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The Communist Review

Vol. 2, No. 1

SYDNEY, N.S.W.

January, 1935

Lenin—Liebknecht—Luxembourg

By L. SHARKEY

The Lenin-Liebknecht-Luxembourg Anniversaries are not regarded by communists as a sort of "saints day," but an occasion that reminds us of what these great comrades of ours, these founders of our Communist world workers' Party, gave their lives for, namely, the establishment of the international Socialist Republic. The Anniversary is an occasion on which we not only refresh but deepen and broaden our knowledge of Leninism, when we strive more energetically to spread amongst the masses the teaching of Lenin. Lenin, the man, is dead, but Leninism lives and is guiding the world proletariat to victory just as Lenin mapped out the path to victory for the Russian proletariat in 1917. Mighty monuments to the life work of Lenin exist in the world of to-day, in the form of the great Union of Socialist Soviet Republics and the growing Soviet power in China and in the powerful union of the revolutionary workers of the whole world, the Communist International. For these historic achievements in carrying out the tasks of the world Socialist Revolution first scientifically formulated by Marx and Engels, the credit in the first place belongs to Lenin.

Soviets in China! Such a conception would have been deemed preposterous by the pedantic pseudo-Marxists, the Kautskies of the pre-war Second International. "Preposterous," we can visualise them exclaiming. Did not Marx speak of the "level of the productive forces," did he not indicate the necessity for a period of capitalist rule to "develop the forces of production"? Yet such was the genius of Lenin, combined with his iron revolutionary determination and insight into the mechanism of the world revolution, and the connection between the colonial revolutions faced at first with bourgeois democratic tasks and the Socialist revolution, that he was able to formulate his theory of the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry which would grow over into the Socialist revolution, which was not only instrumental to the victorious progress of the Russian Revolution, but enabled our Chinese comrades to establish a large and stable Soviet government in the heart of feudal China and advance toward the conquest of that vast country.

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workers and peasants of China and for the world proletarian revolution. Capitalism has developed the means of production in the old-established capitalist countries, but does not necessarily have to begin from the beginning, and once more bring to birth a steam engine in each colonial country and advance painfully from this to the most modern electrical machinery. These can be copied and installed from the industrialised countries. The problem for the revolutionaries in the backward countries was and is the problem of power, and it was Lenin who ridiculed before all the "mechanical" concepts of the opportunists and showed how the power of the toilers could be organised and the problems of the Socialist revolution successfully grappled with in the backward peasant countries.

The growing Soviet power in China and its victorious Red Army are a demonstration of the genius of the greatest of Marxists—Lenin. The illustration of the Chinese Soviets at the moment is the best—after the Soviet Union—of the correctness of Leninist theory and the contribution made to Marxism by Lenin.

Some of us, perhaps coming into contact with the discussions within the revolutionary movement before Leninism became widely known outside of the Russian movement, are inclined to marvel at these arguments around problems that to-day appear to us as simple and even commonplace, that we can marvel at the errors of even such comrades as Rosa Luxembourg, whose name is linked in the Anniversary with that of Lenin.

The reason why these problems of principle, of strategy, of tactics now appear "commonplace," "simple," to us is that Lenin has lived, worked and simplified—by making them clear—the nature of these problems and their solution.

In taking things for granted let us ponder the fact that without the scientific work of Lenin many of these points would still be unclear, perhaps for a considerable time, leading to errors in policy and mistakes in tactics and practice, thereby retarding the development of the revolutionary movement and the triumph of the proletarian revolution.

Lenin rescued Marxism from the emasculators of Marx, from the "King's Socialists," from the distorters and revisionists, and restored it in its pristine revolutionism to the proletariat, thereby destroying the source of the errors of the honest revolutionary proletarian elements, who were confused in their theory because of the Social-Democratic influence, because of the Social-Democratic suppression of the most vital revolutionary proposi-

tions of Marxism—in particular, Marx's teaching on proletarian dictatorship—and not only suppression, but even practical forgery, as in the case of Engels' preface to "The Civil War in France," where deletions were made by Bernstein of the original manuscript, which made the great revolutionist Engels appear as a supporter of pacifist tactics and as an opponent of armed struggles. But Lenin not only restored the revolutionary essence of Marx's teaching; he elaborated it for us, deepened and developed it, and in particular applied Marxism to the problems confronting the revolutionary movement in the epoch of Imperialism. "Leninism is the Marxism of the imperialist epoch" (Stalin).

In connection with Lenin's lifelong struggle against opportunism and revisionism undoubtedly the climax of this struggle came in his memorable conflict with Kautsky, the Pope of the Second International, and embodied in Lenin's work, "The Proletarian Revolution and Kautsky, the Renegade," and also the "State and Revolution." Here Lenin dealt the deathblow to Revisionism, and ensured the victory of the revolutionary teaching of Marx, thus liberating the revolutionary vanguard from Social-Democratic stultification and ensuring the triumphant growth of a revolutionary workers' International which will establish the proletarian dictatorship in the whole world.

The aspects of Leninism can scarce be recounted, let alone adequately dealt with in the course of an article, but if we take this conflict with Kautsky as the apex of Lenin's struggle against reformism, we know that Lenin won a great theoretical victory for Marxism, the issue being the proletarian revolution, and on this contest depended the success of the world revolution. Such were the mighty outcomes of this discussion. It is known to the whole world that Lenin exposed Kautsky as a charlatan, and utterly routed him. Kautsky, of course, stood for "the peaceful path" to socialism as against the "barbaric Asiatic Bolshevik methods," and claimed that under the beloved democratic German Constitution, socialism could be achieved "lawfully," that is, with the consent of the bourgeoisie.

The discussion between Lenin and Kautsky reflected objective realities—the course that was being set by those who were leading the majority of the workers in Russia and Germany.

To-day, we can sum up the results of these two courses, and see for ourselves to what results they have led.

The one—to classless society. The other—to a fascist des-

potism utilising methods of "Asiatic barbarism" in the heart of civilised Europe calculated to make the "Asiatic barbarians," the sheikhs and sultans and emirs, green with envy, excelling them in methods of torturing the representatives of the exploited class.

Social-Democracy is in alliance with the bourgeoisie and Social-Democratic treachery ensures victory to the capitalists wherever it has the upper hand in the labor movement. Germany, Austria, Italy, etc., testify to the correctness of this postulate of Lenin in his conflict with Kautsky. Whilst Lenin's axe here was aimed at the tap root of the Social-Democratic tree it also cut off the nourishment for the various branches of the Social-Democratic tree and ensured their withering away and defeat in the working-class movement—the anarchist, the syndicalist, the allegedly "pure" sects in the English-speaking countries (S.L.P. and others), Trotskyism, all of which are but variations of Social-Democracy, opportunist, anti-Marxist and counter-revolutionary.

The conclusion is plain: Marxism-Leninism is the only revolutionary proletarian theory, which to-day has won for itself and united in the Communist International the conscious revolutionary elements in the labor movement, and is winning over and opening the eyes, daily, of all honest elements in the proletarian movement. Our task is equally plain: To educate ourselves in Marxist-Leninist theory and spread a knowledge of this teaching amongst the whole of the labor movement so that all the activities and struggles of the labor movement will be guided by this teaching—because this teaching alone guarantees the victory of the proletariat.

Lenin, Liebknecht, Luxemburg, these are among the foremost names of the founders of our Communist International. What contribution did the latter two make? They had not the profound understanding of Marxism of Lenin, and could not make a contribution to Marxist theory similar to that of that great scientific genius of revolution. But they made the first great breach, with the help and guidance of Lenin, in the Social-Democratic domination of the working class of Germany, that key-country for the further development of the world revolution. They led an armed insurrection against bourgeois rule, and were only deprived of victory through the treachery of the Social-Democracy, which safe-guarded bourgeois rule, using its influ-

ence with the masses for this purpose. They used their immense popularity and prestige with the German masses to rescue the revolutionary elements from the clutches of counter-revolutionary Social-Democracy. They assisted Lenin to form the Communist International. Under his guidance, they formed the German Communist Party, the instrument of the German proletariat, which ensures the victory of the Soviet power in that country. They left behind them that iron cadre, headed by Thaelmann, which to-day defies the murderous terror of monopoly capitalism and never for an instant ceases its work of mobilising the forces for the approaching proletarian revolution in Germany. By their revolutionary lives and martyrs' deaths they created a mighty revolutionary heroic tradition amongst the proletarians of Germany and of the world, which to-day steels the German proletariat in the struggle against the Nazi horror. With their blood they cemented the bonds of proletarian internationalism, the pledges given when, together with Lenin and the Bolsheviks, they founded the Communist International.

Hence, Liebknecht and Luxemburg made a historic contribution to the world proletarian revolution, and their names live in the annals of the proletariat for all time.



Socialism and The Australian Labor Movement

By R. DIXON.

"Individuals may make mistakes, but the Labor movement is never wrong. It is the one sheet anchor for the workers of Australia." Thus spake John Lang, leader of the N.S.W. Labor Party, at Cessnock on October 29, 1934. He was vainly imploring the miners to throw overboard their tried and trusted leaders, W. Orr and C. Nelson, and to accept the doubtful nominees of the Lang-controlled "Inner Group."

Like the Pope, he spoke with an air of infallibility, but also like the Pope, infallibility is not one of his virtues. His speech at Cessnock was a hotch-potch of distortion in fact and theory.

The miners listened to Lang and later voted overwhelmingly for Orr and Nelson. If Lang's assertion that the "Labor movement is never wrong" was correct, then he should accept the miners' verdict, for it was both correct and decisive enough.

Actually, however, it sounded as if Lang was trying to justify his own position for, if it were true that the Labor movement was always right, then it obviously follows that he could never have been part of it, let alone a leader of it. Lang is a bourgeois, who found a position in the Labor movement because the Labor Party is a bourgeois Labor Party, because of the degeneration of the Labor movement and the penetration of bourgeois ideas.

Lenin pointed to this characteristic of the Labor Party when in 1912 he spoke of it as a "Liberal-Labor Party" and commented:

"What a peculiar capitalist country is this in which Labor predominates in the Upper House (Senate) and recently predominated in the Lower House, and yet the capitalist system does not suffer any danger!"

To this can also be added a statement of Lenin's on the British labor movement which applies equally as well to Australia. He declared:

"The British Labor movement . . . serves . . . as an example of how the isolation of the Labor movement from Socialism inevitably leads to degeneration and bourgeois ideas."

Here there is expressed no blind subservience to the spontaneous movement, no worshipping of some inherent, unexplained quality, whereby "the Labor movement is never wrong." Lenin emphasised that we must be "able to envisage the theoretically

helpless, but vital, mass-powerful Labor movement," and he never tired of insisting that the task of the Socialist movement is to connect itself with this mass movement, to raise its level of class consciousness, to give it "Socialist consciousness," to make it independent of the bourgeoisie and of bourgeois ideas.

It is of particular importance that the basis for the subordination of the Australian Labor movement to bourgeois ideas and policy be clearly understood and its development traced.

The working-class movement in this country was influenced enormously in its development by the ideas, methods of struggle and organisation of the British workers, for as Lenin correctly stated, Australia was an "undeveloped, young country populated by Liberal English workers."

The causes and the effects of the domination of opportunism in the British Labor movement are summarised by Lenin as follows:

"The causes are (1) Exploitation of the whole world by this country; (2) its monopolistic position in the world market; (3) its colonial monopoly. The effects are: (1) The transformation of a section of the British workers into the middle class; (2) the opportunity of leading it which part of the working class accord to a section corrupted by the capitalist class, or at least paid by it." ("Imperialism," p. 89-90.)

This was the exceptional position England occupied in the second half of the last century. The very development of Imperialism, however, as a world system was already leading to the undermining of Britain's favorable monopolistic position towards the end of last century. As a result there was taking place a progressive narrowing of the basis of the Labor aristocracy, and this was accompanied by a growing irreconcilability of opportunism with the general and vital interest of the working class.

Lenin closely observed and analysed these facts, and arrived at the important conclusion that:

"Opportunism can, therefore, no longer triumph in the working-class of any country for long decades, as was the case in England in the second half of the nineteenth century." ("Imperialism," p. 90.)

It was from this heavily-laden atmosphere of English Liberalism which sapped the virile fighting strength of the workers, leaving them weak and disorganised, influenced by and subservient to bourgeois politics, that great masses came which were to make the Australian Labor movement. This was particularly so following the gold discoveries.

The development of the Labor movement proceeded quickly

and naturally tended to follow the lines of the British workers. Numerous small craft unions were formed for the struggle to improve the lot of the workers within the confines of the capitalist system. It was "pure and simple" trade unionism which Lenin declared leads to the Labor movement "becoming subordinated to bourgeois ideology."

However, whilst it was possible to transplant the British methods of organisation and struggle it was not possible to transplant conditions which favored their growth in Britain. The conditions in Australia differed considerably from England, and whilst they certainly favored the growth of opportunism, the basis was not so strong. Hence the movement in its further development took on important new features corresponding to the new conditions.

Australia is a young country in which capitalism developed minus the restricting, retarding, reactionary and despotic influence of feudalism. Here, and particularly at the birth of the Labor movement, capitalism was extremely weak, especially if compared with Britain, but at the same time it had extensive possibilities of development.

The rapid development of the trade unions from the 'fifties, when estimated in connection with the weakness of the capitalist class, meant that the workers occupied a relatively strong position.

However, at the same time the absence of any great democratic tasks confronting the proletariat helped to restrict and narrow the political outlook of the Labor movement. The workers were living and developing in conditions of a fully established democratic system, "which confronts the proletariat with purely Socialist tasks." (Lenin.)

Socialism was sneered at by the Liberal British workers and found no place in the early period of development of the Australian Labor movement.

The young working-class movement was content to struggle for reforms within the limits of capitalism and to develop along the lines of "pure and simple" trade unionism. This meant subservience to bourgeois ideas and complete subordination to bourgeois politics.

The period up until the 'eighties was marked by a shortage of labor power and this, combined with the weakness of capitalism, placed the workers in a favorable position, one which they were not slow to take advantage of. In 1855 the Sydney building work-

ers struck for an eight-hour day and won it. This was followed by a whole series of struggles for the eight-hour day and wage increases, which was accompanied by the rapid development of the trade unions, which began to be organized to cover unskilled as well as skilled workers. This latter is of the utmost importance, for the trade unions of Britain in this same period covered only skilled workers. It was much later, in 1889, when stirrings developed among the unskilled workers in Britain, and new trade unions commenced to develop. Engels regarded this development among the British workers with great enthusiasm, as signifying a new awakening of the British workers which would lead to them becoming politically independent of the bourgeoisie and hasten the development of Socialism. Later, in 1908, Lenin, in analysing the development of this movement together with the changing situation of British capitalism, wrote:

"The English trade unions, insular, aristocratic, philistine selfish, hostile towards Socialism, who have produced a number of direct traitors to the working-class, who have sold themselves to the bourgeoisie for Government positions, are nevertheless approaching Socialism, awkwardly, hesitatingly, in a zig-zag fashion, but approaching it nevertheless!"

The organising of the unskilled workers in Australia, which commenced earlier than in Britain, has also great significance. It meant the going beyond the narrow conception of organising only skilled workers to a broader conception of working-class organisation, even though the craft boundaries remained. It marked the gradual rise of class understanding amongst the Australian workers. This growing class understanding was to be greatly facilitated in the stormy events of the later 'eighties and early 'nineties.

THE FOUNDATION OF THE LABOR PARTY.

Toward the end of the 'eighties an economic crisis of serious proportions struck Australian capitalism.

The capitalist class viciously attacked the living standards of the workers, who resisted strongly. A whole series of struggles developed which culminated in the great maritime strike of 1890. This was an event of the utmost significance, for it marked a definite and clear turning-point in Australian working-class history.

It was the first great general struggle of the organised working class of Australia against capital.

The cause of the dispute was the refusal of the shipowners to permit the Mercantile Marine Officers' Association to continue its

affiliation with the Melbourne Trades Hall Council.

The seamen, waterside workers and then the miners, shearers, and Broken Hill miners all ceased work. The employers mobilised strike-breakers and with the full support of the capitalist State—large forces of police and soldiers were placed at their disposal—succeeded in defeating the workers.

A severe setback was registered, but it was a new working class which emerged from the struggle—one which had advanced a long way along the path to class understanding.

The great general strike had succeeded in lining up the working-class army against capitalism; it revealed the existence of an irrepressible conflict between the working-class and the capitalist class, a bitter class struggle.

In this, more than anything else, rests the great political significance of the maritime strike. From that time onwards the class struggle entered into a new phase.

The political awakening which was manifesting itself in the period leading up to the 1890 strike was greatly advanced. The Labor movement felt the need to shake off its dependence on bourgeois parties and politics, and to come out as an independent political force.

Arising out of the great strike the N.S.W. Labor Party was formed in 1891. The formation of the Labor Party represented a step forward towards political independence. Engels, in dealing with the Anglo-American Labor movement, repeatedly emphasised the need for the establishment of a "broad workers' party . . . no matter on what programme." Lenin, in commenting on the formation of the British Labor Party, wrote:

"It represents the first step on the part of the really proletarian organisations of England toward a conscious class policy and towards a Socialist Labor Party."

Both Engels and Lenin regarded the formation of a Labor party in the Anglo-American countries on "no matter what programme" as a necessary step toward independent working-class political organisation.

In his speech at Cessnock on October 29, 1934, Lang, after stating that the Labor movement originated in the great industrial unions, declared: "But these unions felt they were impotent without political allies. Out of their necessity they created the Labor Party. And with the Labor Party the Labor movement obtained power."

It was not "out of their necessity" that the Labor Party was created. The Labor Party was a product of, was born out of, the

fierce class battles of the latter end of last century, but it has never lived up to those glorious traditions. It was created, not because the unions felt "impotent," but because there was a growing recognition that in addition to the economic struggle and organisations, that the Labor movement had need also to wage the political struggle and to develop political organisation. The formation of the Labor Party certainly marked a forward step in the political awakening of the working-class. However, the workers had need of a class party, one which would pursue a class policy. The Labor Party has never fulfilled this role.

It is a two-class party based in the petty bourgeoisie and working-class, and its policy has always been one of collaboration with the capitalist class. Hence, to declare that "with the Labor Party the Labor movement obtained power" is puerile, but poor deception. It is obvious to even the simple-minded that capitalism is firmly established in the saddle to-day.

Far from obtaining power for the working-class, which can be realised only through the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the Labor Party has subordinated it more and more to the power of the capitalist class. Already, in 1913, Lenin declared that due to the peculiarities of Australian capitalism, the Labor Party "is a liberal-bourgeois party, and the so-called Liberals in Australia are really Conservatives." He then went on to show that "In Australia the Labor Party has done what in other countries was done by the Liberals."

From its very inception the Labor Party pursued the line of avoiding struggle. It neither accepted Socialism as its aim nor did it make the class struggle the basis for its tactics. On the contrary, it sponsored the development of arbitration and the right of the capitalist State to decisively interfere in disputes between capital and labor. It sought to smooth over class differences, to replace the class struggle with "class peace," and to subordinate all working-class activity to the Parliamentary struggle.

The economic development of Australian capitalism, particularly since the beginning of the century, favored the growth of opportunism, and the L.P. politicians together with the reformist bureaucracy established firm domination over the working-class movement, throttling to a considerable degree militant activity.

The domination of the Labor Party and the growing subservience of the trade unions to L. P. politics and arbitration, not only devitalised and dissipated the strength of the workers, but it also meant the more complete penetration of bourgeois ideas into

the working-class.

The conditions of Australian capitalism, however, were changing and with such changes the antagonism between the liberal-bourgeois policy of the Labor Party and the interests of the working-class inevitably sharpened.

Lenin, in his article on Australia, declared:

"Naturally, when Australia is finally developed and consolidated as an independent capitalist State the conditions of the workers will change, as also will the Liberal-Labor Party, which will make way for a Socialist Labor Party."

Already on the eve of the war much opposition was developing against the Labor Party. This discontent found its expression in tendencies to turn back, to reject the political struggle and the political party and to take up anarcho-syndicalism rather than to go forward to the development of a "Socialist Labor Party."

THE 1914 BETRAYAL

The outbreak of the world war increased the discontent of the masses with the Labor Party. The whole treacherous policy which had been pursued in the years prior to the war, the collaboration and co-operation with the capitalist class, the desertion of the interests and aims of the working class, these were but stepping-stones to that greater betrayal, the support of the robber imperialist world war. The Fisher Labor Government held power in the Federal Parliament when war broke out and, with true fidelity to the bourgeoisie, it raised the infamous slogan—"to the last man and the last shilling" in defence of the Empire—this Empire, which is the greatest slave-pen history has ever known, where hundreds of millions of people are held in bondage to British Imperialism.

The Labor Party leaders and the reformist trade union officials allied themselves with the capitalist class against the working-class to carry through the war. If they had not done so, then the bourgeoisie could never have continued.

It was this action of the Labor Party in supporting the capitalist war and thereby going against the interests of the working-class which facilitated the conditions for a split in the workers' forces.

Already prior to the war a number of revolutionary organisations, extremely sectarian and narrow, had come into existence. During the war these organisations, particularly the L.W.W. and the Socialist Labor Party, rapidly extended their influence and organisation, mainly on the basis of their struggle against the war. They conducted this struggle in a courageous and determined manner, but, nevertheless, with many shortcomings which

were the result of their theoretical confusion and wrong tactics.

Within the Labor Party the struggle against the war policy of the leaders was extremely sharp and culminated with the conscription issue in the expulsion of the most blatant war supporters, Holraan, Hughes, etc., from the party. This did not mean, however, that the Labor Party then opposed the war. On the contrary, it supported the war, the only difference being that it claimed the right for each worker to "decide" whether he should go or not. This in face of the fact that the capitalist class held in its hands all the means with which to fabricate and falsify so-called public opinion (press, pulpit, halls, schools, etc.), and suppressed all opposition to the war. It is noteworthy that Labor politicians who "opposed" conscription were not averse to taking the platform in support of recruiting campaigns and thus helping further to frame public opinion and to limit the possibility of a worker "deciding" (Storey and Ryan, etc.).

The 1917 general strike, the Russian revolution, the influence of which was already manifest in 1918, and the general discontent which had reached a high pitch at the end of the war and which the crisis conditions up until 1921 did not serve to lessen, all resulted in intensifying the discontent with the Labor Party. Left wing elements commenced to break away under the pressure from the masses.

In October 1920, the Communist Party of Australia was formed out of left-wing elements, many of whom were opportunists and members of the revolutionary organisations. It was unable, however, to connect itself with the mass Labor movement and particularly with the trade unions, and for many years remained a small, isolated and sectarian body.

Following the war a definite estrangement between the Labor Party and the trade unions was to be observed. Alarmed at the trend of events L. P. leaders and reformist union officials planned a reconciliation. In 1921 a T. U. congress held in Melbourne suggested as a basis for unity the adoption of a Socialist objective, and a few months later the Federal Conference of the Labor Party agreed to make the stated objective of the Australian Labor Party "The socialisation of industry, production and exchange"—this to be realised by constitutional means.

What a travesty this is. The hypocritical "left" wing leaders snugly returned to the fold, satisfied with having changed the stated objective. But nothing else was changed. Corruption, opportunism and treachery were rampant. The working-class movement remained shackled to the chariot of capitalism, subor-

dinated to bourgeois ideas and politics.

Socialism is not something that can be realised by moving resolutions or by the mere changing of an objective. It is a product of the class struggle which must be prosecuted relentlessly and which leads inevitably to the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of proletarian dictatorship.

But instead of pursuing the class struggle the L.P., following the 1921 conference, where the so-called "Red" rules were adopted, continued along the line of class collaboration, of co-operation with capitalism. Economic conditions favored the L. P. From 1921 until 1929 Australian capitalism entered into a period of expansion. The movement of the workers which reached such high pitch at the end of the war commenced to decline. The distrust of the L. P. weakened.

This period was one when reformism strengthened its position considerably and the L. P. once again established class connections with and influence over the trade unions. At no time in its history was the Labor Party more united, at no time were the trade unions more subordinated to it than in this period.

MR. LANG'S PROFOUNDNESS

At Cessnock, Mr. Lang declared with such effrontery as would put a quack doctor to shame:

"The financial power does not care whether the Labor Party moves right or left. The only time it cares, and the only time it is afraid is when the movement is united, marching straight ahead."

This pompous nonsense will not stand a moment's consideration.

In that period preceding 1929, when capitalism was so considerably strengthened, the workers were "united" around the L. P. banner and marched "straight ahead." The Communist Party was weak and isolated and exercised no influence, or very little, on the direction of the march. Labor Governments were elected in Queensland, N.S.W., Victoria, Western Australia, South Australia, and in the Federal arena. The Labor Party was at the zenith of its power, but the financial power neither "cared," nor was it "afraid," for its power was never in danger.

The Labor Party was "marching straight ahead," with the employers, to the strengthening of capitalism, "straight ahead" to the strengthening of the chains holding the working masses enslaved to capitalism.

The main factor enabling capitalism to restore itself and expand further in the post-war period was precisely the co-operation

and assistance of the Labor Party which, together with the reformists, held the workers back from struggle.

Mr. Lang, with ponderous solemnity, has assured the working-class that the Labor movement is "never wrong," which is but a more modest way of saying "Lang is right." From this it follows that if it "marches straight ahead" it must be right. Where it is marching to is a matter of no consequence, the important thing is "forward." (Shades of Bernstein!)

The profound absurdity of this is so obvious that even a child would be amused. Why the whole history of the Australian Labor movement has been marked by aimlessness, by lack of direction in its development, and this has been its weakness.

The movement itself is important, that it march ahead is important, but the most important thing of all is that it knows where it is marching—where it is headed for. The whole movement and its advance must be subordinated to the realisation of its objective, which is the destruction of capitalism and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. It must be able to combine unity in organisation and advance with clear objectives. To merely "march straight ahead" means to travel along at the rear of capitalism.

Lang's worshipping at the shrine of the spontaneous Labor movement is combined with bitter contempt for theory. He declared at the Goulburn Country L. P. Conference, in 1933: "The great Labor movement has never laid claim to a vast amount of scholastic erudition. It is a people's movement." And at the Sydney Metropolitan Conference, the same year, he said after attacking the theorists: "The people to whom we must appeal have no interest in learned dissertations on Socialism."

What a condescending philanthropic bourgeois! He does not want to overburden the workers with knowledge. They must know just enough to shout "Lang is right." But does he not slander the working-class when he declares they "have no interest" in Socialism?

Why must the workers not be given theory? Precisely because they would then commence to demand to know where they were marching to, and they might even start to pry into the very doubtful theories of Socialisation of Credit and Nationalisation of Banking. Lang wants the workers to wallow along in ignorance and black confusion, for it is this, and this before anything else, which makes his leadership possible.

The conditions which favored the growth of reformism and the L. P. in the post-war period were, however, not to last. In

1929 the world economic crisis broke, and the comparatively weak Australian capitalism was hit with tremendous force. The employers launched the most vicious offensive against the workers and "the conditions of the workers" (Lenin) changed.

The crisis of capitalism and its decay was also the crisis of the Labor Party and its decay. As the crisis developed and the "conditions of the workers" changed, so the antagonism between the bourgeois Labor Party and the vital interests of the working-class became more intense.

Profound stirrings were to be observed in the proletarian giant, stirrings which indicated that the reformist chloroform was commencing to lose its effects, that the period of ebb was giving way to a new wave of working-class struggles. In 1928-29-30 there took place the great battles of the waterside workers, timber workers and miners, and this was followed, 1930-34, by a whole series of struggles of employed and unemployed workers. Those great battles in the early part of the crisis revealed the fact that the Labor movement was taking the path leading to the ending of the political reaction, backwardness and passivity, which long years of the domination of the Labor Party had produced. The more recent battles have served to confirm and hasten this development.

The main force influencing this development was and is the Communist Party, which is the "Socialist Labor Party" Lenin foresaw would develop.

From the years of its formation until the end of 1929 the Communist Party was unable to throw off the opportunism and sectarianism which prevented it from overcoming its isolation from the masses. The years 1930-31-32 were years of struggle against opportunism and sectarianism which inevitably accompanied the drive made to win the masses to the side of the revolutionary movement. In this struggle considerable success was obtained in the sphere of mass work, and at the same time the tunists and "left" sectarian elements were shattered. The years 1933-34 were years of real struggle for the masses and of consolidation of the party on the line of the Comintern.

Now, on the occasion of the 11th anniversary of the death of Lenin, the "Socialist Labor Party" he foresaw would develop is coming to maturity. The bourgeois Labor Party is "making way" for the mass Communist Party.

And if 1929 marked a turning-point in the development of the Australian Labor movement, then the miners' election in November 1934 is also historically important.

Not only does it reveal that the Communists have connected

themselves with the masses and become hardened and experienced, but it was also the first major setback experienced by Lang in the Labor movement. The struggle in the miners' elections was the most important and bitter ever waged between the revolutionary and reformist tendencies in the Labor movement, and the overwhelming vote for Orr and Nelson will inevitably facilitate the decay of the reformism in this country.

The clash of class interests within the Labor movement is entering a more bitter stage. The L.P., which dominated the working-class movement for so long, with such little effort, and which corrupted the movement with bourgeois ideas, is now on its way to liquidation. Mr. Lang realises this and he is frantically trying to piece together the house of cards which is falling about his ears. He even engages in such childish nonsense as claiming that the Communist Party is not part of the Labor movement. And to do so he has gone to the extent of revising our definition and understanding of the Labor movement. His outstanding merit is that he always likes things made to suit himself. At Cessnock he declared:

"Always remember that the Labor movement is not the unions, is not the Labor Party; it's the unions and the party combined that make a united Labor movement." ("Labor Daily," Oct. 30.)

From this it follows that any organisation outside this combination is also outside the Labor movement. The Communist Party, definitely, is taboo. Should the miners', or any other organisation, withdraw from the L.P., then it automatically places itself outside the Labor movement. Lang virtually admitted this when later in his speech he said, "There are many people in Australia to-day who would like to see the Miners' Federation fighting the Labor movement." ("Labor Daily," Oct. 30.)

There is no possible doubt as to what is meant. Stripped of its verbiage and deception Lang's definition means nothing more nor less than that the Labor Party is the Labor movement.

Facts, however, are stubborn things, and the fact in this instance is that the Labor movement is something bigger, of greater scope and content than the Labor Party. It existed before the Labor Party was born. It is the great movement of the laboring masses who are forced to sell their labor power to capital. The Labor Party is only a part of this movement. The Miners' Federation, whether inside or outside the Labor Party is part of the Labor movement, one of its most virile and staunchest parts, and to talk of it "fighting the Labor movement" is to talk of it

fighting itself. This is the absurdity to which Lang's analysis reduces itself.

The main point, however, is the suggestion that the Communist Party is not part of the Labor movement. This is a case of the wish being father to the thought. Communism is an integral part of the working class, of the Labor movement, its most vital, virile and necessary part. Without it, the Labor movement degenerates, it "marches ahead" willy-nilly, without direction, it becomes dependent on capitalism and subordinated to bourgeois politics. To cut the Labor movement off from communism, if it were possible, would be to cut it off from life.

With his fervent desire to have things made to his own order, Lang would dismiss the communists, squashing them with his very profound declaration on the component parts of the Labor movement. However, things are not quite so easy. The miners' vote, for instance, was an emphatic approval of revolutionary leadership. It showed that a great body of workers have a different angle on the Labor movement to Lang.

In his speech, Lang grudgingly admitted that the miners had always "been a power" to "be respected." They have been something more than this, however. There has been no important event in Australian working-class history in which the miners have not played a foremost role, and in many cases a leading one. In the great strikes, in the formation of the Labor Party, in the struggle against war, in the fight against capitalism; no matter where you look, the influence of the miners is marked. As a trade union, the Miners' Federation was always in the vanguard of the movement, and the path the miners trod was usually the beginning of a big mass movement in the same direction. This is why we say that the miners' elections, November, 1934, mark a further turning-point in the history of the Labor movement. The miners' decision reflects a general tendency in the working class, of which the miners are the spearhead—a tendency to sever connections with the Labor Party and reformism and to turn finally and decisively to revolutionary leadership.

THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE SPLIT IN THE LABOR MOVEMENT

Mr. Lang was not merely content with declaring that communism was not part of the labor movement; he also suggested that communists should be "treated as enemies of the labor movement," that they were "a party pledged to smash the labor movement."

We should be annoyed at this churlishness from the "leader"

of the Labor Party, but we are not. If Lang had praised us, then we should have had cause to worry and to examine ourselves.

The drivel about the communists being "pledged to smash the labor movement" will no more stand consideration than the suggestions that the miners would "fight the labor movement."

His insistence that the communists be "treated as enemies" is nothing more nor less than a demand that he be allowed, together with his flunkies, to continue his treachery and betrayal of the labor movement, unrestricted and unmolested. We are to be regarded as enemies of the labor movement because Lang and the Labor Party leaders want the unchallenged right to continue to drag the working class through the mire and filth of bourgeois politics; because they want to continue "marching forward" allied with capitalism.

Is it not clear that his demand that we be "treated as enemies" is but a crude attempt to cover up his own culpability, and to do so under the flag of downright lying, abuse and slander? But lying, abuse and slander were ever poor protection. To-day the working masses are commencing to see through it. They are asking the questions: "Who are the bourgeois agents in the ranks of the labor movement? Who are they in the labor movement that are fighting it? Where are we marching to?"

The full implication of Lang's declaration against the Communist Party is to be found, however, in the following statement:

"If there is a likelihood of any union electing members of the Communist Party to a controlling position in that union it is my bounden duty, as the labor leader of this State, to urge the rejection of the members of the Communist Party. And not only is it my duty to adopt that attitude, but it is the duty of every member of the labor movement. **Every individual must declare for the labor movement [He means Labor Party.—R. D.] or for the Communist Party.**"

The communists "must be treated as enemies" . . . "Declare for the Labor Party or the Communist Party." There can be no mistaking the meaning. Lang is determined to split the labor movement to its very foundations, to dismember the working class, render it impotent and to "smash" it.

It is true that a split, to a degree, already exists in the working class; but for this the Labor Party is solely responsible. It created the conditions for the split when it united with capitalism against the working class in the period before the war, but particularly during the war. Following the war, it continued this policy, and with the development of the crisis it degenerated so

far that to-day the only policy it is capable of is a reform of the banking system in order to restore capitalism to "prosperity," to strengthen the capitalist system.

But the collapse of capitalism is imminent, and the bourgeoisie, in order to try and prolong their existence, are madly driving forward to fascism and war. The Labor Party is part of the process, and is aiding its development even as it participated in the preparations for the last great slaughter, and which, when it broke out, openly allied with capitalism in order to "win the war." To continue allied to capitalism means to "march forward" to fascism and war. In Germany, the social-democracy pursued the same policy. It marched with capitalism and split the working class, thus paving the way for the victory of Hitler. In Australia, the Labor Party's policy, carried to its completion, leads also to the victory of fascism and the destruction of the mass organisations of the working class.

To go with capitalism means to go against the working class and thereby precipitate a split in its ranks. This is what the Labor Party policy has meant. One thing is clear, however, from the experiences in the struggles of the workers, namely, that no deep division exists in the mass of the rank and file of the labor movement. It is towards this, however, that Lang is driving, for this is what is implied in the demand that "every individual must declare for the Labor Party or for the Communist Party."

A critical moment has arrived in the history of the Australian labor movement, and great and grave tasks fall to the lot of the revolutionary movement.

If Lang's demand is realised it will have disastrous results for the working class and will deliver a setback to the labor movement from which it will take years to recover. It will almost inevitably result in the victory of fascism and in the materialisation of the war plans of capitalism. Such are the issues, and it is to this that 43 years of the domination of the Labor Party in the labor movement has led. This is the bitter, galling truth which all must understand.

In those dark, hard years up until the 'nineties of last century the labor movement of this country established glorious traditions of struggle against capitalism. The Labor Party was a product of this period, of those struggles, and with its formation the masses believed a new epoch had dawned for them. They were cruelly mistaken. The Labor Party trampled those traditions of struggle against capitalism in the dust, allied itself with the enemies of the working class, betrayed the workers on every vital issue and is now

preparing to crown its treachery by paving the way for the victory of fascism. It stands out as a mighty monument to deception, corruption, treachery and betrayal.

The great task confronting the working class is the development of the struggles against fascism, war and the capitalist offensive. In order to be successful the workers must be united in these struggles. The Communist Party recognises this, and is leaving no stone unturned to secure such unity. We have approached the Labor Party with proposals for organising joint action in the struggle, to assist in welding the united front of the working class for the struggle against capitalism. The Labor Party refuses to answer, which means that it rejects the proposals. It is obvious that Lang's declaration at Cessnock has become the policy for the whole of the Labor Party leadership. But not so with the Labor Party workers. Everywhere there is response to the appeal of the Communist Party. Labor Party branches and trade unions are endorsing it. An enormous mass of Labor Party workers and a number of Labor Party leaders (Rae, Blackburn, etc.) joined in united mass demonstrations and demands for the right of entry for Kisch and Griffin. The united front of the working class is being welded in the struggle, despite Lang and the Labor Party. Greater battles are ahead, and we are determined to unite the workers for these struggles.

The glorious fighting traditions of the latter half of last century live to-day in the Communist Party. But the confusion and hesitation of that period has gone. To those traditions we add Marxism-Leninism, the mighty theory of the proletariat, based on the experiences of the working-class movement the world over.

The Communist Party brings socialist consciousness to the working class, and is organising and directing the struggles of the laboring masses towards the realisation of the great historical task of overthrowing capitalism and establishing the power of the working class.



Lenin and the Trade Unions

By T. WRIGHT

The trade-unions arose inevitably as the result of the conflict between the workers and their exploiters, representing the spontaneous movement of the workers developing in the course of struggle towards their consolidation as a social class.

Combinations of the workers were savagely repressed by the government and the employers. The workers, however, persisted in their activity, organised in secret and waged energetic and stubborn strike struggles. As a result of these determined struggles and with the assistance of the radical bourgeoisie, the working class won the legal right to form trade unions.

In his "Conditions of the Working Class in England in 1844," Frederick Engels gave a theoretical exposition of this development:

"Trade unions came into being in every branch of industry. They openly worked for the defence of the individual workers against the tyranny and injustice of the bourgeoisie. Their aims were: To fix wages by collective bargaining, to negotiate with the employers of labor as a power functioning in the name of all the members of the union, to regulate wages in accordance with the profits of the entrepreneur, to raise wages whenever possible, to keep wages up to the same level in every branch of work in the factories."—Engels, "Conditions of the Working Class in England in 1844."

"Whenever possible and advisable, the local craft associations combine to form federations. . . . Not only did the unions endeavor to unite all the workers in a given trade into one great association, but from time to time (as for instance in 1830) they tried to combine the workers of the whole of England into one vast trade union, within which the workers of each craft should be independently organised."—Engels.

The universal and chief fighting method of the trade unions is the strike, to which Marx and Engels attributed tremendous importance. "In the absence of such a protest the greed of the employers would know no bounds." (Engels). "Strikes are the

military training colleges of the workers, they are the schools wherein the proletariat is prepared for its entry into the great struggle which is inevitable; they are the proclamations whereby individual sections of the workers announce their adhesion to the Labor movement as a whole."—Engels.

Marx vigorously denounced and combated Proudhon, Lassalle, Weston, and other representatives of petty-bourgeois socialism, who denied the usefulness of the trade unions and the importance of strikes. Marx exposed the bourgeois theory of the wages fund which denied the possibility of wage increases, showed how value and surplus value are created and how wages are determined.

In the controversies over the question of whether or not it was worth while fighting for the demands of the trade unions—more wages, shorter hours, factory legislation, etc.—Marx and Engels defended this struggle for partial demands as of the utmost importance in relation to the general struggle of the proletariat. The First International raised the slogan of the eight-hour day. Engels showed how:

"The law of wages is not upset by the struggle of trade unions. On the contrary it is enforced by them. Without the means of resistance of the trade unions the laborer does not receive even what is due according to the rules of the wage system."—"The Labor Standard," London, May 21, 1881.

COMBINING SOCIALISM WITH THE TRADE UNIONS

"The recognition of the necessity for combining socialism with the working-class movement, is the great merit of Marx and Engels. They forged the revolutionary theory which explains the necessity for this combination and shows the socialist objective to be the organisation of the class struggle of the proletariat."—Lenin, 1900.

The discoveries of Marx and Engels established a scientific basis for socialism, but the struggle for socialism was unreal and ineffective until linked up with the mass organisations and daily struggles of the working-class.

On the other hand, the organisations established by the working-class themselves—the trade unions—would never of their own accord have been able to raise the level of their struggle above that of demanding concessions obtainable within the framework of capitalism.

Writing on the limitations of the trade unions, Engels stated: "The struggle for high wages and short hours and the

whole action of trade unions as now carried on, is not an end in itself, but a means, a very necessary and effective means, but only one of several means towards a higher end; the abolition of the wages system altogether."

"At the side of, or above, the unions of special trades there must spring up a general union, a political organisation of the working-class as a whole."—"The Labor Standard," London, April 4, 1881.

Referring to the International Workingmen's Association, and its connection with the trade unions, Marx in his letter to Kugelmann, dated November 29, 1864, states:

"The association or rather its committee is important because the leaders of the London trades unions are in it . . ."

Thus it was the aim of Marx and Engels to build a political party which would be closely linked with the mass organisations of the working-class, particularly the trade unions, enabling the revolutionary leaders to co-ordinate the economic and political struggles of the workers and link the struggle for every-day demands with the final aims of the revolutionary proletariat.

The failure in Western Europe to realise the aim so clearly defined by Marx and Engels, was due to the treachery and departure from Marxism of the Bernsteins, Kautskys, and Hendersons of the Second International. The parties of this international were based mainly on the "labor aristocracy," the privileged sections of the workers, bribed and debased by the capitalists out of the super-profits wrung from the backward countries and colonial slaves. These parties, departing from Marxism, their leaders the lackeys of the exploiters, became lost in the mire of reformism. Instead of linking the economic struggle of the trade unions with the struggle for socialism, the reformists sought to confine the unions to the economic struggle and the political parties to parliamentary activity in pursuit of reforms.

The fight of Lenin against the traitors of the Second International, against the revisers and falsifiers of Marxism, saved the movement of the Russian proletariat from sharing the fate of the Western European movement, and prepared the way for successful proletarian revolution.

LENIN ON "SPONTANEITY"

The Russian Social Democratic Labor Party was established in 1898, and it was not until 1905 that a mass legal trade-union movement came into existence.

"The most characteristic thing in the history of the development of our trade unions is that they originated,

developed and strengthened after the party, around the party and in friendship with the party."—Stalin.

But this close Marxist relationship between the party and the trade unions was not achieved without an intense struggle, under the leadership of Lenin, against opponents within the party.

The strike struggles of the Russian proletariat commenced in the 'seventies, and in the 'nineties reached gigantic proportions, forcing important concessions from the employers. Mass organisations (mutual aid societies, strike fund clubs, etc.) were formed by the workers and persisted in the face of the persecution of the Tsarist Government.

The strength of this spontaneous movement of the workers developed a special tendency represented by the "economists." The economists bowed before this "spontaneity" and considered that it made the party unnecessary. A grouping of the workers around the strike fund clubs, according to the economists, would be a sufficient substitute for the party. Thus the workers were to be confined to the economic struggle. Politics were to be none of their business, but would be confined to narrow groups of the intellectuals.

Lenin fought relentlessly against this tendency, which coincided with the desire of the Russian bourgeoisie to confine the aims of the struggle of the workers to securing only a greater measure of freedom under capitalism.

Lenin, in discussing this spontaneity, stated that the "spontaneous element in essence represents nothing more nor less than consciousness in an embryonic form."

Lenin draws attention to the spontaneous movement in the strikes of the 'seventies and 'eighties, when the workers destroyed machinery.

"The strikes of the 'nineties revealed far greater flashes of consciousness; definite demands were put forward, the time to strike was carefully chosen, known cases and examples in other places were discussed, etc. While the rebellions were simply revolts of the oppressed, the systematic strikes represented the class struggle, but only in embryo. Taken by themselves, these strikes were simple, trade union struggles, not yet Social Democratic struggles."—Lenin, "What Is To Be Done."

Lenin showed how this "spontaneous" movement exclusively of its own efforts could develop only a trade union consciousness, and in a leading article published in the first number of "Iskra,"

December 1900, he stressed the necessity "to organise a revolutionary party, inseparably connected with the spontaneous Labor movement."

"... In conducting only the economic struggle, the working-class loses its political independence, drags in the wake of other parties and runs counter to the great slogan, 'The emancipation of the workers must be the work of the workers themselves.'"

"Organise not only in benefit societies, strike fund clubs and workers' circles, but organise also into a political party, organise for a decisive struggle against autocratic government and against the whole of capitalist society."

"If we have a strongly organised party, an isolated strike may be converted into a political demonstration, into a political victory over the government."

The fight against the economists was part of a general struggle of Lenin against the elements opposed to and departing from Marxism and strongly expressed in the struggle to define the organisational form of the party and its relation to the class. This struggle led to a split in the Russian Social-Democratic Party in 1903 and the formation of two fractions—the Bolsheviks, under Lenin's leadership, and the Mensheviks.

The fact that the Bolshevik Party was built on the basis of factory groups and not on the territorial basis pursued by the Western European parties (confining themselves to parliamentarism) was also of vital importance for the development of the Party in Marxist relationship to the mass organisations and struggles of the workers. This factory basis of organisation was shown to be an essential feature of a Bolshevik Party.

TRADE UNIONS AND THE 1905 REVOLUTION

In the 1905 revolution the strike movement and the trade unions played an important role. Small economic strikes developed into political strikes for democratic rights, then into a general political strike transforming into armed insurrection. These lessons are of enormous significance for the world movement of the proletariat.

The revolutionary wave had enforced freedom of organisation for the workers, and the trade unions developed into a great mass movement. Old errors and illusions were revived and Lenin had once more to combat attempts of the Mensheviks to use the trade unions as a substitute for the Party. The Menshevik liquidators failed to understand the difference between "the organisation of

the workers and the organisation of revolutionaries."

In "What Is To Be Done" Lenin declared that:

"The political struggle of the Social Democrats is far more extensive and complex than the economic struggle of the workers against the employers and the government. Similarly (and indeed for this reason) the organisations of the revolutionary Social-Democrats must inevitably be **different** from the organisation of the workers designed for the latter struggle."

During the 1905 revolution, in addition to the trade unions, the working class established factory councils and delegates from these councils, together with representatives from the unions and political groups, formed the City Soviet, a new form of mass organisation of the greatest significance. The genius of Lenin correctly discerned in this new organisation the organs of the future proletarian dictatorship.

While the trade unions united the industrial workers along trade lines, the Soviets, as a mass organisation, united all of the toiling masses irrespective of trade and profession. They closely linked the proletarian vanguard with the mass of peasants.

"The highest principle of the dictatorship is the preservation of the union of the proletariat with the peasantry, so that the proletariat retain the leading role and the government power."—Lenin.

While the parties of the Second International sank deeper in the mire of reformism and approached the 1914 collapse, the Bolsheviks, under Lenin, carried through the split with the Mensheviks and built a powerful, disciplined organisation.

In the years of reaction after the defeat of the 1905 revolution, the unions were repressed and weakened. They carried on a miserable existence until 1912, when a strong revival commenced. However, during the war, until the revolution of February, 1917, the unions were again repressed.

ROLE OF TRADE UNIONS IN NOVEMBER REVOLUTION

Following on the bourgeois democratic revolution of February 1917, the factory and trade union organisations, under Bolshevik leadership, took up the struggle against the provisional government and for "All Power to the Soviets." The Menshevik and Social Revolutionary leaders opposed the demands of the workers, who nevertheless conducted strikes and demonstrated in the streets of Petrograd in July, 1917, in support of their demands.

Under the control of the majority of Mensheviks and Social

Revolutionaries the Soviets became more or less powerless, the counter-revolution developed, the revolutionary organisations were smashed, printing offices destroyed, etc.

To finally bring the revolution to an end the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries organised a so-called State Conference to be held in Moscow on August 25, 1917. This conference was composed mainly of counter-revolutionary elements and was vigorously exposed and attacked by the Bolsheviks.

On the day of the conference, the Trade Union Council of Moscow called a successful one-day strike, with the slogan of "All Power to the Soviets." The Ural Conference of Trade Unions, representing 145,000 workers, also condemned the conference.

The counter-revolution now arranged for General Kornilov to march on Petrograd to crush the workers. The workers formed armed detachments and barred the entrance to Petrograd with trenches. The railwaymen blocked the railroads and prevented the movement of the troops.

From then on, with the unions actively co-operating in all the military measures, the revolution developed rapidly. On August 27, the Petrograd Trade Union Council held a joint session with the Central Council of Shop Stewards, and made demands regarding measures for the defence of Petrograd, the proclamation of a democratic republic, land to the peasants and the nationalisation of several industries.

The Moscow Trade Union Council in joint meeting with union leaders on September 11, demanded from the Moscow Soviet the suspension of the capitalist newspapers, the arming of the organised workers and the forming of a red guard. The council elected a military organiser.

The military conspiracy against the revolution had finally discredited the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries, and the leadership was now mostly in the hands of the Bolsheviks. As a result of their activity within the unions, the Bolsheviks already had leadership in the most important unions.

The unions more and more insistently called for the seizure of power. After Kornilov's failure, the employers sabotaged production and locked out the workers. The workers conducted a vigorous struggle against the lock-outs and wage-cuts and prepared for the armed uprising.

"That which made Red October possible was the fact that the banner of proletarian revolt was at the same time the banner of the trade union movement in Russia. The Soviet

Republic triumphed over its innumerable foes because the trade unions, which united the whole working class of Russia, gave the proletarian government all possible support.

"The Soviet Republic of Russia will stand all trials, will triumph over all its enemies, because the banner of Communism is the banner of the trade-union movement in Russia."—Message from the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party to the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions on the occasion of its fifth anniversary, July 3, 1922.

TRADE UNIONS AND THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL

With the success of Bolshevism in the Soviet Union and the formation of the Third International in 1919, under Lenin's leadership, the way was paved for rapidly winning over the revolutionary workers of the other countries for genuine revolutionary struggle. The parties joining the Third International took with them many of the weaknesses inherited from the period of reformist domination, and were guilty of numerous and serious errors. Lenin gave considerable attention to correcting these errors of the young Communist Parties.

He set out to correct, among others, the serious errors of the "left" Communists who were opposed to working in "reactionary" trade unions, who were leaving the trade unions and were desirous of creating new and "pure" unions.

Once again Lenin explained the Marxist attitude towards the trade unions:

"Not less funny and childishly nonsensical appears to us the important, learned and awesome revolutionary disquisitions of the German 'left' as to why Communists cannot and should not work in reactionary trade unions; why it is permissible to refuse such work; why it is necessary to quit the craft unions and to create in their stead quite new and pure 'workmen's unions' led by exceedingly nice (and for the most part probably very youthful) Communists, etc., etc."

"Capitalism inevitably leaves as an inheritance to socialism, on the one hand old professional and trade differences created among the workers in the course of centuries—on the other hand trade unions, which year after year, very slowly can and will develop into broader industrial rather than craft organisations (embracing whole industries and not merely crafts, trades and professions). These indus-

trial unions will, in their turn, lead to the education, training and preparation of workers who will be able to do everything. Communism is proceeding in this direction; it must necessarily and will arrive at this point, but only after a great many years. . . ."

"In countries more advanced than Russia, a certain reactionism of the trade unions revealed itself necessarily much more strongly than in our country . . . there a much wider stratum of 'labor aristocracy'—professional, narrow-minded, selfish, stale, petty-bourgeois elements, imperialistically inclined and bribed and corrupted by imperialists—have cropped up. That this is so needs no proof. The struggle against the Gompers, Jouhaux, Hendersons, Merreims, Legiens and Co., in Western Europe is much more difficult than the fight with our Mensheviks, who represent a thoroughly homogeneous social and political type. This struggle must be mercilessly conducted until (as was done in our case), all the incorrigible leaders of opportunism and social-chauvinism have been completely exposed and thrown out of the unions. It is impossible to conquer the political power, and this should not even be attempted, until these conditions have been to a certain degree realised. . . ."

"We carry on the struggle against the 'labor aristocracy' in the name of the working masses in order to gain them on our side . . . Our Mensheviks, like all opportunist, social-chauvinist, Kautsky-like leaders of the trade unions, are nothing more nor less than the 'agents of the bourgeoisie in the labor movement . . .'. Not to work within reactionary trade unions means to leave the backward or insufficiently-developed working-masses to the influence of reactionary leaders, agents of the bourgeoisie, labor aristocrats or 'bourgeoisified' workmen."—Lenin, "Left Communism."

Lenin then explains how the reformist officials will not only be "grateful" to these "left" Communists for refusing to work in the reactionary unions, but will resort to all manner of tricks to prevent Communists entering into trade unions and "insult, hound and persecute them."

"It is necessary to be able to withstand all this, to go to the whole length of any sacrifice, if needed, to resort to strategy and adroitness, illegal proceedings, reticence and subterfuge, to anything in order to penetrate into the trade unions, to remain in them, at any cost, to carry on communistic work

in them."

Lenin proceeds to relate how, prior to 1905, a secret service agent, Zubatoff, established organisations for the workers to ferret out the revolutionaries and for combating them. Members of the Party were sent into these meetings and met with considerable success in "wresting" the workers away from the Zubatoff influence. In a footnote Lenin comments that the Gompers and Hendersons are "nothing else than Zubatoffs, differing from ours only in their European dress, in the gloss of their civilised, refined, democratically smooth manner of conducting their mean, sordid politics."

TRADE UNIONS AND PROLETARIAN DICTATORSHIP

Within Russia, the guidance of Lenin was required constantly, after the November revolution, to clarify the relations between the Party and the trade unions and between the Soviets and the trade unions. The Mensheviks used their influence towards breaking the close connection between the unions and the Soviets, and between the unions and the Party, preaching the "independence" of the trade unions. There were also "right" deviators in the Party who supported a somewhat similar proposal. Then again considerable confusion was created by Trotsky, who failed to understand the correct relation between the Soviet apparatus and the trade unions.

A degree of conflict also developed between the trade union apparatus and the central councils of factory committees, which were becoming rival directing centres. But this conflict was ended by the reorganisation of the unions on an industrial basis with one union in each workplace and one union in each industry. The factory organisation in this way became a branch of the industrial union.

In "Left Communism," Lenin outlines the position of the trade unions in relation to the Proletarian Dictatorship:

"The relation between leaders, party, class, masses, and at the same time the relationship of the Proletarian Dictatorship and its Party to the trade unions, present themselves to us in the following concrete form: The Dictatorship of the Proletariat is carried out by the Communist Party of Bolsheviks. . . . In carrying on its work the Party rests directly on the trade unions."

Lenin then explains how the Communist Party, through its fractions, leads the trade unions, and continues:

"Thus is obtained, on the whole, a formally non-Communist, flexible, comparatively extensive and very power-

ful proletarian apparatus by means of which the Party is closely connected with the class and the masses and by means of which, under the guidance of the Party, class dictatorship is realised. Without the closest connection with the trade unions, whose hearty support and self-sacrificing work aid the construction not only of the economic, but also of the military organisation, it would have been of course, impossible to govern the country and to maintain the dictatorship for two and a-half years or even for two and a-half months."

Lenin characterised the trade union in the proletarian dictatorship as a "school of Communism."

"But the development of the proletariat did not and could not anywhere in the world, proceed by any other road than that of the trade unions, with their mutual activity with the working-class Party. The seizing of political power by the proletariat as a class, is a gigantic step forward, and it is incumbent upon the Party to educate the trade unions in a new manner distinct from the old one, to guide them, not forgetting meanwhile that they remain and will remain for a long time a necessary 'school of Communism,' a preparatory school for the training of the proletariat to realise their dictatorship, an indispensable union of the workers for the permanent transfer to the management of the country's economic life into their hands as a class (and not to single trades), to be given later into the hands of all the laboring masses."

The development of the trade union movement along the course set by Lenin, has confirmed his views and brought magnificent results in the tasks of socialist construction.

The teachings of Lenin on the trade unions are maintained in the forefront by the world Communist movement. One of the twenty-one points in the "Conditions of Admission to the Communist International," declares:

"Every party that desires to belong to the Communist International, must carry on systematic and persistent Communist work in the trade unions, in workers' and industrial councils, in the co-operative societies, and in other mass organisations. Within these organisations it is necessary to create Communist groups, which by means of practical and

stubborn work must win over the trade unions, etc., for the cause of Communism. These cells should constantly denounce the treachery of the social-patriots and the vacillations of the 'centre,' at every step. The Communist groups should be completely subordinate to the Party as a whole."

The Fifth Congress of the Communist International declared that:

"... Trade unions are the rallying ground of all the exploited on which the Communists must conduct their educational and propaganda activity. The abandonment of the trade unions implies desertion from the revolution and co-operation with the enemies of the proletariat."

In the programme of the Communist International, adopted at the Sixth World Congress, in 1928, the teachings of Lenin in relation to the trade unions are summarised as follows:

"Under capitalism, the mass labor organisations, in which the broad masses of the proletariat were originally organised and trained, i.e., the trade (industrial) unions, serve as the principal weapons in struggle against trustified capital and its State. Under the proletarian dictatorship, they become transformed into the principal lever of the State; they become transformed into a school of Communism by means of which vast masses of the proletariat are drawn into the work of socialist management of production; they are transformed into organisations directly connected with all parts of the State apparatus, influencing all branches of its work."

"Work in the factories and trade unions"—this is the vital insistent, instruction to communists. Only by persistent everyday activity in the workplace and trade unions, can Bolshevik success be attained.

The Newspaper as a Collective Organiser

By R. DAKRELL

In this article I propose to quote a number of important extracts from Comrade Lenin's writings on this fundamental question in connection with the issue of an all-Russian newspaper in 1901, and his disagreement with a social-democrat, L. Nadezhdin.

In an article, "Where to Begin," published in "Iskra" No. 4, the task is set for the building of an all-Russian newspaper as the fundamental task for developing the revolutionary movement throughout Russia, closely linked with the (at that time) spontaneous struggles of the workers.

In a negative reply Nadezhdin states: "Undoubtedly this is an extremely important matter, but neither a newspaper, nor a whole series of popular leaflets, nor a mountain of manifestos, can serve as the basis for a militant organisation in revolutionary times. We must set to work to build up strong political organisations in the localities. If we do not build up strong political organisations locally, what will be the use of even an excellently organised all-Russian newspaper?"

In reply to this Comrade Lenin writes: "Unless we set up strong political organisations in the localities, even an excellently organised all-Russian newspaper will be of no avail. Absolutely true. **But the whole point is that there is no other way of training strong political organisations except through an all-Russian newspaper.** The author missed the most important statement "Iskra" made before it proceeded to explain its "plan" (for an all-Russian newspaper.—R.D.): "That it is necessary to call for the establishment of a revolutionary organisation capable of combining all of the forces, and of leading the movement not only in name but in deed. i.e., that will be ready at any moment to support every protest and every outbreak and to utilise these for the purpose of increasing and strengthening the militant forces required for decisive battles."

"A newspaper is not merely a collective propagandist and collective agitator, it is also a collective organiser. In this respect it can be compared to the scaffolding erected around a building in construction; it marks the contours of the structure, and facilitates communication between the builders, permitting them

to distribute the work and to view the common results achieved by their organised labor."

Absolutely everyone now talks about the importance of "unity," about the necessity for "rallying" and "organising," but the majority of us lack a definite idea of where to begin and how to bring about this unification, and very few of us realise the tremendous importance of the Press in this regard.

Lenin goes on to say: "The mere function of distributing a newspaper will help to establish a real contact (that is, if it is a newspaper worthy of the name, i.e., if it is issued regularly, not once a month like a big magazine, but four times a month). At the present time, communication between cities on revolutionary business is an extreme rarity, and at all events an exception rather than the rule. If we had a newspaper, however, such communications would become the rule, and would secure not only the distribution of the paper, of course, but also (and what is more important) **an interchange of experience, of material, of force and resources.** The scope of organisational work would immediately become ever so much wider and the success of a single locality would serve as a standing encouragement to further perfection and the desire to utilise the experience by comrades working in other parts of the country.

"Local work would become far richer and more varied than it is now, political and economical exposures gathered from all over Russia would provide mental food to the workers of all trades and in all stages of development and would provide material and occasion for talks and readings on the most diverse subjects, which indeed will be suggested by hints in the legal press, by conversations among the public and by shamefaced government communications. Every outbreak, every demonstration, would be weighed and discussed from all its aspects all over Russia; it would stimulate a desire not to lag behind the rest, a desire to excel (we Socialists do not by any means reject all rivalry or all 'competition'), and consciously to prepare for that which first appeared to spring up spontaneously, a desire to take advantage of the favorable conditions in a given district or at a given moment for modifying the plan of attack, etc."

"Secondly, regular common work would train our people to regulate the force of a given attack in accordance with the strength of the forces of the given local detachments of the opposition (at the present time no one ever thinks of doing this because in nine cases out of ten these attacks occur spontaneously), and would facilitate the 'transport' from one place to

another, not only of literature, but also revolutionary forces."

"And if indeed we succeeded in reaching a point where all, or at least a considerable majority of the local committees, local groups and circles, actively took up work for the common cause, we could, in the not far distant future, establish a daily newspaper that would be regularly distributed in tens of thousands of copies over the whole of Russia. This newspaper would become a part of an enormous pair of smiths' bellows that would blow every spark of class struggle and popular indignation into a general conflagration. Around what is in itself very innocent and very small, but in the full sense of the word a regular and common cause, an army of tried warriors would systematically gather and receive their training. On the ladders and scaffolding of this general organisational structure there would soon ascend social-democratic Zhelyabovs from among our revolutionists, and Russian Rebels from among our workers, who would take their place at the head of the mobilised army and rouse the whole people to settle accounts with the shame and the curse of Russia. That is what we ought to be dreaming about."

"Divergence between dreams and reality causes no harm if only the person dreaming believes seriously in his dream, if he attentively observes life, compares his observations with the airy castles he builds, and if, generally speaking, he works consciously for the achievement of his fantasies. If there is some connection between dreams and real life, then all is well. Now, of this kind of dreaming there is too little in our movement, and those most responsible for this are the ones who boast of their sober views, their 'closeness' to the 'concrete,' i.e., the representatives of legal criticism and illegal 'Khvostism.'"

And so Comrade Lenin deals brilliantly with the question of the Press, showing the true and real role of the Press as an agitational and propaganda organ, but also as the best organiser, as a means of rallying thousands of workers behind the struggles of the working class, of showing clearly the theories and tactics of the revolutionary leadership, and also of organising this movement of the workers into a conscious revolutionary force, out of which will rise the leaders of the workers' struggles for power.

The Party Press in Australia still fails to reflect the movements of the workers to the necessary degree, falls short as a means of an exchange of experiences, still fails to be used by our Sections as a means of approach and contact with large numbers of workers, of consolidating and building the Party, and

finally fails to be used correctly by our Sections in raising the political level of our agitation and so the political consciousness of the mass of the workers in the trade unions, mines and among the unemployed.

District 2 are the worst offenders in this respect, but to some extent the same weaknesses are apparent in all districts. In District 2 our comrades regard the Press as the responsibility of some other comrade. In all Sections this District has made advances, new Units have been built, new workers won to the Party, much better mass work and trade-union work developed and the influence of the Party increased many times; but despite these gains the Press sales remain static and in some cases drop.

In Newcastle, the Party vote increased from 910 to over 4000, and Newcastle sells about 40 dozen papers; in Hunter, we receive 5000 votes and sell about 50 dozen papers; in the mining fields, very many mining strikes and stoppages occur, and our Press does not reflect this movement. In Newcastle trade unions, steel and railway workshops and in the unemployed, the ire of the workers is rising, and again this is not reflected in the Press.

Throughout the Party, and particularly in District 2, our comrades must remember Lenin's words and seriously consider the Press. Just as soon as our comrades discuss and consciously agree with Comrade Lenin, just as soon as we report on our campaigns, organise paper canvasses, groups of readers and reporters in the mines and factories and in the unemployed, and consciously read and study our Press, then the Party will make enormous strides and become the real Party of the masses, closely linked with the struggles of the workers and reflecting their movements, their feelings and struggles.

District 2 cannot remain satisfied until the Press sales reach and surpass 10,000, for we have this many and more workers who agree with us to the point of voting for us, many of whom will be prepared to work for us. All communists recognise the power of the bourgeois daily Press, and all decry it, but as soon as we recognise the power which the revolutionary Press can and must become, and really face the task, we will be able to develop here, too, a daily organ for the working class.

All of those who are prepared to face this task must become the driving force in the campaign, and, as Comrade Lenin says, all those who boast of their "sober" views, their "closeness" to the "concrete," and so on, must be fought and won to a correct estimation of the role of the revolutionary Press.

The Decline of the Victorian Labor Party

By J. D. BLAKE

The Victorian Labor Party has a number of important characteristics, an outline of which gives an indication of the weak points in its armory in the State of Victoria.

The executive of the Labor Party in this State is not blessed with any very capable or experienced "Left" demagogues of the type of Lang and Garden of N.S.W., with the result that ability to manoeuvre is not displayed by the Labor Party in Victoria to the same extent as in N.S.W. The most glaring acts of treachery and betrayal go hand in hand with a whole series of "Left" manoeuvres. But the Victorian social-fascists show comparatively little skill in using their "Left" phrases, which are somewhat less blatant than those of Lang and Garden, to conceal their very blatant acts of betrayal.

The Victorian Labor Party has no daily paper, but is limited to an unpopular weekly with a small circulation. In this respect the communists are, at least, on an equal footing with them. The growing fighting spirit of the workers, coupled with the increased power of the Communist Party, has made considerable progress in breaking down the mass influence of the Labor Party in Victoria. It is for this reason that the Labor Party leaders find themselves ground between the need to render support to the growing offensive against the workers, whilst at the same time attempting to prevent the leftward swing of the workers towards the Communist Party.

The following quotation throws an interesting light on this position:

"Members on both sides of the House will agree that the Minister, Mr. Hughes, has done his work extremely well. There have been complaints, which are inevitable with such a big problem, but the Minister has administered his Department consistently and helpfully. . . . Unless the Government deals generously with the problem we are certainly headed for some form of social destruction in the not far distant future. Unemployment is the outstanding problem in Australia. If it is not solved, society is doomed. Some day, neglect of the problem will result in disaster."

Such was the statement made by Tunnecliffe, leader of the Labor opposition in the Victorian Legislative Assembly towards the end of 1933. The statement can be said to truly reflect the outlook of the official Labor Party in Victoria. Kent Hughes, of whom Tunnecliffe speaks so well, was the Minister for Unemployment who introduced work-for-the-dole in Victoria, and this is the work for which he received the praise of the Labor Party.

Tunnecliffe showed how much the rising wave of militancy amongst the workers is feared by the Labor Party when he spoke of this as a "disaster" and the "doom of society." This same fear is expressed in the editorial of the "Labor Call" of February 1, in an attempt to explain the disgust amongst the workers at the Labor Party's role in the introduction of the Premier's Plan:

"Disunity, for the time being, was to be expected, because of the fact that a number of workers and their representatives were confused by what had happened, and, naturally, parted company from those who were not confused and who were prepared to continue to stand behind Labor's policy.

The admission is made for the purpose of directing attention to the fact that because of the lack of understanding in times of economic crisis or where sudden disturbances take place in what are accepted as being the usual order of things, disunity in the ranks of Labor, for the time being, must be expected."

Thus anxiety is expressed at the decay taking place within the Labor Party, and the important admission is made that in the critical periods in the struggle of the working class the Labor Party is unable to give leadership. This, of course, arises from the very nature of the Labor Party as the main social support of capitalism. No attempt is made to attack the real cause of the decay, which lay in the reformist support of the Premier's Plan. On the contrary, the workers are blamed for failing to understand why it was that the Labor Party gave support to the introduction of the 10 per cent. cut in the workers' wages.

On the occasion of the application to the Federal Arbitration Court for the restoration of the 10 per cent. cut, the "Labor Call" had the following to say:

"It may prove to be true that the effort will fail, but failure always is possible in all things which are undertaken with the intention of improving the conditions of the workers. There is no certainty that success will be achieved

as a result of every attempt that is made in that regard. . . . But likelihood of failure is not a good reason why an application should not be made to the Federal Arbitration Court to restore the 10 per cent. cut. On the contrary, it is a good reason why the application should be made."

For downright betrayal this would be hard to beat. Thousands of pounds of union funds were expended on an Arbitration Court case in which failure was expected beforehand. Actually, the court decision resulted in a considerable worsening of the position of the working class, and this line is justified by the empty theory that if continued it will wear down the opposition of the employers. Is it not more true that this arbitrationist line of the Labor Party has led to sapping the vital fighting strength of the working class?

BETRAYAL OF STRIKE STRUGGLES

The attitude of the Labor Party to the strike struggles of the workers is exemplified in its declarations on the strikes of the Wonthaggi miners and the Melbourne tramwaymen. Regarding Wonthaggi, the "Labor Call" has the following to say:

But it cannot be denied that because of the stand they have taken up, while other workers have gained, the miners at Wonthaggi themselves have suffered hardship and loss. Their position in that respect is similar to that of the unemployed; they have suffered hardships and loss because the workers generally have yet to learn how best to act more effectively in the interests of one another as a class."

What hypocrisy and what impudence! Was it not the executive of the Labor Party which failed to develop the joint action campaign as proposed by the Miners' Central Council? And did not the workers in every part of Victoria and Australia render wonderful financial assistance to the striking Wonthaggi miners? And was it not because of this latter that the miners of Wonthaggi did not suffer hardship and loss, but were well supported and won through to victory?

Of course, this is so, and yet the "Labor Call" has the audacity to blame the workers for failing to develop solidarity actions in support of Wonthaggi. A failure, the main responsibility for which must be placed at the door of the A.L.P. executive.

On the strike of the Melbourne tramway workers, the "Labor Call" of October 25 declares:—

"The lesson that is or should be learned is that where the workers concerned can easily be replaced by others or where

one group can be used in place of another—such as a railway group in place of a tramway group, or vice versa—the workers' struggle for increased wages and improved conditions of working immediately becomes a political rather than an industrial struggle. . . . In all such cases unity and success through the medium of the ballot-box are much more likely to be achieved than in industry."

Puerile statements about the ballot-box are used to cover up the betrayal carried out by the Labor Party and the reformist union leaders. The facts are that the Disputes Committee, controlled by the Labor Party, in collaboration with the reformist officials of the Tramways Union, refused to extend the strike to the railways, and then completely sold out the tramwaymen.

GROWING "LEFT" MANOEUVRES

All these acts of betrayal result in growing dissatisfaction amongst the Labor Party workers. In its attempts to counter this, the Victorian Labor Party carries out a number of "left" manoeuvres. It repudiated the Premier's Plan (after the Plan had been carried out), and expelled Hogan in an attempt to punish the workers who were hostile to the policy of the Hogan government. During this year, the Victorian Labor Party branch was in the forefront of the movement to overcome the factional differences between Lang and Scullin, with the object of creating greater "unity" within the Labor Party.

The conference of the Victorian Labor Party held at the beginning of this year formulated a programme for the attainment of unity, which displayed marked tendencies to "left" demagoguery. This programme consisted of four points:—(1) Socialisation of credit, (2) anti-war declaration, (3) unemployment insurance, (4) tariffs. These points express a form of "left" demagoguery so characteristic of Lang and Scullin in N.S.W.

The conference was marked by a threat of "left" divisions which ran through the whole proceedings; such phrases as "the breaking of the Federal bureaucracy," "the establishment of rank-and-file control within the Labor Party," showed the desire to sidetrack the rising fighting spirit of the workers through the safety-valve of "left" demagoguery.

The conference carried a resolution which "forbids" governments to take part in some wars which are mentioned, but gives permission to participate in a war of "defence." These same "lefts" in the Labor Party have consistently opposed co-operation with the Victorian Council Against War and Fascism.

Despite this, the anti-war sentiments of the workers in the A.L.P. have grown from week to week, thus compelling the A.L.P. leaders to give some attention to the problem, but they consider it, not from the angle of building the united front of all workers in the struggle against war, but from the angle of retaining at all costs those workers who are opposed to war within the ranks of the A.L.P. Hence the attempt now being made to organise a separate anti-war committee through the Trades Hall Council. This is a most brazen attempt to split the movement, and indicates that so far as the Labor Party leaders are concerned they are not interested in developing the struggle against war, but rather in preventing the building of a united front of the workers in such a struggle.

THE LABOR PARTY BEGINS TO BREAK UP

All these elements taken together form the basis for the obvious disintegration which is taking place within the Victorian Labor Party. This process of disintegration was very clearly revealed in the last Federal elections, when the vote for the Labor Party remained stagnant in spite of a number of "Left" manoeuvres.

An important feature which provides a measure for the degree of disintegration in the A.L.P. is the fact that during the period of the election campaign the union subscriptions to the Labor Party election funds totalled little more than the amount collected from the workers by the Communist Party in Victoria for its campaign during the same period.

This important development, which is unprecedented in the history of the Labor Party in Victoria, serves to bring out sharply the fact that the influence of the A.L.P. in the unions has been seriously undermined. During the entire history of the A.L.P., its great stronghold has been the reformist trade unions, and whilst the small sum subscribed by the unions to the A.L.P. election fund during this year is not a final measure of the weakening of Labor Party influence on the unions, it is a very definite indicator of the trend in this direction and must serve as an accelerator to the communists in intensifying their work in the unions.

This process of decay within the Labor Party has been materially assisted by the correct work of the communists in Victoria, and has developed simultaneously with a rapid growth in the influence and organisation of the Communist Party. In

the last Federal elections the communists almost trebled their number of votes, and the Party in Victoria has displayed greater ability to lead the struggles of the workers despite a number of shortcomings which still exist in this important field of Party work.

During the election campaign large numbers of Labor Party workers assisted the campaign of the Communist Party, and in a number of cases lower functionaries of the Labor Party were canvassing for the Communist candidates.

Further evidence of the rapid disintegration within the A.L.P. in Victoria can be seen in the growing number of unions and A.L.P. branches affiliating with the Victorian Council Against War and Fascism in spite of the ban imposed by the executive. It is mainly because of this development that the Labor Party leaders decided to launch a separate anti-war committee through the Trades Hall Council. Already three branches of the Labor Party have declared their acceptance of the united front proposals of the communists, and joint meetings are being held between the Sections and Units of the C.P. on the one hand and the Labor Party branches on the other. A number of other branches of the Labor Party have declared that they are not opposed to the united front proposals of the Communist Party, but desire more discussion and clarification.

Many unions and mass meetings of workers have already expressed their support for the united front proposals of the communists. In addition to this, some prominent trade union officials have expressed agreement with the united front proposals.

This situation is extremely favorable for winning over the masses of the workers to the united front in struggle. The communists in Victoria must pay more attention to organising and leading the everyday struggles of the workers, and particularly to developing more intensive trade union work—teaching the workers by their own experience in the daily struggle. On the ability to fulfil these tasks will depend the tempo of decline in the influence of reformism on the Victorian workers.

Agrarian Situation in Australia

By T. ENSFIELD.

The passing of the year 1934 leaves the Australian bourgeoisie holding aloft a pricked bubble—the "prosperity" bubble of the U.A.P. and the capitalist press.

The agrarian economy of Australia is entering a storm—the storm forecast by the 4th plenum of the C.C. in March 1934.

The decline in the price of wool, and the still more pronounced decline in demand for wool at the sales, is already reflected in the adverse trade balance for the four months ending October 31. This year exports have declined by £stg4,634,000 as compared with the corresponding four months of last year.

The situation of the wheat industry is rapidly going from bad to worse, for, not only has the price fallen lower than that of last year, but sales have not even reached quota level. The desperate economic situation of the wheat industry is now being further complicated by a series of natural disasters:—the 'hopper plague' in N.S.W. and Victoria, and devastating storms over the major portion of the wheat areas.

The extent of the deterioration of wheat farming is indicated in the report of the Wheat Commission, which states that ten million pounds worth of machinery and implements are necessary to re-equip the wheat farms.

The Federal Government has decided to resort to the flour tax again in order to raise money for the relief of the wheat industry. But relief for the wheat industry does not mean relief for the impoverished wheat farmers. With one hand the Government steals millions from the consumers; with the other it aids the exploiters to appropriate all but sufficient for a starvation existence among the toiling farmers. The four million wheat bounty divided among the whole of the 70,000 wheat growers would give each one £57. The sale of an average harvest at 3/- a bushel amounts to twenty-one million pounds, or approximately £290 per grower. So that actually the return per grower, with bounty, amounts to £347, and this is not taking into account a surplus of forty million bushels from last season. On this basis of calculation the situation of the majority of wheat farmers is still better because, in addition to wheat, a considerable income is derived from sheep.

Yet the average income of the great majority of wheat farmers is less than £100 a year.

It is within this setting that we must review the decisions of the conference of Federal and State Ministers held at Canberra on December 3. The Federal Government proposes to raise twelve million pounds for farm rehabilitation "through relief of farmers' debts."

This is the most daring move made by the plunder government of the bourgeoisie for some time, for it is clearly intended to make a gift of millions of pounds to rich creditors who have already grown fat on the proceeds of years of plunder of the toiling farmers.

The dairying industry, now second to wool in importance, is in a critical position. To gauge the importance of this industry in the national economy we have only to look at the following facts:—

Value of farms and plant	£150,000,000
Value of factories and plant	£6,500,000
Value of exports	£13,000,000
Value of home consumption	£27,000,000
No. of persons dependent on industry (including proprietors)	600,000
Wages paid	£1,500,000

The above statistics reveal the reason for the interest taken in the industry during the past year. Although data is not available to enable us to be exact, it can be estimated that at least two-thirds of the capital value of the industry is under mortgage at an average of 8 per cent., which means a source of some eight millions a year to finance capital.

Furthermore, of the thirteen millions exported, almost the whole amount is appropriated by the exploiters in commission, freight, insurance, etc.

Very little of the forty millions of value produced goes to provide an income for the great majority of the dairy farmers. Nevertheless if we divide the total income among the 100,000 dairy farms we see that it is sufficient to provide each farm with £400 a year. This is not taking into account the cost of manufacturing, and raw materials used, nor transport and marketing costs, but it shows that a living income of at least £150 a year is possible for every dairy farmer and that the wages of the farm and factory workers can be increased at to a considerable extent.

The Government has met with an early check to its Equalisation Scheme.

The Export Control Board set out to restrict exports to London in an endeavour to force the price. The price of Australian butter did rise by from 3/- to 4/- per cwt., but the price of Danish butter rose by 10/- per cwt., and what is more, an avalanche of European butter has descended on the London market, making the prospects for Australian butter very much worse.

And not only are Australian merchants in difficulty on the overseas market. They are meeting with increased difficulty at home, for W.A. butter merchants are prohibiting imports from Eastern States until the end of April. The butter interests are also waging a bitter campaign for the prohibition of the margarine industry. It is significant that since the introduction of the Butter Equalisation Scheme to raise the price on the home market, the consumption of margarine has increased tremendously in Australia, whilst in Great Britain it has been reduced.

The general situation in the dairying industry may be briefly summarised as follows: A rapid deepening of the poverty of the small farmers accompanied by forced sales, evictions and repression; increasing home-price; decreasing home consumption of butter and increasing consumption of margarine; reduced sales at lower prices overseas; and more brazen plundering of farmers and consumers by finance and merchant exploiters.

In Perth and Brisbane, the Labor governments are setting up Milk Boards on the same pattern as the one set up by the Lang Government in Sydney in 1931. The object of the Boards is undoubtedly to aid the big milk distributing companies to establish a monopoly of the city milk supply to further plunder producers and consumers and to drive the small vendors out of the trade.

The beef export industry has received a heavy blow at the hands of the Imperial Government in the form of restriction of exports. This, while not affecting the position of the small farmers directly because the export trade is the property of the big grazing companies, will nevertheless produce repercussions in the livestock market on which tens of thousands of small farmers depend for the disposal of culled stock.

The sugar industry, in which finance monopoly is most highly developed, is also to be subjected to restriction, probably to the extent of 30 per cent. Behind the scenes, at the present moment, the politicians and economists of the C.S.R. are working out their plans, whilst out in the open they are feeling their way in the farm organisations. There is every indication that the C.S.R. will meet with great difficulty in applying a restriction. The condi-

tions of the majority of the farmers are already serious and a great discontent, directed mainly against the C.S.R., is growing. The sugar workers, whose conditions have been greatly reduced during the crisis, by wage cuts and rationalisation, have shown recently that they are capable of breaking from the control of the A.W.U. bureaucracy to struggle victoriously for their economic demands. A 30 per cent. restriction will mean more unemployment (a shorter season) and wage cuts for the sugar workers.

Here are all the conditions for a joint struggle of small farmers and workers against the sugar barons who, this year, have donated themselves a gift of seven million pounds, which means that they intend to make still greater exactions from the sugar industry.

In other branches of agriculture, of which fruit and poultry farming and market gardening are of special importance, a terrible process of ruination is taking place. These industries are not accorded as much attention by the capitalist press as the export industries receive. But the latter two are of special importance for the revolutionary movement because they are mainly in close proximity to the cities.

In the market gardening areas hundreds of small farmers are being steadily driven out. Even farms which have reached a high degree of technique in the production of special cultures will be ruined this year by the competition of produce from the mixed farming districts within a hundred miles or more of the cities. The Sydney tomato market now meets with competition from the North Coast, which despite the unfavourable season, has brought the price of early tomatoes down to glut level.

The crisis is now nakedly exposing the class differentiation in the Australian country-side, and the conditions for a mass farm movement are maturing to an advanced degree.

The decision of the National Conference of December 3, to confine relief measures to "efficient" farmers shows that the Government intends to allow the natural economic process of elimination of small farms to run its course. On the other hand, the subsidising of the "efficient" farms by placating creditors with debt payments indicates the intention of the Government to preserve, as much as possible, the upper strata of the farmers as a support for its plans for fascist repression of the revolutionary movement of the working class and poor farmers.

It is now more important than ever that the banner of Lenin be raised aloft in the country districts. The millions of peasants in the Soviet Union and in Soviet China, with the banner of Lenin

banner of Lenin in their hands, are marching forward from victory to victory.

The teachings of Lenin are our main guide in the struggle to liberate the exploited masses of the country-side from capitalist and landlord oppression.

The last three issues of the "Communist Review" contain one of the most important of Lenin's works on the agrarian question, every word of which applies to Australia—in the conditions already existing.

In the Australian country-side powerful class forces are at work, as this article shows. But only the teachings of Lenin enable us to estimate these forces correctly, to discern the forces tending towards the proletarian revolution and towards the support of the revolution. If we do not learn how to distinguish the various social groupings within the farm population, we will not be capable of correct political work. Failure to distinguish between these groupings so clearly analysed by Lenin in his "Thesis on the Agrarian Question" is the main source of opportunist errors in the work of the Party. Every farmer movement in Australia is confused by the opposing interests of the various groupings. Almost every movement has been dominated by the upper strata—by the kulaks—and on occasions when joint action of the farmers and rural workers has taken place, even the workers have gone over to the support of the reactionary demands of the capitalist farmers.

The task of the Party is: (1) to organise the masses of the rural proletariat in pastoral and agricultural workers' unions, and bush workers' committees; (2) to organise a militant mass movement of the small farmers free from the reactionary influence of the upper strata of farmers; (3) to mobilise the small farmers around demands which bring them into alliance with the movement of the working-class against the forces of capitalist and landlord reaction.

Only by earnest study of the teachings of Lenin can we equip ourselves for this task. Aft with the banner of Leninism—forward to a revolutionary farm movement in Australia! Raise higher the class struggle amidst the poverty and ruin of dying capitalism in the country-side!



For A Revolutionary Struggle Against War

By D. DODDS.

To-day the capitalist politicians and their press openly state that the world is on the brink of war. The ever-increasing war preparations, the lining-up and realignment of the Imperialist Powers for another Imperialist war, and preparations for an attack on the Soviet Union, indicate that the time in which the working-class can be rallied against such wars is now growing short.

The experience of 1914-18 shows, that with large sections of the workers still under the influence of the A.L.P., they can still be used by capitalism in the conduct of their wars. Only by the adoption of the methods of struggle taught by Lenin will the workers be able to correctly organise the struggle against war, and should it break out, proceed to transform the imperialist war into a civil war.

Lenin did not look upon all wars as being Imperialist wars, but in his analysis took into consideration the historical period in which they took place. He always insisted that the question for the working-class was not who was the aggressor in a war, but rather is it a reactionary or a progressive revolutionary war, and that the masses must fight against the former and support the latter.

The endeavours of China to throw off the yoke of British, French or Japanese Imperialism, of India against England, or the Philippines against U.S.A., would be a progressive revolutionary war irrespective of who led the attack. Wars of this character shake the foundations of Imperialism, and because of their "progressive" nature, Communists are justified in supporting the colonial peoples in throwing off the yoke.

In this regard the Communists in Soviet China proposed to the National Governments in China that a concerted attack be made against the Japanese bandits.

In his analysis of reactionary wars, Lenin indicated that wars between Powers had for their purpose the further exploitation of colonial peoples through a more "equitable" division of the colonies and through fanning the national prejudices dividing the working class and prolonging capitalism. It is evident that, to apply the term progressive to such cases and bring out the slogan

of "defend the fatherland" is a historical lie and leads to the betrayal of the workers.

The war of 1914-18 was of this character and while seeing this developing the Congress of the International Socialist Bureau, held in 1912, adopted the Basle manifesto. This manifesto called for the application of the tactics of proletarian revolution on an international scale.

The outbreak of war saw this being thrown to one side. "The Internationalist Socialist Bureau, including Mr. Keir Hardie, M.P., yesterday discussed the possibility of common action by the proletariat to avoid an extension, a general strike and revolutionary action being suggested. **A definite decision was postponed.**"

So read the "Sydney Morning Herald" of July 30, 1914.

Although the Basle manifesto had been adopted in 1912, the eve of war saw the opportunism that permeated the Second International being brought to completion and the National sections of the Second International taking active part with the bourgeoisie of their respective countries to bring success to the arms of the bourgeoisie.

The Second International developed in a period of capitalist expansion. Minor reforms were obtained from capitalism in this period and whilst doing so, an opportunist fetishism for capitalist legality had permeated the parties of the Second International.

The outbreak of war saw these sections calling upon the workers to defend the fatherland or the motherland. Revolutionary Marxism was distorted to justify these opportunists in their adherence to their national bourgeoisie.

There were, however, individual exceptions. Karl Liebknecht, who at first voted for war credits, was able to form a group who carried out work in Germany during the war, issuing illegal material, etc.

The Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party faction (Bolsheviks) in the Russian Duma carried the protest against the war into the midst of the working-class. Using their position they toured all over Russia, called meetings of workers at which protests against war were carried, organised the workers in preparation for "October."

In Australia, the Labor Party was no exception. Prior to the outbreak they had prepared and assisted the capitalist class of Australia for war. An election campaign was in progress during July and August, 1914, and one of the contentious points raised by both Labor and Liberal parties was not the nature of the war but who had done the most to prepare for war.

The Labor Party had introduced universal training—conscript-

tion to defend Australian capitalism—had established the Australian Navy, and during the election campaign were never tired of referring to what they had done.

Speaking at Darlinghurst on August 3, Mr. Watson stated:—

"Whatever be the outcome, however great the trial—we stand shoulder to shoulder for good or evil. The Labor Party believed in solidarity and should war occur, with that same solidarity must they stand behind the Empire."

"When they advocated universal training, it was because they realised that the element of war had not been eliminated from the world. It was to Labor Australia owed the existence of the Commonwealth Bank, and there was no stronger weapon at the disposal of the Government in the present crisis than the bank."

To-day we see both the Lang and Scullin Labor parties raising the issue of defending Australia and putting forward proposals to nationalise the banks in order that capitalism will have a stronger weapon to conduct their next war.

Not only did Mr. Fisher use the slogan of "The last man and the last shilling," but repeatedly stated that there was no parties in this crisis. Speaking on August 2 he said: "In a state of affairs like this there are no parties. The safety and welfare of our country and all near and dear to us is our first consideration."

But this outlook was not confined to Fisher. Holman, in speaking to the press on August 2 said: "It appears to me, Great Britain has nothing to do but defend herself and her ideals as resolutely as possible and that we must assist her in her tasks."

On August 3, the N.S.W. State Cabinet (Labor) decided to place all facilities at the disposal of the Federal Government.

Like Fisher, the N.S.W. Labor Government sank all class differences in favor of the defence of Australian capitalism. Speaking in the House on August 5, Holman said: "While the critical interests of safeguarding the more important weal of the State are being dealt with, we feel that we should ask honorable members not to proceed with the contentious programme outlined in His Excellency's speech." There was no opposition raised to this in the House.

From the Labor Party came the proposal to call off the election. Negotiations were entered into by Cook (Prime Minister) and Fisher (Leader of the Opposition) to postpone the elections. The legality of this was, however, doubted, and no arrangements could be arrived at; hence the elections at which the Labor Government was elected were held in September 1914. Prior to the

elections the Labor Party had proposed that Liberals refrain from contesting sitting Labor members and vice versa, but due to the writs having been issued and nominations closed this was not practicable. But over and above this the capitalist class of Australia saw that a Labor Government would be just as effective to rally the workers in defence of the Empire as a Liberal one would be.

By moves such as this the Labor Party betrayed the Australian working-class to capitalism and led them to the shambles of Gallipoli, France and Flanders. The summing up of Lenin in 1913, in reference to the Australian Labor Party was correct, when he stated that this was not a working-class party but a party of capitalism, that a real worker's party (Communist Party) would rise and lead the workers to their emancipation.

The agents of capitalism in the ranks of the workers were not satisfied with using the Parliamentary machine to rally the workers for capitalism, but also used the Trade Union machine.

D. Watson, President of the Colliery Employees' Federation, pledged the Northern miners to support the war by saying, "the miners would be willing to return to work the afternoon shift if sufficient coal could not be obtained by working one shift during the war period. The men will stand by the nation at this particular time. There can be no limitation put upon their loyalty and patriotism. It will be extended to the fullest."

Again, the Western District Labor Council carried the following resolution: "That this Council expresses its loyalty to the Mother Country and promises to do all in its power to maintain the prestige of the nation."

Further, a resolution carried by the Iron Trades Federation consisting of eight unions with a total membership of 20,000, was: "That the Federation of all unions in the iron trade, realising the seriousness of the present situation hereby expresses its loyalty to the Government and our readiness to assist in any emergency and forthwith call off all industrial disputes."

So did the leadership of the Trade Union movement in 1914 lead the workers from the class struggle to the defence of Australian capitalism.

During the whole period of the war there was no change in front of the leaders of reformism, but they wholeheartedly endeavoured to bring the war to a successful conclusion in the interests of the Allies.

The only division of opinion was as to how the war should be conducted. The conscription campaigns of 1916-17 saw the Labor

Party still maintaining this support and whilst one section supported conscription, the anti-conscriptionists saw no occasion to adopt this method, but were of the opinion that sufficient troops could be obtained by the voluntary method. From the anti-conscription platforms recruits were called for. T. J. Ryan, Labor Premier of Queensland, in order to prove his loyalty to the Empire, allowed his name to be used and took an active part in the raising of the "Ryan thousand."

The leaders of the Labor Party to-day take active part in the war preparations, and like their predecessors only disagree with the method it should be carried out. The manufacture of war munitions should be done in Australia instead of importing them from overseas. Another cruiser should be built at Cockatoo. These are points on which the Labor Party disagrees with sections of the capitalist class of Australia. Through their White Australian policy, chauvinism is raised to a high level and bourgeois nationalist ideology replaces that of the internationalism of the working class.

The workers gained nothing out of the war by following the policy of the Labor Party. Only the Russian workers achieved something and this was the result of organisation maintained by the Bolsheviks under the leadership of Lenin.

Lenin wrote that efforts must be made to "defeat one's own Government," not inferring, however, that this should be to the benefit of the bourgeoisie of another Government, but for the revolutionary overthrow of one's own bourgeoisie and the establishment of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.

With strong revolutionary leadership in a number of other countries during the war, advantage could have been taken of situations that developed, such as the fraternising of the Allied and Entente troops at Christmas time, 1916, and the mutiny in the French Army in 1917. These situations could have been developed into the revolutionary overthrow of the respective governments.

The tasks of preparing the masses for this confront the Communists now and during the war. On the outbreak of war the Chauvinistic wave let loose by the bourgeoisie will have a temporary retarding effect on this work, but success can be achieved with persistent work. The revolutionary struggle had developed to a high stage in Russia in 1914. An All-Russian General Strike, with revolutionary actions in which workers came in conflict with the Czar's police and troops in the barricade fighting, was sweeping Russia in the latter part of July 1914. The outbreak of war

saw the strikers returning to work, but the persistent work of Lenin's Party culminated in October, 1917.

The Communists in capitalism have now the task of carrying the banner of Lenin, struggling on two fronts against "Right" and "Left" deviations for the establishment of Soviet power.

Political "Neutrality" In Trade Unions

By N. LENIN

[The reformist theory of "neutrality" of trade unions in the political struggle of the working class was repeatedly attacked by Lenin. At the present day the situation foreseen by Plekhanov, quoted in this article, has come about and the trade unions represent an appendage of reformist social-democracy, and are even being transformed into organs of the bourgeois State. Does this mean that "neutrality" has been given up? Not at all. In such a situation, Lenin replied, social-democracy will have ceased to be the socialist party of the working class. It is, therefore, of interest now to recall the resolution of the Stuttgart Congress, 1907, on the correct relations of the trade unions to the party of the working class, and the remarks of Lenin at the time on this subject, which have their application for the present struggle against reformism in the trade union movement.]

The resolution of the Stuttgart Congress* on the relation between Socialist parties and trade unions is of great importance. As Kautsky points out, and as any reader of the resolution can see for himself, it at last puts an end to the recognition of the principle of "neutrality." The resolution contains no word on neutrality or non-partisanship. On the contrary, there is a thorough recognition of the necessity for close connections between trade unions and Socialist parties and for the strengthening of these connections.

The injurious aspects of the principle of neutrality were made

* The text of the Resolution of the Stuttgart Congress of the Second International (1907), which is here discussed by Lenin, is appended at the end of this article.

manifest at Stuttgart by the fact that a half of the German delegation, in fact the representatives of the trade unions, were the most decided advocates of the opportunist standpoint. Propaganda in favor of neutrality has had really dangerous results in Germany, for it has played into the hands of the opportunists within the social-democracy. This fact must henceforth be taken into account, particularly in Russia, where the bourgeois democratic advisers of the proletariat, who champion the neutrality of the trade union movement, are so numerous.

At the Stuttgart Congress, the opportunist and revolutionary wings of international social-democracy took up definitely opposed standpoints on a great number of most important questions, questions which were answered in the spirit of revolutionary Marxism. The resolutions of this Congress, elaborated by the debates, should serve as a constant guide for every propagandist and agitator. The work accomplished at Stuttgart will do a great deal to promote unity of tactics and unity in the revolutionary struggle of the workers of all countries.

Our whole Party now recognises that work in the trade unions must be carried on, not in the spirit of neutrality, but in that of the closest possible collaboration between the trade unions and the social-democratic parties. It is also recognised that the party character of the trade unions is only attainable by the work of social-democrats within the trade unions, that the social-democrats must build strong nuclei in the trade unions and that where it is illegal to establish trade unions, illegal unions must be created.

As Kautsky pointed out in his report to the Leipzig workers, the resolution of the Stuttgart Congress put an end to the recognition of the principle of neutrality. The advanced development of class contradictions, their recent intensification in all countries, the many years of experience in Germany—where the policy of neutrality strengthened opportunism in the trade unions, without in the least preventing the emergence of special Christian and liberal trade unions—the extension of that particular sphere of the proletarian struggle brought about by united action on the part of trade unions and political parties (mass strikes and armed insurrection in the Russian Revolution as an example of the probable forms of the proletarian revolution in the west): all this has completely destroyed the basis of the theory of neutrality.

Within the proletarian parties, at the present time, the ques-

tion of neutrality does not appear to give rise to any great divergence of opinions. But that is not the case with the non-proletarian, quasi-socialist parties of the type of our social-revolutionaries, who form, in reality, the extreme left wing of the revolutionary-bourgeois party of the intellectuals and progressive peasants.

It is extremely characteristic that, of our people at Stuttgart, only the social-revolutionaries and Plekhanov defended the idea of neutrality. And that most unsuccessfully.

Plekhanov referred to Lunacharsky's remark that the neutrality of trade unions was defended by the German revisionists, and replied:—

The revisionists say that the trade unions must be neutral, understanding thereby the utilisation of the trade unions in the struggle against orthodox Marxism.

And Plekhanov concluded:—

To do away with the neutrality of trade unions will not help us. Even if we were to bring the trade unions into close and formal dependence upon the Party, if the "ideology" of the revisionists gains the upper hand within the Party, then doing away with the neutrality of the trade unions would only mean another victory for the "critics of Marx."

This argument is an excellent example of Plekhanov's favorite method of avoiding the question and hiding the real nature of the dispute. Should the ideology of the revisionists actually gain the upper hand in the party, it will cease to be a Socialist Party of the working class. We are not dealing with the origin of such a party, or with the struggles and splits that would be caused. We are dealing with the fact that in every capitalist country there now exist Socialist Parties and trade unions, and it is our business to determine the fundamental relations between them. The class interests of the bourgeoisie inevitably give rise to the effort to limit the trade unions to a narrow and petty sphere of activity within the existing order, to keep the trade unions away from any association with socialism, and the theory of neutrality is the ideological garb of this bourgeois wish. The revisionists within the social-democratic party will always try to get along in some fashion or another within capitalist society.

It is true that at the beginning of the political and trade union working-class movement in Europe it was possible to be in favour of the neutrality of trade unions, as a method of extending the original basis of the proletarian struggle at a time when

it was relatively undeveloped and when there was no systematic bourgeois influence operating on the trade unions. But to-day, from the standpoint of international social-democracy, advocacy of the neutrality of trade unions is entirely inapplicable. One can only smile when reading Plekhanov's assurance that: "Marx even to-day in Germany would be in favor of the neutrality of trade unions," particularly when such an argument is supported by a one-sided interpretation of a single "quotation" from Marx which ignores the whole of Marx's writings and the entire spirit of his teaching.

"I stand for neutrality, as Bebel understood it, and not in the revisionist sense," writes Plekhanov. To speak in that way is to swear by Bebel and yet to sink into the morass. No questions asked! Bebel is such a commanding authority in the international proletarian movement, such an experienced practical leader, a socialist with such a delicate sense of the requirements of the revolutionary struggle, that in ninety-nine cases out of one hundred he himself found the way out of the morass when he had made a false step, and also led out those who were willing to follow him.

Bebel was wrong when, with Vollmar, he defended the agrarian programme of the revisionists at Breslau (1895); he was wrong when, at Eisen, he insisted on the difference in principle between offensive and defensive wars; he was wrong when he wanted to raise the "neutrality" of the trade unions to a principle. We readily believe that if Plekhanov will take the wrong turning only in the company of Bebel, then it will not happen often, and not for very long. In any case, we are of the opinion that one should not imitate Bebel when he is mistaken.

It is said—and Plekhanov emphasises it particularly—that neutrality is necessary in order to organise all workers who have succeeded in realising that their material conditions must be improved. But those who say this forget that the present stage of development in class antagonisms inevitably gives rise to "political differences" on this very question of how improvements can be won within the framework of modern society. The theory of neutrality of the trade unions, as opposed to the theory of the necessity for their close association with the revolutionary social-democracy, results unavoidably in this, that in the interests of this improvement, those methods are favored which involve a blunting of the class struggle of the proletariat. A clear example of this (connected, by the way, with the evaluation of one

of the most interesting episodes in the modern labor movement) is afforded in the same number of the "Sovremenny Mir," in which Plekhanov defends neutrality. Besides Plekhanov, we observe Mr. E. P. as the eulogist of Richard Bell, the well-known English railwaymen's leader, who concluded the workers' dispute with the companies by a compromise. Bell is called "the soul of the whole railwaymen's movement."

"There is no doubt," writes E. P., "that Bell, thanks to his calm, prudent and consistent tactics, has won the complete confidence of the Railwaymen's Association, whose members are ready to follow him everywhere without hesitation."

Such a standpoint is no accident; it is closely bound up with the very nature of "neutrality," which places in the foreground the unity of the workers for improving their condition, and not their unity for a struggle which would be of service to the cause of the emancipation of the proletariat.

But this standpoint does not in the least correspond with the opinions of English socialists, who will probably be amazed when they learn that Bell's eulogist writes in the same journal with distinguished Mensheviks like Plekhanov, Jordansky and Co., without coming into opposition with them.

The English social-democratic paper "Justice," in its leader of November 16, writes as follows about the compromise between Bell and the railway companies:—

We fully agree with the condemnation by practically all the trade unions of this so-called peace treaty. . . . It takes all meaning from the existence of the trade unions. . . .

This senseless agreement . . . cannot be binding on the workers, and they would do well to reject it.

And in the next number of November 23, Bernet wrote an article on the agreement under the title: "Sold Again!"

Three weeks ago the Railwaymen's Association was one of the most powerful trade unions in England; now it has sunk to the level of a benefit society. . . . And this change has occurred, not because the railwaymen fought and suffered defeat, but because their leader, either deliberately or from sheer stupidity, sold them to the capitalists before any struggle had taken place.

The editors add that they have received a similar letter from "a wage slave of the Midland Railway Company."

But perhaps, it may be objected, this is an "exaggeration" of a "too revolutionary" social-democrat! No! The journal of the moderate I.L.P., which has never yet called itself socialist, the

"Labor Leader," published in its issue of November 15 a letter from a railway trade unionist who, in answer to the praises with which the entire capitalist press (from the Radical "Reynolds" to the Conservative "Times") overwhelmed Bell, declared that the agreement entered into by Bell "is the most contemptible that has ever occurred in the history of trade unionism," and that Richard Bell is the "Marshal Bazaine of the trade union movement." Another railwayman demands that "Bell must be called upon to answer for this malevolent compromise which condemns the workers to seven years' hard labor." And in the leading article of the same number of this moderate paper the compromise is referred to as "the Sedan of the British trade union movement." "There has never been such a favorable opportunity for demonstrating, on a national scale, the strength of organized labor." "An unexampled enthusiasm" and will to fight prevailed among the workers. The article ends with a biting comparison between the suffering of the workers and the rejoicings at the banquet attended by Lloyd George (a Minister playing the part of capitalist lackey) and Bell.

Only the most extreme opportunists, the Fabians, a body composed entirely of intellectuals, approved of the agreement and made even the "New Age," a paper friendly to the Fabians, blush for shame. That paper had to admit that, while the bourgeois Conservative "Times" published in full the statement of the Fabian Central Committee on this matter, "not one Socialist organisation, not one trade union, not one important working-class leader" declared in favor of the compromise.

That is a model example of the application of neutrality at the hands of Plekhanov's colleague, Mr. E. P. It was not a matter of "political differences," but of an improvement in the conditions of workers within the existing society. The whole British bourgeoisie, the Fabians, and also Mr. E. P. were for an "improvement" at the cost of renouncing the struggle and of an unconditional surrender to capital—but all socialists and workers in the trade unions were in favor of a united working-class struggle.

Will Plekhanov now still continue to propagate "neutrality" instead of co-operation between trade unions and socialist parties?

APPENDIX

RESOLUTION OF THE STUTTGART CONGRESS (1907) OF THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL ON THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE SOCIALIST PARTIES AND THE TRADE UNIONS

(1) The political and the economic struggle of the working class are

equally necessary in order to achieve the complete liberation of the proletariat from the bonds of intellectual, political and economic slavery. While the task of the Socialist Party organisations lies predominantly within the sphere of the political struggle of the proletariat, the task of the trade unions lies mainly in the sphere of economic struggle of the working class. The parties and the trade unions have therefore an equally important task to fulfil in the fight for proletarian emancipation.

Both organisations have their distinct spheres of activity determined by their nature, in which they should decide their actions absolutely independently. But there is also a continually growing sphere of the proletarian class struggle in which work can only be carried on satisfactorily by agreement and co-operation between the party and the trade unions.

Consequently, the proletarian struggle will be carried on the better and the more fruitfully the closer are the relations between the trade unions and the party, the unity of the trade union organisation being in no way compromised.

The Congress declares that the working class in every country must establish and continually maintain close relations between the party and the trade unions.

The party and the trade unions should assist and support each other morally in their activities, and, in their struggles, should only employ methods which are of service to the fight for the emancipation of the proletariat. If differences of opinion occur between the two organisations as to the expediency of employing certain methods, these should be discussed between them and an agreement reached.

The trade unions can only fully carry out their duty in the struggle for working-class emancipation if their actions are conducted in a socialist spirit. It is the duty of the party to assist the trade unions in their efforts for the improvement and amelioration of the social conditions of the workers. In its parliamentary action, the party should emphasise to the utmost the demands put forward by the trade unions.

The Congress declares that the development of capitalist production, the increasing concentration of the means of production, the increasing amalgamation of the employers, the growing dependence of the small-scale concerns in face of the whole bourgeois society, will reduce the trade union organisation to complete impotence if it occupies itself solely with trade interests, takes up an attitude of co-operative egoism and upholds the theory of harmony of interests between labor and capital.

The Congress is of the opinion that the trade unions will work the more advantageously in the struggle against exploitation and oppres-

sion to the extent that their organisations are more unified, their methods of mutual assistance the more complete, their funds destined for the trade union fight the greater, their members have a clearer consciousness of the economic position, and the greater their enthusiasm and their spirit of sacrifice inspired by the socialist ideal.

(2) The Congress invites all the trade unions which fulfil the conditions laid down by the Brussels Conference of 1899 and ratified by the Paris Congress of 1900 to send representatives to the International Congresses, and to establish relations with the International Socialist Bureau at Brussels. It instructs the latter to establish relations with the International Secretariat of the trade unions at Berlin for the purpose of exchanging information relating to working-class organisation and the working-class movement.

(3) The Congress instructs the International Socialist Bureau to collect all documents which may facilitate the study of relations between professional organisations and socialist parties in all countries and to present a report on this subject to the next Congress.



Lenin and The Youth

By P. DEVANNY

The working class to-day is rapidly approaching a period when it will decisively take up the final struggle for the overthrow of capitalism.

Our generation of working-class youth will be a decisive force in abolishing the present order and bringing in the new socialist form of society, which will do away with poverty and exploitation.

In gaining clarity on the question of the youth, its problems, position, and the correct attitude to be adopted towards it, there is no greater authority than the man who led the youth of the Soviet Union to the happiness and prosperity which they enjoy to-day. Lenin, when he was alive, always expressed the fullest appreciation and firmest confidence in the courage and fighting ability of the youth, and spoke of them as "the finest and bravest of the revolutionary forces."

In the formation of the Young Communist International he played a big part, and was always a regular contributor to the magazines and papers of the youth revolutionary organisations.

He always made every effort to be present at their congresses and conferences, and if that was not possible he would send a written statement with his greetings and advice.

Especially did his work aid to clarify the **needs** and **activities** of the young communists. He defined the tasks of the Y.C.L. as a "school for communism," pointing out that—

"The Leagues must make the young workers studying in them participants in the struggle for freedom from exploiters. The Y.C.L. will be true to its name only when it connects every step of its study, rearing and education with participation in the general struggle of all toilers against exploitation."

Lenin laid particular stress on the need for young workers being drawn into activity in working-class struggles. He saw them, not as mere observers or people concerned only with social affairs, but as important and decisive factors in the carrying through of working-class battles. He consistently and categorically condemned the Second International for its superior and patronising attitude towards the youth, which expressed itself in refusal to allow them to take part in political and economic **struggles**, confining their tasks to abstract "education." Lenin gave the greatest encouragement to those youthful members of the Second International, which defied their leadership and became some of the bravest working-class fighters known to history.

On the question of militarism, which so directly concerns the youth, the Second International adopted a treacherous stand. They refused to work within the armed forces of the capitalist State for their disintegration or to show by deeds that they were sincerely concerned with organising the working class for resistance to imperialist war. Their attitude is in sharp contrast to that of the Third International, led by Lenin, which decisively and consistently opposes imperialist war and gives great attention to the problem of organising the youth into the Anti-War Movement.

When the Young Communist International was first formed, due to lack of experience and lack of knowledge on many questions of Marxism and organisation, many mistakes were made; and Lenin, with great patience, in a most painstaking and detailed manner took up these questions of practical organisation and theoretical unclarity with the young comrades.

"Who has not at all times a warm and comradely attitude

towards the youth is not a communist": Lenin always dealt with the youth in such a manner.

Lenin, the man, is dead; but the leader and guide is still with the communist movement in the form of his writings and letters, and it is Leninism, this heritage left to the present and future generations of workers, that is bringing hope in the future to millions of toiling youth throughout the world. Leninism to-day, in the midst of capitalist crisis, is encouraging, pointing the way out, and stimulating poverty-stricken young workers to unite and oppose their strength in solid organisation to that of the bourgeoisie.

Lenin had supreme faith in the ability of the workers, youth and adult, to fight their way out of the morass into which capitalism had plunged them, and clearly and resolutely he showed them how to achieve their goal. He had no fear of the masses; his leadership was based on a knowledge of conditions gathered from the workers themselves.

In the introduction to the book, "Lenin and the Youth," we find this statement: "Lenin was never particularly concerned with the youth." This was the actual position, but those words do not mean that Lenin neglected questions concerning the youth or treated them off-handedly. Not at all. The position is this: the problem of emancipation of the young workers, politically and economically, can only be solved when the general task of emancipation for the working class as a whole has been fulfilled. The youth cannot conduct their class struggles alone as one section of workers isolated from the adults. This would be playing into the hands of the boss, whose slogan is: "Divide and conquer." Only the united forces of youth and adult workers, presenting a solid front of working-class forces, can form an insurmountable barrier in the face of capitalist attacks upon wages and conditions. And Lenin gave the greater share of his attention to the problems of the working class as a whole, dealing with youth problems as they arose.

During the early stages of the revolutionary movement in Russia, the student movement played an important part. The mass of the students in the gymnasiums and universities, and particularly the military schools of Russia at that time suffered under a most reactionary and despotic regime. School discipline was equal to that of a military camp, floggings were carried out, fees were exorbitant, while in military academies the students were at the mercy of their superior officers. This resulted in the

young students becoming radicalised and participating in school strikes, free-speech fights and demonstrations. Lenin gave valuable assistance to these young people, outlining organisational forms and setting out concrete demands around which they could successfully carry out their struggles for reform.

To-day the youthful forces of the proletariat are strong and in every country there are Young Communist Leagues struggling and fighting to raise higher the banner of Leninism and to uphold the principles for the realisation of which Lenin gave the whole of his life. The working-class youth to-day are justifying the faith placed in them by Lenin. Among the barricade fighters of Austria were hundreds of youth, boys and girls, fighting heroically in the face of great odds to defend their class from bloody fascist dictatorship; and in Germany, also. In the ranks of the Chinese revolutionaries, who are striking terror into the hearts of the robber imperialists and the counter-revolutionary Kuomintang government to-day, there are thousands of young workers and peasants enrolled; while in the Soviet districts they are among the most ardent and persistent workers for socialism.

At the present moment, when the danger of an outbreak of imperialist war is so acute, it is opportune to examine Lenin's attitude towards military drill, etc. "Who neglects the opportunity of learning the use of a gun, is a traitor to his class," is an extract from one of his articles, in which he deals with the necessity of young workers learning the technique of fighting from the bourgeoisie, in order that they will be suitably equipped for conducting the battles of their own class.

When we deal with the question of Lenin and the youth we have to consider it from the angle of how we, as fighters already rallied to the banner of Leninism, can best carry out the desires of Lenin. He lived only for the emancipation of the toilers from capitalist oppression, and we can best serve him by carrying on this fight, by giving all our energies to mobilising the working youth on the basis of a united front for struggle against war, fascism and capitalist attacks.

Lenin was no abstract theoriser. Action which brings organisational results is the example he has set before us. The Comintern has stated that "the masses are beginning to take the revolutionary counter-offensive against the growth of fascism and the danger of a new imperialist war." In such a situation there are unlimited possibilities for the development of revolutionary struggles. It remains for us, as members of an organisa-

tion which bears the impress of Lenin, to take advantage of these possibilities.

To reach our goal, it is necessary for us to decisively smash sectarianism. If we will lead and stimulate the revolutionary struggles of the youth we can never be separated from the young workers.

Our task is to become closely connected with the working youth; to educate, guide and show the way out. To reach them in the trade unions, sports organisation and factories; to reach particularly the youth under the influence of the A.L.P. and bring them to an understanding of Leninism. Only by carrying out these tasks, by persistent work and organisation, can we prepare the youth for the realisation of our main slogan, for Soviet Power.

In the Soviet Union to-day the youth live in economic security, free from unemployment and poverty; their future is bright and assured. We must strengthen the bonds between the youth of Lenin's country and the youth of capitalist Australia by sending a delegate for May 1 to see the achievements to which the Soviet workers have been guided by the policy of the Leninist Party.

"The more widespread the revolutionary movement becomes, so much the more rapidly grows the demand for greater consciousness in the theoretical, political and organisational work."

These words mean for us that we have to raise our political level, increase the time given to study, and on the basis of a knowledge of Leninist theory equip ourselves for the practical realisation of the slogan: "A mass Y.C.L. in Australia." Every step of our theoretical study must be linked with day-to-day practical work.

Lenin's teachings must be our guide to action. We will use Leninism to combat opportunism, counter-revolutionary Trotskyism. It will be our weapon in defence of the interests of our class. By strengthening ourselves in a knowledge of Leninism, we will become fit bearers of the standard of Lenin and his Party.