

FAMINE ENTERS

the British Mining Districts



BREAD

The WORKERS' INTERNATIONAL RELIEF OF ENGLAND, the sister organization of the INTERNATIONAL WORKERS' AID OF AMERICA, in a cablegram urges immediate assistance in the famine relief work among the miners' children in the starvation districts of CHOPWELL, BIRTLEY, STANLEY, HIGHSPEN and BLAYTON where they are distributing 50,000 food packages weekly. We must aid them in this splendid work. It takes only fifty cents to make up one package of wholesome food.

International Workers' Aid,
National Office, 1553 W. Madison St.,
Chicago, Ill.

Please find enclosed \$..... for packages of food for the children of the British miners in the famine districts. I will try and send you a weekly contribution of \$.....

Signed

Address

City and State.....

HOW MANY PACKAGES WILL YOU PROVIDE FOR?

BRITISH LABOR APPEALS

The General Council of the Trade Union Congress and the Miners' Federation have issued a joint manifesto,

in which they say:

"Actual starvation has invaded the miners' homes. The women and children are suffering through the action of the Poorlaw authorities, with the connivance of the government, in cutting down the scale of relief and through the curtailment of school meals. In trying to bring the miners into subjection the government has not scrupled to endeavor to check the generous impulses of the public in voluntarily subscribing to the relief funds by which the worst consequences of the tragedy in the coal fields have been partially alleviated.

"The struggle has now reached a stage, when, in the words of the American Federation of Labor, it is necessary to give until it hurts to relieve the miners from defeat by starvation."

The WORKERS MONTHLY



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SEPTEMBER, 1926

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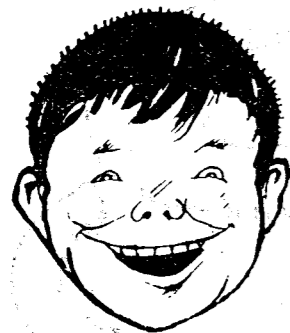
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The Workers Monthly is a magazine that every intelligent worker will enjoy. To reach as many of these workers as possible, we appeal to you for help. We ask that every reader of the Workers Monthly send **AT LEAST ONE** name and address and allow us to reach this worker with a sample copy—to make one more contact with intelligent, militant workers.

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—El Machete, official organ, Communist Party of Mexico.

"Between you and me—we will conquer all America!"

THE WORKERS MONTHLY

Official Organ WORKERS COMMUNIST PARTY OF AMERICA

MAX BEDACHT, Editor.

Single copies, twenty-five cents—yearly subscriptions, two dollars; foreign, two fifty. Published monthly by the Daily Worker Publishing Company, 1113 W. Washington Blvd., Chicago, Ill. Entered as Second Class Matter November 8, 1924, at the postoffice of Chicago, Illinois, under the act of March 3, 1879.

VOL. V.

290

SEPTEMBER, 1926

No. 11

Seven Years of the Communist Party of America

By C. E. Ruthenberg

THE Workers (Communist) Party celebrated its seventh anniversary on September 1. Seven years of struggle lie behind it—seven long years in which it has held aloft the banner of the proletarian revolution in the face of the most bitter persecution and against the most powerful enemy.

The history of these seven years is the history of the development of the party from a Communist propaganda organization into a Communist Party which has learned to make itself part of the struggles of the workers here and now and in fighting these battles to teach the workers the necessity of a revolutionary struggle for the overthrow of the capitalist system.

The movement which crystallized in the Communist Party had its origin and gained its inspiration from the proletarian revolution in Russia. Although there was a left wing in the Socialist Party as far back as 1912, which fought against barring the advocacy of a revolution through force, although it was under the pressure

of this left wing that the St. Louis declaration against the World War was made, it was not until the end of the year 1918 that this left wing took a definite form.

In November, 1918, with the support of the Lettish branch of Boston, the "Revolutionary Age" made its appearance. The left wing in the Socialist Party, greatly strengthened through the Russian Proletarian Revolution and the general revolutionary situation in Europe, quickly rallied around the "Revolutionary Age" and began the struggle to conquer the party and commit it to a revolutionary program.

The answer of the right wing leadership of the Socialist Party was to suspend and expel the left wing, particularly after it had become clear that the left wing had elected the new national executive committee in the party referendum. In June, 1919, a conference of the left wing, called under the auspices of the left wing locals in Boston and Cleveland, and the left wing section of the New York City local, was held, at which a national organization of the left wing was perfected, a national council elected and a manifesto and program stating the principles of the left wing issued.

A difference as to policy developed in the Left Wing Conference, one group desiring to immediately split from the Socialist Party and to issue a call for a convention to organize the Communist Party, the other proposing that the struggle within the Socialist Party be continued until the national convention of the party, which was called for August 31.

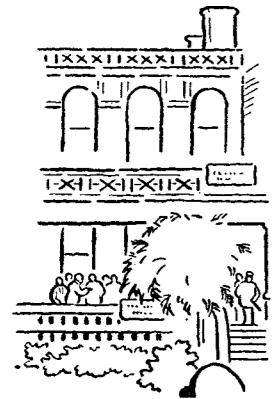
On this issue a division developed in the left wing forces, the first group issuing a call for a convention to organize the Communist Party to be held on September 1, 1919, the second, through the National Council of the Left Wing, continuing the struggle within the Socialist Party, with the avowed purpose, however, of joining in the organization of the Communist Party at the September convention.

At the August 31 convention of the Socialist Party the left wingers were barred from the hall, the police being called in for that purpose. Part of the delegates thus barred held a separate convention and organized the Communist Labor Party and the others went over to

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the convention for the organization of the Communist Party which opened the following day. Thus on August 31-September 1, the Communist Party and the Communist Labor Party came into existence, of which the Workers (Communist) Party is the lineal descendant.



MACHINISTS HALL
Convention Hall of the Socialist Party and the Communist Labor Party, 1919.

During the two years that followed a number of shifts in the alignments took place in the efforts to unite the two parties. This was finally achieved in May, 1921. A new division took place over the question of the formation of the Workers Party. This was liquidated in 1922. In 1923 the underground Communist Party went out of existence and the Workers (Communist) Party became the organized expression of the Communist movement in this country.

The Party in 1919.

WITH this brief sketch of the movement leading up to the organization of the Party, we can turn to the development of the Party during the seven years of its participation in the class struggle in this country. The article will deal rather with the intellectual development of the movement, that is, the development of its policies and its tactics rather than with a presentation of the various struggles in which it participated.

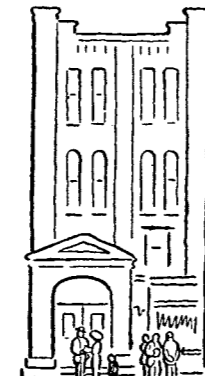
The Communist Party was born in a period of revolutionary struggle. The Russian Proletarian Revolution had been victorious. The Hungarian Soviets were in power. Revolutionary struggles were raging in Germany. In Italy the workers were on the march. The issue on which the left wing carried on its struggle within the Socialist Party was the interpretation of these events—that is, on the basis that life itself was proving that Socialism could only be established thru the overthrow of the capitalist state power and the establishment of a dictatorship of the proletariat which would reconstruct the economic system.

It was to be expected under these circumstances that this question would play a big part in the life and work of the Party and so the Communist Party in 1919 was little more than a propaganda society teaching the lesson of the proletarian revolution to be learned from the experiences of the workers in the European countries. It is true that the Party endeavored to connect this



The Left Wing Singing The International.

propaganda with the events of the struggles of the workers in this country. Thus, the Communist Party, during the four months of open existence which the government permitted it in 1919, entered actively into the struggles of the workers—the great steel strike and the miners' strike of that period. It did not, however, enter these struggles with a program of fighting the immediate battles and aiding the workers to win their fight but rather to use the event of the struggle for the purpose of carrying on agitation to show the necessity of the overthrow of the capitalist state power and the establishment of a dictatorship of the proletariat.



"SMOLNY"
Communist Party Convention Hall, 1919.

The Communist Party of 1919 stood outside of the labor movement, endeavoring to draw the workers into its ranks thru agitation and propaganda which pointed to the necessity of a revolutionary Party fighting for the overthrow of capitalism.

The bitter onslaught of the government against the Communist Party at the end of the year 1919 deepened the tendency for the Party to become merely a propaganda society. During this persecution, nearly four thousand members of the Party were arrested and held for deportation and imprisonment. This persecution drove the Party underground and the immediate result of its being forced into an underground existence was to intensify the tendency to become a propaganda society of the principle of revolutionary overthrow of the capitalist government without concerning itself with the immediate present day struggles of the workers.



Jack Reed hitching up his pants in preparation for a speech.

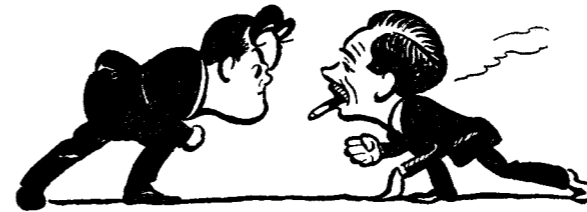
The Struggle Toward a Communist Policy.

The struggle out of this sectarian position was a hard and long one. It lasted thru the years 1920 and 1921.

The first phase of this struggle was expressed in the new orientation of the Party in relation to work within the trade unions. The Party, in 1919 and during 1920, was isolated from the trade union movement. The Party had not yet learned the necessity of organizing its members for systematic penetration of the trade unions in order to win the mass organizations of the workers for the revolutionary struggle against capitalism. In 1921 the Party revised its trade union policy and adopt-

ed the correct Communist policy of working within the existing trade unions.

The second phase of the struggle for a correct Communist policy found its expression in the struggle within the Party over the question of the organization of the Workers Party and finally in the form of the struggle in regard to the liquidation of the underground Communist Party. Behind all these different issues which arose in regard to these questions, was the fundamental issue of the participation of the Party in the class struggle as



REED Left and Right, GERBER Chicago, 1919.

it manifested itself in the present and in formulating programs and policies which would enable it to make its starting point in moving the workers towards a revolutionary struggle the present development of class consciousness among the American workers.

The Communist Party Today.

Today the Workers (Communist) Party no longer stands outside of the labor movement and the manifestations of the class struggles of the workers in this country. It has become part of these struggles. It has learned that there is no phase of the fight of the workers in relation to their present situation that the Party should not have a part in, should not formulate programs for, and use to develop class consciousness of the workers and teach them the need of a militant revolutionary struggle against the capitalist system.

The Party has not only learned this correct Communist policy but it has reorganized its forces so that it can effectively apply its strength in the class struggle. In place of the isolated, territorial and language branches, it has organized shop and street nuclei and in addition to these, trade union fractions, the language propaganda fractions, fractions in co-operatives and fraternal organizations and wherever the workers gather together in organizations in their industries.

Seven years of experience has taught the Party that it must be the steel rod running thru and combining all forms of workers' organizations; that it must be the initiator of a common policy for these workers' organizations; that thru its nuclei and fractions it stimulates into common action, workers, organized in trade unions, in co-operatives in shop councils, in fraternal organiza-

tions and concentrates their combined strength against the capitalist class and the capitalist government.

The Party has learned that it must utilize every form of opposition to the capitalist system and the capitalist government in aid of the revolutionary struggles of the workers.

It has learned the need of work among the farmers in order to ally them with the workers in the struggle against the capitalist class and government. It sees the need of organizing the Negroes for the struggle against racial discrimination and to ally this struggle with the struggle of the workers against the capitalists. It has become the exponent of the foreign born workers in their fight against the foreign born exception laws. It is stimulating the struggle against American imperialism by aiding in organizing opposition to the imperialist adventures of the American capitalists in the West Indies, Central and South America.

Today, the Workers (Communist) Party participates in and organizes and drives forward all these phases of the struggle against the capitalist class and the capitalist government. It does so because it understands that only from these beginnings, thru the consolidation and concentration of all phases of the struggle against the capitalists will ultimately develop that revolutionary force which will overthrow the capitalist government and set up the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The goal of the Communist Party remains what it was in 1919. It has learned, however, that the way to reach that goal is not only thru propagating the idea of a revolutionary overthrow of capitalism but by participation in the present struggles of the workers, stimulating them to more aggressive struggle, teaching the workers in the process of these struggles the necessity of the proletarian revolution and thus generating the force



The Platform at the 1919 Convention of the Communist Party.

which will actually achieve the goal for which the Communist Party is fighting—the overthrow of the capitalist class and its government and the establishment of the Soviet government and a proletarian dictatorship.

What Do the Elections Mean To Us?

By Max Bedacht

ELECTION day is fastly approaching. In a country of "self-government" election day is an occurrence of highest importance. From the standpoint of the "self-governers" it is important because their only act of "self-government" consists in depositing a slip of paper in a ballot box once in a great while, on election day. The remaining days the "self-governers" rest content with being governed. But election day is also important from the point of view of those who have penetrated the fraud of self-government, who know its real character and apply their revolutionary energy to the overthrow of this election system by overthrowing the rule of its beneficiary, the capitalist class. For these revolutionists election day and the period immediately preceding that day is the time when the masses are more or less interested in what they term "politics." They can be approached with political questions and problems. Moreover, election day itself and its practice, can, to a degree, help disillusion the masses still under the spell of the fraud of self-government.

What Is This "Self-Government"?

Political action is not a popular science in America. This is in crying contradiction to the very idea of self-government. It is necessary for a "self-governor" to know how to govern. But the outstanding aim of any and all training that the future citizen receives in the schools and other educational institutions of the United States is not how to govern, how to rule, but how to obey. To cover up this contradiction the idea of a representative government, or government by representatives, is being perverted. This perversion was shown up long ago. When the people of Paris through an insurrection, demanded the expulsion of the counter-revolutionary Girondins from the revolutionary French Convention in May, 1793, the president of the Convention harangued the insurrectionary masses assembled around the meeting hall, imploring them to go home and thus preserve the freedom of action for the Convention. But from the crowd he was met with cries: "Citizen president, who ever told you that you and your Convention are entitled to any freedom of action? You are here in the name of the people and the people are here to give you orders." Of course, this conception of the revolutionary people of Paris was never the conception nor was it ever the practice of bourgeois parliamentarism. Such a conception would run counter to the interests of class rule. Therein lies exactly the contradiction between the illusion of self-government and the reality of class rule. Under these conditions the right of self-government reduces itself to the questionable privilege of who should swing the lash over the "self-governers?" The realization of this fact by the masses is, naturally, not only the end of democratic illusions, but also the beginning of the revolutionary struggle for power. Any struggle of the working masses for self-

government is in contradiction to the government of, by and for the capitalist class which now works under the disguise of democracy. The problem of self-government of the working masses can be solved only through a dictatorship of the proletariat which displaces the present dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

The Significance of Elections for the Working People.

Since we are fully aware of this our approach to the election campaign is naturally decisively influenced by this knowledge. We cannot consider elections as the manifestation of political action. But democratic illusions prevail. The masses react to political questions only on or around election day. Therefore we must make the election campaign the lever with which to try to overcome the inertia of the masses and set the politically inactive workers into motion. We cannot leave the final disillusionment of the masses to perpetual unsuccessful participation in elections. The masses are blaming failure not on the system but on the candidates elected. We must teach the masses to support their action on election day with constant political action on their part, with political mass action. We must help them to learn that they must not delegate their political powers on election day and then forget about them, but that they must try to direct and influence the elected individuals or bodies after election. This is at the same time political action and a school for political education. The very impossibility of directing the elected officials and bodies after election will teach the workers the inadequacy of democracy as a means of self-government for the workers.

The present political situation is very favorable for such work on our part. There is taking place a general regrouping in the political lineup of the country. The old political parties are disintegrating. The old political divisions developed at a time when the advance of any capitalist group denoted the advance of all parts of the capitalist class. Today, however, these divisions no longer conform to the situation. During the general economic advance of the capitalist class the petty bourgeoisie got its share of the spoils, although the political direction of the country was always in the hands of merely a group of the big bourgeoisie. It is significant that the petty bourgeois rebellions against the old parties in the past had their basis and strength in the agricultural districts and did not recruit any considerable strength among the urban petty bourgeoisie.

The Rebellion of the Petty Bourgeoisie.

Today we live in the epoch of industrial monopolies. The political rule of one group or the other of the big bourgeoisie becomes more and more a control of those monopolies over society as a whole, but also over all other bourgeois groups. The specific financial and political interests of those monopolistic groups no longer

benefit the capitalist class as a whole, but, on the contrary, tend to seal the fate of the petty bourgeoisie. That class sees the disappearance of its hopes of a quick elevation into the higher sphere of the big bourgeoisie. It feels the ground of its own economic independence slip from under its feet and down below it sees the pit of proletarian misery into which it is falling. The petty bourgeoisie consequently grow dissatisfied with the political rule of the big bourgeoisie. Within the old parties there develop political rebellions of the petty bourgeoisie. These rebellions are not merely temporary phenomena but are manifestations of fundamental divisions of the capitalist class.

The Petty Bourgeoisie, the Farmers and the Proletariat.

Into this development there enters a factor of supreme importance which tends to give more revolutionary significance to it than it already possesses. A short while ago any political revolt of the urban petty bourgeoisie would inevitably have found an undisputed road to unity with the domination of the farmers' movement. Today, this unification and domination is no longer a matter of course. Forces have developed within the farmers' movement which tend more and more toward a political alliance with the industrial proletariat and against the urban petty bourgeoisie. The economic cause of the political revolt of the farmers, the comparative backwardness of agricultural forms of production as against the tremendous development of industrial production, has not only set the farmers against the big bourgeoisie, but is gradually setting them against capitalism as an institution. And the only force willing or at least capable of fighting against capitalism that the farmer can see is the industrial proletariat. Even though the farmer by no means agrees at this time with methods and aims of the struggle of the advanced portion of the proletariat, he nevertheless displays a tendency for an alliance with the workers. This tendency is a disturbing element in the way of the unity of the petty bourgeoisie and the farmers on the political field. The more the revolutionary section of the working class, the Communists, succeed in developing the militancy of this tendency the more chance is there for avoiding a new period of illusions. The bankruptcy of democratic parliamentarism in all European states is the bankruptcy of the petty bourgeoisie as the savior of capitalist society. A victory of tendencies favoring a proletarian alliance among the farmer masses in America would obviate the experience of a political bankruptcy of the petty bourgeoisie. It would lead much more directly to the death of democratic illusions with the masses. Of course, we do not close our eyes to the almost absolute certainty that even a political alliance of the farmers with the industrial proletariat may for some time be dominated by a leadership with petty bourgeois ideology or even of individual petty bourgeois. But the replacement of a petty bourgeois leadership of a political fighting alliance of the farmers with the industrial proletariat is a much less complicated task than the elimination of the illusion that the petty bourgeoisie will save society.

The Only Way Out.

An alliance of the farmers with a politically active

proletariat could not be anything but a fighting alliance, with the politically more ripe and economically more advanced proletariat as leader. Such an alliance would push to the foreground the contradiction between self-government on the one hand, and democracy on the other. It would necessarily make the self-government of the working masses and the farmers the order of the day and would impress the masses of exploited with the truth that the only solution for the contradiction is the replacement of the self-government of the big bourgeoisie, the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, democracy, by the self-government of the working masses, a workers' and farmers' government.

The Representative and Mass Action.

The value of all of our activities in the election campaign must be judged from the point of view of whether they shape or hasten this development. The character of our election campaign is thus a predetermined one. We cannot and will not carry on a mere vote-getting campaign. Our aim is to move the center of gravity of political action away from the action of the elected representatives to the action of the masses. It must be shown that even the vote for a Communist does not finally solve the problem of the worker. Of course, the Communist would truthfully represent the workers' interests. But without the support of parallel political action of the masses outside of congress the efforts of the representative would be futile even for such aims as capitalism could grant. Mass action of the workers outside of congress must support the representative inside while the representative inside must be the spokesman of the demands and activities of the masses outside of parliament.

Partial Demands and the Revolutionary Struggle.

While thus our whole aim is the development of a movement for the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism, yet the basis on which we promote this movement is furnished by the immediate demands and immediate issues of the working class. The masses are not yet willing to fight a revolutionary struggle. They are willing and ready to fight for their immediate needs and demands. And the struggle for these immediate demands is potentially a revolutionary struggle:

First, because it sets up the demands of the workers as a program for the government as against the present program of the government, which embodies the needs and demands of the big bourgeoisie.

Secondly, because in rallying the masses of workers for a struggle for these needs and demands it demonstrates to the masses the dictatorial character of democracy and puts the exercise of self-government of the exploited masses on the agenda of the day.

It is for these reasons that our program in the coming elections and in all elections under capitalism is not merely the "overthrow of capitalism"; it also contains proposals for the solution of many ills of capitalism even under capitalism. But while the reformists tell the masses: "Elect us and we will do this and that for you," we Communists tell the workers: "In order to alleviate your conditions you must fight for this and that."

Movements—and Programs.

It is from exactly this point of view that Marx said that one real movement is worth a dozen programs. One real mass movement of the American workers for the realization of one of their common demands on the political field is worth a dozen socialist party or socialist labor party programs, including their declaration for a socialist society. The mass movement will lead to revolution: the Socialist Party or Socialist Labor Party program will prevent it.

The Issue of a Labor Party.

It is also from this point of view that we Communists raise the issue of a Labor Party. Yes, the Labor Party will be reformist. Yes, it will not make or organize the revolution. But it will gather the workers into one organization for a struggle for workers' demands. It will create a political movement of the workers, something which does not yet exist, and in this sense it is worth a dozen programs. It does not remove the necessity for the existence and activities of a revolutionary, a Communist Party. On the contrary. It creates a situation of real struggle where the leadership of a conscious revolutionary party becomes more necessary. It creates the proletariat as a separate political entity which needs leadership, while at present the proletariat is an integral part of the political entity of the capitalist class, has no existence separate and apart from the capitalist class and therefore does not in the narrow sense present the problem of a political proletarian leadership. Under such conditions the revolutionists, the Communists, do not and cannot lead the proletariat, or a considerable portion of it, but only the revolutionists among the proletariat. The S. L. P. sees its revolutionary quality in its insistence on confining its leadership to the S. L. P. The Communists see their revolutionary quality and value attested to by the masses of workers they can set into motion fighting under their leadership.

Thus, our election program contains not only demands on the capitalist state. It also contains demands on the workers. It tells them: "You ought to get this or that; but you cannot get it without fighting for it. You cannot make the capitalist state give up this or that to you if you do not organize all of your forces on the political field into one party and through that party fight for your aims." The general acceptance of these

aims, the immediate character of these demands, is a necessary prerequisite for the creation of an all-inclusive political party of the workers. In other words: the program for a Labor Party must be an expression of the generally accepted needs and demands of the workers about which there are no differences, irrespective of present political affiliation.

While the Workers (Communist) Party thus puts forward such general aims and demands of the working class as should form the rallying point of the whole working class around a Labor Party, the Party also clearly raises the issue of the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism. It sets up as the ultimate aim of all political proletarian struggle the establishment of a Workers' and Farmers' Government, as against the present government of the capitalists. Such a Workers' and Farmers' Government, in the nature of things, cannot be anything else than a dictatorship of the class of the exploited, the workers, in league with the poor farmers.

The Next Congressional Election.

Considered in this light, the next congressional elections assume very great importance. Not that the problem is any different from that of any former elections. But the very disintegration of the old capitalist parties puts a special burden upon the Communists. If we permit the undisturbed crystallization of all existing tendencies which lead away from the Republican and Democratic Parties there is bound to be, sooner or later, a unification of all the divergent forces making up these movements. Of course, the very divergency of interests existing among these groups and tendencies would inevitably lead to a later break-up and would end in a division between the different bourgeois interests on the one hand, and those of the industrial workers and the poor farmers on the other. But such a development would be slow and painful. It can be avoided almost completely if the energies of the Communists concentrate on the task of directing the streams of petty bourgeois and proletarian revolts against the old parties into separate channels. These streams still run parallel in spite of all differences of an economic or political nature. The near future must decide whether this parallelity turns into eventual organic, even though only temporary unity, or whether it reaches a final and definite parting point, with the proletarian masses going one way, toward the left, and the petty bourgeois groups another, to the right.

The Catholic Rebellion in Mexico

By Manuel Gomez

REVOLUTIONS are fought and won, and as a result certain revolutionary conquests are written into law. When the acute revolutionary situation has given way to the peaceful dominance of the new regime, these laws have to be applied. But here it develops that the enemy has been by no means finally disposed of. Out from its temporary hiding places creeps the old regime. Every attempt to apply the new laws is a signal for renewed struggle. The fight then begins all over again on propositions that are officially assumed to have been accepted by the entire population as a matter of course.

A revolution has not really triumphed until the revolutionary gains are established beyond question in the new society. Until then, every one of them is a possible point of focus for reactionary counter-attack.

The Mexican revolution wrote its Magna Charta in the Constitution of 1917. Two of the most typical sections are Articles 27 and 123, both of which were acclaimed thruout Mexico on their adoption as embodying great revolutionary gains. Nevertheless, so complex were the forces that became assimilated to the victorious revolutionary regime, so paralyzing was the dead weight of old class relationships upon the government, and so persistent was the outside opposition, that years passed without any determined effort to put them into effect. Setbacks encountered with regard to one constitutional provision opened the way for resistance to others. Slowly, the reactionary front crystallized again along the whole line. It was—and still is—a weak and wavering front, for the reactionary classes must again be awakened politically before they can be galvanized into activity on a big scale, but it has gained confidence thru the idea that help may come to it from unexpected sources.

The present Catholic rebellion brings to a crisis the entire period of post-revolutionary resistance to the conquests of the revolution. None but a philistine could believe that it is merely a religious struggle, or even a strictly Church struggle.

It is a well known fact that the United States has been a prime factor in obstructing the application of the Mexican constitution from the beginning. Article 27, which more than any other may be said to symbolize the revolutionary aspirations, was the target for incessant pounding by the oil interests, their Wall Street bankers, and their Washington political executive committee.

Neither Carranza nor Obregon made any determined effort to apply Article 27 in the face of the U. S. imperialist fury. Calles attempted to confront the storm. His administration presented to the Mexican congress two laws, known as the Alien Land Law and the Petroleum Law. They were passed on January 1st, 1926—nine years after the promulgation of the famous Queretaro constitution. These were enabling laws for the enforce-

ment of Article 27. Diplomatic pressure by the United States government began in October, 1925, even before the oil and land laws were adopted. On October 29th, the U. S. ambassador addressed a series of significant inquiries to the Mexican Foreign Office. Notes from Secretary of State Kellogg followed in impressive succession. Threats from both Wall Street and Washington filled the air. All through the winter and into the spring of this year the offensive continued—until finally during the month of March the Calles government gave way. Calles, who could not present as resolute an opposition to American imperialism as was necessary because of the petty-bourgeois defects of his regime, conceded most of the U. S. demands in a series of administrative regulations for the enforcement of the new laws.

Relations between the United States and Mexican governments are still tense. For American imperialism is by no means satisfied with the national-revolutionary program of Calles. The atmosphere of conflict continues and becomes more threatening from day to day.

Taking comfort from this atmosphere that the native Mexican reactionary elements become bolder. The abortive counter-revolution of Adolfo de la Huerta in 1923-24 was little more than a military tour de force. The present situation in Mexico reveals an attempt to elevate the opposition into a wide-spread, deep-going movement with a common reactionary ideology.

American imperialism is obviously not the only enemy of the revolutionary constitution of 1917, nor even of Article 27. This article, besides striking at foreign monopoly control of Mexico's oil and other resources, includes the revolutionary agrarian program for the break-up of big landed estates. It also includes most of the constitutional provisions against the power of the Catholic Church.

Mexican landed aristocrats have banded themselves together in the so-called *Sindicato de Agricultores*, which maintains armed "white guards" in various parts of the Republic to intimidate the peasants and the local agrarian commissions charged with the carrying out of the land laws. The *Sindicato de Agricultores* is a closely-knit organization carrying on constant guerrilla warfare against Article 27 of the constitution by all possible means, legal, extra-legal and illegal.

But upon the Roman Catholic Church in Mexico falls naturally the task of uniting and expressing all of the elements of the opposition. The Church with its peculiar religio-political position, its over-powering traditions and its wide-spread ramifications among the masses of the people, is the manifest point of focus of Mexican reaction.

The reactionary quick-step is, therefore, signaled by a concentration of struggle around the anti-clerical provisions of the constitution.

Twenty-five thousand priests are on a general strike, refusing to perform any clerical function. An economic boycott, organized by wealthy Catholic laymen with the connivance of Rome, aims to paralyze the life of the country and thus bring the government to its knees. President Calles, petty bourgeois revolutionary-nationalist, is forced to use every governmental and extra-governmental instrument in trying to apply the anti-clerical provisions of the Mexican constitution, which had long ago been established by force of arms. The entire nation is aroused. American imperialism peers eagerly over the border, hanging on the outcome. Organized reaction, clerical and otherwise, is once more engaging the forces of the Mexican revolution.

The national revolutionary front is standing firm. If the international situation does not take a more decisive turn, and if President Calles takes the requisite steps, relying more confidently than in the past upon the laboring masses, the Church power may now be finally disposed of.

The Catholic Church was dis-established in Mexico as far back 1857, when the Jaurez pro-capitalist movement, in an early attempt to sweep away semi-feudal incumbrances, launched out against all the bulwarks of the old aristocracy. Jaurez helped to dispossess the peasants of the land, thus laying the basis for new agrarian problems. But he broke up many of the old aristocratic centers of vantage. In the constitution of 1857, and in the Reform Laws Jaurez's regime initiated what was to be the Mexican Reformation.

Church and state were separated, never again to be united. The Church was forbidden to hold property (this was unconsciously part of the classic pro-capitalist program to free the land from incumbering restrictions). Secular orders, monasteries and convents were suppressed. Education was secularized. The religious oath was abolished, and marriage was declared to be a civil contract.

We have already seen that constitutional provisions are easier enacted than applied. The clergy was the best educated class in Mexico; their parishes possessed a continuous existence, and it was practically impossible for the state to distinguish between gifts to the Church for current expenses and gifts that would render the parish wealthy. When the "cientifico" regime developed under Porfirio Diaz it was natural that the clergy and the Catholic leaders should have assumed a more important part in public affairs. Gradually many of their lost powers were regained.

The overthrow of Diaz and the further march of the great Mexican revolution of 1910-20 was a final accounting with feudalism.

In its initial stages the revolution appeared as a vaguely conscious pro-capitalist rising against the Diaz dictatorship. Almost simultaneously the Zapata-led movement of the poor peasants made its appearance, battling for the break-up of the huge landed estates under the famous slogan of "Land and Liberty!" The two movements ran more and more into one mighty current, unburdening themselves of inadequate leaders along the way. From 1913 onward the revolutionary stream widened perceptibly. The revolution now incorporated as-

pirations of the youthful but strategically entrenched proletariat. Finally, under Carranza it became definitely and aggressively nationalistic. Liquidation of clerical power became a natural point of the revolutionary program, after the ephemeral Church-supported dictatorship of Victoriano Huerta.

During the days when Carranza was marshalling his forces for new struggles after the elimination of Huerta, many states of the republic arbitrarily limited the number of priests who could officiate within their territory; churches were turned into barracks, schools, and libraries. I have seen many of these made-over institutions, which still flourish in the states where the revolutionary struggles were fiercest. It is unlikely that they ever will be returned to their original purposes.

Coming on the wave of this spontaneous succession of revolutionary acts against the Church as an instrument of the old regime, the constitution of 1917 re-enacted the anti-clerical provisions of 1857, and went beyond them. The present document forbids foreign priests to officiate in Mexico, excludes the clergy from all participation in politics and even prohibits Catholic periodicals from criticizing the government in any way.

The Mexican revolution may be said to have been in power throughout the presidential terms of Carranza, Obregon and Calles. There were governmental compromises and betrayals during these last ten years; but throughout the period the aroused workers, peasants and petty-bourgeoisie have been the center of gravity in the political life of the nation. The political atmosphere of the country has been "radical."

When the armed struggle died down, however, many things intervened to lighten the pressure of the triumphant revolution upon the Church, as upon other institutions. There was even sometimes a tacit understanding that some of the anti-clerical provisions of the constitution might be allowed to become dead letters. The defeated forces of the old regime were struggling for some kind of a foothold again. The process described at the outset of the present article was taking place.

The attitude of the reaction became a standing challenge. The crisis with the church was brewing all thru the last years of Obregon's presidency.

With the decisive defeat of De la Huerta's revolt the national revolutionary elements were in a position to take the offensive. Calles began to work out his program for the building of an independent national economy in Mexico. He set out to apply the national-revolutionary provisions of the constitution. On July 3rd, Calles issued a set of decrees putting the anti-clerical provisions into execution, beginning August 1st. His decrees moreover denied to periodicals with even a general clerical tone the right to criticize acts of the government.

Instantly there was tumult. In a sense the attitude of the government had been assumed without warning, although it was foreshadowed in the deportation of papal legates and in a generally increasing aggressiveness toward Rome which could be traced back to the last years of Obregon.

No doubt Calles' move is partly influenced by the

fact that a presidential campaign is approaching in Mexico. Workers, organized peasants and petty-bourgeoisie make up by far the most active elements politically of the electorate. Calles has tried to base himself on the workers and peasants, but he has shown a repeated disposition to subordinate their interests to those of the numerically weak petty-bourgeoisie, a circumstance which has even led to compromises with American imperialism. Even the workers affiliated to the official and officially-favored Labor Party are tired of getting no more revolutionary stimulant than slogans about accepting wage cuts for the benefit of national industry. The peasants have still more serious grievances, notwithstanding that the Calles government has given out titles for partitioned lands and is furthering peasant co-operatives. Calles' candidate could not win against a strong contender such as Obregon—if Obregon should be the opposition—unless the government took energetic steps to enhance its revolutionary prestige. At the present time no matter what electoral combinations may be formed, Calles has the undoubted prestige of leading the anti-clerical struggle.

What, in a larger sense, is the government objective in this anti-clerical offensive? One might say that, hewing to the line of the constitution, it is directed only against the political power of the Church. But what is political? What is left of the Roman Catholic Church in Mexico after the new laws and regulations are in effect? No Church property, no monasteries or convents, no foreign officiates, no ecclesiastical vestments outside of church buildings, no control over elementary education, no polemical press. The very substance of Catholicism must be changed under such circumstances. Anyone who understands the ramifications of Catholic authority must realize this.

Mossbacked American editorial writers ask: How can an anti-Catholic movement triumph in a Catholic country? But this is exactly what happened throughout most of Europe during the Reformation. The Mexican people are throwing off Catholicism. Whether a modified hierarchial form, or something else, will take its place remains to be seen. The attempt to set up a Mexican Schismatic Catholic Apostolic Church, initiated last year with the obvious support of the government, has quite apparently failed. It is possible that the peasants, the masses of whom are religious, will eventually group themselves around their local priests. One thing is certain: Mexico's Reformation will not and cannot follow the classic European lines.

The whole course of modern Mexican history tells us that the anti-Catholic movement is part of a great Mexican revolution which could not reach fruition while leaving the feudal Church intact.

What is perhaps the most obvious aspect of the present conflict in Mexico is that while it began as a government offensive, the Church quickly and energetically took up the challenge, striving to convert it into a clerical counter-offensive. Fortified by the letter from the Pope and full of hopes of aid from the United States as a result of a tacit concordat at the Eucharistic Congress at Chicago, the Mexican clericals decided upon

open rebellion. With the priesthood and lay Catholics on one side and the united national-revolutionary forces on the other, the contest became a vital test of the revolution. De la Huerta's declaration from his Los Angeles retreat that he was ready at any time to engage in a new armed movement for "religious liberty" was, of course, wholly to be expected.

That on the strength of the present contest the Church stands defeated is a tribute to the fundamentally sound class basis of the revolution.

However, the Church struggle will last. It will last because it is a struggle to activate politically the potential reactionary supporters on which a permanent post-revolutionary opposition must base itself. It is an attempt to throw these elements into motion. To awaken them from the stupor to which the long years of revolutionary supremacy reduced them, and to make them contesting factors with the working class and petty bourgeois elements who have for so long dominated the Mexican political atmosphere. One can expect the Church conflict to be a factor in the next presidential elections.

It will last because there is a basis for it in the Mexican class structure.

And it will last because of constantly renewed inspiration from the imperialist nation across the northern border.

Even now the government of America's oil magnates, mining lords and money kings is playing more than a passive role in the Mexican situation. So much secrecy enshrouds the latest U. S. note to the Mexican government at this writing that it is difficult to say what its contents may be; but whatever it may contain, the note has been sent. And it is a hostile act of considerable importance.

President Coolidge makes solemn official declarations to the Knights of Columbus that the United States cannot intervene in such a purely domestic matter as the Mexican Church conflict. But at the same time he dispatches another of his threatening messages to the Mexican government, probably again opening the whole controversy of Mexico's oil and land laws.

The purpose is clearly to embarrass the Calles government at a time when it is face to face with reaction at home, thus lending aid to the clericals.

Incidentally it reveals the whole line of American imperialist policy from the beginning of the Church struggle. The policy is not a new one with regard to Mexico or to other countries of Latin-America. Wall Street and Washington recognize the Catholic Church as a valuable ally of American imperialism, but the complex of forces in the United States itself makes it impossible to support the Church exclusively on Church issues. Consequently, the Church is supported through covert insinuations at a Eucharistic Congress and through official protests over the perfectly legal deportation of a Catholic archbishop who happens to be an American citizen. In the course of the present Catholic rebellion, Ambassador Sheffield, out of a blue sky, hands the Mexican government a threatening note. U. S. intervention—still only diplomatic it is true—becomes a fact, although crystal-

lized around issues quite apart from those raised by the Church conflict.

What can the United States want from Mexico regarding the oil and land laws? The government declared months ago that it was satisfied with President Calles' regulations modifying their enforcement. In these regulations Calles gave practically everything that was immediately asked. What is then the issue with the Mexican government?

The revolution is the issue.

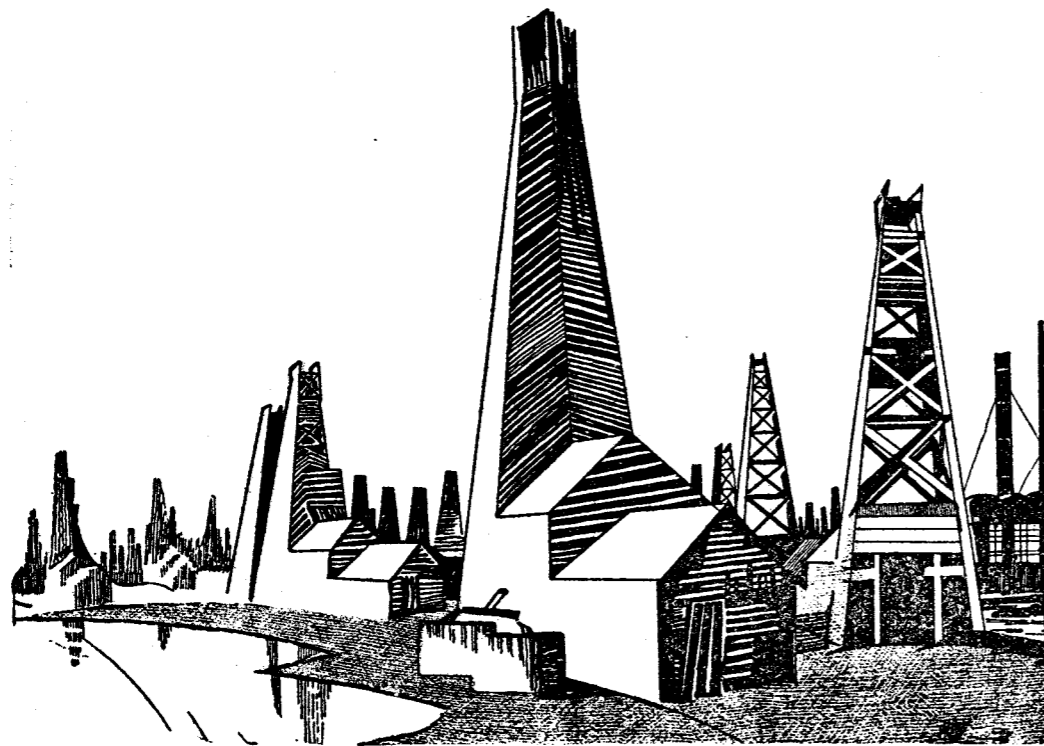
Mexico is a relatively small nation bordering on the most powerful imperialist country in the world. The maintenance of a national-revolutionary program in Mexico is a challenge to the most cherished imperialist aspirations of Wall Street, which include nothing less than the complete subjugation of the republic lying across the Rio Grande.

The latest note to Calles' government may be just an isolated thrust or it may be followed by a general assault against Mexican sovereignty. But whether or not the note is followed immediately by others it cannot properly be regarded as an isolated one. It is part

of the general ever-intensifying push forward of American imperialism against Mexico, in alliance with whatever counter-revolutionary forces are allowed to gain strength there.

It is not likely that there will be any more direct U. S. intervention in the present crisis. The Catholic rebellion failed to split the revolutionary forces and thereby create a favorable situation for imperialism.

The Mexican government will be strengthening the revolution in the face of all its enemies, native and foreign, if it acts with energy in the present crisis. Unless there is a rapid shift in developments the Church will emerge from the present conflict with its prestige badly shattered. The government must grasp this opportunity to remove clericals from strategic positions everywhere, to put out of harm's way all those who have taken an active part in support of the clerical rebellion to root out every remaining vestige of clerical power—and to base itself more and more decisively upon the toiling masses who must be the backbone of its support. The extent to which Calles adopts such a course will determine its true revolutionary character.



OIL!

A Dangerous Situation

By Wm. Z. Foster

THE United Mine Workers of America is falling to pieces. The whole organization is in serious danger of destruction. It is collapsing under the attacks of the coal operators and through the misleadership of the corrupt Lewis administration. The entire American labor movement is passing through a crisis, but in no section of it is the crisis so intense as amongst the miners. Their union actually faces destruction unless there is a radical change in policy by the leadership. The loss of the Miners' Union would break the backbone of the American labor movement, reducing it almost entirely to skilled workers and enormously accelerating the present disastrous drift into intensified class collaboration. The reverberations would be felt throughout the trade union movement of the world. The most important struggle now in the labor organizations of this country is to save the Miners' Union.

The Danger Point.

The danger point in the situation lies in the bituminous section of the union. It is collapsing rapidly. Many districts are already lost to the union. The organization has been completely destroyed in West Virginia. Half the mines in Pittsburgh district, long a stronghold of the union, are now either working "open shop" or on strike against the "open shop." The middle Pennsylvania District No. 2, is in a similar condition. The Alabama and Colorado district organizations are now only memories. The union has been ruined in Washington and the southwest and badly weakened in Kansas and the two Canadian districts. And now comes the hardest blow, a veritable menace of destruction—the Ohio operators have declared for the "open shop." This attacks the union at its very vitals. Nor will the operators in Illinois and Indiana be slow to follow the lead of their confreres in other districts in demanding the 1917 scale, which means "open shop."

The situation has become critical. The bituminous section of the union is melting away. All the districts are afflicted with petty strikes, which are sapping the life of the union. To make matters worse, dual unionism, the sign of a decaying trade unionism, is manifesting itself in Canada, Colorado and other districts. The collapse of the bituminous section would soon be followed by the break-up of the anthracite section. To hope to maintain the latter with the bituminous section destroyed would be utterly futile. The whole union is in danger.

Control Slipping Away.

The union is rapidly losing its control over the bituminous situation. Just a couple of years ago about three-fourths of the bituminous coal mined was produced by union miners and only one-fourth by non-union miners. Now the condition is practically reversed. According

to E. McAuliffe, president of the Union Pacific Coal Company, "Since April 1st, 1924, soft coal production by union miners has fallen from 78% to 30%." In these figures lies the death of the Miners' Union unless the situation is speedily and radically altered to increase union production of coal. They mean, in view of the overdeveloped state of the industry and its general crisis, that in case of a strike of the union miners the men in the non-union fields could produce enough coal to satisfy the needs of the market until the union miners were starved back to work and the union broken.

In an article written seven months ago during the anthracite strike, for the European labor press, I analyzed the dangerous position of the union and showed how, under the misleadership of Lewis, it was threatened with destruction and that the way to save it was to pool the grievances of the bituminous miners with those of the anthracite miners and to tie up the whole mining industry with a general strike. I said: "The United Mine Workers of America is in great peril which requires a radical change of policy on the part of the leadership in order to avert a real disaster to the whole American labor movement."

This article brought forth an attack from Oudegeest, Secretary of the Amsterdam International, who denounced it as a specimen of American sensational journalism. But now the danger is apparent to all, except to the corrupt and ignorant Lewis machine. Even the employers openly state it. Said Mr. McAuliffe, a class collaborationist who professes friendship for the organization, at the Institute of Politics in Williamstown, Mass., Aug. 5th: "Unless the United Mine Workers of America agree to an amicable arrangement when they meet the bituminous coal operators in Miami, in January, to write a new contract replacing the Jacksonville Agreement expiring next April, the union will be destroyed."

The Elements of the Crisis.

The basis of the grave difficulties of the union, aside from the misleadership of Lewis, is the general crisis in the production of bituminous coal. This is caused by a number of factors, such as the overdevelopment of the industry in the war period, the adoption of oil and other substitutes for coal, development of water power, introduction of labor-saving machinery, speed-up systems, etc., all of which have tended to produce a heavy unemployment in the industry. The crisis in the American bituminous coal industry is directly related to the world coal crisis, and is caused largely by the same factors.

The destructive effects of the general crisis upon the union are intensified by the special fact that the production of bituminous coal is shifting from the northern, unionized coal fields, to the southern unorganized districts. A factor in precipitating this is because the

union having established much higher wage scales in the north, the operators are either closing their mines there and opening new ones in the south or the business is being lost straight-way to southern operators. The result is a widespread and chronic unemployment in the northern fields, which saps the life of the union. The employers in the northern fields, determined to get back their business and to crush the union at the same time, are rapidly opening up their mines under the old 1917 scale, which means the "open shop." As pointed out above the general effect has been to reduce union production of coal to only 30% of the total and thus to dangerously weaken the economic power of the organized miners and to undermine their union.

In this critical situation, which has been developing for the past four years, the Lewis machine has followed a policy of criminally betraying the miners, thus enormously accentuating the crisis of the union. The record of Lewis' treachery is as wide as the organization. Every district, as well as the organization as a whole, reeks with it. In Kansas Lewis ruthlessly attacked Howat and the militant miners who stood with him against the operators, thus devitalizing the splendid Kansas union. In western Pennsylvania he flagrantly betrayed the 40,000 unorganized miners in the coke region, who struck in the general strike of 1922, leaving them entirely out of the agreement. His policy has ruined the union in West Virginia and many other districts. In Nova Scotia he lined up with the British Empire Steel Company against the striking coal miners and broke their strike. In Alberta his policy broke up the organization. In Illinois he has made an alliance with Farrington, whom just a short while ago he was denouncing as a crook. He has failed completely to fight for the Jacksonville Agreement and practically without resistance has permitted the employers to introduce the 1917 scale. In the anthracite region he betrayed the miners in their last strike, abandoning the check-off demand and accepting arbitration. He has betrayed the cause of the nationalization of the mines and the fight for a Labor Party, to both of which the union is committed. He has done nothing to organize the unorganized. His policy has been one of terrorism against everyone in the organization who has dared to raise his voice against the prevailing corruption and misleadership. Nor have he and his agents hesitated to call to their assistance the employers in order to drive from the union and industry courageous militants who fought to bring the breath of life back into the rapidly weakening organization. He expelled Howat, Dorchy, Myerscough, Toohey, Thompson, Watts, Reid, Corbishley, McDonald, and scores of others of the best fighters the union has. In all this work of reaction, which has sapped the lifeblood of the organization, Lewis has had the support active or passive, of the remnants of the once powerful and militant but now decadent and corrupt Socialist Party wing of the Miners' Union.

Two Programs.

In the present crisis the Lewis administration has nothing better to offer than a policy of disorderly retreat and hopeless surrender. It may be summed up

as: 1. To accept a general wage cut in the bituminous fields; 2. To establish some sort of a class collaboration agreement based upon the principles of the Watson-Parker railroad law; 3. To carry on a campaign of terrorism against the left wing.

This is a fatal program. It dovetails exactly with the employers' plans. To put it into execution would threaten the life of the union. The proposal to accept a wage cut in the north in the hope that this will equalize the scales somewhat with those in the south and thus result in opening the northern mines and furnishing work for the union miners is a most dangerous illusion. A cut of wages in the northern fields would only be a signal for a cut in the south as well. It would demoralize the whole industry and weaken the union still more. The plan for a Watson-Parker class collaboration agreement, which would also include a wage cut, would sentence the union to a rapid decay through dry rot. The policy of terrorizing the left wing and expelling the best militants from the union means to deprive the organization of what little fighting spirit is left in it. Through the above general program the bureaucrats of the Lewis machine in the various districts hope to maintain a skeleton organization, sufficient at least to pay their salaries. They openly say this. But their hopes would be dashed. The victorious employers would sweep away the last remnants of the U. M. W. of A. in the bituminous districts and establish the "open shop" and company unions, even as exist at present in the steel and other industries. With the bituminous section of the union gone, the anthracite section would not be able to hold out long.

As against the Lewis policy of surrender, the left wing, organized around the Trade Union Educational League and the Progressive Miners, proposes an offensive against the employers. Instead of a cut in wages in the northern fields, an increase in the southern unorganized fields. Instead of levelling down the standards of the organized miners to the standards of the unorganized, the raising of the standards of the unorganized to those of the union men. Together with this fight for wage increase for the unorganized miners must go a struggle for the 6-hour day and the 5-day week throughout the entire bituminous coal industry, in order to absorb the 200,000 "surplus" miners. To make this fight successful the union must launch tremendous organizing campaigns in West Virginia, Kentucky, Pennsylvania, and other unorganized districts. When the officials of the union meet with the operators six months from now to negotiate over conditions of the miners, they must have behind them the overwhelming masses of the bituminous miners.

But along with the general struggle for higher wages and shorter hours and for the organization of the unorganized, the union must take up seriously the fight for the nationalization of the coal mines, for establishment of a Labor Party, for an offensive and defensive alliance with the railroad workers. It must set up an inner democracy, permit free expression of opinion, and abolish the unparalleled terrorism against the left wing and progressive fighters in the union. This is a pro-

gram which will save the union and put it again in a fighting position.

Defeat the Lewis Machine.

The accomplishment of this vitally necessary program requires the sweeping away of the corrupt Lewis administration. Fortunately an opportunity to do this presents itself in the union elections now approaching. The masses in the miners' Union are against Lewis his policies. Every time they have an opportunity they prove this. In the last national union election they voted, according to Lewis' own official report, 66,000 for the rank and file left wing miner, Voyzey, against 134,000 for Lewis. But in reality the vote was much more favorable for Voyzey. There is every reason to believe that he actually secured a majority. Lewis unquestionably stole thousands of votes from him. Lewis never dared to publish the tabulated vote of the election, by local unions, as required by the union constitution. He could not show a majority.

In the present elections John Brophy, president of

District No. 2, a man long associated with various progressive movements in the Miners' Union, has announced himself as a candidate against Lewis. In his official statement, published in the daily press, he states that the union is in peril and will be ruined unless the unorganized are organized. He also stresses the necessity for nationalizing the coal mines. In his fight for the existence of the U. M. W. A., Brophy is joined by Stevenson of District 24 as vice-president and by Brennan, former president of District 1, as candidate for secretary-treasurer. The struggle between the Brophy forces and Lewis will be a fight between the forces of progress and those of destruction in the union. Upon the outcome depends the very existence of the organization. Notwithstanding differences of opinion upon many subjects, the body of progressives, radicals, and revolutionists in the union must make common cause against the corrupt Lewis machine in this election. The victory of Lewis would be the death of the Miners' Union. The great masses of honest rank and filers will support the slate headed by Brophy.



Two Tactics

By Vladimir Ilyitch Lenin

(From "Vperyod" No. 6, Feb. 1, 1905.)

FROM the very beginning of the mass labor movement in Russia, i. e., for about ten years now, there have existed deep-going differences among the social democrats on questions of tactics. As is known, there grew up out of differences of just this sort at the end of the nineties the tendency of economism, which led to the split into an opportunist wing of the Party ("Rabotcheye Dyelo") and a revolutionary wing (the old "Iskra").

Russian social democratic opportunism differs from the West European in certain respects. It reflects very distinctly the views—or perhaps the lack of independent views—of the intellectual wing of the Party, captured by the now stylish slogans of Bernsteinism* and by the immediate results and forms of the labor movement, pure and simple. This deviation has led to the epidemic betrayal of the legal Marxists who are drifting towards liberalism and to the invention on the part of the social democrats of the famous theory of "tactics as a process" which won for our opportunists the nickname of Khvostists (hanging on like a tail, "tailists"). They hung on helplessly to the tail of events; they swung from one extreme to another; they underestimated, in every case, the range of activity of the revolutionary proletariat and its faith in its own power glossing over all this generally with references to the self-activity of the proletariat. It is curious but it is a fact. Nobody talked so much as they about the self-activity of the workers and nobody so narrowed, so curtailed, so degraded this self-activity with their preaching as the people of the "Rabotcheye Dyelo".

"Talk less about raising the activity of the working masses," the conscious workers told their zealous but unwise advisers. "There is far more activity in us than you think. We even know how to support with open street fight demands that do not promise any tangible results. And it is not for you to raise our activity, for you haven't enough activity for yourselves. Bow less, gentlemen, before 'elementariness' and think more of raising your own activity." Thus was it necessary to characterize the relation of the revolutionary workers towards the opportunist intellectuals. (Compare, "What Is To Be Done?")

*Edward Bernstein had begun his "revision" of Marxism before the beginning of the century and the Russian "economists," later the Mensheviks made use of his arguments against the Bolsheviks.

The two steps backwards, taken by the new "Iskra" in the direction of the "Rabotcheye Dyelo" put new life into this relation. From the pages of "Iskra" the preachings of Khvostism are again flowing, covered with such distasteful pronouncements as these: Ah, gentlemen, I believe in and preach the self-activity of the proletariat. In the name of the self-activity of the proletariat, Axelrod and Martinov, Martov, and Liber (from the "Bund")* defended at the Party Congress the right of professors and students to become members of the Party without joining any Party organization**. In the name of the self-activity of the proletariat was created the theory of "organization as a process" that justifies disorganization and praises intellectualist anarchism. In the name of the self-activity of the proletariat there was invented the no less famous theory of the "higher type of demonstration" in the form of an agreement of a workers' delegation sifted through three elections with the people of the Zemstvos***for a peaceful demonstration, without arousing panic fear. In the name of the self-activity of the proletariat the idea of the armed uprising was confused, vulgarized, debased, and perverted.

We want to draw the attention of the reader to this last question because of its everyday practical significance. The development of the labor movement has played a cruel joke on the wiseacres of the new "Iskra". Their first message in which they, in the name of the "process

*Axelrod is still alive as an ardent opponent and slanderer of the Bolsheviks. Martinov admitted and criticized his errors several years ago and has joined the Communist Party. Martov died some years ago in Berlin as the editor of the Menshevik organ there, which provided "arguments" against the Russian revolution for the Mensheviks of all countries. Liber, a Menshevik leader, belonged at that time to the Jewish Bund, which opposed the Social Democratic Party on the principle of not allowing the existence of national federations and which remained outside the party until 1919.

**The question of professors joining the party without joining any party organization refers to the controversy about Paragraph 1, in the Party Statute of 1903.

***The Zemstvos were a kind of country organization, a substitute for self-government, controlled by liberal landlords and bourgeois intellectuals, who used them for a feeble opposition to czarism. Lenin ridicules the Mensheviks who recommended proclamations in the Zemstvo meetings when the workers were already demonstrating and fighting on the streets.

of the systematic development of the class consciousness and self-activity of the proletariat," recommended as a higher type of demonstration "the sending out of the statements of the workers to deputies at their houses thru the mail and their distribution in halls where the Zemstvos held their sessions," this message of theirs hardly succeeded in being distributed in Russia; a message in which there was made the quite upsetting discovery that in the present "historical moment the political scene is filled with the quarrels between the organized bourgeoisie and the bureaucracy," and that "the objective sense of every (hear, hear!) revolutionary movement is one and the same and will lead to the support of the slogans of that one of the two forces which is interested in breaking down the present regime (these democratic intellectuals are proclaimed as a "force"). Hardly had the class conscious workers succeeded in reading these magnificent letters and having a good laugh at them—when the events of the actual struggle in one clean sweep dumped on the rubbish heap all this political trash of the editors of the new "Iskra". The proletariat showed that there was a third force (in reality, of course, not a third, but a second according to figures and a first in fighting ability) which is not only interested in this breakdown but is also ready to go out and actually break down absolutism. Beginning with the ninth of January the workers' movement has actually been growing before our eyes into a popular rebellion.

Let us see how this transition to rebellion was estimated by the social democrats who discussed it before as a question of tactics—now that the workers have begun to decide this in practice.

Three years ago the rebellion which defines our next practical tasks was discussed as follows: "Let us picture to ourselves a popular rising. At the present time, perhaps, all will agree that we must think about it and prepare ourselves for it. But prepare how? Perhaps the Central Committee should appoint agents in all localities to prepare the uprising. If we really had a Central Committee it could not accomplish anything thru such appointments under the present conditions in Russia. On the contrary a network of agents arising in the process of work thru the organization and distribution of a general paper could not 'sit and wait' for the slogan of rebellion but had to do its regular work which would guarantee the greatest likelihood of success in case of rebellion. Precisely this work would strengthen the connections both with the broadest masses of the workers and with all elements dissatisfied with absolutism, a thing that is so necessary for the uprising.

"Just in precisely such work is developed the ability to estimate correctly the general political

situation and, in consequence, the ability to select the proper moment for the rebellion. Precisely this work would teach all local organizations to react at the same time to the same political questions, events and happenings that are agitating all Russia, to respond to these events in the most energetic way possible, as uniformly and systematically as possible, for the rebellion, is, in reality, the most energetic, the most uniform, and most expedient answer from the whole people to the government! Precisely such work, finally, would teach all revolutionary organizations in all corners of Russia to keep up the most constant and, at the same time the most secret connections, creating the actual unity of the party, and without such connections it is impossible to work out in common the plan of the rebellion and take all the necessary preparatory steps for it, which must all take place in the utmost secrecy.

"In a word, 'the plan of an All-Russian paper' is not only not the result of the office work of people afflicted with doctrinarism and literateurism (as it seemed to people with muddled ideas) but, on the contrary, it turns out to be the most practical plan to begin, from all sides and at once, the preparation for the rebellion, at the same time not forgetting for a minute one's everyday party work." ("What Is To Be Done?")

These last words, which we have emphasized, give a clear answer to the question how the revolutionary social-democrats pictured to themselves the preparations for the revolt. But, however clear this answer was, the old Khovtist tactics could not get away from it even on this point. Not long ago Martinov published a pamphlet, "The Two Dictatorships" warmly endorsed by the new "Iskra" (No. 84). The author is agitated to the depths of his Rabotcheye Dyelist heart that Lenin could talk about the "preparation," the designing, and the carrying out of the armed uprising of all the people. The terrible Martinov scolds his enemy thus: "International social-democracy has always, on the basis of historic experience and scientific analysis of the dynamics of social forces, recognized that only palace revolutions and pronouncements can be arranged beforehand and carried out successfully according to a ready-made plan, and these can be just because they are not people's revolutions, i. e., not changes in the social relations, but only disturbances in the governing clique. Social-democracy has everywhere and at all times recognized that a popular revolution cannot be arranged beforehand, that it is not prepared artificially, but accomplishes itself."

Perhaps the reader will say, after reading this tirade, that Martinov is not a serious antagonist and it would be ridiculous to take him earnestly. We would wholly agree with such a reader. We would tell him that there is no worse torment

on earth than to take seriously all theories and all arguments of our "New Iskraits." The pity is that such nonsense should figure even in the editorials of "Iskra" (No. 62). And it is still more a pity that there are people in the Party and not a few of them who litter their minds with that nonsense. And it is necessary to speak about non-serious things as we had to talk about the "theory" of Rosa Luxemburg,* who invented the "process of organization." We must explain to Martinov that he should not confuse rebellion and popular revolution. It must be explained that profound reference to the change in social relations in connection with decisions about the practical question of the means of overthrowing Russian czarism, are worthy only of a Kifa Mokievitch** These changes already began in Russia with the overthrow of serfdom in 1861, and the very backwardness of our political superstructure in regard to the change which has been going on in social relations makes the crash unavoidable. Besides, this crash is quite possible at once, at one blow, because the popular revolution has already struck hundreds of blows at czarism, and whether it will be felled by the hundred and first or hundred and tenth blow is not known to us. Only opportunist intellectuals who try to blame their philistinism on the proletarians can, at a time when the practical methods of striking a blow of the second hundred, come out with their student's wisdom about "the change in the social relations." Only the opportunists of the new "Iskra" can cry hysterically about the terrible "Jacobin" plan, the center of gravity of which lies, as we have seen, in an every-sided mass agitation with the help of a political paper.

It is true that a people's revolution cannot be made to order. But for the knowledge of this truth you need not thank Martinov and the author of the editorial in No. 62 of "Iskra" ("Yes, and of what preparations for a rebellion can there be a question at all in our party" he asked there, fighting with the Utopians, a true companion and follower of Martinov). But to design a rebellion, when we have actually prepared it and when a popular revolution is possible thru the force of the changes taking place in the social relations—this is quite realizable. Let us try to make it plain to the people of the new "Iskra" with a simple example. Is it possible to design the labor movement? No, it is not, because it is a composition of thousands of

*Rosa Luxemburg, altho a radical in Germany, a critic of the deviations of Kautsky and Bebel, did not understand the necessity for a strongly organized and centralized party in Russia and did not agree with Lenin on all points.

**Kifa Mokievitch is a literary figure in a fable, a stupid man.

separate acts, caused by changes in social relations. Is it possible to design a strike? Yes, in spite of—imagine to yourself, Comrade Martinov—in spite of the fact that every strike is a result of the change in social relations. When is it possible to design a strike? When the organization or circle which designs it has influence among the masses of workers concerned and is able to estimate correctly the moment of growing discontent and irritation in the masses of workers. Do you now understand what it is all about, Comrade Martinov and the comrade of the leading article of No. 62 of "Iskra"? If you understand, take the trouble to compare the rebellion with popular revolution. "Popular revolution cannot be designed beforehand." The rebellion can be designed when those who design it have influence among the masses and are able to estimate the moment correctly.

Luckily, the initiative of the advanced workers ran ahead of Khvostist philosophy of the new "Iskra." During the time that the Iskra has sweated out the theory proving that a rebellion cannot be designed by those who prepare themselves for it thru organizing the vanguard of the revolutionary class, events have proved that the rebellion can be designed and must be designed by people even when they are not prepared for it.

Here is a proclamation sent us by a Petersburg comrade. More than 10,000 copies were set up, printed, and distributed by the workers themselves, who on January 10 had captured a legal printing shop in Petersburg.

**WORKERS OF THE WORLD, UNITE!
CITIZENS:**

Yesterday you witnessed the brutality of the absolutist government. You saw blood flowing in the streets. You saw hundreds of fighters for the cause of the workers killed; you saw death; you heard the groans of wounded women and defenseless children. The blood and the brains of the workers splattered the pavement which was made by their own hands. Who directed the troops, the rifles and the bullets against the breasts of the workers? The czar, the grand dukes, the ministers, the generals and the trash of the court.

They are the murderers. Death to them! To arms, comrades, seize the arsenals, the munition supplies, and the rifle stores. Throw open the jails, comrades, set free the fighters for liberty. Smash to pieces the gendarmerie and police centers and all crown institutions. Let us overthrow the czarist government, let us establish our own government! Long live the revolution! Long live the Constituent Assembly of the Representatives of the People!

Social Democratic Labor Party of Russia.

The call to rebellion by this little group of advanced workers who took the initiative, was without success. But a few unsuccessful calls to rebellion and unsuccessful "designs of rebellion" do not surprise or discourage us. We leave it to the new Iskra to philosophize about

the necessity of "the change in social relations" and scorn from on high the "utopianism" of the workers, who cry: "Let us establish our own government." Only hopeless pedants or confusionists can see the center of gravity of such a proclamation in this cry. For us it is important to take note of and emphasize this wonderful, brave, practical approach to the solution of the problem which stares us in the face. The call of the Petersburg workers was not realized and could not be realized as fast as they had hoped. This call will be reiterated and not only once, and the attempts at rebellion may again be unsuccessful, more than once. The gigantic importance of it lies in the fact that this question was raised by the workers. The gain for the workers' movement, which has become conscious of the practical importance of this task and will raise it at every popular movement in the future—this gain can no longer be taken from the proletariat.

As early as three years ago the social-democrats on general considerations raised the slogan of the preparation for the rebellion. The self-activity of the workers arrived at the same slogan under the influence of the direct lessons of the civil war. There is self-activity and self-activity. There is the self-activity of the proletariat with revolutionary initiative, and there is the self-activity of the undeveloped proletariat, beset by obstacles; there is self-activity consciously social-democratic and there is Subatovist self-activity*. There are social-democrats who even at this moment speak with reverence of the second kind self-activity, who think that you can avoid a straight answer to everyday questions by reiterating innumerable the word "class." Take No. 84 of "Iskra". "Why," the leading article writer of the Iskra attacks us with the air of a conqueror, "why was it not the narrow organization of professional revolutionists that gave the impetus to the movement of this avalanche (of January 9), but a conference of workers? **Because the conference was really (hear!) a broad organization, based upon the self-activity of the working masses.**" If the author of this classic phrase were not an adorer of Martinov, he could perhaps understand that the conference served the movement of the revolutionary proletariat just for the reason and to the extent that it passed from the Subatovist self-activity to social democratic self-activity (after which it also ceased to exist as a legal conference.)

*Subatov was a czarist official who started the czarist "Workers' Societies" which were penetrated by the revolutionaries.

If the people of the new "Iskra" and of the "Rabotcheye Dyelo" were not Khvostists they could see that it was precisely the ninth of January that justified the prediction of those who said: "In the end the legalization of the workers' movement will bring advantage to us and not to the Subatovs ("What Is To be Done?")." It was precisely the ninth of January that showed once more the importance of the task formulated there: "Prepare reapers who can reap even the tares of today (i. e., paralyze the present Subatov corruption) and harvest in the wheat of tomorrow" (i. e., direct in a revolutionary way the movement that takes a step forward with the help of the legalization.) And the fellows on the "Iskra" refer to the splendid crop of wheat only in order to depreciate the importance of a strong organization of revolutionary mowers.

"It would be criminal," the leading article writer of the new "Iskra" continues, "to attack the revolution from behind." What this phrase is supposed to mean, Allah only knows. On the question of what connection it may have with the opportunist physiognomy of "Iskra" we will perhaps speak another time. It is enough now to point out that the real political sense of this sentence is this: The author bows before the rear of the revolution, with a contemptuous frown for the "narrow" and "Jacobin" advance guard.

The tactics of the Khvostism and the tactics of revolutionary social-democracy, come into contradiction the more clearly, the more eagerly the new "Iskra" writes in the spirit of Martinov. We said already in No. 1 of "Vperyod" that the rebellion must unite with one of the elementary movements. Consequently we are not at all underestimating the importance of the "protection of the rear," to use the military comparison. We spoke in No. 4 about the correct tactics of the members of the Petersburg committee, who directed all their efforts from the very beginning to supporting and developing the revolutionary elements of the elementary movement, with a reserved, sober relation towards the dark, Subatovian rear of this elementary movement. We will close today with a piece of advice which we are compelled to give once more to the people of the new "Iskra": Do not degrade the task of the advance guard of the revolution, do not forget our obligation to support this advance guard with our organized activity. Utter fewer general commonplaces about developing the self-activity of the workers—they are showing a range of revolutionary self-activity you do not notice. And see to it that you do not corrupt the undeveloped workers with your own Khvostism.

War and Youth

Early History of International Youth Day

By Sam Darcy

THE split in the Social Democratic Party of Germany was presaged as far back as 1904. Not in any conscious manner, perhaps, but thru the growing realization that the Party was not paying attention to the real struggle against militarists. Comrades are wont to say that already at that early period Carl Liebknecht realized the right-wing character of the leadership. An examination of whatever material is available leads one to doubt this. However, even in beginning of his anti-militarist work Liebknecht was already striking a new note in the activities of the Party.

The "grey beards" of Social Democracy frowned on Liebknecht's activities and called them mad youthful adventurism. But Liebknecht continued his work which essentially gave him large contact among the youth—and this was to be of tremendous important in later years.

When the World War broke out the German Party split into three main factions. The bulk of the leadership of the Party supported the war, but not in a united fashion. They were split into two factions—the openly patriotic pro-war elements and those who tended to centrism and pacifism. Liebknecht, however, stood out as the leader of the anti-war group.

The test of this came on the discussion in the parliamentary fraction as to how to vote when the question of war credits arose. There Scheidemann spoke for support of the bill, for the rallying the Socialists of Germany in support of it, and for the calling of Germans thruout the rest of the world to come to the support of the Fatherland. The Kautskyites were for abstaining from voting. They said that the war was here and there was nothing they could do about it but that direct support would be impermissible. So they advocated abstention—which of course meant giving support, because of the confusion that would be thrown into the party ranks. Liebknecht, however, fought against voting war credits and favored a militant struggle against the war. In this struggle, he was supported by Clara Zetkin now a member of the Communist International in charge of women's work; by Franz Mehring, the veteran Socialist who died shortly after Liebknecht's murder; by Rosa Luxemburg, and by most of the younger elements in the Party.

Liebknecht was overwhelmingly defeated in the Reichstag fraction. On the first vote he obeyed Party discipline and voted with the rest of the group in favor of the war credit proposals. On the second vote a short while later, however, he realized that this was a funda-

that the Party was going to split.

The bureaucracy, however, felt calm thinking that Liebknecht could do nothing against their united opposition.

The anti-war and really revolutionary elements in the Party began to sizzle with excitement over the betrayal. They were, however, mostly the younger Party members. The old veterans supported Kautsky and the others who had at one time given good service to Social Democracy but who had now collapsed in the face of a real test. Very little could be done openly, however, for the time. The kaiser's government supported the right wing and threatened extermination to all who took any revolutionary action.

This situation continued until the latter part of 1915. By that time the revolutionary youth, fired by the example of Liebknecht, began to feel more confident about the possibility of carrying on anti-war work.

They secretly called a conference of all the Socialist youth organizations of Europe in Berne, Switzerland. The border regulations were strict and the governments were watching carefully any movement which might develop along this line. Germany was at the height of its military success. Yet they succeeded, despite everything. Delegates from the youth movements of five countries gathered and took steps which had a marked influence on the whole history of what was to transpire during the next few years. The workers took courage from this brave display of revolutionary valor and began again gathering their forces for a renewed offensive against capitalism. Other conferences took place. And finally from these came the organization of the Communist International. Thus, it was that the youth was destined to play the leading role in the beginning of the organization of a new revolutionary international of workers.

The Young Communist International set aside a day annually to commemorate the heroism and loyalty that these young workers showed in accomplishing what they did in the face of an opposition that extended from the kaiser thru the allies to Kautsky and the Socialists. This day is **International Youth Day**.

At first, Lenin called the revolutionary youth the **vanguard of the vanguard**. Because, indeed, were not these young workers the leaders in those early days of that section of the working class which was destined to become the vanguard of the whole class? Today, however, the youth movement is taking its more natural place as a support to the Communist Parties thruout the world and as the rallying center for all young workers.

The Rebellion of Canada

By Maurice Spector

THE former prime minister, MacKenzie King, is talking in the House. The grandson of the "Little Rebel" William Lyon Mackenzie, whose short-lived insurrection of 1837 had been instrumental in forcing so-called "responsible government" from Downing Street, has just been given a taste of "irresponsible government"—and is swallowing hard. Beaten on the question of the Customs Scandal involving his cabinet, he had advised His Excellency, the Governor General, to dissolve Parliament. But instead, Baron Byng had called upon the willing Tory leader, Meighen, to form a government. An unprecedented course of conduct—this, King complains, for the Crown to refuse dissolution to its ministerial adviser. There has been nothing like it in Great Britain for the last hundred years—or are we to understand that Canada has reverted to the status of a Crown Colony? "Are you trying to start a rebellion?" shouts a Tory back-bencher. "No," comes King's unheroic retort. "I am trying to prevent one."

Another "Rebellion of 1837?"

But can he? Can King or anybody else stop the political and social forces at work for the separation of Canada from the Empire? Is Canada heading for another but more important and larger scale "Rebellion of 1837?" Certain it is that the Dominion has run into the biggest "constitutional crisis" in its history—a crisis that may well mark a turning point in its relations with the Empire. The action of the Governor General in refusing dissolution to King, only to grant this privilege to the Conservative leader sixty-five hours later, has forced the issue of Canadian "status" well into the foreground of a general election. The revelations of the Customs Scandal, the immediate cause of King's downfall, fade into relative insignificance. It is common knowledge that both capitalist parties are corrupt. Both, according to the evidence submitted before the Investigating Commission, had accepted contributions to their campaign funds from the liquor manufacturers. However much, then, Meighen may deny that there is any "constitutional issue" at all and Mackenzie King and his timid followers seek to interpret the crisis in terms of Gladstonian parliamentary tradition, the point at stake is fundamentally—the **status of Canada**.

What is "Dominion Status?"

"After this war," said Bonar Law while the world struggle was still going on, "the relations between the great Dominions and the Mother Country can never be the same." Whether this utterance was prompted by sentiment or perception, it was true that the destiny of the Dominions was to be very deeply affected by the new re-grouping of forces arising from the war. But the actual "status" of the Dominion still remained a matter of suspense and debate. To those "extremists" who urged that the Dominion was not yet possessed of

complete self-determination and who denied that national self-determination was at all possible within the bounds of the capitalist Empire, those loyal to the British connection replied that we were already a self-governing country. Had not the Dominions become signatories of the Treaty of Versailles? Had not the Imperial Conference of 1923 given them the right to negotiate treaties specifically affecting their own interests—such as the Halibut treaty between Canada and the United States? We were already completely self-governing equal partners of Great Britain within the "British Commonwealth."

Canada a Colony.

On this question of self-determination, Lord Byng has finally put a stop to the confusion of tendency with accomplished fact, vindicating the position of the "extremists." "Lord Byng," writes the well-known British student of colonial development, Professor Keith, "in refusing the dissolution of Parliament, has challenged effectively the doctrine of the equality of status of the Dominions and the United Kingdom and has relegated Canada decisively to the colonial status she had believed she had outgrown." Neither in actual fact nor in international law, were Great Britain and Canada ever equals. The British North America Act, which is the constitution of Canada, is an act of the Imperial Parliament and can be amended by that authority only. The interpretation of that Act or Constitution lies in the end not with the Supreme Court of Canada but with the Privy Council in London as, for example, when it declared the Lemieux (Industrial Disputes Investigation) Act outside of the power of the Dominion Government. Canada can declare neither war nor peace. When Great Britain is at war, Canada will be automatically treated as a belligerent by powers at war with England. The Governor General is not only head of the state but a commissioner dispatched from London to report on Canadian affairs. Byng reminds Canada that she is still a colony.

Downing Street's Imperial Policy.

That Byng's intervention was not accidental but bears the earmarks of a Downing Street policy of imperial self-assertion against centrifugal tendencies is attested by some recent Australian experiences. Not long ago a memorandum was signed by every state in Australia, except Victoria, asking the Dominion's Secretary Amery to consider appointing local men in place of imperial products to the posts of state governors. Downing Street's reply was that as the matter was not unanimous, it had better stand over. A few months ago the Governor of New South Wales deliberately refused the advice of his ministers to sanction the appointment of a sufficient number of labor senators to the Upper House to have given the Labor Government a complete majority. A

direct appeal to Downing Street brought the reply that the action of the King's representative "was above criticism." Apparently, England is not going to loosen the bonds of Empire more than she is compelled to. The "wretched colonies" are no longer regarded, in Disraeli's phrase, "as a millstone around England's neck." They are of immense strategic, political and commercial value. Imperial influence was brought to bear against Sir Wilfred Laurier in 1911 when his autonomist tendency caused him to refuse to accept wholly Churchill's views on dreadnoughts for Imperial service. The tendency of Canada towards separatism since the conclusion of the war has far outstripped the pace of Laurier's days and the position of the Empire is more precarious than it ever was then. England will not relinquish her hold on the colonies without a struggle.

American Penetration.

Among the Dominions it is Canada in particular which confronts the British Foreign Office with the problem of the waning British and the rising American Empire. "The far-flung British Empire," said Sir Auckland Geddes, former British ambassador to Washington in his Page Memorial lecture (1924), "has yielded the leadership of the world in many respects to the compact empire of the United States. The Dominions look upon the government of Washington as of their own generation . . . and Washington, with its inviting eyes, looks back on them . . ." Some time ago, the U. S. Department of Commerce published a review of the extent of the American investment in Canada which stated that "economically and socially Canada may be considered as the northern extension of the United States and our trade with Canada is in many respects more like domestic trade than our trade with other countries." Between 1915 and 1922 the British investments remained stationary while the United States increased their investments six fold. Now one-fourth of all American investments are in Canada. In the eight years ending 1922, only two per cent of Canada's borrowings were from Great Britain, but 33 per cent were from the U. S. Some 1,200 American branch factories have been established in the Dominion (fostered, ironically enough, by the very preferential tariff that was to bind Canada closer to Imperial Britain). The United States owns a third of all the industries and producing mines of the Dominion and at the rate of this economic penetration, it is just a question of time when U. S. capitalists will become the majority stockholders of Canadian economic enterprises. This growing American influence was fully recognized on the Canadian side when Frederick Hudd, Canadian Trade Commissioner in the U. S. and special delegate to the Pan-American Congress in New York last year, declared that:

"Canada is an integral part of economic America. The commercial economic and strategic problems common to us all furnish indestructible grounds for enduring and permanent co-operation. There is no problem too difficult for the countries of Latin-America to solve provided they stand together as a United States of the American Continent."

Industrialization.

Another factor fostering the separatist tendency of

the Dominion is its increasing industrialization (accelerated in a marked degree by the war and, since 1920, by the aid of American capital). Neither the Canadian Liberals nor the Conservatives are prepared to adopt economic policies to suit the requirements of British industry for a greater market for its products. At the Imperial Conference of 1923, British diplomacy failed to put across such preference, emigration, and capital export policies as would keep Britain the industrial metropolis of the Empire and the Dominions chiefly producers of primary products. Mackenzie King continually emphasized that Canada was the second largest manufacturing country in the Empire. As for the Tories, who politically parade about as the ultra-loyalists—theirs is a policy of economic nationalism and protection which opposes even the present preferential arrangement with Britain.

Economic Slump and War-Debt.

A third factor in this connection is the unsatisfactory internal economic position of this country since the war. The fifteen years prior to the war were years of exceeding prosperity for the Canadian bourgeoisie. Immigrants flowed in by the hundreds of thousands. The third transcontinental railway was in the course of construction. Taxation was low. Military expenditures only amounted to twelve out of 130 million dollars of federal revenue. The war came. Immigration stopped. The heavily over-capitalized transcontinental systems went bankrupt and had to be centralized in a government-owned system with a deficit of a hundred million dollars a year. Increased military expenditures saddled the country with a huge war-debt. Tens of thousands of Canadians actually began to leave the country. The result of this economic slump has been to strain the structure of Canadian Confederation to the breaking point. Secessionist tendencies have arisen in both the Maritime Provinces in the extreme East and in the grain producing provinces of the West. Both sections are dissatisfied with the results of Confederation, complaining of the exploitation at the hands of the manufacturing financial interests of Ontario and Quebec.

Imperial "Jag" Wears Off.

The whole post-war situation in which Canada finds herself, British Imperial decline, industrialization, American penetration, dragging economic development, have naturally made her very cautious of further imperial commitments. When Admiral Jellicoe semi-officially proposed that Canada should contribute 36 million dollars a year towards the maintenance of the Imperial Navy and provide a squad of four cruisers at an annual cost of maintenance of four million dollars there was no visible enthusiasm. All sorts of embarrassing queries arose, particularly in Quebec. After all, what real community of interest does there exist between Great Britain and Canada in matters of foreign policy? Is Canada interested in India or in the Suez Canal? "Our imperial policy!" exclaims the French Canadian nationalist in the House, "I ask any honorable member of the House, have we the same interests in Arak or Mosul as the oil hunters of England have? That Europe should be reaping the results of a policy of national hatred and economic rivalry is no wonder, but why impose upon

this country the consequences of that policy?" Take the possibility inherent in the Locarno Pact of an Anglo-French conflict. Is French-speaking Quebec, which was so indifferent about the war with Germany, likely to be more interested in fighting France?

"Aye, Aye, Ready!"

How serious this feeling of separatism in matters of foreign policy is may be gathered from the recent maneuverings of the leading capitalist politicians. It will be remembered that when Lloyd George attempted to embroil the Dominion in a war with Turkey at the time of the Chanak crisis, he was sharply rebuffed by the King Government. Meighen, leader of the Tory Opposition, thereupon derided the separatist attitude of the Dominion Government and claimed he would have replied to Downing Street's appeal for war preparedness with a proud "Ready, Aye, Ready." Meighen's jingo speech, added to his imperialist war record generally, gave a further impetus to the political suicide of the Conservative Party in Quebec which, at the last elections, returned some three Tories out of a possible sixty. After this debacle, political expediency led Meighen to change his tune. In his now famous Hamilton "key-note" speech (delivered in the course of a Quebec by-election), he declared his "belief that it would be best that not only Parliament should be called upon but that the decision of the government, which of course would have to be given promptly, should be submitted to the judgment of the people before troops leave our shore." Meighen's speech was not taken too seriously in London which realized that he proposed a khaki election with his own fine Italian hand disfranchising the "alien-born" section of the electorate to make the country safe for the Empire. Still it was a sign of the times that Meighen should be forced to pretend a new orientation. When J. S. Woodsworth, the labor representative, moved his resolution that "in the opinion of this House Canada should refuse to accept responsibility for the complications arising from the foreign policy of the United Kingdom," he was viciously assailed by a few Tory back-benchers but was received in silence by the official party leaders, who merely admitted that he was giving expression to an increasing body of public Dominion opinion.

Imperial Conference Issues.

Meanwhile the Imperial Conference is nearing at which the chief topic of discussion, according to the "Morning Post," semi-official organ of the Baldwin Government, is to be imperial foreign policy, particularly the questions of "imperial defense" and Locarno. In preparation for this conference set for October, King proceeded to move a resolution to the effect "that for the acceptance of any treaty, convention or agreement involving military or economic sanctions, the approval of the Parliament of Canada should be secured." King reminded the House that such a resolution would be in accordance with the position taken by Canada at the last Imperial Conference, that the Dominions should be free to negotiate treaties which they considered affected their interests specifically and did not "involve the interests of the Empire as a whole." The commercial treaty the

Dominion signed with Belgium shortly after was negotiated by Canadian plenipotentiaries. Before the country could be committed to the obligations of the treaty of Locarno, he urged, Parliament should be given the opportunity of deciding for or against its ratification. The resolution carried without division—a development that did not escape the attention of the French press. "Quotidien", at any rate, wrote that:

"Hitherto the great Anglo-Saxon communities have held themselves bound by negotiations carried on by the British Foreign Office. Canada's decision has every prospect of establishing a precedent throughout the Empire for Australia is clearly separatist in matters of international politics and South Africa shows a similar mentality in discussing the problem of a flag for the Union. At the Imperial Conference the Dominion governments must make clear their policies in regard to Locarno and other questions."

Governor General Heads Tories.

But Locarno and the problems of "imperial defense" are precisely what cause so much disquiet in the Dominions. In Australia the leader of the Opposition, Charlton, attacked the Treaty and Bruce, the premier, did not defend it very seriously. The Irish Free State is cold towards it. Herzog of South Africa shows scant sympathy for the Pact. In India the government disallowed a resolution introduced disapproving it. It is not a very pleasant prospect for England to have the Dominion Parliaments openly discussing her foreign treaties with perhaps the chance of their altogether rejecting them. Under these circumstances, Meighen becomes decidedly preferable to Mackenzie King. To refuse dissolution to King in order to grant it to the Tory Meighen with his shadow cabinet was to hand over the election machinery to the latter. (In Canada, the party in office appoints the returning officers.) The British press has been quite cynical about the importance of the control of election machinery in Canada. They explain that Canadian politics are characterized by graft and corruption. Mackenzie King's outburst of resentment as that Baron Byng should have taken the machinery out of his grasp. Byng has thus put himself practically at the head of the Conservative Party whose victory would be more conducive to British imperial interests. King, as a liberal capitalist politician, as parliamentarian and a constitutionalist, is of course very timid of attacking Byng directly. He throws the blame for the Governor General's intervention on the misleading advice of Arthur Meighen. But a prominent Liberal, Principal Grant of Upper Canada College, has given utterance to the inner feelings of anti-Conservative rank and file when he said openly with Byng's intervention that "if he gets away with it, it will set a constitutional precedent. If not, it brings the office of governor-general nearer to an end."

The Constitutional Issue and the Workers.

There is then undoubtedly a constitutional issue in this election. But the issue is not merely why did Lord Byng refuse the advice of the late Premier and accept the advice of dissolution from the present Premier. The issue is—Why is Lord Byng here at all to govern as

the appointee and representative of an outside power? Why is Canada still in leading strings? In other words, the "Constitutional Issue" is the issue of the constitution itself. This is an issue which the workers cannot afford to ignore. They are vitally affected by the regime of the British North America Act. It does matter to the workers whether the country in which they carry on their class struggle for social freedom is still a colony or has achieved complete sovereignty. The workers are confronted not only with capitalism but with capitalist-imperialism. Not only are they interested that they shall not be the pawns of British foreign policy and imperialist wars, but that the concessions they wring in the way of immediate social legislation shall not be at the mercy of the British North America Act or of the interpretation of its powers and jurisdiction by

the Privy Council in London. The Senate killed the Old Age Pensions Bill passed in the House of Commons. But assuming it had carried even in that Rich Old Men's Home the right of the Federal Government to pass such legislation might still have been questioned on appeal to the Privy Council. Despite all statements to the contrary, Canada is still a colony of Great Britain, a part of the British Empire, one of the greatest political machines for the exploitation of the working class and subject peoples in the world. That is why the Labor Party, in its Ontario Section at least, takes a position in favor of the complete self-determination of Canada and why the left wing of the Labor Party headed by the Communists takes a more specific position for the annulment of the British North America Act, the separation of Canada from the Empire, and Canadian Independence.



"Employee Education in Economics"

By Will Herberg

AS many readers of the *Workers' Monthly* probably know from their own experience, there is an organized movement afoot among the more "modern" corporations, as represented in their "employment" or "personnel" departments, to teach "economics" to their employees. What is at the bottom of this movement, what are its aims, what sort of "economics" is taught and by what methods and with what results, and, finally, what lessons can we learn to be turned to advantage in our work of Communist propaganda—these are some of the problems which it is the purpose of the following paragraphs to touch upon.

1. What is "Employee Education in Economics?"

In the literature on the subject the phrase "employee education in economics" is used for the instruction of the workers in "economics" (what type of "economics" we will soon see) thru the agency of their employers. Usually the workers of a single enterprise are "educated" by their own employers; sometimes certain groups of workers are taken care of by corresponding groups of employers. But always it is the "education" of the problems upon which it is the purpose of the following paragraphs to touch.

2. The Extent of "Employee Education in Economics."

"Leaders in industry are beginning to realize the importance of teaching simple economics to their employees. It is as yet a comparatively new phase in industrial relations but it has passed the experimental stage."* Only the big corporations, that have specialized personnel departments trained to realize the significance of "employee economics" and capable of carrying it thru, usually undertake it but it is precisely these corporations that occupy the determining position in American industrial life and that employ the great masses of the most decisive sections of the working class.

3. The Purposes of "Employee Education in Economics"

What do the personnel managers and the capitalists in whose interest they work expect to accomplish thru "employee economics?" Their aims may generally be classed under two heads:

(a) The increase of the profits of the corporation thru laying an ideological ("moral") basis for wage-cuts, speeding-up, lengthening of hours, the avoidance and the breaking of strikes, and so on. When we come to consider the content of the "economics" taught by the bosses we will see that it is calculated precisely to render the worker a more "efficient" and docile wage slave. As the strike-breaking open-shop Law and Labor formulates it: "It (employee economics) does pay. Operating expenses are reduced and the employe is

more inclined to be reasonable in his demands and less subject to pernicious outside influence. His interest in his work is stimulated and greater confidence is gained."† H. W. Kimball, employment manager of the Arnold Paint Works, assures us†† that "a sane and tactful campaign" of "employee economics" is certain to "return large dividends to the industries of the United States." This then is the first aim of teaching "economics" to the employees: to provide the ideologic cloak and justification for the ever more intense exploitation of the workers and for the expansion of surplus value and profits.

(b) The second purpose of employee economics is broader. "The restlessness of labor is making these days critical for industry . . . It is very plain that labor, misled by specious appeals, is in danger of ignoring certain fundamental facts and laws . . ."‡ In other words, the growing class consciousness and militancy of the workers are "making these days critical" for the continuance of the domination of the bourgeoisie. This tendency is reflected in the more definite class character of the every-day economic notions of the workers. The propaganda (the "specious appeals") of the trade union militants and of the Communists (the "pernicious outside influence") is beginning to tell. Under the combined influence of all these factors the workers are "in danger of ignoring certain fundamental facts and laws"—particularly such "facts and laws" as e. g., that without the capitalists the workers would starve and that, therefore, capitalism is not only the foundation of civilization but is the greatest blessing civilization offers for the workers. Well, if the workers are in danger of forgetting these very essential things why not teach it to them directly. "The remedy for this trouble (labor unrest) is education."§ Labor should "be educated to recognize the existence of certain economic laws and facts," "labor should know that there is another side to be heard," labor must be made to understand "the large part which efficiency and supervision play" (with these industrial engineers it is no longer "abstinence and saving" as it used to be with the old-style apologists), labor must appreciate that before a worker can get a job it is necessary for some kind-hearted boss to stake him, to capitalize him, to the extent of thirty-five hundred dollars on the average* and more along the same line. If labor is so "educated," then, while "it is useless to think that (it) would eliminate all labor unrest, it would cause many a worker to

†August, 1926.

††Industrial Management, Nov. 1919.

‡H. W. Kimball, *Educating the Workers to Sound Economics*, Industrial Management, Nov. 1919.

§D. A. Hampson, *Selling Plant Costs to Employees*, Industrial Management, Feb. 1926.

*Carl Dietz, *Employee Education in Fundamental Economics*.

*Law and Labor, August 1926.

think twice before he acted in foolish manner"†, before he listened to the "specious appeals" of "dissatisfied spirits" or "professional agitators."

The second aim of employee economics is then: to inoculate the worker against the spread and intensification of class consciousness and class militancy, to spread the ideology of class peace and class harmony—"the study of applied economics is designed to create a better understanding between managers (and employers) and workers"‡—in a word, to counteract the process of the revolutionization of the working class. To accomplish this, as the carefully trained agents of the capitalists—the industrial engineers—realize, the teaching of properly selected and formulated economic "truths" is absolutely necessary. Of course, economics does not go all the way; it must be supplemented by "civics," "citizenship," and the like, but "economics is fundamental."‡

4. The Content of "Employee Economics."

What are these "fundamental truths of economics" that will accomplish so much for the bosses? Judged by the economic standard they are vulgarizations of even the vulgarized apologetics of the bourgeois economists. They are so apparently absurd that the veriest tyro in economics can see thru them. But that does not negative their effectiveness. For, from the psychological viewpoint, they are admirably conceived and formulated to accomplish the results expected of them. The industrial engineers and personnel managers have many lessons to teach us Communist propagandists—lessons that we must not be ashamed to learn.

First of all, we must note the selective nature of the content. The very phrase "employee economics" shows that it is not the whole body of economic "truth" that is to be taught to the workers but only selected portions especially "fitted for" or "needed by the employees." The definition of economics given by the American Management Association Committee is scientifically almost unbelievably absurd but its direct apologetic-tendencious character is obvious: "Economics is the rules of the game of business, involving those principles and practices which, in the long run, have been found to enable business and industry to thrive to the mutual advantage of the members of society."‡ The familiar talk of "impartial science" the bourgeoisie save for their schools and colleges; in the factory economics becomes frankly and openly "partial" and "selective."

The method of approach also influences the content. The personnel managers are very careful as to this point. "Any effective teaching must start from the

†H. W. Kimball, *Educating the Workers to Sound Economics*, Industrial Management, Nov. 1919.

‡Reports on Employee Economics, Committee appointed by the American Management Association.

†Carl Dietz, *Employee Education in Fundamental Economics*.

‡Report of the American Management Association Committee on Employee Economics.

workers' point of view. It must recognize his prejudices and take into account the arguments he has been accustomed to hear. It must admit all that can possibly be granted of his convictions and by this acquiescence a friendly approach may be gained. Very little ought to be said of the rights of capital, very little should be said in defense of its position, but the emphasis should be placed on the plain teaching of the sound principles of industry.‡ What these "sound principles" are we shall now see.

The content of "employee economics" shows a remarkable uniformity from corporation to corporation—as is quite natural when we consider the uniformity of aims to be accomplished and the uniformity of training and outlook of the men who develop these system. The most essential "truths" that are found almost everywhere are:

1. "The shorter work-day has its limits and . . . wherever it results in less production it means higher costs to the customers." Longer hours and wage-cuts!
2. "The shortened work-day must be compensated for by a greater efficiency during the time of work." Speed-up!
3. "The effort to have workers become stockholders in industry is most praiseworthy. As soon as a man becomes a capitalist in a small way he tends to grow thoughtful and conservative. He wants to protect his own possessions which are precious to him the small in size. Men must be made to realize that dollars in the savings bank put them in the capitalist class and that the safety of their savings is dependent upon the permanence of the industrial structure. The home they own or are paying for is of value only as law and order prevail and as the security for property is maintained." No comment necessary.
4. "There are a large number of trade unionists who are members of the unions only because . . . there is little opportunity to get any work without a union card . . . The idea of the closed shop is repugnant to the American spirit of freedom . . ." Union-smashing and open-shop drive!
5. "The wastes of industrial warfare . . . are costly. When there are strikes and lock-outs, stopping production and leaving machinery idle, the wastes mount into millions and this waste is paid for mostly by the average man in the high cost of everything he buys. The right to strike . . . is the most costly weapon he (the worker) can use. Certainly he can be brought to understand this and realize that his own welfare demands some other way of settling industrial disputes."* Abolition of the right

§H. W. Kimball, *Educating the Workers to Sound Economics*, Industrial Management, Nov. 1919.

*All above quotations from H. W. Kimball as above.

to strike! Hamstringing the workers with arbitration, mediation, etc., etc.! Class collaboration schemes!

6. "He (the worker) is more than willing to listen to the lurid tales of vast fortunes which he is rolling up for his employer."* "The notion harbored by employees that their employers are making an inordinate amount of money 'off of them' "must be combated."† This primarily consists in a skilled propaganda of "plant costs" and "operating expenses" to show the workers what "heavy expenses" their poor employers have to meet to keep the business running and "serve the community." At any rate: Exploitation and surplus values do not exist. They are invented by professional agitators.

7. "How many men in industry (workers) realize that before it is even possible for them to project themselves into an industrial organization and get a job, it was necessary for some one to invest three thousand to five thousand dollars for each man so employed. This practically means that someone has to capitalize each worker to that extent."‡ Would you believe it? The capitalist is therefore the kind hearted gentleman who provides a job for the worker and subsidizes him with thousands of dollars. No wonder that Dietz reports one "foreign born" (and therefore naturally radical. See the triumph of "employee economics.") girl as remarking: "If we all try to understand some of these things, we will not be so dissatisfied half the time."

8. Employers and employees are partners. "Understanding and co-operation" should exist between them.§ Friction between them is due to misunderstandings or to the work of "radicals," "professional agitators," "pernicious outside influences." Class peace, class harmony.

These are the "essential truths of employee economics." What shall we say about them? To say that they are absurdly unsound and that they are obviously vulgarizations of vulgarizations is true but not to the point. The workers to whom these "truths" are dished out are not Marxists nor even bourgeois economists. If we examine these "truths" carefully we must admit (a) that they are carefully selected—being just things that the bourgeoisie want the workers to believe in the name of economics and (b) that they are carefully formulated and convincingly put in a way as to appeal to the worker and mean something to him. Again we must say: there are many lessons we can learn, must learn,

5. The Method of Teaching "Employee Economics."

What methods are employed in teaching the workers these interesting "truths?" And here we must point out that the matter of method must not be underestimated. Frequently, it is the most important single factor in the success of this work and a great deal of

*Economics for Employees, Law and Labor, August 1926.

†D. A. Hampson, *Selling Plant Costs to Employees*, Industrial Management, February 1926.

‡Carl Dietz, *Employee Education in Economics*.

§Report of the American Management Association Committee.

thought, experimentation, and analysis of experience has been devoted to it by the specialists. The few words we can say as to method here are collected from a rich material which well repays careful study.

The first point to be considered is the center of the propaganda. Where is the "teaching" to be carried on to be most effective? "In the factories and wherever workers gather in groups"* is the answer of the personnel managers. All of them are unanimous that "employee education" must root in the shops and then extend to the other places where workers are found in groups. To comrades who are still vague as to the reasons for and the significance of the shop nuclei and Party fractions and who look upon them as "novelties" it may be a surprise to find out that to the trained servants of the bourgeoisie the role of the shop as the organizational basis for reaching the workers has long been a commonplace.

Secondly, as to method of approach. We have already quoted Kimball's statement that "any effective teaching must start from the workers' point of view." The approach is made on the basis of the workers' stock of opinions, "prejudices, and . . . the arguments he has been accustomed to hear." The "social," the "human relation" side of each subject is to be brought out since this makes the most direct appeal to the worker.† Approach is facilitated thru starting with the "concrete, practical facts and interests" of the workers' everyday life.

The visual representation method (Anschauungsmethode) is very highly recommended. Pictorial and graphical means have been used to great effect by the General Electric Company where the familiar "partitioned dollar" is used to prove to the workers how munificently they are paid in comparison with the meager dividends of the stock-holders. The Bridgeport Brass Company has developed an interesting system of illustrating "truths" by means of colored blocks and charts. Moving pictures and lantern slides are also used.

The technique of increasing the receptivity of the workers thru "sugar coating" the somewhat uninviting "truths" with accompaniment of entertainment and amusement has also been pretty highly developed. Hampson* speaks of a "meeting wherein salient points may be included in a program of entertainment" and many companies have developed system of "informal meetings (in which) a light supper is followed by an educational motion picture bearing on the subject of discussion."

Let us now examine some of the methods of "employee instruction" and some of the media for this propaganda work.

1. People are to be sent to address labor unions and public forums. Kimball points out what is unfortunately too true, that most labor unions and public forums would be glad to welcome speakers from chambers of commerce and employers' associations—such is the prestige they have with the bourgeois-

*H. W. Kimball.

†Report of the American Management Association Committee.

mindful officialdom. In this connection it is also surprising to what extent trade union and other "labor" publications are used by various bourgeois agencies (such as Professor Irving Fisher's syndicated articles) for the propaganda of "employee economics."

2. "Men's clubs in churches, town improvement associations, public meetings of fraternal organizations and orders" are to be visited by speakers.

3. "Not the least valuable part of such an educational campaign is the newspaper publicity which may accompany it. If this publicity work is well organized the local papers will carry the message of the speaker to many who did not hear him speak.

4. "Bulletin boards thruout the factory" are to be used. "Newspaper clippings and cartoons from papers and magazines can be posted and will be read by many and discussed as men walk home from work or gather at the noon hour."

5. "Noon meetings within the factory or at the gates can be held at least once a week and in a ten-minute talk one point can be pushed home so strongly that it will be clinched in the mind of many a listener." "A brief musical program, instrumental and, if possible, with group singing of popular songs, is a good introduction for the speaker."

6. "The addressing of foremen's meetings is especially important because if the truth is absorbed by them it will filter thru them to the men working under them."* These quotations and those below could be duplicated from most works treating with the subject.

7. Then come "shop talks by foremen, department heads' and plant executives." The "personal instruction thru foremen and others in authority"* right on the floor of the shop has been found especially effective.

8. "The columns of the plant papers . . . also provide a way of getting the facts before them (the workers). An especial value will be given to such publicity if the matter printed is quoted from some one whose name carries weight with the people; otherwise the readers may feel that the argument made is simply another effort of the employers to keep them contented."†

9. An effective campaign can be carried on "thru the daily press." Here Kimball notes that workers generally have little faith in the daily press, especially in its economic lucubrations. He finds that the part of the papers that the readers tend to trust most correspondence section. He therefore calmly advises is the "letters from the people" or, in other words, the correspondence section. He therefore calmly advises a campaign carried on thru these columns. "Short, crisp letters replying to editorial opinions or to other printed letters will be read and be effective." We have already mentioned above how trade union and "labor" papers are used for the spread of "employee economics."

10. "Circulars mailed to employees, special shop bulletins, and pay envelope stuffers" have been found to be effective.‡

11. "Night classes, if properly conducted," altho not a favorite method, have been found to be useful in some cases.

In fashioning a method to suit a particular case it is to be remembered that "this education may take as many forms as expedient—what fits one case may not do in another because of the workers' mental status, their nationality, the size of the plant, and so on. A preachment adapted to inside workers will not touch men of another concern who are in the field part of the time."*

The Struggle on the Ideological Front.

A STUDY of the whole question of "employee education in economics" proves nothing so clearly as the entire correctness of Lenin's oft-repeated remark that "the class struggle has its ideologic front also."† This struggle is a struggle between the bourgeoisie (and its agents) and the conscious proletarian vanguard for the minds of the masses of the workers. Our enemies in this ideologic struggle are either the bourgeoisie directly (as in the case we are discussing) or its agents in the labor movement (the reformists, the reactionary trade union bureaucrats). In so far as we have hitherto recognized the ideologic struggle of the proletariat at all, we have tended to place exclusive emphasis upon the second phase of it. And, indeed, it is of paramount importance. But we have neglected too much, perhaps sometimes even failed to see, that we must fight the bourgeoisie directly for the soul of the proletarian masses. In a country like Germany in which there is a long established and extensive "socialist" labor movement, the role of the labor lieutenants of the bourgeoisie in the ideologic struggle is much greater than in America where, because of the backwardness of the labor movement and the undeveloped ideology of the working class, the employers are enabled to "get away" ideologically with much more, directly and without the aid of their agents among the workers. Many of the "truths" above mentioned as the content of "employee economics" would simply be laughed at by the masses of the German workers to whom the idea of class struggle is a commonplace. The German bourgeoisie is therefore obliged to make use of much more complicated methods to achieve the same ideological goals, methods that operate thru the instrumentality of "socialist" ideas and "socialist" leaders. But in America, where even those who fight for trade union organization are "pernicious outside agitators" and where Socialists are "extreme radicals," the ideological struggle is far crasser and sharper—it is a struggle about the most elementary fundamentals.

In this struggle—to go back to the question of "employee education in economics"—each side has certain advantages and disadvantages. There can be no question as to the advantages of the employers. Their con-

trol of the factory in the first place, of the whole ideology forming machinery of society, of all the social forces of capitalism, gives them an almost incalculable superiority. They can hire the best equipped and trained specialists, they have the full use of such instruments as the press, the school and the church, they can issue factory papers and factory bulletins without trouble and see that all workers get them, they can hold noon hour meetings undisturbed, bulletin boards within the factory are fully available to them, they have speakers and writers of prestige among the workers who will be listened to and believed, etc. In fact, one cannot fully realize their advantages in the struggle until one examines the advantages the proletariat has in Russia today.

But all these technical advantages are more than outweighed in the long run by the fact that they are used to try to stem the advance of an historical tendency that has its roots and sources of energy in the very nature of capitalist society and cannot therefore be eliminated except thru the destruction of capitalism itself. Even the personnel managers are beginning to suspect that it is not the "professional agitator" but something inherent in the economic relations of modern society that brings about a fundamental antagonism between employer and worker and makes the worker look upon his boss as an enemy. This antagonism is there and is effective even where it is undeveloped and not conscious. It is this basic class antagonism that is the rock upon which all the carefully thought out and "scientifically constructed" schemes of the industrial engineers are sure to go to smash. Many of these trained gentlemen have found cause to complain with Kimball that all their efforts are looked upon by the workers as "simply another effort of the employers to keep them contented." And indeed it is uphill work to try to convince even the most backward workers that low wages and long hours are good for them, that the bosses are not out after the profits they can squeeze out of the workers but are kind hearted philanthropists whose sole aim is to serve the community and their employees. These "truths" may appear to sink into the minds of the workers and indeed the workers may come to think they believe them themselves. But the first bit of "labor trouble," as many an employment manager has again and again discovered, undoes the "good work" of many months.

The advantage of the proletarian vanguard in its ideologic struggle with the bourgeoisie for the souls of the working masses is therefore simply this: that its line is the line of the social forces at work in society. But this advantage is enough to give us success if we make the proper use of it. The class position of the proletariat in the modern industrial system gives rise spontaneously in a elemental, only partly conscious form, to the main features of a revolutionary class ideology. It is the business of the conscious vanguard of the proletariat to strengthen these elemental ideas, to clarify them, and to render them conscious and well-organized. This is the basic task of Communist propaganda and it is also our basic line in the ideologic struggle with the bourgeoisie. History promises us success if we play our proper role in its development.

The Rationalization of Method.

One of the impressions that remains with us after a study of our subject is the remarkably conscious deliberation with which the whole campaign of "employee education in economics" is planned out, the careful consideration with which aims are formulated, organizational forms and methods worked out, tested, corrected, adapted, and applied. Empiric and rule-of-thumb ("practical") methods no longer carry any special validity. Everything is analyzed, tested, measured . . . Everything is put upon a rational basis, is rationalized. Of course, this does not apply to "employee economics" alone. For years there has now been a movement among the technical specialists of the bourgeoisie—a movement somewhat loosely designated as "Taylorism" or "scientific management" for the rationalization of the entire regimen of the factory, whether mechanical or personal. This movement has proved of immense advantage to the class in whose interest it has been applied: to the interest of the bourgeoisie in America, to the interest of the proletariat in Russia (Lenin was one of the protagonists of the introduction of "Taylorism" in Russia).

Lenin has pointed out more than once that "the only weapon of the proletariat is organization."* And effective organization means—**systematization and rationalization**. Why should we let our class enemies use scientific methods in perfecting their weapons and forms of struggle while we ourselves rely upon empiricism, ancient prejudices, and rules-of-thumb in our struggle? The proletariat is the bearer of the future of science; let us show that we can utilize it and master it in the present. In science, in system, in rationalization—in organization—there lies our strength!

Lessons for Communist Propaganda.

One of the most important tasks that face us in the study of "employee education in economics" is the examination of its forms, methods, and experiences for lessons that can be used in our Communist propaganda work. Unfortunately, space does not permit us to do this in detail here. A few notes on the subject may, however, be suggestive of the lines along which such an investigation should be conducted.

a. "Economics is fundamental." The first lesson that we can draw is the fundamental character of economics for propaganda work. As Dietz says: "Economics is fundamental." It appears to me that we have tended to underestimate economics in our mass propaganda work just as I believe that we have tended to overemphasize it in our inner party educational work. Economics must be fundamental for our mass propaganda work.

b. Content of our propaganda. The first lesson we may draw is in the matter of proper selection of material. Have we ever deliberately asked ourselves: What propositions do we want to convey to the workers and why? Rather too often the answer has been: Oh, Marxism! But for us to attempt to teach "Marxism" to the workers as basic economic propaganda would be as absurd as for the bourgeoisie to teach the workers the

*All quotations above from Kimball.
†H. W. Kimball, as above.

‡Hampson, as above.
*Hampson, as above.
‡Lenin, "Materialism and Empiriocriticism."

*Lenin, "One Step Forward, Two Steps Backward."

ordinary text-book economics of the bourgeois economist. Surely we want to propagate Marxism—but surely we are not going to teach the whole of “Capital” or even parts of it in the original form. We must make a distinction between the training of Party cadres and mass propaganda. Why cannot we do as the bourgeois specialists: make a list of the fundamental propositions of Marxian economics we want to propagate and demand of each proposition that it justify its inclusion by contributing to the aims we have in view?

The second lesson we can learn as regards content is the matter of formulation of the fundamental propositions that lie at the basis of our economic propaganda work. The propositions must be carefully formulated without technicalities, in terms of the “concrete practical facts and interests” of the workers’ everyday life. A good deal depends upon the felicity of formulation.

c. **Methods of propaganda.** If anything more were necessary, the study of “employee education in economics” would convince us of the absolutely basic nature of the shop in any activity of reaching the workers, especially in our propaganda work. From the shop we must extend to other places “where workers gather in groups” (trade unions, workers’ clubs, fraternal and sports organizations, etc.). Our organizational system of shop nuclei and fractions is justified again thru the experiences of the bourgeoisie.

If it is true that the shop is the basis for our propaganda work then we must admit that we have not given sufficient thought to forms and methods of propaganda work in the shop. Here, too, we can learn a great deal from the experience of the bourgeoisie. We have made some beginning in the matter of shop papers but what have we done to utilize to the full the advantages that shop bulletin boards offer us? Of course, we cannot put up official notices or clippings the way the bosses can—but what is to prevent us from putting up stickers surreptitiously, clippings with some propaganda material, quotations, drawings, graphs, pictures, etc.? Before these stickers can be removed by the authorities they will be seen and read and discussed by many workers. Have we utilized sufficiently the distribution of special propaganda leaflets—we are not speaking here of agitational leaflets but of leaflets devoted to the propaganda of certain economic propositions based, of course, on certain events? Have we ever systematized and organized so powerful a form of propaganda as noon day discussion? It is impossible here to go into further detail in these matters but they should be made the object of careful study and investigation by the agitprop apparatus of the Party.

Above all: careful investigation and analysis, systematization, rationalization, and organization—in these lie our strength.



Michael Alexandrovitch Bakunin

By Viatch Polonsky

I.

FIFTY years ago, Michael Alexandrovitch Bakunin reached the end of his revolutionary life in a hospital in Berne.

Bakunin, Marx's opponent, who largely contributed to the collapse of the First International, the object of the passionate hatred of a whole generation of Social Democracy, no longer rouses in us the disapproval his activities and his teaching provoked in our predecessors. This does not mean that we have come to agree with Bakunin; it only means that our long past dissensions with him have lost their acrimony and that he has long ago become an historical figure.

II.

BAKUNIN was born in the Russia of Nicholas I and grew up in that atmosphere. In the year of the Decembrist insurrection he was twelve years old. At the age of twenty-five he went abroad to acquire science and brought back a goodly array of opinions and impressions which had grown on the soil of foreign countries and had taken intensive hold on him. The Empire of Nicholas was welded together by force—he became an opponent of the state; the state was centralized—he became a pioneer of federalism; the state rested on the shoulders of an enslaved population—he called upon the people to rebel; the state was ruled by a monarch—he called for an overthrow of the throne; the church kowtowed to the czar—he became an enemy to the church; it used the name of God—he began to hate God no less than the state; and both God and the state became his most embittered enemies.

Both in his teaching and in his activities he put a minus sign wherever his epoch put a plus and it can be maintained with full justification that the Russian history of the pre-proletarian period produced no single fighter who denied the foundation on which the edifice of the Russian Empire rested so passionately, so logically and so universally as did Bakunin.

The needs of many millions of enslaved peasants who were passionately thirsting for liberation found expression in the unbridled, revolutionary impetus of Bakunin. This is why, in the first period of his activity in the west, he found no echo in the labor movement of Europe. The revolutionary storms of 1848 did not distract him from his national duties as a Slav. Even the revolutionary Paris of 1848, where he spent two weeks of exuberant, mad happiness (of which he gives a vivid account in his “Confessions”), even Paris did not turn his head; he did not forget his duties to the distant, poverty-stricken, enslaved country, and he

moved away from the metropolis, nearer to the Russian frontiers, in order to help his people.

Bakunin was acquainted with Marx, Weitling and other lesser figures of the European revolution, but nothing could tear him away from his idea of the liberation of the Slav nation. Only after he had behind him two death sentences, twelve years of fortress and Siberia and had himself experienced the failure of insurrections—Paris, 1848, Dresden, 1849, and Poland, 1863—did he cast off the husk of the national revolutionary.

III.

THE Polish insurrection of 1863, into which Bakunin had thrown himself with all the zeal of long-restrained passion, was a mile-stone in the history of his life. The collapse of the insurrection, its character typical of the lesser nobility and the bourgeoisie (to which Bakunin shut his eyes), the pan-Slav Utopian ideas which dominated his brochure “The People's Cause,” his differences of opinion with Herzen and Ogarev, forced Bakunin to reflect upon his nationalist aberrations.

At the end of 1863, Bakunin went to Italy and there, in the years of 1864-1867, he altered his general view of the world, renounced his Slav theories and re-examined his attitude to the forms of state and to revolutionary tactics. The idea of pan-Slav liberation was supplanted by the central idea of immediate social revolution, of the destruction of all states and the creation of a society without states on the basis of freedom, labor and justice. As early as in 1866, he expounded, in his magnificent sketch of the “Secret International,” his whole anarchist system, both in its theoretical foundations and in its practical details.

In the further course of his life, Bakunin devoted himself entirely to the idea of the social revolution. The former nationalist turned into a violent and extreme internationalist. The tactics of the International Workingmen's Association, which he joined in 1868, were not revolutionary enough to suit him. In order to revolutionize the International, he made efforts to found his own secret organization within it, thus to guide the International invisibly from within and to lead its activities on to the revolutionary path. At the same time Bakunin carried on an open campaign against the General Council of the International, against the centralist leadership of the international movement, with the object of depriving the General Council of its leading position and subordinating the international revolutionary movement to his own leadership. He had devoted agents in Italy, Switzerland, Spain and France and tried to form groups in Russia with the help of Sergei Nietchaiev.

He carried on the campaign secretly and in the open; he agitated, organized, preached indefatigably; he sent his partisans in the various countries endless written instructions, usually in cipher, and forced his opponents, who had gathered round Marx, to enter into a decisive struggle which was carried on with the greatest acrimony on both sides and which finally led to Bakunin being excluded from the International at the Hague Congress in 1872.

IV.

HE was the most extreme of the extreme revolutionaries of his time, of those who took the most distant aims as their practical tasks, aims which were not in any way in harmony with the actual forces of the epoch or with its objective needs. He took as his basis **what should be** and not **what was**; his system lacked the necessary elements of realism, his dialectics were idealistic; Bakunin must therefore be counted among the large family of **Utopians**.

In an epoch of the advance of capitalism, of the break-up of small estates, of the pauperization of broad strata of the population, Bakunin's views made him an ideologist, not of the revolutionary proletariat, but of the revolutionary petty bourgeoisie. It is, therefore, not to be wondered at that he met with his greatest success in Italy, Spain, Switzerland, and Russia, the countries which were in the rear ranks as regards economic development. As Bakunin aimed at the immediate destruction of the state, the immediate stopping of exploitation, he took for granted that the backward workers and the peasant masses of Italy, Spain and Russia were ready for the social revolution and that all that was necessary was to organize a series of successful revolts in various places.

Bakunin tried to bring system and organization into the undisciplined rebellion of the people. It was for this purpose that he founded his international League of Social Revolutionaries, which was intended to unite the separate revolts and turn them into an international social revolution to destroy the state and the authorities with all political, judicial, bureaucratic, financial and other institutions.

V.

BAKUNIN, who was the first to translate the "Communist Manifesto" into Russian, the first translator of "Capital," repeatedly gave expression to his deep respects for Marx's economic system and called himself his disciple. Nevertheless, he was unable completely to abandon his own backward views. He spoke of labor as the only basis of life, and yet was not capable of working himself. He called himself an internationalist and was yet a bitter German-hater and anti-Semite; he inveighed against the dictatorship of the General Council, but himself secretly formed a secret society with dictatorial power, etc. In words he professed his belief in the point of view of economic materialism, but in deeds he remained a Utopian and an idealist.

Bakunin's fight in the International does not negate the fact that the development of socialism and of the international organizations in Italy, Spain and Switzerland owes a great deal to him. We cannot refuse to acknowledge this. He wrote a no less important page in the history of the Russian revolutionary movement in the seventies. His book "State Organization and Anarchy" was, according to the evidence of his contemporaries, a gospel for the young Russian revolutionaries. The "going to the people" is linked with Bakunin's name.

It must not be thought that in the years 1860-1870 Bakunin was an isolated fighter for the social revolution, a seeker of quarrels in the International who prevented Marx from leading the international organization of the proletariat. Bakunin had many followers amongst the petty bourgeois strata and sections of the badly paid categories of the working class, who had not yet freed themselves from their petty bourgeois past and had not passed through the school of capitalism.

VI.

BAKUNIN was no theorist. He was not even an author. His strength lay not in theoretical but in practical revolutionary work, and just for this reason, the most valuable parts of his writings are his correspondence and some propaganda articles.

In several instances attempts have been made to place Bakuninism and Leninism on the same level.

What, however, was the essential nature of Bakuninism? The negation of the state altogether, the negation of the dictatorship of the working class, the negation even of transition forms from a state order to a stateless order, the negation of the political struggle which provides for the utilization of the existing forms of the state in order to abolish them. This is the main point, the foundation stone of the edifice on which the tactics and politics of Bakuninism are built up. It is only by falsification that Bakuninism can be compared to Leninism, for the latter takes as the foundation of its policy and tactics the dictatorship of the proletariat, the political struggle and the utilization of the state to aid in a transition to a stateless society.

If we look for the causes of the embittered fight between Marx and Bakunin, we find that the chief points on which their opinions differed were precisely the state, the dictatorship and the political struggle. It is hardly necessary to say that in this great fight history has shown who was in the right. Bakunin did not carry off the victory. The triumph of Bolshevism is the death-knell of Bakuninism.

VII.

SOME of our comrades are inclined to regard Bakunin as one of the ancestors of Social Democracy and thus of the Communist Party. This is of course nonsense. In the last years of his life, Bakunin tried to adopt the principles of Marx's teaching, but without success. Bakunin was not an ancestor of the Russian Party but a

forerunner of the Russian revolution—there is a wide gulf between these two conceptions.

Leninism has its roots in the proletarian movement of the capitalist epoch; Bakunin, however was, in spite of all his radicalism, an exponent of the elementary revolutionary character of the pre-proletarian period of the Russian and the European revolutions.

Our quarrels with Bakunin are past history. There is, however, one feature which brings Bakunin nearer to us than, for instance, Herzen or any other politician of our past. In spite of all the differences and all the hostility which stood between Bakunin and Marx, one com-

mon passion, one common feeling brought them nearer together; both wished that the social revolution should occur as rapidly as possible, both strove for the same end, for the final victory over that order of society which is characterized by exploitation, force and distress.

Both these passions bring him nearer to our Leninist generation also. In this sense it can be said that there is something of "Bakuninism" in our revolution and in Leninism.

But this "common factor" is the same which brought Marx and Bakunin nearer together and without which there can be no revolution.



Homeless Artists

By Karl Radek

THIS year has snatched from the ranks of Russian literature two artists who voluntarily turned their backs upon life and betook themselves to the dim part of the world whence no one returns—Yessenin and Sobol. To be sure, two different entities as writers and as human beings. And the death of each was undoubtedly actuated by personal and individualistic motives. But in the tragedy of these two artists there is also a great deal in common and it is upon these common elements that we Soviet artists must pause and reflect.

Yessenin Dies.

Yessenin died because he had nothing to live for. He abandoned the village, lost all contact with it, but he struck no roots in the city. One can't strike roots in asphalt, and Yessenin know nothing in the city except asphalt and the tavern. He sang just as a bird sings. He had no contact with society, and he did not sing for society. He sang because he wanted to delight himself and catch females. But when he finally tired of this stimulation, he stopped singing.

Sobol Dies.

Sobol, however, had been socially active in the past. But during the war he lost the stem of life and became a social patriot. Subsequently he made attempts to find a new axis of life, but obviously without success. He therefore thought it useless to saunter about, merely observing and contemplating life.

Death in Life.

Many writers are in the position either of Yessenin or Sobol. Not everyone, however, will resort to suicide. But that does not necessarily signify living. For to live means to create, and you cannot create today without knowing the aim and purpose of creative living.

Spectators.

In the old days there were writers who were onlookers. Even great writers like Chekov. They observed life closely and watched it in all its trifling manifestations. If they succeeded in putting down these trifles interestingly, that is, in a manner in which, their readers thought, they were rendered meaningful, and they and their readers were satisfied. Later other writers came to the surface, who, on the basis of the work of their predecessors, wrote whole tracts concerning the meaning of life—its meaninglessness. Read Chekov's letters to his wife. These epistles are most depressing. Two intimate people find nothing to say to each other

The following article by Karl Radek appeared in the Pravda on June 16, 1926. It has been translated for the Workers Monthly by Bessie Weissman. The subject of which it treats has come into the foreground recently thru the suicide of the two young artists, Yessenin and Sobol, and Radek's article is well conceived to throw light on the difficult problem of the position of the artist in Soviet society.

after a long span of years save the most trivial things. These letters are excellent commentaries, not only on the life and creative art of Chekov, but on the whole epoch in which it was possible to be a spectator, but even then only of trifles.

"For or Against!"

But it was impossible to be a spectator during the world war, when millions of people were being killed. It was impossible to be a spectator during the civil war of the Russian Revolution, when the old world was swept to its ruin. You cannot be an onlooker in the U. S. S. R. today, when a new world is being born. For or against—that's the password.

Singers of Putrescence.

A part of the writers remained with the old world, to die with it. But you cannot be a singer of putrescence. The whole Russian emigre literature has not created a single work of art that is of any significance. Some writers lapsed into complete silence and became transmuted, as Akhmatova says in her tragic poem "Lot's Wife." They know that this world must be destroyed, but they are so bound up with it that they cannot take their eyes away from its destruction. And they stand, transmuted into salt pillars.

Singers of the Storm.

Others, who were younger, tried to "recognize" the new life. This was during the years of great suffering and heroic struggle. They felt that a historical storm was sweeping over Russia. They were not frightened by the thunders and lightnings. And, breathing in the pungent air which swished in their faces and tore their hair, they cried: Long live the storm! Thus were born the non-communist Soviet writers. They were born as singers of the grandeur and beauty of destruction. The best works of this literature will help future generations to understand the years of the civil war and intervention.

The Past Fades Out.

But these years belong to the past. Life today no longer proceeds under the boom of artillery and lightning of cavalry swords. It proceeds in the thick coal dust in the shafts of the mines, drenched in the sweat of workers at the blast-furnaces. Life goes on at the peasant's plow and behind the counter of the co-operative store. New relations are being created between people and new dangers are emerging for the Revolution. All this demands literary expression. The function of literature is to give a mirror of life in order that people

may be better able to understand its meaning in artistic expression. This is the demand that life makes upon literature. Life forbids the artist to live upon the past exclusively. It has excellent means of compelling the artist to yield to its will. If the artist will not fulfill the demands of life, he will not be read by those who are most valuable to him. The Soviet artists, in their great majority, do not heed this dictum of life. They have not yet been punished for this heedlessness with lack of attention by the reader. For young readers are still growing up who are interested to know about the past. But the Soviet writers are beginning to perceive the decline of their influence. The latest works even of such talented writers as Babel, Vsevolod Ivanov and Pilnyak are not only uninteresting for the advanced readers, but are already boring the authors themselves. They have lost the joy of creativeness, for they repeat themselves instead of going forward with life.

But Why Not Turn to the Present?

Why, then, do they not depict the new life, the life which is being formed on the basis of new relations created by the Revolution? This may be explained also by external reasons. Our artists are bad workers. They do not love work. They have been trained on the habits of bohemism, strengthened by the disintegration of life during the period of the civil war. They do not like to live under uncomfortable conditions in the village. They do not want to ride in third class cars when they can ride in a soft berth. They do not want to go down the mines and live among workers or become acquainted with the suburban flour dealer. They do not know the worker and the peasant of today. They do not even know the Nepman. There is not a single book today which is an authentic representation of "Nepland." What we get as Nep in literature is simply the history of the fall from grace of weak, petty bourgeois revolutionists, but not Nep with its people who escaped from ten cellars of the Cheka, people who are creeping out of the naphthaline bags, emerging from the village bourgeoisie.

But insufficient contact with life is not yet the sole reason why the artists who are "committed to the Soviet platform" do not produce a representation of reality. Literature is a mirror, but not a mirror mechanically reflecting the world. The artist who refracts pictures of life through his brain must connect them and invest them with meaning. But the trouble with the so-called Soviet artist, the artist who is non-communist but who has "accepted the Revolution," is that he does not understand what he has accepted. He is not communist, although he sympathizes with the Revolution, precisely because he has no firm comprehension of what goes on around him. He does not know whether the world is moving. For him modern life is one great chaos.

Afraid of the Censor or of Yourselves?

Many writers say that it is impossible to write the truth on account of the censorship. Just try, comrades! Try to write not excoagitated, dignified histories with inuendoes spun out of rumors and gossip, but give us

life as revealed in the village or factory, and we shall see whether the censor will prohibit it. The so-called Soviet writers are less afraid of the censor than they are of themselves. Not understanding the struggle between the kulak and the poor peasants in the village, not knowing how to overcome the dangers of bureaucracy, not seeing the great upsurge of creative forces throughout the country, the new social strata created by the Revolution, they are incapable of producing an honest picture of reality, and they are fearful lest their realism will be represented only by the dark aspects of life, which the censor will not approve.

Fresh Breezes.

When some of the writers get a random glimpse of life in some of the remotest and furthest corners of the Union—in the heart of national life—they are absolutely bewildered by the extent of creative work that is in progress today. Just read the travel notes of Pilnyak, whom an aeroplane took to a place which no Moscow writer could ever hope to reach by other means of transit. He was energized by the refreshing breeze and began to believe that something great is being evolved in our Union.

Stagnation.

Artists, in most cases, are people of emotion rather than intellect. When the Soviet proletariat will begin to build skyscrapers, metropolises; when our network of electrical stations will illuminate the entire Union; when new cities will grow up, then every artist will understand that something great has occurred. But now when the beginnings of the new are wresting with the vestiges of the old, when the final victory of the new is not yet seen, the so-called Soviet artist asks himself: How am I to know that the new which is being born will be victorious? After all, there is also some re-establishment of the old. And he watches. Now and then he tries to give a picture of a new and encouraging phenomenon. The results, however, are dry and fugitive, for he does not see the whole, and he purposely obscures the dark and rugged aspects. Now and then he tries to give a picture of ideological disintegration, the growth of philistinism, restoration of the predatory elements, and then he gets frightened. He is frightened not only of the censorship, but of himself, for he feels that somewhere he has lost the revolution which, after all, he does "recognize." Within the last two years Soviet literature has not been progressing. The tragedies of Yessenin and Sobol are symptoms of the infirmity of literature.

What Killed the Poets?

Regarding the death of Yessenin, some writers were shaking their heads at us communists, pointing in exhortation: Comrades, look—literature, a tender flower, and so forth. Regarding the suicide of Sobol, the Lenin-grad "Krasnaya Gazetta" reported that the provocation to this action was furnished by the magazine "On the Literary Post," which classified Sobol with the "Right fellow-travelers."

Nonsense! We are specious enough in our apprecia-

tion of Yessenin and fussed about him as about a real treasure. I am not an admirer of the journal "On the Literary Post," for this publication, following the traditions of its not too worthy predecessor, "On the Post," makes more noise about being naughty than it actually convinces. But a writer who cannot stand even an unjust criticism has no capacity for life. He who writes, fires and goes to be fired at. And as for aiding and subsidizing literature, we certainly spend much more on literature than our resources permit. The point at issue is not here and one should investigate not the Communists but himself.

Actors Not Spectators!

In a period of the most subversive social change, the writer cannot be spectator. While fishing, one can sit on the bank of a languidly flowing stream and observe. But just try to come out on the battlefield with an umbrella in your hand, when artillery pounds on both sides, when shells fly in all directions, and then try to observe. There is no room for the spectator in that milieu. You must sit in the trenches with a rifle in your hands and be ready to be killed or to start an attack. During a great historical change there is no room for the spectator. The only alternative left is to hide like a bed bug behind the wall paper. The storm, however, will kick him up helter-skelter. Tossed out into the air by the storm, he will break his skull against the stones.

Left behind the wall paper, he will die of boredom or lack of spiritual food.

A Step Forward.

The time of the Soviet writer's describing how good was the civil war in which he did not participate is coming to an end. The Soviet writer must make a step forward, a step toward communism. But this requires not only the reading of books and contemplation wither humanity is going. It requires direct participation in the social struggle—work in the ranks of the struggling masses of the people. In order to be a good writer, it is not enough to be a good Communist. But he who will not be a Communist in the U. S. S. R., a Communist not on the basis of a party book in his pocket, but a Communist on the basis of deep inner convictions, a Communist who daily verifies himself on the performance of his social task—he will not be able to be a Soviet writer, for he will be incapable of comprehending the great and significant about him.

To be sure, the fellow-travellers will not change at once. Many of them will continue to be fellow-travellers until the final victory of the revolution. But in consequence, their art will fade. Of course, it is not easy to become a Communist. But this is a question of life and death for a Russian writer.

This is what we should be thinking about at the graves of Yessenin and Sobol.



The Great People's Referendum

By Alexander Bittelman

(Continued from last month)

Social-Democratic Leaders and Social-Democratic Workers.

Driven by the tremendous pressure of the rank and file, the social-democratic leaders were eventually compelled to join officially with the Communists in the struggle for expropriation. We have shown above how the urge from below has compelled the central committee of the social-democratic party to call an enlarged plenum of the committee in which, against the wish of the leaders—Wells, Mueller, Scheidemann and Dittman—a decision was passed to join the Communists in the expropriation campaign.

But all the while these leaders were negotiating with the bourgeois parties for a compromise. They had joined Marx in the unsuccessful attempt to submit to the plebiscite a bill for confiscation with "equitable" compensation. They were sabotaging (also unsuccessfully) the creation of united front committees, from below. And on top of all this, the social-democratic fraction in the Reichstag, together with the capitalist parties, voted down the Communist proposal of no confidence in the Marx government, thus giving direct support to a cabinet which openly stated its opposition to the expropriation proposal and its determination not to carry it out should it be adopted in the plebiscite.

The German Communist Party faced the problem of exposing these machinations of the social-democratic leaders and at the same time cement still stronger its alliance with the social-democratic workers. And in this difficult job the present leadership of the party made good use of the past experiences of the German Communists which were so thoroly analyzed by the Comintern in its famous open letter of last summer.

What was mainly wrong with the policy towards social-democracy of the old (Fischer-Maslov) central committee? It was the failure to differentiate between the treacherous leaders and the workers that followed them. Hence the basically wrong tactic of the old central committee of treating both, leaders and working class followers, in the same way—as enemies. The open letter of the Comintern, along with many mistakes of the old central committee, corrected also this one. And in the present expropriation campaign the new central committee drew the line quite clearly between the Scheidemanns and their working class followers. Whenever social-democracy was attacked (and it had to be attacked continuously for its dealings with the capitalists and sabotage of the expropriation campaign), the attack was directed specifically against those who were guilty,—the leaders of the party.

One of these demonstrations took place on the 12th and 13th of May in connection with the All-German con-

gress of the Red Front Fighters' League, an organization of workers, led by Communists, formed to protect labor and its organizations from violent attacks by the fascists and monarchists. The news of that demonstration reverberated thruout the world, driving fear and anxiety into the hearts of all the enemies of labor.

In front of the procession, which led to the Red Whitsuntide gathering on Temple of Field (the place where the kaiser's army used to hold its war games), were marching 80,000 Red Front Fighters, dressed in their uniforms, followed by hundreds of thousands of workers and poor middle class elements. According to the capitalist papers, not less than 300,000 people took part in the demonstration. In it were also delegations from the Reichsbanner, an organization of Republican Defense which is controlled by liberals and social-democrats.

Following this demonstration the monarchists and the bourgeoisie generally redoubled their efforts to block and defeat the plebiscite. Soon afterwards it became known that Hindenburg, the president of the Republic, who is supposed to stand above parties and their struggles, was actively assisting the monarchists. In the first week in June there came to light a letter by Hindenburg to a prominent monarchist, von Loebell, in which the old servant of the kaiser brands the expropriation proposal as unconstitutional and urges the defeat of the measure, threatening dire consequences if the proposal is carried.

An interesting incident happened with the social-democratic "Vorwaerts" in connection with Hindenburg's letter. The "Vorwaerts" was in possession of a copy of the letter but fails to make it public on the ground that it was intended as a "private" letter. Latter developments—among them a statement by von Loebell himself—proved the absurdity and falsity of such a contention, exposing the social-democratic leaders once more as betrayers and double crossers.

The Hindenburg letter quite naturally created a sensation. The masses were outraged. They began to see very clearly that against them and against the plebiscite was lined up the entire machinery of the government,

Due in part to these correct tactics, the wedge between the treacherous leaders and their working class following was driven deeper, and the united front from below between the Communists and the social-democratic workers and the non-party workers became more solid.

The Extra-Parliamentary Features of the Campaign.

As was pointed out above, the German Communist Party was from the very beginning of the campaign

obvious purpose of the affair was to raise the morale of the monarchist ranks and to terrorize further the adherents of the plebiscite.

The monarchist demonstration was a dismal failure. The masses did not come. The only participants were small bands of professional fascists. There was no enthusiasm but a complete absence of spirit.

But on the same day and at the same hour another street demonstration took place—a demonstration called by the Communist Party. And again hundreds of thousands of workers and middle class elements answered the call. The Communist Party was leading in struggle the toiling masses of Berlin.

And the social-democrats? They, too, called for a demonstration but on the next day, Monday, June 14. The leaders of the social-democracy were afraid to demonstrate on the same day and at the same time as the monarchists. So the "Vorwaerts" issued the slogan: "We demonstrate tomorrow!" It also proudly boasted that "when we issue a call, it is answered by the entire working population of Berlin." But what was the result? The call of the social-democratic leaders was answered by not more than 60,000 people.

The working people of Berlin came to the Communists and were led by them in the demonstration the same as they are led by them in the struggle for the expropriation of the princes. Following this demonstration of June 14, the Rote Fahne justly declared: "The street belongs to the Red Front." Thus did the Communist Party supplement the parliamentary struggle with extra-parliamentary mass action, mobilizing and preparing the masses for the eventual struggle for power.

The Result and Lessons of the Plebiscite.

In the plebiscite of June 20, fourteen and a half million people voted in favor of the Communist proposal to expropriate the princes without compensation. Nearly fifteen million workers, small peasants and poor middle class elements followed the lead of the Communist Party against the bourgeois-monarchist reaction.

An analysis of the vote shows that the working population of the big industrial centers voted overwhelmingly in favor of the Communist bill. This is the case in Berlin, Hamburg, Leipzig, and in the whole of Rhenish Westphalia. In three electoral districts of the latter there were cast in the plebiscite 350,000 more votes than in the preliminary referendum.

But the thing of real importance is that the fifteen million votes cast in the plebiscite represent 350,000 votes more than was cast for Hindenburg in the last presidential elections. This means that the overwhelming majority of the voters among the working population that cared to or were able to vote (because of the monarchist terror) have expressed themselves against the Hindenburg-Marx government. From this it can be clearly seen that were it possible under a capitalist government for the people to register freely and legally its will, the entire working population of voting age would have voted in favor of the expropriation proposal.

It is at this point that the wider slogans employed by the Communists during the campaign exhibit their real value. The contents of these slogans are well summed up in an article by Ernst Thaelman, published in the Rote Fahne on June 20, the very day of the plebiscite. In it Thaelman says:

"We entered the struggle fully convinced that the fight against the princes must become, in the course of its development, a struggle against the bourgeoisie as a whole. We have emphasized the old experience of the revolutionary labor movement that every struggle of the working class beginning on the basis of bourgeois democracy must become a revolutionary struggle, breaking through the framework of this democracy as soon as the struggle begins to undermine the property interests of the bourgeoisie and the latter is no longer able to stem the movement with the ordinary means of parliamentary democracy."

This was the spirit in which the Communist Party has conducted the entire campaign. As far as the party was concerned, the masses were left under no illusions as to the real nature of the struggle. The masses were impressed by deed and word with the fact that the expropriation fight was only an incident in the historic struggle against the rule of capitalism which must culminate in the establishment of a Workers' and Farmers' government.

Even prior to the date of the plebiscite (June 20) the Communist Party was preparing the masses for continuing the fight and for bringing it into its next higher stage: The dissolution of the Reichstag, the overthrow of the Marx-Hindenburg government, and a determined struggle for a workers' and farmers' government. The result was that the masses actually conceived of the plebiscite as only a phase in the struggle for the expropriation of the princes, the second phase, to be exact (the first phase being the preliminary referendum which brought about the plebiscite), and that the expropriation struggle itself is only a phase in the bigger struggle against capitalism.

It is for this reason mainly that the Communist Party was able, on the very day of the plebiscite, to issue the following slogans:

"Down with Hindenburg!"

"Dissolve the Reichstag!"

"For the proletarian united front in the struggle against the offensive of the employers!"

"For a congress of all the toiling people!"

"For the Workers' and Farmers' Government!"

"Hail the united front of the fifteen million!"

On the meaning of these slogans Thaelman writes: "The foremost task at present is to bring together organizationally the full revolutionary force of the working class which was generated in this movement; to bring together organizationally all the social forces of

clearly aware of the fact that the success of the confiscation struggle depended largely upon the extent to which it becomes a mass struggle, with the toiling masses participating directly in it. It was because of this consideration that the Communists moved early in the season for a plebiscite, thus taking the issue out of the hands of the eichstag and throwing it into the very thick of the masses. And it was also for the same reason, supplemented later by the militant offensive and terror of the monarchists, that the Communist Party began to develop a series of mass street demonstrations which have inscribed some of the most brilliant chapters in recent class struggle history. from bottom to top, in addition to everyone that should the plebiscite carry the government would refuse to put into effect.

The Communist Party thereupon issued the slogan:

"The enemy threatens not to carry out the expropriation bill."

"We are menaced with a dictatorship."

"Arise to resistance."

"Down with Marx and Hindenburg."

"Dissolve the Reichstag."

"Mobilize for struggle outside of parliament."

As a counter stroke to this agitation of the Communists, the German Nationalists issued a call for a street demonstration to be held on Sunday, June 13. The impoverished and ruined middle class elements into one united militant front under the leadership of the Communist Party. The slogan for June 21 is this: Every unity committee must formulate its attitude towards the result of the plebiscite. All preparations must be made for the organizational get-together. All slogans of the economic and political struggles of the working class, of the ruined petty bourgeoisie and of the impoverished peasants can be summarized in the following call to struggle:

"Hail the Congress of the Toiling People of Germany!"

THE struggle goes on and is proceeding along deeper and wider channels. The developments so far show that the partial stabilization reached by German capitalism in its turn produces new contradictions and new crises. We have already spoken of the basic contradictions of present-day Germany economy. In attempt-

ing to solve the contradictions produced by the Versailles treaty and the Dawes' plan—the need for increased production and export to make reparation payments, on the one hand, and the shrinkage of the world market for Germany, on the other hand—German capitalism has initiated a scheme for the reorganization of industry which already produced wide unemployment, lower wages, longer hours, heavy taxes for the peasantry and poor middle classes and a general worsening of life for the toiling masses. The grand sweep of the expropriation movement reflects these conditions.

It was a great experience and an imposing prelude to still greater struggles. It became manifest in this movement that large masses of the petty bourgeoisie are breaking with the leadership of the big capitalists and agrarians and are coming over to the side of the working class. What we are having is a two-sided process. On the one hand, the materializing consolidation of the forces of big capital and big landlordism in the shape of a political block of the German Nationalists, People's Party, Democratic Party and Center Party in order to make the workers and petty bourgeoisie pay the expenses of the late imperialist war. And on the other hand, a similar consolidation of all the forces of the working class, peasantry and petty bourgeoisie to resist this attempt of the rich. The fifteen million votes cast in the plebiscite are a living demonstration of the fruits of this consolidation.

It was shown in the plebiscite that the wedge between the social-democratic leaders and their following is growing wider and deeper. The social-democratic workers came to the Communists. They picked up the Communist slogans. They joined with the Communists in the formation of Unity Committees and Committees of Action. They participated in the demonstration called by the Communists and fought the same as the Communists despite the sabotage and opposition of their leaders.

The toiling masses of Germany have learned a great lesson in the nature of capitalist democracy. The idea of a revolutionary struggle for a Workers' and Farmers' government is becoming part and parcel of their everyday needs and struggles. The fighting spirit and self-confidence of the masses has been tremendously heightened. From now on the struggle in Germany will proceed on a higher plane and for bigger objectives.

The plebiscite turned out to be the thing that the Communist Party said it will be: **A prelude to forthcoming struggles.**

Reviews

The American Revolution

THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION CONSIDERED AS A SOCIAL MOVEMENT, by J. Franklin Jameson, Vanuxem Lectures, November, 1925, pp. 158, Princeton University Press, \$1.50.

OF course this is a Sesquicentennial product; it cannot be denied and the author himself confesses it. But in mitigation it may be noted that Professor Jameson succeeds in escaping from the Sesqui atmosphere at the comparatively slight sacrifice of the first few pages. He then brings forward a series of facts and ideas that are certain to prove very interesting and instructive to the worker-student who already has some understanding of Marxist theory and of the elementary facts of early American history.

The author's aim is described in the title with exactly the same lucidity as the idea itself has. What are the "larger aspects," the "social" aspects of the Revolution after which the author yearns, why they are to be separated off, as with an iron wall, from "politics"—we cannot understand. Apparently, to Professor Jameson the "social" means anything that is not "political"—hardly a profitable conception. But, at any rate, it forces the author to go into such matters as the economic basis and consequences of the Revolution, the class alignment of forces, etc.

Why should there be any "social" aspects of the Revolution? First of all, as the author points out not very clearly, the basic cause of the Revolution was the fact that the economic relations in the colonies, particularly the British colonial system (restrictions of industry and trade, the closing of the Western lands, the land system in the old colonies, etc.) had become so many fetters on the further development of the colonial economy. They had to be broken and "the Declaration of Independence brought . . . a release from fetters." Secondly, because of the "social" consequences of the Revolution. What is a revolution? Briefly, the transference of political power from the hands of one class to another. (The author appreciates this fact and approximates this formulation, altho in a very confused "liberal" way.) When this transference has once taken place a process of social reorganization sets in. Here there can be little complaint of clarity on the part of the author: "As a result of such a revolution we expect to see the new group (class) exercising its new-found power in accordance with its own interests and desires, until, with or without fixed intentions of so doing, it alters the social system into something according better with its own ideals."

The task of the author is therefore very considerable. But naturally he is self-limited by the sphere of bourgeois learning within which he moves and so he cannot see many things and sees others very dimly, very vaguely and in a very distorted manner. Already at the beginning the author shows his chief failing by burying some very significant but not exceptionally clear remarks about the class alignments of the Revolution be-

neath a mass of interesting but thoroly secondary material as to racial, religious and other divisions. The rest of the first chapter, except for some remarks on the cause of the Revolution, is devoted to the "Status of Persons."

This chapter strikes one as insufficient and unsatisfactory. No real analysis of the class anatomy of American society is even attempted. The question of indentured servants—"a very numerous class"—is dismissed in a few unmeaning lines. No serious discussion as to the status of the slave can be found and only the stimulus given to the anti-slavery movement by the Revolution wins any notice. Nor is the highly interesting question considered of why the American Revolution, thoroly bourgeois-democratic in many respects, allowed so "unbourgeois" an institution as slavery to continue.

The second chapter on the "Revolution and the Land" is somewhat more valuable. The author's main thesis that the "political democracy" that came to fruition in the forties of the next century was based upon the democratization of land-tenure consequent upon the Revolution is neither as new (the main idea was advanced by Harrington (Oceana), by Guizot and many other historians) nor as universally valid and all-sufficient as the author seems to assume. However, the facts that the author brings forward in regard to changes in the form of land-tenure as a consequence of the Revolution are a very welcome light upon a little understood but very important subject. No word, however, on the gigantic land speculations, the results of which were many and far-reaching.

Probably the best chapter of the book is the third, "Industry and Commerce." After showing very briefly how the restrictions of the British upon colonial industry and commerce acted as serious fetters upon the economic development of the colonies, the author brings out very clearly the enormous stimulus that the pre-revolutionary and revolutionary period (first boycott and then total exclusion of British goods, the demands of the war, popular and official encouragement to home manufacture, privateering, etc.) gave to the development of American industry and commerce. Very interesting in this chapter is the frank explanation of the role of the merchants in the birth of the American Constitution. We recommend these lines to the fervid believers in the myth of the "immaculate conception." But even here the bourgeois apologist cannot be completely downed and no words appear as to the methods by which the Constitution was put over or as to its utterly reactionary character, amounting in effect to a counter-revolution.

The last chapter—"Thought and Feeling"—which should be the most interesting is the least so. It is entirely too fragmentary and unsystematic. There are some suggestive remarks on the American parallels of the great European revolutionary movements of 1830 and 1848 and on some other points of interest—but this is not what a chapter of this nature should contain. The only two important matters really dealt with are the process of the disestablishment of the state churches that still existed in many of the colonies (in Massachusetts, cradle of liberty, until 1833) and the reconstitution

of the churches on a national basis. A brief suggestive remark on the stimulus given to anti-Calvinist sects during the Revolution (because of their more democratic and equalitarian features) concludes this chapter.

To the Marxian reader nothing is so striking about this book as its vagueness and the lack of precision, definiteness and clarity of its concepts and formulations. This is not the fault of the author who is an unusually clear writer. It is inherent in any bourgeois history that is not the purest bourgeois apologetics and makes any claim to scientific objectivity. Why? Because the investigations of the historian, especially the historian of revolutions, are certain to lead him to "intellectual Bolshevism," the recognition of the validity of the methods and results of Marxism. But the class prejudice, conscious and unconscious, of the bourgeois historian cannot permit him to go too far in such a direction. So he is left half-way and, in order to save himself from his ambiguous position, he falls straight into the arms of compromise. Hence the self-contradictory absurdities and the confusing and obscurantist ideological eclecticism so characteristic of the "advanced" and "liberal" bourgeois historians of whom Professor Jameson is an example. They are caught in the toils of the basic contradiction of modern life and thought. To gain freedom means to cut themselves loose from their class and throw in their lot with the proletariat who can afford to look history straight in the face for in the laws of history it sees the conditions of its own triumph. The future of history like that of science lies with the proletariat.

—Apex.

"The Glory That Was Greece"

CLOUD CUCKOO LAND, WHEN THE BOUGH BREAKS, THE CONQUERED, by Naomi Mitchison, Harcourt Brace and Company, New York.

SEVERAL authors in the last few years have turned to Ancient Greece for their material. This is a mine of great wealth. The life of those tiny city states, each a few miles square and with a few thousand inhabitants, is briefly but well pictured by Ben Wheeler in his history, "Alexander the Great."

There was intense and enduring city patriotism and a kaleidoscope of alliances and realignments. All spoke Greek but each city had a distinctive dialect. In spite of their cities' smallness, their slave civilization reached a high level in architecture, drama, oratory, philosophy and science. No Greek owed any duty at all to other Greeks or to Greece—it was entirely proper for a Greek to serve in a "barbarian" army even against Greeks or to hold Greeks as slaves. Even Alexander the apostle of Pan-Hellenism, sold the Thebans into slavery and held Athenian slaves himself. The Spartans destroyed Messene and held the citizens in slavery for three hundred years. The standard of civic duty was low—Alkibiades, for example, commanded an Athenian expedition; deserted to Sparta and showed them how to smash Athens; returned to Athenian service, was again entrusted with command and again deserted, this time to serve Persia.

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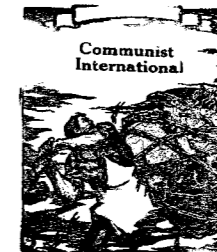
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ABOUT 1,000 B. C., the primitive communism of the A gens began to crack; men were beginning to be distinguished as "rich" and "poor." Men lived by farming, cattle rearing and slave raiding. As technique developed and wealth increased, the importance of trade—shipping and shipbuilding—grew with giant strides. This favored Athens, which had a splendid harbor. The gentile system (described in Engels' "Origin of the Family") was abandoned and neighboring tribes leagued themselves together in the new city states.

A free man's whole interest centered in his civic life. He spent his youth in its militia, being trained in arms; in manhood his social interests were city politics, alliances, debates, public dramatic exhibitions and singing or athletic contests. His religion was woven round his city gods. He knew the politicians and generals personally—heard them debate two or three times a week.

Such minute units were fetters on the growing productive forces and bitter struggles were waged between cities as a result. Early in the fifth century the enormous Persian empire was beaten back in three big victories—Marathon, Salamis and Plataea (490 to 479 B. C.).

Greek military methods were simple—their reliance was on heavily armored hoplites, with light armed footmen and cavalry as auxiliaries. The hoplites, three or four deep, advanced slowly with the spear. The light armed Persians, using short spears and the bow proved helpless against them. Discipline was poor even among the Spartans.

Athens dominated commerce and Greek society for half a century. She collected about \$1,000,000 a year as tribute from her "allies" (the Greek island cities) and spent it on her fleet and her beautiful temples. When she was embroiled in a trade war with Corinth, who drew Sparta in as an ally. The Peloponesian war dragged on for thirty years. The strategy of Athens was rotten and her tactics nearly as bad. She frittered away her resources but so long as she ruled the sea and could import grain from the head of the Aegean, she could carry on.

Since its defeat the Persian Empire had used its limitless financial resources to foster strife in Greece. At this time she subsidized Sparta, who was enabled to build a big fleet, hire well-paid sailors and so wear down and, in the end, wipe out the Athenian navy (in 404 B. C.). On land Sparta and her allies were never in serious danger.

Sparta ruled the roost for thirty years but she did not take kindly to "modern" warfare (hiring professional soldiers) and she had no commercial weight, so her decay was inevitable. A military genius of Thebes, Epaminondas, grasped the fact that if his troops advanced thirty deep, in a dense column, they could smash thru a six-deep line. Once the formation of a Greek army was broken the struggle was over and the massacre began. He illustrated his views in 370 B. C. at Leuctra, wiping out a Spartan army and Spartan prestige.

Thirty years before, 10,000 Greek Hoplites had hired out to a Persian usurper, marched into the heart of Asia, defeated there half a million strong army and then, their commander and officers killed, pondered what to do. They offered to enlist under their late enemies.

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These answered: "Surrender." The Greeks replied: "If the million of you can compel us, do so; if not, why should we?" and started on the 1,700 mile, half-year long hike home. They fought all comers and reached home safely. This illustrated brilliantly the inner weakness of the enormous, wealthy and populous Persian Empire.

In 355 Alexander of Macedon (a Greek tribe) marched south, wiped out Thebes, over-awed all Greece and in ten years, at the head of 50,000 men over-ran Turkey, Palestine, Egypt, Syria, Persia and northeast India. At his death his four strongest generals divided his empire among them.

The Macedonian army was more flexible, better able to maneuver than any army of that period. The cavalry was not a mere auxiliary of the infantry (as it is today once more) but was an independent tactical arm, a novelty in Greek war. No troops ever stopped Alexander's heavy cavalry. The foot soldiers the famous phalanx, advanced six deep, at a slow walk with their twenty-foot sarissas (heavy pikes) levelled—a hedge of six rows of spearpoints before them. This army was led by Alexander, the ablest general of his age.

THIS is the background against which many excellent novels have been written—Snedeker's "Coward of Thermopylae" and Fuller's "Golden Hope" among them. Edward L. Whites "Andivius Hedullio" and "The Sirens" and Conan Doyle's "Last Galley" are of a later period; Mores "Captain of Men" is of an earlier. These authors have written other novels but they are much inferior as are also the works of William Stearns Davis.

"The Conquered" describes the life of a Gaul captured and enslaved by Caesar. More effort is devoted to picturing the Gaul's emotions than to showing what Gaul and Rome were in 55 B. C.

"When the Bough Breaks" has three short Gallic stories but the bulk of the book deals with the Gothic conquest of the Western Empire. It is poor, too subjective.

"Cloud Cuckoo Land" is an excellent novel of Greece about 406 B. C. It sets forth the life of a small island "ally" of Athens, of Athens herself, and of Sparta. The characters, tho well drawn, are subordinated to the vivid description of the life of the period. The history is not accurate in all details. Spartan loyalty as hinted above would be considered low grade today. Spartans sometimes fought against their kin and in the field they often endangered the whole army thru a mutinous refusal to obey. The author pictures the Peloponesian war as a conscious duel between Sparta and Athens. The war started as a commercial war and Sparta was lugged in by Corinth, against her will. She had two or three fine chances to polish off Athens before 404 B. C. and she did not make any serious effort to do so. N. Mitchison's worst error of omission is her failure to stress the slave foundation of society. The Helots outnumbered the Spartans four to one, but the slaves in Athens outnumbered the citizens nine to one. This does not take into account the thousands of slaves owned by Athens in the silver mines and marble quarries. This fact changes the complexion of Athenian politics. These slave masses competed the free citizens out of existence—and

caused the collapse of Athenian economics and Athenian power. The Athenian artisan, unable to live by labor, became a parasite, supported by his pay as juror, voter, soldier or sailor. This pay had to be first extracted from the slaves or from Athen's "allies." This explains why the Athenian "democracy" favored war whether against Sparta or Macedon, while the "oligarchy" were for "peace at any price." Naturally! In time of war the surplus value whipped out of the rich man's slaves was taken by the city to pay the soldiers, who were poor men. In time of peace the rich man kept it and the poor man darn near starved.

It may be remarked that not only novelists write on the Greek theme. Our dear friend Clemenceau has recently published a life of Demosthenes to warn the French that just as the Athenians, fickle, short-sighted and unwilling to fight were reduced to vassalage by Macedon, so the French, unless they listen to their jingoes, will be conquered by Germany—or England—or Russia—or America. The enemy matters not so long as the profiteer prospers!

From the literary viewpoint Clemenceau is an honest old fool, ("Surprises of Life" is delightfully acid, spicy reading—his novel, "The Strongest," is utter trash, however) but his history is as dumb as his politics or his finance. The Athenian democracy was willing to fight in the fourth century—how else could it earn a living? But Athenian economics were even worse off than modern French, so the Athenian "democrats" went abroad and enlisted under the tyrant of Persia (hot dog!), who could feed and pay his troops. Clemenceau can not even do simple arithmetic. The citizen population of Athens was never over 100,000—10,000 fighting men at most. Her war fleet had been 300 ships—30,000 sailors—and she needed an army of 10,000 to 20,000. These were not Athenians but mercenaries paid out of the eight million dollar war chest, which Athens had built up, and the million dollar tribute she squeezed from her "allies." Even bourgeois history sets forth that Athens was smashed to a political cipher by the Spartan—Corinth alliance long before Demosthenes was born. Such is bourgeois wisdom!

—Alex Riley.



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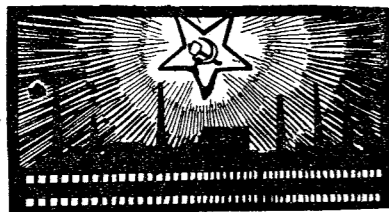
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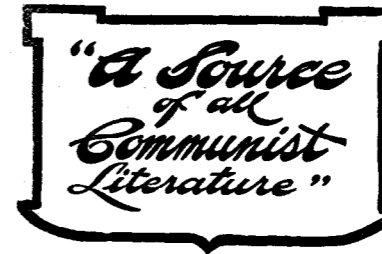
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