such international exchange relation, as it cannot be exchanged for pounds sterling or any other foreign currency.

The best way, and the most logical one, to get an idea of the standard of living of the Soviet worker, is to ask the question, "What sort of life does the average worker in the U.S.S.R. lead on the wages he receives, and how does it compare with the life led by the average Australian worker?"

Take a Soviet worker earning five hundred roubles a month, and that is quite a fair example. Such a worker has no doctor's fees, dental fees or hospital fees to pay; the education of his children costs him nothing and he has nothing to pay for school books or other such things. Out of such a wage he would pay between fifty and sixty roubles a month in rent.

A Soviet family on this wage always has four meals each day and

three of these could be called major meals in the sense that breakfast and supper are two course meals, while dinner, in the middle of the day, is a three course meal. Plenty of fresh meat, vegetables, fruit, butter, eggs and milk are included in the daily diet of such a family; visit them at any time and you will always find one or two bottles of wine in the pantry. They go once or twice to the pictures every week, and about once every six weeks or so to the Opera or the Art Theatre.

On some free day (non-working days) they may spend part of the day shopping, they will go to the Park of Culture and Rest, or they will go out to the week-end rest home owned by the factory at which the worker is employed, and situated about an hour's journey into the country.

On the evenings when they are not out at some entertainment they will probably spend a quiet evening at home reading and listening to the radio; some evenings, friends visit them or they themselves go visiting; and a quiet evening of friendly conversation is spent over the bottle of wine, tea and cake.

The Soviet people are the most politically alert in the world, but they do not talk politics all the time as many think; always much of the conversation in a Soviet worker's home is devoted to relatives, the uncle in the village, children, the next football match (or the last one) clothes and other such everyday topics.

I was personally acquainted with

another worker's family in Moscow, that of Stepan Zubarov, a forty-nine year old assembly worker at the Stalin automobile works. Stepan and his wife had two sons and one daughter. One of the sons did not live at home, having attained the position of commander of an artillery division in the Leningrad regional Red Army.

Of those living at home, Stepan earned six hundred roubles a month, his wife is a school teacher and receives five hundred and fifty roubles a month, the son is a draughtsman and earns seven hundred roubles a month, while the daughter is a junior doctor in one of Moscow's biggest hospitals and receives five hundred roubles a month.

Totaled up, the income of this family comes to two thousand three hundred and fifty roubles each month. They lived in a modern four-roomed flat equipped with every convenience necessary to comfort, they paid one hundred and ten roubles in rent, which also covered light, gas, hot water service and heating. For all this they paid a sum less than one twenty-first part of the total income coming into the home. Compare this with an Australian worker on, say, four pounds a week; such a worker pays at least one pound a week or a quarter of his wages in rent and even then would get a rather miserable dwelling at such a rental, and on top of that he must pay out still more for light, gas, and fuel, while hot water service is out of the question in such dwellings.

The home of Stepan Zubarov was beautifully furnished with excellent furniture now manufactured in enormous quantities in the Soviet Union; it contained a cultured library of almost a thousand books, a radio, gramophone and a good selection of records; the walls were draped with rich Uzbek tapestries; very fine rugs and carpets covered the floor. It should be readily understood, without my emphasising the fact, that this family enjoys a splendid home life which is an interesting commentary on those fairy tales about the Soviet system destroying home life.

The life of Stepan Zubarov is no exceptional case; it is typical of the condition of hundreds of thousands of families in the Soviet Union today.

The great wave of prosperity throughout the U.S.S.R. has affected not only the workers but has also brought sweeping changes in the life of the millions of collective farmers in the Soviet country. At any time in the year now Soviet shops and stores are packed with collective farmers buying a great variety of articles which, but a few years ago, they could only have dreamed of owning.

It is not so many years ago when the Russian peasants were classed as the most ragged and backward in the world; today they purchase the most expensive suit lengths and wear well tailored suits; peasant women regularly purchase large quantities of silk and other materials; every collective farm woman

now has an extensive wardrobe which would be the envy of many farmers' wives in the Australian countryside.

The Soviet collective farmers are buying great quantities of radio sets, gramophones, bicycles, modern furniture, tapestries and other goods; what is most important is that they have the money to pay cash for all these things without time-payment schemes, which is the method most Australian farmers have to use to get even necessities.

There is much more to be said about Soviet agriculture, but I intend to make that the subject of a separate article.

Soviet shops and stores provide another sidelight on the prosperity and abundance which is such an outstanding feature of present-day Soviet life.

There is an immense variety of foodstuffs; plenty of butter, eggs, milk, sour creams, ham, bacon, fresh meat, poultry, game, fish, soup extracts, pure fruit juices and other products; they are very proud of their hundred and thirty varieties of sausage and their ten varieties of meat loaf. In the wine stores there is a wide selection of the finest quality wines, champagne, cognac, and liquors; very little vodka is now consumed in the Soviet Union, and as a matter of fact it is quite difficult to obtain. Despite the great variety of wines and other alcoholic drinks I saw no drunkenness during my stay in the U.S.S.R.

Changes in the Soviet living standards are also revealed by the fact that compared to 1932 each person

in the Soviet Union consumed in 1938 one third less rye bread, twice as much white bread, three times as much fruit, four times as much fresh meat, three and a half times as much butter, two and a half times as many eggs and four times as much milk.

What Australian worker can say that last year he consumed four times as much milk or meat as he did five years ago? Generally the opposite is the case, with the price of these important articles in the diet soaring to the skies while wages remain at bed-rock level. In the Soviet Union the reverse has been the case; wages have gone up 150 per cent. and output has increased tremendously while prices are steadily coming down.

The clothes of the Soviet people, both men and women, have improved beyond all measure; men's suits are well tailored and could be worn with distinction in any country of the world, while women's dress in the Soviet Union is now based on the most modern fashions in the world and compares quite favorably with the latest modes which are to be seen in any of Australia's large cities.

There is another notable feature of Soviet life which has no counter-

part in any other part of the world; at all factories and workplaces there are great signs indicating several jobs available and stating the salary paid on each job. In addition each day between one-thirty and two o'clock the central radio stations conduct a special employment session which advertises every kind of position available and the high wages which are invariably offered.

All my experience in the Soviet Union, some aspects of which I have dealt with in this article, causes me to say without the slightest hesitation that, aside from all the free amenities which socialism gives the Soviet worker, aside from the complete sense of security which socialism has brought, the living standards of the Soviet workers are now higher than those of the Australian workers.

This solution of human problems which cannot be equalled in any other part of the world, explains to a large extent the powerful influence exerted by the U.S.S.R. on world affairs today; it demonstrates how important is the need to strengthen the contacts and relations between our Australian people and the great Soviet people.

MARX ON BYRON AND SHELLEY

"... Those who love and understand Byron and Shelley consider it fortunate that Byron died at the age of thirty-six, for had he lived longer he would have become a reactionary bourgeois; on the other hand they deplore that Shelley died

at twenty-nine, for he was a revolutionary through and through, and would have belonged always to the vanguard of socialism."

(Cited by Edward Aveling and Eleanor Marx Aveling: "Shelley the Socialist," *Neue Zeit*, 1888, p. 54.)

SPAIN

Arise, arise, arise!
There is blood on the earth that denies ye bread;
To weep for the dead, the dead, the dead.
Be your wounds like eyes
What other grief were it just to pay?
Your sons, your wives, your brethren were they;
Who said they were slain on battle day?

Awaken, awaken, awaken!
The slave and the tyrant are twin-born foes;
Be the cold chains shaken
To the dust where your kindred repose, repose:
Their bones in the grave will start and move,
When they hear the voices of those they love,
Most loud in the holy combat above.

Wave, wave high the banner!
When Freedom is riding to conquest by;
Though the slaves that fan her
Be Famine and Toil, giving sigh for sigh.
And ye who attend her imperial car,
Lift not your hands in the banded war,
But in her defence whose children ye are.

Glory, glory, glory,
To those who have greatly suffered and done!
Never name in story
Was greater than that which ye shall have won.
Conquerors have conquered their foes alone,
Whose revenge, pride, and power they have overthrown:
Ride ye, more victorious, over your own.

Bind, bind every brow
With crowns of violet, ivy, and pine;
Hide the blood-stains now
With hues which sweet Nature has made divine:
Green strength, azure hope, and eternity;
But let not the pansy among them be;
Ye were injured, and that means memory.

—Percy Bysshe Shelley.

[An Ode, "written October, 1819, before the Spaniards had recovered their Liberty."]

International Women's Day

Hetty Weitzel

THERE are those amongst our friends who say to us, "What—another 'Day'? Why celebrate a day which, however important to the overseas movement, as yet means little to Australians?" A reason, indeed, for refusing to let March 8 go by without letting Australians know its history and its significance!

The successful May Day celebrations we have seen here are sufficient proof that we in the Antipodes are not the "isolationists" that the above-mentioned friends and certain elements in present-day politics believe us to be.

Actions these days have international reactions and our movement, if it is anything, if it is to be successful, is international in scope and character.

There are important lessons to be learnt from the celebration of such international days as May Day and International Women's Day, and Australians have shown themselves well fitted to learn and to profit by such lessons; nor is it "mechanical" to hold such celebrations at the time decided on by international congresses, for the thought that such demonstrations of strength are being held simultaneously throughout the world is indescribably heartening as well as being a most effective indication to World Reaction of the World's Progressive Forces united in action against it.

By virtue of the fact that the

holding of such days reviews the effectiveness of our work over the year just past, we cannot conceive of them being successful if they are not organised around local and immediate demands as well as around the international situation—against reaction at home and abroad.

"Days" have immense political value. What is the particular significance of International Women's Day and what are the special points that interest and agitate Australian women at the moment?

One cannot think of a single phase of the struggle of the progressive forces against reaction, against the growth of fascism in Europe, against its repercussions in this country due to the support given by Lyons to the pro-fascist policy of Chamberlain, that does not concern women as it concerns men. Perhaps men take the lead in this, or women in that, struggle, but whether it be against the shipping of iron ore to Japan, whether it be against the rise in the price of bread, one section should, and to an ever increasing extent does, support the other.

Readers of the "Communist Review" who are aware of the widespread organisation of miners' wives in the recent struggle, with the splendid backing by the wives of the Port Kembla men, know this.

Why, then, does the revolutionary movement pay special attention

to the question of drawing in the women whether from the home, the farm or the workplace? It is because woman is doubly exploited under capitalism and has not been accustomed to take part in economic, political or social movements to the extent that the menfolk have. Events at home and abroad have proved that when women have enlisted in a struggle they have put into it intensity and loyalty and they are an invaluable—an indispensable—section in the movement to smash reaction and impoverishment and to build a better world.

It is precisely to women that the agents of reaction are continually launching appeals. Taking advantage of their inexperience and their concern over the personal welfare of their children, they attempt to split the ranks in an industrial dispute by blaming "irresponsible agitators" for such dispute. Their attempts are becoming less and less successful as women become more conscious of their status in capitalist society, but with the example of how, in Germany, large masses of women were spellbound by Nazi dogma, it behoves us to make much greater efforts in the future to influence and to organise them along correct lines. Neglect on our part to do so will constitute a serious error, even a calamity.

The above reasons are reasons for special work among women and for International Women's Day, but not, of course, for putting up that a special "Women's Question" exists. Such was the old basis whereby women in their struggle for

equal civil rights directed much energy and bitterness against men. Men and women, we say, must stand together against their common oppressor.

A brief review of the history of I.W.D. will give an indication of the importance with which the international movement has regarded the need for special work among women.

Nineteen hundred and thirty-nine is the 29th anniversary of the day, which originated as an agitation for equal suffrage rights.

In 1891, the German Social-Democratic Party, influenced by Bebel, adopted the slogan of votes for women, but it was not until 1907 that working women were organised round it in sufficient numbers to justify holding, in Stuttgart, the first International Women's Conference.

In 1910, the second conference of Socialist women was held at Copenhagen round the question of women's suffrage and certain demands as to hours and conditions of the women in industry. It was Klara Zetkin, world-famous woman Socialist leader, who fought for the inclusion of the latter. March 8 was adopted as International Women's Day to be held yearly to mark the progress of the struggle for women's demands.

Up to 1914 successful demonstrations of women were held in Germany, Russia and America, but during the war, under the influence of the Social-Democrats, the women's movement, which was becoming too

international and anti-war in character for the liking of the S.D. "patriots" and chauvinists, was squashed. A skeleton organisation was maintained by correspondence through neutral countries. The struggle for the suffrage also went on, but did not receive much support at this stage by the working-class women, who were preoccupied with the struggle to live during that dreadful period.

In 1913, the Russian women in the movement, the majority of whom had developed from a support of the Equal Rights Campaign to a stand on wages and conditions, allied themselves with the international working-class movement and were the first to celebrate I.W.D. by producing a paper, the "Working Woman" (8/3/14). In spite of the arrest of almost all the Editorial Board because of a most trenchant article on conditions of women workers in the rubber factories, the paper appeared and continued to appear, agitating and organising women to such an extent that the 1917 February Revolution began with the action of the women under the slogan "Bread and Peace and the return of our husbands from the Front."

In 1919, when the Communist (Third) International was formed, one of the first questions raised was that of special attention to women, and at a congress of women organised in 1921, March 8, as International Women's Day, was again fixed on.

Speaking to a congress of women in 1920, Lenin said:

"The Soviet government strives to have all workers, not only Party members, but also non-Party persons, not only men but women take part in this economic reconstruction. This cause, begun by the Soviet power, may be moved forward only when not hundreds, but millions of women in Russia take part in it."

One of the first acts of the Soviet government in 1918 was to facilitate economic and political as well as social equality. Lenin, on this occasion, said:

"The Soviet government has, more than all other countries, put the ideas of democracy into practice by allowing not the slightest hint of the inequality of women to creep into its laws. . . . Legislation, of course, is not sufficient, and we should never permit ourselves to be satisfied by decrees alone. But in the field of legislation we have done all expected of us to make the position of women equal with men and this we have a right to be proud of. The position of women in the Soviet Union today is ideal from the point of view of the most advanced countries. But we say that this, of course, is only the beginning."

A resolution, a law was not enough, wide and patient education of men as well as women was necessary to achieve its aims. But under Lenin's slogan, "Every cook must learn to rule the State," the Russian government has applied itself to the task of winning the active participation of women in almost every phase of life with most remarkable results. The happy, purposeful Russian woman of today has not only thrown off her "double burden" and shown herself capable of remarkable courage and initiative, she has also, at the same time, helped to build Socialism.

International Women's Day in Russia today is a day of rejoicing, a day to pay honor to those women who have excelled in art, in science

in engineering, but they do not forget their less fortunate sisters in other countries who still suffer under the double yoke of capitalist exploitation and economic, political and social inequality, nor do we forget them, for what they have achieved we can struggle to achieve and the life they are enjoying today will one day be ours.

International Women's Day could never pass without mention of Klara Zetkin, its founder, and for so long leader of the movement. She died in 1933, a few days before her 76th birthday. As senior member of the German Reichstag, she delivered the opening speech early in 1933, calling on the German people to struggle against fascism and the threat of war, while the Nazi members, planning the immediate suppression of all other parties, had perforce to sit in grim silence and listen. In June she died in Moscow.

A message sent to her by the

E.C.C.I. on her 75th birthday says:

"The world proletariat remembers the services you have rendered in the fight for its emancipation: the masses of working women see in you one of their best champions.

"On your initiative it was decided to observe International Women's Day, the day on which the women demonstrate their determination to fight against hunger and misery, against exploitation and war."

This heroic fighter gave us a lead to freedom and her example is an inspiration to us.

International Women's Day, March 8, here in Australia as elsewhere in the world, is a day on which we review the work done in drawing the women into the struggle against reaction and for progress, and once again sharpen our resolution to improve this work in the future. Conditions are such that this cannot be neglected, but to the task we can bring the heartening consciousness of the fine part women are playing in struggle on all fronts in Spain, in China, and in every-day struggles here in Australia today.

VIVE LA COMMUNE!

DALADIER, agent of finance capital, paves the way for fascism in France. Since Munich that is clear. But the French workers have other ideas: *vide* recent sit-down strikes, and the 24-hours' general strike of two million. And their vanguard remembers revolutionary traditions of 1789, 1848 and, above all, 18 March, 1871, that saw the

birth of the first proletarian dictatorship, the Paris Commune. May this "glorious harbinger of a new society" inspire the workers to struggle victoriously against fascism. "*Le combat ou la mort. C'est ainsi que la question est invinciblement posée.*" Combat or death. It is thus that the question is inexorably put.

PAGES FROM THE PAST

A series of documents illustrating Australia's Social and Economic History, with special reference to the working-class movement and the struggle for democracy.

Edited with introductions by J. N. Rawling.

Period II.— Free Colony and Self-Government, 1823–1856 (Continued)

3—POLITICAL FERMENT (Continued)

THE DEPRESSION OF 1843

[Australia, and especially N.S.W., was hit by an economic cyclone in the early 'forties. It was at its worst in 1842. A radical paper saw some benefits in the depression.]

THE ADVANTAGES OF NECESSITY

In reviewing the last five years—and pondering upon the causes and remedies of our present distress, one observation has given us no slight satisfaction: namely, that we are becoming much more economical in our habits and expenditure, much more industrious in our different avocations, and much more ingenious in our useful inventions. . . .

Some years ago we were a colony of idlers. Those in hired service were, of course, obliged to labor, and those under the lash were perhaps made to sweat, but the generality of the middle and higher classes wasted their lives in idleness and extravagance, or, what was worse, in those gambling speculations which have brought on most severe punishments.

In this respect, at least, necessity has produced a most marked and favorable change. Coaches are being changed into carts and wheelbarrows, and trappings and gewgaws are at a discount.

Local manufactures, the article goes on, are replacing imported articles: Canterbury sugar, colonial tweeds, "wine of surpassingly good quality" (e.g. Fisher's), boiling down establishments at Parramatta Road, Newtown and on the Hunter—it is calculated 1000 tons of tallow will be exported yearly. But our growing prosperity must not be blighted by any wild schemes of finance which may occupy the minds of our maiden legislators.

—"Weekly Register," 29/7/'43.

UNEMPLOYED NOT WANTED

[The unemployed were found to be in the way in 1843—as in many years since.]

THE OPERATIVES

We are requested to ask by whose instructions it is that Mr. Lewis, the Colonial Architect, tells the starving

laborers to "go to h***," when they present their government registration tickets to them?

—"Weekly Register," 2/9/43.

A DEBATE ON UNEMPLOYMENT

[The following are notes of a debate in the Legislative Council in September, 1843, nearly a hundred years ago. It all sounds so modern. The report is summarised from the "Weekly Register" for September 9, 1843.]

The *Colonial Secretary* had to call attention to the large number of laborers and artisans out of employment. A Notice by the government instructed the men to register at the office of the Immigration Agent. No less than 518 had done so—in addition to the number employed by the City Council—and most of these were men with very large families. Of the 518, 320 are now employed by the government, and therefore there are still 200 out of employment. There is the necessity for an immediate enquiry. He gave notice of motion that the Immigration Committee consider the subject of unemployed labor in Sydney.

Richard Windeyer (Member for Durham) said that the men had been offered work in the country and would not go. A member of the Council had offered £17 a year and rations for a man and wife and got none. Unemployed were flocking to Sydney from the country.

The *Colonial Secretary* said that none who came from the country were employed by the government.

W. C. Wentworth (Member for Sydney) said that many who were out of work had deposits in the Savings Bank.

The *Colonial Secretary* would enquire.

Suttor said there was no difficulty in getting men for the country, but it is no use taking carpenters and tradesmen into the country. He cited the case of six or seven carpenters who were being employed at Bathurst as hut keepers at 7/- per week. They came back to Sydney.

Dr. Lang (Member for Melbourne) did not agree with *Dr. Nicholson's* proposal that conveyance be arranged to take men to the country. People in the country could not pay mechanics, and there was no demand for them.

The following day; debate continued.

The *Colonial Treasurer* (the Colonial Secretary being ill) moved the motion. No more were to be employed until the Immigration Committee reported. He laid on the table the lists of the registered men: there were 521, of whom 371 were employed by the government; the highest wages given were 3/- a day; there were yet some 350 men out of work. It was the duty of the government to employ these.

Edward Hamilton (Member for Cassilis) was opposed to any interference on the part of the government on behalf of those who pretended to be suffering from want of employment; he could not imagine that any distress could exist amongst those who were now complaining, while they were able to pay £100,000 per annum for the importation of spirits. He thought that it was most dangerous to interfere in this matter. If a man could not find employment in Sydney, let him seek employment in the country; and if he persisted in remaining and loitering about the Government Barracks, let him be driven out of the town. But he could not protest too solemnly against any interference on the part of the Legislature to provide labor for discontented men within the City; or against any plan to force men into the interior who would not willingly go there.

Dr. Lang could not subscribe to the opinions advanced by the hon. member from Cassilis. The objects which it appeared the House had in view since the opening of the session, were to devise ways and means

for the relief of the upper classes of society; and he regretted that on the first vote which had for its object the relief of the lower classes, the honorable member should be found in the ranks of the opposition. The cause of the distress among the operative classes arose from the distress among the employers of labor, significant symptoms of which were to be inferred from the introduction, by the honorable and learned member for Sydney himself, of no less than three Bills, during the first days of the maiden session of that House, for their objects the prevention of the waste of property, the maintenance of the credit, and the facilitating of the loan of capital; all of which had reference to the present distress among the upper classes. Now as these afforded undeniable indications of embarrassment and difficulty among the employers of labor, to whom the artisans and laborers looked for their daily bread, was it surprising to find that a corresponding degree existed among the laborers? . . .

He therefore considered it to be the duty of that House to regard the efforts of the government with the greatest indulgence, and to lose no time in devising ways and means to afford employment to the distressed poor during the pressure of the present crisis. He knew that many men would willingly go into the interior, but they were encumbered with families, and could not go. . . . The deepest sympathy was due to the humbler classes, whom that House would appear to be

neglectful of, did they refuse to give them employment at a period when they were apparently legislating only for the upper classes, and for whom the Solvent Debtors' Bill and the Usury Bill, were exclusively brought forward.

W. C. Wentworth had no sympathy for single men idle in Sydney; he agreed with Dr. Lang about married men. There were several new public buildings urgently required in Sydney—a Customs House, for instance—and it appeared to him that the married mechanics now out of work might be employed at low wages, and a double good thereby affected, namely, the employment of the distressed poor, and an important economy in the erection of so necessary a building.

Mr. Windeyer contended that, so long as the government gave 3/- a day to laborers—which, with every

article of food obtainable at un-paralleled low prices, with meat, in fact, to be got by picking it up, was a most profitable rate of wages—so long was it manifest that those people would not go out of Sydney. So long as they could get 3/- a day from government, they would prefer "a life in Sydney" to "a life in the bush."

Mr. Hamilton explained that he was not averse from giving assistance to the distressed, but he was against its extension to single men.

Mr. Suttor said that single men were not being employed by government—only married men with families. To many of those the government was now giving 12/- a week, and, out of this stipend, a man had to pay 7/- for the rent of a miserable room in which several other families were huddled together.

[It would be easy to parallel the speeches of Edward Hamilton, Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, and W. C. Wentworth, "Australia's First Patriot," by looking through the Hansard of any Australian Parliament during 1930.—A few days after this debate a Petition was presented to the Legislative Council signed by 3153 unemployed.]

SQUATTERS WANT CONVICTS

[There were often during the 'forties rumors of the revival of transportation. As a result the people were always on the alert and at every attempt at its revival there was strong and organized opposition.]

A report has prevailed since the late arrivals from England, that the government is about to revise the transportation of convicts to this colony; and that in fact a ship is on its way so freighted. This rumor receives some confirmation from the fact that £300,000 had just been voted by parliament for the support

of convicts in "New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land." It is hardly possible to believe that Lord Scanley would recommend a measure of such bad policy, and gross injustice as this—in the face of the reports possessed on parliament on the subject, and in violation of the compact entered into with all who have

recently come to the Colony; many of whom never would have come, but on the faith that transportation had ceased. Yet when we consider that the government is at a loss how to dispose of the convicts, and that a

portion of the colonists have always been clamorous for the recurrence of the system, we are hardly prepared to give a complete contradiction to the rumor. . . .

—"Weekly Register, 19/8/'43.

THE PENTONVILLAINS

[One attempt at the revival of transportation was made in 1844, when convicts from Pentonville, products of a "reformed" prison system and called by Australians "Pentonvillains," were sent out to Port Phillip where they were to be given a pardon on arrival. Thus they were no longer convicts, said the "Port Phillip Patriot" (18/11/'44):]

. . . It will scarcely be believed, and yet such is the fact, that transportation to New South Wales is revived, and that Australia Felix, hitherto uncontaminated, save for its contiguity to the penal settlements, is the chosen field for this new experiment in convict colonisation. . . . It is the resumption of the transportation system without its discipline, with all of its evils and none of its benefits. . . . There

exists no law to justify one country in pouring out the sweepings of its gaols upon another, and when it is attempted we should not be inclined to look to the tedious and expensive toils of the law for a remedy. We should duck the scoundrels if they attempted to set foot in a country of free men, and send them back as they came to the greater scoundrels who dared to send them hither. . . .

A PROLETARIAN PROTESTS

[All, however, were not opposed to the revival of transportation. On Tuesday, December 12, 1844, a public meeting was hurriedly called in Melbourne "of those interested in obtaining a sufficient supply of labor." The meeting was arranged at a time to prevent a majority of opponents of transportation from attending. But amongst the "essentials" and J.P.'s who spoke was a plain "Mc" who could not add the three mystic letters after his name—Esq. He deserves to be remembered. His name was McClellan. He said:]

This meeting is a very respectable one, composed of gentlemen of the first standing. But it cannot be said it represents the inhabitants of the province, for, on looking round me, I see that I am the only working man present. I knew nothing of the meeting until after its proceedings had commenced, and I had consequently to come off in such haste that I hadn't time even to wash my hands. I think the public,

and, in particular, the working classes, are highly indebted to Dr. Palmer and Alderman Kerr [both of whom opposed the squatters' resolution.—J.N.R.] for the stand they have made this day on their behalf, when there was nobody here to protect their interests. I hope it will not be forgotten. [And he proceeded to attack the proposed entry of the Pentonvillains.]

[Other attempts to revive transportation were made—in 1847, 1848, 1851. On June 11, 1848 occurred in Sydney what, for many years, was known as the **Great Protest Meeting**. Two convict ships had arrived and the meeting was held to protest against the entry of the convicts. It was held on the site where now stands the Lands Office—in sight of Sydney Cove, where the warships called to protest against the entry of the convicts. It was held on the site where now stands the Lands Office—in sight of Sydney Cove, where the warships could be seen. Guards at Government House had been doubled, Henry Parkes had gone round distributing handbills and the result was a meeting estimated at between 7000 and 12,000 whose ardor was not diminished by the rain. The principal speaker was Robert Lowe, newly elected representative of Sydney in the Legislative Council. He concluded his "masterpiece" of eloquence, with these words:]

Let us send across the Pacific our emphatic declaration that we shall not be slaves—that we shall be free.

. . . I can see from this meeting that the time is not far distant when we shall assert our freedom not by words alone.* As in America

* Just 51 years away, in fact—at Eureka, December 3, 1854.

[At the meeting the following Resolution was carried unanimously:]

We, the free and loyal subjects of Her Most Gracious Majesty, inhabitants of the city of Sydney and its immediate neighborhood, in public meeting assembled, do hereby enter our most deliberate and solemn protest against the transportation of British criminals to the colony of New South Wales.

Firstly.—Because it is in violation of the will of the majority of the colonists, as is clearly evidenced by their expressed opinion on the question at all times.

Secondly.—Because numbers among us have emigrated on the faith of the British government that transportation to this colony had ceased forever.

Thirdly.—Because it is incompatible with our existence as a free colony, desiring self-government, to be made the receptacle of another country's felons.

oppression was the parent of independence, so will it be in this colony. . . . And so sure as the seed will grow into the plant, and the plant to the tree, in all times and in all nations, so will injustice and tyranny ripen into rebellion, and rebellion into independence.

Fourthly.—Because it is in the highest degree unjust to sacrifice the great social and political interests of the colony at large to the pecuniary profit of a fraction of its inhabitants.

Fifthly.—Because, being firmly and devoutly attached to the British Crown, we greatly fear that the perpetration of so stupendous an act of injustice by Her Majesty's Government will go far towards abenating the affections of the people of this colony for the mother country.

For these and many kindred reasons—in the exercise of our duty to our country, for the love of our families, in the strength of our loyalty to Great Britain, and from the depth of our reverence for Almighty God—we protest against the landing of British convicts on these shores.

WHICH OF THESE TWO...?

By "Gordon"

"HAVE you got it?"

"Yes, it's here. But I'm going to complain about that boy; he should have been round an hour ago."

Mr. William Starling banged the passage door behind him and turned towards the fireplace. One hand clutched a copy of that evening's *Melbourne Daily Blatherskite*, the other groped for his spectacles amongst the grey hairs festooning his forehead.

"Come on, Dick," bustled Mrs. Starling, "let your father have his chair. He'll be perishing, standing at the gate all this time."

The young man seated at the fire-side glanced up from his book with a frown, but promptly rose and moved over into another and less comfortable chair.

"Now, Bill, for the Lord's sake, keep your hair on! Just look at him, Dick. The man's simply trembling with excitement. Anybody would think he'd been left a fortune."

Mr. Starling fixed her with a frigid stare over his glasses. "Don't you sling off! It isn't everybody what gets into the papers these days."

"Grumpy! I'm not slinging off. Here, let me find it for you—"

"I can find it myself. Sit down and keep quiet. It'll be on the second page. That's where —"

The woman winked at her son as she sat down, but the smile she bent on her husband was wholly indulgent.

Mr. Starling gave a sudden gasp. "By cripes, they printed it after all! They printed the photo!"

"Never! Show me —"

"As large as life! Well, if that ain't —"

"My, didn't it come out well?"

"Right at the top of the page, too!"

"And doesn't your old suit look good? Don't you want to see it, Dick?"

The young man had not moved. His expression was one of amused contempt. "That's all right. I'll see it later. What've they got to say?"

"Today's photograph of Mr. William Starling —" she began, but the subject of the article gave her a push with his elbow.

"Sit down and keep calm, for God's sake! I'll read it out. There's a whole lot. They did it nicely, and no mistake. Listen —"

"Today's photograph of Mr. William Starling, who is retiring after 45 years' unbroken service with the Vulcan Brick and Tile Company of Moorabbin. Mr. Starling began as office boy in 1893, and for the last 25 years has been timekeeper at the big modern works in Point Nepean Road, to which the company moved from Brighton in 1918.

Interviewed by a *Blatherskite* reporter in his trim little cottage in Kanoon Street, today, Mr. Starling stoutly declared himself fit for another 45 years, adding philosophically: "— but life's got to go on, I suppose, and a bloke's got to make way for the young ones."

"This is characteristic of the man's outlook. Asked what he thought of the modern political world, he just chuckled and shrugged his shoulders. "They're all mad," he said, obviously in reference to politicians themselves. "Look at me. I never had any time for politics; the job saw to that. And there was the wife and kids, and the garden of a week-end. And ain't I all the better off for it? Politics!" And Mr. Starling snorted contemptuously.

"He's easy pleased," put in Mrs. Starling, whose simple honest face spoke of a life by no means free from anxieties. "He just lived for his job. We've had our troubles, mind you, but I always say, as long as you're a good Christian, work hard, and pay your way, you won't have much to regret afterwards."

"On Thursday night Mr. Starling was guest of honor at a dinner given at the Bung and Wattle Hotel by the Vulcan office staff. He was presented with a smokers' stand, a token of the esteem in which he is held by fellow employees. From the firm itself he received an eight-day clock. Presentation of this latter was made personally by Mr. Gaylord, senior partner of the Vulcan Company, who left an important

function at Menzies specially in order to make the run out to Brighton. In a happy little speech, Mr. Gaylord referred with satisfaction to the growing spirit of co-operation between the employing and employed classes. He said that the time had come when men of the stamp of Mr. Starling were rightly recognised as the backbone of any civilised community. Mr. Starling had carried out with commendable efficiency his modest part in raising the Vulcan Company to the position of eminence which it occupied today. It was a matter for regret that the company had to retire such a man at an age when his ability was still unimpaired. Unfortunately, modern conditions demanded that some concession be made to the claims of advancing youth."

Mr. Starling let the paper sink on to his knees and blinked at his wife. "Well, Susie, I never thought I'd live to see that in the paper!"

"It's lovely! Let me see. I want to read it myself."

"Wait a minute —."

Mrs. Starling threw up her hands. "My God! Just look at him, Dick! He's that pleased he can't let it out of his sight."

Dick's expression was now openly contemptuous. "Doesn't it say what the important function was that Mr. Gaylord had to leave?"

"No. Why should it?"

"There's a good reason why it shouldn't! It was a meeting of the board of directors of the Vulcan. They announced a profit for the year of £13,000. A 12 per cent.

dividend. It was in this morning's *Daily Froth*."

"That Communist talk again —," began Mr. Starling resentfully.

The young man gave a gesture of despair. "But, man alive, can't you see? Thirteen thousand pounds profit! Twelve per cent. dividend! Forty-five years of your life! And you're still paying rent! And Gaylord practically owns that rag of a paper —."

"Mr. Gaylord's a gentleman! He shook hands with me — in front of everybody! Told me I'd been a credit to the firm —."

"God help you!" Dick rested his head against the back of the chair and closed his eyes. His features were twisted as if he were enduring physical pain. He did not speak again, although his parents waited expectantly for several seconds.

Later that same night Mr. Starling looked up from the book he had been reading for the past hour.

"You ought to read this one yourself, Susie, before you take it back. It's a great yarn."

"I don't like them nigger stories."

"You'd like this one. By cripes, it's an eye-opener!"

"Is that the one you were talking about the other night? Where they tricked the niggers away to work in the plantations?"

"Yes. And there's a bit at the bottom of one of the pages what says it's nearly all true. They get them to sign up to work for years just by dangling a string of beads

in front of them. The poor coots don't know what they're signing."

"But I thought they have to give them money."

"So they have. But the niggers don't know what money's worth. And the plantation owners get it all back off them in exchange for a lot of rubbish at the end of the contract. Listen to this bit. It's in the last chapter. It's telling how one of the niggers comes back to his village after working five years in the plantations —."

"Not until sunset of the second day did Tiarka reach Nawambee. In that mysterious way characteristic of the larger islands, news of his arrival at the port had gone before him, and all the village was out waiting for him. A great roar of welcome and excitement went up as he came over the brow of the hill. Tiarka saw the crowd in the clearing string out towards him, with all the pot-bellied children scampering in the lead. And his simple heart swelled with pride. Aye, it was going to be well worth those five years! This was a good beginning. Were they not ALL waiting for him? Not just Dirana his mother, Mamaiki his father, and old Molonka, but — EVERYBODY! Even Olongla, the headman. One couldn't mistake his gigantic figure. He had not moved, as befitted his rank. But there he was, outside the central hut, waiting and watching. And only for the return of humble Tiarka, who had gone away five years ago to work for the white

man. . . . Yes, a great moment, indeed! In his excitement Tiarka had quickened his pace to a trot, but a grunt from far behind reminded him of the black wretch who had contracted to carry half his goods up from the port in return for a lead pencil and a box of matches.

"Hi there! Hurry! These are my people. Am I to come amongst them with but one bundle after five years of toil?"

"With an effort the laborer caught up with his black master, and a minute later the two travellers were amongst the yelping vanguard of the villagers. Tiarka strode through them contemptuously. Five years is a long time, and he remembered none of them. It was the older ones he wanted. THEY would know how to admire! Girls whom he had left as flat-chested brats — they would be women now. Vanina, for instance; she must be 17. And old Manuka her father, was a man of his word. He would have kept her. Besides, cunning devil that he was! — he would know well what would be the manner of Tiarka's return. Yes, indeed, there he is — Manuka himself!

"Hi, Manuka!"

"Aye, a grand moment! They are all here. Dirana and Mamauki, and Molonka; and old Manuka, and Vanina oggling at his side. And everybody else, excepting only the headman. And they're all talking at once, and laughing, and prodding him, and saying what a fine

man he has grown into. And what fine bundles he has brought back. Yes, what fine bundles! But Tiarka, after a short round of jests and greetings, pushes them all off and elbows his way to the front for the march back to the village. But wait — the other bundle, Tiarka?

Yes, yes, let Mamauki carry it now. The laborer may return to the port. Another grand moment! Tiarka paying a servant his hire and dismissing him, just like a white man!

"But here is the village, and grand old Olongla, hungry of eye, and prinked out in all the panoply of office, advancing to meet him. Greetings from the headman himself! Yes, thou hast become a fine man, indeed, Tiarka! But — the bundles? Yes, yes, the bundles. Open them. Open them now! Who said the white man was not generous? All this for but five years' work — with, mark you, five years' food thrown in! Look — these blankets — feel them! Was there ever the like? Four blankets, and two of them for Olongla. Yes, by God, two for Olongla! That's how big Tiarka has become just by working five years for the white man. And these beads — watch over them, Dirana! Yes, one string for Vanina, but Vanina only. Give her the green one. Tomorrow, perhaps, there will be another. Eh, Manuka? But put them away now, Dirana. And now look again! Remember the cloth the trader used to give us for the little stones we found up in the

mountains? Well — there now — feast your eyes! Enough to make a sarong for every wench in the village. Hi! Stop them, Dirana! That was just a way of putting it. Think you Tiarka's mad? The cloth is worth money — many moons' work. Take good care of it, Dirana. Tomorrow we will talk with Manuka. Eh, Manuka? No, don't look at the knife, you old rogue! Not even Vanina is worth that! Why, it's brand new, even to a case to keep it in. It's a fact; doesn't it still shine? Even the ticket is still on it. Made by the great Woolworth himself! Yes, by God, that was the name! The white man told me. Woolworth — the cunning old warrior who now makes weapons for all the great warriors in the country of the white man. And with the knife there comes also the white man's blessing. "Take it, Tiarka," he said, "but for two pounds. And may the spirit of the mighty Woolworth himself enter into thy young arm!"

"Aye, a fine and noble man, that white man! All these things but for five years' work. Wait — did I say ALL? But you've seen nothing yet. There is the clock! This, mark you, should be for the eyes of only the headman himself. But it is, indeed, a day of days, and Tiarka, no less than Olongla, can be magnanimous. Here, this one. Let me open it. Why, the box itself is worth many moons' work. No, hands off! That is for Dirana. She

alone will know how to value such a thing. Now the clock. Did you ever imagine to see the like in this village? Mark how it shines. Why, one can see one's face in the side! And the tick — yes, it ticks! —listen! Hear that, Olongla? And now watch; and listen again. Watch Tiarka with all your eyes. He just turns the little handle. And now this one. See the little spears move? Listen! By Christ, you never heard the like of it! A bell will ring — an invisible bell — there now! No, don't run away! Tiarka is holding it. And Tiarka can stop it at will. See? And now again — and stop! Tiarka's clock, eh? And believe it or not, the white man gave it to me for nothing. Aye, for nothing! "Take it, Tiarka," he said. "You have been a great worker, a good boy. My king is pleased with you." And — are you listening? I will tell you everything, even if you laugh at me and call me a liar. The white man patted me on the back. Yes, with his own hand he patted me on the back! In front of everybody! "Tiarka," he said — "

Mr. Starling came to a sudden stop and glared at his son.

"What are you gasping at?"

"Was I gasping?"

"Well, what are you grinning at?"

"God pity you!" exclaimed the young man, and, rising, he walked out of the room without as much as a backward glance.

THE END.

WAKEFIELD BY-ELECTION

Joan Taylor

This article arrived from South Australia too late for publication in our February issue, but in view of the significant and instructive analysis it presents, we now publish it below.

THE voting in Wakefield has caused widespread astonishment and not a little dismay." So the reactionary Adelaide "Advertiser" commented on the defeat of Mr. Butler. "The polling represents a stinging rebuke to the Lyons-Page government," said Mr. Curtin, and even the "Advertiser" had to admit the truth of this statement.

Butler resigned the State premiership to contest the by-election. He and his supporters regarded it as a walkover, and to them Butler was as good as included in the Federal Cabinet. It is probable that direct B.H.P. influence was behind this move, the idea being to strengthen the tottering Lyons government by the inclusion of Butler, who has so faithfully and efficiently served the B.H.P. while head of the State government.

But Butler and the U.A.P. received a very rude shock. Basing his campaign on support for the Lyons-Page government, Butler found the mass of the electorate opposed to him. The by-election itself was made necessary by the death of Mr. Hawker in the "Kyeema" crash, for which the government's bungling was responsible. Lyons' National Insurance Act, vigorously supported

by Butler, aroused intense hostility among the farmers and small business people who make up the majority of the electors of Wakefield. They can see no benefit in this sort of insurance which insures them against nothing. The Lyons-Page wheat relief scheme, passed during the campaign, does nothing to fundamentally alter the burden of debt which threatens to overwhelm the wheat farmers in the poorer and marginal areas. At the same time, substantial additions to the cost of living have followed immediately on the rise of flour prices.

Defence policy was not made a very prominent issue of the by-election. The Labor Party stressed its opposition to compulsory military training, but presented no real alternative to the Lyons-Page policy, restricting criticism to technical matters and to methods of financing defence works.

Mr. Butler's advocacy of compulsory training, however, added to his unpopularity, as could be expected in a State where the anti-conscription majorities in 1916 and 1917 were, except for N.S.W., the high-est in Australia.

It is significant that no Ministers of the Federal government took part

in Butler's campaign, although earlier it had been announced that Lyons would do so. The presence of Ministers of the disrupted, squabble-torn U.A.P.-C.P. Cabinet would hardly have helped Butler. So they kept away. When Lyons did appear in Adelaide soon after the election to help speed up the recruiting campaign, he was met by a sullen audience and frequent hostile interjections, which ceased only after a dozen men had been removed from the hall by the police.

Towards the end of the campaign it became obvious that the already large opposition to the Lyons government was growing rapidly. Butler accordingly changed his chief slogan to the need to "strengthen South Australian representation" in the government party at Canberra. After the election, the local reactionaries did not hesitate to say that the record of Lyons and his squabbling Cabinet had been too great a burden for the reactionary ex-Premier to carry. The defeat in Wakefield dealt another and a major blow at the prestige of the Lyons-Page government. It showed clearly that Lyons, Page and Menzies have no longer any mandate to speak for the Australian people.

The Wakefield electorate contains more than 50,000 electors. Over 150,000 square miles in area, it extends from the borders of Queensland and N.S.W. to within five miles north of Adelaide. The greater part of this huge area is sparsely populated, divided into huge sheep

stations, most of them under the control of the big pastoral-finance companies. Most of the population of the electorate is concentrated in the southern part. The pastoral country gives place to marginal wheat-growing lands, dependent on the caprices of the seasons, and worked by farmers who often cannot make ends meet. These areas again give place to wheat farms in assured rainfall country, fruit and wine lands and the rich mixed farms of the hill districts and the lower Adelaide plains. In the east are the fruit blocks of the Murray irrigation areas around Renmark.

The largest town in the electorate is Gawler, with a population of less than 5000. There is little industry apart from rail transport, wine making, the State abattoirs, and a small woollen mill, the whole accounting for only a few thousand workers. In addition, there are some thousands of rural workers. A very large proportion of the electors are farmers and business people.

The well-settled areas of the south are traditionally conservative. Ever since Federation, Wakefield has been held by the conservative candidate. Since the U.A.P. candidate, Hawker, won by a majority of 13,605 from the Labor candidate in October, 1937, Butler had some reason for believing himself as good as at Canberra when he resigned to contest the by-election a year later.

The defeat of the U.A.P. candidate in such an electorate as Wakefield was a clear vote of no-confi-

dence in the Lyons-Page government. If further proof were needed that this was the chief meaning of the vote, it is to be seen in the way the votes were cast against Butler. As compared with 1937, the U.A.P. lost 12,582 votes, or 24 per cent. of the total; the A.L.P. gained 1.3 per cent.; the Independent polled 11,292 votes, almost all of which had been cast for the U.A.P. a year before. Of these Independent primary votes, no less than 9356, or 83 per cent., gave the second preference to the A.L.P. This means that over 9000 voters gave up their support of the U.A.P. even as a second preference.*

Part of this huge swing away from re-action can be accounted for by the considerable personal prestige of Hawker, as against the decided unpopularity of Butler, unpopularity based on his record of vigorous support for the big monopoly interests at the same time as he has neglected the problems of the farmers.

The Labor Party chose Mr. S. McHugh as its candidate. A wheat grower in a marginal area, McHugh could appeal directly to the many wheatgrowers of the electorate, as well as to the thousands of other small producers. In addition, he had been State representative for Burra, part of Wakefield, for six years. While those electors who broke away from the U.A.P. gave their first preference, in the main, to the Independent, they gave their

* Over 28,000 voters gave Butler their last preference. Thus the slogan, "Put Butler Last," raised in the Communist Party's election leaflet, thousands of which were distributed throughout Wakefield, was realised.

second preferences to the Labor Party, partly because the Labor candidate, being one of themselves, was more likely to appreciate their problems than Butler, the U.A.P. agent of big financial and industrial interests. This is another illustration that the closer the Labor Party gets to the people in the sense of listening to their problems, of taking a real interest in them, the greater support will it receive. In electorates where farmers predominate, the logical representative will usually be one of themselves. This point was not lost on the conservatives, who selected as their candidate to replace Butler in the State sphere, a very well-known local grazier who made "a local farmer as your representative" one of his rallying points.

The Independent candidate, Mr. P. H. Quirke, is a returned soldier fruit blocker from Renmark. Mr. Quirke is not a political freelancer. He is connected with the group which at the State elections last year won six seats as "Independents," including the Chaffey (Renmark) seat. This "Independent" group, which has connections with the Victorian Country Party, appears likely to develop into a country party based on the small producers. Many points of its programme are progressive and should be supported by the Labor Party as points for co-operation.

Quirke's campaign was centred in Renmark and other fruit areas. In Renmark sub-division he received 44 per cent. of the poll, gaining 1803 votes

from the U.A.P., and 184 from the A.L.P. There was a 4 per cent. larger poll in this sub-division compared with a 2 per cent. poll over the whole electorate. This fact and the considerable support for Quirke followed on agitation and organisation in the irrigation areas about the problem of drainage. This has been strongly supported by McGillivray, Independent State representative for the area. Quirke received good support in most fruit-growing districts, somewhat less among the wheat farmers, but little in the pastoral areas.

The Independent polled less in the sub-divisions where workers are relatively more numerous. In the four sub-divisions of Gawler, Northfield (abat-toirs), Terowie and Peterborough (rail), the A.L.P. polled 53.5 per cent. (49 per cent. in 1937), the U.A.P., 30.5 per cent. (51 per cent.) and the Independent, 16 per cent. In these sub-divisions there was a 6 per cent. larger poll than in 1937. Most of the extra votes went to the Labor Party. It would seem that the workers have become more conscious of the need to defeat reaction, and that their influence has been felt, particularly in these sub-divisions.

In the wheat areas, most of which are in fair to good rainfall country, the U.A.P. retained 44 per cent. of the primary votes, compared with 29 per cent. over the whole electorate. The A.L.P. gained slightly. There was a 4 per cent. smaller vote in these areas than in the whole electorate. In view of the Labor candidate's strong criticism of the Lyons-Page relief scheme, his failure to gain more support can be explained by the fact that the Government's scheme does actually benefit some wheat growers in the areas of high yields.

In Butler's stronghold, the State electorate of Light, the U.A.P. gained 51 per cent. of the primary votes, compared with 71 per cent. in 1937. The sub-divisions composing Light are Kapunda and Eudunda, wealthy old-established wine, wheat and mixed farming districts, settled by farmers and workers, of whom a large proportion are of German descent. These areas are hotbeds of Nazi activity, although we do not suggest that the majority of the German settlers and their families are Nazis or Nazi sympathisers. Within the Kapunda sub-divisions are the headquarters of Nazi leader, Dr. Becker; and it can be easily understood that this local Fuehrer would not be directing his cohorts to achieve a Labor victory.

In October, 1937, the A.L.P. polled 29 per cent. of the Light votes. In the Wakefield by-election this fell to 27.5

per cent., and the Independent polled 21.5 per cent. In the State elections last April, however, the A.L.P. polled only 515 votes of a total of over 4000, the anti-Butler vote then being split among three Independents and the Labor candidate. In the current Light by-election, the Labor Party is standing a farmer candidate, Dolling, against the L.C.P. nominee, Michael, and against Ryan, a war-time Labor renegade, who is standing as an independent, not connected with the progressive group referred to previously. As practically no Labor Party activity is carried out in Light apart from election campaigns, and little if any organisation exists there, it can hardly be expected that the reactionary will be defeated, although such is the resentment against Butler and his associates that the possibility cannot be ruled out entirely.

The result of the Wakefield by-election put new heart into the labor movement in South Australia. On all sides the result was greeted with enthusiasm, except by a few people who objected to the candidate, and appear to be unable to see the Labor Party and the labor movement as greater than persons. Very welcome as the enthusiasm and its heartening effect are, there does not appear to be any general appreciation of the real significance of the Wakefield vote. Even Mr. Curtin hailed the result as a big swing to Labor. Similar unqualified opinions have been expressed by Richards, Leader of the State Opposition, and McHugh, the newly elected Federal member. No reference is made to the Independent, and very little has been said or published in Labor Party circles to indicate a serious attempt to estimate the significance of the support for the Independent candidate.

Analysis of the voting in Wakefield shows no active general swing to the Labor Party. While it is important to note that the Labor Party has retained its position as the main rallying point of opposition to reaction and Lyons, the Independent candidate was directly supported by 11,000 voters, 23 per cent. of the electorate. Most of the voters, formerly U.A.P. supporters, only secondarily preferred the Labor candidate to Butler. To ignore the obvious conclusion that the Labor Party has not yet won the strong support of the majority of the farmers, and to claim a big swing to Labor where actually the swing has been against Lyons and Butler, will only obscure the urgent necessity for the Labor Party to pay more attention to the farmers.

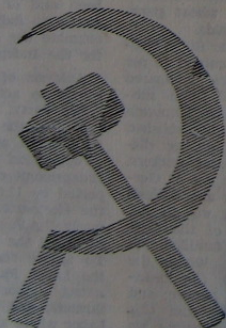
It is because the farmers are dissatisfied with the U.A.P. and its South Australian equivalent, the L.C.P., that they are looking for an alternative policy. The progressive Independent group represents a not inconsiderable movement by the small producers to defend their interests as against the big exploiters. As such this movement is the natural ally of the workers in their struggle. Whilst the Labor Party should co-operate as far as is possible on matters of common concern with the Independent groupers, the main thing is to extend and strengthen Labor Party influence and organisation in the countryside on the basis of a real understanding and championing of the interests of the country people.

The defeat of reaction in Wakefield, the defeat of the ex-Premier, was a very big blow against the State L.C.P. government now led by Playford. This government has 15 members in a Parliament of 39, and co-operation between the Labor Party with nine members, and the six Independent groupers on matters of common interest, backed by similar co-operation throughout the State, can bring about the defeat of this shaky government and pave the way to the election of a progressive State government, either a Labor government or a coalition government, and to the defeat of most of the U.A.P. candidates in the Federal sphere. The possibilities of achieving these results are indicated by

Wakefield. Whereas in 1937 the U.A.P. had majorities of the primary votes in 24 of the 28 subdivisions of Wakefield, a year later it had majorities in only seven of these, five of them together containing less than 2000 voters. In all the 12 State electorates which are contained in whole or in part in Wakefield, except in one, Light, the combined Labor and Independent votes exceeded the U.A.P.

Wakefield gives striking confirmation to the estimates of the Twelfth National Congress of the Communist Party. In particular it confirms the South Australian resolution, which begins, "The situation in South Australia is very favorable to the development of a People's Front." It proceeds to point to the widespread discontent, the disintegration of the L.C.P., the growth of the Independent movement among the farmers, the possibilities of co-operation between the Labor Party and the Independents, and the necessity for this co-operation to defeat reaction.

While welcoming the amount of co-operation between the Labor Party and the Independent in Wakefield (this was practically confined to an unofficial exchange of preferences, which was of very great value), it is necessary that, to maintain the gains over reaction in Wakefield, as well as to repeat the victory throughout Australia, much more practical everyday co-operation between all progressives must be developed.



MILESTONES IN HISTORY

The End of Tsardom

IN eight days of March, 1917, a monarchy which had maintained itself for centuries collapsed. The bourgeois revolution in Russia, which swept decadent Czardom from the face of history, took up the running from the rehearsal of 1905 and paved the way for the working-class triumph of October.

The overthrow of the regime of the feudal landlords, the Czarist bureaucracy and the military caste, was accomplished by the united action of two fundamentally opposed social movements, the Russian capitalists, and the workers and peasants.

Age-old prejudices had been uprooted in the days of 1905, and millions of workers awakened to political consciousness. The reactionary character of Czardom was revealed to all, and in the hour of its apparent triumph its doom was sealed.

No such putrifying regime could stand up to the severe demands of an imperialist war, and the capitalists of Russia swept forward in the same historic stream as the workers and peasants to end the old order.

Threatened with starvation owing to the failure of the bread supply, weary of war which was intensifying their suffering and misery, the masses of Russia joyfully destroyed a ruling class which could no longer rule.

Starting in Petrograd, a mighty strike movement rapidly spread.

Regiments of soldiers sent to suppress the strikers joined the revolt, and the Czar was forced to abdicate. Attempts to set up another monarchy were swept aside, and a Provisional Government assembled from the capitalist Duma parties.

It was the capitalists of Russia, concerned with continuing the war in a more efficient way to satisfy their imperialistic appetites and those of their Allies, who gained power with the abdication of the Czar, but it was the mass movement of the workers and peasants which dealt the rotten regime its death blow.

Out of the revolutionary crisis accelerated by the war, then, emerged two governments, the "official" administration of the Russian capitalists, supported by corrupted sections of the labor movement, and the Soviets, resting on the authority of the vast majority of the Russian people.

Installed in office, the capitalist parties sought to undermine the Soviets, but the pressure of the exuberant masses made it impossible. Failing to win bread, peace and freedom from the Provisional Government, the workers moved rapidly to the left, the Bolsheviks gained control in the Soviets, and the revolution of the people was consummated in November.



From "Low's Political Parade," Cresset Press, London, 1936.

ENGELS AT MARX'S GRAVE

(Speech delivered at Highgate cemetery, London, March 17, 1883.)

ON the 14th of March, at a quarter to three in the afternoon, the greatest living thinker ceased to think. He had been left alone for scarcely two minutes, and when we came back we found him in an armchair, peacefully gone to sleep—but forever.

An immeasurable loss has been sustained, both by the militant proletariat of Europe and America, and by historical science, in the death of this man. The gap that has been left by the death of this mighty spirit will soon enough make itself felt.

Just as Darwin discovered the law of evolution in organic nature, so Marx discovered the law of evolution in human history; he discovered the simple fact, hitherto concealed by an overgrowth of ideology, that mankind must first of all eat and drink, have shelter and clothing, before it can pursue politics, science, religion, art, etc.; and that therefore the production of the immediate material means of subsistence, and consequently the degree of economic development attained by a given people or during a given epoch, form the foundation upon which the State institutions, the legal conceptions, the art and even the religious ideas of the people concerned have been evolved, and in the light of which these things must therefore be explained, instead of *vice versa*, as had hitherto been the case.

But that is not all. Marx also discovered the special law of motion governing the present-day capitalist mode of production and the bourgeois society that this mode of production has created. The discovery of surplus value suddenly threw light on the problem in trying to solve which all previous investigators, both bourgeois economists and Socialist critics, had been groping in the dark.

Two such discoveries would be enough for one lifetime. Happy the man to whom it is granted to make even one such discovery. But in every field which Marx investigated—and he investigated very many fields, none of them superficially—in every field, even in that of mathematics, he made independent discoveries.

Such was the man of science. But this was not even half the man. Science was for Marx a historically dynamic, revolutionary force. However great the joy with which he welcomed a new discovery in some theoretical science whose practical application perhaps it was yet quite impossible to envisage, he experienced quite another kind of joy when the discovery involved immediate revolutionary changes in industry and in the general course of history. For example, he followed closely the development of the discoveries made in the field of electricity, and recently those of Marcel Deprez.

For Marx was before all else a revolutionary. His real mission in life was to contribute in one way or another to the overthrow of capitalist society and of the State institutions which it had brought into being, to contribute to the liberation of the present-day proletariat, which *he* was the first to make conscious of its own position and its needs, of the conditions under which it could win its emancipation. Fighting was his element. And he fought with a passion, a tenacity and a success such as few could rival. His work on the first "Rheinische Zeitsche Zeitung" (1847), the "Neue tzung" (1842), the Paris "Vorwaerts" (1844), the Brussels "Deut-Rheinische Zeitung" (1848-49), the "New York Tribune" (1852-61), and in addition to these a host of militant pamphlets, work in revolutionary clubs in Paris, Brussels and London, and finally, crowning all, the formation of the International Working Men's Association—this

was indeed an achievement of which its founder might well have been proud, even if he had done nothing else.

And consequently Marx was the best hated and most calumniated man of this time. Governments, both absolute and republican, deported him from their territories. The bourgeoisie, whether conservative or extreme democrat, vied with one another in heaping slanders upon him. All this he brushed aside as though it were cobweb, ignoring it, answering only when necessity compelled him. And now he has died—beloved, revered and mourned by millions of revolutionary fellow-workers—from the mines of Siberia to California, in all parts of Europe and America—and I make bold to say that though he may have many opponents he has hardly one personal enemy.

His name will endure through the ages, and so also will his work!

Marx's Tribute to British Workers

ON January 28, 1862, Marx wrote to the Vienna "Presse" concerning the results in Britain of the blockade by the Northern States of the slave States in the American Civil War:—

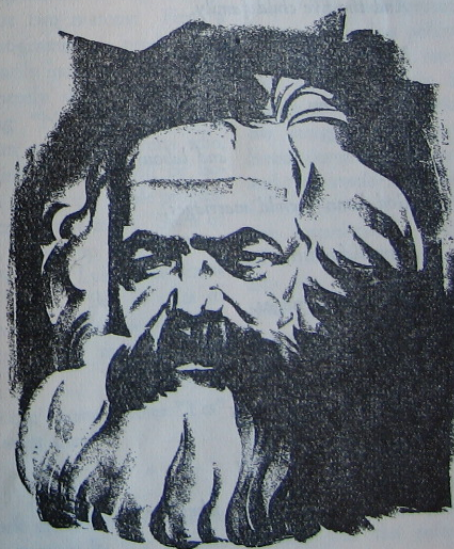
"The misery that the stoppage of the factories and the shortening of the labor time, *motivated* by the blockade of the slave States, has produced among the workers in the

northern districts is incredible and in daily process of growth. The other component parts of the working class do not suffer to the same extent; but they suffer severely from the reaction of the crisis in the cotton industry on the remaining branches of production, from the curtailment of the export of their own products to the north of America in consequence of the Morrill

tariff and from the annihilation of this export to the south in consequence of the blockade. At the present moment, English interference in America has accordingly become a bread-and-butter question for the working class. Moreover, no means of inflaming its wrath against the United States is scorned by its 'natural superiors.' The sole great and widely circulating workers' organ still existing, *Reynolds' Weekly Newspaper*, has been purchased expressly in order that for six months it might reiterate weekly in raging diatribes the *caeterum censeo* of English intervention. The working class is accordingly fully conscious that the government is only waiting for the intervention cry from below, the

pressure from without, to put an end to the American blockade and English misery. Under these circumstances, the obstinacy with which the working class keeps silent, or breaks its silence only to raise its voice against intervention and for the United States, is admirable. This is a new, brilliant proof of the indestructible excellence of the English popular masses, of that excellence which is the secret of England's greatness and which, to speak in the hyperbolic language of Mazzini, made the common English soldier seem a demi-god during the Crimean War and the Indian insurrection."

By a striking analogy, Marx's tribute may be handed on to the Port Kembla watersiders today.



FOURTEENTH OF MARCH

117 years ago Marx,

115 years ago Engels,

Yes sir, yes sir,

O.K. professor.

Shoot the reds down,

Shoot up the whole bloody town.

O fellers, the beauty of the

Total,

totalitarian bloody state!

And the five child family.

Not to mention the sanctity

Of the home,

and labour pains.

God-damn 5 child marriages,

5 small fascisti,

In 5 baby carriages.

117 years ago Marx,

115 years ago Engels,

What the hell fellers,

what the red hell?

"SHOULD WE JOIN THE MILITIA?"

L. Harry Gould

Getting Down to Bedrock on the Defence Problem.

IT would be very pleasant to be able to give a simple "Yes" or "No" to this question. The politics of the class struggle, however, are too complex to permit so direct an answer.

If we were to answer "Yes," and leave it go at that, we should then be supporting Lyons in what we insist is not really a defence plan. On the other hand, to reply "No" without any qualification would be a mistake for two reasons: First, a defence programme is needed, and this necessarily includes trained men. Second, merely shaking our heads and saying "No" does not stop Lyons from enlisting recruits who, in such circumstances, will be isolated from us and the whole progressive democratic movement. Some of those who joined up have told us: "We don't trust Lyons; we know what he's up to. But in spite of that, we enlisted because we feel that the country needs men who are trained."

So if we can't answer either "Yes" or "No," what then?

* * *

Let's work up to what I consider is the correct reply by first examin-

ing a few other illustrative Labor problems.

Take the period when Lang was practically undisputed leader of the N.S.W. Labor Party, and recall the points of confusion then. Communists called for a *strengthening of the A.L.P.* Said some people: "But if we strengthen the A.L.P. we're simply strengthening Langism."

This was a mistaken attitude. By the term *strengthening* we meant only: The development of a militant working-class policy within the ranks of the A.L.P., one that would root out the corrupt bureaucratic "inner group" domination, organise the struggles of the people for bread, democratic liberty and peace, and that would seek unity with the Communists and all other progressive organisations. It meant in effect the *weakening* and eventually the eradication of Langism from Labor affairs.

A second example, the trade unions. (Readers are warned that these are only examples, that "analogies limp." There are many differences between a trade union, the basic class organisation of the workers, and the standing army of capitalism!) "Should revolutionary workers join the reformist trade

unions?" Yes, said Lenin. They must do so in order to wrest control away from the reformist leaders. When the militants joined those unions, and swelled the number of members, they did not thereby strengthen the non-militant leadership. The exact reverse, in fact.

A third example. "Should Communists enter the civil service?" Again to answer "Yes" and nothing else would mean that we accept and support the government in everything it plans and does. To reply in the negative would mean that, well—the capitalist class may have a completely free hand in this sphere so far as we're concerned. "We prefer to ignore the issue." (!) *But we can't ignore it.*

Communist policy in regard to these cases—also to parliament, municipal councils and, indeed, any and all institutions—has long ago been defined and understood.

We become members of a reformist trade union in order to transform it from an organisation which offers no opposition to the oppressive rule of the boss class to one which wages resolute struggle against capitalism.

We put candidates into parliament not to strengthen and perpetuate capitalist exploitation through parliament, but to inject working-class politics into parliament, to make that institution become as far as it is possible within the framework of capitalism a medium of beneficial legislation for the people.

Communists and their supporters who take up the civil service as their

vocation are not just "civil servants." They are civil servants *plus* class understanding and class activity among their fellows, neighbors and friends.

Recently we have witnessed Communists becoming members of non-Socialist governments, in Spain and China. No one will pretend to believe that they are there to strengthen and perpetuate capitalism. In normal times, Communists would refuse to become such Cabinet members. To do so would be to sanction capitalist oppression, and to accept responsibility for the general policy of capitalism. Everyone will agree that it was correct in the present circumstances for Communists to join, as they did, the government organs of the two countries mentioned.

Every question has to be decided concretely, on the basis of the objective situation and the precise class content and relationship at the given moment.

An Australian worker who has fallen for the "patriotic" ballyhoo of Lyons and Menzies is an unconscious tool for militarism and imperialist aggression. The same worker given a sufficient class understanding becomes, even though in military uniform, a fighter for working-class democracy against the fascists, within and without the country.

* * *

And so we come to the heart of the matter, and to the reply to the workers' inquiry: "Should we join the militia?"

Refusing to join (as is the case with the overwhelming majority), or joining (as in the case of the others) must be connected up with the advancing of the class struggle against capitalism and the capitalist government.

Concretely:

If workers come to us for advice, we explain the nature of the recruiting drive, what and who are behind it, how the real defence of the country must be organised. We emphasise that for such a defence, the enemies within must be fought against, and that they must be driven out of office.

The present recruiting campaign does not contribute towards defence, and therefore we oppose it.

If workers insist upon enlisting even though they realise the untrustworthiness of Lyons and his colleagues, then we urge them to remember their working-class background, and that class solidarity, with all that it implies, remains the surest guarantee of defence of Australia from the fascists.

Finally, to those who say to us: "We believe all you say about Lyons as the rich man's government, and we're not going to join up"—we reply:

"That is good, but it isn't enough! We can't just say 'No' and forget the matter. We must explain in a genuine political manner just why we refuse. Refusing to join up ourselves, but giving Lyons a free hand with those who have fallen for his

dope, may be almost as bad as getting into uniform ourselves and asking no questions."

Make the joining and the non-joining a basis for democratic action! The recruiting campaign cannot be ignored.

Let us make it a battleground for action for democracy and peace. Whatever happens in society interests the Communists.

* * *

The test of all plans and theories is *action*. The following account from the "Workers' Weekly" of January 17, 1939, describes how this problem was tackled in actual life. My little speech expresses, I think, the correct attitude. Notice the circumstances—the recruiters, the crowd, the militiamen and the Communists. There was no time for abstract theorising then. *One had to be concrete:*

SPEECH TO MILITIA

The recruiters brought along a detachment of militiamen, who afterwards stated that they had no desire to come.

Harry Gould addressed them:

"I'd join you fellows tomorrow if the government were an honest one, and really trying to defend Australia.

"But they're only defending the profits of the rich.

"We don't blame you a bit for joining up. But remember, we're all sons of the working class, and we mustn't let those fakers up above use our patriotic feelings to betray us.

"Those men who are sending war material to Japan should be impeached for treason."

He called for "three cheers for the militiamen, and three boos for Lyons."

Wasn't the line we took that night the correct one?

EARLY DAYS IN W. A.—II.

W. Watson

WHEN Norcott tried forcibly to take back the biscuit, Yagan, having no sense of inferiority, resented it, and to use his spear was as natural as the punching of a nose is between one gentleman and another. The public spirit of Yagan, his enterprise and influence among his tribesmen, was shown when he, on the arrival by ship of some more natives, five in number, from Albany, arranged to hold a joint corroboree, and at dusk one evening they entertained the citizens of Perth by a corroboree depicting the hunting and killing of a kangaroo, and necromantic dances. At the end of the ceremony, after entertaining the people of Perth, they were accorded the privilege to sleep in the yard for the night. The next day, one Munday got into a matrimonial mix-up in which Munday, his wife and another colored lady were rather badly injured, and the three of them were taken to the hospital. This incident is worthy of note because the "Perth Gazette" in reporting the affair said that Munday's concern for his wife showed such a splendid example of affection that "it was worthy of imitation."

In April, a man from Tasmania, while driving a cart on the Canning, saw some unoffending natives, and in order to show how they did things in Tasmania, shot one of them and killed him and later on natives who were seen breaking into a store were fired on and some died.

These two murders of blackmen infuriated Yagan, who burned under the insult to his tribesmen, and he told a settler's servant that he was going to kill two whitemen. Soon after three carts were going through the bush, the third cart being some way behind. Two men named Yelvick were in charge of the third cart when some natives appeared, among them Yagan, Midgegooroo, Miju, and Munday, the man who had been so interested in his sick wife.

The party closely examined the carts and seemed curious about the third one. Midgegooroo asked questions and the party disappeared. The third cart in which were the Yelvicks was at the same spot as the cart which the Tasmanian had driven when he shot the blackman.

Yagan's party surrounded the cart and the two men were killed. The Governor offered a reward of £30 for Yagan, dead or alive, and £20 each for Midgegooroo and Munday. Armed parties went out and one party saw Midgegooroo in the bush playing with his five-year-old son. Midgegooroo was not expecting pursuit and was surrounded, leaving him no chance to escape; he called for Yagan in vain.

He was taken to Perth and without a trial the magistrate read a death warrant; he was pinioned and blind-folded, tied to the prison door and at a signal from the Governor a party from the 63rd regiment at

six paces fired a volley and Midgegooroo fell dead. Commenting on this act of British justice the "Perth Gazette" said: "The feeling generally expressed was that of satisfaction at what had taken place, and in some cases of loud and vehement exhalation which, in view of the solemnity of the scene, a fellow being, although a native, launched into eternity, ought to have been suppressed."

Many natives were shot down by whites, although some recognised the sequence of events that led up to the murders by Midgegooroo.

A white man and a black man were shot and Yagan again came into the scene. Mr. Moore at Guildford met a party of natives and among them he saw Mig and Munday with Yagan standing well back. When he was recognised he came forward and said, "Yes, Yagan, Fremantle man kill Domjuin. Two black men have been killed and I will kill two white men." This was Yagan's explanation of the man being shot from the dray and of Domjuin killed at the store. Mr. Moore explained that Domjuin stole and was shot and that if a blackman stole he was shot as was a whiteman if he stole. Whereat Yagan replied: "Whiteman shoot Domjuin, Yagan brother; Yagan shoot whiteman far away."

Mr. Moore then told the party that all whitemen were brothers. This was too thin for the aborigines, who are very quick at sizing up real conditions, and they joined in chorus, "No! No! No! No!"

Mr. Moore then said, "Whiteman brother all the same," but the retort was not strong enough to elicit a reply. The lion and the lamb theory was then put forward in pidgin English and all the natives except Yagan rushed forward to shake hands. Yagan knew that the theory could only become practicable by having a new lamb for breakfast every morning. However, much more was in Yagan's mind for he stepped forward, placed one hand on Mr. Moore's shoulder and addressed him, looking earnestly into his face as he did so. He spoke in his native tongue and Mr. Moore could not understand him, but said that he sensed what he said was: "You came to our country, you have driven us from our haunts and have disturbed us in our occupations. As we walk in our country we are fired on by you. Why should whitemen treat us so?"

Mr. Moore said that the manner of delivery was like a chorus in a Greek tragedy; the others seemed to be acting in support of Yagan. They wanted to know about Midgegooroo and Yagan said, "White man shoot Midgegooroo, kill three white men." Moore replied and Yagan, scowling a look of daring defiance, turned on his heel and went into the bush. Yagan visited a farmer friend and told his wife that he knew the names of those who were present at the death of Midgegooroo.

The farmer's wife was alarmed but Yagan reassured her and told her that he would kill a "soldier's man."

BATTLE OF PINJARRA

In 1834, trouble with natives moved to the Murray River District occupied by a tribe named Kalyuts.

Many robberies occurred, and two white men were killed. On July 15, a Mr. Barron with his servant Nesbit, and two blackmen, went to Peel's place to exchange a horse. They were joined by nineteen other natives and the party set off to search for the horse they needed. Barron dismounted to examine tracks—why he did so when the blacks could have told him about them with scarcely an effort is not stated—and some of the natives, unable to resist an easy target, speared Barron while he was stooping, and also mortally wounded Nesbit.

Out of these events grew the circumstances that led up to the Battle of Pinjarra, the one and only pitched battle fought in Western Australia. In October, Captain Ellis took a body of police to arrest Noongar and the other Kalyuts concerned in the attack on Barron and Nesbit. Governor Stirling, who was visiting Peel, joined up with the party, which was twenty-five strong, all armed and mounted. They came up with the Kalyuts, and Stirling tried to get an interview. The yelling of the blacks was so loud that no one could hear anything else, so that after manoeuvring for position, Captain Ellis's force came up to seventy armed natives, who began to retreat.

The order was given, and the horsemen darted among the natives,

among whom were recognised some of the wanted men. Our language had not yet had a chance to develop for Mr. Norcott exclaimed: "There are the fellows we want, for there is that rascal, Noongar," whereat Noongar replied, "Yes, me Noongar," and raised his spear to throw, but Norcott shot him dead. The first shot, and the yells of the natives, brought in Stirling and his force.

It was a critical moment for the Kalyuts, who were confounded on seeing the second party. Some of the Kalyuts were in the river and some were scrambling up the banks. A fusilade killed some and the cross-fire gave them no chance to rally; they hid in river banks and among shrubbery, and some of them fought back, but were shot down, and the white force potted the rest in their hiding places. About thirty were killed, and some may have been carried away by the river and not accounted for. Some women and children were mixed up with the fighting and were killed. Half the men of the tribe were dead, and the rest were addressed by Governor Stirling who told them that if any more white men were killed the force would return and destroy them all, men, women and children.

The prisoners were set free after the lecture. Captain Ellis who was hit by a spear and fell from his horse died of wounds and P. Heffron, a policeman, was badly wounded but recovered. It is recorded that no more trouble was made by the Kalyuts for many years after the Battle of Pinjarra.

In January, 1835, a child was lost in the bush and did not come home that night, so Mr. Norcott with two white men and two natives, Molly-dobbin and Mogo, set out at four o'clock next morning. The black men tracked the child for four miles along the bush where he had turned into the bush, made a circuit of four hundred yards and continued his journey along the beach, where he was found lying down with the water lapping his legs. Mr. Norcott galloped up; the child awoke and rose to meet him. The joy and delight of the trackers was beyond description, so pleased were they at finding the child safe and sound, just in the nick of time. The trackers had walked twenty-two miles in ten hours with their eyes to the ground and always alert. Sometimes the track was hard to follow, but the black men held on to their task until it ended in the discovery of the child.

Mr. Norcott could but applaud the noble work of the savages.

In tribal life true brotherhood existed in the marriage group, and all the children were sons and daughters of all the men and women in the group. Father, mother, sister, brother, son, and daughter, are not relationships created by the monogamic system, rather have they been debased by it. The lost child was their concern as much as it was that of its own family.

Mr. Norcott applauded the noble disposition of the savage, and we have no doubt he felt very pompous, superior and patronising; but the black men shared the food that was

available; none robbed another of a share in what was going; none starved and none was exploited.

It was our system of the exploitation of man by man that predestined the native races to extinction. With the best intentions in the world nothing could save them under the social system that was imposed upon them and in a century that system would reduce thousands of the working classes to a condition that the natives had never known—starvation in the midst of plenty.

MASSACRE OF LAKE MINNINUP

The natives of the South of W.A., or King George's Sound, had received the early settlers very peaceably, and appear to have accepted dual occupation of the country as quite in the natural order of things, so that when in 1838 they began to steal and to kill stock, the settlers were alarmed and punishment of the natives for small offences grew into reprisals until, as had happened around Perth, at York and Pinjarra, a black man was killed in the interests of law and order. This led to the inevitable operation of age-old tribal customs: a man had died, and some one had to be killed to square the matter. On February 22, 1841, a settler named George Layman of Wonerup was short of flour, when a native named Quibean, by a ruse, obtained some from one of Layman's servants. He was so incensed on hearing of this that he caught Quibean by the beard and shook him. Whether or not the

act of pulling the beard was a breach of some code of honor among the blackmen is not stated, but Quibeau was so indignant at this treatment that he resolved to kill Layman, and biding his time, speared him, and fled to the bush. This happening stirred up the whitemen of the district, and banded them together from Wonnerup, Capel, Vasse and Blackwood. They were headed by Colonel Molloy, a veteran of the Peninsular War and Waterloo who was in command of some soldiers. The orders were to spare women and children but to kill all the men they could find. No mercy was to be shown the men. "A strong and final lesson was to be given to them." Colonel Molloy ordered his band to march, and off they went into remote places killing any blackmen they saw. A few fled the district and escaped, but the main body hid around Lake Minnipup.

The combined force of soldiers and civilians, headed by the gallant Colonel, not satisfied with the slaughter of a blackman here, and two or three there, decided to push on and wipe out the main body who, discovering that their enemy had found them, retreated in panic to a sand patch back of the lake.

Colonel Molloy saw a native boy among the rest, and riding forward, picked him up and brought him to safety. His name was Burrin and he lived in the district for forty or fifty years afterwards, a living souvenir of the massacre.

By the time the boy was rescued

the blacks were surrounded by armed, mounted men, who proceeded to wipe them out. There are no written official records of the Massacre of Lake Minnipup. None, other than stories told by natives and settlers in after years, and particularly by one Weelak, a member of a Vasse tribe.

For many years the bones of the murdered natives strewn the surface of the sand patch at Lake Minnipup.

Covered and uncovered by the shifting sand they remained witnesses to the whiteman's revenge. The remaining natives were so scared that they did not go near the place to bury their dead, and while the few members of the dying race remained, none could be induced to go near the spot that was regarded with terror, and never forgotten by them.

By the irony of fate Quibeau escaped the massacre, but another tribal custom was his undoing; he wanted another man's wife. The other's name is not recorded, but it certainly was not Seemson. He placated Quibeau, who was mighty in battle, by promising to bring "Clytemnestra" to the Banksia grove where they had met, but the cunning one went off for some settlers, who stole upon Quibeau among the Banksias, and brought him, not "Clytemnestra," but bullets. So ended Quibeau, whose offended beard led up to the Massacre of Lake Minnipup, and it is recorded that no more trouble was caused by the blackmen of King George's Sound.

QUESTION BOX

Q.—Lenin has said that, properly to understand Marx's "Capital," a comprehension of the preface to the "Critique of Political Economy" is necessary, in which Marx formulates the materialist conception of history. Comprehension of the latter, however, is in itself no light task. Thus, in the course of his formulation, Marx writes: "In broad outlines Asiatic, antique, feudal and modern bourgeois modes of production may be designated as progressive epochs in the economic formation of society." The latter three modes of production, based on slavery, serfdom and wage-labor, are well understood. But what does Marx mean by the "Asiatic" mode of production?

A.—A pertinent question, and one which has come in for much discussion in the Soviet Union. In "Capital," vol. I, pp. 392-394, Kerr edition, Marx has, in our opinion, himself provided the answer: "Those small and extremely ancient Indian communities, some of which have continued down to this day, are based on possession in common of the land, on the blending of agriculture and handicrafts, and on an unalterable division of labor, which serves, whenever a new community is started, as a plan and scheme ready cut and dried. Occupying areas of from 100 up to several thousand acres, each forms a compact whole, producing all it requires. The chief part of the products is dis-

tributed for direct use by the community itself, and does not take the form of a commodity.

Hence, production here is independent of that division of labor brought about, in Indian society as a whole, by means of the exchange of commodities. It is the surplus alone that becomes a commodity, and a portion of even that, not until it has reached the hands of the State, into whose hands from time immemorial a certain quantity of these products has found its way in the shape of rent in kind. The constitution of these communities varies in different parts of India. In those of the simplest form, the land is tilled in common, and the produce divided among the members. At the same time, spinning and weaving are carried on in each family as subsidiary industries. Side by side with the masses thus occupied with one and the same work, we find the "chief inhabitant," who is judge, police, and tax-gatherer in one; the bookkeeper who keeps the accounts of the tillage and registers everything relating thereto; another official, who prosecutes criminals, protects strangers travelling through, and escorts them to the next village; the boundary man, who guards the boundaries against neighboring communities; the water-overseer, who distributes the water from the common tanks for irrigation; the Brahmin, who conducts the religious services; the schoolmaster, who on the

and teaches the children reading and writing; the calendar-Brahmin, or astrologer, who makes known the lucky or unlucky days for seed-time and harvest, and for every other kind of agricultural work; a smith and carpenter, who make and repair all the agricultural implements; the potter, who makes all the pottery of the village; the barber, the washerman, who washes the clothes; the silversmith; here and there the poet, who in some communities replaces the silversmith; in others the schoolmaster.

This dozen of individuals is maintained at the expense of the whole community. If the population increases, a new community is founded, on the pattern of the old one, on unoccupied land. The whole mechanism discloses a systematic division of labor; but a division like that in manufactures is impossible, since the smith and the carpenter, etc., find an unchanging market, and at the most there occur, according to the sizes of the villages, two or three of each, instead of one. The law that regulates the division of labor in the community acts with the irresistible authority of a law of Nature, at the same time that each individual artificer, the smith, the carpenter, and so on, conducts in his workshop all the operations of his handicraft in the traditional way, but independently, and without recognising any authority over him. The simplicity of the organisation for production in these self-sufficing communities that constantly repro-

duce themselves in the same form, and when accidentally destroyed, spring up again on the spot and with the same name—this simplicity supplies the key to the secret of the unchangeableness of Asiatic societies, an unchangeableness in such striking contrast with the constant dissolution and refounding of Asiatic States, and the never-ceasing changes of dynasty. The structure of the economical elements of society remains untouched by the storm-clouds of the political sky."

Q.—What comment would you make on Lyons's supine refusal to summon Parliament out of recess in face of the fall of Barcelona, the increase of international tension, and his own warning that "your peace is threatened."

A.—It is on a par with the earlier approval by a landslide vote in the House of Commons of the Anglo-Italian agreement, giving Italy a free hand in Spain and the Mediterranean. Several hours earlier, a Spanish rebel trawler had shelled and sunk a British-owned freighter within sight of the Norfolk coast. "The news," reported the "Times," "had not the slightest effect upon the debate in the Commons." All these things read like obituary notices of the British Empire, and constrain us to quote the lines written a few years ago by T. S. Eliot:—

*"This is the way the world ends
This is the way the world ends
This is the way the world ends
Not with a bang but with a whimper."*

WELLSIAN ODYSSEY

G. Baracchi



H. G. Wells before the War.

I.— Mr. Wells Incites The Middle Class

H. G. WELLS has come and gone. During his brief sojourn among us it became quite fashionable for people to "confess" the radical role he had played in guiding their once conventional middle-class spirits to higher things. One must take many of these confessions with a grain of salt. The post-war intelligentsia here grew up with other literary idols than Mr. Wells. His war-time works, such as "God the Invisible King," could only influence to a worship of heaven and British imperialism, and Mr. Wells himself is not proud of them. It was only the generation that came to manhood and womanhood in the period preceding the world war that

was seriously and extensively influenced by Mr. Wells. The present writer belongs to that generation.

Born into a bourgeois family, educated at Melbourne Church of England Grammar School and Melbourne University, he would naturally require some strong stimulus if he were to extricate his mind from the clutches of capitalism. An Irish artist and an English "scientist," Shaw and Wells, provided this stimulus, pulling him one by either hand and finally pushing him along a path that led him at length to Marx and Engels, Lenin and Communism. For the inestimable service of providing a young middle-class "intellectual" with a mental

bridge from capitalism to Communism, the present writer owes a great debt of gratitude to Wells. For how many others of his kind and generation must Wells have rendered analogous services!

It may thus be not uninformative to essay a brief approach to Mr. Wells by way of the present writer's intellectual Odyssey. "In the Days of the Comet" (or some such title) was the first story by Wells he ever read, one of those early fantastic romances of which Wells wrote a series based on the discoveries and conquests of modern science, and it gave the present writer a first glimpse of a Socialist future. Before him as he writes are two other early favorites by Wells, "Mankind in the Making" and "A Modern Utopia," as well as a book containing a number of essays by various writers on "The Great State" of the future, to which Wells contributed the first essay on "The Past and the Great State." These three books sowed further seeds of Socialism in the present writer. During the same period before the war he also read: "First and Last Things," a treatise in which Wells expounds his view of life (one may not say "philosophy"), as well as his novels of social criticism "Tono Bungay," "Anne Veronica" (on the emancipation of women), "The New Machiavelli," etc. He also read "The Country of the Blind," a collection of stories of which the first gives its title to the book. As sheer story "The Country of the Blind"

("In the country of the blind the one-eyed man is king") is good. Nevertheless when, in connection with this book, Mr. Cyril Pearl of the "Daily Telegraph" essays veritably to exalt Mr. Wells as *artist* of the short story in interviewing him recently at Canberra, the unresponsiveness of the subject of the interview by itself shows that Mr. Pearl has gone too far. (Just as, some years ago, he "discovered" Norman Lindsay in the press at a time when nearly everybody else was already trying to forget him.) That Mr. Wells himself does not go far in his self-estimation as an artist is shown by his words on "my art or trade (or what you will) of an imaginative writer" in his preface to "A Modern Utopia."

But it was "First and Last Things" and "The New Machiavelli" which, of all Mr. Wells' books made the deepest impression on the present writer's thought. In his opinion, the former contains in essence positively everything Wells has ever had to say, including something about the lady with whom Wells once got himself frightfully entangled (in the good old days, too!), which entanglement he fictionalises in "The New Machiavelli" as the "affair" between his political "hero" and Isabel. The latter book depicts the conflict between the "white" (social) and "red" (love) passions of this political hero, but it is much more than that. Like others of his novels an illuminating critique of

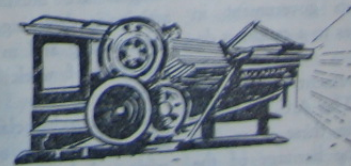
the social condition of capitalist England, it at the same time surveys practically every school of political thought of the period in that country, as well as portraying under the flimsiest of veils very many of its most important social and political figures of the day, Balfour, Bernard Shaw, Sydney and Beatrice Webb, *et al.* The present writer remembers the late Professor Harrison Moore strongly objecting to Wells' public speculations on the sexual relations existing between the Webbs. And then there was the bedroom scene with the young Englishman holding his collar and tie in his hand and the harlot babbling in broken German: "Bin ich ein Hubsche?" (Am I a darling?). A fine thing mortally ailing, as Wells put it. And then, too, there was the characteristically Wellsian description of lectures on the philosophy of Hegel as like a dew-wet spider's web shining in the morning sunlight over the black mouth of a gun. But, however all these things may be, "The New Machiavelli" bade fair to become the "bible" of many of those who, like the present writer, already vaguely wanted Socialism,

but badly wanted it without the class struggle.

And yet, and yet—Mr. Wells, in sad despite of himself, already by 1913 pushed the present writer into a conflict in support of the Labor Party against the authorities of Trinity College, Melbourne University, when, in face of their ban, he organised a meeting to enable the late "Little Doctor" Maloney to address the College students. And later in the same year aggressive Socialist statements in the College magazine he edited resulted in a row with authorities and students that ended in the suspension of the magazine and in the present writer quitting the College. Impelled by the anti-Marxist Mr. Wells, he was beginning to exchange its cloistered calm for the outlawed university of Communism. Directly incited by the classless Mr. Wells, he was proceeding to become what the same gentleman has called a "dreary fanatic of the class struggle."

Such was the end of the period of Wells' deepest and most extensive influence. Then came world war.

(Continued Next Issue.)



TRADE UNION POLICY AND THE A. C. T. U.

R. Dixon

AN Australian Trade Union Congress is to take place early in March. The agenda will probably include among other matters, Australian defence, social insurance and the Labor Party split.

In a way the forthcoming Congress recalls the important congress of May 1927—when the A.C.T.U. was formed. Twelve years have passed—twelve years of bitter struggle and experience. The A.C.T.U. was barely established when it had to face the terrific offensive of the capitalist class against the hours, wages and conditions of the workers in 1928-29-30. First the marine cooks were attacked and defeated and then followed the waterside workers, timber workers and miners in quick succession. At the end of 1929 the economic crisis broke and hundreds of thousands of workers were thrown out of employment. Trade union membership declined by more than 150,000 and the fall in union revenue was catastrophic. In 1931, Lang split the Labor Party, defeated the Scullin government, and in May, 1932, brought his own government in New South Wales to a crushing defeat.

The labor movement truly was in the doldrums. The A.C.T.U. was found wanting in these years. It suffered from the heritage of the

reformism of the pre-crisis years.

Then came recovery. As production improved trade union membership increased until today it approaches the million mark. But there was a change from the old unionism. The trade union movement has come to accept and pursue a more Left and, therefore, more virile policy than formerly. This is not the case with the Labor politicians. Always isolated from the rank and file of the trade union movement, the politicians are finding themselves more and more in conflict with trade union policy.

When the A.C.T.U. meets in March it will be confronted with a situation complicated and difficult.

A new economic crisis, world war and fascism—issues on which turns the future of the labor movement—must be resolutely faced up to. The split in the Labor Party which is keeping Lyons and Stevens in office, must be tackled and overcome.

There are many signs of economic decay. Australia's trade position is unsatisfactory, State and Federal budgets are unbalanced, building activity is declining, unemployment is increasing and in some industries rationing of work has already begun.

The capitalist class know, in the last analysis, only one way to meet crisis and that is to lengthen hours

and cut wages. In 1928-29-30 direct wage cuts took place. Today, the capitalists, having realised that wage slashing arouses great resistance from the workers, are achieving the same result by the indirect method of taxing foodstuffs and wages. The latest and most infamous impost of this character is the flour tax. But in addition, the Sales Tax has been increased by 25 per cent., excise duties have been raised as the recent increase in tobacco prices testified, and higher customs duty is forcing prices up. Moreover, when the National Insurance scheme comes into operation in September, a tax of 1/6 per week in addition to the existing wage tax will be imposed on the workers' meagre income.

This indirect method of fleecing the workers in accomplishing what the capitalists want with very little resistance, as yet, from the trade unions.

Now taxation of this character hits the farmers and middle classes as well as the workers and well organised opposition to it on the part of the labor movement would arouse enthusiastic support from these sections of the population and create the possibilities for an Australian People's Front. This opposition is not yet forthcoming. As a matter of fact, the resistance to the Lyons government's taxation policy is greater amongst the farmers than workers. It was farmers' opposition that caused the Lyons government to delay until September the National Insurance Act. Given a well organised fight against the reac-

tionary class taxation policy of the Lyons government, the labor movement should succeed in mobilising great support amongst the farmers and middle classes.

This fight is all the more important in view of the war danger and the menace of fascism. It is surely impossible to misunderstand the gravity of the international situation since the fall of Barcelona. Hitler and Mussolini, aware of the threatening collapse of their bloody regimes under the blows of the outraged German and Italian people, place their hopes in desperate adventures. Chamberlain and Daladier, who fashioned the traitorous Munich peace to suit the needs of fascism, are planning fresh betrayals. They, too, pursue a policy, no matter what slogans or phrases it may be cloaked under, of war. Industry, transport, manpower, are being mobilised for war, democracy is being undermined, to the cheers of the capitalist class, especially the munition manufacturers.

The Australian Trade Union Congress will be expected to give a lead on these issues. At its last Congress, held in 1937, the A.C.T.U. declared for collective action against fascist aggression. The "Inner Group" is out to reverse that decision and tie the A.C.T.U. to the anti-Labor policy of isolation. Should it succeed the A.C.T.U. will be utterly discredited and the trade union movement more divided than ever.

Collective action against fascism is the accepted policy of the great bulk of the working-class movement,

as it is of the farmers and the middle class. Only a few politicians and their closest supporters stand for the suicidal policy of isolation. The Port Kembla waterside workers proved this. When they decided, as they put it themselves, to impose "sanctions" against Japan and refused to load the "Dalfram," they were supported from one end of Australia to the other by the trade unions, Labor Party rank and file, middle class and farmers. Even the capitalist press, which rarely fails the B.H.P., was forced by public opinion to take a stand not entirely unsympathetic. The opposition to the Port Kembla men came from the B.H.P., the Lyons government, Lang "Inner Group" and unfortunately some leading Federal politicians. The Federal Labor Party would not support the wharfies in their stand because, they claimed, the strike was contrary to Federal Labor policy. That is quite true. Their policy is so anti-working class that they could not support the Port Kembla workers, despite the fact that Australian public sympathy was overwhelmingly in favor of the men.

It is time that the Labor politicians and the rank and file of the Labor Party realised where this anti-working-class policy, sponsored by Lang and supported by Curtin, is getting them to. The trade union movement particularly must understand this. The chief task before the working class in the fight against war and fascism is to organise an Australian People's Front, broad and powerful enough to defeat re-

action. The Port Kembla waterside workers have shown us that this is possible. They stopped the export of pig iron to Japan and thereby gave expression to the pent up resentment of the Australian people to the barbarous war the Japanese militarists are waging against China. Prior to this there was much talk against war—but here was action and the masses wanted action. Hence the support of the Australian people which forced the Lyons government to climb down and after the loading of the "Dalfram" to refrain from sending further pig iron to Japan.

Now the "Inner Group" want to reverse the policy which led to such magnificent action and won such support for the labor movement. It wants to isolate the working class from the farmers and middle classes and split the labor movement more than ever with "isolation."

The acceptance of this policy of Lang's would do irreparable damage to the A.C.T.U.

In foreign policy it is more than ever necessary, after the experience of Munich and the events that have followed, to pursue a policy of collective security and to oppose the Lyons government's policy of capitulation and appeasement. And this likewise determines our attitude to defence. We must repeat again and again that the labor movement is determined to defend Australia against fascist aggression. This does not pre-suppose support for the reactionary Lyons government or its so-called defence policy which is dictated not by the needs of Aus-

tralia but of the rich.

Defence is a class question. You can be opposed to the Federal government's policy and yet be in favor of defence.

The trade unions rejected the proposal made by Lyons that they should co-operate with the government. This decision caused some heartburnings in certain trade union circles and there are those who secretly pray for the day when co-operation will be accepted and they, if selected, will be able to work to their hearts' content in collaboration with the capitalists and the Federal government and receive the flattery and perquisites that go with such treachery. The A.C.T.U. Congress should firmly lay it down that there must be no collaboration with the Lyons government.

However, something more than mere passive opposition to the Federal government's policy is necessary today. The present recruiting drive, being led by the conscriptionist, Billy Hughes, is accomplishing a double purpose—getting recruits and ideologically preparing the people for the imposition of a compulsory register of manpower which is but the forerunner of conscription. We are informed that when Parliament meets a bill providing for man-power registration will be submitted.

The labor movement ought to declare beforehand its opposition to a man-power register, as well as conscription. It should be recalled that in the first years of the world imperialist war of 1914-18, a census of

manpower was taken and the militarists received the information as to the cannon fodder available in Australia. Then followed the attempt to foist conscription on the country.

A register of manpower and conscription go together. Having the register, the militarists calmly proceed to dictate who shall go to the front and who remain in the industries to keep up the supply of the means of death and destruction. Given a manpower register they can do this with or without conscription, but they are doubly powerful with conscription. Without conscription, economic pressure is the weapon used. Workers wanted for the army are dismissed by their capitalist master on instructions from the military and are denied further employment. They must join the army or starve—an equally terrible plight.

This register of manpower must be opposed by the full strength of the organised labor movement. During the war the trade unions opposed the War Census Act and tens of thousands of workers refused to supply the information required. A far greater effort is required today and the trade union movement is the force which must supply this effort.

Of the various branches of defence, that which is receiving the least attention (no attention would be more correct) is the defence of the civil population against air raids and bombardment. This is a very important question for all of us. While he was Minister for Defence,

that pro-fascist gentleman, Mr. Thorby, pooh-pooed the idea of expending a few of the many millions of pounds allocated for defence on preparations for protection of the civil population. He expressed the cynical approach of the Lyons government to this question. It has been suggested, and the suggestion came from government sources, that Australia has little to fear from air bombardment and such like. If this is so why the need for the huge defence expenditure and preparations for war being made by the Lyons government? If it is true, Australia is in no danger of being invaded. And yet the whole strategy underlying the government's war preparations starts from the need to defend Australian shores against invasion.

One spokesman after another for the government and the militarists have drawn attention to the danger of attacks on the Australian coast and even of invasion of this country. Lyons himself has admitted this. If it is true that Australia is threatened with coastal raids and maybe invasion, one of the chief methods the enemy will employ will be air raids in addition to naval bombardment and the points of attack will be Sydney, Newcastle, Brisbane and Melbourne. But, we are told, air raid precautions are not important. They are not important because the people who will suffer most from air raids and bombardment are the workers. The capitalist, as soon as word comes of a

threatened raid—and word should be received in Sydney and elsewhere in Australia some hours before—will be able to get to a comparatively safe distance by car, whilst the workers and many middle-class people will have to withstand the bombing. The government's policy is a cynical, reactionary class policy and like the rest of its defence programme its chief concern is the defence of the rich exploiters.

Air raid precautions and defence of the civil population is a matter the trade union movement should take up without any delay. The A.C.T.U. should lay down a line of policy for the whole of the trade union movement and initiate a campaign for proper measures to protect the civil population.

The trade union movement of Australia can play a very important role in launching a People's Front. By conducting a well-organised campaign against the taxation policy of the government, by more aggressively pursuing the policy of collective resistance to fascist aggression and by taking up the fight for protection for the civil population against air raids and making clear the basis of its opposition to the Lyons government's war plans, the trade unions will gain the support of great numbers of farmers and middle-class people.

Complicating the situation, however, is the Labor Party split. There can only be one solution to the Labor Party position and that is to

establish unity without Lang. It cannot be established with him, as has so often been demonstrated. The establishment of Labor Party unity with the exclusion of Lang would lead to Labor victories within 12 months both Federally and in the State of New South Wales. The Labor Party would be on top and the working class would then be in the position of playing a more effective part in the solution of the

economic and social problems besetting our country.

The A.C.T.U. must not evade this issue, nor express an ambiguous opinion on the issues. It must take sides and demand that the Federal Executive of the Labor Party get off the fence, cease procrastinating in its attitude to Lang (they realise he must go) and establish Labor Party unity in New South Wales and Australia.

NEW BOOKS OF INTEREST

Gordon Grant

PEOPLE in China are fighting our battles though in most cases they do not know it; they are short of food and even medicine to deaden the agony they suffer from their wounds. Still they fight on and their leaders are confident of victory over the Japanese aggressors. What are we going to do about it? Such thoughts arise a thousand times while reading "China Fights Back," the latest book on the Chinese war, by Agnes Smedley, the American writer and journalist, a Left Book Club choice.

When the history of these days is written, if it is written by free men, our sons will not be proud of us if we allow these things to go on in our part of the world without taking a hand to help those who are

fighting for the liberation of Asia and the rest of the world.

Our sympathy is an empty thing if we do not find a way to translate it into something real, tangible and active in the way of aid to the Chinese people and their army.

Agnes Smedley is one of the few people who have told us the truth about what has gone on and is still going on there. The story of her journeys with the Eighth Route Army (successor to the Red Army of Chinese workers and peasants) is given in the form of dated despatches. She showed great personal bravery in carrying on under tremendous difficulties which were made greater by her being injured while on her work there and lack of proper medical attention.

An Australian journalist who met her recently in China spoke in glowing terms both of her courage and the thoroughness of her work, making her outstanding among the European and American writers there.

Her book reveals a great deal about the lives of the people in the army, whom she was able to meet more intimately than most writers, the leaders of China's fight, and gives an insight into the life and characters of the partisan ("volunteer") fighters who play such a big part in the war for China's freedom, the peasants, and the political workers and their work.

It also gives a good idea of the Japanese officers' and soldiers' feelings about the war both through contacts with Japanese captives and through their diaries found on the battlefields.

The Chinese are depicted as earnest fighters of first quality; men who sing, though hungry, and know exactly what they are fighting for. Men who have inspired the confidence of the country people, in a land where a soldier had formerly been an enemy of the people.

"The Red Army gives me a headache," said a Japanese officer in his diary. That officer is dead.

The Chinese people have a different view. This army pays its way and arms the people. They become

mutual protectors. The Japanese fear the United Front of China.

The writer says she is convinced that the principles embodied in the heart of the Eighth Route "are the principles that will guide and save China, that will give the greatest impulses to the liberation of all subjected Asiatic nations, and bring to life a new human society."

This Army and the Communist Party have issued two manifestoes to the Japanese soldiers and many copies have been found in the pockets of the Japanese dead. They point out that the real enemies of the Japanese soldiers are the Japanese militarists and call on the soldiers to refuse to fight the Chinese.

Agnes Smedley has a good word for the China Inland Mission. Its members, she says, are all friends of China, sympathising deeply with the Chinese armies and people.

The author gives more instances common in modern warfare (we have read of the examples in Spain) where the workers remain to fight the enemy after the rich have fled.

Some of the slogans reflect the basis of victory in China: "Improve the livelihood of the people!" "Drive the Japanese from China!" "Soldiers and People Unite!"

"China Fights Back," by Agnes Smedley (V. Gollancz). Australian price 8/6. Left Book Club 3/9.

A MASTERPIECE OF EXECUTION

THE most rabid conservative would indeed possess a stomach

of some strength if he could read of the last moments of a certain late

Mr. John Coffey and still retain a fervid belief in capital punishment.

This Mr. Coffey was recently sentenced to be hanged by the neck until dead. He probably realised the force of "until dead" on the morning of his execution, for it is reported of him: "When the rope broke for the first time at his execution his body fell to the ground. The neck was not broken but the shock caused blood to spurt from the wretched man's ears. He was carried back, and while the new rope was being adjusted, he regained consciousness and begged to have the cap removed in order that he could make a speech. The rope broke a second time but the body was caught before it reached the ground. It was lifted up and held in place by Deputy Sheriffs while the noose was again adjusted. The rope held and Coffey was strangled to death, dying in the short time of 12 minutes."

If this still leaves our Conservative unmoved we could try him out on the French Prison Authorities' report of an execution in Paris at the beginning of this century, when the condemned man, by virtue of a blunt guillotine or a touch neck, survived three blows of the knife edge and finally succumbed through the good offices of the executioner's assistant who jumped on to the platform and hacked off the prisoner's head with a knife.

Should the defender of capital punishment prove adamant after this, our best course would be to present him with a copy of Charles Duff's "Handbook on Hanging,"

where he will find a wealth of such gruesome tales as the above.

All of which has probably given you the impression that Duff's book is on a cultural par with the best American horror magazines. Such, however, is not the case. This brilliantly written book is at once the nearest approach to true Swiftian satire produced since "Gulliver's Travels," and the best attack on capital punishment I have ever seen. It is a masterpiece of propaganda.

Duff relies, I think, on the important psychological truth that if you can make a man *feel* a certain way, if you can play upon the primary emotions of fear, revulsion, love, anger or any other of those deep-seated feelings behind all our actions, then it will be next to no time before he will justify the frame of mind into which his emotions have cast him by all the causes of logic and reasoning. Duff refuses to approach the question of execution along lines of intellectual argument. He leaves it to you to work out the intellectual case against capital punishment. In fact he makes you work it out, and three weeks after you have read his book you discover that although time has cracked away the shell of revulsion somewhat, you are left with a kernel of reasoned argument for the complete abolition of capital punishment.

In examining Duff's methods in this regard you cannot fail to recognise the artistry of his book. You are informed that the book is a satire by the dedication on the fly leaf:

"To the Hangmen of England, and to similar constitutional bulwarks elsewhere."

But satire which deals with the brutal topics of bleeding necks and other forms of human agony is in danger of becoming disgusting. Duff's amazing capacity to use the telling phrase and the right word and, above all, his scintillating wit and humor, insure against this possibility. The whole of the book, even the more ghastly passages, is softened by his all-pervading humor. The scene, for example, of a condemned man suspended from the rope with his toes just brushing the trapdoor which had failed to drop properly is not particularly inviting. When the hangman attempted to correct the error by hoisting the unfortunate man up to the top of the beam again, Duff recounts, however, that the prisoner gaspingly inquired of the hangman, "What do you think I am—a bloody yo-yo?" Perhaps Duff's contribution to the episode is not strictly true, but you don't find yourself worrying much about that.

The book is not, of course, merely a succession of tales regarding miscarriages at executions. Much of it appeals for the elevation of His Majesty's hangmen to a higher

position in the Social Register than they at present enjoy. He provides a draft scheme for staging public executions in the Albert Hall where the masses could be amused and the pockets of the promoters considerably garnished. The figures he submits along these lines were arrived at, he says, by a friend of his who is an uncharted accountant. He pries, for our amusement, into the private life and reminiscences of such redoubtables as Mr. Hangman Ellis and Mr. Hangman Berry—two English gentlemen of some renown in the prisons in recent years.

This is a book you must read. From his opening lecture on "Fashions in Hanging" to the ready reckoner on the last page, from which, with only slight mathematical procedure, you can work out the length of the drop in feet which you personally would receive, Duff will entertain and instruct you. And, more important, his book is a perfect object lesson to those who are compelled to write their propaganda subtly.

—Roy Smee.

"A Handbook on Hanging," by Charles Duff. (Our copy from the Anvil Bookshop.)



ALLIES — AND OTHERS Canberra Science Congress

J. Williamson

THE past fifty years have seen faster changes in the relations of man to man and man to nature than ever before. The development of capitalism and the tremendous advances that this has brought about in the productivity of labor have only been possible by the increase of our knowledge of nature and its processes. Science today has developed further than any fifty-year-old forecast would allow, and it is this development which has enabled many men to say that in the scientist alone man has found his savior. It is when we look at the fields in which these advances have taken place that we can see why the above naive theory has not been justified. The main applications of science to society have been made by capitalism, new machines and new processes have been the means of vastly increasing the wealth of the monopolists by enabling them to dispense with more and more of the workers in their factories. It is just this close link between science and industry which means that when industry hits an economic crisis, such as the world crisis of 1929 to 1933, the benefits of science are junked and greater emphasis is laid on the destructive powers of knowledge. Universities and technical schools are not immune from this frustra-

tion of learning, since today their capacities for research and teaching are increasingly hampered by lack of money and equipment. The knowledge of nutrition which science has given us cannot be used by the people because of their poverty, and since preventive medicine is closely linked with nutrition, housing, medical services, safety precautions in industry, these too suffer from the inadequate government support while the conditions of modern industry, with its speed-up and disregard of the health of the worker, negate the first conditions for the proper use of the science of health.

The Science Congress at Canberra celebrated the jubilee of the Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science. It has met at a time when fascism has succeeded in some countries in smashing the legal organizations of the workers and driving the people into its plans for aggression. Under these conditions the scientists and intellectuals have stood no chance against the book-burners, and have seen their science and culture degenerate for the first time since the Middle Ages.

How did the Science Congress react to these challenges? The passing of resolutions by both the British

and American Associations on the menace to science from the movement against democracy and peace, gave a lead to the convenors of the Congress and an official meeting was held on "The Relation of Science to Society." The presence of Mr. H. G. Wells as an official guest was sufficient to ensure that "big things" would be discussed. As well as both these opportunities the Canberra Left Book Club held a public meeting at which visiting scientists spoke, and an informal group, composed mainly of the younger delegates, organised a further public discussion at which rather more concrete proposals were put forward than at any of the official meetings. Outside all the organised discussions the impression gained from talking to the delegates from other sections was that of a lively yet confused interest in the problems facing the scientist as a specialist and as a human being.

Both in the presidential addresses and in the subject-matter at the section discussions the relation of science to politics cropped up. This was not unexpected since most of the papers delivered at the Congress dealt with the application of science to Australian problems—radio research, soil erosion, development of the fishing industry, banking policy, aboriginal problems, to mention a few fields in which the political is closely bound up with the scientific.

Among the main trends at the Congress on the broader issues the Wellsian approach got a great deal more publicity than it deserved.

For Wells the most significant development of modern times is the fact that we can travel faster than we could a hundred years ago, or that we can speak to each other across the Atlantic. With this as his approach to the world he can comprehend neither the development of fascism nor the building of the U.S.S.R., but contents himself by confusing the planned science of the Soviet Union with the mess that Goering has made of the fine traditions of German science. He is no materialist and urged that a greater emphasis be laid on the "biological" approach to history. This attitude was not uncommon, E. C. Dyason, a leading stockbroker of Melbourne suggesting a thousand years of research into the mind was necessary before our problems will be solved. No doubt he would be quite content if the working class took this course of action. Among the other quack solutions was the theory that the people of Australia were getting soft, the reason being that the test team was not playing so many matches as it did in the grand old days. Sir E. J. Russell said the solution was to be sought in getting back to God, and he told the section on agriculture that the best way of overcoming soil erosion would be the formation of "small self-containing farms" which could produce for themselves and barter their small surplus for the tools they needed, a solution which would reduce agriculture to the level of the peasant of old Russia.

To turn now from one section of reactionary thought to more open

attempts at "co-ordination." Professor D. B. Copland, who distinguished himself in the last depression by his share in the 10 per cent. wage cut, is again on the warpath, this time as a defender of democracy. In commenting on Wells he deplored the fact that our administration is not "tuned to the circumstances of emergency," and he followed this up by springing a motion on the economics section that "Congress urges the most effective organisation of manpower, physical, mental and material resources to improve the nation's capacity to resist aggression and preserve its democratic structure." This was defeated and a further motion coming from Mr. J. R. Darling, a headmaster of one of the Great Public Schools of Victoria, on the subject of "co-operation," was shouted out of the session, one cry being: "Is it the object of the Science Congress to urge the people of Australia to support the Lyons government?" When we remember that Copland's plan for national emergency in the University of Melbourne had as point one "physical exercise in groups" we can well ask where the theory comes from which strengthens democracy by making it more like fascism.

Among the more positive utterances, that of Sir David Rivett at the official meeting on the Relation of Science to Society was outstanding. He denounced the prostitution of science that we can see in the recent events in Spain, China and Abyssinia, and in so doing laid the charge at the door of the main

enemy. It was a world scandal, he said, that any nation should be short of food, and men were wanted who would care little for vested interests. He attacked the idea that the misapplication of science would be stopped by stopping the growth of knowledge. Apart from this the best contributions came from unofficial speakers. Professor Duhig hit the nail on the head when he said that millions of people could not be properly nourished by the industrial methods used at present. The following resolution, moved from the floor, was passed unanimously:

"In conjunction with the British and American Associations we affirm our loyalty to the task of preserving truth, freedom of expression and justice in the world. These are today made subject to increasing attacks which, if successful, will frustrate the future of science and humanity which requires that the labors of scientists be used for the benefit and not for the destruction of mankind."

The wishes of the scientists at the Congress were in the right direction, but the suggestions made as to methods for defending science were not so good. The Association officially resolved to set up a Committee for Science and Social Relations, and to co-operate with similar bodies overseas. This would be a good move if there are any guarantees that the Committee will do much except sit on its tail and wonder what it can do. "We are a bunch of question marks" said Wells referring to the British committee. A meeting of the younger delegates suggested the formation of a Contemporary Science Society, which would make its business the enlightening of the people as to

what science can do for them and the carrying out of the great task of popularising science, which by forging a link between science and the people will ensure that it becomes the servant of humanity and not of octopus B.H.P.s.

The labor movement in Australia

must wake up to the existence of these powerful allies; the formation of a Trades Union Advisory Committee is one immediate need. The fight for a People's Front is a fight for the freedom of culture and the liberation of science; here the manual and brain worker stand united.

QUESTION BOX

Q.—What lies behind the apparent illogicality of the Commonwealth government banning the export of iron ore, while still permitting the export of pig iron to Japan?

A.—When in 1937 the question arose of working the iron ore deposits at Yampi Sound with Japanese capital operating through the firm of Brasserts Ltd., the Labor Premier of W.A. could then see nothing wrong in exporting iron ore to Japan. So far as we know, we were the first then to apply to this question, Lenin's words about the connection between imperialism and "the export of capital, which has become extremely important, as distinguished from the export of commodities." We pointed out that what was involved here was not merely the export of commodities from Australia to Japan, but the export of Japanese capital to Australia. Now when commodities are bought and sold by capitalists of two countries, that is, relatively speaking, the end of the matter. But

when capital from one country is invested in another, that, on the contrary, is very much the beginning of a process of the capitalists of the former country becoming afraid for the safety of their capital and only having their fears finally allayed when they have a stranglehold on the latter country.

And that is why, after much vacillation, and under cover of a rather dubi-
out report on the extent of Australian deposits of iron ore, the Lyons government at length decided to block the above-mentioned process by placing an embargo on the export of this ore, in the interest of the groups of capitalists it represents. Having thus diplomatically checked the export of Japanese capital to Yampi, the Lyons government and the capitalists whose spokesman it is, saw no other interest than to let the export of commodity pig iron to Japan proceed. But then came Japanese imperialism's armed invasion of China. The B.H.P. and the Lyons government still saw no other interest than to let the sale of pig iron to Japan continue. Little they recked that Japanese imperialists were blasting Chinese workers and peasants into eternity. But the Australian workers did care, and the Kembla wharries thus caught the government in a trap of apparent illogicality from which all the forensic dexterity of Menzies has not availed to release it.

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