

# COMMUNIST REVIEW

Registered at G.P.O. Sydney, for transmission by post as a Periodical.

No. 58

JUNE, 1946

Price 6d.

## LIST OF CONTENTS

REFORMISM AND THE UNITED FRONT . . . . .	R. Dixon . . . . .	163
COAL CONTROL URGENT! . . . . .	Edgar Ross . . . . .	165
BRITISH COMMUNIST CONGRESS RESOLUTIONS . . . . .		168
WHY THE REFERENDUM MUST BE WON . . . . .	H. B. Chandler . . . . .	169
U.S. RELATIONS WITH LATIN AMERICA . . . . .	William Z. Foster . . . . .	171
THE PALESTINE INQUIRY COMMITTEE . . . . .	S. Mikunis . . . . .	174
VICTORIAN LABOR PARTY CONFERENCE, 1946 . . . . .	E. F. Hill . . . . .	176
INDIA'S AGRARIAN CRISIS . . . . .	G. Adhikari . . . . .	179
THE FASCIST MENTALITY IN AUSTRALIAN ART . . . . .	"Goya" . . . . .	182
ARMY MEDICINE SHOWED THE WAY . . . . .	Capt. John Couani, A.A.M.C. . . . .	184
SCIENCE IN EDUCATION . . . . .	C. A. Short, B.Sc. . . . .	186
ON THE COMMUNIST PARTY WHEAT PROGRAMME . . . . .	Agrarian Committee Member . . . . .	187
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS . . . . .		189
BOOK REVIEW . . . . .	Ray Oldham . . . . .	190
	Emile Burns . . . . .	190
WAR ON WEEDS . . . . .	Prof. J. B. S. Haldaxe, F.R.S. . . . .	191

ORGAN OF THEORY AND PRACTICE OF THE AUSTRALIAN  
COMMUNIST PARTY

Editor . . . . L. L. Sharkey

## REFORMISM AND THE FIGHT FOR THE UNITED FRONT

R. DIXON

CONFRONTED with the sharpening struggle against the capitalist class and growing resistance from the Right Wing Reformists, the fight for working class unity must be more fully developed than ever, as this is the condition for victory of the working class over the forces of reaction.

In Europe, which is the great testing ground of working class theories and tactics today, the fight for unity, in many countries, is well on the way to being won. In the struggle to defeat Hitlerism and, when that was accomplished, to win the peace, the working class found they could not afford the luxury of division as preached and practised by the Social Democratic leaders, as that meant disaster. They rejected the splitters and united their ranks for the struggle and, as a consequence, the labor movements in many parts of Europe have succeeded in exercising a major influence on the national life of their respective countries. New vistas have opened up before them, they have taken the path of united working class advance to socialism.

But while the cause of working class unity has been advanced so much in Europe, in the Anglo-American countries the fight for the united front is in its initial stages. The Right Wing opponents of unity are still strong enough, still have enough influence in the Labor Parties, to prevent those parties meeting with the Communist Parties to discuss a basis for united action. More than that, the L.P. of Britain has undertaken to lead the fight against unity on an international scale, as well as in Britain, and the Dominion Labor Parties are backing them in this outrageous anti-working class decision.

Wherever discussions on working class unity were arranged between Communist Parties and the Social Democratic Parties in European countries, Professor Laski, Chairman of the British Labor Party, was sent, to throw his weight behind the opponents of unity in the hope of preventing agreement being reached. The British Foreign Minister, Bevin, not only opposed the uniting of the Communist and Social Democratic Parties of Germany, he forbade the Social Democratic representatives from the British Zone who had been elected onto the governing body of the united party from taking their seats and urged more assistance to the Social Democratic Party and restrictions and limits on the activities of the Communists. The British L.P. is also organising a special conference of representatives from Social Democratic Parties of Europe to decide upon measures to combat the Communist Parties and the advanced working class unity. Within Britain, Labor's Right Wing are waging a bitter fight against the growing Trade Union sup-

port for the affiliation of the Communist Party to the Labor Party.

Thus, the British Labor leaders are using all their influence, and the power of British imperialism, to prevent working class unity being achieved and this policy coincides with the efforts of Bevin and the Labor Government to create a world capitalist front against the Soviet Union, the land of Socialism.

Such is the criminal anti-working class policy being pursued by the British Labor Party.

What bearing does this have on Australia and upon the policy of the A.L.P. and the Labor Governments?

The trend of British Labor policy has not left Australia untouched. For some time now discussions, which culminated in the recent Empire Conference, have been going on between British and Dominion Governments, the object of which was to bring about a greater co-ordination of foreign policy and defence plans. The weakened positions of British Imperialism resulting from the war made it necessary for the British Government to get stronger backing from the Dominions on major questions of foreign policy, with the object of strengthening its hand in the negotiations with Soviet Russia and the United States.

The discussions with the Dominions proceeded not on the old basis of foreign policy being determined almost solely by the British Government, but on the basis of the active participation of Dominion representatives in the formulation of foreign policy, and with major responsibility for particular spheres for the various part of the Empire. For example, Australia will play a major role in the Pacific.

In a broadcast dealing with the results of the Empire Conference in London, Mr. Chifley said that Australia will "shoulder the responsibility of playing a major part in ensuring Australian and British Commonwealth interests in the Pacific."

In view of the looming Anglo-U.S. trade war, the fight of the colonial peoples for their independence and the preparations for war on the Soviet Union, that statement is very significant. The Conference will result in Australia's war potential being enlarged and in a closer linking of powerful British monopolies with Australian capitalist interests. The policy Bevin advocated at the Foreign Ministers Conference in Paris was supported by the Empire Conference, much to the satisfaction of reactionary anti-Soviet circles.

It cannot be assumed that no differences remain between the British and Australian Governments, or that differences will not develop in the

An index of the 1945 issues of the Communist Review is now available. Copies may be obtained by sending a stamped and addressed envelope to Review Management, 695 George Street, Sydney.

100 bound copies of the Communist Review for 1946 will be available early next year. Orders for these will be accepted now and should be sent to the above address.

June, 1946

future. Conflicting economic interests make this inevitable. This much is certain, however: the Empire Conference resulted in a considerable success for Bevin and the Australian Labor movement must be on the alert for changes in the foreign policy of the Chifley Government. We can also be sure that the British Labor leaders discussed their campaign against communism with the Australian delegates, Chifley and Ewart.

Indications also point to a strengthening of Right Wing influences in the internal policy of the Labor Governments. The statement of the Tasmanian Labor Premier, Mr. Cosgrove, urging speed-up in industry, more production and cessation of strikes is symptomatic. Dealing with the all-important question of wages, Mr. Cosgrove said: "Whereas Labor for the whole of its history has been engaged in a struggle for decent wages and conditions, it must now regard this task as completed." ("Sun," 7/5/46.)

Labor Party members and supporters will be amazed to learn that the struggle for higher wages and conditions has been completed. The rise in prices during the war, as everyone knows, was not accompanied by a corresponding rise in wages and as a result the real wage of the worker today is lower than for very many years. At the very moment, therefore, when Labor should be exerting itself to the utmost to get decent wages and conditions and when the Labor Governments should be helping forward this movement, Labor Party leaders are blocking the path, opposing increases in the living standards of the workers. Mr. Cosgrove had nothing to say about the huge profits of the big monopolies, the increased cost of living, nor about the rise in productivity over the last two decades, and especially during the war.

What Mr. Cosgrove said openly and frankly Mr. Chifley has been hinting for some time in private. The trade union movement, therefore, must face up to the fact that improvement in wages and conditions, for which there is such pressing need, will not come from Governments or Arbitration courts, but only from the organised struggles of the workers.

On other issues, the 40-hour week and nationalisation of the coal and certain other industries, Labor's policy shows the same trend to the Right.

These developments make it obvious that the fight for working class unity is taking place under more difficult conditions. Right Wing Labor leaders and Trade Union officials are energetically campaigning against the Communist Party and working class unity.

Should we assume from this that the united front is now further off than ever? No such conclusion can be drawn. Over these last months the cause of working class unity has been advanced considerably, in spite of the attitude of the Right Wing Labor leaders. Their efforts to betray the

big steel, coal and shipping strike at the end of last year failed because of the solidarity of the Communist and Labor Party members and supporters engaged in the struggle. Hundreds of examples can be quoted showing the growth of working class unity in the factories and the rising hostility of Labor Party members and supporters to the policy of differentiation taking place in the Labor Party of differentiation taking place in the Labor Party leadership and not a few reformist T.U. officials and leading members of the Labor Party are disassociating themselves from the extreme Right Wing and their treacherous policies.

The realisation of the united front has, therefore, not been set back, but advanced by recent developments. Here we can learn a lesson from the experiences in European countries where, also, a strong Right Wing had to be overcome before unity was achieved. In France, Czechoslovakia and other European countries it was the powerful united front organised in the factories, unions and localities in the course of the struggle against fascism that was the deciding factor in the fight for unity. The Right Wing Social Democrats were compelled to cease their disruptive attacks on the Communist Party and their opposition to the united front.

We cannot achieve the united front by capitulating to the Labor Party, or by weakening and smoothing over the struggle against the Right Wing. On the contrary, we need the widest mobilisation of the workers to fight for progressive internal and foreign policies, combined with the most vigorous exposure of the Right Wing. The fight for the united front goes hand in hand with the fight against and the exposure of the Right Wing of the Labor Party.

The existence of Labor Governments must be taken fully into account when considering the organisation of the United Front with the Labor Party. Labor ministers oppose mass pressure on the Labor Governments on the grounds that it is embarrassing to them. We can only regard this as a paltry excuse for the evasion by the Labor Government of their responsibility to the labor movement, and the failure to carry out their election promises and the platform of the Labor Party. We support the Labor Governments as against Governments of the Liberal and Country Parties, but not without qualification. By failing to respond to the demands of the working class, the farmers and middle classes, by their bungling of the reconstruction programme they themselves outlined, the Labor Governments are frittering away the support of sections of the people and creating confusion and division in the labor movement. All this is gnat to the mills of reaction. These tendencies will increase if the Right Wing strengthens its hold on the Labor Party. Hence the need for intensifying the campaign against the reactionaries in the labor move-

June, 1946

ment, to concretely and effectively expose them.

Labor Party members and supporters have to be organised to join with the Communists in a united demand that the Labor Governments adhere to the programme of the labor movement, that they cap the fight for "decent wages and conditions" with a substantial rise in the Basic Wage and the 40-hour week, that the problems of reconstruction be met with better planning and organisation which

entails the nationalisation of the coal industry and of the big monopolies, and that the anti-Soviet trend in foreign policy give way to a policy of friendly and peaceful relations with the Soviet Union and with all other peoples, including those in the colonies now fighting for their independence.

The fight for working class unity means that pressure on the Labor Governments must be increased, not relaxed.

## COAL CONTROL URGENT!

EDGAR ROSS (Editor, "Common Cause").

IN a cartoon in a recent issue of "Common Cause" we depicted the Australian coal owners seeking to hide from public view a chaos of smoking mines, with the caption, "Hands Off! Everything's O.K."

Recent heavy rains in Northern New South Wales threw ten pits idle for several days, and had as a sequel three severe fires, several roof "falls" and "heating up", and flooded mines. It was spectacular confirmation of the charges made over a period of years of wilful neglect, wasteful and careless methods of coal extraction, and a criminal lack of foresight, on the part of the present owners of the industry.

Thus dramatically found guilty of negligence, the coal owners could only plead inanely "We could not help it," while their willing propagandists sought to divert attention from the wreckage with talk of miners and strikes, and their directors audaciously agitated for increased subsidies from a Government they would not hear of having any say in the industry!

Coal mines on fire . . . coal mines flooded . . . coal mines collapsing!

Coal mines without underground transport . . . coal mines lacking both rooms . . . coal mines without system or method.

An industry which cannot "hold" its employees, let alone attract new labor . . . an industry which cannot guarantee work from day to day . . . an industry which cannot meet requirements.

That is the background for the reaching of the "showdown" stage on the paramount issue of Coal Control.

The coal mining industry is in a mess! Having haphazardly extracted the coal most easily obtained in accordance with the slogan of "speedy returns" the owners now face accumulating serious problems—how to extract the pillars left standing in the first working, how to keep air circulating and transport moving, while the "shells" their chaotic methods have created tend to cave in, causing falls, "creeps", fires and floods. Their failure to handle the "dust" menace has led to a mounting burden of workmen's compensation. And profits must still be won!

To cap it all, the declining industry—unorganised, anarchistic, technically backward—is being asked to produce millions of tons of coal more than pre-war, in order to provide the "fuel" basis for the extensive industrial expansion planned by the Federal Government. There is no hope of it doing so unless it is drastically reorganised under national control.

This is not the first time we have warned that the coal industry, unless reorganised and re-equipped, would fail to meet the requirements of an extending economy. In the "first and second round" campaigns of the Miners' Federation, 1937-1940, we not only agitated for improved working conditions, but called for Government control to fix prices, regulate production, systematic distribution, and modernise the industry. When mineworkers were breaking all production records during the war period, we warned that it could not last unless the whole set-up of the industry were altered.

The National Convention of the Federation in September last year called for the nationalisation of the industry, to make possible its modernising under conditions which would not mean merely intensified competition by private owners, but would increase output while safeguarding the health, safety and security of the workers. The Federal Government's answer was to announce that it was "getting out of coal" completely, to declare that it would not nationalise the mines under any circumstances . . . then, after further consideration, that it was determined to "keep in coal" at the distribution end but would leave "production" to the States . . . with the New South Wales Government countering with propaganda that it could do nothing about the coal controls because the Federal Government would not vacate the field.

And so, the seemingly endless discussions and "passing the buck", with promises made and regularly broken, while the disproportion between the coal being produced and the coal needed grew until yet another of the ever-recurring stocks crises intervened, and the familiar scare-headlines of the press appeared to threaten housewives with rationing. Press propagandists, as usual, blamed miners!

strikes, but the real story was told by the ten pits idle in New South Wales as a result of the rains, and, then, the aftermath. . . North Wallarah was filled with water to the tunnel mouth. A big fall of ground in Bellbird had blocked the haulage road. Cessnock No. 2 was on fire, threatening to set other adjacent mines ablaze. As the mine managers replied "exaggeration" to the miners charges, flames 100 feet high leapt from the Ayrfield colliery, and fires were reported from Muswellbrook.

Northern miners' president, W. Crook, declared that any part of the whole coal seam from Maitland to Cessnock could "go off any tick of the clock", making inevitable the permanent loss of millions of tons of coal. The story is being re-told of the flooding and firing of the Ayrfield-Greta pits some years back, with the loss of some of the most valuable coal in the world, owing to the failure of the owners to take the necessary precautions.

These are merely spectacular manifestations of the routine employment by the mining companies of methods of coal extraction which sacrifice everything to the winning of big and speedy profits. The fires and floods and collapses were predicted years ago.

In layman's language, the customary "bord and pillar" method of coal extraction simply means that you carve out the seam of coal as dictated by maximum and speedy profits, leave holes underground, then go back and "rob" as many of the pillars left standing as you can, leaving behind a shell which collapses on the slightest "provocation", with serious consequences when the "excavation" is close to the surface, as at Cessnock No. 2. The known—and quite "established"—method which ensures that all the coal seam will be "worked out" systematically (instead of 30 per cent as often is the case today), while the workers are protected, and the surface "safeguarded", is that of replacing the coal as it is extracted with some other material . . . hydraulic or pneumatic stowage. But it costs money, and there's the rub! And so, the "shells" are collapsing, and the nation is being robbed of more and more coal.

True, some strikes continue, as an inevitable corollary of the whole chaotic set-up, but it is significant that since the end of the war the overwhelming percentage of them have been due not to any concerted move for real advances for the workers, but to a determination to "hold what we have" in the face of attacks on seniority principles, wage rates, and conditions generally . . . with an increasing number of stoppages due to mechanical breakdowns and safety issues.

Scientific advancement has largely by-passed the coal mines under private control! A method of injecting water into the coal face to mitigate the "dust" menace, recommended by Royal Commission as far back as 1938, was applied—under State

control—at one mine, Coalcliff, in 1944 with a success hailed by experts everywhere; but no private company has attempted to adopt it, while increasing cases of permanent incapacity from dust disease reach the total of 120 a year from one small district—Southern New South Wales!

So, too, accidents increase, with fatalities occurring at a rate double that of pre-war. Working conditions grow worse, with the sorry story of poor ventilation, inadequate bath rooms, no eating facilities, and generally primitive methods repeated year after year. And this in the industry which must form the backbone of post-war industrial expansion!

Its chronic instability, all-pervading atmosphere of insecurity, and bad working conditions, have had the inevitable result of young men shunning the industry, while others leave it for better jobs, creating a labor problem that threatens its very existence in the years to come.

Now well on the defensive, the coal owners nevertheless maintain their dogmatic rejection of any form of control, and seek the lifting of even those minor restrictions imposed upon them during the war period. They want carte-blanche to carry on with the methods that have brought the industry to the brink of disaster!

In the words of Judge Drake Brockman, "The disequilibrium between capacity and production and the absence of any sane co-operation among coal owners is the real cause of the sickness of the industry in recent years." How can such a situation be corrected except by planning and enforced "co-operation" under national control?

It is significant that in their fanatical resistance to any form of national control, the coal owners even rejected a proposal that the Federal Government should acquire all coal produced in New South Wales at a fixed price and arrange for its distribution . . . a rejection categorised by the former Coal Commissioner, Mr. N. G. Mighell, as the most absurd attitude within his knowledge. As pointed out by Mighell, in the absence of some control over distribution, there would simply be terrific competition among coal users for the best coal, with the lower grades left unexploited, the perspective of permanent loss to the country, and demand still unsatisfied.

But, be it noted, while the coal owners reject all forms of control, either at the production or distribution end, they regard it as "quite the thing" for the Federal Government to pay them thousands of pounds in subsidies (with virtually no say as to how the money is spent), and for the public to pay for the cost of putting out the many fires, etc., their negligence causes!

To the problem of coal, the owners have but one answer — that they shall be given the unfettered opportunity to embark upon a fierce competitive drive, to be fought with the latest coal cutting and

loading machines, with the weaker going to the wall, and the workers accepting the toll in wrecked and diseased bodies, lost lives and loss of jobs, as more "distressed areas" follow in the wake of mines ruined and closed down, and the industry drifts into inevitable "depression". At the recent Royal Commission, the coal owners announced their plans for the full mechanisation of selected mines, with others presumably to be shut down—and "devil take the hindmost".

The attitude of the Miners' Federation to mechanisation is quite clear. It will co-operate in the modernising of the mines, including the introduction of more machines, provided that it is regulated in accordance with real requirements and the safety, health and security of the workers are safeguarded . . . and that can only be done under a system of control by the nation. It is not surprising, then, that one of the burning issues of the moment is the question of using machines in pillars, which has been opposed by the union on the ground that machines aggravate the "dust" hazard and generally add to the dangers of coal extraction . . . but back of it all is the issue of control. Pillar extraction under private control has already wreaked havoc!

Indeed, most of the "sticky" issues this year have been linked closely with the bad set-up prevailing in the industry generally, and the issue of control. The labor shortage, for instance, forced to the forefront the question of compensatory payments for miners directed to leave the coal face to do the work of wheelers and others, which led to a clash with the Government, through its veto of the favorable decisions of the Central Industrial Authority, its own Authority.

The miners are tired of being pilloried by propagandists because the owners have made such a mess of the industry that it is unable to meet requirements . . . and sick of Labor Party Governments which tend to join in the chorus of condemnation as they pass the buck to each other in dodging their responsibilities to the workers, the Labor movement, and the nation.

When in Opposition the Deputy Prime Minister, Mr. F. Forde, warned U.A.P.-U.C.P. that when Labor was returned it would nationalise the industry, and other Ministers, too, have from time to time emphasised the need for national control, and promised the workers security, with a "new deal" in the post-war period. Now, the Central Executive of the Miners' Federation have found it necessary to assert publicly that the Federal Government has not the courage to take over the mines, and have indicated that Government for seeking refuge in the purely destructive report of Mr. Justice Davidson, with his repudiation of his own earlier recommendation for controls, and his nauseating propagandising against the mineworkers, from political and sectarian angles of approach.

Throughout the protracted negotiations between the Union and the Governments, the N.S.W. Minister for Mines, Mr. J. M. Baddeley, has insisted, "I will take control of the mines in New South Wales, if the Federal Government will get out of the picture." Now, Mr. Baddeley is to have his chance to make good! He has written and spoken often of the necessity for State control over production and distribution. He has indicted the coal owners for their wasteful methods, and advocated hydraulic stowage, scientific methods of dust prevention, and guaranteed full employment for the workers. Other N.S.W. parliamentarians, too, have been outspoken in their support of State control, declared that if present trends continue the industry will be in a state of collapse in 12 years, and have supported the miners with bold words for refusing to work in "dusty" and dangerous conditions.

The time has arrived for the State Labor Government to show its mettle!

The Baddeley draft Bill proposes the setting up of a Commission with power to regulate production (including the introduction of machines), to control the development of mines, to fix wages, conditions and prices, to limit profits, and to organise distribution. It provides for a guarantee of security for the workers, and for the introduction of social amenities and insurances.

The Federation's attitude is still that nationalisation is required in the coal mining industry, but it has been forced by circumstances as outlined to take a "detour", and work through the various States, starting with New South Wales, for State control.

Our Party's position is still that as expressed in the resolution of the last National Congress, with its call for nationalisation of the coal mines, and the membership must be mobilised to carry that campaign to ever higher levels, while backing the efforts of the Miners' Federation to force the implementation of the Baddeley Bill, with similar legislation in other States.

We are in step with world trends! The British Government is nationalising the mines because private coal companies have brought the industry to a state of collapse. The French Government has nationalised the mines. The Polish Government has nationalised the mines. The Czech Government has nationalised the mines. Sooner or later, every Government in the world will be forced to wrest coal from private controllers and place it under the control of the State.

The situation is rotten ripe for that action in Australia, where recurring stocks crises in a set-up of mines collapsing through fires and floods and earth subsidences indict the industry's capitalist controllers, and cry "Out of the way, you wreckers! Give the National Authority a try!"

## RESOLUTIONS OF THE BRITISH COMMUNIST CONGRESS

The following resolutions were unanimously passed by the National Congress of the Communist Party of Great Britain, held in London on November 25, 1945:—

### Resolution On Colonies

THIS Congress welcomes the growth and strengthening of the national liberation movement in the Colonies during wartime. The Colonial peoples played an important and far-reaching part in the war against fascism, sacrificing many of their best sons in the struggle and undergoing serious economic privations. Especially we note with pride the glorious part played by our comrades in Burma, Malaya and the Far East Colonial countries, whose heroic armed resistance to the armies of Japanese occupation, in close collaboration with the Allied Armies, materially helped to bring about the speedy defeat of the Japanese without great loss of lives to the Allied forces.

The wartime experiences of all Colonial peoples had strengthened their confidence in their ability to determine their own future and their conviction of the justness of their demand for the right of self-determination.

This Congress re-affirms its belief in the equality of all peoples, the right of all nations to choose their own form of government and the necessity to end the exploitation of one nation by another. We therefore call upon the Labor Government, in accordance with the traditions of the Labor movement, to extend to all peoples the rights of equality and freedom which were promised in the Atlantic Charter and at Teheran. We call upon the Labor Government to break sharply and decisively with Tory policies of imperialist exploitation which have impoverished the colonial territories and denied them their elementary civil liberties.

Congress places on record its dissatisfaction at the use of British armed forces in an attempt to suppress the national movements in Indo-China and Indonesia, and at the refusal of the Governor of Burma to recognise the right of the Burmese Resistance Movement to speak for the Burmese people. Further, the constitutional changes now proposed for Colonies such as Nigeria and Ceylon in no way meet with the clearly expressed wishes of the people of those countries.

We ask the Labor Government, therefore, to outline a clear policy for the achievement by the Colonial peoples of equal and free status amongst the nations of the world. And, in addition as an immediate step—

- (a) to secure the repeal of all laws restricting freedom of speech, movement and assembly.
- (b) to repeal all laws that discriminate politically or economically against the popula-

tion, or sections of the population, in the Colonies.

- (c) to work out and immediately put into effect plans for a vast development of all social services in the Colonies.
- (d) to grant every facility and assistance to the Colonial peoples in forming their trade unions and co-operative organisations.
- (e) to draw up, co-ordinate and put into effect plans for the economic and industrial development of the backward colonial economies which will have the effect of stimulating world trade and lessening the threat of unemployment. It is essential that all such industrial development should be controlled by, and in the interest of, the indigenous populations and not for the benefit of foreign combines and monopoly interests.

A great responsibility rests upon the Communist Party to arouse the Labor movement, by its clear socialist presentation of the colonial issue, to an understanding of the community of interest that exists between the British people and the subject Colonial peoples in the fight against imperialism and for a world in which all nations shall be free and equal.

### Resolution On India

The new world situation brought about by the military defeat of German and Japanese fascist-imperialism, in the attainment of which the Indian peoples played a vital part, opens up new perspectives and new possibilities for the Indian peoples.

The newly-elected Labor Government in this country is now faced with fresh opportunities and responsibilities to fulfill its pledges to negotiate the settlement of India's future on the basis of the recognition of India's right to freedom.

This Congress expresses dissatisfaction with the proposals made by Mr. Attlee on behalf of the Labor Government on September 19, 1945, because they do not constitute a decisive step towards such a settlement. Congress declares that it is necessary to break entirely with the policies for India inherited from previous Governments, and in particular to abandon as a basis for negotiation the "Cripps" offer of 1942.

An essential condition for giving practical effort to Labor's desire to give Indians the right to frame their own democratic constitution lies in the calling of a democratically elected Constituent Assembly based on adult franchise.

Unlike the "constitution-making body" proposed by the British Government the Constituent Assembly must be created by direct election and not through the existing Provincial Assemblies, and it must include democratically elected representatives from the Indian States and not nominees of the Princes. Such a Constituent Assembly, being truly a reflection of the national aspirations of the Indian peoples would not only make a practical reality of Indian independence but would ensure that the full fruits of that independence would be enjoyed by the working masses of India and not solely by the privileged vested interests. The Constituent Assembly must, of course, be a sovereign body whose decisions would be unchallengeable by any other authority.

To make possible the calling together of such a Constituent Assembly, Congress urges the Labor Government to arrange immediately for the preparation of electoral lists based on adult franchise for the whole of India, to release without delay all political prisoners, and to withdraw all bans and orders restricting freedom of movement, speech and association.

To deal with the immediate and urgent social and economic problems which are now causing tremendous distress in India, Congress urges that interim representative governments be established in the Provinces to function until the results of the Provincial election are known; and that immediately after the Central Assembly elections, a responsible Government at the Centre, composed of representatives of the leading political parties and minorities, be set up.

Independence for India will mean India taking her place alongside all those other countries throughout the world which are advancing along the road to freedom and democracy. A subject India will make impossible the achievement of lasting peace, prosperity and happiness in the world. It is in the interests of all peoples, and of the British people in

particular, that India should become a free and sovereign country.

The Communist Party pledges itself to do all in its power to ensure the carrying out of this policy.

### Emergency Resolution On Indonesia

The Communist Party strongly protests against the use of British and Indian troops in the interests of the great Anglo-Dutch monopoly concerns to re-impose colonial slavery on the people of South-East Asia, in defiance of the principles of the Atlantic Charter and the Charter of the United Nations Organisation.

We owe a duty to the armed forces of Britain in the Far East, who joined up to defeat Japanese fascism, and not in order to be used alongside Japanese forces to suppress the struggle of other nations for freedom. Their demobilisation is being prolonged by the Labor Government's policy in South-East Asia.

We owe a duty to those British seamen of the "Moreton Bay" who have helped to save the honor of the British Labor movement by opposing the transport of troops and war materials to Indonesia. It is an action in line with the traditions of the immortal "Jolly George" and is an example to be followed by all British workers who are asked to produce or transport war materials to Indonesia. We demand that neither they nor their dependents shall suffer financial loss or victimisation because of their splendid action.

We demand an immediate cessation of hostilities, and negotiations with the Indonesian Republican Government on the basis of full recognition of the right of the Indonesian people to self-determination and independence.

The Communist Party calls for a reversal of the policy of the Labor Government in Indonesia and Indo-China, and for all Labor and progressive organisations to exert their strongest possible pressure upon the Government to secure this.

## WHY THE REFERENDUM MUST BE WON

H. B. CHANDLER

THE issues to be decided at the Referendum to be held concurrently with the Federal Elections are simple but important.

On this occasion, electors will be given the opportunity of voting "Yes" or "No" separately to each of three questions having, as their aim, the alteration of the Constitution to give the Federal Parliament power to legislate for social services, terms and conditions of industrial employment and organised marketing of primary products.

The presentation of the questions in this form and provision for voting for or against each one of them separately removes the basis of the main objections raised during the 1944 Referendum. It

will be possible for the electors to reject one and carry the others but, as some of the issues are to be treated as non-party issues, there should not be a concentrated, organised campaign against the proposals.

Although the new powers asked for by the Commonwealth Parliament do not overcome all the weaknesses of the "horse and buggy" Constitution, are not revolutionary and, in fact, are no greater than powers already held by each of the State Governments, they are necessary to enable the Federal authority to carry on many of the tasks it embarked upon under the Defence Powers of the Constitution during the war.

The Social Service powers which the electors are asked to give the Commonwealth Parliament concern almost every individual. According to "eminent legal authorities," there is some doubt about the security of social services already provided by the Federal Government. By this, it is meant that Maternity Allowances, Child Endowment, Widow's Pensions, Unemployment and Sickness Benefits (as provided for in the 1944 Act), and Hospital Benefits could all be declared invalid should somebody like to challenge the validity of these measures in the High Court and the Court feel disposed to rule that "within the meaning of the Constitution" the Commonwealth has no power to give these services. The fact is that all too frequently, the High Court does feel disposed to give such retrogressive decisions.

Dr. H. V. Evatt, when introducing the Bill to Parliament, submitted the opinion of five leading legal authorities who upheld this view, after considering the effect upon other Commonwealth Acts of the principles laid down by the High Court in the Pharmaceutical Benefits case. Dr. Evatt said:

"After considering these legal opinions and those furnished by its own advisers, the Government has decided that the only amendment to the Constitution which is urgently necessary as a result of the High Court's decision is an amendment to authorise the continuance of acts providing benefits in the nature of social services, and to authorise the Parliament in the future to confer benefits of a similar character."

This is the object of the power sought. Therefore, the alteration is absolutely necessary to ensure continuity of existing services, as well as to provide for extended services, such as medical and dental services, benefits to students and family allowances.

In 1944, there were 319,979 people receiving Old Age and Invalid Pensions at a total cost of £21,699,100 for the year. In the same year, 143,795 claims for Maternity Allowances were paid, the amount being £2,258,838, and 503,140 families received payments of Child Endowment at a total cost of £2,256,976. The total number of children for whom Endowment was paid was 921,973. In addition, there was an amount of £2,800,702 paid out for 42,220 claims for Widows' Pensions. Who, then, will vote "No" to this question?

There was a division of opinion in the ranks of the Opposition over the question of organised marketing. The Liberal Party favoured the proposal, whilst the Country Party, which is the big graziers' party, voted against the Commonwealth having power to organise the marketing of the farmers' products.

The alteration seeking Federal power to organise the marketing of primary production is only common sense. The inability of each State Government to efficiently organise such marketing was

forcibly brought before the people during the war. Under its Defence Powers, the Commonwealth was compelled to take over this task and did a relatively good job. When this power ceases to exist, which it does with the ending of the war period, we must revert back to the pre-war chaos. This would mean that, while the Federal Parliament has power to make laws with respect to trade and commerce with other countries and among the States, it cannot make laws with respect to trade and commerce within a single State. Another difficulty which this alteration will overcome, if carried, is in respect to Section 92 of the Constitution, which laid down "that trade, commerce and intercourse among the States shall be absolutely free." This limitation constitutes a serious difficulty and does make all marketing plans to some extent uncertain. If the power is granted the Commonwealth will be able to deal with the marketing of primary products in the best interests of the producers and the people.

The third question, industrial employment, is the most vital and has given rise to the sharpest conflict. At the last Referendum, the Opposition raised their greatest objection to the employment and unemployment power sought. They declared that to give such power to the Commonwealth Government meant industrial conscription. They demanded a modification of this clause to guarantee against industrial conscription.

On this occasion, Dr. Evatt has cut the ground from under their feet. He has inserted a guarantee against industrial conscription in the Constitution Alteration Bill dealing with the powers sought on terms and conditions of industrial employment. The most important aspect of this power is that it will enable the Federal Parliament to fix standard hours in any industry, though this will not apply in occupations that are not industrial in character; it will enable the Federal Parliament to fix the basic wage in accordance with present day requirements or to fix the principle upon which the basic wage is determined; it will enable the Federal Parliament to carry on with the important work of the Women's Employment Board and the maintenance of the conditions obtained for women in industry during the war; it will enable the Federal Parliament to maintain, modify and improve existing machinery for conciliation and arbitration.

Here, then, is the real reason for the attacks by the leaders of reaction. If the Referendum is carried, there will no longer be any excuse for the Federal Government to postpone the introduction of the 40-hour week, £1 increase in the basic wage, fortnight's holiday for all workers, improved industrial working conditions—and all this on a uniform scale throughout the Commonwealth.

Although the Liberal Party has decided to allow its members to determine their own individual attitude to the Referendum and have declared for a "non-party" issue, they traditionally repudiate their own decisions and undertakings, and a very big campaign against this alteration can be expected

from the nefarious groups established by the reactionaries. Big Business will fight tenaciously against any constitutional alteration calculated to overcome the division created in the industrial field by the operation of different conditions in each State and which will remove all legal obstacles to the introduction of the 40-hour week, the fixing of wages by the Federal authority, regulating conditions of employment, holidays and industrial amenities. This is what big business does not want.

Shorter hours, higher pay, full employment are inimical to the interests of the capitalist class. They want a reserve army of unemployed to restrain the efforts of the workers in forcing wage increases and to break strikes. They want low wages and longer hours and will fight with all their capital, all their sinister intrigues and all their lies and misrepresentation to hold back changes which will lead to full employment and some measure of Federal Government control likely to interfere with their freedom to exploit, profiteer, victimise and suppress the working class.

So the real issue at the Referendum will be a class issue. On the one hand we will have arrayed all the power of the capitalist class, fighting to preserve the out-dated Constitution which was drafted in 1900, a Constitution aimed at protecting the principle of private enterprise and based on the narrow concept of State rights, which has proved a barrier to progress and the general well-being of the working people. This group will be led by Menzies, the discarded leader of the disgraced and demoralised U.A.P., now masquerading under the name of "Liberal." He will be supported by Cameron, Fadden and many of the appeasers of fascism, the opponents of democracy, freedom and security.

On the other hand will be arrayed all sections of the working class—the people most vitally concerned with hours of labor and who are continually struggling for the right to work, for better working and living conditions, adequate social services and for security, work, homes and a greater degree of the leisure and culture that rightly are theirs. They will be supported by the struggling farmers—the dairyman, the wheatgrower, the orchardist, the poultry breeder—all those producers who have struggled for years against the heavy burden of debt and have toiled for a meagre

existence in an unorganised system in which the individual marketing of essential primary production has accentuated their poverty, whilst bankers, insurance companies, racketeering middlemen and capitalists of the worst kind have waxed fat at their expense.

"Yes" advocates will also come from the ranks of the skilled workers, the professional workers, small business men and the typical democratic middle-class liberal who is really anxious to get back depressions, avoid dole queues and provide decent homes and living amenities for his fellow human beings. In fact, the campaign for "Yes" can be a weapon in the hands of the working people that will build unity in struggle for progress.

Although "Yes" Committees representing all points of view as was experienced in the last Referendum are not likely to develop owing to the concentration on the election campaigns by the respective Parties, there can and must be widespread united action for a "Yes" vote.

What, then, are the tasks of the Party? Our tasks must be to develop the widest understanding of the constitutional alterations, to win into struggle for a "Yes" vote the great masses of the working people whose interests will be in jeopardy unless the Referendum is carried; to unite all who want jobs, homes and security behind the drive for a substantial "Yes" vote on each of the three questions. All candidates must give prominence to the "Vote—Yes" campaign, all propagandists must place clearly before the people the reasons why the Australian Communist Party calls for a "Yes" vote.

Both the Labor Party and the Communist Party will be campaigning for "Yes" on all questions. Both Parties will also contest seats at the elections and whilst we will strive for the utmost unity in action, exchange of preferences and the mobilisation of the working class for a gigantic struggle for the defeat of reaction, the election of Communists and the return of the Labor Government, we will also campaign vigorously for a majority "Yes" vote in each State and throughout the Commonwealth. Such action must bring the most active section of the working class parties together, laying the basis for a wider unity of all progressive people and opening up the opportunity for greater victories for the people.

## U.S. RELATIONS WITH LATIN AMERICA

WILLIAM Z. FOSTER (From "Political Affairs", March, 1946).

(Address delivered in Havana on January 28, 1946, at the government-owned Sports Arena, before a capacity gathering of 15,000 people, with some 35,000 more in the great overflow meeting. The enormous gathering was held under the auspices of the Popular Socialist Party of Cuba, at the conclusion of its Third National Assembly.)

THE collaboration, politically, economically, and culturally, of all the nations of the Western Hemisphere is indispensable for the well-being of these peoples. It is also one of the basic conditions

for a powerful United Nations and for maintaining world peace. In order that such all-American co-operation may exist to the fullest extent, each of the nations of North, Central and South America

must enjoy full national independence, become broadly industrialised, and exercise the right to develop its internal democracy entirely without reactionary outside interference. However, the powerful imperialist interests of the United States reject these necessary bases of all-American co-operation. These exploiters of the peoples consider the Latin-American countries as their special imperialist preserve, and they are following policies which seriously infringe upon the national freedom, industrialisation, and democracy of the Latin American peoples.

This interference by United States imperialism in the lives of the 140,000,000 Latin Americans must cease. It is a grave injury to the peoples south of the Rio Grande. Moreover, it works serious harm to the people of the United States by hampering the development of friendly economic and political relations with the many Latin American republics, and it is also a menace to world peace. Among the many changes in the policies of the United States toward Latin America that the Communist Party of the United States fights for, and in these matters it undoubtedly expresses the will of millions of our citizens, are the following:

First, a drastic change is necessary in the attitude of the United States towards the national independence of Latin American countries. To begin with, the United States must concede the full right of self-determination to Puerto Rico, without any "ifs", "ands", or "buts". In doing this, the United States must also grant the necessary funds to the Puerto Rican people as indemnification for the long colonial status, as well as make trade agreements of such a character that Puerto Rico may prosper economically. To do this is an obligation which the United States cannot evade, and which all of Latin America and the progressive movement in the United States should insist upon.

The United States should also turn over to the Latin American governments the various military bases it now holds in their respective countries, and promptly repatriate all the American soldiers, sailors and marines now in these lands. The war has long been over, and the continued holding of these bases can only serve to intimidate the various Latin American peoples. It is ridiculous to try to justify our maintaining these bases on the ground that they are necessary for the military security of the United States.

The United States must also refrain from interfering militarily in the life of Latin American peoples, either on its own initiative as in the Hoover days or jointly with Latin American governments, as proposed recently by Uruguay. Such military intervention could only result in United States domination of the country invaded. Should it become necessary to restrain by armed force any aggressor nation in the Western Hemisphere, this should be the responsibility of the Security Council

of the United Nations Organisation, not of the United States or of any group of Latin American countries under United States leadership.

Another important necessity for strengthening Latin American independence is that in the General Assembly of the UNO there must be no pressure exerted by the United States upon the Latin American nations to compel them to form a bloc under the control of the United States, as is now the case. The preservation of world peace and the stability of the UNO, as well as international collaboration throughout the Western Hemisphere, demand that in the UNO the Latin American nations should act as free and independent nations, and not as subordinate parts of an imperialist bloc under the domination of the United States.

Secondly, we must develop a helpful role on the part of the United States in the industrialisation of Latin America. It is an undeniable fact that the United States policy has long worked against the growth of a diversified industry in the Latin American countries. This policy harms every American nation, including the United States. For at least fifty years our economic policy in Latin America has been basically colonial. It has been directed, on the one hand, at monopolising the markets for the United States, and, on the other hand, at preventing the development of Latin American industries competitive with those in the United States. This policy was essentially continued with some modifications, under the liberal Roosevelt regime, and is even more emphasised under President Truman. To change these reactionary policies and to facilitate the industrialisation of Latin America, a number of major measures are necessary.

For one thing, the United States should at once extend large loans to the democratic nations of Latin America, where such loans have the sanction of the trade unions and other peoples' organisations in the Latin American countries concerned. These loans should be for long terms and should also bear low interest rates, if any. The loans should also be free of reactionary political conditions and should be available for the broadest and most varied industrialisation.

The Latin American nations must also be recognised as having the fullest freedom to trade among themselves and abroad, by barter and otherwise, without United States interference. At present, however, the United States is treading heavily upon the right of the Latin American nations to trade with one another. Moreover, the young, new industries of Latin America should be protected through the necessary devices in trade agreements against what would otherwise be the fatal competition of the highly developed industries of the United States. The so-called "Economic Charter," adopted not long ago at Chapultepec, is an imperialist document which unduly favors United States

trade and capital investment. It should, therefore, be radically amended to meet the needs of the Latin American peoples.

That the industrialisation of Latin America will benefit the United States greatly, by considerably increasing United States foreign trade with the countries to the south of us, is evidenced by the case of Canada. Canada, which is a highly industrialised country, has more trade with the United States than all of the Latin American countries combined, although it has less than one-tenth of their population.

In the United States, we Communists will do everything in our power to make our whole nation understand that in the interest of its own liberty and well-being it must bring our government to follow a policy of treating Cuba, Mexico, Chile, Brazil, Panama and all of the Latin American countries as countries equal in independence and rights with the United States, and that the United States must aid them in their economic development.

We Communists of the United States will not limit ourselves to general declarations. We will support the aspirations of Cuba to have guarantees for her sugar crop, corresponding to the help Cuba gives to the United States by selling it almost her entire production of sugar at a reduced price. We will support militantly every progressive demand of every Latin American country that advances the welfare and economy of its people.

It is important, in working for Latin American trade and industrialisation, that every Latin American nation should concern itself with all the economic agreements entered into between the United States and individual Latin American countries. They should do this both within and without the Pan-American Union. This collaboration is necessary because the Latin American peoples are not strong enough to bargain individually on an equal basis with the much more powerful United States. Experience has long demonstrated that, when they engage in such individual bargaining as they now practise, they fall easy victims to imperialist-minded United States monopolists. The more the Latin American countries co-operate together in economic and political affairs, the more favorable terms they will arrive at with the United States, and the better it will be for all the peoples concerned.

In the post-war period, with peace prevailing, the most potent imperialist weapon possessed by the United States is not its Army, Navy or Air Force, and, likewise, not its atom bomb; it is its vast financial and economic power. With huge resources at its command, it can and does compel borrowing nations to grant it important political concessions. The United States, therefore, cannot expect to be permitted, in a world wrecked by war, to use recklessly this powerful economic strength on an international scale, any more than it would

be permitted to employ its military force as it sees fit. Therefore, all the Latin American countries must especially concern themselves with the character of their general economic relations with the United States. The regulation of the way in which the United States uses its economic power is a major question that should also interest the UNO itself. It will be difficult for the people of the United States to understand the need for such regulation, but it is one of the lessons we must learn in the difficult international situation now confronting us.

Thirdly, it is vital to fight for a change in the attitude of the United States towards democracy in Latin American countries. The rapidly growing democratic forces of Latin America have many enemies to fight — among others, landowners, big capitalists, fascists and reactionary clerics. And not the least of their enemies are the imperialists of the United States and Great Britain, exploiters who are uniformly to be found on the side of reaction. Have we not recently seen Berle's insolent interference in the Brazilian elections, the importation of arms into Mexico from the United States by Sinarquistas, and similar reactionary incidents throughout Latin America? And just now Carlos Prestes has warned us that reactionary forces in the United States, to save their own interests, are trying to provoke a war between Brazil and Argentina. While taking advantage of all contradictions between rival imperialist powers, the Argentine peoples must understand that the present hostile attitude of the United States Department of State toward the notoriously reactionary and profascist Peron Government of Argentina is primarily designed to break the power of its strong rival in that country, British imperialism. The United States is not fighting for Argentinian democracy as such, but for its own reactionary imperialist interests.

Obviously, United States opposition to Latin American democracy, and its reactionary interference in the life of the various countries, constitute a danger to all the peoples of this hemisphere. The Latin American nations are quite qualified to establish their own democracy without the more than dubious interference of United States imperialism, and to this end they should be supported by the labor movement, and by the progressives generally, in the United States.

An especially dangerous form of imperialist attack against Latin American democracy is the persistent attempt of the reactionary leaders of the American Federation of Labor to split the Latin American trade union movement. During the past dozen years the workers of Latin America, in the face of fascist terror and extreme reaction, have built splendid trade union organisations, in many countries, totalling several millions of members. These unions, in their mutual interest, have combined themselves into the Latin American Confed-

eration of Labor, headed by Lombardo Toledano. But the leaders of the A.F. of L. are arrogantly trying to wreck this great new labor movement. The workers of Latin America, therefore, should understand and deal with such disrupting efforts for what they are — manoeuvres of United States imperialism. Men like Matthew Woll, the A.F. of L. specialist on Latin America, are as much imperialist in their outlook as the big monopolists themselves, and they should be treated as such. The project of the A.F. of L. leaders to split the labor movement of Latin America is the labor phase of the attempt by the imperialists of the United States to strengthen their grip on Latin America. In this sense, the A.F. of L.'s splitting programme should be fought both by the workers of Latin America and the United States.

The above-mentioned measures are some of the major changes in the policy of the United States, which must be fought for to eliminate interference with the national independence, industrialisation, and democratisation of the countries of Latin America. For the most part, changes in the policy of the United States along the lines here suggested would have the general support of millions of workers and other progressive forces in the United States, and they would also have the backing of the peoples of Latin America. They would help to create sound relations in general between the United States and Latin America. A free, indus-

trilised, democratic Latin America will benefit the people of the United States, as well as the Latin American nations themselves.

One of the most progressive and hopeful developments in the world today is the growing struggle of the Latin American peoples for the complete national independence of their countries, for the development of an expanded industrialisation that will radically improve their living standards, and for an advanced democracy that will guarantee the civil liberties of their nations. In this great progressive struggle the Communist Parties throughout Latin America are playing a vital, leading role. The tremendous surge forward of the many Latin American nations, of which Brazil is at present such a striking example, also has the good wishes and the support of progressive-minded forces all over the world, including the vast majority of the people of the United States. This great advance of the Latin American peoples is invincible. It cannot be defeated by Latin American reactionaries, nor by the imperialists of the United States and their labor lackeys of the Matthew Woll type. Latin America is fast travelling the path of progress. The road upward is hard, but the victory will be yours. Irresistibly, Latin America is on the way to becoming one of the freest, most prosperous, and most democratic areas in the world, and, therewith, it will also become one of the basic foundations of world progress and peace.

## THE PALESTINE INQUIRY COMMITTEE

S. MIKUNIS

(From "Kol-Haam," 3.1.46, No. 1.)

THE Anglo-American Inquiry Committee which started its activities after and upon the declaration of Mr. Bevin is to come to Palestine. British and American Government circles still continue in their endeavours to camouflage the true purpose of the Committee and to present it as the "final arbiter" in the Jewish-Arab conflict in Palestine and the Middle East. However, not only in London and in Washington, but also in Jerusalem and Cairo, there are people who are working hard to subscribe to this committee entirely humanitarian and altruistic aims and to blur its real character.

Co-operation has existed between America and Britain in the Middle East since the beginning of the Second World War. The large supplies from America to Britain's armies in this part of the world, the common M.E.S.C. (Middle East Supply Centre) which controlled the economic life of all the countries of the Middle East, and British and American agencies to inquire into the economic problems of these countries, all these are sign-posts on this path of co-operation. The consequence of this was that American influence penetrated more

and more into the Middle East and became a constant factor in the general policy of these territories.

However, simultaneously with this co-operation there arose also contradictions and clashes between the interests of the ruling classes in England and America, along with the additional complication of the political and economic problems of the Middle East; contradictions and clashes having as background the oil-concessions, pipe lines and in what direction they should be laid, the endeavours to win over political supporters in the Arab countries, and so forth. Hence the "sympathies" of British imperialists towards reactionary ruling circles in the Arab countries, along with a demonstration of a "cooling off" of relations towards the Jewish Agency leaders, on the one side, and the expression by American imperialists of "ardent feelings of love" towards Jews and Arabs alike in changing turns.

At the beginning with soft voices, and eventually with more frankness and aggressiveness, big American oil bosses and capitalists commenced to talk and to announce the holiness of their interests in

the Middle East, their readiness to defend these interests even by force, all the while spicing this with some kind of "care" for the poor fellow and for the raising of the economic standard of the Arab countries.

The shaken position of Britain after the war, her dependence upon American credit and her need for a strong ally to protect the colonial Empire and to build up lines of defence against the movements of national liberation and Soviet influence, "softened" the British imperialist groups and forced them to certain concessions. Thus America increased her penetration into the Middle East and achieved the well-known oil agreement. Thus she achieved as well her legal recognition by Britain as a real factor in the Middle East when Britain agreed to her co-operation in the Anglo-American Inquiry Commission.

The imperialist groups in Britain and America have their own deliberations. The declaration of Mr. Bevin and the establishment of the Inquiry Commission had as first object to create a state of expectation as to the future, to "freeze" the public activity among the Jewish and Arab masses and engage the latter with "prospects" for a settlement of their problems. The declaration as well as the authority vested in the Committee were presented in such a light as to make it easy for the agents of imperialism among Jews and Arabs to reduce the masses to despair and to allay their fears at the same time. All this was deemed necessary in order to gain time and to conquer comfortable positions for the concentrated and concerted attack of Anglo-Saxon imperialism on the freedom movements of the peoples of the Soviet Union and on the increasing influence of the Soviet Union and the democratic movements in the world.

The object is and was to determine the areas of their respective economic domination and the boundaries of their respective financial subjugation for each of the imperialist powers, just as the Anglo-French agreement in the Levant serves the same ends.

The political activity in London and Washington as to the Middle East in general and Palestine in particular, which is accompanied by proclamations, votings and discussions in parliaments and in public, intends to assist in the classification of the pro-imperialist forces among Jews and Arabs to the sides of Britain and America alike. It is an activity which has as object to divert the Arab countries from their vital interests towards the "Jewish danger" in Palestine, at the same time as it is intended to divert the minds of the Jews in the world and in Palestine from their political progressive and real fight towards the "Arab danger."

"I'll hit your Jew and you'll hit my Arab," this is the way the colonial system common to Britain and America works in our country and in the Middle East. This way is supported by big

landlords and big moneyed trading capitalists, by the big pro-imperialist bourgeoisie among Jews and Arabs and by the dynastic circles of the Arab countries, who all together are more afraid of the liberation movements of their peoples than of imperialism whichever it be. The way is: By means of camouflage, by relating decisive importance to secondary points, and by erection of racial boogies, to strengthen further the oppressive colonial rule, to hinder and weaken the democratic movement, to build positions against the Soviet Union and to prepare the soil for a third world war.

The Anglo-American Inquiry Commission is an unclean merger created for unclean purposes. This Committee was born in an "atomic twilight" when the reactionary groups in London and Washington plotted to cancel the achievements of the peoples derived from the great victory over fascism. This Committee is one of the illegal creatures of the ruling classes in Britain and America, born as a foreign substance, an unnatural offspring, on the body of a renovating world. The establishment of the Anglo-American Committee stands in strict contradiction to the United Nations' decisions at San Francisco, where the initiators of the above-mentioned Committee promised to assist in the advance of the Mandated Territories and colonial countries "towards self-government, or independence, in accordance with the concrete conditions of every territory and its population." Therefore the Committee is illegal not only de facto, not only on account of its character and tendencies, but also de jure from the legal point of view of the United Nations' constitution.

The Anglo-American collaboration sets out from the supposition that the Mediterranean is "Mare Nostrum" of imperialism, and the peoples who live on its shores are destined to be "tributaries" and objects of exploitation for the groups of capitalists in the Metropoly. This collaboration ignores the great Soviet power and the other United Nations, as if they were not existent at all. . . . This is an intrigue to create the most favourable conditions for reaction in this part of the world, under the leadership of the darkest forces all over the world, last not least in order to build up an anti-Soviet bloc and to threaten therewith the peace and security of the peoples.

The very attempt to remove the Soviet Union from discussion and decision on the questions of our country and the neighbouring countries proves that this committee is neither capable nor interested, from its very nature and composition, in helping Jews and Arabs. It is a new camouflage to an old policy, but under such new conditions as, we hope, will not help to make this "job" an easy one at all.

The Committee will concentrate mainly on the question of Jewish Immigration, thereby ignoring all other principal issues of Palestine. And not in vain did they choose this question in particular



which over and over again served in the hands of imperialism as a means to whip up the chauvinistic instincts of Palestine, and to oppose one national camp against the other. The Committee will deal with some tens of thousands of Jewish refugees who remained in the camps and whom all reactionary forces are profiteering with for their own ends, and whom they try to use to press for concessions from each other. Both these empires, the American and the British, want to make the world believe that they don't know what to do with this small number of Jews, small in comparison of millions and the financial arrangements imposed by the war and after-victory period. They want us to believe that they cannot open the gates of their own countries to Jews who want to immigrate there and that a common democratic basis for Jews and Arabs cannot be found to render possible the immigration into Palestine of those Jews who want to do so.

Neither for investigations, nor for solution of the problem of the political and economic system of our country has this committee been constituted, but to complicate things and to arouse one people against the other, and thus to strengthen the power of imperialism.

It is quite natural that the Jewish and Arab masses are disgusted by this new inquiry. In consequence of the vast experience gained from former committees and inquiries which our country has seen too often in the past, the masses regard this committee as well with doubts, suspicion, and

## VICTORIAN LABOR PARTY CONFERENCE, 1946

E. F. HILL

A MOST significant feature of the Victorian Easter Labor Party conference was the evidence of a new spirit of radicalism amongst the Labor Party rank and file. The agenda paper, which contained over 400 resolutions, showed the increasing concern of the Labor Party branches and affiliated unions with the hours and wages demands of the workers. Over 30 resolutions dealt with these all-important questions and the Conference adopted resolutions calling for the 40-hour week and endorsing the A.C.T.U.'s policy on the basic wage. A.C.T.U. Secretary Monk, who was a delegate to the Conference, expressed the determination of the labor movement to secure the 40-hour week — if not through the Arbitration Court then "by other means."

The impatience of the A.L.P. basic organisations with the passivity of the leadership expressed itself in numerous resolutions which sought a more expeditious handling of the agenda, more frequent conferences and various other measures of a similar nature.

a good deal of cynicism. Not so the official "national" leaders. These, Jews and Arab leaders alike, accept "a little" and reject "a little," praise "a little" and rage "a little" and remember gratefully the benevolence of imperialism in its and their "good old times." Out of the excited voices of the big talkers, the following cry is audible: "I loved thee, my Lord!" . . . . . And thus we learn from an editorial of "Davar" on 31/12/45 under the headline "Not because of us":

1. "Not because of their intention to attack the Soviet Union were British Forces concentrated in Palestine . . . . ."
2. "Not on account of the Jewish Yishuv were British Forces concentrated in Palestine . . . . ."
3. "The large force which was brought to Palestine has been concentrated here out of pure British interests. We recognise the justness of these interests and are ready to take them into consideration and to support them as we did many times."

No further comments are needed. These gentlemen have felt insulted in the past and feel insulted in particular to-day, when they are called "agents of imperialism." Therefore, there is nothing more convincing than the confession of the "convict" himself and the frankness he demonstrates in public. These gentlemen, responsible for the Jewish Agency policy, are ready to go to any imperialist "Canossa," to any reactionary adventure. May the Yishuv be on his guard with them!

For many years it has been obvious that the A.L.P. leadership has been an impasse beyond which branch rank and file activity could not get. This was a situation, assiduously fostered by the handful of extreme right wingers, headed by the late H. M. Cremean and ably assisted by the renegade Lovegrove. Their most ardent desire was to prevent the A.L.P. from carrying out any militant progressive activity, to split the Labor movement and render it immobile in the struggle against the enemies of the working class. Just how successful this policy was can be measured by the almost entire absence of official Labor Party campaigning against the Liberal Party. In short, this was precisely the policy of the bourgeoisie, carried into the A.L.P. by gentlemen of this kind.

The report of the Catholic Action "Movement" spoke of the late H. M. Cremean, M.L.A., as a man who would be "impossible to replace" in the work of the fascist policy of that body. It was well known that Mr. Cremean spent a great deal of his time (he "died literally because he was worn out

by this work") in combating socialist views, in steering the Labor Party into the united front with the Menzies and Francos so ardently desired by the "Movement." The "Movement" claimed great victories in the Victorian section of the A.L.P. in 1945 — "it was represented by more than 70 delegates from A.L.P. branches and unions" and, so it claimed, succeeded in imposing its policy on the Conference. A bureaucratic form of organisation, the lower organs of which accepted the infallibility of the Central Executive with the right wing in dominant positions, could be the only form acceptable to the reaction.

The 1946 Conference, however, reflecting rank and file stirrings, introduced radical departures from the old organisational forms. It adopted the report of a committee set up to investigate "the workings of the A.L.P. office." The report covered far more than the workings of the A.L.P. office. Summarised, the report recognised that for 20 years there had been no change in Labor Party methods, that the Labor Party's propaganda methods were outmoded, that the leading executives were immersed in routine and that there had been ineffective use of the "devotion and enthusiasm" of the A.L.P. members. Numerous specific instances of serious shortcomings were listed. Proposals were made to retire male officials at the age of 65 and female at the age of 60, and the whole system of leadership was to be reorganised to enable it to function more efficiently. The report, with the exception of the retirement provisions (with which we will deal later) was adopted in its entirety. On paper, at least, this sweeps away much of the dead wood and bureaucracy, upon which the extreme right wing has battened and thrived for so long. It is a clear victory for those A.L.P. members who sincerely desire action by the A.L.P. in the interests of the working class and who were revolted by the sabotage and passivity of the right wing. But there is no doubt that the surviving right wingers, whose days are numbered, will attempt to prevent the Party from taking advantage of these new proposals and to return to the good old days. The new scheme can be made to live only by the activity and vigilance of Labor Party members.

Great significance attaches to the decision of the Central Executive that Communist candidates in the last State election had to be given second preferences. That decision was taken on the initiative of the more realistic members of the Central Executive, headed by Messrs. Cain and Kennelly. But it called down the wrath of the "Movement" which organised resolutions of protest that called for more bans and witchhunts and placing Communists last on the ballot paper. (J. M. Cremean: "If there were 1000 on the ballot paper I would give the Communists my 1000th preference.") Those resolutions did not see the light of day at the Conference and thereby the "Movement" failed to secure one of its dearest objectives.

No doubt, however, the Catholic Action Movement regards as a good victory the decision of Conference to set up A.L.P. groups in the factories. It will be remembered that it was precisely this policy that was advocated in the secret report of the Movement. The report of the Movement said: "Most important . . . . . was the formation of Labor Party discussion groups within the factories . . . . . It is impossible for us to exaggerate the importance of this chance for our activists . . . . . Today they have the cover of the Labor Party." The speeches made by Messrs. Cousland, Peters, Maxwell and Tobin, who introduced the motion, made it clear that their conception of these groups was as bodies from which to organise anti-communism. Their speeches express no concern for the interests of the workers. The carrying of the resolution means that the policy of the infamous band of conspirators, who have the audacity to call themselves "The Movement," has been carried into the Labor Party. The experience of New South Wales with so-called industrial Labor groups, shows that this is not any academic question with which we are dealing, but that in fact these groups are to be centres of disruption. Inside the Labor movement, they carry out the policy of which Menzies is the centre and which has as its component parts the Catholic Action Movement, the Trotskyists and similar agencies of reaction.

It is clear, and always has been clear, that the Communists willingly co-operate with all who sincerely work for the realisation of the workers' aims. Equally clearly, the Communists are prepared still to do that. Insofar as Labor Party members are prepared (as the great majority of them are) to act in unity with other sections of the Labor movement they will receive as ever the willing support of the Communists. Insofar as these groups become centres of reaction they will be fought by the Communists just as ruthlessly as are the Menzies and other open enemies of the working class. Those anonymous fascist figures, who skulk under the cloak of the Labor Party and under the cloak of religion, will be assuredly unmasked and driven right out of the Labor movement.

Perhaps, too, attention should be drawn to the fact that none of the really influential people in the A.L.P. was too keen to soil his hands on the filth of the Movement. It was left to the Couslands and the Maxwells and the Tobins and the Peters to handle this delicate subject. Even Lovegrove and the egregious Stout played no part in it.

These same people took the initiative in maintaining the exclusion of the Railways Union, including the Clerks' Union and keeping outside the A.L.P. such a veteran Labor Party stalwart as H. J. Oke. The policy of these people, which captured the headlines in Sir Keith Murdoch's press and earned its plaudits, will inevitably result in smashing the Labor Party to pieces in blind hatred of the Communists. Their anxiety to serve the

same masters as those served by the Menzies and Faddens expresses itself under cover of pious phrases of "saving the Labor Party" and "maintaining its independence." But their saving of the Labor Party consists of saving it from working class politics and ensuring its dependence upon the capitalists. It is noteworthy that the energy of these people was not directed against the common enemy of all workers—the Liberal Party. Indeed, much more attention might have been paid by the Conference as a whole to working out the campaign against the Liberal Party. But that is what strong reactionary influence causes: a paralysis of the Labor movement in face of the main threat.

This fatal policy has accentuated differences and divisions in the leadership itself. On the one hand, Mr. J. V. Stout, backed by the Catholic Action Movement and assisted by Mr. R. Broadby, recently promoted by the Movement, continues to lead and direct this policy. Its logical results, thrown clearly into relief in the Henty by-election, are dead Labor Party branches and disgruntled members. Such a situation threatens the Labor Party with the disaster so passionately desired by the Liberals. On the other hand, Mr. Kennelly and Mr. Cain understand where the policy of Mr. Stout and his Movement colleagues is leading. Whilst they are not prepared openly and actively to struggle against it, and whilst they still resort to backstairs manoeuvres, their stand is far more in accord with the working class interests. Their timidity and failure boldly to base themselves on the mass movement commencing inside the Labor Party can only lead to disaster. History shows that those who attempt to reconcile the right and the left end up on the right and betray the interests of the workers.

Signs of the division between these groups, and the differences of opinion even within the groups, were clearly apparent in the manoeuvring that went on over the full-time jobs of General Secretary and Organising Secretary. Mr. Stout was selected as the candidate of the extreme right to oppose the logical successor, Mr. Kennelly. Lovegrove, who is rapidly losing the influence he once had in the A.L.P., and is desperately clutching at straws to regain it, was an aspirant for the organising secretary's job. It is abundantly clear that neither of these individuals is in any way acceptable to the rank and file of the A.L.P. and the affiliated unionists. Mr. Stout has left no doubt where he stands: the "Movement" has obligingly confirmed it. (See *Catholic Action at Work*, p. 31). An

uneasy truce was reached when the question of the retirement of the officials was referred back to the Executive.

The important thing from all this is that there must be redoubled efforts to expose the machinations of the right wing. Labor Party branches and affiliated unions must see that their party does not fall into the hands of the Lovegroves and Stouts. They must drive forward to the exclusion from the Labor Party for ever of the Lovegroves and Stouts.

In this regard, special mention should be made of the need for affiliated unions to recognise their decisive position in the Labor Party structure. They send the overwhelming majority of delegates to Conference, but because of apathy and sectarianism their influence in determining upon progressive issues and cleaning up the A.L.P. is not nearly what it should be. The Trade Unions must continuously exert much more pressure on the Labor Party leadership.

Despite these features of the Conference and despite the absence of decisions on major questions of world politics, the important decisions on matters common to the whole Labor movement provide a better basis than ever upon which to build united action. Demands of the Labor Party Conference and of the Communist Party merge in the 40-hour week campaign, and basic wage increase. On such important issues as gas nationalisation, workers' compensation, housing, etc., Communist organisations and Labor Party organisations must necessarily take similar action. The signs of awakening activity in the A.L.P. will be welcomed by every progressive. Every Communist must do everything to assist Labor Party members and affiliated unions to play their full and rightful part in the campaigns of the workers—a part so long denied them by the bans and prejudices of the right wing. The old dead branches, the inactivity, the passive submission to the Stouts and Lovegroves can no longer stand. The world and national situation are far too serious. Likewise every honest member of the Labor Party has a responsibility to the working class—he must see that in unity with the Communists lie the next steps forward. The forthcoming Federal elections underline and emphasise the urgent necessity of this. Only by acceptance in full measure of this responsibility and the working out in detail of the positive steps to realise it can the legacy of the past be overcome and the full harvest of the victory over fascism be reaped.

## INDIA'S AGRARIAN CRISIS

G. ADHIKARI

Part II (Abridged)

THE impact of the four years of war on this bankrupt agrarian system and the impoverished peasantry, culminating as it did in the Bengal famine, poses before the Indian people two alternatives: Shall our villages—once self-sufficient village communes—be converted into serf villages completely in the grip of the parasitic landlord and the hoarder-merchant? Shall we allow them to destroy the very basis of our agriculture and society and leave India a victim of frequent famines and permanent poverty of her peoples? Or shall we make a clean sweep of out-dated parasitic landlordism, usurious money-lenders, and the greedy hoarder-merchant and liberate the peasants and the villages from their grip? . . . .

What did the Bengal famine show? It showed that India—once the land of plenty—is today deficient in food. It has grown deficient in rice—the main food grain on which the bulk of our people live. Production of rice has decreased during the last 30 years while the population has grown:

AREA SOWN PRODUCTION  
(in million acres) (in million tons)  
In British India

1911-12	.. .. .	66.7	.. .. .	28.2
1921-22	.. .. .	68.8	.. .. .	27.8
1931-32	.. .. .	68.6	.. .. .	27.8
1941-42	.. .. .	69.6	.. .. .	24.3

The deficiency in rice was being made good by importing about 1.5 million tons of rice from Burma. As India's population increases at the present rate, our food needs in 1951 would be increased by about 8 million pounds on the basis of 1 lb. per head a day. No plan of reconstructing India can have any meaning unless it simultaneously contains practical measures for increasing food production.

In the war period, and especially in its latter part, the imperialist government was faced with the problem of rapidly raising the industrial and agricultural production of India. India had to be organised as an industrial base for beating back the counter-threatened Jap invasion and to support the food offensive operations. India had to supply the defence needs of the civilian population and of the defence forces, with food grain imports, which made up our deficit, cut out.

Imperialists, anxious to keep their monopolist hold over the Indian market, did not expand the industrial base of India but got their needs supplied by importing lend-lease goods and setting up the auxiliary repair workshops here. They secured co-operation of the Indian capitalists by appealing to them with contracts, high prices and freedom to profiteer. This parasitic policy of high prices and

inflation meant high profits for big business and a drastic lowering of the standard of life and cloth crisis for the people. The imperialists did not succeed in increasing food production despite their much-boasted "Grow More Food" campaign. The only possible plan to organise it in a big way was by relying upon the peasants, by giving substantial concessions and fallow land to the peasants. But they could not throw overboard their traditional allies—the landlords—and rely on the peasants. Their way to procure food stocks for defence and civil needs was to rely upon the hoarders. The result was that when Burma rice imports were cut off, it was the hoarders who ran away with the rice, made fortunes for themselves and manufactured famine for the Bengal peasantry. Even later when rationing was stabilised in the main cities and towns, the poor peasants and toilers in the rural area remained entirely at the mercy of the hoarders.

The legacy of imperialist war-time economic policy is that landlords and Mahajans have learned to be hoarders and profiteers and obtained a stranglehold over what the peasant produces and needs for his production. They have amassed vast fortunes and economic power, while the bulk of the poor peasants and toilers have been impoverished beyond measure. What has happened in the famine-stricken districts of Bengal is the last stage of what is happening to the poor peasants and village toilers all over India.

As a result of high prices, only a thin stratum of middle-peasants has been able to wipe off part of their debts. But the bulk of the poor peasants sank still deeper into debt and the process of their losing their land was accelerated. They and their cultivation have suffered because of the rising prices of bullocks, seed, manure, iron, cement and cloth. They have also suffered from the high prices of food grains, which they have to buy for a part of the year. In Bengal 5% of the peasants were forced to sell all their land in 1944 while 11% sold off a part. The percentage of peasant families in debt increased from 43 in 1943 to 66 in 1944. The number of landless laborers must have rapidly increased though the figure is not known. A few millions of them got jobs in the auxiliary Labor Corps attached to the army. But the great majority remained behind and their standard of living went down because their wages did not keep pace with rocketing prices.

The prospects which face us in the immediate future in the period of transition from war to peace are still more alarming. First we will be faced with the unemployment question. About a million

agricultural laborers who were working in auxiliary Labor Corps will be returning back to the land. This will immediately lead to the fall of wage rates of the agricultural laborers at present employed. Secondly, when the colossal expenditure which the government was making on defence ceases, there will be a deflation and the food grain prices will be the first to register a lowering. The industrial prices may continue high. This will immediately create a difficult position for the poor and even for the middle peasant. The cycle of debt bankruptcies and loss of land will again begin for the poor peasants. Thirdly, the landlords may begin throwing out tenants-at-will and may begin getting their land cultivated by cheap agricultural labor, the chief reason for this being the fear of new land legislation from the new ministries and the declining wage rate of the agricultural laborers. Fourthly, the deficient nature of India's food economy will continue in the immediate future. Production will not have increased and the deficit will not yet be made up by imports from Burma and America. Burma will not be in a position to supply—her present rice production, due to destruction of cattle and devastation, being 40% of the pre-war. America will be sending her surplus to starving Europe. . . .

The situation which the popular governments formed after the elections will be faced with, will be one of a new crisis precipitated as the aftermath of the bankrupt war policy of imperialism. Its main features will be vast urban and rural unemployment and falling prices first of the agrarian produce. The rapacious landlord and rich peasant will react to this by reducing the wage of the land laborers and by screwing the tenants still more. The profiteering capitalist will attack the wage standards of the workers but try to keep up the prices of his manufactured goods. This disparity in the prices of food grains and manufactured goods will in its turn impoverish the poor and middle peasants and send them again into the grip of the money-lender. The immediate prospect is war of the vested interests and the war-rich of the city and the countryside, against the toilers and the people, in defence of their privileges and profits. . . . The Communist Party is therefore putting forward a plan to arrest this crisis, to smash the shackles of outmoded feudal exploitation and serfdom which strangles agricultural production. . . .

The first prerequisite of rebuilding agriculture is to abolish statutory landlordism — which is known in different parts of the country by different names like Zemindari, Taluqdari, Jagirdari, Malguzari, or Khoti. The entire land held by them reverts to the State and is made over in permanence to the present tiller-tenant as the peasant-cultivator. The landlord may be allowed for tillage up to one hundred acres of his Khas lands provided he

cultivates himself or by employing labor. The land of the absentee non-cultivating landlord of the Ryotwari areas, who owns more than 100 acres, reverts to the State and is made over in permanence for tillage to the present tenant-cultivator. The land-holder owning land up to 100 acres retains it for tillage provided he does the same himself or by employing labor. Thus the entire land whether in Zemindari or in Ryotwari areas, is nationalised.

This would be a great act of longstanding justice to save 40 million tenant-cultivators, the bulk of whom are tenants-at-will of big feudal or absentee landlords. They are living and working under conditions of practical serfdom. They would thus be freed from the load of rent, serf services and the insecurity of tenure. . . .

After nationalisation, land redistribution takes place through the village committees and under the authority of the district or provincial state organs, with a view to secure to the cultivating peasants with small and scattered plots a consolidated economic holding. For this purpose the entire current fallows of the local landlords, which have been nationalised, would be used. After nationalisation all sale and purchase of land will be prohibited. The debts which peasants with uneconomic holdings owe to Mahajans would be cancelled outright, while the debts of other cultivators would be liquidated and scaled down through debt liquidation boards. All usury would be banned and cheap credit would be made available to the peasant-cultivators through a network of co-operative banks. All this does not solve the problem of some 30-40 million landless peasants and laborers. A portion of these unemployed on land will have to be absorbed by the new plan of industrial expansion. But a good portion of them could be settled on new land, reclaimed and made available for cultivation from cultivatable waste land other than fallow. There is about 100 million acres of such land in British India alone. This is about one half the present total acreage under major food crops.

This land can be made available for cultivation by various measures which will differ according to the state of the land, such as initial deep-ploughing by tractors, drainage, anti-erosion measures, damming of streams, and irrigation. The plan of settling millions of landless laborers as peasants on newly reclaimed land would also include supplying the settlers with agricultural implements, seed, material for housing, cash credit and expert guidance in cultivation. This will require an investment of several thousand million rupees, but the money can be found. The expenditure would be productive. It would not only find work for millions of landless laborers, but also increase the food grain production of India by at least 20% in the immediate future. Apart from bringing new land under cultivation,

the food production and yield can be increased on land already under cultivation. This can be done by taking in hand immediately new irrigation and drainage schemes (many of which are already projected in different provinces), repair and desilting of old canals, wells and tanks. At present (1937-38 figures) only 63 million acres, out of a total sown area of 280 million acres in the whole of India, are irrigated, i.e., only about over 1/4 of the year's crops get the benefit of extra water. Extension of irrigation facilities, distribution of canal water through the co-operation of peasant committees, reduction of water rates for peasants, will undoubtedly lead to a further improvement in yield and in food production.

These land reforms will immediately lift the poor peasants and land-laborers out of conditions of starvation and poverty. But it is the middle, well-to-do and rich peasants who would be able to prosper more because their plots would be bigger and they would have more resources. To help to prosper the poor peasants who would still be the vast majority of tillers cultivating the bulk of the land, they would have to be drawn into a movement for building co-operative farming based on large scale mechanisation methods. The people's state would of course have to help in the establishment of these farms by supplying them with machinery and technical assistance. An immediate beginning can be made in the newly-colonised lands. To inspire the peasants by practical demonstration, the state should organise state-owned model large-scale mechanised farms run by agricultural labor.

The great vision of transformation of the whole of Indian agriculture which the Communist Party places before the people is to convert millions of small holdings into large-scale co-operative farms run by mechanised methods. This transformation alone would rescue the poor peasant finally from the grip of poverty and place the agriculture of our country on secure foundations. It would create the modern village community based on the co-operative effort of peasants, artisans and workers, working in a single farm and sharing equitably the fruits of their labor. But the basis for the realisation of this vision will be laid only when we have a people's state which will have the boldness to go ahead simultaneously with the plan for a thorough-going industrialisation of the country based on nationalisation of key industries, transport and mines, and with the plan of agricultural development by abolishing landlordism, nationalising the land, and by settling the landless on newly-reclaimed and fallow lands.

An essential part of our programme for liberating the peasant from the triple grip of landlord-moneylender-hoarder is to take away food grain distribution out of the hands of hoarders and profiteers. The people's state should organise a

network of sale-purchase co-operatives in every village with branch centres in Talukas, district and provincial towns. This co-operative network produces all surplus food grain which the peasant offers for sale at a fair fixed price. It organises village food pools and also sells grain to village artisans at reasonable fixed rates. It supplies surplus grainstocks to district and provincial central granaries so that food grain is available in towns at reasonable control rates. These sale-purchase societies will also supply the peasant with essential commodities such as tools, manure, cloth, kerosene, and sugar at fixed control rates.

This plan of taking the food grain trade and distribution entirely out of the hands of private traders will not hit the small merchants and retailers. Already, they have largely become the agents of big hoarders and profiteers and can only function as such. They would get a chance to put their skill at the service of the people and earn a decent wage as officials and technical hands in the co-operative network. As functionaries in the co-operatives they would be able to earn about as much through honest labor in the people's interests as they did as honest merchants. Only the monopolist trader who turned hoarder and caused all the havoc in 1943-44 will be eliminated. The peasant will profit by this because he would get a fair price for his produce. The village and town consumer will get his food at reasonable rates. The surplus grain stocks would be safely and scientifically stored in concrete granaries in the districts and Talukas to be made available wherever there was a shortage.

Before the people's governments of free India are in a position to pass the new land law and undertake the far-reaching agrarian reconstruction programme outlined above, the Communist Party will demand that popular ministries formed immediately after the elections should undertake at once the following measures:

We want the popular ministries to make all the fallow land in the province, whether of the big landlords or of the government, at once available to settle landless laborers for food grain cultivation. The new settlers must be supplied by the state with implements, seed, manure and cash credit to begin with. A ban to be imposed on the ejection of tenants-at-will. Substantial reduction of the rental of the poor peasant with uneconomic holdings and the cancellation of the debts of all cultivators with uneconomic holdings to the Mahajans — serfdom, illegal cesses and services extracted from tenants-at-will by landlords to be made illegal and the infringement of the same to be made punishable. Big landlords to pay over and above the land revenue a steeply graded tax so as not to leave an annual surplus of more than six thousand a year out of the total rental collected by them. Provincial governments to procure the food grains directly

from the peasants by monopoly purchase system, through the co-operation of the peasant committees. Guarantee fair price to the peasant, continue rationing in the cities and extend control price grain shops throughout the rural areas. Make essential commodities available to the peasants in the countryside village co-operative shops.

These immediate measures are calculated to grant immediate relief to the poor peasant-cultivator, tenant and the land-laborers, who form the bulk of the poverty-stricken food producers and who will be the first to face the onslaught of the new agrarian crisis in the change-over from war to peace. It remedies at least partially the question of the rising unemployment of the landless laborers released from auxiliary labor services and the question of the fall in their wages. Settling hundreds of thousands of them on fallow lands would relieve unemployment and also check the tendency to cut down their wages. By stopping ejection of tenants-at-will, by giving the poor tenants and cultivators relief in rent and from debt, the bulk of the poor peasants would be saved from starvation and food production itself would be ensured. The first blow against serfdom would be struck by rendering all the serf practices illegal.

By universalising the food grain procurement through monopoly purchase system and through the co-operation of the peasant committees, the peasant would be ensured a fair price for his produce. By making essential commodities available to the peasant through co-operative shops he would be saved from the effects of the disparity of the prices of food grains and manufactured goods which is likely to grow in the immediate future. By the graduated income tax on big landlords a part of their inflated wealth amassed at the expense of the starvation of tenants during the war period can be secured for reconstruction of agriculture and rehabilitation of the peasantry.

These changes can be carried out only when they are backed by a widespread and powerful peasant movement embracing all sections of the peasants — the middle and well-to-do peasant, the poor peasant and the agricultural laborer, and all communities and nationalities. The Communist Party is pledged to rouse the entire peasantry and unite them in their Kisan Sabhas (the All-India Kisan Sabha, or peasants' Union, is today 800,000 strong.—Ed.) to fight for the realisation of this programme and for getting the popular ministries to implement the immediate measures.

## THE FASCIST MENTALITY IN AUSTRALIAN ART AND CRITICISM

"GOYA"

THE seventh chapter of Bernard Smith's *Place, Taste and Tradition* traces the growth of the art for art's sake theory, so far as its local history in Australia is concerned, from the depression period of the nineties in Melbourne and Sydney, through the period of increasing mysticism associated with the approach to landscape painting, during the early years of the twentieth century, to the chauvinism expressed in the writings of J. S. MacDonald. It is to be regretted, however, that the writer did not pursue the logical development of this chauvinistic development in Australian art criticism to its maturity in an attitude possessing many of the attributes of the Fascist mentality.

Both aestheticism and the sentiment of nationalism in art comment in Australia took on, between 1910 and 1940, the characteristics of pre-fascist mentality. These characteristics, as with others already mentioned, arose partly from the existing social conditions in Australia and partly from the influence of overseas developments. Melvin Rader, of the Department of Philosophy, Washington University, whose *No Compromise* is one of the best analyses of its ideological features, cites the social origin of Fascism in these terms: "Financed by rich capitalists, it attacked chiefly trade unions and workers' organizations. Its development accordingly cannot be understood apart from the crisis of capitalism. The post-war chaos and world depression

meant a rising tide of popular resentment and radicalism. Fascism has been promoted as a counter-movement to crush the insurgency of the masses. It had been growing within the womb of the old order for more than a century, but the world crisis nourished its growth and brought it quickly to maturity." The features mentioned by Rader—support of rich industrialists, post-war chaos, world depression, rising resentment and radicalism, capitalist crisis—were present in Australia as in other countries. They provided the social basis for an indigenous fascist development in Australia. But, in addition to these local factors, there were overseas influence—the writings of Nietzsche, Spengler and others—who gave a measure of theoretical credence, and the sanction of "authorities" to the local developments, particularly in the realm of art comment.

It will be possible to deal only with those attributes of pre-fascist mentality that are in some way connected with art comment and criticism. What are these attributes? Rader has analysed a large number with great care. Some of those which are relevant to our purpose here, include: the doctrine of racial supremacy, the belief in society as an organism, a hatred of democracy, the Fascist praise of rural life, the identification of modern art with Bolshevism and "Jewish" exploitation. Have these

attributes revealed themselves in the "culture climate" of Australia?

Nationalism in its heightened forms is usually identified with the dominant "race" of the nation. In this way, nationalism tends to transform itself into racism. We have already noted symptoms of this transposition in the phrases of J. S. MacDonald, "the racial expression of others will not be and similar statements. The same writer gives concrete evidence of his belief in the possible development of an Australian racial elite when, in dealing with the art of Arthur Streeton, he writes: "If we last of the pastoralists, the thoroughbred Aryans in all their nobility." Such a statement combines the fascist "love" of rural life, emphasises the Aryan myth of racial supremacy, and champions racial "purity."

The Caesar-worship and pessimism of Fascism owes a great deal to the writings of Oswald Spengler, who maintained that "cultures" were organisms and, as such, had pre-determined lifespans. This view has been embraced by P. R. Stephenson, who adapts it to Australian conditions when he writes: "The only Spenglerian point worth considering for us is whether Australia is going to decline with Europe, or whether there is some force in us which will enable Australians to enter into the "Spring" phase of an entirely new Pacific-centric culture. Alas, the overwhelming majority of Australians appear to be mentally Europe-centric, not Pacific-centric. More, they are Euro-decadents. They prefer, for example, to fall with Britain in the Atlantic than to rise with Japan in the Pacific. Save us Great Bunyip, save Thy little ones!" This is little more than a poor attempt to turn the argument of *The Decline of the West* to Australia's "benefit." But the argument has weathered very badly in the light of recent history. The exclamation at the end, "Great Bunyip, save Thy little ones!" is to be considered presumably, as an invocation to a new Australian paganism to become an official religion in a Pro-Fascist Australian state. It may seem a far-cv back to the Bunyip worship of the Australian aboriginal. But here we have another instance of that archaism which has affected many social institutions in recent years, although they were considered previously quite immune from such illogical developments. Rather than be sceptical of such a possibility, it would be well to read Professor Toyne's warning written after a detailed analysis of the development of archaism in contemporary society, in connection with Hauer's neo-paganism in Nazi Germany: "Haurism is evidence that Western souls were no longer proof against being captivated by a religious archaism even when this offered itself in an elaborate fancy dress."

But many years before either J. S. MacDonald or P. R. Stephenson wrote these statements advocating racial supremacy, the poet, William Baylebridge, had written his *National Notes*, which were

printed and circulated privately, "largely to members of Parliament." That an obscure Australian poet writing before the 1914-18 war was able to advocate a "philosophy" that was almost completely identical with the "philosophy" of Hitler and Mussolini, is further evidence that Fascism is a phenomenon growing out of specific social conditions; that the nationalism which it brandishes is, in fact, a symptom of international capitalism in decay.

In his *National Notes*, Baylebridge states that: "When the mind of a nation is set free and a direction of research given to it, all the explanatory and hunting instincts are awakened." The "hunting instincts" of the nation so aroused, it will then be possible to embark upon an imperial domination of the earth. "Man's principle in creation we must now posit in himself. Our present goal (to be supplanted when reaped by one of larger touch) shall be the overrunning of earth by Australians, strong-necked, natural men." These supermen, Baylebridge maintains, can only be bred from Australian women who must help to populate the country with great rapidity, and must eschew any activities that will militate against their sole mission of "motherhood." "When we shall have bred this higher human activity, it is not possible that it will allow itself to be chained up in any particular stall—it will devour the earth." It may be objected that the idea of a race of super-man Australians "devouring the earth" is so ridiculous as not to be worth serious consideration. But the stupidity of such "philosophy" is not here in question. We are concerned here solely with the existence of these ideas and their relation to the Australian milieu.

It may, of course, be objected that this obscure poet has little relation to Australian thought in general. And this is undoubtedly true. Yet we must not underestimate the spread of "irrationalism" in the intellectual circles of Australia, as of elsewhere. T. Inglis Moore—who was awarded a prize in the Australian celebrations of her 150th Anniversary, and whose book *Six Australian Poets* was published by the Australian Literary Fund, and, therefore, can be taken as fairly representative of Australian critical thought—selects Baylebridge as one of his six best Australian poets. We are not concerned here with the aesthetic merits or otherwise of Baylebridge's work, but the selection by Moore at least indicates that Baylebridge is not merely an unknown rhymer, but a man with a following and influence. Speaking, not of Baylebridge's poetic ability, but of his thought, Moore insists that, in his poem *The New Life*, "the poet stands out as a thinker in advance of his time, whose ideas, formulated twenty years ago, are only now winning acceptance." It may be remarked at this stage that at the time when Moore's book was published, 1942, the "ideas" of Baylebridge were not finding acceptance, though, in their cause, Europe was being turned into a concentration camp, as "blood and soil" rode on its triumphant way.

The "ideas" were finding a grave. For *The New Life* of Baylebridge is an amazing anticipation of the ideas presented in the "dawn ceremony" of the Nazi Storm Troopers, entitled, "Men, Fighters and Soldiers." Rader describes the ceremony: "The participants are a band of music, a male speaking choir and three principal speakers, namely the 'Believer,' the 'Doubter,' and the 'Caller.' The Doubter records the defeats in German history; he is eventually silenced with the dates of victories." This should be compared with the titles of the early poems in *The New Life*, which include "Our Task," "The Mean," "The Executors," "The Call," "The Rejected."

It must be stressed here that T. Inglis Moore states explicitly in his essay upon Baylebridge, after noting the Fascist nature of his ideas: "His creed

is not mine, for I hold that the State was made for man, not man for the State." And this is borne out in Moore's own war poems, particularly his fine "Festival of Freedom." But when a critic writes of the illogical melange of quack-theorising that makes up the great body of Baylebridge's "thinking"—"It is not only the statement of a metaphysic; it is also the hymning of a faith held with religious passion, or rather, perhaps, of a vision attained through the mystic mood"—then he certainly prejudices his claim to critical integrity. A collection of ideas about birth, love, death, race, war, and so on, may make a "metaphysic," but before we talk about a poet's "thought," it should also make sense.

(Continued next issue)

## ARMY MEDICINE SHOWED THE WAY!

CAPT. JOHN COUANI, A.A.M.C.

In recent years there has been much discussion on the merits of a salaried medical service. It is timely, therefore, to make an analysis of the advantages of a "salaried medical service" as seen in the Army Medical Corps and to compare it with civilian medical practice.

The basic idea of Army medical practice is primarily to keep its men fit, and secondly to get fit men back to his job as soon as possible. In other words, the emphasis is first on prevention of disease and then on efficient treatment when a soldier has become ill. Without a comprehensive organised medical service an army in the field would quickly cease to exist. This has been demonstrated by the work on malaria by the Medical Research Unit at Cairns, which reduced the incidence of malaria from alarming to practically negligible proportions, and so made the campaigns in the South and West Pacific Area militarily feasible. If the same energy and thoroughness were exhibited in other malarious areas in civil life, malaria, which claims the largest mortality of any single disease on a world scale (millions die from malaria each year in India alone), would not be the menace it is. What has been done for war can also be done for peace.

Army medicine is organised and comprehensive—this is its great advantage over civilian practice. Prophylaxis and treatment are recognised as a national responsibility. Every disease becomes a notifiable disease and thus investigation into any disease or the efficacy of preventive measures and treatment can be assessed on a national scale. Civilian medicine on the other hand is haphazard and disorganised, lacking national direction. Our medical personnel is not used economically but wasted by overlapping of work.

From the point of view of preventive medicine, the Army recognises the well-being of the commu-

nity (that is, the army as a whole) as against the individual soldier. Preventive measures are enforced and must be observed by all personnel, irrespective of rank. In the Boer War, typhoid fever claimed many thousands, but with the introduction of hygiene measures and the T.A.B. vaccine, this menace was overcome. Thus to-day all army personnel are given the T.A.B. vaccine, with a negligible incidence of typhoid fever. By comparison we know that at least 75% of susceptible children must be immunised against diphtheria before it is effective, but since the community as a whole is not regarded as of paramount importance and since our methods are hopelessly inadequate only a tiny percentage of susceptible children receive this immunisation.

All soldiers too receive vaccination against small-pox, immunisation against tetanus, and, if service in particular areas is contemplated, also against cholera.

On enlistment all recruits had chest X-rays. Modern medicine realises that mass radiography is the most important factor in the early diagnosis of tuberculosis and that when this disease becomes clinically recognisable the chances of recovery of the patient decline steeply. Where this procedure was not carried out, as in the Royal Navy, the incidence of pulmonary tuberculosis was much higher, a position analogous to that of civilians.

The Army too does not neglect the education of the soldier. By lectures, demonstrations, talkie health and dental films, attempts are made to instruct soldiers in hygiene, the avoidance of particular diseases, and the preventive aspects of medicine in general. For the civilian, on the other hand, medical and dental education is sadly neglected. The occasional health department bulletins have a narrow circulation. Radio health sessions are few and unattractive. The film is

never used. The daily press realises the thirst of the general public for medical knowledge and does feature health articles; but the public health bodies have not correctly evaluated and taken advantage of this interest.

The Army dental service conducts a continuous oral hygiene propaganda campaign, and each member of the forces has a dental card on which is recorded the dental condition and treatment. All are made dentally fit on enlistment and by repeated routine examination and treatment efforts are made to maintain dental fitness. This comprehensive dental service is free, financial considerations do not prevent the soldier from reporting any dental disease in its early stages, i.e., at the optimum time for treatment. The success of this dental service has been noted in the R.A.A.F. Dental examinations prior to enlistment revealed incredibly filthy mouths while examination in North Queensland of personnel who had been through the dental routine showed what can be done in this field of public health.

A doctor is available to every serviceman and woman at any time of the day or night at the Regimental Aid Post. Depending on the patient's ailment, the regimental M.O. may transfer the patient to better-equipped medical centres for further observation and treatment. All investigations and treatment are free, the attending M.O. being relieved of all financial interest in the patient. The medical condition of the patient is the only consideration for any action taken. At the discretion of the attending M.O. the patient can be referred for specialist opinion and treatment. In the A.G.H., specialists in all branches are available on the spot. Medicines, operations, orthopaedic appliances, specialist consultations, special pathology tests, X-rays, medical transport, etc., impose no financial burden on the sick or disabled soldier. Quantity and quality of treatment are not determined by the patients' ability to pay; the soldier therefore is encouraged to report for treatment earlier than would a civilian.

The convalescent period is provided for and on discharge from the Convalescent Depot, the soldier is fit to return to his occupation. For the entire period of incapacity to work, there is no loss of pay, no loss of employment, and no lowering of status. Dependents, too, still draw their allotment. These benefits are available irrespective of men. These benefits are available irrespective of the type of illness or disability, without any consideration of its duration, and are non-contributory. Also, the discharged serviceman has pension rights according to the degree of disability. For the basic wage and middle income groups illness represents a financial disaster to the patient and to his dependents. Convalescence must be as short as possible even though it means an unfit man returning to work, to prevent any further expense and to avoid losing his job.

The service provided by civilian medicine is determined to a great extent by the patient's ability to pay. Medical practitioners of necessity have a vested interest in disease. If specialist opinion and treatment are required the general medical practitioner must decide whether he is to refer the patient to a specialist or a better-equipped medical centre, and risk losing the patient, or attempt to treat the patient himself. Inevitably the medical practitioner must become a business man, and although the importance of preventive medicine is appreciated, without a planned national effort little is achieved. Doctors work primarily as isolated units, resulting in much overlapping.

In recent years there has been a tendency towards group practice where several doctors work together as a co-operative team. This is a movement towards a higher stage in medical organisation, brought about by the increase in medical knowledge, and the tendency this produces is to specialise in the various branches of medicine. From group practice in small areas, a national organisation resembling that seen in Army medicine should be the logical outcome.

The obvious conclusion to be drawn from this comparison is that Army experience has shown that the best and most effective way yet devised to keep large masses of men fit and active, is a free and comprehensive, non-contributory, fully-staffed salaried medical service. It is not a far call from the Army Medical Service to a National Medical Service. It is no novelty; we have been using it as our best weapon of defence in the maintenance of a physically intact military force. Such a National Service should logically be controlled and directed by medical men themselves, just as it has been found that the Army Medical Service was best controlled by senior medical personnel.

The policy of the Australian Communist Party embodies such a full and comprehensive National Salaried Medical Service. The Army men themselves, on their return to civil life, must inevitably realise many of the drawbacks of the present form of medical practice, especially if they have had no previous experience of it, and are confronted with the necessity of establishing a practice among the dozens of similar young men with similarly limited opportunities. It would take little to convince most of these young men where the remedy lies. The British Medical Association fears that Army doctors will more readily join a Salaried Medical Service, and has endeavoured to depict the present form of practice in its rosiest light, and to relieve the present shortage of practices by advocating partnerships and assistantships.

Our task is to show the fallacies of our present service and to point out the manner in which these fallacies were necessarily overcome in the Army, and would be overcome to an even greater extent in the service advocated by our Party.

## SCIENCE IN EDUCATION

C. A. SHORT, B.Sc.

THE frustration of science under capitalism is a commonplace. The bachelor of science and of engineering selling cigarettes on a street corner to get a bare existence during the depression was an example the most conservative could not fail to appreciate. One talked, at the university, of "graduating onto the dole." The greatest advance in technique since the discovery of the wheel was ushered in with the slaughter of hundreds of thousands of human beings, to the horror of scientists responsible for its invention.

But these are very obvious examples. The concentration on short term, "payable" research because of the anarchy of capitalism, the inventions we never hear of because they are suppressed, the thousands of "might have been" scientists, the failure to apply science to agriculture, the failure to treat history and, above all, political economy, scientifically are the not so obvious but more important aspects of the frustration of science.

Is the frustration of science in capitalist society reflected in education? I do not propose to deal with primary or tertiary education in this article. In primary education scientific methods in the teaching process are probably more important than scientific content at least in all but the highest classes. I am not competent to speak on tertiary education save to venture the opinion that University science is divorced to a large extent from production. But if science is to become the foremost activity of our life, as Professor Ashby says it is of Soviet life, the foundations will be laid in the secondary schools.

High schools were established in the 1840's to serve as training grounds for the universities. Today, with the school leaving age raised to 15 years, virtually all children have two years of secondary education and the majority have three years. It is during these years that a child should adopt a scientific attitude not only in physics and chemistry, but toward all problems.

The experimental sciences illustrate the scientific attitude in the most direct way. About one-ninth of the school week is devoted, in all secondary schools, to the experimental sciences, generally combined physics and chemistry, but often botany for girls. On the credit side it can be said that practically all Australian children are receiving some background of scientific knowledge. This in itself is a tremendous advance on the position twenty years ago.

But the debit side is very heavy. A rigid curriculum of study is laid down leading to the Intermediate Certificate Examination. Much of the work is unsuitable for the majority who have no intention of continuing their studies beyond the

third year. For example, the value of the ability to measure and calculate the density and relative density of solids and liquids is very doubtful. These abilities do not imply a knowledge of scientific principles. The curriculum and the examination set on it in the past have laid emphasis on the acquisition of a body of knowledge of physics and chemistry rather than the development of a scientific attitude — the rejection of authority and the submission of questions to the test of experiment.

Another weakness is the failure to include any experiments of even the simplest kind dealing with living things. Yet children who will probably be leaving school in a few months, are expected to take an interest in the equations of uniformly accelerated motion. One of the greatest difficulties teachers have to face is lack of interest, but living things, which are the most vital and interesting to the living beings in the school, are excluded from the syllabus.

In the "experimental sciences" experiment should be the most important feature of the work. Before the children of New South Wales can do effective experimental work hundreds of thousands of pounds must be spent on laboratories and equipment. In some junior technical, and central schools the children in first year hardly handle a piece of equipment. In at least one first-class high school the pupils are only able to use the laboratory once a fortnight. In general classes are halved for the teaching of woodwork and technical drawing, but it is assumed that classes of up to forty-five can be given experimental work in science as whole classes. Neither the appreciation of the scientific attitude nor ability to perform experiments bears any relation to position on the examination list. Perhaps these are difficult to measure. The substitution of memory work as a test is hardly satisfactory.

The courses and opportunities for experimental work in physics, chemistry or botany in senior classes have been fairly satisfactory in the past. The major weakness is that it is often impossible for a student to take both physics and chemistry. Many of our best students suffer under a severe handicap when they go to the university because they know little or nothing of one or the other subject and a knowledge of both is almost essential for first year medicine or science. It is always possible for students to follow a suitable classical course. It is possible, for example, to have classes of three students taking latin, but it is necessary to have a class of about 15 before a separate physics or chemistry class can be taken. The very classification of some schools is dependent on their

classical courses, a hangover from the classical tradition.

It is a great advantage for a scientific worker to be able to read scientific works in one or two foreign languages. Little effort is made in either secondary schools or universities to meet this need.

The frustration of science is reflected in the schools in lack of space and equipment and in large classes. The curriculum is unsatisfactory because its primary aim is the acquisition of a body of knowledge rather than the development of the scientific attitude. The curriculum is too

rigid and does not allow for variation in ability and interest. It contains a lot of work of doubtful value and excludes the study of living things.

If wars are to be outlawed, if we are going to not only refrain from destroying each other with atomic fission but use it to free our lives from hunger and drudgery, our children must be taught to challenge fearlessly every authority, every prejudice, and turn to experiment and evidence. It is essential that the scientific attitude should permeate not only the teaching of the experimental sciences but the teaching of ALL subjects.

## A COMMENTARY ON THE COMMUNIST PARTY WHEAT PROGRAMME

By a Member of the Agrarian Committee.

REVOLUTIONARY enthusiasts have complained, "Why does the Communist Party bother about a programme like this? You know that such reforms as you advocate are not possible under capitalism. You are only doping the people into believing they can obtain them. Why not preach Socialism straight out to the people?"

Yes, it may be quite true that many of the changes advocated will only occur under Socialism, but the average farmer is not ready to have Socialism preached at him. He has been nurtured in the lap of Mother Capitalism and the rights of private property. Even the smallest farmer imagines he has a freedom greater than that of the industrial proletariat: the freedom of owning his own means of production. He does not realise that in reality his property and tools are mostly owned by the moneylender, and his produce really is owned by the agent and market racketeers.

Thus we must approach the farmer by pointing out ways in which agriculture could be regulated even under a modified capitalism, to bring a definite improvement to his position. In being enlightened thus far, and in working for such improvement, he will come face to face with the monopolists and realise the part they play in the exploitation of the farmer, as well as discovering that the proposals outlined are only truly possible when the power of monopoly is broken. This is half the battle on the road to Socialism. We are out to break the ideological control of capitalists over the small farmers and we cannot do it by preaching Socialism at them or forcing it down their throats.

The "liberals" have propagated the idea that Communists are out to create industrial upheaval, unemployment, misery and degradation, with the set purpose of making the masses dissatisfied with capitalism, causing capitalism to cease to function properly and so facilitating a revolution.

The Communist policy is quite the contrary. As the wheat programme states, "The struggle for the improvement of the wheatgrower helps in the movement towards Socialism." Communists see

that capitalism does not function properly, and farmers, in working for such necessary reforms, will soon have a practical demonstration of this. Experience will rouse the farmers, but understanding will direct their efforts along the right lines.

Let us first consider the question of organized production. The false idea held by many farmers is that organized production is dictatorial restriction—a body of academic dictatorial "experts" is set up in Canberra without knowledge of local farming conditions or even of the needs of industrial workers. In contrast, the Australian Communist Party advocates the setting up of Local and District Committees (in place of the War Agricultural Committees), democratically elected, having majority producer representation, which will send recommendations for the amount and type of production necessary to suit the particular local conditions, such data based on the suitability of soil and climate for wheat, as contrasted with other crops, the soil erosion control necessary, etc., to State and Commonwealth Committees. These latter, having collected all data from the various localities, will consider it and arrange it in relation to the market requirements of the State or Commonwealth as a whole. The co-ordinated plan will then be submitted to the various Local Committees for suggestions and alterations and accepted only with their approval.

Again, we must emphasize, this organized production does not necessarily mean restriction. First, areas unsuitable for wheat will change to more suitable methods of farming and the farmers must be helped financially in this changeover period. Secondly, the diversion of wheat (in the form grain and/or hay) to indirect nourishment of the people, i.e., per medium of such livestock as pigs, poultry and cattle. Such a programme will benefit the farmer in that he has an additional source of income, as well as experiencing all the other benefits of mixed farming such as cheap supply of farmyard manure, and enabling a better system of crop rotation. This naturally will lead to an increase in

livestock production, the products from which are urgently needed to raise the standard of Australian nutrition and directly bring the farmers into unity with the workers in their struggle for £1 increase in the basic wage. Thirdly, a tremendously increased world wheat production is needed if the millions of highly populated Asiatic countries, such as China, Japan, India and Indonesia, are to be relieved from periodic famine. The nations of the world are under moral and treaty obligations to raise the standards of living of such countries if they are members of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, and Australia is a member. There seems but little chance of raising the standard of living of these Asiatic peoples unless they are freed from imperialist extortions and enabled to reconstruct their own national life. We can all, working in unity, bring pressure to bear on our Government to support their great independence movements.

Organized marketing will naturally be facilitated by, and follow from, organized production. A fixed price related to the costs of production will bring a measure of security, and costs of production will be stabilized by the strengthening of the Wheat Board, a Board on which producer representatives are really responsible for its management, to cover the sale of farm equipment, fertilizers, etc., to the farmer.

The next step could then follow—the nationalization of machinery, and this would further stabilize and lower costs of production. The more the cost of production is stabilized, the greater possibility there is of having a stabilized price truly based on the costs of production.

Growers' co-operatives operating for the removal of produce from the farms, will also break the control of the private agencies.

Although the Wheat Programme deals with many other matters, I propose finally to comment on only two other important items. These are debt melioration and wheat research.

Lifting the debt burden should be one of the main planks in the Communist platform. The interest burden is by far the biggest factor in keeping the farmers on the breadline. It is estimated that, following a 5 per cent. increase, the average net income of the farmer would only be £117 per year—a miserable pittance. At an interest rate of 2½ per cent. it would be only £260 per year. Thus the attack on interest rates and the writing off of debts which sometimes have been paid off over and over again in interest, is of extreme importance. The Commonwealth Government, with its new banking powers is adequately equipped to do something about it. It is our task and that of the farmers to bring pressure to bear on the Government, without an attack on interest rates all our efforts at stabilized marketing and production will mean a more stabilized return of interest payments to the moneylenders.

Thus the Communist Party recommends that the Commonwealth Mortgage Bank take over and

adjust debts and mortgages and lower interest rates, thus competing favourably for the business of moneylending with the private banks, this leading to the nationalization of all land. It will be remembered by students of Lenin that Lenin did not recommend the nationalization of land in Tsarist Russia and thus differed radically in his Agrarian Programme from that of the Populists—another progressive Russian party in the days of the Tsar. Why, then, do we advocate it in capitalist Australia? Tsarist Russia was under autocratic control, and nationalization would not have lifted the burden of the poor peasants to any extent. It would have simply meant a transfer of payments from paying the landlord to paying the State. In Australia we at least have some form of democracy, even though it be capitalist. A transfer of land to State ownership would mean that the landlord's monopoly in land would be broken and absolute rent would no longer be valid.

The Communist Party advocates more expenditure on Wheat Research and the establishment of a Wheat Research Institute. Wheat is our largest agricultural product and wheat rust the greatest pest, and yet we have no Wheat Institute. In the U.S.A. there is a whole Research Institute set up to study wheat rust alone, yet wheat is not by any means the biggest agricultural industry in the U.S.A.

Further, the Communist Party reports an unsatisfactory baking quality of Australian wheat in comparison with British. But there is no wonder in this. It has not been found possible to combine the characters for high yield with the characters for high baking quality in any particular variety. Thus Bencubbin has a very high yield but rather poor quality, whereas Pusa III has a high quality but a low yield. Yet little encouragement is given to growers of high quality wheat such as Pusa III.

The outturn system of grading wheat based on the Fair Average Quality (F.A.Q.) still has a firm hold in Australia. The average gluten content of the year's crop is ascertained on a pooled sample consisting of samples from the various wheat growing districts. Any farmer having a lower gluten content than the average is penalized, while those with gluten higher than the average receive no extra bonus. Thus the tendency is to grow the wheat with the highest yield and Bencubbin has been the most popular variety in N.S.W. in the last few years. The fact that limited bonuses have recently been introduced for growing Pusa III testifies to the desperate situation. The time has come for at least two grades of wheat, based on baking quality, or even three grades, High, Medium and Poor, with three different levels of prices. Such is not impossible, particularly with organized marketing. Canada has a satisfactory system of grading, so why not Australia?

Much more might be said about the Wheat Programme, but space is limited and I can only conclude by recommending a thorough reading, study and constructive criticism of this programme by all thinking citizens interested in the land.

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

R.E. (Sydney), writes:

"In his attack on Soviet Russia, Mr. J. J. Maloney referred to 'privileged people' and 'the highest strata of Soviet Society'. Does this mean that class differences remain in Soviet Russia?"

Answer:

I AM afraid it is very hard to disentangle the grains of fact from the "malignant fables" of our ex-Minister to Moscow.

Your question would arise from the statement as reported in the "Sydney Morning Herald," 27.4.46. It seems that to Mr. Maloney "special workers, Red Army officials and their families, leading ballerinas and scientists" are in one privileged class, and then "the highest strata of Soviet society" which he omits to describe more fully (but we presume he means government officials) and finally there are the "common people."

In order to understand the political meaning of the word class and its application to the Soviet Union let us recall Lenin's definition: "classes are large groups of persons, differing according to their relations to the means of production."

"If one part of society owns the plants and factories, shares and capital, while the other part works for them, we have the classes of capitalists and proletarians." [The owning class no longer exists in the U.S.S.R., where the means of production are socialised.]

The position in Soviet Russia today is described by Molotov:

"Having eliminated the remnants of the exploiting classes (capitalists, landlords, kulaks; S.M.), we have established a society of two mutually friendly classes, the working class and the peasantry. This society has given rise to an intelligentsia of its own, which is no longer bourgeois or bourgeois-democratic, but is, in the main, a socialist intelligentsia. This intelligentsia, linked with ties of blood to the working people and to socialism, plays a great part in the work of directing the development and consolidation of the new society and state. The antagonism that used to exist between town and country has largely been uprooted, but a substantial difference between the above two classes still exists. This difference exists, primarily, because the workers are employed in establishments which are the possession of the whole people, are socialist-state in character, while the peasants work on the collective farms, which are socialist co-operative in character. Both of these classes, the working class and the collective-farm peasantry, are already classes of socialist society." This is the only correct approach to the problem.

The differences in income of the Soviet workers are in no way indicative of class differences. All Soviet citizens are paid "according to work performed" (Constitution U.S.S.R.), or, we might say, according to their usefulness in society as a whole. The "privileged" who receive more than others are not the parasites who own the means of production, but the "leading ballerinas, scientists," etc., who are regarded with special affection by the "common people." Peoples' ownership of the industries, mines, fields, etc., ensures that everyone receives a fair share of the means of livelihood that are available.

In the capitalist countries, however, the high incomes are received not by the useful people, the workers, but by the owners and directors of the B.H.P., C.S.R., the banks, the breweries and other monopolies.

The 1933 (the latest) Australian census showed that 78 out of every 100 Australian breadwinners got, on the average, less than £3 a week, 14 in 100 got £3 to £5, 8 in 100 got over £5. Not much room for inequality there, we might think, and there isn't 92% of the population, but the other 8% of the population receive nearly as much as the 92%. For instance, it is estimated the Knox family alone received over £124,000 a year, about as much as 800 average workers received.

This sharply reminds us of the real meaning of class differences—the mass of the hard working people live in poverty, while an insignificant number live in idleness on the fat of the land, produced by others' labor. This is exploitation; and exploitation is the essence of class society. When the higher phase of Communism has been reached, the inequalities of income of the present Socialist stage will end and each will receive "according to his need."

### SOCIAL COMPOSITION OF THE POPULATION OF THE U.S.S.R. IN 1937

(in per cent of total)

1. Workers and employes . . . . .	35
2. Collective farmers and handicraftsmen organised in producers' co-operatives . . . . .	55
3. Individual peasants, and handicraftsmen not organised in producers' co-operatives . . . . .	6
4. Miscellaneous (students, the armed forces, pensioners, etc.) . . . . .	4
Total . . . . .	100

Read also Marx's Critique of the Gotha Programme, wherein he deals with inequality of income in the first phase of Communism.

## BOOK REVIEW

## PROGRESS

RAY OLDHAM

"THE next few years will see history continuing to march with its seven-league boots—in Australia, no less than elsewhere . . ." said Harry Pollitt, Secretary of the Communist Party of Britain, in a recent letter congratulating the Australian people on the advent of the new cultural magazine "Progress."

"Perhaps the most distinctive contribution Australia will make will be its strong, proud glorification of the common man, which not only shines through the works of Lawson, Patterson, Bernard O'Dowd and others, but also finds unmistakable expression in the anger and quick action taken in Australia recently over the sacking of Cyril Fields, the chauffeur of Brigadier Schriber.

"We feel sure that this young, live, energetic nation, Australia, will, with the help of "Progress," make a mark on world culture and science equal to that it has already made on world Trade Unionism."

This tribute to "Progress" by Britain's leading Communist brings home vividly to Australians the need to support this new monthly magazine.

"Progress" deals with important scientific and artistic events from a Marxist viewpoint. All those interested in arts and sciences will keep themselves up-to-date by reading the articles contributed by prominent figures in the different spheres.

Art—and science—are a weapon. They are weapons that are used either for the benefit of a small and privileged minority of finance-capitalists or for the benefit of progressive humanity. When Communist leaders started a few days after the dropping of the atomic bomb on Japan, that "for

## LABOR'S FOREIGN POLICY (G. D. H. COLE)

(From "World News &amp; Views.")

EMILE BURNS

THE Labor Party Executive continues its raging, tearing campaign against unity at home and abroad. Professor Laski, fresh from writing his new pamphlet against the Communist Party in Britain, has rushed to Italy to try to stop Socialist-Communist unity there. Major Mayhew, Parliamentary Private Secretary to Herbert Morrison, has the same job in Bavaria. This attempt to maintain division in the working-class movement, characteristic of the outlook of the Labor Party leadership, is thought of—and often openly presented—as a weapon against the growing influence of the Soviet Union.

Professor G. D. H. Cole has just produced a pamphlet on Labor's Foreign Policy in which the

us the atomic bomb is also a political question," many people—scientists among them—argued against this, maintaining that science must remain abstract, above politics. Events of the past few months have brought home the truth of the Marxists' assertion. Today most people recognise that science is a political weapon; and many, including such famous names as Joliot-Curie, J. B. S. Haldane and Julian Huxley, have taken their stand on the side of progressive humanity—against the use of science as a secret weapon of imperialist intrigue.

In the June issue of Progress, there is an interesting article, "Did Modern Man Originate in Australia?" This article is based on a theory of Dr. Alec Jolly (well-known to Review readers).

Of interest to music lovers, there is a brilliant analysis of the music of Tchaikovsky, written by the famous Soviet composer, Dmitri Shostakovich.

It is the responsibility of all progressive people to see that arts and sciences are a weapon used for the workers and against the exploiters. We can only do this if we know just what's going on in the field of arts and sciences. This is where the new "Progress" is important to you. In it many of the leading progressive scientists and artists deal with all current questions as they apply to the class struggle. In it is made evident the unity of interest between all useful workers whether these work predominantly with their hands, their muscles, or their brains.

June "Progress" now on sale at all bookstalls. Price 6d.

essential theme is the defence of the "West European Way of Life," and with that, the need for "the unity of Western Europe"—a "Western Bloc." Now Cole is not at all anti-Soviet; he expressly says: "If I thought that Western unity on a basis of liberal Socialism would hurt the Soviet Union, I should not be advocating it." And yet against whom is the so-called "Western Way of Life" to be defended? True, there are some passages in the pamphlet which refer to Western Europe standing up against American imperialism; but the main weight of the argument is the need to defend the Western Way of Life against Communism. What does he mean by this Way of Life,

It is impossible to give in detail all his description of the Western Way of Life. But the following is, I think, a fair summary—respect for the individual, personal liberty, toleration of difference in habits and opinions, free speech, freedom of writing and association, free discussion to settle policies, free elections, social behaviour that is tolerant of differences; the pursuit of welfare and social security; education to help all to develop; legal safeguards for the individual; belief in morality as binding upon States as well as private persons. And, in Cole's view, all this requires "democratic Socialism," "liberal Socialism," to preserve it. But we get no nearer to what this means than "the Socialism that stands for carrying over into the new society whatever is good and fine in the tradition of the older society that is being displaced, and is also compatible with the new values of the society that is being born."

But if we regard "what is common to Western Europe" as something supremely important, what is the main common feature, dominating all the rest? That these countries are capitalist countries. If Cole had started from that standpoint, he might have reached very different conclusions. Take France, for example; Cole himself says: "France hovers, but with a plain predominance of leftish opinion, if only the forces of the left can act together." What lies behind that? Not any theoretical "Western Way of Life," which distinguishes the French people from the Soviet or the Czech people, but a class struggle for democracy, for liberty, for Socialism, in which the Communist Party is playing the leading part. And when Cole says: "if only the forces of the left can act together," he is putting the central issue not only for France, but for every other country in the world. The conception of a Western Way of Life that is somehow to preserve itself against an imaginary

"Eastern Way of Life" is only a pale reflection of the underlying reality: capitalism which still exists in the West, against Socialism in the East. It is the Communists everywhere who try to show that this is the real issue; it is the Socialists who try to substitute "East versus West," or "liberal Socialism" versus Communism. And that is why, where the struggle for Socialism is so advanced that the people brush aside all substitutes, the Communist Party stands out as the leader of the people in that struggle, with the membership of the Socialist Party more and more realising that the alleged differences are unreal, and therefore more and more determined on unity.

And it is this situation which makes all the ideas of a "Western Bloc," or a division of Europe into two parts, one Communist, one "liberal Socialist," not only theoretically unsound, but unreal, as a practical policy. Cole abandons to the "Eastern Way of Life" quite a number of countries; those who are invited to the "Western Way" are Sweden, Norway, Belgium, Holland, France and Italy. But France and Italy, far the most important, are not dominated by Socialists, but by Socialist-Communists in unity, with the Communists more and more in the lead. The very first point that Cole makes about Labor foreign policy is that it must be realist. Yet the whole Western Bloc idea, as a grouping of countries dominated by "liberal Socialists," is completely unreal. And the serious danger is that, in pursuit of this unreal policy, the Labor Party is doing its best to prevent the growing unity of the Socialist and Communist Parties, and thereby trying to create conditions which would, in fact, lead, not to "liberal Socialism," but to the defeat of the Socialist movement and the victory of reaction. I am sure that Cole does not want this; the pity is that in this pamphlet he provides ammunition for those who do.

## WAR ON WEEDS

Prof. J. B. S. HALDANE, F.R.S.

FOR ages it must have been known that plants kept in a shady corner often grew towards the light. If you believe in a life-force, or something equally ill-defined, you will regard such a tendency as natural, and not investigate it farther. If you think materialistically, you will want to know how this growth, which is obviously useful to the plant, is achieved.

In 1881 Charles Darwin, who was a great experimenter as well as a great theorist, wrote a book on "The Power of Movement in Plants," in which he stated that "when seedlings are exposed to lateral light, some influence is transmitted from the upper to the lower part, causing the latter to bend." He did not discover the nature of the influence.

In 1911 a Dane called Boysen-Jensen found that if he sliced off the top of a growing barley shoot, and put it back again with a fine film of gelatin between it and the rest of the shoot, the influence was still transmitted; while it would not pass through watertight films. Later Kogl, Exlehen and others, mostly in Germany, actually isolated chemical substances which, in extraordinarily small quantities, stimulate plant growth, and showed that they are formed in the growing point of a shoot, and pass down in the sap on the shaded side of it.

All this sounds interesting, but very remote from practical agriculture. To judge from a series of communications published in "Nature" on April 28, it may prove, though quite indirectly, the means



of making Britain much more self-sufficient as regards food supply.

The most easily prepared of these plant hormones is indolylacetic acid. This is such a powerful stimulant that if it is added in a concentration of under one part in ten million to a watery solution in which plants are growing, it will kill the majority of species. The roots cease to lengthen, the leaves curl up in a characteristic way, and so forth. Similarly, one can kill a man or an animal with an overdose of the hormone from the thyroid gland, of which a small amount is absolutely necessary for normal growth.

Nutman, Quastel, and Thornton, at Rothamsted Experimental Station started from the observation of a Chinese colleague, Chen, that the bacteria which fix atmospheric nitrogen in clover roots produce a hormone which makes them curl up. They found that though it is poisonous in water, it soon disappears from soil. But a chemically-related substance, sodium 4-chloro-2-methyl phenoxy-acetate, persists in soil for some weeks and has similar effects. Fortunately, it has much less effect on cereals and grass than on most other plants.

Slade, Templeman and Sexton, working for Imperial Chemical Industries, had been secretly testing this substance among others for some years, and Blackman, at the Imperial College, London, also experimented with it. No doubt it will soon be on the market under a trade name.

The amounts needed are extremely small. Slade used one pound per acre, Blackman as little as a quarter of a pound. This is dissolved in about a hundred gallons of water, and sprayed. In these quantities it does not harm cereals or meadow grass, nor peas, onions and leeks, although root crops such as the turnip and beet are very sensitive to it. But it completely wipes out a number of annual weeds, such as yellow and white charlock, and poppies. Some perennial weeds, including buttercups and horsetails, are killed; but unfortunately docks, stinging nettles, and bracken stand up to it.

Where weed infestation is serious, the effects may be enormous. Blackman obtained a ninety per cent. increase in one of his cereal crops.

It is still too early to suggest what effect it would have on the wheat, oats, and barley production of this country, but if it raised it by even five per cent. this would be of very great value. Heavier doses will kill off all kinds of plants, including grasses and clover, and this may be of great use in improving pastures. For the poison disappears from soil in a few weeks, and after this a new crop of meadow grass can be sown.

It is very important that the soil is not permanently poisoned. Some weed-killers contain copper and arsenic; and these may remain in the soil for many years, and may harm valuable plants, or even make them poisonous to men.

Incidentally, an ounce should be quite enough to eradicate the weeds on a fairly large lawn, including mouse-eared chickweed, which is not touched by iron ammonium sulphate, though this is very effective against plantains and dandelions. So this discovery may mean not only cheaper bread, porridge and beer, but better cricket, lawn tennis, golf and bowls. For I have no doubt that the turf of our sports grounds, even where they have not been dug up for victory, has deteriorated during the war.

It is probably only the first of a series of similar discoveries.

The other plant hormones, and the substances related to them, are a good deal harder to make in a laboratory, and cannot yet be made on a factory scale. But when they are made, it is likely that a different group of plants may prove specially sensitive to them. For example, one of them may prove to be harmless to beets and turnips, while active against their weeds. Or perhaps it may be very effective against bracken.

Once more the value of pure science—or, as I prefer to call it, long-term research—is demonstrated. When one discovers a fundamental fact, one rarely knows what will be its practical value, if any. Darwin and Boysen-Jensen may have thought that their work would produce straight trees. They would never have guessed that they were on the track of a super weed-killer. On the other hand, if agricultural research workers had realised the poisonous nature of an overdose of these hormones, the work would have been done earlier, and the lives of a number of merchant seamen who died to bring us wheat, would have been saved.

The gap between fundamental research and its application is far too wide. It will only be bridged when we have far more workers on fundamental research, and when they spend a part of their time in peace, as most of them have done in war, in the practical application of their special knowledge. The experience of the Soviet Union suggests that this will be far easier under Socialism. In England a professor who takes time off to work for a private firm is very properly censured, though he is allowed to do public service. In a Socialist country, all applied science is public service, and the gap between theory and practice is narrowed. That is one reason why more and more scientists are becoming Socialists.