

THE

WORKERS OF THE WORLD-UNITE!



Communist

LENIN AND THE BRITISH LABOUR PARTY

R. P. Dutt

MEMORIES OF LENIN

W. Gallacher, T. Bell

MATERIALS FOR THIRTEENTH CONGRESS.

C.P.G.B.

Idris Cox, P. Kerrigan

International

VOLUME XII

3

FEBRUARY 5th, 1935

THREEPENCE

CONTENTS OVERLEAF

CONTENTS

Number 3

Published fortnightly in Russian, German,
French, Chinese, Spanish and English.

	Page
1. The Banner of the Communist International — the Banner of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin.	95
2. Lenin and the British Labour Party. By R. Palme Dutt.	101
3. The Developments and New Tasks in the U.S.A. By Earl Browder.	108

REMINISCENCES OF LENIN.

4. Memories of Lenin. By W. Gallacher.	117
5. Remembrances of Lenin.* By Tom Bell.	119

TRIBUNE FOR THE SEVENTH CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL.

6. The Struggle to Establish Inner Soviet Regions in the Semi-Colonial Countries. By V. Myro.	122
--	-----

MATERIALS FOR THE THIRTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE C.P.G.B.

7. The British Party Congress and the Situation in Lancashire. By Idris Cox.	130
8. Some Problems of Party Work in Scotland. By Peter Kerrigan.	134

THE BANNER OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL — THE BANNER OF MARX, ENGELS, LENIN AND STALIN

ELEVEN years have elapsed since the death of LENIN, the brilliant teacher, theoretician and leader of the world proletariat, the leader and organiser of the Bolshevik Party, of the first victorious socialist revolution, the creator of the first socialist State in the world — the U.S.S.R., the founder of the International Working Men's Association of struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat, for working-class power, for socialism throughout the world, namely, of the COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL.

The whole of LENIN's life was devoted to working out the revolutionary theory, strategy and tactics of the proletariat, to the creation of a proletarian party capable of leading the working class to the overthrow of the power of the exploiting classes and to the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The Russian proletariat succeeded in gaining its great October victory only thanks to the fact that LENIN created and fostered the BOLSHEVIK PARTY, armed with the best scientific theory, strategy and tactics, and uniting in its ranks the best sons of the working class who were completely devoted to the struggle for the proletarian revolution and were capable of making the greatest sacrifices.

The great October SOCIALIST REVOLUTION, carried out by the Russian proletariat under the leadership of LENIN and the Bolshevik Party, laid the foundation for a new era in the development of human society, namely, the ERA OF THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT, THE ERA OF THE WORLD SOCIALIST REVOLUTION.

Lenin's greatness, above all, lies in the fact that in creating the Soviet Republic, he thus gave a practical demonstration to the oppressed masses of the whole world that there is still hope of ridding themselves of their oppressors, that the rule of the landlords and capitalists is not eternal, that the kingdom of labour CAN BE created by the efforts of the toilers themselves, and that this kingdom MUST BE created on EARTH and not in heaven. In this way he fired the hearts of the workers and peasants of the whole world with the hope of liberation. And this explains the fact that Lenin's name became the most beloved name for the toilers and the exploited masses."*

* * *

MARX and ENGELS, the brilliant founders of scientific socialism, were Lenin's teachers. But brilliant thinkers as Marx and Engels were, they could not foresee all the possibilities of the development of the class struggle over the many decades following their death, in the new period of imperialism and proletarian revolutions. LENIN was the brilliant

disciple of, and the one who continued the cause of, Marx and Engels, and NOT ONLY RE-ESTABLISHED MARXISM, distorted as it was by the theoreticians of the Second International, but DEVELOPED IT FURTHER in accordance with the needs of the proletarian class struggle in the epoch of imperialism and proletarian revolutions.

There is a whole chasm between the Marxism of Lenin and the "Marxism" of the social-democrats of the Second International.

The social-democrats as well as the renegades from the Communist movement (Zinoviev and others) have repeatedly tried to present matters as though Marx and Engels said everything, and that all that is left for those who have followed them is to repeat and explain the Marxist doctrine. Such an interpretation of Marxism converts Marxism into a dogma, congealed into a formula.

This dogmatic conception of Marxism was alien to Lenin, the disciple, and one who continued the cause of Marx and Engels.

The manner in which Lenin understood the development of Marxism is best shown in his works. In his *State and Revolution* (end of chapter 3) where he counterposes Marx to the Utopians, Lenin says the following:

"Marx deduced from the whole history of socialism and of political struggle that the state was bound to disappear, and that the transitional form of its disappearance (the transition from the political state to the non-state) would be the 'proletariat organised as the ruling class.' But Marx did not undertake the task of 'discovering' the political 'forms' of this future age. He limited himself to an exact observation of French history, its analysis and the conclusion to which the year 1851 has led, viz., that matters were moving towards the destruction of the capitalist machinery of the state.

"And when the mass revolutionary movement of the proletariat burst forth, Marx, in spite of the failure of that movement, in spite of its short life and its patent weakness, began to study what political forms it had disclosed.

"The Commune was the form 'discovered at last' by the proletarian revolution, under which the economic liberation of labour can proceed. The Commune was the first attempt of a proletarian revolution to BREAK UP the bourgeois state, and constitutes the political form, 'discovered at last,' which can and must take the place of the broken machine. We shall see below that the Russian revolutions of 1905 and 1917, in different surroundings and under different circumstances, have been confirming Marx's brilliant analysis of history."

It was in this Marxist fashion that Lenin understood Marxism, as the scientific theory of the class struggle of the proletariat, gradually supplemented and further developed on the basis of the new historical experience of this struggle.

* J. Stalin *On Lenin*, p. 18-19 (Russ. Ed.)

Thus, continuing the work of Marx, LENIN disclosed the SOVIETS in the revolutions of 1905 and 1917 as the concrete form to be taken by the dictatorship of the proletariat in all countries where it is possible to bring about the transition to socialism.

Lenin developed Marxism further on the basis of a study of the historical course of the development of the working class movement. Since the period when the centre of the revolutionary storms was transferred to Russia, and Russian problems became the basic problems facing the international working class movement, the further development of Marxist thought became mainly linked with the development of the Russian working class movement, with the development of the Bolshevik Party and its struggle for the overthrow of Tsarism and capitalism, for working class power.

The victory of the socialist revolution in the former Tsarist Russia, the establishment of the Socialist Soviet Union, was not only the mightiest historical triumph of Marxism-Leninism—the only genuine Marxism in the epoch of imperialism and proletarian revolutions—but made the further development of Marxist-Leninist theory necessary and possible.

The German fascists have proclaimed that they have annihilated Marxism in Germany . . . But hardly a year passed after this solemn statement was made when Goering himself was forced to make a new statement to the effect that Marxism is alive, that the struggle against it must be intensified, and that Marxism cannot be destroyed in Germany without destroying it on a world scale. Marxism is alive in Germany, we say, because it cannot be destroyed, since the working class exists, and Marxism is the revolutionary theory of this class. What has been destroyed is only the pseudo-Marxism of social-democracy, with the aid of which social-democracy held back the masses from the revolutionary struggle, as well as the democratic illusions of the masses.

It is only the social-democratic, anti-Marxist theory regarding the peaceful democratic road to socialism that has become bankrupt.

Marxism-Leninism is not only alive. In the Soviet Union Lenin's party is in power and is advancing from victory to victory. Thanks to the Leninist leadership of the Bolshevik Central Committee of the C.P.S.U., thanks to the leadership of our brilliant leader—Comrade Stalin—the eleven years that have passed without Lenin have brought the toiling masses a number of new tremendous victories. Socialist heavy industry has successfully overfulfilled its plan, and the working class have scaled new heights of modern technique. The collective farm system has become

consolidated finally and irretrievably, the collective farmers are becoming well-to-do and the collective farms are becoming Bolshevik farms. The ability of the U.S.S.R. to defend itself has grown enormously and has provided the toiling masses with new possibilities for defending their rights to engage in socialist construction and to attain a better life. The most important capitalist states have been compelled to invite the Soviet Union into the League of Nations and to recognise it as a Great Power. The Bolshevik words uttered by the representative of the first socialist state have begun to be heard from the tribune of the League of Nations, this assembly of the most important representatives of the capitalist world.

There is a growth throughout the world of the sympathy of very wide masses of toilers for the Soviet Union, the land which shows the oppressed of all countries that the road to their liberation lies through armed uprising against the exploiting classes, and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, which means broad democracy for all those who toil, and a ruthless dictatorship against the exploiting classes.

These huge successes achieved by the Soviet Union are successes gained by the theory, strategy and tactics of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, and constitute the realisation of what is the only correct scientific theory in practice.

The socialist development of the Soviet Union necessitates the further development of the theory of Marx and Lenin. The proletariat has become enriched by new methods of struggle against the arbitrariness of the exploiting classes, as a result of the existence of the socialist state. Socialism has been converted from theory into the real activity being carried out by 170 million people. Not only has the correctness of the teachings of Marx, Engels and Lenin been demonstrated thereby, but it has also determined the path of the development of the entire world to socialism. Not only has the theory of the transition from capitalism to socialism through the dictatorship of the proletariat been confirmed thereby, but it has also provided an example of how to carry this theory into practice. Therefore, anyone who seriously faces himself with the problem of the struggle for socialism must study the experiences of the Soviet Union, and master the theory which has led the Soviet Union to victory. Therefore, anyone who adopts a hostile attitude to the Soviet Union, who refuses to recognise this tremendous process of the reconstruction of human society is a pseudo-socialist, i.e., a socialist only in words, and in practice an adherent of the existing capitalist system of the oppression and exploitation of the toiling masses.

MARX AND ENGELS formulated the laws of the

development of capitalist society and demonstrated that the development of the productive forces and the productive relations under capitalism inevitably leads to the socialist revolution, and proved that the dictatorship of the proletariat must be the transitional form from capitalism to socialism, from the state to a society without a state. LENIN developed the theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat further, and disclosed the soviets as the concrete form for bringing about this dictatorship. He proved that it is possible to break the imperialist chain of states first of all in the weakest links in this chain, and determined the strategy and tactics of the proletariat in the socialist revolution. STALIN has developed further the theory of the transition period from capitalism to socialism, and defined the tactics to be pursued by the proletariat in this transition period, also by the proletariat in the capitalist countries when the proletariat is already in power in one country and is successfully building the new socialist society.

Lenin, and later Comrade Stalin, have enriched Marxism, and have shown the whole world what tremendous reserves of strength the proletariat has in what is the solely correct theory, if guided by it in a Bolshevik manner. Lenin showed that the age-old dream of the toilers regarding their liberation from the hateful yoke of the exploiters can be realised, and that what it requires is first and foremost the creation of a Bolshevik Party, to conquer all the opportunists, to isolate the leaders of social-democracy from the masses, and to win over the majority of the working class, and despite difficulties and unavoidable sacrifices, to proceed to armed uprising for the conquest of the dictatorship of the proletariat. His brilliant successor, Comrade Stalin, has shown how socialism has to be built, showed what are the paths that lead to its final victory, if there is a firm, unwavering Bolshevik Party, and that the achievement of the dictatorship of the proletariat requires fewer victims than does continued suffering under the yoke of capitalism.

The successes achieved by socialism in the U.S.S.R. have proved to the whole world the correctness of the theory, strategy and tactics of Lenin and Stalin.

The victory of fascism in Germany and Austria has proved to the whole world the incorrectness of the theory, strategy and tactics of social-democracy.

The theory of Marxism-Leninism is becoming the theory of ever-increasing masses of toilers throughout the world.

The dictatorship of the proletariat is becoming the goal of the struggle carried on by ever new millions of workers in the capitalist countries.

Socialism is becoming the glorious dream of all

those who are tortured by the brutal exploitation and oppression of the toilers.

For many years social-democracy saved capitalism from the proletarian revolution.

"Petty-bourgeois democracy in the capitalist countries, represented in its leading section by the Second and Second-and-a-Half International, is the main support of capitalism at the present time in so far as it retains influence over the majority or a considerable section of the industrial workers and office employees who fear that in case of revolution they will lose their comparatively philistine well-being established by the privileges of imperialism. But the growing economic crisis is everywhere worsening the conditions of the broad masses, and this circumstance, along with the ever more evident inevitability of new imperialist wars while capitalism is preserved, rendered the above-mentioned support ever more shaky."

The first round of imperialist wars and revolutions could not as yet shatter this prop of capitalism among the masses of the people. It grew stronger during the years of stabilisation. But as a result of the world economic crisis and the intensification of the world crisis of capitalism, as a result of the incredible torments of hunger and unemployment, and faced with the horrors of fascism and the threat of a new war, the formerly passive masses are beginning to come into movement. The social buttress of capitalism among the masses of the people has not yet been completely shattered, but is becoming more and more so in all capitalist countries:

"The masses of the people have not yet reached the point of storming capitalism, but the idea of storming capitalism is maturing in the consciousness of the masses —there can hardly be any doubt about this." (Stalin, Seventeenth Party Congress, C.P.S.U.)

The revolutionary crisis is maturing and will continue to mature. The slogan of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the slogan of soviet power, is becoming more and more popular.

The Thirteenth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. stated in 1933 that at any moment a turning point may be reached which will signify the transformation of the economic crisis into a revolutionary crisis. This turning point has not yet been reached on a world or all-European scale, or even in some big imperialist country, but sharp changes and turns of events have taken place in a number of countries during the past year such as demonstrate the maturing of a world revolutionary crisis and which in some countries have already led to the entire apparatus of the bourgeois state being shaken up. The armed struggle in Austria and the general strike in France in February, 1934, the tremendous growth of the strike movement in America, the united front movement in all the capitalist countries, and particularly the armed struggle in Spain and the proletarian uprising in Asturias in October, 1934, show that the class struggle of the proletariat is rising month by month to an ever higher level, that ever broader masses of the

toilers, formerly passive and far removed from the political struggle, are being attracted into the revolutionary struggle. The forecast made by Comrade Stalin to the effect that

"the revolutionary crisis will mature the more rapidly as the bourgeoisie become more involved in military combinations, as they take up terrorist methods of struggle more frequently against the working class and the toiling peasants,"

is being confirmed.

The experience of the last year of the class struggle has shown the broad masses of the workers that if the fascist offensive and the preparation for war are to be smashed all the forces of the working class need to be united and the level of the struggle must be raised to that of the struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat. The toiling masses in all countries are turning more and more to this path. The determination of the social-democratic workers to fight alongside the Communists is rising in all countries. In a number of countries agreement has been reached between the Communist Parties and the Social-Democratic Parties for the joint struggle against the capitalist offensive, fascism and war.

The aim of our strategy is to overthrow the capitalist system as a whole. But taking into account the present state of the organisation and class-consciousness of the workers, the immediate tactical problem facing the Communists at present is to offer determined resistance to the capitalist offensive on the standards of living of the workers, to sweep back the fascist offensive and the preparations for a new imperialist war, so as to prepare the masses in the process of these struggles for a determined struggle for power. The most important task under these conditions facing the revolutionary party of the proletariat in all capitalist countries is to establish the united front of the working masses.

For many years the Communists consolidated their ranks by fighting against social-democracy and opportunists of all kinds, and carrying on propaganda for Leninist theory and preparing cadres to lead wide mass movements. But it was not possible for them to carry the decisive strata of the proletariat with them. But now, when the revolutionary crisis is maturing in all countries, when a profound unrest has begun among the broadest masses of the toilers, the Communists can and must make their address themselves to the whole of the working class, speak to millions of people and rouse these millions to the revolutionary struggle. The time has now come when the Communists must calculate all their tactics on setting the millions into motion who were previously indifferent to the revolutionary struggle. Only the bold application of the tactics of the united front will open for the Communists the

path to the broad masses of the workers who are under the influence of the reformists, will make it possible for these masses to be taught the revolutionary class struggle, by raising them from the struggle for elementary demands and the defence of their everyday needs to the struggle against fascism, war and capitalism as a whole. For millions of social-democratic and unorganised workers the united front is a school of the class struggle, no matter how the social-democratic leaders try to limit the programme of joint action. The Communist Parties must therefore display the greatest initiative, flexibility and wisdom at the present day, based on a study of the principles of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin and on the experience of the international labour movement as a whole. Therefore, the present international situation, which faces each Communist with tasks which are higher than at any time in the history of the working class movement, also presents much higher demands in respect to the ability to apply Leninist theory, tactics and strategy to the concrete conditions of the present day in their own country.

How can the masses be raised for the overthrow of the capitalist régime? How can the masses be roused to the determined struggle against the capitalist state?

The experience of the revolutionary class struggle shows that for this purpose all the forces of the revolutionary party must be concentrated on the point that is most vulnerable as far as capital is concerned. If the working class is not yet ready to begin the storming of capitalism, it is revolting with all its strength against a further worsening of its conditions, against fascist terror and the preparations for a new imperialist war. The struggle against fascism and the preparations for a new war is drawing very wide masses into the movement, showing them the disgusting face of modern capitalism.

Does this mean that when concentrating the struggle against the capitalist offensive, fascism and preparations for war, the Communists hope to "ennoble" capitalism, to ameliorate its morals, and to avoid war while capitalism continues to exist?

Is it possible to bring about a state of affairs where capitalism exists without war and imperialist robbery? This would mean that capitalism must cease to be imperialism, must cease to be capitalism, and cease to be itself. Is it possible to cause the capitalists to give up their attacks on the standard of living of the working class, to give up attempts to destroy the last vestiges of the democratic rights and social gains of the working class, to abandon their transition to fascism? It would mean that in conditions where the class

struggle is being sharpened, capitalism must not resort to ever more violent methods of struggle against the working class, must not transfer the burdens of the crisis and the depression to the toiling masses. Theoretically a situation could be conceived where capitalism continues to exist but is not in a condition to increase its plunder of the working masses, is not in a condition to throw itself into a new military adventure. But to achieve this, such a pressure on capitalism by the toiling masses is required as would be EQUIVALENT TO REVOLUTION.

Therefore, when we speak of the struggle against the capitalist offensive, against fascism and war, under the leadership of the Communists, it is a method of drawing the masses into a determined struggle against fascism as a whole, for the overthrow of capitalism in a revolutionary manner, because the masses have seen the weakness of capitalism and are passing to decisive struggle for its overthrow.

Therefore, the fact that the organisation of the struggle against the capitalist offensive, fascism and war is advanced as the basic tactical task, arises from the Leninist setting of the question of the rallying of the masses and the formation of the revolutionary army of the proletariat for decisive class battles.

If under these circumstances the Communist International places the tactics of the united front in the forefront, this is because these very united front tactics are the form of the struggle and of the organisation of the masses which corresponds most closely to the present conditions of upsurge of the revolutionary movement of the masses and can facilitate and ensure the approach of the masses to a revolutionary position, the approach of millions of workers to the revolutionary front.

"With the vanguard alone victory is impossible. To throw the vanguard alone into the decisive battle when the whole class, when the broad masses have not yet taken up a position either of direct support of the vanguard, or at least of benevolent neutrality towards it . . . would not merely be folly, but a crime. And in order that actually the whole class, that actually the broad masses of toilers and those oppressed by capital may take up such a position, propaganda and agitation alone are not sufficient. For this the masses must have their own political experience. Such is the fundamental law of all great revolutions, confirmed now with astonishing force and vividness, not only in Russia, but also in Germany." (Lenin: Vol. XVII.)

The October Socialist Revolution was victorious because the entire working class, and the broad masses of peasants, took up a position either of direct support or of benevolent neutrality towards the Communist Party. In 1919 the German Communist Party was unable to win because it was an insignificant minority, only the vanguard, without the support of the masses. In 1933 the German Communist Party could not call the masses to the

struggle because, although it was a mass Party, it did not have the support of the majority of the working class, but on the contrary the majority of the working class supported the social-democrats, and the broad masses of the working class had not yet become convinced on the basis of their own political experience that the only way out was the revolutionary way indicated by the Communists. In 1933 the vanguard of the German working class already realised the necessity of overthrowing capitalism and the inevitability of the incredible suffering which the proletariat would have to undergo under the power of the fascists. But the broad masses of the proletariat still remained neutral in this struggle against fascism. Therefore, the German Communist Party was unable to call the masses to the decisive struggle.

The masses learn rapidly under the heel of fascism, and under the threat of fascism. They need to be united and must be TAUGHT in the struggle. Socialist revolutionary consciousness must be brought to the masses by the Communists. It is absolutely harmful and fatal to expect that the masses will themselves arrive at an understanding of the need for the revolutionary struggle. For the revolution the masses must be organised.

The tactics of the united front and the strengthening of the Communist Party are two tasks closely inter-connected.

The Communist Parties have become ideologically strong in an unceasing struggle against the capitalist offensive, against fascism and war. In the first round of proletarian revolutions, the situation which was favourable for the proletariat could not be used to achieve victory in the foremost capitalist countries because the Communist Parties were still weak, inexperienced and without authority among the masses, and did not know how to carry with them the broad masses of the people who were prepared to advance to the storming of capitalism. Nowadays, on the other hand, the highest duty facing the politically consolidated and solid Communist Parties, which know that events are moving towards revolution, is to try now to break the masses away from the S.D. Parties, to unite them under their banners, to win their confidence by leading the every-day struggles on the basis of the united front, so as in the long run to stand at the head of their struggle for socialism.

The experience of the entire development of the class struggle of the proletariat shows that the victory over fascism requires that the struggle of the masses must be raised to the level of the struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat, for socialism. In a number of countries agreements have been reached between the Communist and Social-Democratic Parties for joint struggle against fas-

cism and war. THIS IS ONLY THE FIRST STEP, THE FIRST STAGE. The united front struggle is an extremely important stage in the mighty liberation struggle of the proletariat, but in the decisive class struggles for the dictatorship of the proletariat, for socialism, the proletariat will only be victorious UNDER THE BANNER OF MARX, ENGELS, LENIN AND STALIN, UNDER THE BANNER OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL.

THEREFORE, THE TASK OF ALL TASKS IS TO STRENGTHEN THE COMMUNIST PARTIES AND TO CARRY ON A DETERMINED STRUGGLE AGAINST CONCILIATION AND OPPORTUNISM, FOR THE WINNING OF THE MAJORITY OF THE WORKING CLASS AND TO PREPARE THEM FOR THE DECISIVE CLASS BATTLES.

The Bolsheviks were strong in the fact that over 30 years ago, at the dawn of the Russian working-class movement, they split with Menshevism, and cleansed their party from the opportunists, the Mensheviks. The Bolsheviks are strong now in the fact that in 1923-24 Comrade Stalin, like Lenin 20 years earlier, recognised in the disputes with Trotsky, Zinoviev and Kamenev the new Menshevism which led to the departure of the followers of Trotsky and Zinoviev into the camp of counter-revolution.

The Mensheviks from whom Lenin and the Bolsheviks split in 1902 on the question of the first point in the Party Statutes, have long since become a party of counter-revolution and have fought alongside the white guard generals against the dictatorship of the proletariat in the U.S.S.R. The Trotskyites who undertook the struggle against Bolshevism on the question of the possibility of constructing socialism in one country alone, have become the foremost detachment of international counter-revolution. Zinoviev, Kamenev and Co., who acted against the Bolshevik Party at first on the same question of the possibility of constructing socialism in one country, trained the counter-

revolutionary groups which organise terror against the leaders of the Bolshevik Party and committed the dastardly murder of Comrade Kirov, just as 16 years ago the gangs led by Noske murdered Luxemburg and Liebknecht.

In a revolutionary situation the masses learn rapidly, and the social-democratic workers of yesterday are quickly coming into the camp of revolution.

But in a revolutionary situation ghosts walk quickly and opportunists rapidly slip into the camp of counter-revolution.

Lenin taught us to be merciless towards our enemies, but he also taught us to deal mercilessly with the opportunists — the agents of the class enemy in the ranks of our own party.

A party of the proletariat which wishes to lead the masses to victory must be like the Bolshevik Party. It must organise the hatred of the working masses towards the bourgeoisie, and teach them to be heartless towards the class enemy. It must teach the members of the Party to guard the unity and purity of their Party like the apple of their eye.

In order that the proletariat can be victorious, it must have a genuine Bolshevik Party, consisting of the best people of the working class.

“We Communists are people of a special mould. We are made of special material. We are those who comprise the army of the great proletarian strategist, the army of Comrade Lenin. There is nothing higher than the honour to belong to this army. There is nothing higher than the title of member of the Party founded and led by Comrade Lenin. It is not given to all to be members of such a Party. It is not given to all to withstand the stress and storm that accompanies membership in such a Party. Sons of the working class, sons of poverty and struggle, sons of incredible deprivation and heroic effort — these are the ones who must first of all be members of such a Party. That is why the Leninist Party, the Communist Party, at the same time calls itself the Party of the working class.” (Joseph Stalin about Lenin.)

LENIN AND THE BRITISH LABOUR PARTY

By R. PALME DUTT.

IN January, 1924, in the same month in which Lenin died, the first Labour government was formed in Britain. The views of Lenin on the rôle of a Labour government in England were brought to the test of history, although he could not live to see their realisation.

To-day, we are able to see the outcome of two Labour governments in Britain, with the near prospects of a third, alongside the achievements of Bolshevism in the Soviet Union. MacDonald, the leader of the two former Labour governments, who sought to show the British working class a "better" path than that of Lenin, has gone over openly to the bourgeoisie and become the head of what is fundamentally a conservative national cabinet. When difficult days came on for British imperialism and class contradictions sharpened, MacDonald and Snowden, previously the leaders of the fight against Communism in the British Labour Movement, ended in the arms of the bourgeoisie as the open enemies of the entire Labour Movement. Of the two leaders in the Labour Party who at the 1921 Labour Party Conference led the fight for the rejection of Communist Party affiliation to the Labour Party, one, Hodges, former Secretary of the Miners' Federation, is to-day a colliery company director; while the other, Spencer, to-day leads a yellow company union for the purpose of breaking trade unionism in the mining industry.

Decaying, moribund capitalism has condemned the toiling masses to unexampled misery; two and a half millions are unemployed; the numbers of the organised workers are halved; fascist measures are being prepared by the bourgeoisie and their "national" government, steadily cutting down the old pretences of "democracy," to strengthen the enslavement of the masses. At the same time the British workers learn of the triumph of socialism in the Soviet Union, alike in industry and on the land, of the advance of the Soviet Union as a socialist industrial country, second in the world as regards its level of production and soon to be the first, of the abolition of unemployment in industry and of poverty in the village in the U.S.S.R., of the decisive steps taken towards the abolition of classes, of rising standards of living of the masses of workers and collective farmers and of a rise in the cultural level of the population of the country. These achievements fill the heart of every worker with joy and pride, and cheer them and fill them with certainty in the struggle against their own bourgeoisie; but that joy and pride cannot but be shot through, for the workers of the West, with bitterness at the contrast between capitalist con-

ditions of labour in the U.S.S.R., at the thought that they, the "advanced" workers of the West, have fallen behind in the race and have allowed fascism to engage in its bloody orgy in a number of the biggest countries in the West. How has this come to pass? How have the great working class movements of the West in the last century, which before led the way, with all their strength and decades of experience, turned out to be on the wrong road leading to the establishment of fascist dictatorship? This question must tear at the heart of every thinking worker. The eleven years since the death of Lenin have provided a terrible object-lesson of the working out of the two paths, the path of Labourism and Social-Democracy, of MacDonald and Henderson, Wels and Vandervelde, as against the path of Communism of Lenin and Stalin.

But the lesson has not been fully mastered by the masses of British workers. The majority of the British workers still follow the Labour Party. The Communist Party in Britain, after nearly fifteen years' existence, still continues to have the support of only a minority of the proletariat, and has NOT YET become transformed into a mass party, although it has done much and learnt much in preparation for speedy growth in the future. Now, when the world revolutionary crisis is ripening, when class contradictions are being sharply intensified in England, the process of the radicalisation of and the move to revolution by the British proletariat has been speeded up. This revolutionary process is most clearly expressed in the urge to a united front with the Communists and in the growing repulse being offered to fascism.

But this process does not proceed in a straight line. The majority of the workers in Britain, filled with hatred of the National government, led by MacDonald, anxious for its downfall, and anxious to beat off the fascist and capitalist offensive as seen in the rising Labour vote in the municipal elections, are again counting on bringing this about in the way tested in the past, namely, by way of a "Labour" government. Hopes and illusions are once again being spread in a Labour government, in a third Labour government which, it is promised, will be "different" from the disastrous experience of the first two. At the same time the Southport Labour Party Conference has established a more openly reactionary programme of the Labour Party, and of the future Labour government, than ever before. Therefore, on the occasion of the anniversary of Lenin's death it is more than ever timely for the British working

class movement to study again, and yet again, the teachings of Lenin on the question of the Labour Party.

To-day it has become the fashion for reformist leaders of the Labour Party, the very leaders whom Lenin most fiercely attacked as an "ulcer" in the movement, to quote Lenin's name and tags from Lenin in their defence in the hope of throwing a halo round their own corrupt policies. The Secretary of the Scottish Labour Party writes in the Labour organ *Forward* (10.9.32) on the subject of "Lenin's Programme and Labour's" to prove that the two programmes are essentially the same!

"There is not one item of these proposals of Lenin's which is not embodied in the Labour Party's programme." (*Forward*, 10.9.32.)

Still more frequent is the perversion and distortion of Lenin's tactical teachings in relation to the Labour Party by would-be "Left" leaders and theorists in the Labour Party at the present day in order to defend their own reformist position and fight the line of the Communist Party.

It is necessary to study Lenin as Lenin studied Marx—not in order to draw out of their context isolated fragments and formulas in order to apply them ready-made to basically different situations contrary to their meaning, but in order to learn from them the methods and principles of approach in a given situation and carry forward these principles and methods to the present situation and new problems arising. Above all is this important in relation to the Labour Party, which is no uniform phenomenon, but a successively changing and developing one. The Labour Party of 1920 was no longer that of 1906; the Labour Party of 1935 is no longer that of 1920. It is necessary to study Lenin's treatment of the Labour Party historically, dialectically.

Lenin approached the problems of the British Labour Movement and of the Labour Party on the basis of the work already done by Marx and Engels, and never failed to state and to re-state this foundation of his approach. He began from Engels' analysis of the "bourgeois Labour party" as a peculiar phenomenon of England. Again and again he showed how Marx and Engels, over a whole series of decades, from 1858 to 1892, had traced the connection between England's industrial monopoly and colonial monopoly and "the (temporary) victory of opportunism in England." The monopoly created "a small privileged protected minority" of the working class distinct from the "great bulk of the workers." On this basis was built the old trade unionism; and on this basis grew up the new social-political stratum of a privileged labour leadership in the service of the bourgeoisie, "saturated with bourgeois respectability," and rewarded by the bourgeoisie with pickings, bribes, decora-

tions, parliamentary seats and ministerial offices (the first of these labour leaders to be appointed Government Minister was in 1885). Lenin was never tired of relating how Marx won the honour of a vote of censure from the General Council of the First International for declaring that "the English Labour leaders had sold themselves," or how Marx wrote in 1874:

"As to the urban workers here, it is a pity that the whole gang of leaders did not get elected to parliament. This would be the surest way of getting rid of these blackguards." (Marx, Letter to Sorge, April 4, 1874.)

To give an estimation of these "labour representatives," Lenin quoted the following from Engels' Preface (1892) to the Second Edition of his *Conditions of the Working Class In Britain*. (See Lenin *Imperialism and the Split in Socialism*.)

"The so-called labour representatives are those who are forgiven for belonging to the working class because they are themselves ready to drown this quality in the ocean of their liberalism." (Ibid.)

The analysis by Marx and Engels of the character of the "bourgeois labour party" in England was based on the conditions of the second half of the nineteenth century before the period of imperialism had begun, but when England already, in advance of the other capitalist countries, "revealed at least two of the outstanding characteristics of imperialism: (1) vast colonies; (2) monopoly profit." (Lenin.)

Lenin carried forward this analysis into the period of imperialism which began with the turn of the century, and within which the modern Labour Party was formed.

What was the effect of imperialism on the situation of the British Labour movement? It was a two-fold effect. On the one hand, the English industrial monopoly was destroyed; "England's industrial monopoly was destroyed about the end of the nineteenth century." (Lenin.) This to a certain extent NARROWED the basis of super-profits and consequent basis for the corruption of the working class, began to undermine the basis of the old labour aristocracy, worsened the conditions of the mass of the workers, awoke a new spirit of struggle already visible in the revival of the Socialist movement in England in the eighties and the new unionism, and developed new militant tendencies warring against the old leadership in the old trade unions. But at the same time imperialism INCREASED the systematic corruption of the upper stratum of the labour leadership and their drawing into the state apparatus; and this development now began to appear, not only in England, but in all the imperialist countries. Lenin analysed with great care this two-fold process:

"Formerly, the working class of ONE country could be bribed and corrupted for decades. At the present time this is improbable, perhaps even impossible. On the

other hand, however, EVERY imperialist 'Great' Power can and does bribe SMALLER (compared with 1848-1868 in England) strata of the labour aristocracy. Formerly, a 'bourgeois labour party,' to use Engels' remarkably profound expression, could be formed only in one country, because it alone enjoyed a monopoly and enjoyed it for a long period. Now the 'bourgeois labour party' is inevitable and typical for ALL the imperialist countries." (Lenin: *Imperialism and the Split in the Socialist Movement*.)

The struggle against the "bourgeois labour party" thus becomes a characteristic form of the revolutionary struggle in all countries.

"The fact is that 'bourgeois labour parties' as a political phenomenon have already been formed in ALL the advanced capitalist countries, and unless a determined ruthless struggle is conducted against these parties all along the line—or what is the same thing, against these groups, tendencies, etc.—it is useless talking about the struggle against imperialism, about Marxism or about the socialist labour movement. There is not the slightest reason for thinking that these parties can disappear BEFORE the social revolution. On the contrary, the nearer the revolution approaches, the stronger it flares up." (Ibid.)

The characteristic of the British Labour Party from the outset was thus that it was the outcome of two contradictory processes, both springing from the conditions of imperialism. On the one hand, the establishment of the Labour Party reflected the beginnings of an awakening among the workers. It was the first step, as Lenin stated, of these workers towards socialism and the class struggle against the bourgeoisie. On the other hand, the Labour Party continued the forms and traditions and policy and leadership of the old "bourgeois labour party," which led to a further development of the process of unification of the labour leadership with the capitalist state under the conditions of imperialism. It was necessary for Marxism simultaneously to help forward the first tendency and to fight the second; all the difficulties, confusions and cross-purposes in the very weak Marxist ranks in Britain arose from the problem to meet this twofold task, dictated by the contradictory twofold character of the processes which led to the establishment of the Labour Party. It was in relation to this situation that Lenin advocated the acceptance of the Labour Party into the International in 1908, despite its denial of the class struggle, on the grounds that "it represents the first step on the part of the really proletarian organisations of England towards a conscious class policy and towards a socialist Labour Party." He wrote:

"When the objective conditions prevail which retard the growth of the political consciousness and class-independence of the proletarian masses, one must be able patiently and persistently to work hand-in-hand with them, making no concessions to them in principle, but not refraining from carrying on activities RIGHT IN THE HEART OF the proletarian masses. These lessons of Engels have been corroborated by the recent development of events, when the English trade unions, insular, aristocratic, philistinely

selfish, hostile to socialism, who have produced a number of direct traitors to the working class, who have sold themselves to the bourgeoisie for governing positions (like the scoundrel John Burns) are, nevertheless, APPROACHING socialism, awkwardly, hesitatingly, in a zigzag fashion, but are approaching it, nevertheless. Only the blind can fail to see that socialism is now growing rapidly among the working class in England, that socialism is ONCE AGAIN becoming a mass movement in that country, that the social revolution is approaching in Great Britain." (Lenin: *The Session of the International Socialist Bureau, 1908*.)

The pre-war Labour Party, wrote Lenin, represented "a compromise" between the socialist party and the non-socialist trade unions:

"This compromise arose out of the specific features of English history and the fact that the ARISTOCRACY of the working class is separated in non-socialist liberal trade unions. The beginning of the turn of these unions towards socialism gives rise to a number of intermediary and confused positions." (Lenin: *The Conference of the British Labour Party, 1913*.)

With close attention Lenin followed every twist and turn of the pre-war Labour Party leadership which operated in alliance with the Liberal government of the day, and every sign of rising opposition in the workers' ranks and of the mighty rising workers' struggle in the years before the war.

This character of the pre-war Labour Party could not continue indefinitely. The war brought the issues to a head. The official Labour Party openly united with the bourgeoisie and entered into the successive Coalition War Governments . . . "the proletarian mass" (in England—R.P.D.), wrote Lenin in 1915, is

"disorganised and demoralised by the desertion of a minority of the best-situated, skilled and organised workers to liberal, i.e., bourgeois politics. The English trade unions comprise about one-fifth of the wage-workers. The leaders of those trade unions are mostly liberals whom Marx long ago called agents of the bourgeoisie" (Lenin: *English Pacifism and English Aversion to Theory*.)

The Labour Party and trade union leadership was drawn into the state machine:

"Lucrative and easy berths in the ministries of war industries committees, in parliament and on various commissions, on the editorial staffs of 'respectable' legal newspapers, or on management boards of no less respectable and 'bourgeois law-abiding' trade unions—these are the means with which the imperialist bourgeoisie attracts and rewards the representatives and adherents of the 'bourgeois labour parties.'" (Lenin: *Imperialism and the Split in the Socialist Movement*.)

The rising workers' opposition to the imperialist war developed mainly outside the channels of the Labour Party, through a variety of forms and groupings. The 1917 Revolution gave an enormous stimulus to this process, and the victory of Bolshevism, the Socialist October Revolution, and spreading of the principles of Bolshevism, led to a growth of class-consciousness in the militant workers' ranks. The time became ripe for the formation of a real revolutionary workers' Communist Party in opposition to the opportunist

social-chauvinist leadership of the Labour Party. It was from this point that Lenin, as leader of the World Revolution and in the formation of the Communist International, including the British Section, began to directly lead the revolutionary wing of the British working-class movement.

At this point it is important to note the key thoughts of Lenin on the problems of the revolution in England, as very briefly, but with powerful suggestion, indicated in his *Notes on the Dictatorship in the Conditions Prevailing in England* (Lenin, *Miscellaneous*, Vol. III.), written in the beginning of 1920. After emphasising first the position of a "proletariat in an IMPERIALIST country," and raising a direct query as to the relative proportion of the imperialist section in the proletariat ("per cent. of imperialists among proletariat?"), he goes on to warn directly AGAINST "TALKING ABOUT THE 'PROLETARIAT' IN GENERAL":

"The new and material, the concrete is brushed aside, but they keep on talking about the 'proletariat' in general . . .

"The proletariat, not in general, not in abstract, but in the twentieth century, after the imperialist war, inevitably SPLIT from the upper stratum. Evasion of the concrete, deception by means of abstractions (dialectics versus eclecticism).

"Engels in 1852 on England, 1852-92. Cf. 1914-19. Dictatorship of the proletariat—proletariat overthrows its opportunist leaders, transition from the aristocracy of labour to the masses, 'fight for influence.' Not without a split." (Lenin: *Notes on the Dictatorship in the Conditions Prevailing in England*, 1920 — Lenin, *Miscellany*, Vol. III.)

Here we see, in shorthand form, some of the most important governing principles of Lenin's thought in relation to the problems of the revolution in England.

First, that the proletariat in England is NOT HOMOGENEOUS; that it is essential to distinguish sharply the imperialist "upper stratum," the "aristocracy of labour" from "the masses."

Second, that the dictatorship of the proletariat can only be accomplished in England on the basis of a definite "TRANSITION FROM THE ARISTOCRACY OF LABOUR TO THE MASSES," whereby the "proletariat overthrows its opportunist leaders" (note well that the "overthrow" of the "opportunist leaders" is not presented in isolation, as a simple "change of leaders" within an existing party and movement, but as a definite change of the SOCIAL BASIS of the working class movement "from the aristocracy of labour to the masses").

Third, that this change requires a SPLIT: "not without a split" since the Labour Party subordinates the working class to the bourgeoisie and its state, and the proletariat must establish its Communist Party so as to carry on a consistent and victorious class struggle.

What is meant by this "transition from the aristocracy of labour to the masses?" Lenin

makes this further clear in his Letter on the Formation of the Communist Party in Great Britain, written in August, 1919:

"In England until now participation in the socialist movement and in the labour movement generally has been confined chiefly to a narrow upper section of the workers, representative of the labour aristocracy, largely thoroughly and hopelessly spoiled by reformism, captives of bourgeois and imperialist prejudices. Without a struggle against this section, without the destruction of every trace of its authority among the workers, without convincing the masses of the complete bourgeois corruption of this section, there can be no question of a serious Communist workers' movement." (Lenin: *Letter to Sylvia Pankhurst*.)

The struggle is not merely against the opportunist leadership of the Labour Party and trade unions, but against the whole narrow social basis of the old traditional "socialist" and "Labour movement," against the privileged strata of the working class still soaked with "bourgeois prejudices." Only so is the full meaning of the "continuous connection with the mass of workers," which Lenin incessantly preached to the young Communist Party, correctly understood.

It will be necessary to return to these governing statements made by Lenin on the problems of the revolution and of the existing Labour movement in England; but it may already be noted that the vulgar left-reformist conception (Plebs, Socialist League, etc.—actually paraded to-day as corresponding to Lenin's views!) for instance, regarding the Labour Party as the "political party of the organised working class" (a conception which Lenin violently attacked), which by a process of internal change of leadership and policy could become the party of the working class revolution, was emphatically rejected by Lenin, as based on a complete misunderstanding of the real rôle and character of the Labour Party and of the conditions of a revolutionary working class movement in England.

The first necessity was the formation of the existing revolutionary class-conscious elements into a Communist Party. In May, 1920, before the Communist Party was yet formed, the first British Labour Delegation to Russia cunningly sought to put the question to Lenin, whether it was not more important that Russia should receive the powerful assistance of the great Labour Party against the war of intervention rather than that the forces should be split in Britain by the formation of a Communist Party. Lenin's answer was emphatic and couched in terms of biting irony. That the British workers might get his answer directly, without distortion, he wrote it in his Letter to the British Workers:

"Members of the delegation asked me what I thought was most important: the formation in England of a consistent revolutionary Communist Party, or getting the immediate assistance of the masses of the workers in

England for the cause of peace with Russia. I answered that this was a matter of opinion. Sincere supporters of the emancipation of the workers from the yoke of capital could never be opposed to the formation of a Communist Party, which alone is capable of training the workers in a non-bourgeois and non-petty-bourgeois manner, which alone is capable of really exposing, ridiculing and disgracing 'leaders' who are capable of doubting whether England is helping Poland, etc. There is no need to be afraid of there being too many Communists in England, because there is not even a small Communist Party there. But if anyone continues to remain in intellectual slavery to the bourgeoisie, continues to share petty-bourgeois prejudices about 'democracy' (bourgeois democracy), pacifism, etc., then of course such people would only do more harm to the proletariat if they took it into their heads to call themselves Communists and affiliate to the Third International. All that these people are capable of is to pass sentimental 'resolutions' against intervention couched exclusively in philistine phrases. In a certain sense these resolutions are also useful, namely, in the sense that the old 'leaders' (adherents of bourgeois democracy, of peaceful methods, etc.), make themselves ridiculous in the eyes of the masses, and the more empty non-committal resolutions they pass unaccompanied by revolutionary action, the quicker will they be exposed. Each one to his own: let the Communists work directly through their Party on the task of awakening the revolutionary consciousness of the workers." (Lenin: *Letter to the British Workers*, May, 1930.)

But the formation of the Communist Party, the drawing together of the small vanguard of class-conscious workers, did not yet mean that this vanguard had all that was necessary for constant contact with the broad mass of the workers, which alone could make it possible for it to fulfil its rôle as a Communist Party, guide and leader of the proletariat. This at once raised sharply the question of the Labour Party which had the support not only of the overwhelming majority of the working class, but at that time, in response to the post-war revolutionary wave and in order to utilise that wave in the interests of the policy of class-collaboration with the bourgeoisie, had adopted a nominally "socialist" programme (*Labour and the New Social Order*), had enlarged its basis to include individual members, thus opening the way to inheritance of the crumbling remains of the Liberal Party, and yet at the same time appeared to carry forward the old pre-war character of a so-called "broad workers' party" or wide and loose federation of working class organisations with complete liberty of the constituent organisations to proclaim any policy, including a Communist policy and the possibility of criticism of the opportunist leadership.

What was to be the relation of the newly-formed Communist Party to "the old trade unionist, opportunist and social-chauvinist Labour Party?" How did Lenin term it in propounding the question? Lenin's answer to this is given in his *Left Wing Communism* and in his speeches at the Second Congress. No summary can be adequate to the fullness of their contents.

Lenin had in essence to fight on two fronts over this question. On the one hand, he had to fight the tendency, closely associated with the anti-parliamentary tendency, which sought in effect simply to boycott the Labour Party, which saw clearly the fight against the whole bourgeois programme, policy and leadership of the Labour Party, but overlooked the conditions of winning the workers within the Labour Party, since these workers still regarded the Labour Party as a united workers' Party for the fight for socialism, and needed to go through the actual experience of exposure in practice in order to learn the incorrectness of this view and to advance to Communism.

"Unless a change takes place in the opinions of the majority of the working class, revolution is impossible; and this change is brought about by the political experience of the masses, never is it brought about by propaganda alone." (*Left Wing Communism—Lenin*.)

How must this "change in the opinions of the majority of the working class" take place? On the one hand, on the basis of their own experience of the class struggle and of the policy of the Labour Government. On the other hand, as a result of the agitational rôle of the Communist Party, carrying on the struggle to conquer the majority of the working class and helping them to master the lessons of the struggle of the masses of the workers, and of the treachery committed by the Labour Party and the Government, and by showing the necessity of entering the path of struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Lenin accordingly put forward his tactical proposals in the situation of 1920:

First, that the Communist Party should apply for affiliation to the Labour Party, conditional on "freedom of criticism and freedom of propagandist, agitational and organisational activity for the dictatorship of the proletariat and the Soviet form of government," in order to utilise every opportunity to carry on the fight from within the Labour Party "as long as" this should be possible. Full freedom of criticism and of the party's independent policy was the essential condition of this.

"We must say frankly that the Communist Party can affiliate to the Labour Party only on the condition that it can preserve its freedom of criticism and can pursue its own policy. This is an extremely important condition. . . . The structure of this party is a very peculiar one and is unlike that in any other country . . . The members are not asked what political convictions they adhere to." (Lenin's Speech at the Second Congress of the Comintern.)

This character of the Labour Party has long since passed away, as the Labour Party has developed the discipline and exclusion policy of an ordinary social-democratic party; but Lenin anticipated that this would happen, and calculated upon it in advance:

"Let Messrs. Thomas and other social traitors expel you.

This will have an excellent effect upon the British workers."

And again:

"If the British Communist Party starts out by acting in a revolutionary manner in the Labour Party, and if Messrs. Henderson are obliged to expel this Party, it will be a great victory for the Communist and labour movement in England."

Second, Lenin proposed that the Communist Party should seek to hasten the process of exposure of the Labour Party by

"accelerating the transition of political power from the direct representatives of the bourgeoisie to the 'labour lieutenants of the capitalist class' in order that the masses may be more quickly weaned from their last illusions on this score."

For this purpose the Communist Party should make a compromise and propose an "election agreement" to the Labour Party leadership, with division of seats, while retaining for the Communist Party "complete liberty to carry on agitation, propaganda and political activity." The Communist Party should seek to "compel" the Hendersons and Snowdens, who are "afraid to win," to advance to the responsibility of governmental power, in order thereby to convince the workers of their "petty-bourgeois and treacherous nature" and

"to bring nearer the moment when, on the basis of the disappointment of the majority of the workers in the Hendersons, it will be possible with serious chances of success to overthrow the government of the Hendersons at once." (*Left-Wing Communism*.)

It will be seen that the situation here envisaged is that of the revolutionary wave of 1920, of the period of the Council of Action, when the formation of a Labour Government AT THAT TIME could have had the character of a Kerensky Government. The later Labour Government of 1924 was already formed under different conditions.

At the same time, Lenin envisaged the possibility of the Labour Party refusal of such an electoral agreement:

"If the Hendersons and Snowdens reject the bloc with us on these terms, we will gain still more, because we will have at once shown the masses (note that even in the purely Menshevik and utterly opportunist Independent Labour Party the RANK AND FILE is in favour of Soviets) that the Hendersons prefer THEIR closeness with the capitalists to the unity of all the workers." (*Left-Wing Communism*, p. 67—1934 Edition.)

This was one side of Lenin's fight in 1920. But at the same time he had to fight those Communists who misunderstood these tactics, who distorted these tactics into a kind of support of the Labour Party as an all-in "workers' party," while opposing the leadership, comrades who saw the Labour Party as the "political party of the organised working class" or "political expression of the trade union movement," within which the rôle of the Communist Party was simply that of a revolutionary opposition seeking to change the programme and leadership.

This view had been widely prevalent in the British Socialist Party, which was the largest constituent element of the new Communist Party. Lenin directly polemised against this view, naming the British Socialist Party:

"I want to observe that Comrade McLaine was guilty of a slight inaccuracy with which it is impossible to agree. He calls the Labour Party the political organisation of the trade union movement. Later on he repeated this when he said: the Labour Party 'is the political expression of the trade union movement.' I have read the same expression of opinion in the organ of the British Socialist Party. It is not true, and partly is the cause of the opposition, to a certain extent justified, of the British revolutionary workers. Indeed, the concept: 'the political organisation of the trade union movement' or the 'political expression' of this movement, is mistaken. Of course, for the most part the Labour Party consists of workers, but it does not logically follow from this that every workers' party which consists of workers is at the same time a 'political workers' party'; that depends upon who leads it, upon the content of its activities and of its political tactics. Only the latter determines whether it is really a political proletarian party. From this point of view, which is the only correct point of view, the Labour Party is not a political workers' party, but a thoroughly bourgeois party, because, although it consists of workers, it is led by reactionaries, and the worst reactionaries at that, who lead it in the spirit of the bourgeoisie." (Speech regarding Affiliation to the Labour Party.)

The definition of the Labour Party as a "bourgeois party," even though composed of workers in the bulk of its membership, and even of working class organisations, lay at the basis of the subsequent definition by the Communist International of the Labour Party as a "third bourgeois party."

Against the political sophistry which seeks to present the trade union or "mass organisation" basis of the Labour Party as thereby constituting it a "working class party" ("we do not want to break away from the masses and mass organisations"—the favourite argument to-day of all the Plebs, Socialist League, etc., theorists who seek simultaneously to proclaim their "Marxism" and to swallow slavishly every reactionary programme of the Labour Party) Lenin had already warned in the strongest terms in his *Imperialism and the Split of Social-Democracy*:

"One of the most common sophisms of Kautsky is his reference to the 'masses'; we do not want to break away from the masses and mass organisations! But think how Engels approached this question. In the nineteenth century the 'mass organisations' of the English trade unions were on the side of the bourgeois labour party. Marx and Engels did not conciliate with it on this ground, but exposed it. They did not forget, first, that the trade union organisations directly embrace the MINORITY OF THE PROLETARIAT. In England then, as in Germany now, not more than one-fifth of the proletariat was organised. It cannot be seriously believed that it is possible to organise the majority of the proletariat under capitalism. Second—and this is the main point—it is not so much a question of how many members there are in an organisation, as what is the real objective meaning of its policy: does this policy represent the masses? Does it serve the

masses, i.e., the liberation of the masses from capitalism, or does it represent the interests of the minority, its conciliation with capitalism? The latter was true for England of the nineteenth century, it is true for Germany, etc., at the present time.

"ENGELS DRAWS A DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE 'BOURGEOIS LABOUR PARTY' OF THE OLD TRADE UNIONS, A PRIVILEGED MINORITY, AND THE 'GREAT MASS,' THE REAL MAJORITY. ENGELS APPEALS TO THE LATTER, WHICH IS NOT INFECTED WITH 'BOURGEOIS RESPECTABILITY.' THIS IS THE ESSENCE OF MARXIST TACTICS!" (My emphasis—R.P.D.)

"This is the essence of Marxist tactics"—to appeal to the "great mass," the "real majority," against the "bourgeois labour party" line of the upper stratum, of the privileged minority.

It is, of course, necessary to understand this correctly in relation to modern conditions. The post-war capitalist crisis has enormously carried forward the process, already begun since the beginning of the decline of British capitalism in the eighties, of undermining the basis of the old aristocracy of labour. The sixteen years since the war have seen profound changes. The basis of the aristocracy of labour has narrowed; its forms have in many respects changed, and new forms have developed. This whole process, however, requires a separate study, for which there is here no room. But the essential principle of Lenin's approach, the sharp distinction between the mass of the workers who suffer under capitalism and the privileged and bribed upper stratum who constitute the social-economic basis of bourgeois labour politics, still remains of cardinal importance for the question of the Labour Party.

The tactics laid down by Lenin for the young Communist Party in relation to the Labour Party were admittedly not easy tactics. They required a very high degree of revolutionary clearness, tenacity and flexibility to meet the successively changing situation. Lenin indeed indicated in his speech at the Second Congress that "we must test by experience" their reception by the revolutionary workers in England. This is not the place to review the subsequent working out of these tactics and the many problems that arose. Undoubtedly there was much in the actual carrying out that betrayed weakness and confusions among the British Communists; there was much that will still require deeper historical survey and evaluation than it has yet received. But whatever the mistakes in the execution, the passage of time has only confirmed the correctness of Lenin's principles of approach.

The fourteen years that have passed since then have seen a profound transformation of the whole situation and of the relation of forces. The Labour government of 1924 was no longer the Labour government looked for by Lenin at the height of the revolutionary wave of 1918-20. The experience of the first Labour government, and the ex-

perience of the General Strike, constituted landmarks for the British working class movement, after which nothing could be the same again. The Labour Party was increasingly transformed from its old loose federal basis into a rigid social-democratic party with an increasingly reactionary capitalist programme. The mechanical repetition, under these changed conditions, by the majority of the older leadership of the Communist Party, of the shell of "Lenin's tactics," without understanding their spirit, had to be corrected only after a sharp inner struggle with the aid of the International. In 1928 the International recorded the definite change of the conditions from when Lenin wrote:

"Under no circumstances can the present situation be compared with the situation as it existed in 1918-20, when Lenin insisted on supporting the Labour Party and pushing it into power. In 1918-20 a Labour Party government could have played the part of the Kerensky government with all its vacillations . . . A Labour government at the present juncture will be from the very outset an obvious instrument for attacking the workers." (E.C.C.I., Ninth Plenum Resolution on the British Question, 1928.)

The 1929-31 Labour government fully realised this prediction.

The situation has continued to change. And now the heavy issues of fascism and of war face the working class. The experiences of Germany, of Austria, of Spain, of France, are calling forth a striving among the masses of the workers to establish a united front, along with the Communists. The first for the united working class front is going forward, is gaining strength, in the teeth of the fierce opposition of the Labour Party leadership, which has adopted draconian measures to check it. The rising wave of working class struggle has been shown in the anti-fascist mass actions of the past year. But at the same time, this rising wave is leading to a rise in the vote for Labour candidates at the elections. The Labour Party leadership is seeking to divert the rising wave, away from the united front, away from the class struggle, to electoral-parliamentary illusions in a third Labour government. A third Labour government is being prepared; the Southport Labour Party Conference has shown the reactionary programme that is being prepared for it; already a flirtation between Lloyd George and the Labour Party leaders with regard to this future government has begun. Whether this rising wave will be thus diverted to illusory hopes in a third Labour government, with the menace of the consequent disillusionment leading to the benefit of fascism, or whether it can be carried forward, in spite of the Labour Party leadership, to the united front, to active struggle and readiness for the great issues before us, rests above all on the rôle of the Communist Party. Such is the situation in which sharp issues and the necessary tactics to be

followed, will be discussed at the Thirteenth Congress of the Communist Party in February.

The details of Lenin's tactical methods worked out in relation to the Labour Party in the conditions of his day can no longer be adopted as ready-made formulas to-day in those respects where the conditions have changed. But the basic principles of his approach to the problem of the revolution in England and the special problem of the Labour Party remain as a powerful guide. That "the progress of development in England perhaps will be slower than in other countries," he already anticipated. In his speech to the Second Congress, he said:

"All the best revolutionary elements in the working class who are dissatisfied with the slow progress of development which in England, perhaps, will be slower than in other countries, will come over to us. Development is slow because the British bourgeoisie is in a position to create better conditions for the aristocracy of labour and by that to retard the progress of the revolution. That is why the British comrades should strive not only to revolutionise the masses, which they are doing excellently (Comrade Gallacher has proved this), but must simul-

aneously also strive to create a real working class political party."

The essence of Marxist-Leninist tactics — to reach "lower and deeper," the "real masses," the "great mass," distinct from the "privileged minority infected with bourgeois respectability," remains the guiding lines for the transformation of the C.P.G.B. into a mass party, and to lead the broad mass of the British workers, impoverished and struck down by capitalism, to the struggle for power, in spite of the corrupted upper stratum which seeks to-day to occupy the political stage in their name:

"We cannot—nor can anybody else—calculate beforehand what portion of the proletariat will follow the social chauvinists and opportunists. This will only be decided by the struggle; it will be definitely decided only by the socialist revolution. But we know definitely that the 'defenders of the fatherland' in the imperialist war (read to-day *Labour Ministerialists—R.P.D.*) REPRESENT only a minority. And it is our duty, therefore, if we wish to remain Socialists, to go DOWN LOWER and DEEPER, to the real masses; this is the meaning and the whole content of the struggle against opportunism." (Lenin: *Imperialism and the Split in the Socialist Movement.*)

NEW DEVELOPMENTS AND NEW TASKS IN THE U.S.A.

By EARL BROWDER.

I. The Economic Situation.

THE third year of the depression following the lowest point of the economic crisis reached in 1932 completely bears out the characterisation of the depression as a "depression of a special kind which does not lead to a new boom and flourishing industry, but which, on the other hand, does not force it back to the lowest point of decline."

The short-lived spurt upward of industrial production in the first months of Roosevelt's administration (April-July, 1933) was quickly cancelled by the declines in the last months of the year, while 1934, beginning also with a rise in production, is also ending on the downgrade which more than wipes out all gains in the first part. The zig-zag line representing the high and low points of the depression is indicated in the following figures:—

1929 average	...	100	
July, 1932	...	50	
November, 1932	...	58	
March, 1933	...	51	(Based on Federal
July, 1933	...	82	Reserve Bank
December, 1933	...	60	index.)
July, 1934	...	72	
October, 1934	...	60	
November figures will, probably, bring the index			

down below the November of 1932, the date on which Roosevelt was elected president two years ago. It would be hard to find signs of recovery in these figures.

The above quoted figures show not only the present difficulties hindering the going out of the economic crisis on the basis of the mobilisation of the inner forces of capitalism, but on the whole they reflect results of the economic policies of the N.R.A. and New Deal. These policies have not succeeded to keep industrial production above the level already reached under Hoover. It is true that Roosevelt's 40 per cent. inflation of the dollar created a four-month inflation "boom," but this ended at the same moment that the N.R.A. with its system of industrial codes was established, and almost all those gains from inflation are again wiped out.

A sober estimate from the point of view of finance capital, from the Business Bulletin of the Cleveland Trust Company (November 15th), is the following: "All the advance of the earlier months of this year has been cancelled, and most of the advance of last year."

The financial journal, *Annalist* (October 19th, 1934), speaking of the September figures, declared editorially:

"This is the lowest level reached by this index since

April, 1933. Only in the worst months . . . from April, 1932, to April, 1933, has this index stood at a lower level." . . .

And concludes :

"We are entering the sixth year of depression with business activity almost at its extreme depth."

EMPLOYMENT, WAGES AND EARNINGS have all declined for the working class as a whole during Roosevelt's régime. Official statistics on employment shown an increase, but this is accomplished by spreading part-time work (which is no increase in employment for the working class) and by listing as employed the workers forced to render labour services of a non-productive character in return for unemployment relief. Official statistics show an increase in wage scales, but this is in terms of the dollar, which has itself been depreciated 40 per cent., so that real wages have actually declined. Weekly earnings of workers have declined even more than real wages, due to the shortening of working time through the spread-the-work system. Even the organ of finance, *Annalist*, is forced to admit this (October 26th) when it says :—

"Factory employment, seasonally adjusted, was slightly lower than last December, though factory payrolls were slightly higher. If, however, allowance is made for higher living costs, the real wages of factory workers were no higher than last December."

Such conservative sources as Hopkins, national relief directory, and William Green, president of the A.F. of L., have publicly admitted that this winter will bring the largest relief lists ever before seen in America. More than 20 million people will be directly dependent upon relief, while an additional 20 million will be supported by relatives, friends and their own last accumulations. A total of 40 million, or 30 per cent. of the population, will be without normal current income.

II. Significance of the National Election Results.

Results of the national congressional elections on November 6th, which greatly strengthened Roosevelt's control of Congress, were generally interpreted (both in the U.S. and abroad) as showing a big wave of mass sentiment in support of Roosevelt and the New Deal. This interpretation will not, however, stand up under analysis.

Total votes cast declined under the figure of 1932 by over 10 millions. This mass abstention from the polls was greater than in normal times, indicating mass dissatisfaction with the programmes of the major parties.

This mass abstentionism was even greater among the followers of the Democratic Party than among those of the Republican Party. While the Republican vote declined by 3 millions, the Democratic vote declined 7 millions.

Despite their greater loss of votes, the Democrats increased their strength in Congress. This is because,

wherever it appeared that the Republicans had a chance of election, there usually the abstentionism was overcome. The voters turned out TO DEFEAT THE REPUBLICANS. That is, large masses were supporting Roosevelt on the theory of "the lesser evil" in spite of their discontent, disillusionment and even a growing though vague mass radicalisation.

This mood among the masses was even more sharply and clearly expressed whenever it had the opportunity to rally around candidates, fashions or new party formations which appeared before the masses as being "to the left" of Roosevelt, and which yet did not, in the estimation of the masses, represent a revolutionary departure from the present system. Wherever such "Left" alternatives to Roosevelt were offered they gained unprecedented mass support. We need mention only four outstanding examples among a great number of lesser ones : (1) Upton Sinclair, with his EPIC programme, running on the Democratic ticket, with his promise to "end poverty" without disturbing capitalism, received 800,000 votes out of a total of 2 millions, and was defeated only by the intervention of the Roosevelt administration against the California Democrats in favour of the Republican candidate. (2) Huey Long retained control of the Louisiana Democratic Party, against the Roosevelt administration, on a programme of a two-year moratorium on debts, taxation of the circulation of the capitalist daily newspapers, struggle against the bankers, etc., and legalised for the next two years his one-man dictatorship of the State. (3) The La Follette brothers in Wisconsin, sons of the late leader of the third-party movement of 1924, split away from the Republican Party, established an entirely new Party (called "Progressive"), and carried all important State and congressional posts in the elections. (4) Floyd Olsen, heading the Farmer-Labour Party of Minnesota, carried the State with an increased majority on a vague but radical-sounding platform calling for "the co-operative commonwealth."

In these events we have the characteristic feature of the November elections. Without being prepared as yet to come out in support of a revolutionary challenge to the capitalist system, the masses were seeking something new, something more radical, something which promised more definitely relief from their miseries. They rejected decisively all appeals of the Republican Party to return to the era of Hoover, appeals based upon the traditions of the two-party system in America that discontented masses always vote out the party in power and put its established rival in office again. Where they had no other alternative they apathetically, without enthusiasm, supported Roosevelt as the "lesser evil." Where a "progressive" faction or party emerged, it at once gained enthusiastic mass support.

We must conclude from the elections that among the broad masses strong currents to the left have begun. These currents have already paralysed the normal operation of the old two-party system, begin to present manifestations of its break-up, of mass desertion of the old capitalist parties, and which indicate the probability that in 1936, with the continued absence of economic recovery, with continued prolonged depression, there will emerge a mass party in opposition and to the left of Roosevelt.

III. Socialist and Communist Parties in the Elections.

The Socialist Party vote in the elections was, on the whole, stagnant. In a few localities it succeeded in becoming the "progressive" opposition, and elected state legislators in Pennsylvania and Connecticut. Its national vote will probably fall below that of 1932. (Information on the smaller party votes is not yet completely available.) This stagnant condition was primarily due to its inner condition, which was one of partial paralysis resulting from a deepening division which has split the party into two main warring camps—one, which wants to take the Party to the right and merge in the Progressive movement, and the other, which moves to the left under the general influence of the Communist united front activities, and a part of which operates under the slogan of united front with the Communist Party.

The Communist Party vote increased over 1932 by 80 per cent. to 100 per cent., the total will be about 225,000. (These figures do not take into account exceptionally large votes for individual candidates, like the 80,000 votes for Anita Whitney in California, but only that cast for the whole or major portion of the Party ticket.) In New York City the vote increased from 26,000 to 45,000; in Ohio, from 8,000 to 14,000; in California from 8,000 to 24,000. In Arizona, the C.P. came second, the comparative vote being: Democratic—45,000; Communist—11,300; Republican—2,500.

In a number of small communities in the mining area of Illinois, the Communists and Socialist workers put up Workers' Tickets on a united front basis; in Taylor Springs, such a ticket was elected to office, including most of the county posts. In Trumbull County, Ohio, a united front between the local Socialist and Communist Parties which had formed in a series of struggles, was carried over into the elections, in a joint appeal to the workers to vote for the Socialist (local) ticket, and for the Communist state ticket (this was facilitated by the fact that the C.P. was not on the local ballot, while the S.P. was absent from the State ballot.)

In general neither the Socialist or Communist Parties succeeded in engaging in its support the masses who were tending to break away from the

two traditional capitalist parties. In the case of the S.P. this is to be attributed primarily to its inner contradictions, to its inability to make up its mind decisively in what direction it wishes to go. In the case of the Communist Party, the subjective weaknesses of insufficient contact with these masses, remnants of sectarian approach, is supplemented by the still low degree of consciousness among the leftward moving masses, the main part of which is by no means prepared as yet to go boldly upon the path for the revolutionary solution of the crisis, which was given major emphasis by the C.P. during the election campaign.

IV. The Strike Movement and the Role of the C.P.

The major manifestation of radicalisation of the working class was in 1934 the strike movement, which has already involved well over two million workers this year, has taken on a political character in the growth of general strike sentiment and actions, and represents the strongest revolutionary upsurge seen in America since the first post-war period.

These strike actions in their great majority, were carried through under the banner of the American Federation of Labour. This already is a great change from 1931-32, when most strike struggles were initiated and led directly by the independent revolutionary unions; and even from 1933, when the strike movement was initiated by the red unions which led the first successful strikes in the crisis period, in auto, mining, textile, steel, and other industries, in which the A.F. of L. only came into the strike movement later, when its membership surged out of its control under the influence of the successful strikes led by the red unions. In 1934, the red unions definitely passed into the background in the basic industries, and to some extent also in light industry. The main mass of workers had definitely chosen to try to organise and fight through the A.F. of L. organisations, even though that meant also struggle against the official top leadership.

The chief feature of the strike wave was the sudden crystallisation of a movement for general strike and solidarity strike actions. The first important movement of this sort came in Toledo, Ohio, in May, when a small strike in an auto-equipment factory, on the verge of defeat, was suddenly brought to life again by the surging on to the picket line of ten thousand sympathetic workers, mostly unemployed, who had responded to a call by the Unemployment Councils led by the Communists. The mass picket line, continuing for some days, was attacked by State troops, one worker killed, many wounded, hundreds gassed and arrested. The response to this attack was a vote in every union in the city on the question of an immediate general strike; out of 91 unions, 83 voted for the strike. Before the hour set

for the general strike the employers and union leaders hastily patched up a settlement of the strike, granting the striking workers some of their demands and giving guarantees against victimisation. Within a week or two of the Toledo events a similar solidarity movement took place in Minneapolis, Minnesota, in support of the teamsters' strike, where also lives were lost, masses came on to the streets and took possession of them, and where also the general strike was only prevented by a hastily conceived settlement which could be paraded before the workers as a victory. Again within a few weeks a strike of street-car workers in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, which seemed about to be broken, was suddenly made 100 per cent. effective by the surging on to the streets of 40,000 workers who prevented even a single street car from moving. Again the use of violence against the workers, and the killing of a picketer, so roused the masses that a general strike vote swept through the unions; within 12 hours the threat of a general strike had secured the granting of most of the demands of the original strike and a quick settlement with the union. During all this period of May, and on into June, the Pacific Coast marine workers (longshoremen, sailors and harbour workers) had been carrying on their general industrial strike over a 2,000 mile stretch of coastline. Early in July, the employers decided to smash the strike by violence, attacking the pickets on the streets of San Francisco and killing two of them, one a member of our Party. Again the masses responded; at the funeral, 100,000 workers took possession of the main streets of the city. A general strike vote swept through the unions. The Central Labour Union leadership, which had been standing firmly against the general strike, suddenly changed front when they saw the movement going over their heads, came out for the general strike and took the leadership of it, and then proceeded in four days to betray the strike, hoping in crushing the general strike to smash at the same time the marine strike which was under revolutionary leadership. For four days, however, the city of San Francisco was in the hands of the workers, until the strike committee itself had step by step surrendered the strategic positions and then called off the strike. Only the betrayal of the San Francisco general strike stopped the development of general strikes in Portland, Oregon and Seattle, Washington.

This wave of local general strike movements and solidarity mass actions is unprecedented in modern American labour history. I will not go into an analysis of these strikes, their strength and weakness, the rôle of the C.P. in them, etc. This has been done at some length in a special resolution of our central committee which has been discussed and approved in the Comintern. What is important here to establish, is the characteristic of the passing

over of even small economic struggles into great political class battles; of the engaging of entire communities in solidarity actions; of the winning of factory strikes by means of the solidarity actions of the unemployed; of the growth of class-consciousness and the feeling of class-power among the workers, the breaking down of fears and hesitations, the prompt mass responses to go on the streets as the answer to police and military violence.

Within six weeks after the ending of the San Francisco strike, came the great general strike of the textile workers, involving about 400,000 workers. This again was the expression of a great upsurge from below; the strike was forced by the membership against the wish of their leaders; when the strike call was issued, it was met with response far beyond the limits of the organised textile workers, tens of thousands of unorganised workers streaming into the union during the period of strike; entirely new forms of mass action were spontaneously developed from below, outstanding of which were the so-called "flying squadrons," consisting of 50 to 100 motor cars full of strikers going from town to town to call out on strike the mills still working, and which met with tremendous successes. Troops were called out in eleven States against the textile strike; the Governor of Rhode Island called upon the Legislature to declare a "state of insurrection" and ask Roosevelt to send Federal troops; the State of Georgia erected concentration camps on the style of Nazi Germany, herding several thousand textile pickets into the camps. Some 18 or 20 workers were killed, hundreds wounded, tens of thousands gassed and arrested. In spite of this extraordinary terror, the strike was growing stronger every day, extending to new mills, when suddenly it was called off by the leaders on the basis of a request from a Board appointed by Roosevelt, with loud claims of victory but without a single demand conceded by the employers.

It is undoubtedly necessary to characterise this wave of struggle as a revolutionary upsurge of the American working class. This upsurge defeated the efforts of the A.F. of L. bureaucrats and the government to bring the trade unions under governmental control and transform them into semi-official agencies of the N.R.A. It defeated the efforts of the leaders to drive the Communists out of the unions, and opened up a broad field for revolutionary work where before it had been impossible to penetrate. It gave the masses vivid and clear lessons in the practical benefits of class struggle, when the only considerable gains conceded to any group of workers in this period were those given to the longshoremen who had followed Communist leadership throughout their struggle and afterward, and who continued the fight by always new forms even after their strike was ended. As a result of these battles, there is a new

relation of forces, a new social atmosphere, a new spirit among the masses, a new confidence and readiness to fight.

In characterising the strike wave of 1934 it can be said that its most significant features are: first, that for the first time since 1919 have we witnessed such a great wave of struggle, developing on a continually rising level, directed against the effects of the Roosevelt New Deal policies; second, the masses have been aroused to an unparalleled fighting spirit and desire for unity in action, as expressed in the development of solidarity actions and movements for local general strikes, and the participation of the unorganised workers, the unemployed, and even the poor farmers; third, the mass urge of the unorganised workers for organisation, and struggle against the company unions, which breaks through all the barriers which the trade union bureaucracy of the A.F. of L. attempt to put up. The struggles for the most elementary economic demands develop into struggles of a highly political character. Every effort of the reformist leaders to prevent or sidetrack these struggles did not succeed, and they were forced to go along with the strike movement in order to avoid being swept aside and be in a better position to betray the struggle through arbitration. In this they were ably assisted by the Trotskyites (Minneapolis), the Musteites (Toledo), and the Socialist leadership (textile).

This strike movement took place mainly through the channels of the reformist unions, and the Communists in the main were unable to exercise a decisive influence in the leadership of the workers because we were not entrenched as yet inside the A.F. of L. unions where the masses were entering for the purpose of carrying on struggles for their daily interests. Nevertheless, the Communists played a growing and effective rôle, in some instances relatively weak as in Minneapolis (but even here of decisive importance at certain moments), in other cases of great influence though unorganised, as in the textile strike, and were able to issue timely slogans which were seized upon by the masses and translated into action (mass picketing, general strikes, solidarity actions). Where the Communists were firmly established inside the A.F. of L. unions and had strong positions as in the Pacific Coast Longshoremen's strike, we played a leading and decisive rôle from first to last, and were instrumental in forcing the calling of the San Francisco General Strike.

What is of supreme importance is this, that out of the strike wave the A.F. of L. bureaucracy emerged weaker, the S.P. emerged weaker, the Muste group and the renegades emerged weaker—but the Communist Party emerged stronger in every instance without exception.

V. The Change in Trade Union Policy.

Serious changes in our current trade union policy were found to be necessary, in order to achieve these positive results in our work. In all the basic industries it was necessary to shift the main emphasis to work inside the A.F. of L. This we proceeded to do, at first with some hesitation, but with our growing satisfactory experience with increasing boldness. Among the longshoremen we threw all forces into the A.F. of L. union, with excellent results, not only establishing leadership of the most important strike, but winning victories for the workers, and maintaining our organisational positions after the strike; the big majority of all offices in the union in San Francisco were filled, in the September elections, by Communists and sympathisers. In the textile industry we joined the small and scattered locals of the National Textile Workers' Union into the United Textile Workers' Union of the A.F. of L., thereby multiplying our organisational base by four or five times, and becoming an influential minority in the great strike movement of 400,000. In the steel industry we withdrew our red union, the Steel and Metal Workers' Industrial Union, and confined it to the field of light metal and machinery, sending all our steel workers into the A.F. of L. union, the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin workers, with the result that in a few weeks we have begun to crystallise a great national rank and file movement to prepare for strike action in the spring, a movement which already has serious organisational strongholds in the union, basic American cadres of leaders, and excellent prospects for a great mass movement. In the auto industry we have dissolved the red Auto Workers' Union, sending the members into the A.F. of L. federal local unions, and already have under way a serious movement for the uniting of the 80 to 90 locals in the industry into an industrial union within the A.F. of L., a movement which forced the recent national convention of the A.F. of L. to grant industrial union form of organisation to the auto industry, as well as to others. Even in light industry we had circumstances where it was necessary to send our forces into the A.F. of L., as in the case of the New York dressmakers, and here again with excellent results of considerably strengthening our influence over large masses of workers.

The resolution before us to-day proposes to confirm these changes in our trade union line, and to set the Party even more firmly and energetically upon this path.

At the same time we do not propose a general and immediate abandonment of all independent revolutionary trade unions. While generally, in all industries, putting forward the line of trade union unity, we recognise that in some cases the cause of

unification can be best advanced by strengthening the red unions, or the independent unions not directly under our leadership. There are still some seven national unions in the T.U.U.L., as well as a whole series of local unions, with a membership of about 75,000, for whom the perspective for the immediate future is continued independent existence; there are three or four unaffiliated national independent unions of which the same must be said. That these unions have big possibilities of growth is demonstrated, for example, by the Metal Workers' Union, about which news has just come that it has held a unity conference with 12 smaller independent unions, of about 10,000 members, which decided to organise a joint council for common action. The independent United Shoe Workers' Union (in which we merged our red shoe union a year ago) is much larger than the A.F. of L. union, and must talk unity with it in much different terms than in other places where we are relatively weak.

At our 8th Party Convention we put forward the perspective of the organisation of an Independent Federation of Labour, which would unite the red trade unions with the then growing independent unions, and with the expected movements of splitting away from the A.F. of L. of those newly-organised workers who rejected the plans of the A.F. of L. to split them up into craft unions. This was a realistic perspective, a possible development, at that time; but now we must say that this project has receded into the background for the next period, when we are sending a number of our unions into the A.F. of L., when the independent unions are not growing as they did last year, and when the split movements from the A.F. of L. have halted by the concessions granted at the last convention for industrial unions. It is clear that a new situation has arisen, in which immediate organisational steps for the Independent Federation of Labour would not serve to strengthen the movement. Whether this issue will again come to the foreground will depend upon future developments.

VI. Finding New Organisational Forms.

In our latest resolution the concepts of "minority movement" and "opposition," as the organisational forms for our work in the A.F. of L., are sharply rejected, as tending to limit the movement to Communists and their close sympathisers; the task is set to find such forms which will lead to the Communists becoming the decisive trade union force, winning elective positions, becoming the responsible leaders of whole trade unions, and bringing the decisive masses behind them in their support. This position is fully confirmed by our experience in recent months.

Our most successful work has, in every case, found organisational forms which arise out of the

established life and work of the individual union, in most instances having as its main centre one of the union organs, either a local union in which we gain a majority, or a district council or other body of elected delegates.

We have rejected the proposal to attempt to transform into a general "opposition" centre the A.F. of L. rank and file committee for unemployment insurance. This body has a specialised rôle to perform, which would only be hindered and perhaps destroyed by trying to make it an all-embracing "minority movement." Its influence extends far beyond its active participants, as shown by the fact that it has won to the support of the Workers' Unemployment Insurance Bill more than 2,400 local unions and 7 national unions, with a very large part of the members of the A.F. of L. It furnishes a broad recruiting ground for the gathering of new forces into the revolutionary movements in the different industries and unions, which is a much more valuable function than to try itself to become the form for the revolutionary movement in the unions.

An increasingly important rôle will now be played by revolutionary delegates in trade union conventions and conferences and councils. Even in the A.F. of L. National Convention, which is very tightly controlled by the top bureaucracy, it is possible to develop effective "revolutionary parliamentarism." These possibilities we are now beginning to use; thus, while in 1932 there was not a single revolutionary delegate to the A.F. of L. Convention and in 1933 there was only one, in 1934 we had 15 delegates standing on our revolutionary programme and fighting for its adoption in the convention, putting forward our various measures before the whole working class through the participation in the Convention.

VII. Some United Front Successes.

An outstanding feature of our united front efforts was the Second U.S. Congress Against War and Fascism, held in Chicago at the end of September. At this Congress were 3,332 delegates, from organisations with a total membership of 1,600,000. That represents an extension of the influence of our movement over about a million organised persons MORE than we have ever before had gathered around us. The quality of this representation was higher than ever before; it came after a year of the most intense attacks against the American League Against War and Fascism by the A.F. of L. and the S.P., who denounced the League and its Congress as a "Communist innocents' club." In spite of these attacks the Congress represented considerable expansion in both the A.F. of L. and the S.P. For example, among the 350 trade union delegates were an important delegation of A.F. of L. union leaders,

all workers from the mills but influential officials of the union, representing a district which a few weeks later in its convention voted to confirm its affiliation to the League. Further, there were 49 S.P. members present, headed by Mrs. Victor Berger, widow of the former Socialist Congressman, who formed themselves into a national committee to fight for the united front of the S.P. with the C.P.; since the Congress this Committee had gained notable victories. For instance, the Milwaukee S.P. organisation which had threatened to expel Mrs. Victor Berger for attending the Congress, and which actually did expel a member, Compere, has in the past days been forced to reverse itself and officially join the League, after participating in a united street demonstration and march, headed by the expelled Compere, together with the secretaries of the local S.P. and C.P., and addressed by Mrs. Berger among others.

The League Against War and Fascism also made significant advances among women's organisations in connection with the campaign to send a delegation to the Paris Anti-War Congress of Women. Having set itself the task of getting 15 delegates to Paris, it surprised everyone by obtaining twice that number in a short campaign of 60 days, including that most difficult of all tasks, the raising of sufficient money to cover the heavy expenses of such a long trip for a big delegation.

An autonomous Youth Section of the League held a separate Youth Congress in connection with the main gathering in Chicago, with over 700 delegates. In this youth section is included all organisations of youth in the U.S. who in any way consider themselves "to the left" of Roosevelt.

An unique achievement of the youth united front movement was the building of an anti-fascist bloc inside the American Youth Congress, which was called together by a certain young woman named Viola Ilma with the backing of Mrs. Roosevelt, Anne Morgan, a half-dozen State Governors, members of the Roosevelt Cabinet, etc., with the purpose of adopting a programme for American youth which was distinctly fascist in its tendencies. To this Congress came delegates of all varieties of youth organisations, including Y.M.C.A., Y.W.C.A., Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, church youth organisations, trade unions, student organisations, the socialist youth, the Y.C.L., etc., representing a membership of 1,700,000. The anti-fascist bloc in this Congress took control of it at its opening, adopted an anti-fascist programme which included the immediate demands of the working youth, consolidated the overwhelming majority of the delegates behind this programme, set up a continuation committee to which almost all the participating organisations continued to adhere after the Congress, conducted a series of conferences and meetings over the whole country,

captured away from Ilma various State conferences which she tried to organise afterwards, and is now gathering another Youth Congress in Washington in January to present the youth demands to Congress and to President Roosevelt.

Our united front approaches to the Socialist Party have been involved in the divisions within that Party which came into the open in the fight for and against the Detroit Convention declaration of principles. Two distinct camps have crystallised, which already have many of the characteristics of two separate parties (separate national committees, headquarters, funds, etc.) and which conduct negotiations with one another like two parties. The so-called left, headed by Norman Thomas, is very heterogeneous, and really is a bloc of several distinct groups. The right wing is very militant, while the "Left" with Thomas, the centrist, at its head, is very conciliatory although it controls the Party. In the Detroit Convention the Right wing wrote the trade union resolution which was adopted with the vote of the "Left" majority. The Right wing still dictates or decisively influences many of the current decisions of policy of the National Committee of which Thomas nominally has a big majority. Thus on the issue of the united front with the C.P. Thomas swings back and forth with the wind of the moment, following no consistent line. Shortly after Thomas had made a public speech hailing the French united front, and expressing the belief that it could be duplicated in the U.S.A., he participated in the action to reject the united front by the S.P. National Committee. This action was itself a classical study in hesitation and equivocation. On a Saturday the Committee debated the question, coming to a decision *favourable* to opening negotiations with the C.P. by a vote of 7 to 4. A few hours after the meeting closed for the day a capitalist newspaper appeared on the streets with big headlines announcing, "S.P. decides to join the Reds." Some of those who had voted for the united front went into a panic at the sight of this capitalist newspaper publicity on their action and, without a full or formal meeting of their committee, decided to reverse their vote, hastily wrote a statement to this effect and gave it to the newspapers, which came out with the news of the UNFAVOURABLE vote two hours after they had announced the FAVOURABLE vote. The conflict was smoothed over later by a compromise decision, that the question of united front was only POSTPONED until December to obtain the advice of the Second International, to see the further development in France, and to have the results of the 7th Congress of the C.I. (at that time expected in September); and, further, to send a delegation of "observers" to the Chicago Anti-War Congress to report back with recommendations as to whether the S.P. should affiliate or not.

All the conciliation and waverings of Thomas, however, and all his concessions to the Right wing, have not served to bridge over the split but seem, on the contrary, only to drive it deeper, to make the struggle develop more sharply. This is because in the lower organisations the controversy is raging, with the adherents of the united front becoming ever stronger, more organised, more clear and effective in their demands. In this the "committee for the united front," formed at the Chicago Congress, has been a decisive influence. The Revolutionary Policy Committee, while containing many energetic advocates of the united front, has been singularly passive and irresolute as an organised group. It is too heterogeneous in composition to become a forceful leading centre in the inner-Party struggle.

Present indications are that the National Committee of the S.P. will try to obtain a temporary settlement of the conflicts on the united front by a decision to enter into the American League Against War and Fascism, with a series of conditions, such as the addition of a list of leading S.P. members to its leading committees, certain limitations upon criticism by the C.P. against the S.P. leaders and policies, etc. Our policy is to facilitate, so far as possible without principle concessions, the entry of the S.P. into the League; but at the same time to use this to raise even more sharply than before the question of direct negotiations between the two parties for a general united front on all the most burning questions of the class struggle, including the fight for the Workers' Unemployment Insurance Bill, the Negro Rights Bill, Farmers' Relief, and the current strike movements.

VIII. The Question of a Labour Party.

The political changes taking place among the American masses already require that the Communist Party shall again review the question of the possible formation of a Labour Party, and its attitude toward such a party if it should crystallise on a mass scale. The correct basic approach to this question was formulated at the Sixth World Congress in 1928, which said:

"On the question of organising a Labour Party, the Congress resolves: that the Party concentrates on the work in the trade unions, on organising the unorganised, etc., and in this way lay the basis for the practical realisation of the slogan of a broad Labour Party, organised from below."

Since 1929 until now this correct orientation has necessitated unqualified opposition by the Communist Party to the current proposals to organise a Labour Party which, in this period, could only have been an appendage of the existing bourgeois parties.

Developments in 1934, however, begin to place this question in a new setting, in a new relation of forces. The decisive new features are, in brief: mass disillusionment with the New Deal and Roosevelt

administration, shown by the development of strike wave AGAINST the codes and AGAINST the Government conciliation and arbitration boards; also shown negatively in the fall of Democratic Party vote from 22 millions in 1932 to 15 millions in 1934: the bankruptcy of the Republican Party policy, which attempted to utilise this disillusionment and turn it into openly reactionary channels, according to the traditional two-party system, but without success: The mass support given in the election to groupings and leaders within the old parties and to new and minor parties standing (in the eyes of the masses) to the left of Roosevelt (Sinclair in California; La Follette and the new Progressive Party which captured the state of Wisconsin; Olson and the Farmer-Labour Party who won Minnesota with an unexpectedly large vote; Huey Long faction of Democratic Party in Louisiana, with its two-year moratorium on debts, etc.; and a number of less significant examples all over the country). Renewed mass interest in the trade unions in all forms of proposals that the workers' organisations engage directly in political struggle against the capitalists and their parties, whether through a Labour Party, through workers' tickets or in other forms. It is clear that mass disintegration of the traditional party system has begun; masses are beginning to break away from the Democratic and Republican Parties. There is all probability that the discontented, disillusioned masses will already be moving during the next two years sufficiently to give birth to a new mass party, to the left of and in opposition to the existing major political alignments.

As to the character of such a new mass party, the major possible variants are the following: (a) A "People's" or "Progressive" Party, based on the La Follette, Sinclair, Olsen, Long movements and typified by these leaders and their programme; (b) A "Farmer-Labour" or "Labour" Party, with the same character, differing only in name and extent of demagogy; (c) A Labour Party with a predominantly trade union base, with a programme of immediate demands only (possibly with vague demagogy about a "co-operative commonwealth" à la Olsen), dominated by a section of the trade union bureaucracy assisted by the Socialist Party and excluding the Communists; (d) A Labour Party built up from below on a trade union basis but in conflict with the bureaucracy, with a programme of demands closely associated with mass struggles, strikes, etc., with a decisive rôle in the leadership played by militant elements, including the Communists.

The major task of the Communist Party is to build and strengthen its own direct influence and membership on the basis of the immediate issues of the class struggle connected with its revolutionary

programme for a way out of the crisis. It cannot expect, however, that it will be able to bring directly under its own banner, and immediately, the million masses who will be breaking away from the old parties. At the same time, it cannot remain indifferent or passive towards the development of these millions, nor the organised form which their political activities will take. It must energetically intervene in this process, influence the development towards assuming the form of a real Labour Party based upon the working masses, their struggles and needs, ally itself with all elements willing to work loyally towards a similar aim, and declare its readiness to enter such a mass Labour Party when the necessary preconditions have been created. At the same time it must conduct a systematic struggle against all attempts to capture this mass movement within the confines of a "People's" or "Progressive" Party, or within a Party of the same character masquerading as a "Labour" Party. This will at the same time be the most effective basis for struggle against a Labour Party bureaucratically controlled from above by Right wing reformists with the exclusion of the Communists and rank and file militants.

In this situation the simple slogan, "For a Labour Party," is not an effective banner under which to rally the class forces of the workers. This will be also the main slogan of a section of the reformist bureaucrats, who will transform its contents into that of a mild liberal opposition; its undifferentiated use by the Communists would therefore play into their hands. Every effort must be made, therefore, to bring a clear differentiation into two camps of those who are trying to turn the mass movement into two different channels, on the one hand of mild liberal opposition masking class collaboration and a subordination of the workers' demands to the interests of capital, of profits and private property, and on the other hand of an essentially revolutionary mass struggle for immediate demands which boldly goes beyond the limits of the interests of capital. In this struggle for differentiation, care must be taken to avoid all sectarian narrowness, which would only play into the hands of the reformists; that means, first of all, that the basis of unity of the working class camp must be the immediate demands with the broadest mass appeal. At the same time

the Communist Party energetically conducts its own independent political mass work for the revolutionary way out of the crisis.

All premature organisational moves should be carefully avoided. The Communist Party should not itself and alone initiate the formation of a new Party. In the various States this problem will present itself with all variations of the possible relation of forces. It will be necessary to study carefully the situation in each State, and the tempo of development, adjusting our practical attitude and tactics in accordance with these differences. There is much greater possibility of the final crystallisation of a mass Labour Party in certain States, in the immediate future, than upon a national scale where the contradictions and complications are more intense.

It is necessary to systematically strengthen all mass connections of the Party, and the Party itself, politically and organisationally, preparing to face and to solve without undue hesitation the various practical phases of this question that will present themselves in life, and which will be especially subtle and intricate in the earlier stages of development. The basic means to this end is the bold and energetic expansion of our united front work in all fields, but before all in the trade unions, especially in the A.F. of L.

Every phase of the struggle for the political leadership of the masses now breaking away from the Democratic and Republican Parties is dependent upon the constant growth and strengthening of the Communist Party as an independent revolutionary force, with its full programme made familiar to ever broader masses. It depends upon, and must be always subordinated to, the daily mass struggles of the workers, before all of strikes and other economic struggles, the struggles of the unemployed, of the farmers, the movement for Unemployment Insurance, etc. Under the conditions of the crisis, in its present phase of protracted depression, with sharpening and broadening mass struggles, of growing difficulties of the bourgeoisie, the only force capable of leading a mass struggle to really win the immediate demands of the toiling masses of the United States, is the revolutionary vanguard of the working class under the leadership of the Communist Party.

REMINISCENCES OF LENIN

By W. GALLACHER.

IN 1920 I got appointed by the comrades in Glasgow, associated with the Clyde workers' Committee (Shop Stewards Movement) to attend the 2nd Congress of the Communist International. We were at that time "Left" sectarian and refused to participate in the discussions taking place between the B.S.P. and the S.L.P. on the questions of the formation of a Communist Party in Britain.

We had the project in view of starting a "pure" Communist Party in Scotland, a party that would not under any circumstances touch either the Labour Party or parliamentary activity.

As I hadn't a passport and as there was little likelihood of getting one I set out for Newcastle, where after a week's effort I succeeded with the assistance of a Norwegian comrade, who was a fireman, in getting safely stowed away on a ship for Bergen. From Bergen I travelled up to Vords, from Vords to Murmansk and from there to Leningrad. When I arrived at Leningrad, the Congress which had opened there was in session in Moscow to where it had been transferred after the opening.

In Smolny I was made comfortable in a room while some of the comrades tried to find an interpreter. While I was writing one of them came in and handed me "Left-Wing Communism, an Infantile Disorder," which had just been printed in English. I started reading it quite casually, but when I came to the section dealing with Britain and saw what it had to say about me, I sat up with a jolt. I had come away from Glasgow with the notion that our case against the Labour Party and against participation in parliament was so sound, so unassailable, that all I would have to do would be to put a few well-rehearsed arguments and the B.S.P. and S.L.P. would be wiped off the mat. It was a real shock to find that already, before I had been anywhere near the Congress, all the fancy building I had been doing was knocked into complete ruin. But at that time all the questions raised by Lenin were far from being clear to me as was evident later in my speeches at the Congress.

I got to Moscow on a Saturday at mid-day, was taken to a hotel just in time to be taken to a "subotnik." I got a job till eight at night stacking pig-iron in a foundry. On Sunday I was persuaded to play a football match and got myself kicked all over the field for an hour and a half. At night I met and had a very interesting talk with a young French comrade named Lefevre, who had been lost along with another companion and three fishermen between Murmansk and Vords.

On Monday, with other delegates, I made my way

to the Kremlin and to my first acquaintance with an International Congress. In the main hall groups of delegates were standing chatting and arguing.

We passed through into the side room where delegates sat drinking tea, writing reports or preparing speeches. I was introduced to Radek, to Bucharin, to delegates from this and that country and then I got into a group and someone said: "This is Comrade Lenin," just like that. I held out my hand and said, "Hello;" I was stuck for anything else to say.

He said, with a smile, as he was told that I was Comrade Gallacher from Glasgow: "We are very pleased to have you at our Congress." I said something about being glad to be there and then we went on talking about other things. I kept saying to myself: "Christ, there's war everywhere, there are internal problems and external problems that would almost seem insurmountable. Yet here is a comrade supremely confident that the Bolsheviks can carry through to victory." Lenin joked and laughed with the comrades and occasionally when I said something he would look at me in a quaint way. I later discovered that this was in consequence of my English. He had difficulty in understanding it.

I immediately felt that I was talking, not to some "far-away great" man hedged around with an impossible barrier of airs, but to Lenin, the great Party comrade who had a warm smile and cheery word for every proletarian fighter.

When I got going in the discussions on the political resolution and the trade union resolution, I got a very rough handling. Some of my best arguments were simply riddled. Radek and others of them when I got up to speak, never missed a chance of "cutting in." Naturally I would snap back at them and things sometimes got very hot. As I felt the ground slipping away from beneath my feet, I got very bad tempered. But Lenin, while carrying on an irreconcilable criticism "in principle" of my line, would always take the opportunity of saying something helpful, something that took away a lot of the soreness from the difficult position my wrong ideas had rushed me into.

In the Political Commission the same thing was going on as in the open sessions. Every time I got up to speak I would say things in such an offensive way that interruptions would start and then two or three of us would be at it hammer and tongs. On several occasions at these sittings Lenin passed me short pencilled notes explaining a point or showing me where I was wrong.

When the sitting would finish I'd tear up my own notes and I tore up Lenin's along with them. It

seems incredible now that I could do such a thing, but I never thought of it at the time. Towards the end of the Political Commission, when I had been very aggressive about the B.S.P. and S.L.P., he passed me across a note which in a very short caustic way gave an estimation of these groups. At night I mentioned in confidence to one or two comrades that Lenin had given me a note about the B.S.P. and S.L.P. which if I had shown them would have made them blink. "Where is it?" one of them asked. "Oh, I tore it up," I casually replied. "You what? You tore up a note in Lenin's handwriting?" He was aghast. "I tore up several," I said, "but they were personal and I didn't think he'd want me to keep them." This fellow, who turned out later to be a thorough renegade, got me to promise if I got another that I would give it to him, though it should have been obvious to me at the time that what he was interested in was the handwriting of a "great man," not in Lenin's politics.

Two days later, in the Political Commission, in the midst of a breeze and while I was speaking, someone made a reference to "Infantile Sickness." "Yes," I said, "I've read it, but I'm no infant. It's all right to treat me as one and slap me around when I'm not here but when I'm here you'll find I'm an old hand at the game." This latter phrase caught Lenin's attention and some time later, when Willie Paul visited Russia, Lenin repeated it to him with a quite creditable Scotch accent. When I sat down after this effort he passed me a note which read, "When I wrote my little book, I hadn't met you." I gave that note to the aforementioned renegade to my present great regret.

While insistent in carrying through his political line Lenin gave both in the open sessions and in the Political Commission every conceivable assistance to myself and other comrades in order to help us to political clarity. He showed all the time the utmost patience and consideration and this when he was carrying the main burden of responsibility for all the bitter internal and external struggles with which the revolution was faced.

Then when I went to visit him at home I had my greatest experience. I sat down before him and we talked of the building of a party and its rôle in leading the revolutionary struggle. I had never thought much about the Party before, but I began then to get a real understanding of what a Communist Party should be. He was dead against the project for a separate party in Scotland. I would have to work, join up in the newly-formed party in Britain. I made objections, I couldn't work with this one or the other one. "If you put the revolution first," he said, "you won't find any difficulty. For the revolution you will work with all sorts of people for a part of the way at any rate. But if you start off by shutting

yourself away from everyone, instead of getting in amongst them and fighting for the time of revolutionary advance, you won't get anywhere. Get into the Party and fight for the line of the Communist International and you'll have the strength of the Communist International behind you." In all our talk the "revolution" was the living, throbbing theme of all that was said. I never had an experience like it. I couldn't think of Lenin personally. I couldn't think of anything but the revolution and the necessity of advancing the revolution whatever the cost might be. This ever since to me seemed to be the outstanding quality of Lenin's great genius. He never thought of himself, he was the living embodiment of the revolutionary struggle and he carried with him wherever he went the inspiration of his own great conviction.

During the course of the Congress I had another very close friend, Artem, who was killed in an accident the following year. Artem, or Serjieff, as he was more commonly known, used to talk a lot with me of the experiences they had in the early days of the Party. He was only about 19 or 20 when Lenin broke with the Mensheviks. He was absolutely devoted to Lenin and the Party. In the course of one of our talks he said to me, "We have another great leader who is never heard of outside the Party, Comrade Stalin. Often when there is an exceptionally difficult problem before the Political Bureau, all eyes will turn to Stalin. In a few well-chosen sentences he will give his solution and it's always clear and decisive." That was the first time I'd ever heard the name of Stalin. When I returned to Glasgow and reported my impressions of the Congress it was the first time any of the Glasgow comrades heard his name. It was not till I was over again in 1923 that I had the opportunity of meeting Stalin and learning at first hand how correct the estimation of Serjieff was.

On several occasions I was in the company of Trotsky. I spoke with him at a great demonstration at the end of the 2nd Congress in the Bolshoi Theatre but, strangely enough, I have never at any time exchanged a word with Trotsky. Not one solitary word. When I got back to Glasgow I told the comrades, "When you talk with Lenin, you can't think about Lenin personally, you can only think about the revolution, but you can't come anywhere near Trotsky without immediately realising that this is Trotsky." Long before he became a counter-revolutionary he was the supreme petty-bourgeois intellectual, who saw the world mirrored in his own image.

It was arranged that John Reed and I should go to Baku to the Toilers of the East Congress there. Then a message came to the hotel, Lenin wanted to

see me. Off I went to the Kremlin. "When can you go home?" he asked me. "I'm going to Baku," I replied. He smiled and nodded his head in a negative way. "There's a big movement developing in Britain," he said. "Councils of Action have been set up to stop the attack that is being made against us. You ought to get back as quickly as possible. Do you agree?" "I agree," I answered. "When can you go then?" he asked. "To-morrow, if you like," I replied. He smiled broader than ever.

"Why not to-night?" he said. "You could catch the night train." "All right," I said, "to-night, I've got nothing to pack." "Good," he said, standing up and holding out his hand, "be very careful on the way back, and when you get to Britain we'll look to you as a loyal fighter for the revolution and the Communist International."

We shook hands very warmly, then I went on my way. That is the last memory I have of our great Comrade Lenin.

REMEMBRANCES OF LENIN

By THOS. BELL.

DURING the period of the revolutionary struggle for power (and the civil war), following the October days of 1917, communications between Soviet Russia and the outer capitalist world were almost completely broken. By the first weeks of 1921 communications were still very meagre. It was in this period that I had received instructions to go to Moscow as the first official representative of the C.P.G.B.

For an English worker to get a passport to leave the country at that time was extremely difficult. Having got the passport, as I did after some delay, I came up against another serious obstacle, that of visas to travel to another capitalist country. Judging from the difficulties I encountered there seemed to be an understanding or agreement among the Consulates as to certain applications from people going to the land of the Soviets. As a result I found it necessary to make arrangements to travel without papers, bag or baggage, which I did, and arrived in Moscow in the month of March, 1921, after a journey which took several weeks.

The apparatus of the Comintern in those days was confined to a small house in the Denishney, off the Arbat, with a modest staff. In the intervals between meetings the delegates' time was occupied in studying the events of the revolution, in international propaganda, and, of course, attending all manner of meetings of the Party and the Soviets.

It was at one of those Party meetings I first saw Lenin and heard him speak. The occasion was, I believe, a meeting of Party workers following the Tenth Party Congress held in the Sverdlov Hall in the Kremlin in the month of May, 1921, at which Lenin was expounding his views on taxes in kind. I had been a little late in arriving, due to no fault of mine, and was immediately conducted to the door leading to the platform.

When I got inside, the platform, like the hall,

was crowded almost to suffocation. People were craning their necks in the side wings and at the back of the platform to hear every word or catch a glimpse of the speaker. The speaker was Lenin. So interested and keen was everyone that comrades literally crowded round the rostrum, some leaning up against it.

It is always a difficult situation for a translator when meetings of such importance take place. The translator becomes so engrossed in the proceedings as to forget, at times, his charge. I am afraid this was the case on this occasion. Rarely have I attended a political meeting with such an atmosphere of comrades good humour. The New Economic Policy had just been adopted, and the times were serious. (The Party was faced with many problems in this transition period.) In connection with which, deviations were discovered in the Party prior to the Congress. Lenin had been triumphant at the Tenth Congress. Now the chief task was to get the whole Party to work, but before it could get down to work the opposition to this policy from the opposition had to be overcome. Here was Lenin, in a spirit of Bolshevik self-criticism, explaining the politically mistaken character of the assertions of some comrades and the harm done by them, as to provoke repeated bursts of laughter at their own expense.

On the eve of the Third Congress of the C.I. a number of extended executive meetings of the E.C.C.I. were held in the hall directly opposite the Dom Soyusov at the corner of the Sverdlov Square. Serious discussions took place at those meetings on the Italian situation and the March uprising in Germany, as well as a number of problems connected with the Centrists who were knocking then at the doors of the C.I. Throughout these discussions I followed with intense interest how Lenin was able in his speeches to brilliantly combine an

irreconcilable adherence to principle and firmness with a surprising flexibility and tact, and could reach out the hand of comradeship and correct those wavering elements (the Italians behind Serrati at that time) and at the same time restrain the impetuosity of those ultra-lefts (Bordiga's followers) who tried to utilise the opportunist mistakes made by the Party to advance their own sectarian line.

Every student of Lenin's life and work knows how he loved to have conversations with simple workers and his habit of closely questioning them. This practice of ascertaining the feelings of the masses he invariably carried out in the workers' circles he attended and led in Petersburg. After the proletariat seized power nothing delighted Lenin more than to have conversations, put questions and listen eagerly for every scrap of information from comrades coming from abroad concerning the living and working conditions of the toilers and their moods. This was one of the channels which linked Lenin's life and policy with the lives and struggle of the working masses, enabling him to better sense every mood and to formulate the correct Party tactics and slogans that finally brought victory.

Lenin knew England and the working-class movement there very well. In his study of imperialism he gave a profound analysis of the rôle of the English bourgeoisie in the period of imperialist expansion and of parasitic decaying and moribund capitalism, as industrial monopolist, as the exploiter of teeming millions of colonial and semi-colonial toilers. Again and again in articles and speeches he returns to the strategy and tactics of the English bourgeoisie in corrupting the upper strata of the workers' movement, the Labour aristocracy, and through them exerting pressure on the wider mass of the proletariat.

Lenin's articles never were nor could be of a character which formally and theoretically set problems, but he always directed the revolutionary workers to the political tasks of the current revolutionary struggle. He loved, when he was in London, to visit the workers' quarters, go to Socialist meetings and study the English workers' movement.

This practice of conversations, of listening to what workers had to say, continued up to his untimely death.

In 1921, despite his responsible duties as Chairman of People's Commissars, as leader of the Party and the revolution, whenever a workers' delegate arrived from a brother party abroad, he insisted on having a personal conversation at the earliest opportunity. An iron-moulder by occupation, of Scotland, I had been active in the workers' move-

ment since 1900, as propagandist, instructing workers' circles, strike leader, trade union and party worker and assisted to form the C.P.G.B., and had known and met most of the Labour leaders and had come almost straight from the foundry floor. I mention these details because in my conversation with Lenin I was free not only to speak of our Party, of the Labour leaders, the various streams in the workers' movement, but also about the living conditions and moods of the workers which made up the substance of our talk.

It was on or about the 3rd of August, 1921, accompanied by Comrade Friis of the Norwegian Party and Boris Reinstein, that I had a real comradesly talk with Lenin. Our conversation took place in his room in the far corner of the building formerly used as the High Courts of Moscow situated in the Kremlin. Up the narrow unpretentious stairs we entered a room occupied by a staff of stenographers and typists. After announcement of our arrival and we were invited to Lenin's room. No fuss or bureaucratic formalities, and punctual to the minute. The furniture consisted of a heavy writing desk against the wall, one immediately behind the chair used when working, so that he had only to turn and reach for any book desired.

Rising to greet us with a hearty handshake, Lenin assisted in drawing a couple of chairs near the corner of his desk, inviting us to be comfortable, and we settled down to a real comradesly talk. His first enquiry was as to our welfare. How we were in health, where did we live, had we a good room, did we have enough to eat, etc. To all of which enquiries we were able to give him satisfactory assurances.

He was very interested to know how I had travelled, legally or illegally, and chuckled with amusement at some incidents I had to relate about my journey. Formalities over, he begged to be excused for not having been able to give much attention to the English situation since his illness. Drawing closer his chair he rested his right elbow on his desk and with his right hand shading his right eye he proceeded to listen to me intently as if not to lose anything this new comrade might have to say.

Our conversation turned on the situation in England, particularly the Labour leaders; who they were; their characteristics and the support they had amongst the workers; of the White Russians abroad and their counter-revolutionary rôle.

Notwithstanding his assertion that he had not been able to follow events closely in England, he astonished me by reaching down from his bookshelf some of the recent publications from England

which he certainly had been reading, for example, Bertrand Russell's *Practice and Theory of Bolshevism* and R. W. Postgate's *Revolution and Bolshevik Theory*.

He enquired about Postgate, who he was, if a Party comrade, etc. (Postgate was then in our Party, and sub-editor of our Party organ, *The Communist*. Subsequently, in 1923, he left the C.P.G.B. to collaborate with his father-in-law, George Lansbury, in the new *Lansbury's Weekly*.)

With regard to Postgate's book, *Revolution*, Lenin classed this as a mere catalogue of documents, important in themselves, but how much better, he thought, it would have been if the author had given us the material events of the respective periods, treating each period from the standpoint of the class struggle and knitting all the documents together. As to *Bolshevik Theory* he thought this showed promise of better things, since Postgate then was still a young man.

We talked about the Trade Unions and the Labour Party and their relative strength and influence in the working-class movement; about our Communist Party, who was who, and its influence among the workers. Lenin was extremely interested in the miners' movement, particularly in South Wales, and I promised to give him more information from time to time. On returning to my room I jotted down in detail everything that had transpired during our talk. Comrade Friis borrowed those notes to write to his Party paper in Norway, and I never saw them again.

A few days afterwards (on August 7th) I sent Lenin a letter in keeping with my promise. In this letter I informed him about the Annual Conference of the South Wales Miners' Federation and its decision to affiliate to the Third International; further, some notes I had made from comrades who had come to the First Congress of the Profintern.

These notes gave interesting details of the communal kitchens in Fifeshire among the miners, the manner in which the funds were raised by the workers; the support given by the local Co-operative movement, and the part played by the marines drafted into the colliery districts to quell strikes. I gave several particulars of how the workers fraternised with the sailors and expressed the hope that he would find them interesting. Lenin found such details sufficiently interesting as to write a reply almost by return. To this letter I sent another giving my views and some new information I had received. Almost immediately I left for England and our correspondence was interrupted. When I returned in 1922 he was already ill.

Here is the letter I received in full:—

To the comrade THOMAS BELL
(LUX 154)

Dear Comrade,

I thank you very much for your letter, d(ated) 7/8. I have read nothing concerning the English movement last months because of my illness and overwork.

It is extremely interesting what you communicate. Perhaps it is THE BEGINNING of a real proletarian mass movement in Great Britain IN THE COMMUNIST SENSE. I am afraid we have till now in England few very feeble propagandist societies for communism (inclusive the British Communist Party) but no really MASS communist movement.

If the South Wales Miners' Federation has decided on 24/VII to affiliate to the III. Int. (ernational) by a majority of 120 to 63,—perhaps it is the beginning of a new era. (How much miners there are in England? More than 500,000?—25,000? How much in South Wales? How much miners were REALLY represented in Cardiff, 24/VII, 1921?)

If these miners are not too small minority, if they fraternise with soldiers and begin A REAL "class war,"—we must do all our possible to DEVELOP this movement and strengthen it.

Economic measures (like communal kitchens) are good but are not much important NOW, BEFORE the victory of the proletarian revolution in England. NOW the POLITICAL struggle is the most important.

English capitalists are shrewd, clever, astute. They WILL support (directly or indirectly) communal kitchens IN ORDER to divert the attention FROM POLITICAL AIMS.

What is important,—is (if I am not mistaken)

(1) To create a very good, really proletarian, really mass COMMUNIST PARTY in this part of England,—that is such party which will REALLY be the LEADING force in ALL labour movement in this part of the country. (Apply the resolution on organisation and work of the party adopted by the 3 congress to this part of your country.)

(2) To start a daily paper of the working class, for the working class in this part of the country.

To start it not as a business (as usually newspapers are started in capitalist countries), not with big sum of money, not in ordinary and usual manner,—but as an ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL TOOL of the MASSES in their struggle.

Either the miners of this district are capable to pay HALF-PENNY daily (for the beginning WEEKLY, if you like) for their OWN daily (or weekly) newspaper (be it very small, it is not important)—OR THERE IS NO BEGINNING OF THE REALLY COMMUNIST MASS MOVEMENT IN THIS PART OF YOUR COUNTRY.

If the communist party of this district cannot collect few £ in order to publish SMALL LEAFLETS DAILY as a beginning of the really PROLETARIAN communist newspaper—if it so, if EVERY miner will not pay a penny for it, then there is NOT SERIOUS, not genuine affiliation to the III. Int.(ernational).

English government will apply the shrewdest means in order to suppress every beginning of this kind. Therefore we must be (in the beginning) very prudent. The paper must be NOT TOO REVOLUTIONARY in the beginning. If you will have three editors, at least one must be non communist* (*at least two genuine workers). If 9/10 of the workers do not buy this paper, if 2/3 workers (120/120 63) do not pay special contributions f. (or) i. (instance) 1 penny WEEKLY for THEIR paper,—it will be no workers' newspaper.

I should be very glad to have few lines from you concerning this theme and beg to apologise for my bad English.

With communist greetings, LENIN.

As a matter of fact the C.P. was extremely weak then in South Wales. Amongst the miners there was a radical movement. Many trade union workers at that time were following the Russian Revolution with deep proletarian sympathy, but still not communist. Lenin understood this. That is why he proposed the elementary step, though exceptionally important as far as the whole work of the Party was concerned, of starting a small paper to be published and maintained by those who were for support to the Third International. That this was not done was due primarily to the fact that this vote was not the result of a sustained Communist influence, to the feeble condition of the Party and its failure to grasp the political significance of such a measure. Indeed, it was not

till nine years after, in 1930, that the Party was able to launch a national daily paper.

As for applying the organisational Theses of the Third Congress of the C.I., it was not till the autumn of 1922 that a beginning was made to apply these theses. This work has still to be completed.

The recent publication in a collected volume of Lenin's writings on Britain is a great contribution to the English workers' movement. He has left us a rich heritage in economic and political science, and in revolutionary literature, from which the English workers, and especially the Communists, should with great advantage study to-day and draw the necessary conclusions in the struggle for a Soviet Britain.

THE STRUGGLE TO ESTABLISH INNER SOVIET REGIONS IN THE SEMI-COLONIAL COUNTRIES

By V. MYRO.

CHINA has remained the only country where until very recently the overthrow of the old order and the establishment of a firm Soviet government in **VARIOUS REGIONS IN THE INTERIOR** was brought about prior to the victory of the revolution on an all-national scale.

Is a repetition of such a situation possible in any other countries? If so, what are the preconditions necessary for it?

The present article represents an attempt to answer these questions.

The "Geographic Distribution" of the Contending Class Forces.

In September-October of 1917, when outlining his plan for the armed struggle for power, Lenin insistently stressed the point that

"the decisive word lies . . . in the working class quarters of Petersburg and Moscow"* and that the most immediate task was to "encircle Petersburg and to isolate it, and to take it by a combined attack by the fleet, the workers and the troops."†

The events which followed showed the whole world how correct Lenin was when he attached such great and decisive importance to the struggle for Petrograd and Moscow. The victory of the proletarian revolution in these most important industrial and cultural-political centres in the country immediately gave it a decisive preponderance over the forces of the counter-revolution on a national scale.

Comrade STALIN was also very definite in stressing the tremendous importance of Moscow and Petrograd, which became transformed into the main bases of the revolution. In an article entitled *The War Situation in the South*, published in the *Pravda* on December 28, 1919, he wrote the following:—

"At the beginning of the October Revolution a certain geographic differentiation between the revolution and the counter-revolution was to be noted. In the course of the further development of the Civil War, the districts controlled by the revolution and the counter-revolution became defined once and for all. Inner Russia, with its industrial and cultural and political centres, Moscow and Petrograd, the national composition of whose population was uniform, mainly Russian, became transformed into the bases of the revolution. As for the outlying regions of Russia, and mainly those in the south and east, they became transformed into the bases of the counter-revolution. These regions in the south and the east were without industrial and cultural-political centres of any importance, while their populations to a very great degree varied from the national point of view, being composed of the privileged Cossack-colonisers on the one hand, and on the other hand of peoples deprived of full rights, such as the Tartars, Bakshirs, Kirgizians (in the east), the Ukrainians, Chechens, Ingushes and other Mussulman peoples.

"It will not be difficult to understand that there is nothing unnatural in such a geographic distribution of the contending forces in Russia. In actual fact, where else should you expect to find a base for the Soviet Government than among the proletariat of Petrograd and Moscow? Who else could be the firm support of the Denikin-Kolchak counter-revolution than the Cossacks, the age-long weapon of Russian imperialism, who enjoyed privileges and were organised as a military caste, and who had long exploited the non-Russian peoples on the borders of Russia?"

* *Lenin*, Vol. 21, p. 197, Russ. Edn.

† *Lenin*, Vol. 21, p. 320, Russ. Edn.

"Is it not clear that there could not possibly be any other 'geographic distribution'?" (See *Pravda*, December 28, 1919.)

It stands to reason that such a "geographic distribution" of the contending class forces is by no means a specific peculiarity of the proletarian revolution in Russia, not to be repeated. On the contrary, it is characteristic of many other countries, especially WESTERN EUROPEAN countries. In a number of countries, economically developed and politically centralised, the most important class battles, the outcome of which determined the development of the revolution to a very great degree, took place as a rule, not in the outlying districts, but in the biggest cities, most often in the capitals of the countries concerned. The revolutionary government, in these cases, at first established itself in the centre, and then proceeded to spread its authority to the outlying districts. The defeat of the revolution in the centre usually meant its defeat on a national scale as well. Thus, for instance, the main base for the great bourgeois revolution in France was Paris, with its heroic plebeian rank and file, and Paris maintained its dominating importance, both in the bourgeois revolutions which followed in 1830 and 1848, as well as in 1871 during the existence of the Commune.

But if the "Russian" type of the development of the Civil War (according to which the most important industrial and cultural-political centres in the country become the base for the revolution) does not constitute a specific feature, not to be repeated, but is of much wider significance, then, on the other hand, THIS TYPE OF DEVELOPMENT OF THE CIVIL WAR IS BY NO MEANS SOMETHING OBLIGATORY FOR ALL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES. The experience of the Soviet Revolution in CHINA above all is witness to this.

In China the revolution has still not been victorious on a national scale. But the power of the Soviets has been established on one-sixth of its territory. The most important and vital centres in the country, namely, the biggest towns, including the capital, are still in the hands of the counter-revolutionary Kuomintang Government, which has the support of world imperialism. But the workers and peasants, led by the heroic Communist Party of China, are masters of an important section of Chinese territory. The revolution has been victorious at different points in the outlying regions of the country before the forces of the counter-revolution have been smashed in the main centres.

Is this type of the development of the civil war a specific peculiarity, one not to be repeated, of the Soviet Revolution in China, or is it of wider significance? Is the "geographical distribution" of

the contending class forces after the "Chinese" fashion possible in any other countries?

The history of the class struggle in the colonial and semi-colonial countries provides a quite definite reply to this question.

IN THE COLONIAL AND SEMI-COLONIAL COUNTRIES, THE MOST IMPORTANT CLASS BATTLES HAVE IN THE PAST, AT LEAST IN THE FIRST STAGES OF THE REVOLUTIONARY STRUGGLE, BEEN FOUGHT OUT NOT SO MUCH IN THE CAPITALS OR OTHER BIG CENTRES AS IN OUTLYING REGIONS. The far-distant outlying regions have, in many cases, become the main base of support for armed uprisings. Prior to being victorious on a national scale, the revolution has embraced the outlying regions, on the outskirts. The uprising has "spread" over tremendous territories, has dragged on over many months and on some occasions for years. What is more, at times, more or less firmly established regions of revolt have come into being with their own revolutionary governments and armies.

The armed struggle conducted by the North-American Colonists against England lasted seven years (1775 till 1783), while the main base in the hands of the insurgents was far-distant Virginia, whereas the most important centres (New York, Boston, etc.), were in the hands of the British forces for a long time.

The so-called "War of Independence" of the countries of Southern and Caribbean America against Spain extended over a period of sixteen years (1810 till 1826); and the armed struggle broke out in the first instance, not in the residential districts of the Spanish Viceroy, but in the agricultural districts or in towns of second-rate importance, and it was only after the insurgent regiments had consolidated their forces to a considerable degree that the revolutionary armies undertook the offensive against the "capitals."

The Taipin uprising in China (1850-64) broke out in the province of Guansi, and after gradually spreading to the north, resulted in the establishment of the independent insurgent state of "Taipin Tyango"; and the main part of the country, including Peking, remained in the hands of the counter-revolutionary government and its army.

The Sepoy uprising in India (1857-58) covered a tremendous territory in the north of India; a big section of the country, however, including such very big centres as Bombay, Madras and Calcutta, etc., remained in the hands of the British.

The Persian revolution of 1908 also began in the outlying regions, namely, in Azerbaidjan, Gilyani and Ispagani district, and it was only later that the insurgents advanced on Teheran and occupied it.

The "Young Turk" uprising in 1908 began in the far-distant territory of Macedonia.

The Mexican revolution of 1908 broke out in the northern states of Sonora, Coahuila, etc.; and it was only after firmly establishing themselves there that the army of insurgents moved southwards and occupied the capital.

The Kemal revolution in Turkey in 1919 also broke out in the outlying districts of Anatolia, and it was only after the revolutionary government and its army had been set up and consolidated that they moved forward to the most important centres. (Smyrna became "Kemalist" only in 1922, and Constantinople in 1923.)

In all the above-mentioned cases the specific "geographic distribution" of the contending class forces was determined by the special features of the economic and political structure of the corresponding countries, the character of the revolutionary tasks awaiting solution and the concrete correlation of class forces in the "centres" and on the "outskirts" of one or other country. In all the cases mentioned, the forces of revolution in the "centres" were weaker, while the forces of counter-revolution were of greater importance than were those in the "outlying districts."

If, for instance, we take the present (Soviet) stage of the anti-feudal and anti-imperialist revolution in China, then it contains among other features, the following which are characteristic and which exert decisive influence on the "geographic distribution" of the contending forces in China, viz.:

(1) A HIGH LEVEL IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PEASANT MOVEMENT, which assists in consolidating the forces of the revolution in the agrarian "outlying districts" and renders it easy to establish inner Soviet regions long before it becomes directly possible to overthrow the central counter-revolutionary government.

(2) THE WEAKNESS OF THE KUOMINTANG STATE APPARATUS, which has become more or less firmly consolidated with the aid of interested imperialist groupings in the most important industrial and cultural-political centres, but which has not sufficient forces and means at its disposal to bring about real control over the "depths" and "outlying districts," where the revolutionary (Soviet) movement is developing.

* * *

In what countries AT THE PRESENT TIME is it most possible that the "geographic differentiation" of the contending forces will follow "CHINESE" lines?

As we have shown above, such a differentiation in the past was also characteristic of the semi-colonial countries (China, Turkey, Persia, etc.), and of the colonies (North America in the eighteenth century, and South and Caribbean America during the first quarter of the nineteenth century). But IN THE IMPERIALIST EPOCH the most favourable conditions for the development of civil war along "Chinese" lines are to be found not so much in

the colonies as in the "SEMI-COLONIAL COUNTRIES." It is precisely in these latter countries that the preconditions for the overthrow of the old authorities in some or other districts in the "depths" or "outlying regions" can be found, long before the forces of revolution turn out to be adequate for the overthrow of the central government of the counter-revolution.

Here we come right up against a question of first-rate importance, namely, THAT OF THE DISTINCTIVE FEATURES WHICH COME TO LIGHT IN THE IMPERIALIST EPOCH BETWEEN THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN THE COLONIES AND THAT IN THE SEMI-COLONIAL COUNTRIES, features which are of tremendous importance from the point of view of the problem of the "geographic differentiation" of the contending class forces. But we must deal a little more at length with these distinctive features.

What constitute the SPECIAL conditions of the development of the class struggle in the semi-colonies of the present day as compared with the colonies?

Each colony represents a sphere of the monopolist political domination of some one imperialist state. The state apparatus in the colonial country is usually an obedient weapon in the hands of the ruling classes of the imperialist dominating country (exceptions are only to be found in some colonies which have a certain self-government and especially certain British dominions). In the majority of cases economic domination in the colonies is also concentrated in the hands of the imperialist dominating countries.

In the majority of semi-colonial countries, on the contrary, no single imperialist state has a monopoly of political and economic domination. Here the struggle between the imperialist states for levers of political influence and for the commanding heights of the national economy is as a rule sharper, more tense and of a more stormy character than in the colonies.

This brings about a tremendous sharpening of the internal contradictions in the camp of the "national" ruling classes of the semi-colonial countries. Here we usually find a permanent struggle going on between various bourgeois-landowning groupings, who are connected with some or other of the contending imperialist states. The foreign capitalists (in their own interests) stir up and sharpen the inner contradictions in the camp of the "national" ruling classes and provoke plots, military outbreaks and "palace revolutions." All this CREATES SERIOUS DISORGANISATION IN THE STATE APPARATUS OF THE SEMI-COLONIAL COUNTRIES, AND WEAKENS ITS POWER TO RESIST THE REVOLUTIONARY INSURGENT MASSES OF THE PEOPLE.

BY THE VERY FACT OF THIS ONE CIRCUMSTANCE, THE "NATIONAL" GOVERNMENTS IN THE SEMI-COLONIAL

COUNTRIES FREQUENTLY ENJOY ONLY NOMINAL POWER IN A NUMBER OF REGIONS; in many regions their power is disputed by the local, civil or military administration, which in actual fact is independent of the "centre." THIS RENDERS IT EXCEEDINGLY DIFFICULT FOR THE RULING CLASSES IN THE SEMI-COLONIAL COUNTRIES TO UNDERTAKE AN AGREED AND CENTRALISED STRUGGLE AGAINST THE REVOLUTIONARY OUTBREAKS IN THE "DEPTHS" AND IN THE "OUTLYING REGIONS"!

Apart from this, the main instrument in the semi-colonial countries used to suppress the revolutionary uprising are the governmental armies which are, as a rule, far worse trained, organised and technically supplied than the colonial armies of the imperialist state, to maintain which their masters beyond the seas spare neither forces nor means. Thus, for instance, according to official data for the year 1931, the Brazilian Army had only 41 aeroplanes (with a total horse-power of 24,725) in a territory covering 8,525,000 square kilometres, while the Anglo-Indian Army in a territory half the size (4,675,000 square kilometres) had 196 aeroplanes (with a total horse-power of 103,900).

It should also be borne in mind that discipline is far weaker in the armies and navies of the semi-colonial countries than in the colonial armies and navies of the imperialist states. During the last two years especially, revolutionary outbreaks have become extraordinarily frequent among the armed forces of the semi-colonial countries (the numerous cases where various sections of Chang-Kai-Shek's army passed over to the Chinese Red Army; the number of revolutionary outbreaks of the armed forces of Brazil, Peru, Chile and other countries in Southern and Caribbean America, etc.).

Finally, whereas when revolutionary uprisings spread in the colonial countries, the imperialist states usually find it possible in case of necessity to secure support from the whole of their military power in the home country (by the despatch of reserves, etc.), in the semi-colonial countries, on the other hand, any attempts at open military intervention frequently encounter various difficulties of a diplomatic and open character. Thus, for instance, in 1933, when the revolutionary struggle in Cuba had become very much aggravated, the U.S.A. was compelled, having in mind the international situation, to refrain from direct intervention, although the development of events in Cuba directly threatened the interests of U.S. capital.

Thus, as a result of a number of causes and especially AS A RESULT OF THE GREAT WEAKNESS OF THE STATE APPARATUS EXISTING THERE, by comparison with the colonial countries, the SEMI-COLONIAL countries present more favourable conditions for such a geographical distribution of the

contending class forces, under which the overthrow of the old authorities in one or other of the "depths" or "outlying districts" can take place before they have been overthrown in the main vital centres of the country.

2. What Conditions are Necessary for the Establishment of Inner Soviet Regions?

The fact that the semi-colonial countries, generally speaking, present the most favourable conditions for such a "geographical distribution" of the contending class forces, under which it becomes possible and advisable to establish inner Soviet regions, by no means, of course, implies that these regions can be established at ANY moment, independent of the general political situation, and the degree to which the revolutionary forces have been prepared.

FIRSTLY, it is essential that at least in some regions in the country a situation of revolutionary upsurge should have developed which ensures that masses of toilers are rallied for the armed struggle for Soviet power. Should there be an absence of sufficient revolutionary movement among the masses, IF ONLY IN SOME REGIONS IN THE COUNTRY, attempts at armed uprisings would be of a "putschist" and adventurist character, and would only lead to a useless expenditure of the revolutionary forces, compromising the very idea of the armed struggle for Soviet power. This, however, does not imply that the establishment of inner Soviet regions only becomes possible if there is an ALL NATIONAL revolutionary crisis. Herein precisely lies the special feature of the situation in certain countries (primarily SEMI-COLONIAL COUNTRIES), where the state apparatus is shattered and unstable, namely, that here IT IS POSSIBLE for the revolutionary classes to seize power in CERTAIN regions PRIOR to it becoming directly possible for them to seize power on a NATIONAL scale.

SECONDLY, what is needed is that a certain co-ordination should exist between the level attained by the upsurge of the working class movement and the level attained by that of the peasant movement. Should the working class movement be very much behind, the establishment of a firm proletarian core in the revolutionary insurgent army would be very much hindered or would even be completely ruled out; the movement of revolt in such a case would be characterised by all the weaknesses inherent in a purely peasant movement (its scattered character, weak organisation, etc.). On the other hand, should the peasant movement lag very much behind and masses of peasants be insufficiently prepared (if only in certain regions in the country) for armed struggle, the construction of a revolutionary insurgent army would, generally speaking, become impossible (for only

peasants would constitute the main forces of the revolutionary army).

THIRDLY, what is needed is that the movement should be headed by a Communist Party sufficiently firm and able to carry on the struggle, a party whose leadership would ensure that a correct political line is being pursued. Should the opposite be the case the destruction of the hotbeds of the Soviet movement is absolutely unavoidable. Proof of this is particularly provided by the history of the struggle of the Chinese revolutionary army which came into being in August, 1927, after the military uprising in Nanchan, headed by the Communists, Ye-Tin and Che-Lun. This army was very soon smashed up, mainly as a result of the POLITICAL mistakes committed by its leaders. What was left of it had to undergo a fundamental reorganisation before it could develop in close co-operation with other partisan, working class, and peasant detachments into the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army of Soviet China.

The THREE conditions above mentioned are ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY, and should they be lacking, the establishment and consolidation of inner Soviet regions is, generally speaking, IMPOSSIBLE. One could indicate a whole number of other political conditions which are not absolutely essential, but the existence of which could very much FACILITATE the seizure by the revolutionary classes of various regions in the country, and the establishment of an army of insurgents by them.

Thus, for instance A SHARP AGGRAVATION OF INNER CONTRADICTIONS IN THE CAMP OF THE RULING CLASSES could be a very favourable factor, especially in those cases where these contradictions lead to direct armed conflicts and "internal wars" (like the wars between various military cliques in China, or the war between the "Paulists" and the supporters of the Vargas government in Brazil in 1932). In such cases the revolutionary discontent of the masses increases, the disorganisation of the state apparatus becomes more intensified, there is an increase in the quantity of arms in the country, and the passage of whole military detachments in the service of both of the contending bourgeois-landowning camps to the side of the revolution, etc., becomes facilitated.

A WAR BETWEEN DIFFERENT SEMI-COLONIAL COUNTRIES (after the fashion of the Peru-Colombia war of 1933 or the Bolivia-Paraguay war which has continued until this day) could be another factor operating in this direction, on condition, of course, that the Communist Party carries on active work to rally and organise the revolutionary forces. In such cases, especially if the war is of a protracted character, the slogan of the passage of the government troops to the side of the revolutionary insur-

gents would evoke a favourable response among the soldiers of the contending countries.

In general, if only the necessary political and other conditions are to hand for a wide development of the revolutionary movement, REVOLTS IN THE ARMY OR NAVY, whatever the basis on which they arose, can, if there is only a certain contact between the Communist Party and the insurgents, serve even as the starting point for an armed struggle to establish Soviet regions. If the revolt in the army or fleet has not even set the revolution going on a national scale, then in any case, the soldiers and sailors in revolt could enter the interior of the country. After uniting there with peasant detachments already in action, and the workers' militia, led by the Communists, they could establish inner Soviet regions.

3. "The Optimal Variant" of the Operative Base in the Struggle to Establish Inner Soviet Regions.

Even in those semi-colonial countries, which, generally speaking, provide the best conditions for the establishment of inner Soviet regions, by no means all regions are favourable for this purpose to an equal degree. IT STANDS TO REASON THAT WHEN PREPARING the armed struggle for Soviet power it is far from always possible for the Communist Party to "select" one or other district according to its own wish, AS ITS MAIN BASIS FOR OPERATIONS. Much here depends on the concrete development of events, which it is not possible to foresee in all its details IN ADVANCE. None the less, the Party must aim at bringing about the "optimal variant." It must strive to bring about a situation where the armed struggle develops AS FAR AS POSSIBLE in the most favourable regions. If this is not immediately possible, then, in any case (without tying one's hands with dogmatic considerations and, above all, carefully bearing the concrete conditions of the struggle in mind), it would nevertheless be advisable to strive to bring about a situation in the near future where the main basis for the revolutionary struggle is transferred from districts which are less favourable to those which are more so. Correspondingly the main kernel of the revolutionary army being established would be transferred.

But what regions are the most "optimal" as far as the establishment of Soviet territories is concerned?

(1) From the general political point of view those districts are the most favourable where great sections of the population live under conditions of especially severe exploitation. Thus, for instance, in the South and Carribean American countries these are primarily the regions mainly populated by Indian peasants. The establishment of an Indian Soviet region in one of the South and Caribbean American countries on the condition that the action

* "Optimal variant": The most favourable alternative or prospect.—Ed.

undertaken by the revolutionary army bears the character of a national-liberation war, would thereby draw to the side of the revolutionary army the sympathy of millions of Indian toilers in all the other countries of South and Caribbean America.

(2) It is highly advisable that a peasant insurgent movement should already be in existence in the districts where it is proposed to establish Soviet Power. Peasant partisan detachments (even small ones) can, if they are assured the necessary political leadership from the Communist Party, serve as the primary core around which will be formed the revolutionary army which will defend the Soviet territory. These detachments will provide cadres of tested fighters who are already acquainted with military affairs, who know the weak sides of their opponents, and have made a good study of the given region from the military point of view, etc. In addition, these partisan detachments can be utilised from the very first stages of the struggle as the main driving force to bring about the unexpected seizure of military stores, arsenals, etc., which will ensure that the revolutionary army which is being organised will have a certain supply of arms and military supplies; they can also be used to destroy the communications of the government troops, so as to prevent them concentrating in masses in the district where the armed uprising takes place, and also to win time for the organisation of a more or less big revolutionary army.

(3) The territory proposed for the organisation of Soviet regions should, as far as possible, be extensive. Should the opposite be the case, it would be difficult to ensure the revolutionary army the opportunity to manoeuvre and retreat in case the result of the military actions are unfavourable, to a locality which the enemy cannot easily approach.

(4) This territory should be so placed that it should, as far as possible, impede the speedy concentration of the armed forces of the enemy on its borders, as well as disorganise their regular supplies. Should the enemy have well-organised communications at their disposal (railways, navigable rivers, sea-routes, etc.), the Soviet districts would be exceptionally vulnerable to the blows of the counter-revolution. Thus, for instance, it is, generally speaking, inadvisable to establish Soviet regions along the river banks; the enemy would make good use of their own fleet or of the imperialist states and be in a position to systematically bring forward reserves, make descents on them, and bombard them from the sea, etc. It is well known that as a rule the Chinese Red Army avoids advancing along the river banks, but prefers to concentrate its forces in the inner regions of the country.

(5) The Soviet territory should, as far as possible, be placed at a certain distance away from those places in the country where foreign interests are especially powerful (for instance, those localities where the most important foreign enterprises and concessions are concentrated). Should the opposite be the case it would be difficult to avoid or even to delay direct armed intervention of the interested imperialist states.

(6) The Soviet regions should have their own internal supply base, sufficient to supply both the revolutionary army that protects them as well as the wide sections of the toiling population. Thus, for instance, in those districts which systematically import food supplies (for instance, in districts which are completely devoted to "monoculture"),* it would be practically impossible, when a blockade would be inevitable following the organisation of the Soviet regions, to feed the revolutionary army and the wide sections of the population. Of course, when establishing Soviet Power it might be possible to pursue a course aiming at the abolition of this "monoculture" and replacing it by "multicultured† economy," but this is a long-drawn-out process which would inevitably be spread over a few years at the very least. A certain possibility

to manoeuvre exists in such a case, but as a rule districts which are completely monocultured are far less favourable for revolutionary armies carrying on long-drawn-out actions than districts where multicultured economy exists.

* * *

(7) It is highly desirable that there should be at least the most primitive industry in the Soviet regions, to ensure that the arms in the possession of the revolutionary army could at least be repaired, if not actually manufactured, and that the means of transport could also be repaired, etc. Of course, such industry (smithies, armament workshops, etc.), can be established after Soviet power has been brought into being in one or another district, but this would require at least several months of preparatory work, whereas the revolutionary insurgent army will as a rule, right from the very beginning, feel the inadequacy of its supply of arms, explosives, etc., and it will not always be possible to cover this deficiency by the military trophies won.

* * *

The question of the selection of a basis for operations can only be concretely solved in the actual process of the struggle in connection with the numerous circumstances which it is impossible to take into account in ADVANCE in all the details.

But this, of course, does not mean that everything should be left to the mercy of the spontaneous development of events. Events have to be DIRECTED, the struggle has to be REGULATED and ORGANISED,* and CONSTRUCTED according to a definite plan. Hence, the conclusion that EFFORTS MUST BE MADE TO ENSURE SUCH FAVOURABLE CONDITIONS FOR THE STRUGGLE AS WILL FACILITATE AND SPEED UP VICTORY.

4. The Preparation of the Struggle for the Establishment of Soviet Regions.

The preparations of the struggle to establish inner Soviet regions presupposes first and foremost a general intensification of the work of the Communist Party, especially on the territory which is proposed as the basic region of support in the oncoming struggle. Party work should primarily cover the biggest factories in the most important branches of industry, and also the biggest villages, plantations, etc. A mass struggle must be carried on for the partial-demands, based on a very wide UNITED FRONT, while the treacherous rôle of the opponents of the Communist Party must be exposed in action, in practice, in the very course of the mass battles, and not only through wordy agitation, etc. In brief, what is needed is that there should be an intensification of the development of the struggle to win over the majority of the working class and wide masses of toilers to the side of the Party. All these points constitute the main preconditions for a successful struggle to establish inner Soviet regions.

This, however, does not exclude the necessity

* Monoculture: Cultivating one specific product.—Ed.

† Multiculture: The cultivation of a number of different kinds of products in a particular region.—Ed.

for most careful preparation in certain special directions. What does this special preparation consist of?

(1) The timely concentration of the best Party organisers, agitators and propagandists on the territory selected as the basis of support for the struggle to establish Soviet regions. The strengthening of the leadership of the Party organisations of the given regions by including the most tested Party elements who have really shown their loyalty to Communism (mainly the best proletarian elements closely linked up with the masses of the workers). The systematic transfer to the given district of big supplies of Party literature (manifestos, newspapers, pamphlets, etc.).

(2) The establishment of direct contact with peasant insurgent detachments, if such are already in action in the given region. The mobilisation of a section of the Party members who have some acquaintance with military affairs, and are sufficiently tested politically to be allocated to the partisan detachments in action. The task facing these Party workers is step by step to win the confidence of the partisans in action, in the very process of the struggle, in the war situation, and thereby to ensure that the Communists obtain the leadership of the partisan detachments. They must do so further so as to give the armed struggle of the partisans a really revolutionary character, by combining it with the current economic and political struggle of the masses of the toilers in town and country, and stimulating the partisan detachments to such acts as the destruction of the landowners' police, the seizure of the landowners' stores, and their division amongst the peasants, etc. The establishment of Party cells in the peasant detachments. The summoning of conferences of delegates from peasant detachments to elect a central staff or revolutionary committee, including, as far as possible, representatives from the Communist Party. To systematically give publicity in the Party press to the struggle carried on by the partisan detachments, and to expose the lying campaign of the reactionary press against the insurgents. The organisation of mass meetings, demonstrations and strikes in defence of arrested partisans. To carry on systematic agitation among the masses of toilers in town and country in favour of joining the peasant detachments.

(3) The establishment of workers' defence groups ("fives," "tens," etc.), in the towns, and their systematic military education and training. To ensure that there is iron revolutionary discipline in the ranks of the workers' defence groups and that they are subordinated to the leading centre. In the period directly preceding the struggle to establish Soviet regions, some of the workers' defence groups may be utilised for individual joint actions along with the peasant partisan detachments, and to liberate arrested revolutionaries, etc. In the course of time the workers' defence groups become merged in the ranks of the revolutionary army organised on Soviet territory.

(4) The intensification of activity among the armed forces of the ruling classes (in the army, fleet, police, etc.). To specially mobilise the most decisive, energetic and politically tested members of the Party for this work. The systematic struggle for the current and direct demands put forward by the masses of soldiers. The main task facing all this activity is to systematically prepare the passage of the armed forces to the side of the revolution in the Soviet region.

(5) All members of the Party must be made acquainted with the foundations of the Marxist-Leninist doctrine regarding the armed uprising. A study of the corresponding works of the founders of Marxism-Leninism in the whole network of Party educational organisations (in circles, Party schools, etc.). As far as possible to acquaint wider sections in the Party with at least an elementary knowledge of military affairs.

5. The Armed Struggle for the Soviet Regions.

The military technical plan of the struggle to establish Soviet regions must be so constructed as to take the concrete conditions into account. UNIVERSAL RECIPES WOULD BE EXCEEDINGLY HARMFUL. In practice a series of the most varied alternatives to this plan is possible. It depends exclusively on the local situation, on the concrete situation, whether the struggle to establish Soviet regions begins with a general strike in the towns, and develops into an armed uprising, or whether with the mass seizure by the peasants of the landowners' estates, or as a result of an attack on military stores, arsenals, etc., by peasants, insurrectionary detachments and workers' militia, concentrated beforehand at definite points, or whether it begins following an uprising by the soldiers and sailors, or following on some other incident.

But what is important is that immediately, from the very beginning of the struggle, decisively all the existing forces on whom the leading revolutionary centre could calculate, should be immediately drawn into the struggle. Once the struggle has begun the insurgents must advance boldly, all waverings must be cast aside, cowards thrown out of the ranks, and traitors summarily dealt with. Hesitation would be equal to defeat.

On receiving the corresponding instructions from the leading revolutionary centre, the peasant partisan detachments, workers' militia and the insurrectionaries among the government troops, etc., must in the shortest possible time hew a way for themselves from the points where they are originally placed, to the territory selected beforehand as the main basis of operations. On their road they must "bye-pass" the main centres of resistance of the enemy, and avoid struggle with any big enemy forces, as far as possible, if there are such, and wipe out any secondary spheres of resistance. At the same time they must make themselves masters of supplies of arms and military stores, destroying all railway lines, bridges, etc., behind them, and increasing their forces by reinforcements from among the toiling population.

After concentrating their forces on the territory previously decided on, the insurgents establish a REVOLUTIONARY ARMY here with a centralised leadership, and ensure the establishment of a REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENT by the toiling masses of the given territory. If the leaders of the army carry through a correct political line, calculated first and foremost on letting loose a mass revolutionary movement, then the army, basing itself on the masses of toilers, will grow into an exceptionally serious force, and THE POSSIBILITY OF MAINTAINING A FIRM HOLD ON THE TERRITORY FIRST SEIZED WILL BECOME QUITE A REAL ONE. After establishing covering parties on the borders of the sovietised terri-

tory, the leaders of the revolutionary army at the same time adopt "diversion" measures in the rear of the main forces of the enemy advancing on this territory, making special efforts to destroy the latter's communications. After beating off the enemy, the revolutionary army extends the boundaries of the Soviet territory, and expands as a result of the reinforcements from the wide sections of the toiling population, and of enemy detachments who come over to its side.

This is the "optimal variant" of the plan of operations. Whether it will be possible to carry this variant into life, or whether it is necessary to alter it under the pressure of the concrete conditions of the struggle, is determined in the actual process of the struggle. In any case efforts must be made to at least make AS CLOSE AN APPROACH TO THIS "OPTIMAL VARIANT" AS POSSIBLE.

However, it is more than likely that in ACTUAL PRACTICE it will turn out to be a TASK BEYOND THEIR POWERS, to maintain a firm hold on the territory originally seized. What is more, it would be A BIG MISTAKE if the insurgents were to strive to maintain their hold on this territory AT ALL COSTS, even if it meant expending a big section of their forces in the struggle against the superior forces of the enemy. THE MAIN THING IS NOT THE MAINTENANCE OF THE TERRITORY, BUT THE PRESERVATION OF THE ARMED CADRES OF THE REVOLUTION. If the revolutionary army is faced by an enemy which has preserved its fighting capacity and is numerically superior to it, it may have to evacuate the territory originally occupied, and retreat to other regions less accessible to the enemy. If the armed forces of the revolution are preserved, they will be able to establish themselves on new territory without great difficulty. After organising a new centre for the Soviet movement, the revolutionary army will renew the struggle, always growing, by drawing the local toiling population and the enemy detachments who come over to its side into its ranks. It is possible that, under the pressure of the superior forces of the counter-revolutionary army, it will have to change its territorial base several times, now retreating still further into the interior, at other times, returning to territory previously evacuated. In the last analysis, however, if only the political line pursued by the leaders of the Soviet movement is correct, the revolutionary army will undoubtedly be able to beat off the offensive of the enemy, and consolidate its forces on the territory selected, and then to transform it into a more or less stable centre for the Soviet movement.

All this, however, does not mean that as soon as the enemy appears, the insurgents must immediately evacuate the points occupied without offering resistance. Such tactics of "permanent

evacuation" were applied by the Brazilian insurrectionaries in the years 1924 to 1927 (the so-called "Colonna Prestessa") who carried through a cavalry raid extending over 75,000 kilometres, with the enemy in the rear practically the whole of the time—a feat unexampled in recent military history. But the "Colonna Prestessa" was under petty-bourgeois leadership, its political line was not really revolutionary, and it was unable to rally the masses of the toiling population around itself. It therefore could not calculate on maintaining a firm hold on any definite territory. All that remained for it to do was to keep changing its locality from one end of the huge territory of Brazil to another, with all possible persistence, and avoid any serious conflicts with the government troops.

As regards a SOVIET insurgent army, led politically by a Communist Party, it is, of course, not excluded that it might also have, for a certain time, to avoid decisive battle with the armed forces of the counter-revolution. But as soon as it succeeds in unloosing the mass revolutionary movement (and primarily the struggle of the peasantry for the land) in the front and the rear of the advancing enemy, thereby creating a mass base for itself, it would immediately be faced with the real possibility of entrenching itself for a long time without the risk of losing the main cadres of the army in struggles carried on against the superior forces of the enemy.

Thus, in the first phases of the struggle, which precede the firm consolidation of the Soviet territory, the actions of the insurrectionary army must mainly bear the character of a "SMALL" PARTISAN WAR. The insurgents develop the maximum of mobility, and under no circumstances concentrate in big masses at fortified points; they transfer the struggle to the open field; they operate in relatively small detachments; they appear simultaneously in the front, on the flanks and in the rear of the enemy; they disorganise, wear out and scatter the enemy's forces, and prevent the enemy from concentrating in big masses. While they HAVE IN VIEW, the perspective of firmly establishing themselves on a definite, previously determined territory, and making use of every possibility to make this perspective a reality as soon as possible, the revolutionary forces, however, do not in case of necessity avoid moving from one locality to another, everywhere kindling the flame of the mass revolutionary struggle.

The extremely rich experience of the establishment and of the struggle of THE CHINESE RED ARMY shows that the METHODS OF "LITTLE" WARFARE ARE THE MOST SUITABLE FOR A SOVIET ARMY WHICH IS IN THE PROCESS OF ESTABLISHMENT. While avoiding

conflicts with the government troops when concentrated at one spot in big masses, and while undertaking a concentrated offensive against them and surrounding them, when the enemy troops were weak, the small newly-formed detachments of the Chinese Red Army were able to defend themselves and to inflict a series of defeats on the enemy. After in this way receiving a certain breathing space, they then developed into a big army, more or less firmly established in definite regions. Of course they had to retreat on several occasions, and to yield their territory to the enemy, but their ARMED CADRES were preserved and saved from destruction. The territory they lost was compensated for by the time they gained, which

enabled them to extend the small detachments into a big army.

In China the struggle to establish firm Soviet territories extended over quite a lengthy period of time. It was only at the end of the year 1929, and especially at the beginning of the year 1930 that the Soviet movement emerged from its original phase of partisan warfare, and obtained a more or less stable territorial base. But this primarily, preparatory phase of "small" warfare was absolutely necessary; without it the powerful Red Army of Soviet China, which has for several years already successfully repulsed the onslaught of the armed forces of the counter-revolution, could not have been brought together.

FROM THE EDITORIAL BOARD

In connection with the forthcoming Party Congress of the C.P.G.B., we are publishing two articles dealing with the experiences of two important districts in the struggle for the united front of the working class. While we welcome these reports of individual party organisations, we emphasise the need for receiving descriptions of the development of the most important organisations of our party on the basis of concrete facts regarding factory and trade union work, membership figures and the work of the cells.

THE BRITISH PARTY CONGRESS AND THE SITUATION IN LANCASHIRE

By IDRIS COX.

THE fact that the 13th Congress of the British Communist Party is being held in Manchester in February is significant, not only because of the important place which this city occupies in Britain, but because the whole county of Lancashire crystallises the great problems which the British Communist Party has to solve in its task of building the united front against capitalism, for the daily demands of the workers to bring down the National Government, to repulse the growth of fascism and to advance on the road towards building workers' Soviet power.

The Importance of Lancashire.

Lancashire is the most important industrial sector in the whole of British capitalist economy. It is the most important centre of the metal industry. The whole of the cotton textile industry is situated in Lancashire. Its railway system occupies the key position in the whole network of British railways. It has an important coalfield,

although mainly for inland trade. Thousands of dockers are employed in Salford, Liverpool and Preston. On its borders are some of the most important chemical factories preparing deadly instruments of war. It is therefore the most important concentration point for the British Communist Party, and to the extent that it is possible to lead the workers of Lancashire in revolutionary struggle will it be possible for the Party to win the majority of the British workers.

Not only is Lancashire important in the economy of British capitalism. It is also becoming a battleground for the waging of political differences between different sections of the capitalist class. The crisis in the cotton textile industry has given rise to all kinds of schemes on the part of the capitalist class—tariffs, price-fixing schemes, trade pacts and export quotas. The India Report now being put forward by the National Government has a direct relation to the Lancashire cotton industry in so far that the imperialist policy in

India, which results in the mass poverty of the workers, has had a big effect in the contraction of the Indian market for Lancashire cotton goods. The National Government endeavours to maintain its rule in India by the "Iron Hand," while at the same time giving the appearance of an expansion of democratic rights. The die-hard section of the ruling class (represented by Churchill and Page-Croft) are alarmed at what might happen if the small percentage of workers and petty-bourgeoisie in India have the right to vote, and therefore want to maintain the open rule of the "Iron Heel" in India. Mosley comes forward also in opposition to the National Government with a view to persuading the Lancashire workers that their salvation lies in the suppression of the Indian masses, and in the vast resources of India being exploited by British imperialism. Lancashire is therefore becoming one of the centres of political conflicts within the ruling class, as well as the most important sector in capitalist economy.

There is no part of Britain where there is such a teeming working-class population. Over 300,000 cotton textile workers, tens of thousands of metal workers, railwaymen, dockers and miners. Over 600,000 unemployed workers—nearly one-third of the total number of unemployed workers in Britain. Great working-class struggles have taken place in the past few years. Cotton textile strikes in 1929, 1931 and 1932. Strikes of dock workers in Salford and Liverpool. Numerous strikes of waterproof workers in Manchester. Big demonstrations and marches of unemployed workers. All these mass struggles have each time been betrayed by the policy of the Labour and trade union leaders, who, when forced to call for strike action, utilised the first opportunity to betray the strike and assist the employers to drive the men back to work on reduced wages and worse conditions. Only in the case of the Manchester waterproof workers have their strikes been successful, due to the strong organised militant opposition within the union and the growing influence of the Communist Party.

Great Prospects for United Front.

Throughout Lancashire as a whole the workers have suffered considerable defeats, and the Labour and trade union leaders have assisted in splitting the forces of the workers, creating a feeling of confusion and, in many cases, hopelessness. It is in this situation that Mosley recognises a favourable ground for spreading fascist propaganda and is now concentrating all his forces to build up a mass basis for fascism in the industrial towns of Lancashire. If Mosley can succeed in establishing a firm basis in Lancashire then it will be a big step forward towards the growth of fascist influ-

ences in Britain, and a big setback for the working-class movement as a whole. On the other hand, there are very big possibilities for the growth of the united front, and for dealing decisive blows against the attacks of the employers and the National Government, against the menace of war and fascism both in the form of open Blackshirt propaganda and in the form of "constitutional" measures by the National Government, to prepare the way for fascism. Through the initiative of the Communist Party it was possible in Manchester to win wide mass support for a big counter-demonstration against Mosley at Belle Vue on September 29th. So great was the desire of the workers for unity, arising from this successful mobilisation, that the Manchester and Salford Trades Council (the most important in the country) was obliged to agree to organise an all-inclusive demonstration of all sections of the working class against war, and against fascist measures of the National Government. Despite the decision of the National Labour Party Conference early in September to ban all Labour M.P.s and other officials to speak on platforms with Communists, there was in Manchester in October a common platform from which spoke a number of Labour M.P.'s and leading Communists on the united front struggle against war and fascism. The mass pressure of the workers was able to force through the ban imposed by the Labour Party. In the November municipal elections it was possible in many decisive places in Lancashire to win the support of local Labour organisations and candidates for the united front proposals of the Communist Party. This was particularly the case in Bolton, in Harpurhey, and to a certain extent in Salford.

The good mass work of the Communists in Nelson brought pressure upon the Weavers' Association to organise a campaign throughout the whole of Lancashire against the joint proposals of the employers and county union officials to legalise wages at a reduced rate and to speed up work in the mills. It won the support of the Skipton Weavers' Association and the Colne Weavers' Association — the three Associations forming a Joint Committee to lead the campaign. Despite the character of the proposals (offering wage increases to some sections in order to enforce wage-cuts upon other sections) and the demagogic propaganda that legalisation would prevent further wage-cuts, there was a 40 per cent. opposition to the proposals in a ballot vote. The Joint Committee is timid and hesitant, dominated by strong reformist elements, but it is really the FIRST STEP in Lancashire to win over the local organisations for the building of a militant movement against the employers and the policy of the county union

officials. To the extent that the Party succeeds in mobilising the workers in the trade unions and in the mills, bringing pressure to force this Joint Committee forward, winning the support of the militant elements on the Committee, it will be possible to get a decisive change in the struggle of the Lancashire weavers as a whole.

Among the cotton spinners there is great discontent against the piecemeal attacks on wages and conditions, and considerable alarm at the proposal to destroy 10 million spindles, which mean closing down 100 mills and throwing 6,000 more out of work, whilst the employers are to receive huge sums in compensation. The Party is almost completely isolated from the cotton spinners, and does not take any active part in leading the fight on these vital issues.

Sectarian Tendencies the Main Barrier.

The main obstacle to the extension of the united front and the advance towards revolutionary struggle against capitalism in Lancashire is the paralysing influence of the Labour and trade union leaders, who try to hold the workers back from struggle, and the alarming weakness of the Party in its leadership of mass struggle. There is a big gap between the militant fighting spirit of the masses of workers in Lancashire and the policy of the Labour and trade union leaders. This fighting spirit of the workers has not been transformed into decisive influence in the working-class organisation in order to force the hands of the officials. The result is that even in big mass struggles, when the decisive moment comes, the trade union and Labour leaders are able to betray the interests of the workers. The Party is so weak and small that the workers have not recognised it to be an organisation to lead their struggles, but rather regard it as a propagandist body whose views might be quite correct, but as an organisation, not able to provide them with an alternative to the Labour and trade union leadership.

The main barrier to the advance of the Party in Lancashire is the long-standing heritage of sectarian tendencies which has existed for many years. It is true that there has been quite a big change in the approach to mass work, and a good improvement in Party leadership. But the situation is moving much more rapidly than the growth in Party influence, and improvement in Party leadership. It is not possible to break down age-old traditions within a short period. There still exist strong sectarian tendencies which isolate the Party from the mass issues in which the workers are interested. Lancashire was chosen by the League of Nations Union as the most important part of the country for the Ballot Vote on the question of war and the policy of the League of

Nations. This Peace Ballot is the biggest single mass issue in the whole of Lancashire. In one part of Manchester (Gorton and Openshaw) more than 75 organisations attended a Conference called by the League of Nations Union. The Communist Party was almost the only organisation not represented at this conference, and although it had the opportunity for a representative on the Peace Ballot Committee, it did not take advantage of this until weeks afterwards. Thousands of workers in Manchester volunteered to assist in carrying out the ballot, but the Party did not know of this. It is quite clear that this is not just an exception, or that it is a question of forgetfulness, but rather arises from an outlook which has existed for years. In many Party organisations there is expressed an open opposition to the building of the united front, whilst throughout the Party as a whole it is in the main accepted in words but not actually put into practice. There are good examples of united front work and good results achieved, but all these examples are the exception and only go to show what can be achieved if there is a thorough understanding throughout the Party of the urgent need to build the united front, and the whole Party mobilised to carry this through.

Party Leadership.

The decisive question for Lancashire is Party leadership. Many piecemeal changes have been made in the past three years, but none have been of a sufficient lasting character to make a drastic alteration. Only the first beginning has been made by the district leadership to mobilise the whole membership to carry out mass work, and even where the best results have been achieved, it is mainly due to the efforts of individual members who have good mass influence rather than the organised work of the Party as a whole. In fact, even militant workers do not see the Party as a REVOLUTIONARY ORGANISATION—they only see individual Communists who are active in the fight for the daily interests of the workers. The best factory cell in Manchester is among the tramwaymen. Every member of the cell has mass influence and plays a leading part in all the struggles against grievances in the different departments of the depot. But as a basic organisation of the Party, the factory cell has given no lead on how to unite the workers in the different departments around a common programme of action. The factory cell has no paper—it has not even issued a leaflet. In short, the membership has not regarded the cell as the LEADER of working-class struggles, uniting different sections of the workers, and from their experiences in the depot bring them forward into the broader class struggle against capitalism as a whole.

The improvement in trade union work is not confined to Manchester, but is also expressed in the growth of the opposition movement in Colne, Nelson and Skipton to the attacks of the cotton employers and the policy of the trade union officials. All the Party activities in the big weavers' strike in 1932 were OUTSIDE the union. The "Solidarity Movement" formed out of the strike had no real roots in the lower organisation of the union, and was mainly composed of individual Communists. It was inevitable that such a movement could not live long. But there is now a solid foundation for a wide militant movement of the weavers, having the full support of the local union organisations. The leadership of this movement is weak, with no clear policy of militant struggle. The full-time officials have a strong influence. Nevertheless, good mass work in the mills and personal approaches to the union collectors, will organise the mass pressure of the workers to transform the present Joint Committee into a real militant opposition.

Even with the improved trade union work, the Party in Lancashire has not understood how to utilise its increased influence to win the trade union branches to join in the struggle of the unemployed workers. With the biggest proportion of unemployed workers, Lancashire still remains the weakest district for unemployed activity. Yet it is the most favourable district for building a mass unemployed movement. In Manchester and many other towns in Lancashire the maximum allowances under the new Unemployment Act will mean big reductions for the unemployed, compared with the present scales of poor law relief. Everywhere it will mean a big blow against young workers, both in the cuts in benefit, and the plans to force them into slave camps. All the Party influence in the trade unions has been kept separate from this vital issue of the struggle against the Unemployment Act, due to the failure by the Party leadership to see the work in the unions not merely as something which concerns the sectional interests of the members of a particular trade union, but the vital struggles of the workers as a whole.

These big weaknesses in the leadership of mass struggles are reflected within the Party itself. The district leadership is not in close contact with the problems of the local Party Committees, and the tendency is to give leadership from the top, resulting in paper decisions which are never carried out in practice. Even in Manchester itself, where there has been a considerable improvement in Party leadership, its decisions are not translated into the life and activity of the Party units, and a big gap exists between the decisions of the leadership and the actual mobilisation of the Party membership. The tendency has been to try and

solve the task of carrying out mass work by the greater individual efforts of two or three Party leaders, instead of seeing the need to concentrate attention on building a strong leadership in each local cell and group, which would have the confidence and initiative to lead the fight of the workers on mass issues without always relying on the district leadership. The experience in the Belle Vue campaign against Mosley proved that, when a clear political aim is put before the membership and concrete leadership given, the whole membership can be mobilised for activity.

Together with this, collective leadership is very weak in Lancashire, and the feeling of responsibility by individual members in the district and local leadership is almost entirely absent. This is part of the whole problem of transforming the Party into a political mass organisation, because as a propagandist body merely there is no recognition of the need for collective leadership and bringing forward new leaders. Neither is there a burning recognition of the need to recruit members and to transform the work of the Party, so that new recruits are organised for activity for which they are best suited, and not merely fitted in to carry out routine tasks.

Congress Can Change Lancashire Situation.

The British Party Congress can mark a decisive change for the Party in Lancashire. A clear line for the extension of the united front and its application in the next General Election can provide a channel through which the Party can win the support of the decisive mass organisations for united action against war and fascism and against the employers' attacks, and to bring down the National Government. The Party which leads the fight for UNITY in Lancashire can win the mass support of the workers.

At the same time, nowhere in the country is there such an urgent need for the Party to combine its fight for the united front with a clear explanation of its fundamental principles and its revolutionary programme in the struggle for workers' Soviet power. The 13th Party Congress will discuss a revolutionary programme for the British Communist Party. This is a big advance (the first discussion of its kind at a British Party Congress), but it can only become a living issue for the workers if it is translated in all our work to answer the actual situation in Lancashire (as well as in other districts) and in each industry, town and village. It is not surprising that Communist candidates in elections receive low votes when the workers know nothing of what the Communists stand for, except for two or three weeks in the year when elections take place. The demands

of the Communist Party in elections are merely points for propaganda, instead of a platform for struggle all the year round, which mobilises the support of the workers and succeeds in securing the election of Communists to lead the fight to a higher stage.

Lancashire workers are faced with grave dangers—dangers which affect the British workers as a whole. The workers are moving forward to big class battles. 600,000 unemployed workers are facing big attacks. There exists a strong desire for the united front—a desire which is frustrated by the paralysing influence of the Labour and trade union leaders on the one hand, and the alarming weakness of the Party on the other. Capitalism intends to destroy 10,000,000 spindles and to close 100 spinning mills, and there is no effective mass movement of struggle to prevent

this. THIS SITUATION IS FRUITFUL GROUND FOR THE GROWTH OF FASCISM.

But there are also big prospects for the building of a powerful united front and a strong Communist Party. The Party Congress can give a decisive lead in this direction. The character of the 13th Party Congress is expressed in the fact that 600 working-class organisations have been invited to send representatives to take part. It expresses the fact that the Congress will deal with mass issues affecting the workers. The biggest hall in Manchester will be the scene of a tremendous workers' demonstration to welcome the Congress. It will be an inspiration for the Lancashire workers and will make a decisive change of such a character that will enable the Party in Lancashire to become a mass organisation leading the struggle of the workers.

SOME PROBLEMS OF PARTY WORK IN SCOTLAND

By PETER KERRIGAN.

THE most urgent problems facing the Party organisation in Scotland are the extension of the United Front and the consolidation and growth of the Party Organisation. Our Congress can clear the air on these two questions and thus make DECISIVE PROGRESS to achieving the task which Comrade Lenin set for another District in 1921—"To create a very good, really proletarian, really mass COMMUNIST PARTY in this part."

The proletariat of Scotland has a tremendous revolutionary past, and to-day the Class Struggle in Britain is nowhere more sharply expressed than in this so-called "depressed area."

From the days of the weavers' struggles in Glasgow and Paisley during the Chartist Movement over a century ago, through the Engineering and Ship-building workers' strikes before the war, during the heroic struggle of the Clyde workers led by the Shop Stewards' Movement of the war years, the courageous struggle during the General Strike, the mighty unemployed street demonstrations of 1931 and successive Hunger Marches of the Unemployed, Glasgow and the Clyde Valley have been the centres of the struggle in Britain. It should be borne in mind also that it was the Fife miners who, sixty years ago, were the first in Britain to win the eight-hour day and who are in the van to-day in the struggle against the capitalists as witness the success of the U.M.S. in leading the fight for safety in the mines. In Lanarkshire in pit strike after pit strike the miners are almost daily giving examples of their heroism in the class struggle. Finally, while there is no considerable peasantry left in Scotland, we still read in the Press occasional reports of crofters seizing land. The Highland clearances and the present condition of

agriculture in Scotland have created an agricultural population many thousands strong.

Is the Party influence increasing, especially among the ORGANISED workers (no one can question the growth of the influence of the Party among the Unemployed)? I think yes, and I just want to make reference to a few examples to support this: (1) In the A.E.U., the decisive Union in Engineering, the winning of the Chairmanship of the Glasgow District in the elections just concluded; (2) The decisions of Glasgow Trades Council in favour of the N.U.W.M. proposals of work schemes for the unemployed supporting the fight against the slave camps and the operation of Part II of the Unemployment Act, also its support for the N.U.W.M. Deputation to the Town Council demanding that the Council make up the cuts to the Unemployed, and its latest decision by a two to one majority to call an all-in conference in Glasgow against Fascism and War; (3) The successes won by the U.M.S. in its fight for safety in the pits and support now being developed among the miners, including local officials of the Old Union for the Unity Proposals of the U.M.S., i.e., one Miners' Union in Scotland on the basis of a fight for the interests of the miners; safety; 7-hour day; wage increase, etc.

WHY THEN HAS OUR VOTE DECLINED IN MOST PLACES IN SCOTLAND IN THE RECENT MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS, AND FURTHER, WHY AREN'T WE BUILDING THE PARTY?

In the first place the workers see the need for bringing down the National Government and its local representatives and the alternative appears to them as the Labour Party. We have not been able to convince them that in elections our Party was a serious factor and that it is vital in their own interests

to support the Party and its candidates. Further, the United Front in many cases was not built correctly on burning issues for the worker, and, up to the 1934 Municipal Elections, was not operated or even introduced at all in what to thousands of workers is the most burning immediate issue, namely, the elections. When we did bring the question of the United Front into the last elections it was very late and mistakes were made. It is clear we must make the fullest use of the elections, including the Parliamentary Elections, to develop the closest united action with the workers in the T.U.'s, Co-ops. and Labour Party. The issues are here; for example, the new Unemployed Scales and the Slave Camps (and it may be in Glasgow, as a result of our efforts, some immediate progress will be recorded in bringing the Labour Party and T.U. workers into joint United Struggle against the scales). Emphasis should be placed on the importance of developing this joint Action NOW. When this is said, however, it brings out more clearly the need for this unity expressing itself in the elections in united working class struggle for, and the return of candidates pledged to fight for these Working Class demands. It is vital also that we should combat all illusions which exist among the Labour Party workers about the character of the Labour leadership and a Labour Government, and ensure the return of a group of Communist M.P.'s along with a majority of Labour M.P.'s on the United Front fight. The essential thing is to strengthen the Class Fight of the workers and by ensuring its fullest expression in the electoral fight, break through among the decisive sections of the workers in Scotland, that is, the workers in the T.U.'s, Co-ops. and Labour Party.

What about Recruitment to the Party? What about Factory Cells and Street Cells being built? What about the working of our Party organisation and the retention of members? We cannot sidestep this problem. I want to refer to some aspects of it. The successful development of United Front action ought to mean also new, vast numbers of the workers being brought closer to, and thousands into, the Party ranks. Our failure to recruit to the Party or even to get the importance of building the Party understood by many of our leading Party comrades in the District and Locals, is due in my opinion in one important aspect, to a failure to understand THE ROLE OF THE PARTY. The Party is taken for granted. But that the Party is "the vanguard of the Working Class;" and not only the vanguard but "it must also be a division of the Class Army, an intimate part of the Working Class, striking deep roots into the very life of that Class" (Com. Stalin), is not understood in our Party and is therefore not continually explained to the workers in all our activities. This is a basic weakness we must overcome. Of course, there are other things to be considered. We will need to pay

special attention to breaking down the conception that exists among many workers who are fairly close to the Party, that Party membership means giving up entirely their previous mode of life, maybe even their friends, and also working day and night on the tasks which too often are the only ones seen by the outside workers, namely, chalking streets, canvassing "Daily Workers," attending Party meetings, operating in a Street Cell or Unit as a mere cog in a machine with no relaxation at all. There is also the irresponsible attitude towards elementary duties that exists in some parts of the Party. For example, failure to carry through meetings on time, failure to deliver "Daily Workers" or to turn out on canvass, looseness with finance, lack of comradeship towards new members or even to non-Party workers—ALL of which become apparent to the workers and create a barrier between them and the Party. This raises the question not only of stamping out these evils but of developing, especially in the Locals, a leadership capable of giving the political direction necessary to avoid these things, and also of providing the new cadres for District leadership and Central leadership of the Party.

I think that more attention will need to be paid to local leadership by the District. More close personal contacts by the leading Party comrades with Cells and Fractions is needed. We can ensure that problems affecting the workers in the streets or factories are considered at all our meetings. We can organise more businesslike meetings, at the same time ensuring further consultation with our members Instructors, who are capable of not only transmitting decisions, but helping appropriate organs to apply them locally, will also help to remedy our organisational weakness and with more attention to social activity and elementary detail work, the present tremendous gap between our Party influence in Scotland and our Party membership can be rapidly reduced.

There is one final point. We have made least progress among the agricultural workers and the small farmers. It is significant that it is amongst them and the University Students (sons and daughters of the petty-bourgeoisie in the main, with a sprinkling of children of the upper section of the Working Class) that the Scottish Nationalist Movement has made some headway. In view of this and also the Fascist associations of some of the leading elements in the Scottish Nationalist Movement (Sir Ian Colquhoun) we must face up to this problem definitely in Scotland. To carry on the struggle against them we will need to thoroughly examine this movement deal with its basis and its policy and explain its reactionary capitalist essence before those workers who are at present under its influence or likely to become under its influence.

2 9 0 3 0

Twenty Nine Thousand and Thirty Pounds

This is the magnificent total subscribed by workers to the various funds for the support of the DAILY WORKER during the five years of its existence.

WHY ?

Because it is the only Working-Class Newspaper in Great Britain.

Do you read it every day ?

Do you pass it on ?

Do you get new readers and thereby extend the battle front ?

If not, why don't you ?

It is your paper, fighting for you every day in every way.

Buy it. Read it. Pass it on.