

0335.4
C710

THE
**COMMUNIST
REVIEW**

MAR 1957

Vol. 2

SYDNEY, N.S.W.

No. 8

FROM THE CONTENTS

Abyssinian Crisis and British Policy . . . *R. Dixon*

Australia's Anti-Militarist Tradition . . . *J. N.
Rawling*

The Struggle Against War At a New Stage . . .
Karl Radek

Defeat of "Our" Government In the Imperialist
War . . . *N. Lenin*

Decision To Hold Party Congress

AUGUST ISSUE - SIXPENCE

THE COMMUNIST REVIEW

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

PUBLISHED MONTHLY.

CONTENTS:

	Page
The Abyssinian Crisis and British Policy (R. Dixon)	1
The Struggle Against War at a New Stage (Karl Radek)	10
Defeat of "Our" Government in the Imperialist War (N. Lenin)	16
Australia's Anti-Militarist Tradition: The Fight Against Compulsory Training (J. N. Rawling)	22
The Struggle Against War (R. Gibson)	33
Decision to Hold Party Congress (Polit. Bureau, C.P. of A.)	37
Towards the Eleventh Party Congress (Editor, "Communist Review")	38
The Struggle For the United Front (D. J. Robertson)	40
Agrarian Problems (T. Ensfield)	47
BOOK REVIEWS—	
Marxian Theory Explains Crisis: "The Nature of Capitalist Crisis" (John Strachey)	55
A Foundation of Bolshevism: "What is to be Done?" (N. Lenin)	58
Party Work in District 3 (M. P. Ryan)	62

Printed by The Forward Press, 175-7 Campbell Street, Surry Hills, N.S.W., for
the Publisher, H. Devanny, contractor, 82 MacEhbone Street, Sydney.



The Communist Review

Vol. 2, No. 8

SYDNEY, N.S.W.

August, 1935

The Abyssinian Crisis & British Policy

By R. DIXON

"The Italy of Garibaldi's time decisively changes before our very eyes into an Italy of a crude and repulsively reactionary and rapacious bourgeoisie, whose mouth waters in the expectation of a share in the plunder to which it is admitted."

These words were penned by Lenin shortly following Italy's entry into the war on the side of the Anglo-French alliance. The plunder which Italian imperialism received following the defeat of the Central Powers did not come up to expectations. The bourgeoisie was not satisfied, for it dreamed of colonies, rich in raw materials, which would bring great wealth and power to Italy.

Then came Fascism. Mussolini, combining in himself all that is "crude, repulsive, reactionary and rapacious" in Italian Imperialism, planned for a war of plunder and annexation. It was first of all necessary, however, to deal with the activity of the workers and peasants at home, who were rebelling against the intolerable conditions of their existence. Fascist terror in its most terrible form was let loose, but even this could not suppress the movement of the masses.

Italy has been described as a "pauper Imperialism," due to the poverty-stricken state of the workers and peasants. It is a remarkable fact that just on 10,000,000 Italians have emigrated to all parts of the world in order to escape the dire want and misery of Italy. The condition of the masses is a source of highly inflammable revolutionary material which repeatedly flares up. The world crisis did not improve matters. Italian capitalism was hovering on the brink of a revolutionary crisis. It was this whole situation which prompted Mussolini to declare that Italy must either "expand or burst."

Pressed on by the threat of revolution at home and an inordinate desire for colonies, Italian Fascism is desperately taking a step in the dark. It is preparing for the waging of a

criminal war to dismember, annex, and enslave Abyssinia, the last independent State on the great African Continent.

Every criminal can find some argument or other to "justify" his rascality. Mussolini is by no means lacking in this respect. He declares that the war which will enslave Abyssinia, is to be a war for the "liberation of slaves," and for the "civilising" of Ethiopia. It is a pity that these grand words can be sullied by this Fascist monstrosity.

There are none who would welcome with greater enthusiasm the liberation of the slaves in Ethiopia than we revolutionaries; but, on the other hand, there are none who will fight with greater bitterness and determination against the imposing of that more brutal and widespread imperialist slavery which Fascist Italy aims at. Mussolini's sudden predilection for freeing slaves in Africa is the more hypocritical when one realises that within Italy 40,000,000 workers and peasants are already enslaved by the Fascist-Imperialist regime.

Public opinion right throughout the world, with the exception of narrow Fascist circles, is opposed to Mussolini's robber plans. Italy itself is the scene of strikes and demonstrations against war. So widespread is the movement that even the rigid Fascist censorships have been unable to prevent the truth from leaking through. Defeat in Africa would be catastrophic for Italian capitalism. It would act as a giant bellows helping to fan the existing flames of discontent into a great conflagration which would lead, almost inevitably, to revolution. Mussolini fully realises this, and is taking the most far-reaching steps for conducting the military operations, and at the same time is seeking the support of European capitalist Powers, principally Britain and France. It is with this latter that we are mainly concerned at the moment.

Italy's action in Africa has once again thrown into the melting pot that complex of European antagonisms and contradictions which time and again has brought the world to the very brink of war. The issues involved in Abyssinia are world issues of the most vital and pressing kind.

At the moment the League of Nations is in the centre of attention. Abyssinia is a member of the League, and so is Italy. Mussolini has issued an ultimatum to the effect that the League either endorses his robber plans for annexing Abyssinia or Italy will leave the League. For either to happen would wreck the League.

To close observers such an event was not entirely unex-

pected. As a matter of fact the ignominious collapse and death of the League of Nations was assured from the start. It was built upon the shifting sands of the Versailles system—upon the system of imperialist relationship established following the defeat and dismemberment of the Central Powers. Its purpose was maintenance of the status quo—of that division of the world, frontiers and conditions as determined by the treaties of Versailles and Trianon.

Of all the imperialist powers, Britain and France are the ones most interested in maintaining the status quo. The reason for this is obvious. Britain holds in subjection the greatest colonial areas in the world, whilst France comes second. Any redivision of the world, or upsetting of the status quo, directly menaces these two countries. Hence they have become the main pillars of support of the League of Nations.

Imperialism, however, raises of necessity the redivision of the world, and if Britain and France are, for the moment, satisfied with the present division, it does not follow that Japan, Germany and Italy are. The strengthening of monopoly capitalism in these countries has increased their hunger for colonies, for a "place in the sun." Their interests conflict more and more with the existing division of the world. They aim at a redivision, and to an increasing extent seek to destroy the status quo.

Under the stress of these contradictions the foundation of the League of Nations is rapidly crumbling.

Those Powers dissatisfied with the status quo have either withdrawn or threaten to. Japan gave the lead in this connection. At the beginning of 1931 it brutally attacked China and proceeded to dismember and colonise it. Both China and Japan were members of the League. Under extreme pressure from the United States (a non-member whose imperialist interests in China were menaced by Japan) the League made a pretence at action, and appointed the Lytton commission to investigate the situation in Manchuria. Japan immediately announced its withdrawal from the League. This was the first marked outward sign of the disintegration developing within the League.

Germany was soon to follow. The Versailles peace left Germany in a peculiar condition. There we witnessed the supreme contradiction of a highly developed imperialist country bereft of colonies and disarmed. Only the simple minded believed that this state of affairs could endure. It provided con-

ditions for the rise of Fascism in Germany. Hitler came forward as the champion of the cause against the Versailles system. He was to be the one who would smash the shackles binding and throttling Germany. With demagogy and chauvinism unparalleled he won the support of the great masses of the petty-bourgeoisie and seized power. But what could a disarmed Germany do to regain its colonies in a world bristling with bayonets? The secret arming of Germany commenced. Then, when this would not meet the needs of Fascism, Hitler loudly proclaimed his intention of arming Germany to the teeth. This could only be done in defiance of the treaty of Versailles and the League of Nations. Germany withdrew. Its action shook the League of Nations to its very foundations.

It was following Germany's defection from the League that the Soviet Union joined. The reasons for this decision are worthy of examination.

The Soviet Union did not participate in the robber peace of Versailles, nor has it ever supported it. Its attitude has always been one of resolute opposition. When the League of Nations was formed, it recognised the frontiers and possessions of the Imperialist Powers in the capitalist world. If the Imperialist Powers, and particularly Britain and France, did not desire a redivision of the newly established boundaries arising from the defeat and dismemberment of the Central Powers, they were not opposed to the division of Soviet Russia. Here was a vast country suddenly torn from the grip of imperialism, and whose very existence was a menace to capitalism. The League of Nations was used as a weapon for organising the anti-Soviet front and preparing for intervention.

This situation changed with extraordinary suddenness following Japan's bandit war in China and withdrawal from the League, but more particularly with the demand for the rearming of Germany. If realised, this latter will make Germany the strongest imperialist power on the Continent of Europe, and can end only in the catastrophe of war—imperialist war to redivide the world. The rearming of Germany is a mighty challenge to its traditional enemy—France. It is an immediate menace to the Soviet Union. In face of the danger France, particularly, found it necessary to change its policy in relation to the Soviet Union. This decision was greatly influenced by the outstanding success of the policy for the industrialisation of the U.S.S.R., and the collectivisation of agriculture. The strengthening of the economic situation of the country raised

considerably its defensive capacity and increased its political prestige. All of these factors, combined with the consistent peace policy of the Soviet Union, served to make it a great force against war.

The withdrawal of both Japan and Germany from the League in order to develop more freely their war plans left Britain, France and Italy in almost unchallenged control. Britain and France are forces which, for the moment at least, are not desirous of disturbing the status quo. They are more interested in peace than war. Thus, whilst the defection of Japan and Germany threatened to destroy the League of Nations, it meant also a relative strengthening of the peace tendencies within the League. The U.S.S.R. recognised this. It saw that the League was becoming a factor in the cause of peace. Hence the Soviet Government announced its decision to join the League, having in view the drawing together and strengthening of the tendencies making for peace. When being admitted to the League, Litvinoff declared that the Soviet Union accepted no responsibility for the past actions and decisions of the League nor was it supporting the degrading peace of Versailles. Whilst stating the resolute opposition of the U.S.S.R. to the Versailles peace, Litvinoff, however, made it quite clear that the Soviet Union was still more opposed to Hitler and others of his ilk transforming the world into a bloody shambles in order that they may dictate a new Versailles.

The entry of the U.S.S.R. into the League served to strengthen it as an instrument of peace. Now, however, it is faced with the gravest crisis of its existence—it must decide whether or not it will oppose Fascist Italy's brutal annexation and enslavement of Abyssinia.

The League council meeting, which is to decide the issue, is scheduled for July 29. At the moment of writing everything points to it giving Italy a free hand. The London correspondent for the "Sydney Morning Herald" declared that all efforts are now being directed "to establish a bridge between the aims of Italy and the work of the League" ("S.M.H.," July 16). As a matter of fact, so confident has Mussolini become of European support that he declares Italy will attend the League council in order to demand Abyssinia's "expulsion from the League." Sinister moves are afloat to relieve Italy of even this responsibility. The leading article in the "S.M.H." of July 17, cynically comments, "the proposal now is that not Italy, but some other Power, should move the League to declare that Abyssinia is

unable to discharge its 'obligations,' and that thereupon process should be devised for placing Abyssinia under mandate to Italy. Italy presumably being instructed to see that slavery is abolished." It is a travesty on "civilisation" that motives and actions so criminal and clothed in such nauseating hypocrisy, can find support in such a body as the League of Nations is supposed to be. Yet such is the case.

Both France and Britain are supporting Italy. France wants to do nothing to offend Mussolini. It is concerned with strengthening the European front against Hitler. When pressed as to the French attitude towards Italy's threatened violation of Abyssinia, Laval replied that the French Government felt "something should be done," but then, as if fearful at his own extravagance, hastened to add that he had, however, "no proposals to make." This attitude seems to indicate that the agreement entered into earlier between France and Italy against Germany also provided for Mussolini to have a free hand in Abyssinia.

In the initial stages of Mussolini's campaign the attitude of the British press tended to give the impression that the British Government was sincerely alarmed at the threat to annex Abyssinia. Such, however, was not the case. If the press sympathised with Abyssinia and talked of the application of League sanctions, it was only for the purpose of driving a better bargain with Italy regarding British interests in Ethiopia. Control of Abyssinia is bound up with control of the Blue Nile, the waters of which are vital to the British colonies in the Sudan and Egypt. At the same time control of the Abyssinian water supply must seriously effect British policy in the strategical Suez Canal area. Thus, Abyssinia is actually the key to the near East.

Over a long period Britain has attempted to enforce an agreement from the Abyssinian Emperor which would give it control of Lake Tana, thus enabling it to regulate the outflow of Blue Nile waters. Although unsuccessful in this, Britain has been able to bring sufficient pressure on Abyssinia to prevent any other country from obtaining this vital concession. Now it would appear that at last it was to be frustrated. This, however, is not so. In commenting on the threat to the Blue Nile waters by Italian annexation, the "S.M. Herald" of July 8, in a leading article declared, "were it imperilled Britain would probably take active steps, League or no League, in support of protests." This is further confirmed by the statement of Signor

Alessandro Lessona, Italian Under-Secretary for the Colonies, who, in outlining Mussolini's policy, declared: "Italy fully intends to safeguard British rights in Abyssinia" ("Truth," Sydney, July 14). After this there should be no doubt that the British-Italo agreement of 1925 provided for recognition of British interests in the Lake Tana region. This, also, explains why the British Government has taken no decisive steps in connection with the near Eastern situation.

There are, however, dangers which the British Government recognises and is seeking to avoid. From experience it knows that agreements and secret treaties can prove to be mere "scraps of paper" where military annexation is concerned, and when imperialist interests are involved. An Abyssinia annexed and dominated over by Italy is a danger to Britain, agreement or no agreement. In view of this and faced with a situation where Italy's territorial ambitions can no longer be suppressed, British policy is cunningly devised to try and satisfy Italy's demand by "peaceful" means. Not military annexation, but a League of Nations mandate, for Italy to control and "civilise" Abyssinia —this is the direction in which British policy tends. The advantage to Britain in such a policy rests in this: that under a League mandate Italian control of Abyssinia would be subject to a much greater extent to International influence; further, that British interests would receive League recognition, and this supplementing the Italo-British agreement of 1925 would strengthen enormously British claims in the Lake Tana area.

In pursuit of this policy the British Government made its proposal to Mussolini to the effect that it would cede to Abyssinia the part of Zelia, together with a corridor of territory approximately 50 miles long, in British Somaliland, in return for which Italy was to obtain territory and further concessions and privileges in Abyssinia. This was done (we are told) in order to "facilitate a peaceful settlement to the Italo-Abyssinian dispute" ("S.M.H.," July 6). Translated into correct English this phrase "peaceful settlement" means to hand Abyssinia over bound and gagged for Mussolini to enslave.

The British proposal did not meet with the approval of the Italian dictator and was rejected. Then Sir Samuel Hoare, British Foreign Secretary, in order to allay Italian suspicions, declared that the British Government had not considered and had no intention of taking action against Italy nor of proposing to the League of Nations the application of economic sanctions in the event of aggression in Abyssinia. Further, that Britain

had "always understood and sympathised with Italy's desire for overseas expansion." This infamous admission met with the wildest applause from the whole Fascist press, and the Italian position firmed considerably. From talk of direct flouting and withdrawal from the League, opinion in Italian Fascist circles commenced to change in favor of attending the League, and demanding Abyssinia's expulsion.

Thus the way is being cleared for the League to declare an Italian mandate over Abyssinia, or at worst to quietly acquiesce in Italy's robber plans. Such an attitude, however, must inevitably sound the death knell of the League. The leading article in the "S.M.H." of July 17 senses this when it mournfully opined, "it seems that Abyssinia, as an independent State, is sentenced to death, but also that the covenant as a law will die with her."

If it supports Italy, the League will stand completely exposed as a weapon in the hands of the great imperialist Powers of Europe, Britain, France and Italy, and its use as a weapon for collectively assuring peace of necessity falls to the ground. Mr. Anthony Eden, one of the most far-seeing members of the British Cabinet, in commenting on this situation, declared that the League "cannot afford another Manchukuo." That is true. If Abyssinia is sacrificed, then no nation, and particularly the smaller ones, will feel confidence in the League as an instrument to help maintain its independence and integrity. Public opinion throughout the whole world will hold it up to ridicule and contempt.

The issues of Europe and Africa are also issues for Australia. The policy of the British Government on these questions has the unequivocal support of the Australian Government. That policy must meet with opposition and resentment from every democratically minded person. The sympathy for Abyssinia must be transformed into a great wave of opposition to Fascism, to the violation of Abyssinian independence, and to the policy of the British-Australian Governments.

Thus, all the conditions are developing for the destruction of the League. What will follow from this? Sir Samuel Hoare, in one of his unctuous moments, supplies the answer. In his speech to the House of Commons on July 11, he declared:—

"If the system of collective security that is gradually being built up with great care and patience were smashed,

if the League became too feeble and so futile as to have no real influence upon the course of events, the old system of alliances—that is the reverse of collective security—must necessarily reappear with all its ancient disquiets and intrigues."

The implication that the "old system of alliances" fell into decay with the development of the League is incorrect. Military alliances and secret treaties are an integral part of capitalist diplomacy, and will continue to exist as long as capitalism does. However, one thing is clear, that with the demise of the League the "old system of alliances" will come much more to the fore, greater uncertainty will prevail, and the danger of war will increase.

The whole situation is fraught with the gravest danger. It is the more serious when seen together with the appalling situation in Europe, where things are rapidly going from bad to worse.

That monster of reaction, intrigue and corruption, the House of Hapsburg, has been invited back to Austria with a view to resuming the throne. Greece is witnessing a similar process. The Balkans are seething with discontent and antagonisms. Meanwhile, Britain, supporting Germany to the limit, has unloosed the maddest armaments race of all history.

With the League seemingly on the verge of collapse, and the "collective system" it implies null and void, with the Stresa front already a thing of the past, and Franco-British relations strained, the Franco-Soviet pact of mutual assistance against aggression stands out more prominently than ever—a mighty challenge to those who would plunge the world into the abyss of war, a firm sheet anchor for the cause of peace.

All the apostles of war are mobilised, and in this assault on peace they attack first and foremost the Franco-Soviet pact. British imperialism, Hitler Germany, and French Fascists are all rearming to the limit in order to upset and destroy the pact. On the other hand the army of fighters against war and for the cause of peace in the capitalist world is rapidly growing. What is lacking is the yet insufficient mobilisation of the working class. It should be understood that the organised working class is that power alone which is capable of organising, uniting and welding around itself the large masses of the petty-bourgeoisie and intelligentsia, of building the mighty army of fighters against war which will destroy the enemies of peace.

The Struggle Against War at a New Stage

By KARL RADEK

The Franco-Soviet mutual aid treaty and the visit of the French Foreign Minister, Pierre Laval, to Moscow occupy the central attention of the international press. The working class of the whole world, including the Social-Democratic workers, under whose pressure the Second International was compelled to "welcome the co-operation of European democratic countries with the Soviet Union," look on this as a new big step taken by the Soviet Union in the struggle for peace. The bourgeois press, however, look upon this treaty from the point of view of that particular great power which they happen to represent. The papers that support German Fascism hurl thunder and lightning, claiming that the treaty is an imperialist military alliance, only slightly concealed by the statute of the League of Nations. The vast majority of the British and French press recognise that the treaty is a measure directed towards the preservation of peace. But both the papers with a German orientation and the papers which support measures aimed at preserving peace display a certain uneasiness concerning a new feature presented by this treaty.

This new feature is the tremendous increase in the international influence of the Soviet Union. When the working class and peasants of Russia in 1917 dragged themselves out of the fiery circle of the world war, overthrew the rule of the bourgeoisie and landlords and set up a proletarian government, no representative of the world bourgeoisie would have admitted that the monopoly of the bourgeoisie to power had been broken for ever and that with the Soviets a new class organised in a State had appeared on the historic scene.

The representatives of the Anglo-French bourgeoisie and the representatives of the German bourgeoisie were quite sure that they would be able to liquidate the gap which had arisen in the imperialist system. The Anglo-French ruling class accused the German bourgeoisie that when they signed the Brest Peace Treaty with the Soviets, they were "opening the gates to the modern barbarians." The German bourgeoisie, however, in their efforts to utilise the Brest peace for setting free their forces on the eastern front did not conceal their intention to use every effort to liquidate the Soviet power when the war was over.

The Soviet proletariat wrecked these dreams. The Anglo-French bourgeoisie, who, in the words of Churchill, mobilised 14 nations against the Soviet republic, were forced to admit that their plans had collapsed, and Great Britain was the first of the victorious countries to begin diplomatic negotiations with the U.S.S.R. It was followed by other countries. But they were all convinced that the recognition of the Soviet Government and the establishment of diplomatic relations with it were only a brief truce. Some of them calculated on our internal deterioration, the return of the bourgeoisie to power; others hoped that a united front would be formed, directed against the U.S.S.R., and that a new intervention would take place which would be victorious this time. But this also failed to materialise.

The Soviet Union became a great world power. The proletariat of the U.S.S.R. was not only able to destroy the bourgeoisie and landlords and liquidate the kulaks as a class but with their own forces they created a huge industry, mechanised agriculture, built the foundations of Socialism. This process created the conditions for supplying the Red Army with all the modern technical equipment.

The chief means by which the capitalists attempted to crush Soviet Russia at the time when it was still chiefly an agrarian country—the blockade—are useless at the present day. We produce everything that we need to defend our country. Any hopes that discord would arise between the working class and the peasantry have also proved to be vain. The alliance between the proletariat and the peasants is a hundred times stronger than it was. All the more far-sighted among the international bourgeoisie understand what a tremendous force the Soviet Union represents.

This understanding of the growing strength of the U.S.S.R. and the enormous difficulty of waging war against it handicapped the attempts to form a single bloc directed against the existence of the proletarian State. The deepening of the contradictions in the imperialist camp operate in the same direction. The plans of Japanese imperialism to form a great Asiatic empire are directed not only against the U.S.S.R. but also against the interests of certain capitalist countries in Asia. The efforts of German Fascism to secure the revising of the results of the World War have caused the most profound uneasiness among the capitalist countries which emerged victorious from the war, and

likewise among the smaller powers which sprang up as the result of the war.

All attempts to reach a compromise between yesterday's victors and to-day's claimants to a new redivision of the world have so far not led to any result. German imperialism has restored its armed forces, and its slogan of equality now means: Give me what I demand voluntarily or if you do not I will take what I need by force. And it demands neither more nor less than the creation of a huge German empire which would bring 150,000,000 people under the rule of German monopolist capital and would give it the resources of men and materials for a fight for domination over the world.

The international situation is fraught with dangers. All the powers are arming, preparing for war. The possibility that an alliance of discontented imperialist countries will arise which will strive at the repartition of the world is causing disquiet to the other capitalist countries. Great Britain, which supported the German bourgeoisie after the war in order to prevent French hegemony, has become convinced that the restoration of German imperialism will bring back the German danger for British imperialism. German imperialism is already as strong as Great Britain in the air. It is building submarines, which once upon a time almost brought England to its knees. It demands for itself a navy equal to one-third of that of Great Britain. This means that if the British fleet were occupied in the Far East, Germany would be as strong as Great Britain on the sea.

In such a situation the imperialist powers found themselves face to face with the urgent question of how would the powerful Soviet Union look upon the war danger that had arisen. To this question the Soviet Union gave an unequivocal reply by its policy. This policy is the **policy of peace**. The Soviet Union not only established good relations with its neighbors but concluded **non-aggression pacts** with most of them. The Soviet Union gave an exact definition of the aggressor. Sweeping aside all cunning juridical and diplomatic artifices, it laid down that the aggressor is the one that first crosses the borders of another country with its armed forces on land, sea, or air for any reason whatsoever.

The Soviet Union joined the **League of Nations**—although the latter had been formed to strengthen the bourgeois system and colonial rule—as soon as it was proved that this organisation could even to some extent serve as a hindrance to the forces which were breeding war. The Soviet Union proposed to all the members of the League of Nations and the countries outside it

to take all measures to guarantee peace. In proposing to conclude the **Eastern European regional pact** the Soviet Union proved that it was prepared to act in common with other powers against those who violated peace.

This made it possible for the Soviet Union to come into closer contact with a number of capitalist countries which at present are afraid of a new war. Of course there are considerable and influential circles amongst the bourgeoisie in these countries that would not be averse to making an attempt to direct their military plans against the U.S.S.R.

But the world crisis has so greatly loosened the soil in all capitalist countries, has so far intensified all contradictions, that a **war breaking out in one place would inevitably develop into a general melee**. But in addition to this, in view of the growing might of the Soviet Union, the question arose as to whether the countries that are seeking to divide up the world afresh will not try to satisfy their interests by a struggle against countries less powerful than the U.S.S.R. Thus the tendency arose to seek for protection and for support in case of war, in the Soviet Union.

In France the tendency to draw nearer to the U.S.S.R. came to the top. Among the countries of the Little Entente and the Balkan Entente, which might be the first victims of German aggression, this tendency to seek support in the U.S.S.R. has become the ruling tendency.

In this question the Soviet Union has taken up a perfectly clear and definite position. **The U.S.S.R. cannot and will not take part in imperialist alliances, i.e., alliances which aim at the annexation and enslavement of other countries.** The Soviet Union, basing itself upon the teachings of Marx, Lenin, and Stalin, derives its policy from the principle of the solidarity of the toilers of the whole world. The Soviet Union has not enslaved other nations, and does not take any part in their enslavement.

The U.S.S.R. has not only always recognised relations with capitalist countries but even **compacts** with them such as are directed towards the strengthening of peace and the weakening of the forces of those imperialist powers which are a danger to peace at a given moment. It was this position which formed the ground on which arose the rapprochement between the U.S.S.R. and France. The Soviet Union is prepared to make an agreement for mutual aid with any country.

Any attempt to represent the treaty for mutual aid as being equivalent to the old imperialist military alliances, as the German press tries to represent it, is pure deception. The Soviet Union is not only not interested in a war with Germany, but, on the contrary, tries to avoid this war which German Fascism has openly inscribed on its banners.

The Soviet Union is not trying to enslave or divide the German people. Our friendship with the German people is strengthened by the whole history of the existence of the workers and peasants' Government. It is based on our principles of international solidarity and our respect for the creative and organisational abilities of the great German nation.

While concluding the mutual aid treaty, the Soviet Union did not forget for a moment that the strength of the workers, collective farmers, toiling peasants and intellectuals of our country is the only guarantee of our independence, and that the toilers of the U.S.S.R. are able with their own forces to beat back any attack on our country. If the country is attacked, they will receive the support of the international proletariat, the colonial peasants, and all honest people of the world.

If the Soviet Union, its people and its friends, relying on any treaties whatever providing for mutual aid, were to weaken their struggle for peace and to weaken their preparations to hurl back an enemy invasion, then all diplomatic compacts would be harmful for the Soviet Union. For the independent strength of the Soviet Union is the cause bringing other powers closer to us. Any weakening of this strength would inevitably lead to an increase in the strivings of the imperialist powers to come to an agreement at our expense. It is only by being a mighty force that we are a valuable champion in the struggle for peace.

The great country of victorious Socialism, while concluding agreements for mutual aid with countries having a different social system, never for a moment forgets its own class interests, just as our capitalist partners do not forget their aims. Historic development is extremely contradictory, and this contradictoriness finds expression in situations in which it is possible for interests to arise uniting at a certain stage countries with different social structures. In such a situation, it is equally dangerous to forget the basic contradictions and the tasks which are being solved in common.

The first danger never menaced us at any time. We are guaranteed against the second by the profound realism in which Lenin educated our Party, and the best representative of which is Stalin.

Without abandoning our principles for a moment, but on the contrary firmly remembering the words of Lenin spoken in the polemic against the "Left Communists" that the representatives of the proletariat who have overthrown the exploiters and broken all the secret plundering treaties, have the duty, if they are threatened by one group of capitalist countries, to make a bargain with another group for the strengthening of peace, for defence against the aggressor, the Soviet Union has concluded a treaty for mutual aid and will carry it out honestly and firmly.

Defeat of "Our" Government in the Imperialist War

By N. LENIN

A revolutionary class in a reactionary war cannot but "wish the defeat of its Government."

This is an axiom. It is disputed only by the conscious partisans or the helpless satellites of the social-chauvinists. To the former, for instance, belongs Semkovsky from the Organisation Committee (No. 2 of his "Izvestia"); to the latter belong Trotsky and Bukvoyed; in Germany, Kautsky. To wish Russia defeat, Trotsky says, is "an uncalled-for and unjustifiable political concession to the methodology of social-patriotism which substitutes for the revolutionary struggle against the war and the conditions that cause war, an orientation along the lines of the lesser evil, an orientation which, under given conditions, is perfectly arbitrary." ("Nashe Slovo," No. 195.)

This is an example of the inflated phraseology with which Trotsky always justifies opportunism. "A revolutionary struggle against the war" is an empty and meaningless exclamation, the like of which the heroes of the Second International are past masters in making, unless it means revolutionary actions against one's own Government in times of war. A little reasoning suffices to make this clear. When we say revolutionary actions in war time against one's own Government, we indisputably mean not only the wish for its defeat, but practical actions leading towards such a defeat. (For the "penetrating reader": This does not at all mean to "blow up bridges," organise unsuccessful military strikes, and, in general, to help the revolutionists to defeat the Government.)

In using phrases to avoid the issue, Trotsky has lost his way amidst very simple surroundings. It seems to him that to wish Russia's defeat means to wish Germany's victory. (Bukvoyed and Semkovsky express more directly this "thought," or rather thoughtlessness, which they have in common with Trotsky.) In this Trotsky also repeats the "methodology of social-patriotism." To help people that do not know how to think, the Berne resolution ("Social Democrat," No. 49) made it clear that in all imperialist countries the parliament must now wish the defeat of its Government. Bukvoyed and Trotsky have preferred to evade this truth, while

Semkovsky (an opportunist more useful to the working class than others, thanks to his naively frank repetition of bourgeois wisdom) openly blurted out the following; "That is senseless, because either Germany or Russia must win" ("Izvestia," No. 2).

Take the example of the Commune. Germany defeated France, but Bismarck and Thiers defeated the workers! If Bukvoyed and Trotsky had done some thinking, they would have realised that their point of view is that of a war of the Governments and the bourgeoisie, i.e., that they pay homage to the "political methodology of social-patriotism," to use Trotsky's affected language.

Revolution in war time is civil war. Transformation of war between Governments into civil war is, on the one hand, facilitated by military reverses ("defeats") of the Governments; on the other hand, it is impossible to strive in practice towards such a transformation without at the same time working towards military defeat.

The "slogan" of defeat is so vehemently repudiated by the chauvinists (including the Organisation Committee, including the Chkheidze fraction) for the very reason that this slogan alone means a consistent appeal to revolutionary action against one's own Government in war time. Without such action, millions of the most revolutionary phrases concerning "war against war and conditions, etc." are not worth a penny.

He who wishes earnestly to dispute the "slogan" calling for the defeat of one's own Government in the imperialist war, would have to prove one of three things: either (1) that the war of 1914-1915 is not reactionary; or (2) that a revolution in connection with it is impossible, or (3) that co-ordination and mutual aid of the revolutionary movement in all belligerent countries is impossible. The last reason is particularly important for Russia, because this is the most backward country, where an immediate Socialist revolution is impossible. This is why the Russian Social-Democrats had to be the first to advance the theory and the practice of the defeat "slogan." The Tsarist Government was perfectly right when it asserted that the propaganda of the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Fraction was the only example in the International of not only Parliamentary opposition but of real revolutionary propaganda in the masses against their Government, that this propaganda

weakened the military power of Russia and aided its defeat. This is a fact. It is not clever to hide from it.

The opponents of the defeat slogan are simply afraid of themselves when they do not wish to realise the most obvious fact of the inseparable connection between revolutionary propaganda against the Government and actions leading to its defeat.

Is it possible to have co-ordination and mutual aid between the Russian movement, which is revolutionary in the bourgeois democratic sense of the word, and the Socialist movement in the west? This has not been doubted by any one of the Socialist who, in the last decade, expressed themselves publicly and the movement of the Austrian proletariat after October 17, 1905, proved such a possibility by the facts of real life.

Ask any Social-Democrat who calls himself internationalist whether or not he approves of an understanding between the Social-Democrats of the various belligerent countries concerning united revolutionary actions against all belligerent Governments. Many will answer, as did Kautsky ("Neue Zeit," October 2, 1914) that this is impossible, and therewith they will most clearly manifest their social-chauvinism. For this is, on the one hand, a notorious, flagrant untruth, a slap in the face of commonly known facts and of the Basle Manifesto; on the other hand, if it were true, **the opportunists would be quite right in many respects!**

Many will answer that they sympathise with such an understanding. To which we will say: If this sympathy is not hypocritical, it is ridiculous to think that, in the war and for the war, formal understandings are required, such as the election of representatives, arrangement of a meeting, signing of an agreement, appointment of a day or an hour! Only Semkovskys are capable of thinking that. An understanding concerning revolutionary actions within even one single country, not to speak of a number of countries, can be realised **only** by the force of the **example** of earnest revolutionary actions, by their being launched, by their **development**. It is impossible, however, to launch them without wishing the Government defeat, and without contributing to such a defeat. The change from imperialist war to civil war cannot be "made," as it is impossible to "make" a revolution—it grows out of a multiplicity of diverse phenomena, phases, traits, characteristics, consequences of the imperialist war. Such growth is **impossible** without

series of military reverses and defeats of those Governments which received blows from **their own** oppressed classes.

To repudiate the defeat slogan means to reduce one's revolutionary actions to an empty phrase or sheer hypocrisy.

What substitute is proposed for the defeat slogan? It is the slogan of "neither victory nor defeat" (Semkovsky, in the "Izvestia," No. 2, also the entire Organisation Committee in No. 1). This, however, is nothing but another version of the "**defence of the Fatherland**" slogan. This is putting the question on the level of war between Governments (which, accordingly, must remain in their own place, "retain their positions") and not on the level of **struggle** of the oppressed classes against their Governments! This is a justification of the chauvinism of all imperialist nations whose bourgeoisie is always ready to say—and does say to the people—that it is only fighting "against defeat." "The meaning of our vote of August 4 (was) not for the war but **against defeat**," writes the leader of the opportunists, E. David, in his book. The Organisation Committee as well as Bukvoyed and Trotsky put themselves **entirely** on the same ground with David when they defend the slogan "neither victory nor defeat!"

Upon closer examination, this slogan means "civil peace," renunciation of class struggle on the part of the oppressed classes in all belligerent countries, since class struggle is impossible without dealing blows to "one's own" bourgeoisie and "one's own" Government, and to deal a blow to one's own Government in war time means (Bukvoyed, take notice!) high treason, it means helping to defeat one's own country.

Whoever accepts the "neither victory nor defeat" slogan can only hypocritically be in favor of the class struggle, of "breaking civil peace"; such a one must in **practice** renounce an independent proletarian policy, because he puts before the proletariat of all the belligerent countries the **absolutely bourgeois** task of guarding their imperialist Governments against defeat. The only policy of a real, not verbal, breaking of "civil peace," of accepting the class struggle, is for the proletariat to **take advantage of the difficulties of the Government** and its bourgeoisie with the aim of **overthrowing them**. This, however, cannot be achieved, it cannot be striven at, without wishing the defeat of one's own Government, without contributing to such a defeat.

When, before the war, the Italian Social-Democrats raised

the question of a mass strike, the bourgeoisie replied, undoubtedly correctly from its standpoint, that this would be high treason, and that they would be dealt with as traitors. This is true, and it is also true that fraternisation in the trenches is high treason. Whoever writes against "high treason" as Bukvoyed, or against the "disruption of Russia," as Semkovsky, proceeds from a bourgeois, not from a proletarian standpoint.

A proletarian cannot deal his Government a class blow; cannot reach out (in practice) a hand to his brother, the proletarian of the "foreign" country which is at war with us without committing "high treason" without contributing to the defeat, the dismemberment of "his" imperialist "great" power.

Whoever is in favor of the "neither victory nor defeat" slogan is a conscious or unconscious chauvinist, at best a petty bourgeois pacifist, at all events an enemy of a proletarian policy, a partisan of the existing Governments, of the existing ruling classes.

Let us look at the question from one more angle. The war cannot but call forth among the masses the most stormy feelings which destroy the usual sluggishness of mass psychology. Without adjustment to these new stormy feelings revolutionary tactics are impossible.

What are the main currents of these stormy feelings? (1) Horror and despair. Hence growth of religious feelings. One more the churches are full, the reactionaries rejoice. "Wherever there are sufferings, there is religion," says the arch-reactionary Barrea. He is right, too. (2) Hatred for the "enemy," a feeling carefully fanned by the bourgeoisie (more than by the priests) and of economic and political value only to the bourgeoisie. (3) Hatred for one's own Government and one's bourgeoisie—a feeling of all class-conscious workers who understand, on the one hand, that war is "a continuation of politics" on the part of imperialism, which they meet by "continuing" their hatred for their class enemy; on the other hand, that "war against war" is a silly phrase if it does not mean revolution against their own Government. It is impossible to arouse hatred against one's own Government and one's bourgeoisie without wishing their defeat, and it is impossible to be a non-hypocritical opponent of "civil" (class) "peace" without arousing hatred towards one's own Government and bourgeoisie!!!

Those who stand for the "neither victory nor defeat" slogan are in fact on the side of the bourgeoisie and the opportunists, since they "do not believe" in the possibility of international revolutionary actions of the working class against its Governments, and since they do not wish to help the development of such actions, this, though undoubtedly difficult, being the only Socialist task worthy of a proletarian. It is the proletariat of the most backward of the belligerent great countries, that, especially in the face of the shameful treason of the German and French Social-Democrats, must, through its Party, undertake revolutionary tactics. Such tactics are absolutely impossible without "contributing to the defeat" of the Government; they alone, however, lead to a European revolution, to the permanent peace of Socialism, to freedom for humanity from the now prevailing horrors, miseries, debasements, relapses into bestiality.

—"Sotsial-Demokrat." No. 43, July 26, 1915.

AUSTRALIA'S ANTI-MILITARIST TRADITION

Part I.—The Fight Against Compulsory Training

By J. N. RAWLING

In 1909, Deakin's Defence Act made Compulsory Military Training the law in Australia. Already, however, in July of the previous year, the Inter-State Labor Party Conference had made Compulsory Military Training a plank in the Labor Party's platform. From November, 1908, to May, 1909, the first Fisher Labor Ministry was in office, but not in power, and no attempt was made to pass a Compulsory Service Act. The Fisher Government was defeated in Parliament when the two opposition Parties coalesced. During the term of office of the resulting Fusion Government (May, 1909 to April, 1910) the above-mentioned Compulsory Service Act was passed, with the whole-hearted support of Fisher and his Labor Party. "A remarkable circumstance affecting the new Australian defence policy," says Scott, in his "Short History of Australia" (p. 326) "was that, although the political Parties of the country were bitterly at enmity, they all, at about the same time, became converts to the principle of compulsory military service, and all became eager supporters of the establishment of an Australian Navy."

In April, 1910, the first Labor Ministry with a majority took office, and ran its full term. This Ministry amended the Act of 1909 upon the advice of Lord Kitchener, who had visited Australia in 1909, upon the invitation of the Commonwealth Government, to report upon the needs of Australian defence.

According to these two Acts all fit male persons between the ages of twelve and twenty-six were required to register and undergo military training. Boys from 12 to 14 had to join the Junior Cadets. Thence they passed to the Senior Cadets until the age of 18, when they joined the Citizen Forces in which they remained until they were 26. The most democratic country in the "Empire" had begun to drag boys from their mothers and train them for war before they had lost their milk-teeth!

Before the Bills were passed there was a veritable avalanche of propaganda throughout the whole of the capitalist press preparing the mind of the people for the coming of conscription.

The Socialists were alive to the coming of compulsory training and carried on propaganda against it long before it began.

The Socialist Federation of Australia arranged anti-militarist demonstrations at Adelaide, Melbourne and Sydney for Sunday, November 26, 1910, at which the following resolution was passed:—

"This meeting declares itself uncompromisingly hostile to all forms of militarism, recognising that whilst the present class State exists the armed forces will be used to buttress up capitalism and hold down the workers. The Federation further recognises that all the energies of the working class can be most profitably utilised in building up their political and industrial organisations, which shall finally render war impossible, and which organisations by international affiliation and alliances between the working classes of all Nations are at present the chief guarantee of the peace of the world."

In January, 1911, the registering of the victims of the Defence Act began, and in the following month the Socialist Federation of Australia issued "An Open Letter to the Conscript Boys of Australia," which was published in the "International Socialist" for February 11, 1911. During the previous week, Pearce, Minister for Defence, had issued, through the columns of the capitalist press, an appeal to "every lad worthy of the name of Australian." "You and I," he told them, "are partners in a big scheme."

The Socialist "Open Letter" showed the speciousness of this Labor Minister's special pleading for soldiers to defend his masters' wealth, and was able to point to the Boer War to show how wars are really made. The boys were told that the interests of the working-class and those of their masters could not be identical, and that they, the boys and not grown men, were being forced to drill because "the men with matured mind would rebel against conscription," while the Government hoped that boys, "whose minds are as yet immature, will be easily drilled into the frame of thought that would make them ready murderers and willing tools for the ruling class—the real thieves."

Those who had refused to register, and they were many, were congratulated. The Manifesto went on: "Refusal to drill or otherwise is the question that has to be decided, and it is more than probable that a special conference of revolutionary Socialists and other anti-militarist bodies will come to a decision in this respect before July arrives. . . . We want you to study this question between now and July 1, for we are convinced that when you understand the Socialist position, war will become impossible." A propaganda rather rationalist and aloof!

A good deal of the Socialists' propaganda against the Defence Act was concerned with the anticipated industrial consequences. Often it was assumed that the sole purpose of introducing Compulsory Training was to have an army that could be used against strikers and demonstrating or protesting workers generally. The new army was destined for the class-war, not for an imperialist war. Of such a character was much of the reasoning anent the aims of the introducers of the Defence Acts. While, of course, it was important to stress the fact that similar armies in other countries (U.S.A. and Switzerland, for example) had been used against strikers, and that the "Citizen Army" would, if the necessity arose, be similarly used here, it was a disservice to the fight against imperialism and war to ignore the fact that the Citizen Forces were being trained to take part in an imperialist war.

For example, an editorial in the "International Socialist" for June 4, 1910, endeavors to prove that the proposed conscript army could not defend Australia. And, then, "seeing that Australia cannot defend herself, and her immigration policy is a failure, one naturally asks: What is this citizen army required for? We can look to the United States for an answer to this question. Her position is somewhat similar to Australia. Evidently the United States depends on her navy to defend her. Her army is too small for attack or even defence against a first-class Power. But it is sufficient for the purpose for which it is primarily required, namely, shooting down strikers and preserving law and order. . . . The writer is quite certain the local politicians intend to force conscription on Australia; not for the health of the White Australia policy, now a sick bogey, but to utilise the conscripts against their fellow working men."

Thus, according to this writer, Australia was not preparing for war overseas, but for war against the workers here. The result of that cogitation shows a lamentable failure to under-

stand the nature of imperialism or to see where the world was drifting.

Another article in the issue of December 3, 1910, on "Invasion and Defence," by the same writer, showed that Germany was not in a position to take Australia and that Japan was more concerned in Korea than in thinking of invading Australia. And, even if Germany took Australia, "she could hardly govern it more conscientiously than England does for the international capitalists." So then the author goes on to say that "the score of invasion is a bogey dragged in for political purposes," and that "the idea is to educate a sufficient number of the people to militarism so that during industrial troubles, in the name of God, King and Country, they may win their way to glory shooting down strikers." The possibility that Australians would be sent overseas to fight does not seem to have been envisaged. And yet Australians had been sent overseas on three previous occasions.

Another sign of the inability of the Socialists of the time to see the approaching war is this: In April, 1913, a report in the daily press that "startling military activity was being shown by the Melbourne defence authorities," that "practically the whole of the fighting force was being suddenly brought up to its full war strength," and that "war material was being extensively purchased," because of "a possible European complication," was treated by the "International Socialist" as merely the result of scheming on the part of war material manufacturers to get orders.

The September 23, 1911, issue of the "International Socialist" was an anti-militarist issue. In it the unionists of Australia were appealed to to "withdraw the boys." A couple of splendid articles showed how the Defence Act was injurious to the industrial gains of Australia's workers. It was announced, too, that an anti-militarist conference was being called of representatives from all bodies opposed to Compulsory Military training. It was to be a broadly-based conference to discuss nothing else but the Defence Act. But after running for a few weeks the announcement was dropped, and no more was heard of the anti-militarist conference.

The I.W.W. also issued an anti-war manifesto. "Working men and women," it said, "do you know that the soldier, the army of soldiers, though it were millions strong, is helpless unless the working class in farm, field and factory, remains at work, and

feeds, transports and supplies the fighting force with all the means of war? The soldier on the battlefield is but the final unit of a long and complicated social process. The clothing he wears, the food he eats, the arms and ammunition he fights with . . . these are supplied by the industrial army, the working class, by whose labors alone the soldier is placed upon the field of murder and enabled to keep there. . . . Organised industrially in one class union, you will have in your hands a mightier power than the armed force, and one that cannot be used against you. . . . By organising the L.W.W. Union in Australia, and affiliating internationally with the working class in other countries, we shall knit together a mighty force which will enable us to achieve emancipation from capitalism."

As one reads the papers of the period, one appreciates the vast amount of active opposition and the much more passive opposition there was in the first years of compulsory military training. There were many class-conscious, militant, anti-militarist, filled with hatred of and determined to oppose the scheme. Yet that opposition was fated to take an individual character. It was not mobilised into a mass movement which, in alliance with the other opponents of the scheme—those to whom it brought hardships, to whom it was irksome, to whom military discipline was at once something foreign and something hateful—and with the support of the unions, could have made the scheme inoperative and defeated the plans of the militarists. The material was there—the knowledge and leadership necessary to solidify the individual protest into a mass opposition were lacking.

The Labor Party, of course, was partly responsible for the passing of the Defence Act, and it was the Labor Party that put it into effect and administered it for the first three years. It was a plank in the Labor Party platform and I do not think that a single member of the party voted against the Act. The left wing of the party prated about a democratic citizen army and did their part in trying to popularise the idea among the working masses, while Hughes and the other leaders knew what it was they wanted. To the "Lefts" it was the democratic, citizen army—to Hughes it was conscription to prepare a force for the rapidly approaching German war. Between the two they were able to perform excellent service to Australian and British imperialism. Even Senator Rae voted for the Bill and attempted to justify his action.

The leaders of the big unions also, were, in the main, attached to the apron-strings of the Labor Party. Thus it was not to be

expected that either Labor Party or unions could give a lead in the fight against compulsory training and, even in the fight against conscription (1916 and 1917), the Labor Party opposed it mainly on the ground that Australia had done enough—not because of opposition to the war. On the other hand, the revolutionary movement was not strong enough in forces or in understanding to give a lead against the compulsory system in 1911 to 1914. By 1916 it was strong enough to bring about the defeat of the conscription proposals.

Compulsory military training began on July 1, 1911. From that date to June 30, 1915—a period of four years—there were no less than 33,942 prosecutions of members of the Senior Cadets and the Citizen Forces for refusal to drill and other offences "prejudicial to good order and military discipline"! Of those 33,942 Labor-Party-manufactured "criminals," haled into courts thousands of them had never seen before and introduced to a "criminal" career, 7093 were sentenced to imprisonment in fortresses, military detention camps or civil prisons—these in addition to the thousands who were fined! And these figures only go as far as March 30, 1915, for from that date the Federal Government ceased publishing the figures—and for this reason: for the first three years those sentenced to imprisonment averaged 159 per month, but for the three months ending March 30, 1915, they averaged 290! It was about time that the Government ceased publication of the figures! The following official tables will graphically illustrate both the oppressive "Prussianism" of the Australian military machine and the amount of revolt against it:

TABLE 1

	No. of Prosecutions for Three Years Ended 30/6/14.	Yearly Average for First Three Years.	No. of Prosecutions for Year Ended 30/6/15.	Total Prosecu- tions to 30/6/15.
Queensland	2,671	890	364	3,035
N.S.W.	11,082	3,694	2,982	14,064
Vic.	8,086	2,695	2,040	10,126
S.A.	2,699	899	247	2,946
W.A.	1,749	583	211	1,960
Tas.	1,462	487	349	1,811
Total	27,749	9,248	6,193	33,942

TABLE 2

NUMBER OF TRAINEES IMPRISONED

For 3 years ending 30/6/14	5,732
For 3 months ending 30/9/14	234
For 3 months ending 31/12/14	258
For 3 months ending 31/3/15	869
Total	7,093

It is to be noted that, while the monthly average of prosecutions decreased from 770 to 516, the monthly average of imprisonments rose from 159 to 290!

One of the first to be prosecuted for refusing to allow his son to drill was H. E. Holland, then Editor of the "International Socialist." His son handed back his uniform with a letter of explanation. It was determined that an example should be made, and Holland was fined £100—the maximum penalty. Upon appeal to the Supreme Court this was reduced to £10.

Alfred Giles, a Socialist in Broken Hill, also defied the military authorities, with the result that he was imprisoned. The agitation of the Australian Miners' Association was able to secure his release, the Supreme Court quashing the conviction upon a technical point.

There were many who opposed the militarists as conscientious objectors. One example is that of William Ingle, an Adelaide Quaker, who was also prosecuted for refusing to allow his son to drill. "My defence," he said, "is that I am a Christian, a follower of Christ; and to obey this Defence Act, my conscience and my religion will be violated. To do it I cannot follow Christ, whose message to the earth was to love and serve our fellow-men, irrespective of color, creed or caste." Said the magistrate: "To put it shortly, you object to this Act?" Ingle: "How can my child love and serve his fellow-men if—?" Magistrate: "We don't want that. That is more a matter for the churches."

He meant, of course, that, as the churches had given their support to the militarist machine, he could not accept any private interpretation of a Christian's duty—What is the use of having churches as mobilisers of consciences in the service of militarism if we allow individual independence?

Ingle went on to say that he would not allow his son to do any military service, for, he said, "there is no difference between carrying the ammunition and shooting a man." He was fined 30/-, in default 14 days' imprisonment—he chose the latter.

In these cases of prosecution of parents that procedure was the first step. Parents were fined, imprisoned or had their belongings distrained on. In many cases this had no effect, for they still refused to allow their sons to drill. Then the next step was to make a move against the boys themselves, so that, in the cases of the three parents cited, their sons, Roy Holland, Frank Giles and Herbert Ingle, were all imprisoned—but they still refused to drill.

Alfred Francis Giles, son of the Giles above-mentioned, was arrested while at work and taken before the court. He was sentenced to 14 days' imprisonment for refusing to drill. For the first seven days that he was imprisoned he was forced to exist on "one pound of bread per day and as much water as he could drink"! An attempt was being made to starve him into submission. But the attempt failed. The Australian Miners' Association thought so much of his constancy that its members presented him with a gold medal when he was released. That union, too, refused to take part in the 1914 annual hospital demonstration unless military forces were forbidden to take part in them. They won their point.

Another Broken Hill boy who put up a fight against conscription was Victor Yeo. His elder brother had already served 14 days for refusing to drill and in November, 1912, Victor was fined £5 or two months for the same "crime." Agitation was able to secure his release after 10 days. But in July, 1913, he again refused to be medically examined and, in August, was again charged. This time he was sentenced to one month's imprisonment, and for the first seven days he was given only bread and water! Remember he was only 15 years and 9 months old! But they did not break his spirit.

Half-way through the first week the prison doctor came to him—he was in solitary confinement, with only two hours' exercise a day—and said: "You are not looking too well; you need a change of diet." After a pause he asked the lad if he would submit if his diet were altered. The answer was a firm "No!" And the kindly doctor said: "Then stop on bread and water!" After the first week he was put on bread and water on each alternate day.

The Australian Freedom League, the Miners, Senator A. Rae, and others were active in attempting to bring about the release of Yeo. At last the Minister for Defence undertook to release him, but managed to delay having the necessary papers sent on

until his sentence had expired. The military machine had failed to torture and starve a brave boy into submission. Within a year the same Minister for Defence and his successor (Pearce) were calling on the Australian youth to go and fight to overthrow Prussian militarism!

The miners of Broken Hill were very active in opposition to compulsory service, and so were many individual unions and branches, in spite of the fact that the union bureaucracy was behind Pearce and the Labor Government. The Stanford-Merthyr Miners' Lodge sent on a notice of motion, "emphatically protesting against the hare-brained murder scheme of the so-called Labor Party, namely, compulsory military training," and pledging themselves "to oppose the brutal measure to their utmost, seeing that the workers of this country have nothing to defend." On the other hand, H. E. Boote, in the "Worker" (December 5, 1912) was laboring to show that compulsory training was democratic and that it would place the plutocracy at the mercy of the workers—a type of reasoning that was common.

When the drilling began, the boys did not take kindly to it. In the first week in Victoria, at one place, the officers were stoned, while, at Erskineville (Sydney), all refused to drill and spattered the officers' uniforms with mud and the uniform, too, of a policeman who tried to interfere. At Marrickville, too, there was open revolt and the officers were forced to dismiss the young conscripts.

There were many examples of "mutiny," strikes and organised demonstrations against the system. Those who had to drill in those first years will remember that often very little could be done and the officers had to stand helpless, and were glad when the time was up so that the cadets or citizen forces could be dismissed. In May, 1912, as a result of the bad conditions at Middle Head military camp (Sydney), the defaulting cadets interned there walked out!

In spite of the unreality and pacifist character of much of the Socialist propaganda against the Defence Act and military training, much good work was done in the exposure of the militarists, armament firms and the military system generally.

Gustave Herve, the French anti-militarist (afterwards, during the war, a jingo), and his anti-militarism were often quoted in the columns of the Socialist papers, and his "Anti-Patriotism" was published in pamphlet form in 1911 by the I.W.W. From his prison cell, in December, 1910, Herve sent a message and greetings in return for messages of sympathy that were sent from

here. Herve had been sentenced to four years' imprisonment for anti-militarist propaganda.

An editorial on "Conscript Australia," in the "International Socialist" (November 26, 1910), quoted with approval Jaures's words: "The duty of Socialists as soon as danger of war appears is very plain. . . . When ambition or desire of conquest arises in the State and suggests the probability of war, the international proletariat must rise as one man and make it plain to the government of a capitalist State that the laboring man will have no slaughter."

Early in November, 1911, at a meeting of representatives of various organisations, an Anti-Militarist League was established in Adelaide. Later on a similar league was formed in Sydney with the following objects:

- (1) To organise all sections to combat the barbarous system of compulsory military training.
- (2) To devise ways and means of making an effective protest against the severe penalties inflicted on parents and boys who conscientiously object to military training.
- (3) To hold demonstrations, to distribute literature and to adopt any other effective methods of securing the complete overthrow of this inhuman and iniquitous system of organised savagery.

The various trends of opposition to compulsory service were crystallised in the Australian Freedom League, which began, in July, 1912, to publish "Freedom."

The vast amount of revolt against compulsory service inevitably called forth, on the one hand, demands for suppression of anti-militarist propagandists and, on the other, apologies from Labor politicians. On October 5, 1911, Senator Chataway (Q.) moved the adjournment of the House to draw attention "to the circulation of treasonable literature in regard to compulsory training." The treasonable literature referred to was the "International Socialist" and the anti-militarist manifestos it had published. Senator Pearce promised to prosecute if circumstances showed it to be necessary. It was during this debate that Senator A. Rae, always regarded as a "left," voiced his strong support of the Defence Act. "I am," he said, "a strong advocate of compulsory military training, and feel very much inclined to rebel, because it is restricted so much that my children are not able to be trained, living as they do some distance from a railway."

In November, 1912, a Mrs. Nicholson, of Melbourne, a former member of the Labor Party, wrote to the members of the Federal Labor Party, heatedly protesting against compulsory military training. The letter was placed before the Federal Labor Caucus. Only one member was ready to reply and defend his actions. That was Senator Rae. In it he said: "As a Socialist of many years standing, I have an instinctive dislike of all that pertains to militarism, yet I cannot help supporting the system with all its defects, not because my party supports it, but because the nations that won't fight or won't provide themselves with a highly-trained defence force and up-to-date weapons, go down before those who do. . . . Then again, when we relied on a volunteer force, the greater part of the volunteers were related to the land-owners and the well-to-do classes, and all the officers practically were friends of capitalism and prepared to shoot the workers down on the flimsiest excuse. When all are drilled and serve in the citizen forces, there will be more workers than employers to take a hand." The workers had full political power here in Australia, he went on, and we should prepare to defend "the anti-capitalist form of civilisation" that was being built up in Australia!

Senator Rae, with the avowed object of removing objections to the Defence Act and, as he said, "in the interests of the compulsory system," moved (November 2, 1911) that the Act be amended so that under no circumstances should any person so enrolled be compelled to bear arms against any fellow Australian citizen. In reply, Senator Pearce said that "the defence scheme does not merely mean that we will defend Australia from foreign aggression, but that we will defend the laws of Australia, no matter from where the attack may come . . . not only against foreign aggression, but also against internal aggression, and, as far as I know, the only way by which the Commonwealth Parliament is able to protect itself or a State from domestic violence, is by its Defence Force." Only Senators Gardiner, Long, Rae and Ready voted for the motion.

At the end of the third year of the compulsory system the Great War came. What would have been the outcome of the struggle had not the war intervened cannot be known, but as it was the coming of the world war meant that the Federal Government had won the first round in its attempt to militarise Australia. The second and third rounds (1916 and 1917) went to the workers.

(To be continued)

THE STRUGGLE AGAINST WAR

The United Front and the Labor Party

By R. GIBSON

The events of the last month have brought the danger of war still closer to our doors. Mussolini has openly proclaimed to the world that he will attack Abyssinia, and has even fixed the date. The Hitler Government, not deterred by the threat of financial crisis, has decided to spend £80,000,000 in the coming year on the re-building of the German Navy. The entry of a Japanese war-boat into Soviet waters for military purposes warns us once again of the nearness of the war danger on the Soviet-Manchurian border. Meanwhile French Imperialism enforces its doubled conscription period, and British Imperialism carries out the programme for trebling its air-fleet.

But from the point of view of the Australian workers the most startling blow is the one that has been struck nearest home. The Lyons Government, which had already raised the expenditure per year on war preparations from £3,100,000 to £5,600,000, has decided to raise it to £6,700,000 in 1935-36, and to £7,100,000 in 1936-37; while the Melbourne "Herald" of July 6 informs us that these are only minimum figures and may be further increased in the near future to finance "other urgent defence measures." Almost at the same moment the Dunstan Government in Victoria jumps in with an offer to the Federal Government to place at its disposal the Victorian police, fire brigades, and ambulance service to provide expert corps for civilian training in the use of gas-masks! Such facts make it terribly clear that the war menace cannot be conveniently confined, as some suppose, to the other end of the world.

The linking of Australia with world preparations for war has been further strengthened by the secret conversations of Lyons and his fellow-ministers in London. The Melbourne "Herald" of July 13 last year stated, "Empire Defence will be the outstanding question discussed by the Empire Prime Ministers when they visit London next year in connection with the celebration of the King's Silver Jubilee." These discussions have now been held, as even the capitalist Press admits. We do not know what took place at the discussions, for they were buried (in spite of promises to "abolish secret diplomacy") in a shroud of secrecy as deep as any that surrounded the confer-

ences of pre-war times. But we do know that Lyons & Co. would not have been invited into the conversations at all except on the assumption that they were bound to co-operate in all the war moves of the British Empire. The London conversations, following on those (equally secret) held with Sir Maurice Hankey on his Australian visit last year, bind Australia to take part in all these moves, no matter whether they be in China, Abyssinia, the Soviet Union or anywhere else.

Against these redoubled preparations for World Imperialist War we can, however, set one fact—the fact that the mass resistance to imperialist war is growing, especially in that country which is nearest the actual commencement of war operations, a country in which the Communist-Socialist united front against war has been securely built, in imperialist Italy. Note the admission of the “Sun” (Melbourne) on May 30, that soldiers and the public took part in anti-war demonstrations in Florence, Bologna, and Milan (soldiers, too, on the eve of war under a merciless Fascist dictatorship!). Note also the agreement of the French Communist and Socialist Parties to wage a united campaign against the two-year training law (dispelling, incidentally, the illusion that the signing of the Franco-Soviet Pact would in any way affect the leadership by the French Communists of the struggle against war preparations).

These examples point with tremendous emphasis to the building of the united front in Australia against the local imperialist war preparations which have been so frantically speeded-up in the last month. When we speak of building the united front of the workers against war, we do not mean merely the signing of a united front agreement with the Labor Party. Kisch was, as he remarked in his farewell message, saved from prison by the united front of the Australian workers, but it was a united front in which the Labor Party officially played no part (Kisch was actually refused permission to speak from A.L.P. platforms). The “united front against war” is the united front of the mass of the workers struggling by strikes, demonstrations, etc., against war and war preparations. But in the forming of such a united front the official co-operation of the Labor Party with the Communist Party would be an exceedingly important step. It would mean the coming together of the two political parties commanding a mass following among the workers, and could therefore not fail to strengthen the unity of the workers in the anti-war struggle. It is therefore important to review the prospects of a united front agreement with

the Labor Party in this struggle, and to see how these prospects can be made more favorable.

The movement within the Labor Party for the establishment of a united front against war has already reached large proportions. At the National Congress against War, in the State in which the congress was held, Victoria, thirteen A.L.P. branches were represented. Leading Labor Party figures participated in the Kisch-Griffin campaign which followed. At the first public meeting held by the committee formed in Victoria to fight the “Soviets To-Day” ban, Messrs. Blackburn, Holloway, and Arthur Lewis were among the speakers. Among the rank and file of the A.L.P., the swing towards the united front is naturally ever so much more advanced than among the leaders, and large numbers of individuals and branches have indicated that they would co-operate with the Communists but for the fact that the Executive has forbidden them to do so.

Further evidence of the mass movement against war is to be seen in the action of certain unions, for example the Shop Assistants and Furniture Trade Unions in Victoria, in setting up committees on the basis of the A.L.P. “Anti-War” manifesto, though no instructions to do so had come from the A.L.P. Executive. Such committees should be able to develop very valuable work even if the A.L.P. manifesto itself renounces the real struggle against war by the support of the “Defence of Australia” (the standardised label of all war preparations in this country). Indeed, it would have been impossible for a mass movement against war among the working class to have reached its present proportions without coming to influence the mass of A.L.P. members and supporters.

How is this movement towards the united front to be developed? This is the supreme question of the moment for the Australian working class.

The answer can be found from the experience of our comrades in France. In France the admission was lately made by one of the main leaders of the Second International, Vandervelde: “I am convinced that the masses of workers in France wanted unity of action, and that they were the decisive factor in bringing about the pact that has been concluded.” This desire of the French workers was expressed not merely in support for resolutions in favor of the united front, but in a long series of actual united struggles against war and Fascism, the general strike in Paris in February, 1934, demonstrations of 100,000

and over, violent clashes with the authorities and with Fascist bands at Orient, Toulouse, and elsewhere.

The French Socialist Party leader, M. Blum, admitted that the Socialist Party had for years "evaded" the issue. But in the end it was compelled to enter into the agreement because "the masses of workers in France wanted unity of action." The statement of the one Socialist Party leader supplements the statement of the other.

What is the lesson for the Australian workers? Clearly it is that the Labor Party will officially oppose the united front until the workers, by their own united actions, bring to bear such pressure as to make it difficult or impossible for the Labor Party to maintain this attitude. When this pressure becomes sufficient, the Labor Party leaders will fall into line, not out of choice, but out of necessity.

Not only is the mass united struggle of the workers the end towards which the agreement with the Labor Party must be directed, but it is itself the main lever for bringing such an agreement into existence.

Wonthaggi, Lysaght, the struggle for the release of Kisch and Griffin, the free speech and unemployed struggles—these represent the main line of advance towards the united front in Australia. If, by better trade union and factory and unemployed work, we can develop more such struggles, develop them on a larger scale and conduct them more efficiently, then the building of the united front of all the Australian workers is assured.

DECISION TO HOLD PARTY CONGRESS

The June session of the Central Committee decided to convene the Eleventh Congress of the Communist Party of Australia towards the end of the year. The exact date of the Congress is to be announced later.

The agenda suggested is as follows:—

- (1) Fascism, the war danger, and tasks of the Party.
- (2) Lessons of the economic struggles and Trade Union Work.
- (3) Alteration and amendments to the Party Constitution.
- (4) Election of the leading committees.

The proposals for the agenda will be further considered as the date for the congress draws near, and upon the receipt of materials from the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International.

The basis of representation at the congress will be as follows:—

- (a) One delegate to each 50 members or part thereof, to be elected from District Congresses, conferences, or special delegate meetings; (b) At least 50 per cent. of elected delegates to come from industry; (c) Members of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission; (d) Leaders of various phases of Party work invited to attend by the Central Committee.

In order to adequately prepare for the Congress, it is necessary to develop throughout the Party, in the districts, sections and units, discussions on all Party problems. The "Communist Review" will feature special discussion articles on Party problems from now until the Congress. Later, as decided by the Central Committee, all Party papers will be thrown open for pre-conference discussion.

POLIT. BUREAU, C.P. of A.

Towards The Eleventh Party Congress

The calling together of the highest forum of our Party is timely in view of the changing economic and political situation, but more particularly in order to seriously discuss and work out the line for the application of the Seventh World Congress decisions to Australian conditions.

The Tenth Congress of the Party was held in April, 1931. Since then the advance of Communism in this country has been very marked. To-day it is correct to say that the Party occupies an important place in the political life of the Australian people. The Eleventh Congress, therefore, has much significance not only for the Communists, but also for the toiling masses oppressed by capitalism. Its decisions will influence greatly the struggle of the working class against the employers, and the future development of the Australian labor movement.

For this very reason the preparations for and the carrying through of the Eleventh Congress call for the utmost attention from all Party organisations and members. The immediate question is the development on the widest scale of discussions on the work of the Party and its line for the capturing of the majority of the working class.

The pre-conference discussion must have the purpose of further clarifying the basic economic and political issues confronting the Australian working class as well as the strategy and tactics of the Communist Party.

To this end the following questions must necessarily feature in the discussions:—

(1) The present stage of the world capitalist crisis and the perspectives it opens up. Special examination will need to be made of the economic situation of Australian capitalism and the peculiarities of the special kind of depression.

(2) The danger of war. Here particular attention is necessary to the contradictions of British imperialism and the policy of the English bourgeoisie, with which Australian policy is so closely linked. At the same time careful consideration must be given to the disintegrative tendencies within the British Empire; to the peace policy of the U.S.S.R. and its influence on the world situation; to the tactical line of the Australian Party in the struggle against war at the present time.

(3) The growth of Fascism, drawing the lessons from European events (Germany, Austria, Spain), and showing the

role of Social Democracy. The peculiarities of the growth of Fascism in Australia and the tasks of the Communist Party.

(4) The Labor Party. Our estimate of the A.L.P.; tendencies toward disintegration; tasks of the Party.

(5) The mass work of the Party, in which discussion should centre around:—

(a) The multiplicity of questions connected with the tactic of the united front, e.g., experiences in strikes and demonstrations, etc., in approaching the Labor Party with proposals for joint action; the results of giving second preferences to Labor Party candidates in elections; what the next steps are in overcoming the opposition of Labor Party workers and others to joint action; the perspectives opened up by the united front; the struggle against right and "Left" distortions in applying the united front.

(b) Trade Union work, e.g., the strike wave and our tasks; tendencies within the unions and where leading; experiences of work in the unions; why the Labor Party still exercises strong hold over the unions; tactic of the united front; next tasks of the Party.

(c) Unemployed, e.g., lessons of struggles; the tendencies of development; fight for social insurance; united front and organisational questions.

(d) The agrarian question.

(6) The Party. Under this heading must be discussed:—

(a) Organisational questions, recruiting, fluctuation, finance, work in units, fractions, and higher organs.

(b) Tasks in preparing for an illegal existence.

(c) The production of cadres and the campaign for raising the ideological level of the Party.

(d) The Party Press: the bi-weekly, the campaign for a "Daily Worker," the "Communist Review," district papers and the factory press.

From now until the Congress the "Communist Review" will be thrown open to contributors wishing to discuss the problems and experiences of the C. P. of A.

EDITOR, "COMMUNIST REVIEW."

The Struggle For The United Front

By D. J. ROBERTSON

The experiences of the Lithgow Section Committee of the Communist Party in building the united front of the working class are instructive, and contain many lessons for the revolutionary movement in Australia. The untiring efforts of the Communist Party to attain unity in the ranks of the exploited masses has exposed the Australian Labor Party and revealed its growing fear of the ever-expanding influence and prestige of the Communist Party.

In November, 1934, the Section Committee forwarded a letter to the Hartley A.L.P. Assembly containing united front proposals. The main points in this letter were: (1) Abolition of the P.S.S.R. Act; (2) Restoration of 10 per cent. and 12 per cent. (miners' wage cut; (3) an extra day's work per month for relief workers, double dole for all unemployed, and a 12/- weekly rental allowance for the workless; (4) the struggle against the growth of Fascism, and the war danger. The Section Committee proposed that united action be developed by the A.L.P. and C.P. on this programme of immediate demands. We also suggested the inauguration of a wide campaign in the trade unions, on the jobs, amongst the unemployed, and in the workers' ranks to secure these laudable objectives.

The organisational structure of the Hartley A.L.P. Assembly, to which the letter was forwarded, differs from that of other A.L.P. Electorate Councils. Miners' lodges and trade unions are affiliated to and send delegates to the Assembly, in addition to A.L.P. leagues. The parliamentary representative, H. Knight, attends all meetings of the Assembly.

There are approximately thirty units of the trade union movement in the west, and the majority are affiliated to the Hartley Assembly. Therefore a very compact organ, embracing industrial and political organisations, exists. When the prestige and the authority of the A.L.P. were high, the Assembly meetings were well attended. The Executive had to charter buses to convey the delegates to the meeting place, and the decisions of the Assembly were accepted, in the main, by the trade union movement. Consequently, a favorable decision and the acceptance of our united front proposals by the Assembly would have been of far reaching importance, as the majority of the

delegates are trade union representatives. If our proposals had been endorsed, A.L.P.-ers and Communists would have been united around a programme of immediate demands. This would have been a decisive step towards working class unity in the west.

The Assembly considered our proposals and granted permission for a C.P. member to address the meeting. After "considerable discussion, many resolutions, amendments and further amendments" (quotation from the Secretary's reply to our letter), a very vague and lengthy resolution was carried, the main points in which were, a protest against the war plans, condemnation of the Stevens Government, and an appeal for support for the Labor Party in the State elections. The reasons advanced for the rejection of our proposals were: (1) "The insincerity of the Communists, who opposed the Labor Party in the political and industrial fields"; (2) "There was room in the A.L.P. for those who were desirous of fighting war and Fascism, opposing capitalism, and leading the workers to their emancipation."

Let us spend a little time on the arguments advanced by the Hartley Assembly. On the first point—the Federal elections and also the local municipal elections had just been held. The Communist vote in the Federal elections, despite a weak campaign, increased 125 per cent., and in the municipal sphere, the three Communist candidates had polled an aggregate of 700 votes. Our policy in these elections was based on the immediate demands of the workers. We propagated a fighting policy and sought to rally the workers on the basis of immediate demands to fight for improvements in their living conditions. The A.L.P. propounded their age-old policy of Arbitration, conciliation and parliamentary action, a policy that demoralises the workers and leads to defeat. To counterpose a fighting policy, a programme of action, a schedule of immediate demands, to the weak insipid policy of the A.L.P., is dubbed by the Hartley Assembly as expressing "the insincerity of the Communists."

Again, just prior to the proffered united front, the members of the Miners' Federation had wholeheartedly supported C. Nelson and W. Orr, in opposition to the A.L.P. nominees, Anzark and Logan. The militant nominees had advocated struggle and action against the encroachments of the coal barons. They strove to transform the Miners' Federation into

a mass fighting organisation. Nelson and Orr supported closer trade union unity, in contrast to the desires of Anlezark and Logan, to harness the Federation to the bankrupt chariot of the A.L.P. Lang, Beasley, James, "The Labor Daily," tried to point out the virtues of the A.L.P. nominees, but the militants gained the day. This, according to the A.L.P., is an example of "the insincerity of the Communists, who opposed the Labor Party."

Secondly, the Hartley Assembly forgets that the views expressed in our letter cannot be expressed within the A.L.P. The many expulsions of radical and honest A.L.P. workers by the A.L.P. Executive are a refutation of the Hartley Assembly's assertion. Further, the policy of the A.L.P. is based on observation of the constitution, which legalises existing relationships in society and safeguards private property. The policy of the Communist Party is one of irreconcilable class struggle, of destroying the capitalist constitution which encircles the working class, and abolishing private property. The ideology of the A.L.P. is based in capitalism; the aspirations of the Communists render articulate the desires inherent in the heart of the working masses to end forever the degradation of capitalist society.

If the second assertion of the A.L.P. Assembly were correct, the revolutionary workers would become permeated by capitalist ideology, their revolutionary steadfastness would be destroyed and their vanguard, the Communist Party, would be liquidated—to propagate their ideas within the A.L.P.

The united front proposals rejected by the Hartley Assembly were endorsed by the Lithgow Valley and Oakey Park Miners' lodges. The A.F.U.L.E. instructed their delegates to vote in favor of acceptance of the Party's united front proposals. Hundreds of relief workers in Lithgow, after hearing an outline of our proposals by speakers, unanimously endorsed our programme and called upon the A.L.P. to unite with the Communist Party behind this fighting programme of immediate demands.

During the State elections, in furtherance of the candidature of R. Cram, a letter was sent to H. Knight, M.L.A., offering to wage a campaign in the interests of the workers on a united front basis. The suggested points for united action were: (1) 12/- rental allowance; (2) to fight the ban on the Railway Shop Committees; and (3) to prevent relief work spreading into industry. The acceptance of our offer would have given an impetus to the struggles of the working class, and led to a rapid development of the organised resistance of unemployed, rail-

waymen, etc. But Knight did not desire a speedy unfoldment of the workers' struggles. He did not condescend to reply to our courteous letter, but indulged in a vicious attack against the Communists at a public meeting. He stated, "that the Labor Party had always supported the demand for a rental allowance for the unemployed." He forgot to mention that not one word had been spoken in Parliament in support of this demand. No leaflets had been issued by the A.L.P. to gain mass support for a rental allowance, the agitation being conducted by the unemployed and militant workers. If the Labor Party supported this demand, nothing had been done to further this objective. Knight claimed that he was "opposed by a united front of the U.A.P., U.C.P., and Communists." This inane cackle is no substitute for positive proposals and concrete activity amongst the workers; slander and abuse are negative in comparison to the united front offer of the Communist candidate.

Our united front proposals were contemptuously disregarded by this politician, who did not deem the railway workers worthy of support in their efforts to force recognition of democratic rank and file organs and to hamper and prevent relief work from being introduced into the railway services. The hysterical outburst of Knight did not negate the vigorous election campaign of the Section Committee, as the greatly increased vote for Cram shows.

These two rebuffs did not deter the Section Committee from forwarding another letter to the Hartley Assembly, proposing united action around specific questions. The questions were: (1) To support the establishment of a Trades and Labor Council, as proposed by the Western District Miners' Delegate Board; (2) to further the work of the Miners' Federation in organising historic May First as a day of working-class struggle; (3) to actively support the campaign of the State Council of Unemployed to obtain a 12/- rental allowance for the unemployed; and (4) to launch a united campaign against the war danger and the growth of Fascism.

The Western District Miners' Delegate Board, which had recently concluded its deliberations, had decided to organise a Trades and Labor Council in the western district, and to organise May Day as a day of virile working-class struggle. The decisions of the delegate Board are of tremendous importance to the workers in the west. The majority of the Miners' lodges are affiliated to the Hartley Assembly. According to the balance

sheet of the Assembly, presented on the same day, a big sum had been drawn from the miners to prosecute the State election campaign in the interests of Knight. Mr. Knight is also a member of the Federation, consequently one would have thought that the Assembly would do all in its power to assist the miners' organisation and bring to fruition the decisions of the Delegate Board. No consideration was given by the Assembly to support the decisions of the miners and to unite with the Communist Party, to arouse support for such an important industrial organ, and for a mass united front demonstration on May Day.

Knight's assertion, made during the election campaign, "that the Labor Party always supported the demand for a 12/- weekly rental allowance for the unemployed," a statement made in reply to our united front proposals, is not repeated at the Assembly, when another offer is made. The rank and file would support this demand, therefore Knight is silent and sits with folded arms, permitting an opportune moment to further the case for a rental allowance, to slip away. Support was forthcoming from the industrial delegates in relation to a fight against war, but after a homely little lecture by Mr. Knight, in which he stressed "our policy is right," "abhorrence of the white ants," "the need for a Labor Government," "condemnation of the Communists," he finished on the plea that "the solution to the problem lay in more effective work in the trade unions," and induced the Assembly to reject our proposals.

T. C. Arthur supported Knight in castigating the Communists. His vitriolic outburst was reminiscent of the palmy days of Anlezark and Logan in their vile insinuations against the militant leaders of the Miners' Federation. The reasons for this outburst lie within the Assembly, the decay of A.L.P. organisation in the west. The Hartley Assembly is beginning to disintegrate; the mass basis of the Assembly is crumbling, and only a coterie of political aspirants remain at the helm. The Labor Leagues within the electorate are in a state of disorganisation. The Portland League is just about defunct, and no meetings have been held for some time past. During the State elections, a campaign Committee could not be built, and Knight only visited the town after the C.P. candidate had addressed several meetings. Fear of an increased Communist vote drove the Assembly to devote time, money and labor to the Portland League.

The Wallerawang Branch of the A.L.P. had to be revived prior to the elections. The Hartley Assembly had to finance this branch to enable it to carry on, yet only a few enthusiasts responded to the call. To-day this branch exists in name only. The Oakey Park branch, a league of rank and file workers, who were the activists in and around Lithgow, is in dire organisational straits, but sound financially. Two meetings lapsed due to the meagre attendance, as a quorum could not be recorded. A special meeting was held to wind up the affairs of the branch, and members of the Lithgow A.L.P. attended the meeting. The voice of the Oakey Park members was raised in favor of disbanding, but was drowned by the visitors, who induced the members to carry on. The A.L.P. Women's Auxiliary has staged many a function to raise funds for the Lithgow League. The Auxiliary provided the Assembly with the sinews of war, it had its own President, Secretary, and conducted its own meetings. At the last meeting of the Lithgow League, the Women's Auxiliary was disbanded, due to the lack of women workers. The Auxiliary was absorbed in the League.

The trade union affiliations, the bulwark of the Assembly in the past, are now mere formalities. The waning influence of the A.L.P. in the trade unions is expressed in the endorsement of our united front proposals after their rejection by the Assembly, and by the financial support given to the Communist Party in the recent election campaign. The decline of A.L.P. influence is reflected in the attendance at the Hartley Assembly; the industrial representation at the last meeting of the Assembly being very small. Approximately 20 were in attendance, and this included the Executive, the parliamentary representative, delegates from the leagues, and trade union representation.

The organisational decline of the A.L.P. in the west, the withdrawal of trade union support and waning influence are the root causes of the provocative and slanderous assertions against the C.P. The above factors, plus the rejection of our united front offers, raise in turn important questions which the Secretariat Committee of the Party must solve.

Firstly, the struggle for the united front of the working class must be intensified. This campaign must be carried to the trade unions and the jobs. Our united front proposals must gain the support of the industrial workers. Party bulletins must feature the struggle for united action and popularise our programme of immediate demands. Job and street meetings

must be held, and a mass campaign instituted. This campaign can draw into activity the workers who are leaving the A.L.P. and are at present rudderless and leaderless.

Secondly, improvements in trade union work must be recorded. The trade unions must become the stronghold of the revolutionary movement. Planned systematic work must be carried on, to gain the allegiance of the decisive section of the working class. Trade union and job work must be co-ordinated, and a string of bulletins developed to espouse the daily interests of the workers, and carry the policy of the Party to the working class. In this manner job bulletins will hasten the disintegration of the A.L.P., combat A.L.P. ideology, and educate workers in all matters appertaining to the class struggle.

Thirdly, street unit activity must be directed to implementing the work in the unions and jobs. Fourthly, regular study classes must be held. The A.L.P., although declining organisationally, still carries tremendous weight, ideologically, in the workers' ranks. At the present time, a class under the auspices of the W.E.A. is being conducted in Lithgow. Marxism is emasculated, and the theories of Marx and Engels distorted. The leaders of the A.L.P. attend this class; therefore the importance of theory must be correctly placed in the forefront of Communist work, and study classes organised to which can be invited all those seeking enlightenment and working-class knowledge.

Agrarian Problems

By T. ENSFIELD

The disintegration of the Country Party and the farmer organisations upon which it is based; the loss of influence of the U.A.P. in rural districts; and the exposure and loss of influence among the small farmers of the Labor Party, particularly in W.A. and Queensland, creates a condition tending towards the creation of new political parties among the radicalised farmers.

This tendency has been evidenced on two occasions in Queensland. In the first case, militant activity developed by the Farmers' Unity League, giving rise to political demands, led to proposals for the formation of a new political party. Wide discussion led by the Communist fractions within the F.U.L. brought about the abandoning of the idea.

The second tendency towards the formation of a political Party again proceeds from the Farmers' Unity League, in the decision of the Mulgeldie branch, in Central Queensland, to run a candidate in the Shire Council elections. In this case the Party fraction did not consult the Party, and the candidate was duly nominated, with the support of the Party members.

Where does this development lead? It leads directly from Shire to State politics. All that is required is a further growth of the Farmers' Unity Leagues and their centralisation on a State basis, plus a neglect to build the Communist Party as the political leader of the exploited farmers, and we have a movement for a militant farmers' Party which must inevitably conflict with the Communist Party.

With the deepening of the agrarian crisis and the impoverishment of the small farmers, the Shire Councils, as guardians of large amounts of finance capital invested in Shire undertakings, are called upon to carry out a more and more aggressive policy for the collection of rates and taxes to pay the interest to the bondholders. Obviously, a Council in the hands of militant farmers pledged to defend the interests of the poor farmers could not pursue a policy on behalf of the finance capitalists. It would have to urge a struggle against capital which would quickly lead to the intervention of the State Government, the dissolving of the Council and the appointment of an administrator—which would give impetus to a further political development in the direction of State politics. In the sphere of Shire politics the conflict between the exploited farmers and finance

capital quickly develops into a struggle against the State Government.

In this direction, too, dangers lie ahead, for the number of farmers supporting such a party, while representing a considerable force, would nevertheless be impotent against the forces of the bourgeoisie. Such a farmers' party would represent but a small fraction of the population, and in no electorate could it command a majority vote, for in no electorate in the whole of Australia do the small farmers constitute a majority.

It is becoming more and more necessary to concretise the Leninist theory of the hegemony of the proletariat in the political struggle of the oppressed masses. In Australia, as much as in any other country, the following words of Lenin hold good: "No one but the city industrial proletariat, led by the Communist Party, can save the laboring masses in the country from the pressure of capital and landlordism, from dissolution and from imperialist wars, ever inevitable as long as the capitalist regime endures. There is no salvation for the peasants except to join the Communist proletariat, to support with heart and soul its revolutionary struggle to throw off the yoke of the landlords and the bourgeoisie."

If in a country like Russia, where the peasantry was actually many times larger than the proletariat, the overthrow of the capitalist power was accomplished under the leadership of the Party of the proletariat, then it should be obvious that here in Australia, where the proletariat is much more numerous and better organised than the exploited farmers, that it must occupy the position of hegemony in the struggle for the emancipation of all the oppressed from capitalism.

It appears that many Communists working among the farmers are afraid of the idea of the hegemony of the proletariat. They think that it is something to conceal from the exploited farmers lest they be humiliated at the thought of being led by the working class. They proceed with their work among the farmers in a clandestine manner, concealing from them the real truth of their position in capitalist society, and obscuring the role of the working class in the struggle for emancipation from the shackles of capitalism.

It is peculiar that in the independent political tendencies among the small farmers the interests of the workers are not expressed in any way. The embryo of the farmers' party does not contain even a germ of the idea of an alliance with the

working class, as would be evidenced if, in the case of the Mulgeldie F.U.L., the local workers were called upon to endorse its candidate for the Shire election.

Why does this development proceed from Central Queensland, in areas where both F.U.L. and Bush Workers' Committee organisations exist, and within which there are active Communist members? It is because of the underestimation of the importance of the rural workers and their class interests on the one hand, and the over-estimation of the farming class and failure to differentiate between small and big farmers on the other hand. This has led to the subordination of the interests of the workers to those of the farming class, reflected in practice by Communist Party members in the Bush Workers' Committee in supporting a united front of workers and farmers in demands for increased prices for cotton under the pretence that, until the farmers get a higher price for their cotton, it is impossible for the cotton pickers to win higher wages and better conditions.

Instead of organising the cotton pickers to struggle for higher wages and better conditions, the Bush Workers' Committee have relied upon the movement of the farmers for a higher price for cotton, in the hopes that higher rates would be given to the pickers. The result of this policy is that the cotton harvest has passed off without a struggle, and the conditions of both workers and small farmers are worse than before. The exploiters have taken pains to equip the ginneries with more efficient machinery, which will make possible the elimination of approximately two thirds of the cotton pickers when the Government agronomists succeed in establishing varieties of cotton suitable for snap picking. Next season, even with much less labor employed, it will be necessary to make a determined effort to develop the struggle of the workers for higher wages and better conditions, in accordance with the principles of militant trade unionism.

At the same time, Communists working among the small farmers, especially the fractions in the Farmers' Unity League, must endeavor to develop a struggle of the small farmers for a minimum income of £150 a year and no evictions or forced sales, instead of initiating movements for higher prices and lower rentals, which, under present conditions, can benefit only the rich capitalist farmers.

The income of the small farmers—those whose holdings are only large enough to sustain themselves without employing

labor—has fallen so low that an extraordinary increase in the price of cotton and butter would have to take place before their income would be raised to £150 a year. The big capitalist farmers, on the other hand, immediately benefit by increased prices, and are able to extend their plantings by enlarging their holdings, using more machinery, etc., and increasing the intensity of labor employed. Under conditions of capitalist development the improvement in the position of the capitalist farmers takes place at the expense of the small-holders. This is clearly shown in the developments taking place in the cotton industry, where the Government, with the support of the big capitalist farmers, is not only talking about eliminating inefficient farms, but is actually setting up the necessary machinery in the form of Commissions and Boards to drive out hundreds of small farmers and allot their land to others. In order to assist this development the Government is reducing rentals, not sufficiently to save the small farmers, but sufficient to improve the position of the big farmers. It often happens that small farmers are evicted from farms which are subsequently handed over to big farmers at one fourth the valuation and rental charged to the previous holder.

A vivid illustration of this practice can be seen in the following quotation from a letter from a Party organiser in the N.S.W. Mallee, who was investigating an eviction case:—

"On our way out to E's— place (threatened with eviction) we called on W.M., who was not at home. But his wife showed no sympathy with the evicted men or their families, and evictions are becoming very numerous. Our investigations revealed W. as a typical Kulak. He was able to put one son on the block of an evicted neighbor, and is now looking for another block for another son who is about to get married.

"The bank manager from Hillston visits W. every Wednesday and receives information about all the farmers and all movements, despite the fact that W. owes the bank £1400. W. is on the Carrathool Shire Council, and takes part in the various activities of the farmers, which enhances his value as an informer to both the bank and the receivers."

Thus we see in W., evolving into a big capitalist farmer at the expense of his evicted neighbors, the working out in prac-

tice of the law of development of capitalist farming. But this does not imply that the development of capitalist farming generally follows the line of enlargement of holdings. In the cotton industry, as well as in many others, it also proceeds along the line of intensification of cultivation by using fertiliser, best quality seed, implements and machinery, irrigation, and intense exploitation of labor.

The orientation of the Queensland Government to the development of capitalism in agriculture is indicated by its agrarian policy, which serves the interests of finance capital by ruthlessly exploiting the small and middle farmers, and suppressing the movement of the rural workers, at the same time aiding the upper strata of farmers, the big land holders, and other exploiters such as the sugar and tobacco companies.

Under these conditions the Communists must devote their main attention to the organising of the rural workers and to the building of the Party by recruiting the most class-conscious workers into the Party.

In the farmer organisations our main task is to win the small farmers away from the influence of the bourgeoisie, exercised by the big farmers and corrupt elements among the middle farmers. This requires that special attention be given to the question of demands. Our Party fractions must work out demands which in each situation express the interests of the small farmers and are directed against the capitalists.

The Party must carry on a consistent exposure of the exploitation of small farmers by the capitalist farmers and the role they play in support of capitalist reaction. The small farmers can be won to the support of the struggle of the rural workers, especially if they themselves are in conflict with the big farmers against whom the workers are fighting.

From the foregoing analysis it follows that our main tactic in the farm movement must aim at separating the small farmers from the big, in order to bring the small farmers over to an alliance with the working class. Hence it is necessary to correct all tendencies which link workers and small farmers up with the capitalist farmers in movements which improve the position of the capitalist farmers at the expense of the masses. The struggle of the small farmers in alliance with the working class, under the leadership of the Communist Party, will extinguish any serious independent political tendencies among the small farmers.

Foreign-Born Workers In The Australian Labor Movement

By J. P. K.

On the wave of immigration during the first years of the century, many thousands of workers and peasants came to Australia from Southern Europe. They came expecting to acquire, by hard work and saving, sufficient to enable them to return to their native country and small holdings, there to live a quiet and undisturbed life without dependence on financiers.

Being mostly peasants, without any knowledge of the modern labor movement, they did not take an active part in political affairs, and only joined the trade unions under the influence of the English speaking workers. The historic and political conditions of Australia differed fundamentally from those of their own countries.

In Southern Europe their fight had been against the remnants of feudalism and against national oppression, and it required actual experience of capitalist wage slavery to arouse their spirit of rebellion. Their orientation to the class struggle was also retarded by language difficulties and the chauvinist policy of the reformist labor movement. But as the industrial struggles began to develop they proved themselves staunch and bitter fighters, and in the Kurrawang, W.A., strike in 1910, the Yugoslav workers waged a splendid struggle marked by determined actions against scabs.

The pre-war crisis and the war prevented many of them from realising their ambition of returning to their native countries, and they have settled down to the conditions of life of the Australian workers and small farmers. Growing poverty in Europe, especially since 1924, and the temporary capitalist stabilisation in Australia, drew additional thousands of foreign workers and small farmers. The experience of the war, the post-war revolutionary struggles, new forms of national oppression, etc., a clearer understanding of political questions, and the influence of the Russian Revolution, made them vastly different from the pre-war immigrants.

But in the Australia of that period they were subjected to influences which produced peculiar reactions. There was no

widespread revolutionary movement; the standard of living was much higher than at home, the Labor Party was more sharply chauvinist. Under such conditions they tended towards individualism and isolation from the reformist labor movement. Their revolutionary consciousness became dulled.

Among the foreign immigrants of both periods were many politically backward workers, escaping from terrible poverty and unemployment, who were not brought into the trade unions and who were forced or lured by the employers into working long hours for low wages. Many class-conscious workers who had left their families in their native country were forced to submit to brutal exploitation and to deprive themselves of many necessities in order to save enough to bring them out. Those who have fallen into unemployment or have become bankrupt on their small farms will never see their families this side of the revolution.

They have now discovered that capitalism, with its starvation and degradation, treads the same path here in Australia as in Europe. In the capitalist crisis in Australia they recognise the process of decay experienced in their own countries. The rising of the revolutionary movement and the mass struggles of the Australian workers find firm support among large numbers of the foreign-born workers and small farmers. In the strikes in the timber industry in W.A., the unemployed struggles in Perth, the strike of the Kalgoorlie miners, and in the strikes of the sugar workers in North Queensland, foreign workers have fought side by side with Australian workers against the capitalists. The foreign-born workers are also a strong support to the revolutionary movement in many other ways, and contribute liberally to any financial appeal.

The foreign-born workers in Australia, in organising in support of the revolutionary movement, have many difficulties to face. They have the chauvinist policy of the A.L.P. and T.U. reformists to contend against—a policy which has resulted in serious violence against them, as at Kalgoorlie and in North Queensland. They are handicapped by language difficulty which to a large extent, prevents their active participation in trade union life. The language difficulty is very often the means whereby unscrupulous employers take advantage of foreign-born workers.

The Federal Government does all it can to prevent educational work in foreign languages, by operating its Fascist Foreign Language Newspaper Publications Act. On a number of occasions permission has been refused Yugoslav workers and farmers to publish a paper in their own language. This Act is operated in conjunction with the Fascist Consuls, who receive full license to issue foul Fascist publications in the hope that if nothing else in their own language is available, the foreign-born workers will imbibe the carefully prepared Fascist poison. Needless to say, under such conditions it is difficult for foreign-born workers to inform themselves on matters relating to the working-class movement in Australia. But the fact is that despite these difficulties, a firm unity is being built between the foreign-born and native workers.

It is necessary that the Australian working-class movement cast aside all chauvinist influence and the agents of the capitalists who introduce it. The foreign-born workers are an integral part of the Australian working class. Many of them possess a rich experience of the international class struggle, which will be of great benefit to us in the struggles of the future. Those of them who are in communication with their relatives at home, especially the countries where Fascism prevails, and those who have escaped from the persecution of the Fascist terror, possess an experience which might well be taken notice of by the Australian workers, who have yet to decide the issue of whether Fascist terror shall prevail here or not.

It is necessary, while drawing the foreign-born workers wholly into the Australian labor movement, to wage a campaign for their right to publish papers in their own language. It is now time to publish a working-class paper in the Croatian and Italian languages, and this must become the concern of all militant trade unionists.

BOOK REVIEWS

Marxian Theory Explains Crises

"THE NATURE OF CAPITALIST CRISIS," by John Strachey; Golancz, 1935.

"Theory is the eye of practice," declares Strachey, and with this as his watchword he sets himself to discover what is to be done about capitalist crises. In the light of bitter experience of recent years, our attitude to existing society necessarily depends on our answer to the question whether the occurrence of catastrophic crises is accidental to or inherent in the capitalist system. Is the recurrence of crises, and of ever more severe crises, inevitable under capitalism, or can they be eliminated by appropriate reforms which render the system stable and progressive?

Strachey begs no questions. He explores every available line of inquiry and listens to all who have a theory to offer. No help, to be sure, is to be had from the main body of capitalist economists, which, concerning itself only with "that blessed but illusive Nirvana, the state of equilibrium," knows nothing of crises except as "plagues which fall upon the capitalist world because of its disregard of the advice of the professors." But this complacency is clearly insufficient to explain, for instance, the regularity of the cycles of boom and slump, or the enforced idleness of available capital and labor. As a result, many capitalist economists (defined as "economists who accept the capitalist system. . . as the immutable data of their inquiries") have gone outside the main generalisations of their science and attempted to explain the occurrence of crises. Strachey faithfully follows their arguments through.

The "under consumptionists," of which Major Douglas, J. A. Hobson and Irving Fisher are discussed as representative types, are found to have the merit of "insistently calling attention to the extraordinary facts of capitalist crisis" (such as the familiar paradox of "starvation in the midst of plenty"), but to offer solutions which would only result in an inflationary boom which in turn would produce a new crisis. The "deflationists" (represented by Hayek and Robbins), who attribute crises to exactly opposite causes to those diagnosed by the under consumptionists, and account for the trade cycle by the fact that the financial authorities DO pursue the policy advocated by Hobson and Fisher, are able to account for the oscillations of crises, but not for the crises themselves. This failure is due to the fact that to both schools the obvious precondition of recovery is to restore the rate of profit. In the final analysis, "the practical proposals of both schools turn out to be merely alternative ways of restoring the rate of profit—the under consumptionists by raising prices while costs fall, and the deflationists by cutting wages and social services." But both these methods, while they are rational measures for restoring the rate of profit, are not designed to restore prosperity (understood as

the condition in which all can purchase adequate supplies of commodities, for they tend only to cut down the real income of the majority of the population. Even following the line of approach of the capitalist economists, it becomes apparent that "a direct attempt to produce plenty without a change in the ownership of the means of production wrecks itself at once, since it takes no account of the fact that plenty will destroy profits, and that profits, so long as the means of production are privately owned, are a necessary condition for any production at all."

What is the reason, asks Strachey, that contemporary capitalist economists offer no solid explanation of the nature of capitalism and its crises? A brief—and extraordinarily illuminating—history of the economic theories of the last 150 years, serves to show that, when economists abandoned the labor theory of value of the classical school and substituted a subjective theory of value (combined to-day with a theory of costs as displaced alternatives), they turned their backs on the task of understanding the movement of history and reduced economic theory to a mere price theory, of service only in "understanding the movement of stocks and making money." Giving up the attempt to find any common factor which could make commodities commensurable, contemporary capitalist economics has become "a gelded science, unable to form any opinions whatsoever on the issues which chiefly concern us."

It is to Marx, then, that Strachey is compelled to turn for "some law that will enable us to predict the general destiny of the system." For Marx clung to the objective (labor) theory of value of the classical economists, and, by making the distinction between labor and labor power, enabled us to explain profit and to comprehend capitalism as a system of exchange of labors embodied in commodities. The labor theory of value "we can tell whether the possibilities of a particular kaleidoscope of the market and see what it is that men are exchanging." By means of laws formulated upon the basis of the labor theory of value "we can tell whether the possibilities of a particular set of social relations are exhausted or not."

Marx's theory of capitalist crisis (as developed in the third volume of "Capital") is then discussed at length. Marxian categories, based on the labor theory of value, establish "the uniquely and necessarily profit-making character of the present system" and explain why both a falling rate of profit and a rising amount of profit are conditions necessary to the existence of capitalism. These conditions can be simultaneously fulfilled only if capital is accumulated sufficiently rapidly to make the amount of profit grow from year to year in spite of the fall in the rate of profit. Thus capitalism is faced with a fundamental dilemma: "If wages and social services are kept down to the necessary minimum, the familiar crisis of glut must occur. But wages and social services cannot be raised; for to do so would be to depress the rate of accumulation to a level at which it could no longer offset the fall in the organic composition of capital." It is the existence of this dilemma that makes capitalist crises inevitable. "It is of the very essence of capitalism that there can never be a period of 'stabilisation' in which we can enjoy the fruits of our past labors. . . .

Thus all the various contemporary policies for 'recovery' cannot conceivably do more than stave off the bankruptcy of the system. . . . Each is more severe. . . . The time has come when the further development of society's productive powers cease to maximise profits and begin, on the contrary, to diminish them. This can mean nothing but that capitalism has outlived its function. . . . When this point has been reached, we have entered the period of the general and permanent crisis of capitalism. This is the period in which we live to-day."

Finally, since for Strachey the test of theory is to be found in practice, and since he is at all times concerned with what is to be done, the book applies Marx's theory of crisis to the present situation. Marx's analysis is called on (and is found sufficient) to explain "the downswing and the upswing of the present cycle," enabling us to understand why this recovery must end in crisis like its predecessors. It is used to annihilate the belief (common to Labor leaders, rank and file Fascists, "Brain Trusters," "progressive" conservatives and all "planners") that it is possible to bring into existence a remodelled, high-wage-paying capitalism; such belief only opens the door to Fascism, Marxian theory, and it alone, enables us to understand the present drive to Fascism and war, to see that there are only two alternatives to-day—Communism and barbarism—and to act intelligently to shorten the agonies of the period of capitalist decay and hasten the establishment of the new civilisation.

This summary has seemed desirable, for the very brilliance of the treatment of many of the special topics tends to divert attention from the book's greatest merit—its comprehensive and coherent argument. Because he has caught the spirit of Marxian analysis, Strachey has succeeded, incidentally to this argument, in throwing light on such varied vexed questions as—

- What is the root fallacy of the Douglas A plus B theorem? (pages 28-35).
- Will a stable price level produce permanent stability? (49-53).
- What is the basic economic weakness of Roosevelt's New Deal? (53-54, 93-95).
- Why cannot inflation stabilise boom conditions? (69-77).
- Do machines produce value? (186-189).
- Why has capitalist economics abandoned the search for a theory of value? (129-131, 137-138, 157-161, 191-192, 211-213, 226-229).
- Will a policy of high wages and social services solve the problem of crises? (43-47, 86-87, 248-250, 258-260, 270-271, 320-324, 330).
- How is recovery from a crisis brought about? (274-276, 286-290).
- What is "over-production"? (276-284).
- What part is played by money and monetary policy in the precipitation of crises? (300-305, 309-319).
- What is the function of Fascism? (338-349).
- Why does capitalist policy necessarily turn more and more urgently to war? (251-252, 272-273, 360).
- Why is Hitler Germany to-day the most active open organiser of war? (361-364).

This book should be introduced into all possible libraries. It should be widely read, studied, discussed and applied. Though controversial, it is extraordinarily persuasive—not plausible, but convincing through its patient and thorough examination of rival arguments. It is not exactly light reading, but that is not the fault of the author, who succeeds in making complicated and sometimes abstract issues far clearer and livelier than the general run of economists. Those who query the value of a detailed study of a theoretical question such as crises should heed Strachey's own words:—

"It is precisely to-day, in our time of violence and confusion, that a mastery of theory becomes . . . a matter of life and death for all of us. . . Without theory we can blindly do, but cannot prevent what we do from becoming the violent and purposeless deeds of a nightmare. . . The one substitute for adequate social and economic theory is the rediscovery of reality by the method of trial and error. The working-class movements will in this case have to go through the purgatory of learning from the brutal lesson of events both what is the true nature of capitalism and what is the only way of their salvation. This frightful process can be enormously shortened, and even in great measure avoided, by the use of that body of social and economic science which Marx bequeathed to us. Equipped with this knowledge, men will comprehend the necessity of revolution."

E. M. H.

A Foundation of Bolshevism

"WHAT IS TO BE DONE?" By V. I. Lenin; Modern Publishers, Sydney. 254 pages. Price, 1/6. Obtainable from the Anvil Bookshop, 191 Hay Street, Sydney, and all Party locals.

Modern Publishers, who have recently issued a number of valuable pamphlets, including such invaluable documents as Ehrenbourg's "A Soviet Writer Looks at Vienna," Stalin's Speech to the 17th Congress of the C.P.S.U., and documents of the 13th Plenum of the Communist International, have shown commendable enterprise in making available this important work by Lenin. No. 4 in the famous "Little Lenin Library," the volume will enable the many workers who have obtained the rest of the series to make their collection complete.

"What Is To Be Done?" is one of the works of Lenin which must be read in order to understand the basic principles of Leninism and the history of the Party. Written in 1902, between the First and Second Congresses of the Russian Party, in the period when the Party was still in the process of formation (when the struggle between revolutionary Social-Democracy and opportunism was centred in the acute polemics between the "Iskra"-ists and the "Economists"), it served as a guide to the problems that confronted the Russian Party at that time, and still serves as a guide to the Communist parties in other countries. Under the dictatorship of the proletariat, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union has grown into a tremendous organisation and the prob-

lem of cadres and of the party apparatus is being solved in a different way from that of the pre-October days. But the idea of forming an "organisation of professional revolutionaries" in the main still holds good to-day, as do the other organisational proposals enumerated in "What Is To Be Done?" Without this firm skeleton the Party in Russia would never have grown into the militant party it was and is; it would never have been able to lead the workers to victory in the proletarian revolution and guide the first country in the world that is building Socialism.

"What Is To Be Done?" is a summary of the ideas expounded by Lenin during the "Iskra"* period (1900-1903), the time of the ideological crystallisation of Bolshevism. In the pages of this paper Lenin put forward the principles which have remained the firm foundation of Bolshevism for over thirty years.

First is the struggle for a revolutionary theory—Marxian theory—as a means of converting the "spontaneous" labor movement into a conscious socialist movement. "Without a revolutionary theory," said Lenin, "there can be no revolutionary movement. This cannot be insisted upon too strongly at a time when the fashionable preaching of opportunism is combined with absorption in the narrowest forms of practical activity." "The first reason for the importance of theory for Russian Social-Democrats," Lenin continues, "is that our Party . . . has not yet completely settled its reckoning with other tendencies of revolutionary thought which threaten to divert the movement from the proper path. . . . Under such circumstances, what at first sight appears to be an 'unimportant' mistake, may give rise to most deplorable consequences, and only the most shortsighted would consider factional disputes and strict distinction of shades to be inopportune and superfluous. The fate of Russian Social-Democracy for many, many years to come may be determined by the strengthening of one or the other 'shade.'" And, pointing out that "the role of vanguard can be fulfilled only by a party that is guided by an advanced theory," he points to the brilliant band of Russian revolutionaries of the nineteenth century. They achieved a degree of organisation unapproached by their successors, but lacked the revolutionary theory.

So, after dealing with the theoretical situation, Lenin goes on to describe the organisational steps necessary to build the vanguard party. What was the theoretical and "practical" state of the Russian movement that made such a fundamental overhaul essential?

The foundation of Lenin's political activity was the principle of the hegemony of the proletariat in the revolution, and the theoretical war against revisionism was waged in defence of the fundamentals of

* "Iskra" ("The Spark") was adopted as the central organ of the Party at the first congress (1900). Lenin performed most of the editorial work; Plekhanov and Martov wrote a lot of material for it. It became the ideological and organisational Social-Democratic centre, around which the local organisations united. After the 1903 congress Lenin resigned from the Editorial Board, and "Iskra" passed over to the Mensheviks.

† Bourgeois revolutionary "shades" whose descendants were revolutionary in the February revolution but the most savage opponents of the October revolution.

Marxism and Marx's analysis of capitalist production relations. That analysis discloses the inevitable intensification of the conflict of class interests in capitalist society, the proletarianisation of the intermediary sections of the town and country population, and the ripening of social and political conditions necessary for the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

However, Marxism had penetrated the Russian movement largely under the influence of international opportunism. The German, Bernstein, criticised Marxist doctrine on all fundamentals, and as the Tsarist censorship at the time was very strict, and only certain of the ideas of Marx could be openly advocated, Bernstein's theories received wide publicity. While it was impossible to expound Marxism from the point that with the development of capitalism the working class is developing and the way being prepared for a social revolution, it was possible to describe the development of capitalism without a class struggle, i.e., from the point of view of the bourgeoisie. Thus, with the transference of Marxist ideas to Russia, many people, more closely allied with the bourgeoisie than the proletariat, adopted Marxism, objectively with the purpose of proving the inevitability of the development of capitalism, and to make the growing working-class movement serve the interests of the bourgeoisie. This "legal" Marxism was nothing more than a reflection of the interests of the developing capitalist class. Lenin not only took up the struggle against the revisionists in Russia, but also in Western Europe, and his fight against the revisionist theoreticians became of vast international significance.

The rapid development of capitalism and of the working-class movement, marked by a widespread strike movement, formed the background of the theoretical disputes between the revolutionaries and the "legal Marxists." The mass arrests of the leaders and active workers soon devastated the ranks of the Social-Democratic movement, which had concentrated its energies previously on propaganda work, but now began to assume leadership of the strike movement. The places of the "old" comrades were gradually taken over by the younger generation of practical workers in the Social-Democratic movement, many of whom were under bourgeois influence as a result of "legal" Marxism. Thus what is termed "Economism" made its appearance, with Bernstein theories of "evolutionary" methods and the peaceful transition from capitalism to socialism. The necessity for an independent party of the working class, capable of opposing the bourgeois parties and of fighting the dictatorship of the proletariat, was ignored. The class conflicts in capitalist society would grow less acute, the position of the working class would improve—according to this theory—so legal methods, such as the parliamentary struggle and the pressure exerted on capitalism by the trade union movement would be sufficient.

Opportunism in theoretical questions had led to opportunism in practice.

Lenin, after polemising the theoretical tendencies, proceeds to the problem of creating a centralised party, "the main link" to enable a march forward. The organisation of a centralised party is an essential condition for the correct leadership of the working class. This party must be the vanguard of the class, and must be armed with the revo-

lutionary theory. As he examines his own experiences and typical examples of the work of the circles and Leagues of Struggle, their failure to carry on consistent work, largely because of their inexperience making them easy victims to the police; their poor utilisation of forces available, etc., he draws the conclusions put into practice by the Bolsheviks. He differentiates between the organisations of workers—wide mass organisations, trade unions, mutual aid societies, etc.—and the organisation of revolutionaries.

The workers' organisations must be trade organisations; they must be as wide as possible; and they must be as public as conditions will allow (speaking particularly of Tsarist Russia where all organisations of workers were illegal). On the other hand, the organisations of revolutionaries must consist first and foremost of people whose profession is that of revolutionary. Such an organisation must not be too extensive, and as secret as possible. To be durable, it must have a stable organisation of leaders to maintain continuity (which becomes the more important the wider the masses are drawn into the struggle). From these points Lenin shows that with a firm theoretical basis the Party would not be diverted from its path by "outside" influences.

To Australian workers, reared in a movement which Lenin was able to characterise in 1913 as a bourgeois Labor Party, which in office prepared the Australian masses for the Great War, whose leaders were openly non-Marxist, and neither knew nor cared anything about any theory, "What Is To Be Done" is a revelation. The tradition in Australia, as in other English-speaking countries, has been contempt for theory. The organisational tradition, as a consequence, have been opportunist, reformist. A study of "What Is To Be Done" will inspire all militant workers to intensify the struggle for theory—the struggle against "Right" opportunism and "Left" phrase-mongering—and to build the Communist Party in Australia into an organisation capable of following in the paths of that Party in whose foundation "What Is To Be Done?" played so important a role—to lead the workers and oppressed poor farmers to their emancipation, to a Soviet Australia.—R. G.

Party Work in District 3

By M. P. RYAN

In Queensland a rising wave of militancy is manifesting itself in a will to unity and militant action. The sugar-workers are struggling against the capitalist exploiters in defiance of the A.W.U. bureaucracy, whose policy of Arbitration and class-collaboration they repudiated for the policy of mass action under democratically elected rank and file leaders.

The pastoral workers at Charleville asserted their rights to discuss the united front proposals of the P.W.I.U. of A. for unity in action with the A.W.U., which they endorsed and called upon the Executive of the A.W.U. to also endorse. This action of the rank and file was taken in defiance of the efforts of the local A.W.U. officials. Bush-workers' Committees are forming up at Dirranbandi and elsewhere. At Dirranbandi award conditions have been enforced through the efforts of the B.W.C.

The Mt. Coolon miners are still struggling with the aid of the unions and workers on the jobs, who levied themselves for their aid, for better wages and conditions, and against victimisation and speed-up. The building trade unions have before them a proposed constitution for amalgamation into one union for the industry, which they recognise as a necessity in the growing struggle to defend their interests against the employers' attacks and the betrayals of the Labor Government. The only obstacles in the way of unity are technical objections raised by some officials.

The meat-workers just recently put up one of the finest displays of solidarity ever seen in Queensland, even in the opinion of the reformist officials, who betrayed them into Arbitration and defeat; they are still dissatisfied, and are ready for a militant leadership. The conditions of Railway workers have been attacked by the Labor Government. Speed-up is the order of the day, in an endeavor on the part of the Government to continue to meet the enormous interest bill to bondholders. So indifferent are the Government and the heads of the Railway Department to the claims of the workers for redress, that the "Advocate," the militant journal of the A.R.U., in its last issue declared that the time was near at hand when the rank and file will need to turn their attention to strike action, to have rectified conditions ne-

glected by the Government and the bureaucratic heads of the Railway Department.

The waterside workers, realising the futility of divided ranks in their struggles against the shipping companies who are continuing their attacks despite the prosperity talk of the Forgan Smith Government, are taking a ballot on the question of admission of the Permanent and Casual men into the Waterside Workers' Federation.

The unemployed and relief workers are outspoken in their criticism of the Government's refusal to grant any improvements in their conditions. They are commencing to organise, and a number of voluntary organisers are visiting relief gangs, camps and hostels, and are meeting with ready response to their appeals for organisation based upon job committees. A large meeting of unemployed and relief workers assembled at the Treasury Building in support of their deputation which waited upon Minister for Labor Hynes, with a demand for an extra day's work and fares for relief workers, and increased rations for those not on relief work. Dissatisfied with Hynes's mere promise to consider the matter, the unemployed are more determined than ever to organise for mass action to win their demands. They will hold a mass demonstration at Parliament House when Parliament meets in August.

Some changes have been made in methods of Party work and a definite turn to trade union work has commenced, but much more is required.

Detailed attention is now being paid to the Ipswich railway workshops, and already three Party units have been formed. The comrades are planning for better trade union work as the most effective means for developing the united front around job grievances.

Not only do the comrades pay the closest attention to even the smallest items of job issues, but practical application is given to Lenin's dictum, that "we must build the Party in ones and twos." The militant workers are visited at their homes, and Party membership is discussed, and the conditions of membership made clear. In this way, not only are many recruits won, but the quality of the membership is improved.

Some excellent work in the campaign for unity on the waterfront in Brisbane has also been carried out, and the prestige of the Party has been raised considerably, but we are lagging behind in the task of recruiting and setting up Party nuclei for

developing the work to a higher level. To remedy this situation leading comrades have been given personal responsibility for leading the work of building the Party by personal approach.

In Mayne Junction and other railways depots, a large number of workers have been recruited to the Party in the past, and improvements in trade union work are noticeable, but political unclarity holds back the comrades in these activities, particularly in Mayne Junction, and here, where there are no classes, we have a concrete example of the inability to develop the practical work because the correct political line is not clear to the comrades.

In the tramways, meat, and building trade industries, the workers are ripe for a militant leadership, which we can develop only by closer personal contact, and by careful and considerate attention to the workers' needs. Plans have been laid for this, and already good results are beginning to be shown.

Though we urge upon comrades to sustain their efforts for improved methods of work in the trade unions, which are the natural organs of struggle for the workers, and are therefore the most important sphere of work, we must not underestimate the importance of all other spheres of activity. For unless we develop a broad, comprehensive view of the entire front of the class struggle we cannot get a clear perspective or grasp sufficiently the political significance of any one sphere of action.

Lenin, in "What Is To Be Done?" informs us that, "The workers can acquire class political consciousness **only from without**, that is, only outside the economic struggle, outside of the sphere of relationships between **all** classes and the State and the from which alone it is possible to obtain this knowledge is the sphere of relationships between **all** classes and the State and the Government—the sphere of the inter-relations between **all** classes."

"To bring political knowledge to the workers," Lenin goes on, "the Social-Democrats (Communists-M.P.R.) must go **among all classes of the population**, must despatch units of their army in **all directions**."

The objective situation, briefly outlined at the beginning of this article, calls for our closest possible consideration and practical attention which can be given by all comrades, making every endeavor as Communists should, to study Marx-Lenin-Stalin, and acquire a better knowledge of the methods of our Central Committee, that we may be able to apply ourselves to our Communist tasks with greater initiative, wisdom and flexibility.