

A Few Facts of History

The events of the past months bring out clearly that the revolutionary camp in India continues to gain strength. The assertions that all is "quiet" do not conform with reality. It is enough to point to the peasants' uprising in the Alwar State affecting more than 80,000 peasants, and the growing strike wave, to prove that it is not quiet. This compels us again to consider the reasons why the organisation of the Communist Party proceeds so slowly, and why the proletariat is so slow in winning the hegemony in the mass, anti-imperialist and anti-feudal movement.

We are compelled to say that the development of the Communist Party lags behind the spontaneous development of the proletarian movement and the growth of the working-class consciousness.

In their open letter to the Indian Communists, the Central Committees of the Chinese, British and German Communist Parties pointed out at the beginning of 1932, that "the organisation of a mass all-Indian Communist Party" lagged behind, whereas the "objective conditions and the growth of class consciousness of the proletariat" provided the conditions for the solution of the problem of the organisation of a Communist Party and added that in the future everything depends "on the endeavours, the energy, the unselfish struggle and the correct policy of the Indian Communists."

The growth in the labour movement has brought some growth of the Communist ranks. The number of local party organisations has increased, their influence in the trade unions has somewhat increased; in some trade unions the Communists have consolidated their influence, forcing the reformists out. The Communists are leading some strikes and, in a number of cases, the national reformists, under the pressure of the masses, were compelled to adopt their slogans, for example, the slogan of general strike of the textile workers.

The students, dissatisfied with the National Congress and its "left" wing, are being increasingly drawn towards Communism. In Calcutta, the students have for the first time organised May Day meetings and have demonstrated on the streets together with the demonstrations of the revolutionary workers.

The same developments are to be seen in Punjab and other provinces. Under the influence of the revolutionary developments and owing to the pressure of the international Communist movement among the Communists of India the desire grows to solidify their ranks, to put an end to fractional strife and to create a united Party. (See the leaflet of the Calcutta Committee of the Communist Party published in March, 1933.)

There are a number of things which testify to the fact that the turning point in the development of the Indian Communist movement soon will be reached—when a united, powerful Communist Party will emerge in spite of the disorganising activities of the national reformists and provocative work of police agents.

We can easily understand that the conception of renegade Roy and his group that there is no prospect for the rapid formation of a mass "Communist Party," that the workers must support a national revolutionary (1) party, a petty-bourgeois party within which the revolutionary proletariat would play the role of the left flank, is particularly harmful.

In the article "On the Tenth Anniversary of the 'Pravda'" Lenin wrote about India and China:

"But India and China are seething. That is more than seven hundred million persons. . . . There 1905 is approaching irrepressibly and with ever increasing rapidity, with that essential and tremendous difference that in 1905 the revolution in Russia could still be isolated (at least at the beginning), i.e., not drawing other countries into the revolution immediately. But the growing revolutions in India and China already are and were drawn into the revolutionary struggle, into the revolutionary movement, into the international revolution." (Vol. XXVII, p. 293.)

Comrade Stalin, developing this idea, outlined the basic lines which the Communists of India must follow if the revolution is to be victorious. In his speech in 1925, explaining the reformist

nature of the Indian bourgeoisie, Comrade Stalin pointed out what must constitute the basic link in the policy of the Communists:

"The revolution cannot be victorious unless this alliance is broken (of imperialism and the reformist bourgeoisie—E.B.). If we are to break it we must concentrate our attack upon the reformist section of the native bourgeoisie, must expose its treachery, must withdraw the toiling masses from its influence, and must systematically prepare the way for the leadership of the proletariat. In other words, the proletariat of such lands as India must be trained to become the leader in the movement for national emancipation whilst the bourgeoisie and its spokesman must gradually be dislodged from the leadership. The aim, therefore, must be to create a revolutionary, anti-imperialist coalition, and to ensure that within this coalition the role of leader shall be played by the proletariat. . . ."

"But the advanced Communist elements will need to insist upon the independence of the Communist Party in such lands, for the proletariat cannot be prepared for its task as leader, nor can the proletarian leadership be realised by any other than the Communist Party." ("Questions of Leninism," p. 279, Stalin.)

The Indian revolution can be victorious only under the leadership of the proletariat with an independent Communist Party at the head. The formation of such a Communist Party is the basic task, the task of primary importance. But this, unfortunately, the Indian Marxists did not grasp in time, chiefly due to Roy's Menshevik policy.

The labour movement in India is characterised by a zigzag course that coincided with the periods of the upsurge of the revolutionary emancipatory movement.

The first significant step taken by the Indian proletariat dates back as far as 1907-1908 when the first upsurge of the mass movement took place. There was an uprising of the peasants in Punjab and under its influence the toilers of Ravalpindi destroyed the government institutions. At the same time the railway workers declared a "sympathy strike" and stopped the movement of trains on a number of lines. The political strike of the Bombay workers in the summer of 1908, as a protest against the arrest of Tilak, the leader of the national movement, was even bigger. Almost four-fifths of all the Bombay workers participated in the strike. Lenin wrote about this period that "the proletariat of India has already attained the stage of conscious political mass struggle, and since this is so, the song of the British-Russian systems has been sung!" Thus the first appearance of the Indian proletariat on the arena of the mass movement was linked up with the struggle for the independence of the country.

The second stage (1919-1922) of the labour movement again coincided with the second tremendous upsurge of the national emancipatory movement. The differentiation of class forces already began to develop; the struggle of two currents—revolutionary and reformist—took place, and this process, which ran like a red line throughout the history of the national movement from the beginning of the twentieth century up to 1919-1922, brought the beginning of the spontaneous crystallisation of the proletarian camp.

The national-reformist camp of the reformist bourgeoisie was able, however, to retain the dominant positions in the people's movement. However, the spontaneous process of class differentiation manifested itself in a number of strikes, political as well, street clashes, which greatly frightened the Indian bourgeoisie.

The working class during 1919-1922 has developed an energetic strike struggle the like of which had not been seen before. In 1921, 535,000 workers went out on strike; in 1922, 435,000 workers struck, and these figures are far from being complete. Trade unions began to spring up. In the Bombay Presidency alone twenty-two trade unions, numbering 51,472 members, were organised.

The proletariat took a most active part in the struggle for independence. The workers, the city poor and the students com-

prised the most active section of the city demonstrations. The working class not only showed great activity in the struggle for independence, but outstepped the limits of the campaign of "civil disobedience" set out by the Congress.

"We could—said *Gandhi*—ignore Malabar (the uprising of the peasantry.—Ed.); we could also ignore Malagaon. But it is impossible to ignore Bombay." ("Young India.")

Thus in the movement of 1919-1922 which developed under the influence of the October Revolution, we saw the beginning of the process of the formation of the working class into an independent class force, conditions for the formation of a Communist Party have been created.

The third stage of the labour movement was linked up with a new wave, a new upsurge of the independence movement of 1928-1929 which assumed an all-Indian character in 1930. In 1928-1929 there was a tremendous strike wave. In 1928 507,000 workers went out on strike; in 1929, 532,000.

Mass red trade unions sprang up; the destruction of the influence of the Joshi-Giri group, which represents the interests of the British capital, began. Political organisations, newspapers, appeared. A broad strata of workers-activists, who developed through their experience in the labour movement grew up. Wide masses were reached by political agitation. The workers advanced to the vanguard of the anti-imperialist movement. Together with the students they constituted the main contingent of the demonstrations and meetings against the Simon-Whitley Commissions. There took place a number of independent political and anti-imperialist working-class demonstrations under their own slogans (Bombay February demonstration of 1928, etc.). The Indian bourgeoisie began to lose its influence, the old forms of its leadership proved inadequate. The growth of the class consciousness and organisation of the working class was illustrated by the fact that the second Bombay textile strike of 1929 began in an organised way at 12 m. at the call of the Girmi Kamgar Union, a call printed in the form of a leaflet, literally a day before the strike. Therefore, this statement of the Open Letter of the three Communist Parties to the Indian Communists that the "working class, beginning with 1928, has aroused the peasantry and the city petty bourgeoisie to a struggle against British imperialism through its mass activity, exerting influence on the development of the national movement of 1930-1931," is completely correct.

In the course of the last fifteen years the working class has accumulated tremendous experience in the class struggle and has, in practice, verified the position of the different classes and political parties. But the proletariat of India has not yet been able to grasp, absorb and utilise to the full extent its experience—because for that the Communist Party is needed. However, this experience is rich and varied enough to ensure the rapid creation of a strong Communist Party and transformation of the working class into the conscious fighter and leader of the masses. For that is needed the creation of a cadre of active Communists, who could guarantee the development of a Communist movement. In other words, the actual course of the labour movement proves that we can and must solve the task set by the Communist International, the task of organising a Communist Party, and thus of paving the way for the winning of the hegemony by the proletariat.

At the same time we see that the bourgeoisie is drawing further away from the struggle for independence and the defence of the people's interests, and is coming closer to imperialism, to fight against the national revolution. The experience of 1919-1922, the practice of the Swarajist party, the manoeuvres of the National Congress in 1928-1933, the agreement in Karachi, *Gandhi's* participation in the Round Table Conference, and so on, all prove this in a most clear way.

India can be emancipated and the landlord money-lending system of exploitation can be destroyed only through the people's revolution, under the leadership of the proletariat. And therefore it is not without reason that the imperialist and the national-reformist camp have done and are doing practically everything they can in order to delay the process of the transformation of the working class into an independent political force.

What is it that kept the proletariat from turning into an independent leading class force?

The main difficulty was the existence of the widespread illusions of an all-national united front, which actually meant the subordination of the proletariat to the bourgeoisie, to its leader-

ship. India is a colony of British imperialism and the absolute rule of British imperialism impudently trampled on the elementary rights of the masses. The Indian bourgeoisie, whose policy amounted to liberal-passive opposition and efforts to make an agreement with British capitalism, this Indian bourgeoisie proved capable to exploit for its own ends the sacred hatred of the people against the British oppressors. At the same time, the bourgeoisie of India fought against the revolution and were ready to drown the uprising of the toiling masses in blood. But the toiling masses saw but one aspect of this policy—the "opposition" activity of the bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie at the same time covered itself up with the National Congress, designating it to the masses as an all-national, non-class organisation.

Thus the national issue, the hatred of the toiling masses for British imperialism was at the beginning of the mass independence movement successfully used by the bourgeoisie (which as a matter of fact sabotaged the struggle for independence) to consolidate its position. This was done under the pretext of united front against imperialism. As the struggle for freedom developed, national reformism tried to disorganise this struggle, to lead the toiling masses off the revolutionary path, and direct it into reformist, *Gandhi* channels of passive non-violence, Round Table Conference, etc. The national bourgeoisie, up to a certain stage of the development of class differentiation, was able to exploit the burning desire of the masses for national independence, to consolidate its positions, posing itself as a "fighter for freedom."

It was much more difficult to expose the reformist role of the Indian bourgeoisie than the bourgeoisie of any other country because of the fact that British imperialism appeared before the masses as direct violator; even during strikes on mills that belong to the Indian capitalists, it was the English police that openly enforced the repressive measures. And the Indian bourgeoisie covered up its hatred of the people's revolution by its liberal opposition to the imperialists.

The Indian bourgeoisie has its own "martyrs"—national reformist leaders, *Gandhi*, *Nehru*, and others who are sometimes even put into prison. Besides, unlike China or countries which have their puppet national government (such as Egypt), the complicated situation in India allowed the bourgeoisie greater manoeuvring possibilities. Under these conditions it was more difficult for the proletariat to see the treacherous role of the national reformists, to separate itself and become an independent class force. And this in its turn made the struggle against national reformism more difficult. However, the experience of the class struggle and the independence movement has furnished sufficient material for the toiling masses to begin to realise that the Indian bourgeoisie, national reformism, does not fight for independence but betrays the struggle for independence. The national issue at the present time continues to develop and intensify the mass movement, but at the same time, in contrast to the old times when it was used by the bourgeoisie to consolidate its position, it (the national issue) begins to weaken the forces of national reformism; it begins to help the proletariat to turn into an independent class force, leading the masses, it helps to spread the influence of Communism. It does so because it becomes clear to the masses that the only force which fights to the finish for independence, which is able to organise the scattered masses of the peasants to fight for independence, land, bread and power is the working class headed by the Communist Party. But the absence of a Communist Party made and makes the exposure of liberal-reformist currents more difficult, it makes more difficult the destruction of the illusions of the united all-national front, and the supposed non-class character of the Indian National Congress, etc., it helps the bourgeoisie to spread illusions of all-inclusive national front and fool the masses, and it makes the transformation of the proletariat into the leader of the masses more difficult.

Thus the first difficulty is the difficulty of tearing the proletariat away from the bourgeoisie and of turning it into an independent class force in the conditions when the country is a slave colony of British imperialism and when the proletariat has as an opponent such a shrewd liberal "oppositional" bourgeoisie (particularly its "left"-national reformist wing). This difficult situation is aggravated by the peculiarity of the organisational structure of the National Congress, which combines the maximum centralisation "on the top," which secures the leadership in the hands of the bourgeoisie with considerable amorphousness, so far as the influence of rank and file is concerned, below. Such struc-

ture has helped to spread the illusions of an alleged all-national non-class nature of the National Congress. To sum up, we must clearly understand the role and importance of the struggle for independence for the rapid formation of the mass Communist Party.

The second factor which hampered to no small extent the development of the revolutionary consciousness of the Indian proletariat is the considerable political isolation of backward, semi-feudal India. The crux of the matter is not only that the British enslavers have set up police barriers which prevent revolutionary literature from coming into the country, but that in the country exists unbelievable poverty, that feudal relics and traditions and backwardness play a great role, that the country is greatly divided and provincialism still is an important factor, and all this is utilised to keep the country away from the outside world. All this as well as the great distances and the expensiveness of travelling have been a great obstacle to intercourse between the revolutionaries of India and the Marxists in the West.

"Marxism—wrote Lenin—the only revolutionary theory, has been attained by dint of fifty years of work and sacrifice, through the greatest revolutionary heroism, the most incredible energy, by unselfish pursuit, training, education, practical tests, disappointments, check-up and comparison with European experience. Thanks to the emigration forced by the tsar, revolutionary Russia, in the second half of the nineteenth century, came into the possession of rich international connections, and of an excellent grasp of the forms and theories of the revolutionary movement such as no other country had." (Lenin, "Left-Wing Communism, An Infantile Disease.")

In India the revolutionary proletariat, for the last fifteen years, had tested through its own experience the Gandhist national-reformist bourgeois theories and petty bourgeois (including terrorist) theories, and has seen them put into practice.

Revolutionary India is beginning to see with increasing clarity the anti-revolutionary, anti-people's nature of the national-reformists' policy. We see a quest is developing for new theories: there is a growing spontaneous move to socialism, to Bolshevism. A number of revolutionary groups are already calling themselves Bolshevik. Revolutionary India is summing up its past experience and is trying to learn and apply the experience of revolutionary Marxism.

The differentiation of social classes, the bankruptcy of the terrorists and the national-reformists on one side and the experience of the U.S.S.R. where Marxism has been tested successfully and applied in practice and the Soviet Republic of China on the other side, are increasingly attracting the attention and the interest of the Indian proletariat in Marxism-Leninism, are stimulating a great demand for Marxist teachings. However, even now, for a number of reasons, including those of organisational, technical nature, Marxism (in the form of literature as well) is being far too inadequately broadcast. The problem of applying the Bolshevik experience of the international labour movement and of extensively broadcasting Marxism-Leninism has not yet been solved, and this explains, to a large degree, why the process of the organisation of a Communist Party is so slow.

The third factor which hindered the formation of the proletariat into an independent class force was the activities of the bourgeoisie who penetrated the growing mass labour movement and the anti-imperialist movement, spreading the illusions of a united all-national front, in order to seize the leadership over the working class.

The bourgeoisie seized the initiative in the organisation of trade unions. Its task was to prevent the formation of strong, mass, independent, class trade unions. It tried to turn the trade unions from militant organs of class struggle, into a sort of lawyers' offices. The trade unions they created were nothing else but bureaucratic top-narrow organisations where lawyers or other liberal intellectuals were at the head. During strike conflicts these so-called leaders acted as mediators and always brought the conflicts to an end by making a compromise, a compromise to the advantage of the capitalists. These liberal leaders carry on a policy of subordinating the working class to the interests and the leadership of the bourgeoisie.

Gandhi wrote in 1920:—

"The time has passed when all kinds of attempts were made to exploit the proletariat as a pawn in the name of various interests. The situation demands the thorough con-

sideration of those who engage in politics. The proletariat needs friends. It cannot remain without leadership. *What type of people will give this leadership, will solve the problem of the proletariat?* . . . Strikes, the cessation of work, hartals, are, without doubt, marvellous things, but it is easy to exploit them harmfully. . . . We must organise strong trade unions and by no means must the workers strike without the consent of the trade unions." (Young India, p. 730.)

The meaning of this statement is clear, but Gandhi frankly explains further on:—

"We need not be very wise to understand that it is most dangerous to exploit the proletariat politically so long as the workers do not understand the political conditions of the country and are not ready to work in the name of the common welfare." ("Young India," p. 737.)

i.e., we, the bourgeoisie, must understand that there is a danger that the workers will refuse to subordinate themselves to the leadership of a national reformism and might accept the revolutionary methods of fight for independence.

The imperialists, too, took to the organisation of trade unions. They tried to seize the initiative in organising the trade unions—i.e., to disorganise the ranks of the proletariat. Hence two groups of enemies of the working class sprang up within the trade union movement—the Joshi-Shiva-Rao group, the agents of British imperialism, i.e., who represent the interests of British capital, and the national-reformist group, Mehta-Lajpatrai-Ruikar-Ahlu-Kandalkar (subsequently Roy-Kandalkar)—the agents of the Indian bourgeoisie. The vanguard strata of the working class got a good lesson of the class struggle before it began to understand the true policy of these anti-working-class groups. However, in the period of 1919-1927 both of these groups met no opposition on the part of the revolutionary elements. They came forward as the only claimants to the role of the leaders of the proletariat, thus they had a clear field to hinder the transformation of the proletariat into an independent class force.

The fourth cause of the delay of conversion of the proletariat into an independent class force can be explained by its very structure. The Indian proletariat is a young proletariat with but few workers of the second generation. During the investigation made by the Department of Labour of the conditions of 1,848 Bombay textile workers (1927-1928) it was shown that

37.31%	had worked for less than five years
23.37%	" " from 5 to 10 "
15.78%	" " " 10 " 15 "
9.13%	" " " 15 " 20 "
14.06%	" " for more than 20 "

A group of old workers is growing up, but there are still few workers of the second generation. The majority are connected with the village. The election investigation carried on in Bombay proved that 63 per cent. of the workers from Konkan sent a considerable proportion of their wages to the village. (A single worker sends, approximately, 36 per cent. of his wages.) The greatest number of the workers work in the light industries.

The fluctuation of labour made the organisation of the proletarian ranks more difficult although this also had its positive aspect—the political development of the village, the consolidation of our contacts with it. However, all this explains in part the lack of organisational experience and ability to organise (which is rapidly developing in recent days). The strength of backward traditions and the petty bourgeois psychology and semi-feudal relationships and habits of the village life among the many Indian workers—all played its role. Bourgeois leaders have used all these circumstances to strengthen their influence and keep the workers in submission. Besides, national reformism has exploited the fact that many languages are spoken (for example, the population of Calcutta speaks in Hindi, Tamil, Punjabi, Bengali, etc.), that illiteracy is great, that religious and caste traditions, superstitions and feudal relics exist (some aspects of the jobbers' system, etc.). National reformism used this state of oppression, poverty and downtrodden submissiveness of the people in its attempt to retard the process of class awakening of the proletariat and its becoming an independent class force.

However, this situation in the proletarian movement considerably changed, the process of the consolidation of the working-class ranks, the growth of its consciousness and formation of class trade unions and Communist groups has taken place. It meant that the position of national reformism began to weaken. The absence of a

united Communist Party, or at least, of strong Communist groups, hampered this process and gave a chance to the national reformists (particularly the "lefts") to carry on their disruptive work, without a serious resistance on the Communist side.

The fifth circumstance, though not much discussed in our press, is the Menshevik, anti-revolutionary policy and activity of Roy and his followers. Roy's Menshevik policy and his treacherous, anti-revolutionary policy played an extremely harmful role. It demoralised the ranks of the working class on the very basic question—on the question of the hegemony of the proletariat and the formation of a Communist Party.

Instead of fighting consistently for the hegemony of the proletariat, for the transformation of the working class into an independent force and organising a Communist Party, Roy and his present followers adhered from the very beginning to a policy which led the working class into the national-reformist camp, led to the subordination of the proletariat to the leadership of the bourgeoisie; it brought an actual refusal to organise a Communist Party and to fight for the proletarian leadership in the anti-imperialist movement. Roy does not believe that the democratic revolution will grow later into a socialist one, he did not believe that the working class will and can be the leader of the national revolution; he assumed that a period of capitalist development was inevitable.

Appearing in 1919-27 before the Indian revolutionists as the only interpreter (but, in fact, perverter) of revolutionary Marxism, Roy asserted that the basic task and the basic condition for the victory of the Indian revolution lay in the transformation of the Swarajist party into a revolutionary (1) left party. This he proposed to do by drawing the workers into it, and giving this party the leadership of the Indian revolution. Roy proposed to turn the semi-liberal Swarajist party into the leader of the revolution. The result was complete confusion among those groups which had not understood the essence of Roy-ism, and led to a refusal to organise a Communist Party and as a matter of fact led to a systematic adaptation to "left" national reformism.

Roy and his adherents are carrying out this policy to this very day. At first Roy tried to follow the Comintern—representing the anti-imperialist elements of the national-revolutionary camp. However, in the course of the development of the class struggle in India as well as in the rest of the world (particularly in China) a process of class differentiation took place. The separation of the working class from bourgeois national-reformism began. The vanguard elements of the working-class movement began to see more and more clearly that the organisation of a Communist Party and the establishment of the hegemony of the proletariat was a necessary condition for the victory of the Indian revolution. They saw that there cannot be an alliance with the national reformists.

Class differentiation and the growing crystallisation of the proletariat as an independent class force brought Roy's retreat into the camp of national reformism. Those upper groups of the petty bourgeois and the bourgeois intellectuals who defended the interests of capitalism went along with him. These people are ready to speak aloud about removing feudal relics which are an obstacle to the well-ordered bourgeois development of India. They are even ready to put their ideas in a socialist garb—but none the less they consistently fight against the proletariat, against the revolutionary methods of struggle, against the revolution.

Roy has asserted from the very beginning that the British bourgeoisie has finished with feudalism in India and was following, in recent years, the policy of the industrialisation of India. He thus gave arguments in favour of the policy of collaboration with imperialism, inspiring belief in the possibility of the "emancipation" of India through negotiations, reforms and the Constitutional Assembly. Roy and his followers thought from the very beginning, and still think, that it is necessary to organise a left party (actually a bourgeois party) which all classes would join and which would lead the national movement. According to Roy, the task of this party would be to replace the old leaders of the National Congress—the adherents of the Gandhist philosophy. Roy proposed, as we have already said, to turn the Swarajist semi-liberal party into the leader of the proletarian masses. This idea is set forth by him in the book "Future Indian Policy"; Talking of a left party, Roy actually fought against the organisation of a revolutionary alliance of the proletariat, the peasantry, the city poor and the revolutionary elements of the intellectuals, an alliance in which the proletariat would have the leadership.

This idea went through a long process of transformation, although the essence remained. The followers of Roy propose sometimes Workers' and Peasants' Party, sometimes revolutionary working-class party, but at the same time develop and support the old idea. This Mr. Karnik, one of Roy's followers, reiterated quite recently. He wrote:

"A party of the revolutionary radicals voicing the demands of the inarticulate masses must come forth. The task before this party is to champion the interests of the masses by voicing their demands and starting country-wide organisation. ("The Maharashtra," October 1, 1933.) This is Royism in open.

Roy's supporters try in every way, by their anti-revolutionary policy, to consolidate the influence of the National Congress, spreading the idea of its supposedly non-class nature. They "criticise" Gandhism only for the unsuitability of its "ethical doctrines," for the unreality of its principles and assert that the misfortune lies in the wrong "ethical" principles of the present leadership of the National Congress, on the altar of which the National Congress sacrifices the interests of the people. One of Roy's followers, Mr. Karnik, wrote that "Gandhism represents nothing but petty bourgeois humanitarianism, hopelessly bewildered in the meshes of the staggering forces of human progress." ("The Maharashtra," October 15, 1933.) Gandhism is petty bourgeois, that is the idea of Roy's followers, who try under this cloak to justify their disruptive work in the revolutionary movement. Fighting against the hegemony of the proletariat and the formation of a Communist Party, Roy and his supporters embarked on the policy of splitting the trade unions and combining with the Joshi-Shiva-Rao group, which had implanted the principle of economism in the labour movement, the principles of subordination to the imperialist rule, to the policy of class collaboration and participation in the Round Table Conferences. Roy and his supporters came out against the slogan of a general strike and throughout 1930-1932 disrupted preparations and mobilisation of the workers for the railway strike in spite of the fact that the vote taken by the reformists proved that 90 per cent. of the railway workers came out in favour of the strike. Roy and his supporters opposed the movement for the non-payment of taxes, rent and debts, calling it "untimely" in spite of the fact that there had been a number of peasant uprisings which brought millions of the peasants into movement in spite of the fact that in a number of provinces the spontaneous refusal of the peasants to pay rent and taxes had forced the government to reduce temporarily the land tax by 50 per cent. They called it "untimely" in spite of the fact that hundreds of punitive expeditions were sent throughout the villages of Bengal, United Provinces, Bombay Presidency, etc.

Roy's supporters, calling themselves "rational communists," took a quasi-neutral position in regard to the "reforms" prepared by the Round Table Conference, reforms which strengthened the entire system of colonial and feudal oppression. The newspaper "Advocate" (February 5, 1933) wrote:

"The radical leaders of the trade unions, whether they be socialists or rational communists (excluding the Stalinites) are concerned with seeing to it that the new democratic (?—Ed.) institutions of the State do not remain in the monopoly of capitalism, but are used, as far as possible, for the benefit of the toilers. . . . They must be seized and used for the benefit of labour."

The British Constitution, granted to India, consolidates the positions of the feudal princes, landlords, retains and strengthens the power of the imperialists and just throws some crumbs to the Indian bourgeoisie. This constitution is based on the preservation of the caste system, accentuating religious differences, unheard-of slavery and exploitation. And this slave constitution, it appears, Roy's supporters regard as a "new democratic institution"! This constitution may be criticised, but it must be immediately adopted and used. We must, they say, adapt ourselves to it, and not put the whole energy and attention of the masses to organise mass movements, to organise resistance against the constitution—this is the essence of the policy of national reformism. It is not without reason that the "rational communists" attack the Communist Party of India with such vehemence. It is not without reason that they fight against the Third International which calls for a consistent revolutionary struggle against imperialism and its liberal lackeys.

That is why the Roy followers spread mistrust in the revolutionary ability of the working class and demand to limit the

political struggle of the workers, and propose to wait with the struggle for independence. That is why Mr. Karnik, for instance, wrote "The workers . . . are not able to grasp big political issues." They have to be explained what independence means, etc. ("Maharatta," October 15, 1933.) Workers are not ready yet to fight for independence; is it not a clear lie, is it not a classic expression of mistrust in the working class and expression of the policy of agents of the national reformism?

The "rational communists" are the consistent agents of the reformist Indian bourgeoisie which is an enemy of the Indian revolution. The policy of the "rational communists" was still more clearly formulated in the same newspaper ("Advocate"):

"As we have already said, the basic political ideal of our trade union movement is indissolubly bound up with the struggle of India for independence. The Second International has done very little to this day to raise its voice in protest against the oppression of our country. And just as the Third International is completely subordinate to the national interests of Russia, so the Second International has not yet risen above purely European perspectives." ("Advocate," February 19, 1933, p. 2.)

Roy's supporters are fighting against the hegemony of the proletariat in the Indian revolution, hiding behind a "criticism" of the Second International. They are fighting against the Comintern, trying to disrupt the alliance of the international revolutionary proletariat and the oppressed colonial toiling masses, i.e., they are actually carrying through the policy of the British imperialists.

In general it is typical for national reformism to do everything possible to break up the alliance of the colonial peoples with the world proletariat against imperialism, they do everything possible to prevent the toiling masses to understand that the only way to get independence is through joint struggle with the revolutionary proletariat throughout the world.

Lenin has long ago shown (in "Imperialism" and other works) that the methods typical for imperialism are methods of domination, violence, directed to establishing monopoly over the backward and weaker countries. A handful of imperialist countries have divided the whole world among themselves and are exploiting it. The seizure of Manchuria confirms Lenin's prognosis that imperialism tries to turn semi-colonies into colonies, to maintain its monopoly on the land and, using it, to appropriate these countries and using State power, to fence themselves off by tariffs, army, etc., from their competitors. The Ottawa Conference clearly proved that the British imperialist countries taking advantage of their monopoly over vast territories, are trying, by applying their State power, to get an upper hand over their competitors. British imperialism, introducing preferential tariffs and the new draft constitution, is trying to weaken in India the positions of the U.S.A., Japan, Belgium, and other competitors, to strengthen its hold over the Indian capital and thus to strengthen the economic and political domination of British imperialism.

Lenin long ago pointed out, and events have since confirmed, that the emancipation of the colonial countries is inconceivable by way of reforms, agreements, negotiations. In the epoch of imperialism the enslavement of the oppressed and backward peoples is constantly increasing. The only way to get rid of this oppression—is through a revolution, a worker-peasant revolution under the leadership of the Communists, a revolution in alliance with the international proletariat.

It is precisely against this policy that national reformism and, together with it, the Roy group, is fighting. A detailed analysis of Royism does not fall within the scope of this article. But sufficient has been said to declare that the Roy group is not only the most harmful, anti-revolutionary, national-reformist group (whose specific role is to carry on disruptive work among the vanguard of the proletariat), but that the policy and the activity of this group has assumed a very demoralising influence. This past and present activity of the Roy group became a most important reason of the delay of the formation of Communist groups and the mass Communist Party of India, and thus delayed the transformation of the proletariat into an independent class force.

The sixth cause of the lagging behind of the formation of the Communist Party was closely connected with what has been said above. The fact is that the young Indian revolutionary Marxist movement did not believe that there exists the basis for a struggle for the hegemony of the proletariat. In 1927-1929, they fought

against national reformism, but showed a lack of confidence in the powers of the proletariat, not realising that the question of hegemony had become the question of the day. They limited themselves to economic struggles alone and to work in the trade unions and thus, except for occasional campaigns, they under-estimated the political struggle and the need of political organisations. They did not strive energetically for the transformation of the proletariat into an independent political force, they did not try energetically enough to build a mass political party of the proletariat—the Communist Party. This in its turn kept the revolutionary Marxists from breaking completely with national reformism, although at the same time it did not keep them away from falling frequently into sectarianism. And therefore, they were unable to fight as they should have for the transformation of the proletariat into the leading force, into the leader of the anti-imperialist and agrarian revolution, able to draw all the democratic forces to its side.

All the reasons which have been given above, tended to delay, with different force at different times, the process of the formation of the Communist Party of India and the transformation of the proletariat into an independent class force, into the leader of the masses. Unless we correctly illuminate these causes, we cannot arrive at the path for the rapid and successful organisation of the Communist Party.

(To be concluded.)

The Negro Movement

The National Recovery Act Lynch Drive Calls for Mass Resistance

By B. D. Amis

The "New Deal" to the Negro masses was the same old deal in disguise. N.R.A. became the symbol, "Negro Repressive Act"—"No Rights At All." In the industries that predominantly employ Negro workers, the N.R.A. operated in a repressive manner. Wage rates were generally omitted from the codes of "fair" labour competition in these industries. In the textile code the Negro unskilled labourer is classified as a cleaner or outside worker, thereby being excluded from the minimum wage provisions. According to an article in the September issue of the magazine, "Opportunity," three million Negro workers (domestics, personal servants, farm labourers, unskilled workers, etc.) are excluded entirely from the N.R.A. codes. In the codes that provide a minimum wage for Negroes, the differential is from 25 per cent. to 50 per cent. less. In the lumber code there is a wide disparity in the rates of wages paid to the Northern white lumber worker and those paid to the Negro lumber worker of the South. Frances Parkins, Secretary of Labour, admitting the open discriminatory practices of the N.R.A., states: "The low rates of twenty-five cents and twenty-seven cents per hour for the two Southern districts are presumably based on the pre-dominance of Negro labour in those districts." To overcome such flagrant disparity, she gives the solution that the Negro must have "increased wages that will not unfairly compete with the wages of the white labourer." This common practice of the Federal government amongst the Negro employees was the result of a strike in August of all the Negro workers of the Federal Barge Line, operated by the War Department. This strike in East St. Louis and St. Louis was against rotten working conditions of 12-15 hours per day, for which the men received pay for two hours' work. The N.R.A. Labour Board refused to give a hearing to the men; but the officials called the police who, through intimidation methods, tried to break the strike. During the application of the codes in the South, especially where there were wage increases, rather than give these increases to the Negro worker, the employer discharged him for the white worker.

The illusions in the "New Deal" among the Negro and white toilers were being shaken as the programme became a reality. Employment ceased; wages were cut; lay-offs set in; continued poverty and misery looked into the faces of the workers. Consequently there developed on the background of rapidly worsening conditions of the toilers a movement against the N.R.A. and its codes of "fair" competition for labour. This movement gained in momentum, as it swept every part of the country.

Naturally such wide disaffection took its sharpest form among the most exploited. To repel this deepening mass upsurge of Negro and white, which defied the dictates of the American Federation of