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Russia's Hour of Need

By ROGER B. NELSON.

A Tragic Situation

A colossal disaster has befallen Red Russia! Starvation stalks throughout a large part of the country! The working class of Russia inherited a dilapidated transportation system, a wrecked industry, and a most poorly developed agricultural system. Then came the bloody campaigns of a horde of counter-revolutionists and imperialist invaders. One by one, the workers crushed Kolchak, Yudenich, Denikin, Wrangel and the Poles.

After four years of heroic struggle against subsidized counter-revolution, death-dealing blockade, and capitalist invasion, the Workers' Republic appeared victorious and free to devote itself to peaceful reconstruction. But, alas! It seems as if the gods themselves have gone over to the capitalists. For the last two years, proletarian Russia has been suffering from a most terrible drought. The once-fertile Volga region is especially hard hit. Its soil is parched, crops burned, and millions are in the grip of famine and disease. This Russian famine seems to be more dreadful than those of 1873 and 1891.

There is undoubtedly much exaggeration in the alarming reports spread broadcast by the capitalists in order to discredit the Communists in the eyes of the world proletariat. Yet the dearth of medicines, the broken-down transportation system, the want of mechanical means for deep ploughing—all of which the capitalists of Europe

and America are responsible for through their invasions and blockade—aggravate the hardships coming in the wake of the unparalleled heat and drought.

The Sad Plight.

Soviet Russia, the citadel of the world revolution, is in the hour of its most acute crisis. So calamitous is the famine, so many millions are face to face with death, and so widespread is the devastation that the proletarian government was forced to appeal to the entire world—capitalist and worker alike—for immediate help. This situation is fraught with ghastly possibilities. The Third International has already appealed to the workers of the world to be on guard.

The counter-revolutionists of every country, each land in its own way, are plotting to exploit the tragic situation for new wars, for inciting new revolts and for drowning Russia in a sea of blood. Briand and the French bourgeois press do not even veil their intentions. The new French treaties with Finland, Poland and Roumania are ominous. Guns and ammunition are already pouring into these countries from "liberty-loving" France. Nor is Britain asleep. And America, perhaps more stealthily, can be relied upon to render yeoman service to the world bourgeoisie.

What We Must Do.

The death-gripping struggle in which the Russian workers are now engaged is only a fierce battle on a section of the whole revolutionary front of the working class of the world. If the capitalists succeed in breaking through the Russian defenses, darkest reaction and disaster will sweep the entire proletarian line. The battles of the workers of one country are the struggles of the workers of all countries. The fight of the Russian workers is our fight.

What can the Party do at this tragic moment? *First*, we must bend all our energies toward positive, direct help by the membership and the whole American working class. *Secondly*, recognizing that there exists a situation in which Russia is compelled to accept famine-relief from various sections of the bourgeoisie, we must also wage our campaign on another front. Though we should do nothing to undermine the actual, material aid of such organizations as Hoover's American Relief Administration, we must do all in our power to unmask their treacherous character, expose their sinister motives, and bring to light their fraudulent intentions. We must "beware of the Greeks when they bear gifts."

Our Campaign.

The entire membership must wholeheartedly throw itself into the drive for Soviet Relief on a country-wide basis. Mass meetings, parades, drives in the unions, shops, mills and mines for aiding our starving comrades and brothers must be launched. The advisability of initiating a national one-day wage for Soviet Russia in all the labor bodies should be considered. The appeal is to be made on a class basis. We must point out to the American workers the why and wherefore of the tragedy in Russia. We must impress upon the masses the inviolable duty of working class solidarity.

Mere talk, however, is insufficient. We may talk the leaves off the trees and yet not get a bit of concrete relief for famine-stricken Russia. It is our task to translate our efforts into food, medicines, clothes and machinery. The Party must set up a relief apparatus which will not only draw the entire membership but gather into its fold all the sympathizers, supporters and workers in general.

Through proper caucus tactics, the Party must obtain membership on all workers' relief committees. Our members shall strive to assume as much responsibility as possible in such committees. Thus only will we be able to unify the drive and give it a Communist color. In every labor organization or section of the country where a Soviet relief drive has not been started yet, we must arouse a sentiment for the immediate initiation of such activities. At no time should we let slip the prestige and popularity attached to so broad a working class movement as this.

All our relief caucuses in the labor organizations must serve as mere nuclei about which should be gathered as

many workers as possible. In order to affiliate the numerous workers' aid committees with the central proletarian relief body, the membership must be subject to all Party regulations and instructions, whether these come through underground or open channels.

The Party must correlate and unite its unemployment, trade with and recognition of Soviet Russia campaigns with the relief drive. This will give us an excellent opportunity to bring home to the workers the fact that they can also immediately help themselves through helping Russia. Trade with Russia will not only tend to alleviate our unemployment sufferings but will also relieve the Russian famine stricken areas. Recognition of the Workers' Republic is necessary in order to insure full trade with America. The merging of all of these campaigns into one gigantic drive will be of tremendous aid toward promoting the solidarity of interests between America's and Russia's workers.

At Work.

Our speakers and agitators should utilize the movement for the relief of Soviet Russia for specific purposes. But at no time must we compromise the class character of our campaign for immediate results. Any other policy on our part would in the end do more harm than good to the starving workers of Russia.

As in any other working class struggle, it is our duty to utilize the relief campaign for spreading communism in the unions, mass meetings, relief organizations, press, etc. It is up to our representatives to explain clearly the situation confronting the Russian workers and peasants. Particular stress must be placed by us on the fact that neither the working class nor the Communist Party is responsible for the present situation but that it is due to the attacks of the world capitalists and the ravages of the drought. We can effectively use the pellagra wave in our own South as an example of what the economic crisis brought on by the bourgeoisie has in store for the workers of every country. We must bring to light the fact that no successful revolution can be accomplished in any one country without the assistance of the international proletariat.

The share of the A. F. of L. bureaucracy in the plotting against the Workers' Government is tremendous. We must openly place this shameful guilt on the heads of Gompers and his lieutenants. The lack of enthusiasm, the unwillingness, and the inertia of the dominant union officialdom—even if it be driven into the relief campaign—should be mercilessly exposed. We can tolerate no let-up in the efforts to aid Soviet Russia. Unceasing activity and unstinted contributions are our objects. Our slogan is: "Workers, give your all for Soviet Russia! Workers, give until it hurts—capitalism!"

Finally, we must draw a picture of our own workers being found in such a condition. American capitalism must be severely indicted for the suffering it has brought

upon Soviet Russia. The tactics, courage, thrilling struggle, and heroic sacrifices of the Russian proletariat should be extolled. And on this basis the American workers must be inspired to renewed and greater efforts for its own emancipation.

Attitude Toward Bourgeois Relief.

Maximum vigilance is absolutely necessary in dealing with the capitalist relief agencies. "Bread is mightier than the sword," and the bourgeoisie now have the bread. It does not matter a straw whether we like it or not, their participation in Russian relief is a fact. And we must adapt ourselves to this reality. We cannot but also recognize that in so far as actual, material assistance goes, the capitalists will be in front of us. Here our task is only to thwart the attempts of the bourgeoisie to use their relief organizations as a base for counter-revolution.

There are concrete steps to be taken by the Party in this direction. We must first of all bring into bold relief the fraudulent humanitarianism of Hoover and his ilk. His notorious work in Hungary and Central Europe, his machinations in the Baltic States, and the dastardly manipulations of Colonel Ryan in the Kronstadt adventure offer us fine opportunities for acquainting the American working class with the immeasurable "charity" of their exploiters and oppressors.

The Hungarian Manoeuvre.

The case of Hungary is especially illuminating. From the mouth of Captain T. T. C. Gregory, Director for Central Europe of the Interallied Food Mission, we have an outright confession as to the role Hoover played in overthrowing the Hungarian Soviet Republic and setting up the bloody Horthy regime.

Captain Gregory boasts of the fact that Hoover was the principal agent responsible for the overthrow of the Hungarian Soviets. He openly narrates how he himself swindled Communist funds out of the hands of the weak and gullible assistant Food Commissar of Hungary. His bribing of Agoston, Haubricht and Gerami—Hungarian labor-lieutenants of imperialism—is a cruelly powerful exposure of the treachery of Social Democracy. The naive captain makes his apology to the innocent who might be prone to protest against Hoover's "solicitude" for the wretched Europeans. In his report he says: "*At this distance it may seem that Mr. Hoover was unnecessarily persistent in his thankless task, but it must be remembered that he was looking beyond the momentary needs of these countries—that he was feeding and succoring Balkanized Central Europe only as an incident to the fight that he was making to throw back the red wave of Bolshevism that, all this time, was threatening the puny and chaotic states.*" Here we have the real purpose animating all bourgeois relief.

Hoover's Plans.

We see, then, that Hoover will strive to use his relief agency as an entering wedge of counter-revolution. Soviet Russia, because of necessity, was compelled to yield to his ultra-harsh conditions. This "humanitarian" Hoover is to-day a leader of world reaction. He is a past master in the art of counter-revolution. He organized the starvation of Germany. He supplied the "new democracies" of Europe with food and thus enabled their bourgeoisie to crush the workers. In his letter to Ex-President Ador of Switzerland, Hoover, who in the Czarist days owned large industrial and coal interests in Russia, lets the cat out of the bag. He says: "*The causes of the famine are such that they will be recurrent every year until there is much further change in the economic system of Russia.*"

This portrays nothing else but a desire on Hoover's part to relieve Russia of the Soviets. Harding is doing all in his power to help Hoover. He has publicly announced that he is against "many organizations to collect charity" and that passports to Russia will be granted only to relief agents controlled by Hoover. Thus, all obstacles will be put in the way of genuine or working class relief of Soviet Russia.

The Party's Answer.

The Party should begin an intense agitation to compel Mr. Hoover to issue a public appeal for Russia's relief. This is a strategic point of paramount importance to us. Harding and Hoover are well aware of this, and they have already announced their decision not to issue such an appeal. This is contrary to the policy pursued by the American Relief Administration in all its previous campaigns.

The reason for this change is obvious. A public appeal would tend to promote the interest of the American masses in Soviet Russia. It would do more than that. The public response to such an appeal would be most enthusiastic and the solidarity between the American and Russian working masses would be thus greatly enhanced. Besides, Hoover would find it more difficult to use such funds for counter-revolution than his own. This is precisely the reason for his insisting on using only private funds.

We must strive for the issuance of such a public appeal for Soviet relief. It will not only be a great source of relief, but will also more effectively help us to bring to the attention of the working masses Hoover's plots. The refusal of Hoover to publicly appeal for Soviet aid gives us a splendid opening for exposing his plans and purposes.

To the Front.

In this hour of trial, of crisis, of anguish, no one should shirk his duty! The working class of Russia has heroically paved the way for proletarian victory in every country. Our Russian comrades are now facing the test of

their lives! The political dice are loaded against them! Counter-revolution is already raising its ugly head!

With the aid of the workers of other countries, the Russian proletariat has vanquished all its enemies. Let us redouble our efforts! Let us rise as one to Red Russia's defense—to end the indescribable hardships wrought by the calamitous famine. Let us stifle the dastardly at-

tempts of the imperialists to sail in to victory on a sea of blood at the eleventh hour!

Comrades! To work! To to the front! To your task! Help Soviet Russia! In the name of that most sacred of duties—working class solidarity—give your all for Soviet Russia, the heart of the world revolution!

The Third Congress

By JAMES A. MARSHALL.

(Delegate, Communist Party of America.)

Impressions.

For the third time in the history of the Communist International delegates from all corners of the world assembled in a world congress. What city would be more fit to shelter the highest forum of the international proletariat than Moscow, the throbbing heart of Soviet Russia! Nowheres in all the world could the contrast between the old and the new impress itself upon the mind of men as strong as in Moscow. Its forty times forty churches still throw the shadow of the mental and physical slavery of past ages across the path of the visiting wanderer. The Kremlin in its ancient splendor still tells the tale of dark days of a suppressed people. But out of all these surroundings, from here, from there, from everywhere, there comes the sound of the marching battalions of workers in arms. The victims of the order of yesterday have become the masters of the order of to-day, and their battle cry resounds from the high walls and towers of the Kremlin:

Arise, ye prisoners of starvation!

Arise, ye wretched of the earth!

To-day the Red Army honors the delegates with a grand parade. The Cathedral of St. Basil still looks as in the 17th century, with all its barbarian beauty upon the Red Square of Moscow. In front of that monument of bigotry there still stands the executioner's block, a monument of horror of ancient days. But to-day, over the beautiful square, there carries the voice of the best hated and most feared soldier of a new order, Comrade Trotzky. "Welcome, you spokesmen of the revolutionary proletariat from everywhere! Welcome in Moscow, the capital of revolutionary Russia!"

This great parade of the Red Army on the Red Square represented all festive arrangements in honor of the Third Congress. Moscow greets the delegates rather with repaired streets than with bunting. That was the slogan, and the delegates appreciated it.

Another phase of the congress. Opening day. The former imperial opera house is filled to capacity. The

aristocratic officer with his glittering uniform who formerly filled parket, boxes and galleries of that pompous theater is replaced to-day by the workmen and women of Moscow. Moscow greets its guests through the mouth of Kamenev. Shaljiapin sings, the incomparable Shaljiapin. Yes—the times have changed; once Shaljiapin paid his tribute to the czar when he sang his famous "Boje tzara krani." To-day he sings to us, to the workers of Moscow, to the representatives of the workers of the world, and his wonderful voice wakes the enthusiasm of all the thousands present for the watchword of the proletariat:

Workers of the world, unite!

The congress is in session. It is sheltered in the "thron—saal" of the new palace of the Kremlin. The presidium sits on a platform right in front of the Thron. The hall is pompous, but not beautiful. Its builder showed as little regard for cost as he did for artistic taste. Only a few hundred feet away is the Terem. There, in the bedroom of Alexander Michailovitch, Napoleon once camped. There the heir of the French Revolution witnessed the first signs of the collapse of his empire.

But what of these visions of the past? Here, in the Thron—Saal of the new Kremlin palace a vision of the future arises. Three hundred delegates from forty-eight countries are assembled. Here the myth of the free born Briton is dispelled, and British and Indian workers, members of one class, deliberate here about the struggle against their common enemy. Here workers from France and from Germany, from Italy and Japan, persecuted and prosecuted in their home countries, deliberate under the protection of red guards stationed at the gates of the Kremlin, at the entrance of the palace and at the door of the congress hall.

Trotzky Reports.

Trotzky, reporting on the world crisis, unrolls before the congress last year's development on the theatre of world politics. He shows the complete collapse of the

world structure of capitalistic finance. He shows how capitalism in its effort to reach the summit of its glory and profit, has gained a momentum which makes it now slide down on the other side. He shows how all efforts of capitalism to gain a foothold again, to check the downward movement, result only in momentary successes. These successes are breathing spells of capitalism in its life struggle against the proletarian revolution. But although these breathing spells of capitalism invariably signify a momentary defeat of the revolution, still, the revolution, like the fabulous Anteus, will gain new strength from its very defeat and will charge again and again, till the complete collapse of capitalism signals victory. The working class therefore must abandon its passive resistance now and must enter the struggle aggressively.

The reporter for the committee had dealt so exhaustively with the matter and had brought in such unassailable evidence to sustain him, that the discussion hardly brought any new note. An exception was furnished by the delegates of the K. A. P. D. (Communist Labor Party of Germany). This Party was admitted only a few months ago as a sympathetic organization on trial. Its leaders have developed a theory of their own. The basis of that theory is that the Third International is always wrong. From that presumption they prove their case—backward as it is. And the result does justice to this method. The K. A. P. D. maintains that the world capitalists now see the mistake of the war and try to rectify that mistake by burying the hatchet of international competition and establishing an international alliance of exploiters. Wilson's League of Nations celebrates its rebirth in the heads of those "communists." But unlike the Wilson monster, the result of a miscarriage of Madame Peace at Versailles, this theoretical child of the K. A. P. D. promises to thrive, and to subjugate finally its antagonist, the working class. That is if you believe the father's tale about that wonderful child. But then the K. A. P. D. claims to be a revolutionary Party. It realizes that its task can not be to prove the ultimate defeat of the revolution. Therefore, the wonder-child becomes the bugaboo of these revolutionists. After they have created it they fear it, and that fear dictates to them a tactic to kill it, a tactic as monstrous as its cause. The siren song of the K. A. P. D. converted no one at the congress and the theses submitted by Trotzky were passed unanimously.

Serrati and Levi.

The report of the Executive Committee, given by Zinoviev, opened the Serrati and Levi questions. Serrati was discussed exhaustively. His emissaries, Lazzari and Maffi, defended his course with genuine southern temperaments. Levi did not have that much luck. For the representatives of his faction, Naumann and Mahlzahn, Levi was a "touch-me-not" flower. Under the report of

the Executive Committee they refused to discuss Levi because the German question was a special order of business. Under the German question they refused to discuss Levi because his case was decided when the report of the Executive Committee was adopted. Stoically did they permit the merciless execution of Levi. Radek, in spite of his always ready remark, "permit no one to provoke you," did his best to provoke Levi's sympathizers to speak up for him—or against him. But in vain. They knew that they were traveling on dangerously thin ice, and stepped carefully.

"Leftism" Buried.

"Leftism" was stepped upon heavily. Lenin, Trotzky and other irreproachable leaders of the International showed that "Leftism" is by no means a virtue. It is no counter-balance against the "right." Where "Leftism" reigns supreme the "rights" make hay. The impossible and abstract dogmatism of the "Leftists" delivers the working masses over to the leadership of the reformists, the centrists and the right. Realistic tactics, dictated by a Marxian understanding and judgment of the situation, and a wise use of all the available forces, will advance the cause of the revolution and defeat the reformists in their struggle for leadership.

A discussion of the tactics of the Russian section of the International gave occasion for another lesson to the "Leftists." A betrayal of communism, some called the concessions, given by Soviet Russia to foreign capitalists. First, these critics were shown that it is child's play to criticize any action. Such action was an attempt at solving a concrete problem. The problem demands solution. Any criticism of a proposed solution is unsound and even dishonest if it persists to be negative. It does not suffice to prove that this or that should not or must not be done. The problem is there. It demands action. Honest criticism presupposes the proposal of another solution in place of the one criticized.

Soviet Russia's Foreign Policy.

Soviet Russia can not exist as an isolated state within a capitalist world. This is the problem. Two solutions are possible. One puts the burden of the action upon the revolutionary working class outside of Russia. The other must be carried out by the workers of Russia. The first is the overthrow of capitalism in the countries of Europe or America, and the establishment of a proletarian dictatorship there. The other is a method to break the deadly economic isolation of Russia. The proletariat of Russia hoped for the first solution. It waited until it could wait no longer. It now proposes to break the unbearable economic isolation. The concessions policy is one of the methods of doing it. But then, you say, concessions to foreign capitalists are a betrayal of the fundamental principles of the workers' state. Comrade Trotzky answers: "Will you permit the Workers' Ré-

public to buy a little honest capitalist locomotive, say in Germany. No objection—good! But any such little thing must be paid for, paid in gold or its equivalent. Do you object paying for the locomotive? No—good! Well now, we have no gold to spare, but wood. Any objection to paying with wood instead of with gold? No—good again! But wood in its natural stage is a forest. It must be cut and shipped. Any objection to this operation? No—all is right then. Now, instead of we ourselves cutting and shipping (we lack facilities for that), we try to pay for the locomotives with the forest. We tell the foreign capitalist: Here is a forest. That is our payment for your little honest capitalist locomotive. But you must cut it and ship it. We allow you to bring in the necessary machinery for that operation (because we lack them). Then we permit you to employ us, the workers of Russia, at our conditions, which must be the same as those in Soviet institutions. In other words, we give you concessions to cut this forest and ship it out of the country. Well, now, what do you say? You still object? Your objection seems to originate in the forest. And amidst all the trees you can not see the forest.”

An Historical Gathering.

The Congress is a very impressive gathering. The great tasks to be accomplished give it a more solemn than an enthusiastic face. Admirable for the achievement of our Russian comrades, for their great sacrifices and their indescribable sufferings fill every delegate with a deep desire to help, by bringing about the natural and best solution of the problems of Soviet Russia, the world revolution. Weighed down by a full conception of the tremendous responsibilities of a revolutionist, disillusioned of all romanticism, the delegates return to their homes, back to their posts.

One last look at beautiful Moscow. One last handshake with new friends from all corners of the earth one has learned to love and to respect. And then homeward we travel, determined to do our duty in full and without reservation.

The Third Congress of the Communist International is now history. But the impressions received there will and must have their effect. They must result in increased activities of all the sections the world over. The fourth congress will then be a review of our activities and a reckoning with those that have failed to do their duty.

Two Years of Struggle in America

By Y. F.

Clearing the Ground.

Two years ago the Communists of the United States separated themselves from the composite Socialist Party.

It has been said for us and we have said any number of times among ourselves that we have spent a very great amount of energy during these two years quarreling with one another. Much or even most of this factional and personal squabbling has been as petty and useless as could very well be. But in the big sweep of the social process in which we play a part such diversions of energy are of little consequence. The reckoning of achievements and failures must be made on a larger scale.

The purpose of this brief review is to consider these two years from an objective, or external point of view. From this viewpoint what has been going on among ourselves drops out of sight. It is like the struggle within the mind of an individual, of tremendous importance to the individual, but visible only in its net result in action.

A person is, in truth, worth all that he dreams to be; likewise an organization. Among ourselves our aspirations give complete justification to all our efforts. In the external reckoning, however, the spark must light upon ready fuel, else it is too quickly lost. Yet in the outward view of our striving it would be palpable error to overlook our aspirations, of themselves our highest contribution. A decadent

social organization fosters cynicism, despair of progress, deadly apathy. The revolutionary movement shatters confusion, numbness, tiredness. It is the ringing challenge of the youth elements in the social organism, of clarity of mind, haleness of body, buoyancy of spirit.

Parenthetically, it is to be noted how the psychological factor illumines the difference between revolutionary Communism and go-easy Socialism. Communism is of the temper of the aggressive proletariat; Socialism, starting from the same analysis and condemnation of Capitalism, expresses the timidity and bafflement of the millions whose lives and minds are a compromise between hope of betterment and jealous attachment to small advantages within the condemned social system. The Communists speak for those who have no basis for any dealing with the capitalists and their agents except that of warfare and its strategy. The opportunism of Communism is that of military manoeuvres; the opportunism of Socialism is avoidance of struggle. Socialism is fearful of the hazard of present petty advantages, and is ever seeking to magnify dangers and to convert the efforts of the masses toward lesser aims, arguing that these lesser aims alone can be attained. Communism is contemptuous of small fears and small aims, contemptuous of all the bogies against the venturesomeness of youth. With due allowance for temporary disruption, the Communists express the self-suffi-

ciency of the proletariat to reorganize industry and government. But the Socialists, aiming to retain small advantages while seeking abridgement of the advantages of the big capitalists, strive to keep in harmony the classes above and below them.

The Reckoning of the Two Years.

(1) We split the Socialist Party. The axe went deep. Less than 15 per cent of the early 1919 membership remains in the Socialist Party.

This is not by any means a completed task. The Socialists, whether in their present party or in other organizations, will try constantly to reanimate the slogans of reform by the methods of capitalist "democracy"—methods which are fool-proof against any fundamental change in the social system. At the recent Detroit convention of the Socialist Party the projected policy seemed to be to transfer the Socialist talent in demagoguery to other organizations representing the petty shopkeepers, the skilled workers in semi-monopolized trades, the petty professionals, the small farmers, etc. There is still the all-important task of rooting out the stultifying doctrines of class reconciliation and of revolutionary change without revolution.

(2) We have appreciably advanced the general consciousness in the United States between fake Socialism and revolutionary Communism. Evidences of sharp differentiation are to be found almost daily in the press and reviews. (The single exception noted recently is the final report of the Lusk Committee.) The more widespread this consciousness, the lesser chance of Socialist befuddlement of the workers in time of crisis of action.

(3) The idea of the general strike as a method of working class political action has become definitely joined with the name of Communism and the Communist Party.

True, the whole tactical concept of mass action has little hold upon the minds of the American workers to-day. But unemployment of millions, wholesale and ruthless slashing of wages, gradual curtailment of permissible trade union action to the point of impotency, not even a pretense of legislative dealing with the workers' problems, illusory as the legislative sops would soon prove themselves—these are circumstances which foretell the groping of the workers' minds towards new modes of action. The masses do not commit suicide in the face of barriers to self-preservation and self-betterment. A few go to begging and stealing. Most go to breaking down the barriers, grasping whatever weapons are available when the impulse to action sweeps over them.

The Communist Party is going to have an attentive audience in this country of many millions before long. The identification of our party with the general strike is our great opportunity to give inspiration and guidance to the mass protests and action which must come in response to the blatant imperialistic policies which now dominate our national life.

(4) We have given intense demonstration to the existence of Communist consciousness in the United States. We have been taken seriously enough for the nation-wide depor-

tation raids and for hundreds of criminal prosecutions. Almost every state has passed new laws for our special benefit, or put to use old laws just as good as new. All the scoffing in the world, all the shouting about 'alienism' cannot offset what is recognized by these persecutions. The sophistries of nationalism cannot avail much with a working class which is preponderantly alien.

We have shown that the Communist International functions in the United States. We have become elusive; we do not expose ourselves so freely to the attacks of the enemy, but this illusiveness only intensifies the Communist menace to Capitalism. The workers will soon begin asking why our comrades are jailed and deported. These questions will start the volcano rumbling.

(5) With all the confusion of party splits, with the sudden and tremendous scope of the Communist raids and arrests, with the terror of non-Communists (with some noteworthy exceptions) about associating themselves with the defense of the thousands arrested, both the C. P. and the C. L. P. made a creditable showing in the defense and relief of those imprisoned. Undoubtedly many suffered without aid of any kind, so drastic was the disorganization, but all things considered the handling of the situation in most of the localities is a matter of considerable credit to the Communists.

(6) We have developed, since January, 1920, underground organization.

(7) More broadly, we have developed the idea and plans of centralized, disciplined party organization.

(8) We have developed a fairly definite program of activity for our members within the trade and industrial unions. This is at the beginning. The formulation of plans and the launching of this work is of itself a major achievement.

(9) The basic tenets of our program are more clearly understood by our members. They are more clearly differentiated from those of the Socialists and the Syndicalists.

The left wing of two years ago seemed hopelessly confused, so diverse were its elements, so antagonistic their views. It is only concrete experience which can bring ultimate clarification of our program, but enough points of controversy have been definitely enough settled among ourselves to bring essential unity.

(10) We have overcome the aversion of militants in the labor movement to affiliation with a political organization. A strong prejudice was created by the Socialist play for votes and offices. Now there is a broader concept of working class political action, identified with Communism and the Communist Party. This, too, is at the beginning; but in a revolutionary movement a sound nucleus of persons with organized plans of action is bound to pick up momentum at a terrific pace.

The outstanding shortcoming of the two years is that we have not produced a native body of Communist literature. The translations have been very helpful in presenting general theories, but what is needed is a rendition of these

theories in the color of experience and happenings in the United States. The raids and the factional controversies have had their greatest adverse effect on this side of our work. Here is an obvious first task of the united party, to build upon the agreed theories a literature concretely adapted to the teaching of Communism to workers growing

up under the influence of Capitalist education in the United States.

There have been mistakes. There is much to do. But the record of the two years should give us great encouragement.

The Party at the Crossroads

By ROGER B. NELSON.

THE PRESENT SITUATION.

Never before has the situation in America been so favorable for Communist propaganda and activity. Millions of workers are unemployed. Wages are being cut at an alarming rate. The open shop drive is becoming more intense. The capitalist class has taken the offensive along the whole front.

The Party must fulfil its historic role of serving as the guiding, unifying and directing center of the class struggle. We must lend unity of plan and purpose to the American labor movement. Merely to lay plans and express hopes is to dabble in Platonic aspirations. We cannot stop here. Too long have we supposed and proposed. Propaganda alone is not sufficient for the realization of working class victory.

It is high time that we act. *The Party must develop such a machinery as will enable the entire membership to actively participate in all the struggles of the working masses.* We must further give these struggles a political character and direct them into revolutionary channels. We must give them a deep Communist hue.

Never before has there been such a crying need for Communist activity and leadership. But our underground organization is by itself not best or even suitably fitted for the task of winning over the masses to the side of Communism. *It must be remembered that we were driven underground by the American bourgeoisie.* Our class-conscious capitalists will not sacrifice this tremendous advantage won by them during their orgy of persecution. They realize full well the advantage they have gained. *They are well aware of the fact that their fate is sealed unless we become a hopeless, sterile sect.* And the capitalists know all too well that underground life pure and simple makes most positively for sectarianism and political impotency. Hence the bourgeoisie will do all in their power to thwart our working in the open, to sabotage our efforts to establish machinery for effective open work—that is unified and centralized open activity on a national scale. They will do all to promote suspicion, distrust and dissension in our ranks in order to stifle us.

WHAT HAS BEEN DONE?

Our Central Executive Committee, conscious of its duties and the pressing needs of the Communist International and the Party, has laid the foundation for unifying and centralizing the open, legal activities of the Party. It is high time that our efforts to win the masses should cease being sporadic sallies. If we are to develop a mass Communist Party in the United States, our efforts at coming into open, direct contact with the working class in all its struggles must be highly organized and centralized on a national scale. This is indispensable to a proletarian revolution in America. In doing this we are simply accepting the tactics adopted by the Third Congress of the Comintern. We are only taking steps to carry out the especially emphatic instructions of the Third Congress to the Communist Party of America.

We quote from the Theses on Tactics as submitted to the Third Congress by Lenin, Radek, Bukharin, Trotsky, Zinoviev and Kamenev: *"In the United States of North America, where, on account of historical circumstances, there was lacking a broad revolutionary movement even before the war, the Communists are still before the first and simplest task of creating a Communist nucleus and connecting it with the working masses. The present economic crisis, which has thrown five million people out of work, affords very favorable soil for this kind of work. Conscious of the imminent danger of a radicalized labor movement becoming subject to Communist influence, American capital tries to crush and destroy the young Communist movement by means of barbarous persecution. The Communist Party was forced into an illegalized existence under which it would, according to capitalist expectation, in the absence of any contact with the masses, dwindle into a propagandist sect and lose its vitality. The Communist International draws the attention of the Communist Party of America (unified) to the fact that the illegalized organization must not only serve as the ground for collecting and crystallizing the active Communist forces, but that it is the Party's duty to try all ways and means to get out of the illegalized condition into the open, among the wide masses. It is the duty of the Party to find the means and forms to unite these masses politically,*

through public activity, into the struggle against American capitalism."

Comrades, conditions known to all of us and at present beyond our control make it impossible for us to go into an elaboration of the details involved in our plans. For this end, the Central Executive Committee is devising other means. Suffice it to say that our Central Executive Committee is not pledged to any iron-clad formula as to our machinery for country-wide open work. We frankly recognize that the form is a matter mainly dependent upon the prevailing Party and outside conditions. But taking all circumstances into consideration, the Central Executive Committee's plan is best suited for the present. *It is therefore the inviolable duty of every member of the Party to give the Central Executive Committee undivided support in its efforts to build a Party of life, of action, of revolutionary power.*

We have taken all steps possible to insure complete and unquestionable control of the entire open work of the Party. *Our open work is completely under the control of the Party.* Only the most reliable comrades, subject to strict Party discipline, are entrusted with such work. The Party is at the cross-roads. We are first beginning to be aware of the difficulties and problems involved in our task. *But difficulties and dangers are no reason for avoiding the class struggle.* To turn your back on the class war because of the difficulties and dangers that go along with it is rank opportunism. This is true whether the opposition comes from the "left" paralyzed or from the Center and Right. To lead and unify the workers in their struggles the Party must set up proper machinery. This is exactly what the Central Executive Committee is doing. *Any member—or anybody else—who deliberately spreads misinformation, distorts or misrepresents the Central Executive Committee's plans for unified, centralized, open work is guilty of gross insubordination and crass violation of Party discipline and loyalty.* Especially shameful is such insubordination and disruption at this moment in view of the national and international situation. Besides, the Party is still completing the task of organic amalgamation. Particularly at this time, then, should every member give his all to the Party.

THE ROLE OF THE PARTY.

The role of the Communist Party is to unify the proletarian struggles so as to turn them into broader and deeper channels—into a revolutionary struggle for power, into a struggle for the complete destruction of the bourgeois State and overthrow of the capitalist system. To realize this task, the Party must actively participate in every phase of the class struggle on the basis of a clearly defined plan. But we cannot secure such active, well-planned participation in the struggles of the workers unless we have connections and contact with the broad laboring masses. Our present outlawed, underground organization, imposed upon us by the American capitalist class, is not fitted to realize this end by itself. We must, therefore, develop an auxiliary organization that will be so organically constructed as to secure for the

Communist Party a controlling influence on the working masses. Hence we must develop an organization functioning on a national scale and unifying and centralizing all our open work—that is, all our work of immediate and direct participation in the life of the labor movement in this country.

SOME PROBLEMS.

It may be said by some that such an organization will slip out of the control of the Party. Some maintain that the development of an organization that actually leads the workers in their struggles will do away with the Party. Others may be afraid of compromising our principles. Still others, insisting on their being in favor of open, legal work, may oppose the idea of setting up one unified, centralized, national organization. They would have us set up many special organizations for particular purposes.

1. Party Control of Open Work.

Let us consider these problems. First, against the fears of losing control. Well, the problem of control is one which we will always face. The Central Executive Committee has taken every step possible to effect 100 per cent control of the legal work. As time goes on, still better methods of control may be devised. Then again, our entire membership must swing into the open work so as to perpetuate our control. It must be remembered that a well-trained and highly disciplined body of Communists can guide and control a far larger number of workers. The problem of control is in reality a problem of getting across certain policies and tactics in practice. The success we will have in meeting this problem depends on the extent to which every Party member will devote his energy and time to carrying out Party instructions and orders. Those especially solicitous of having the Party control its legal expression should devote their time to Party building only. To promote dissension and mistrust on a specious plea of "control" is conduct unbecoming a Communist and worthy only of the worst enemies of the Party.

2. No Liquidation.

Now as to the fear of doing away with or liquidating the Party. The underground form of organization is not a form inherently characteristic of or indispensable to all Communist Parties. The mass Communist Parties of the world are to-day functioning mainly above ground. Our underground organization arises from the unfavorable conditions under which we find ourselves now. The bulk of our work can and must be done openly. The Third Congress of the Communist International emphasized most strongly the urgent necessity of our finding ways and means to so function.

Because of capitalist oppression, our underground organization must and will be maintained for at least two very important reasons. *First of all, as a protective, emergency safety valve.* Our open organization may at any time be faced with an onslaught by the Government forces and agencies. We must have, at all times, an organization that will hold together our membership and be ready to function.

This is a task of the underground Party. *Secondly, the present political conditions in America do not permit a legal guidance, a direction and unification of the class struggle by an open Communist Party.* Such guidance, direction, and unification are a prerequisite to a successful struggle for proletarian political power. Therefore, we must now have an underground Party devoting itself to devising ways and means of giving the workers' struggles a political character, a unified plan, and Communist purpose.

...The existence of a strong, open, fighting auxiliary organization of the Communist Party will not undermine or do away with the underground Party. Such a subsidiary organization will positively add strength and life to our Party. The more work our Comrades do, the more we are engaged in guiding the struggles of the working class, the more will our underground Party devote itself to serious consideration of the actual problems of the proletarian battles and victory; the less time and energy will we expend in sterile, factional strife. And this is the greatest source of vitality and power of our Communist Party. Besides, as our members come into contact with the broad laboring masses and distinguish themselves in the class struggle the more opportunity will we have of winning over into our closed ranks, into membership, the best blood, the most conscious and the most courageous of the proletariat. This will breathe a new spirit of life into our underground Party. This will strengthen us immeasurably. This will make us the vanguard of the proletarian movement in fact and in deed as well as in name. And the only way to realize this most desirable condition is to devise such ways and means as will enable our membership to win the recognition and trust of the working class. Hence, the unification and centralization of our open work is the best means possible to end our isolation, rid us of our present political impotency, and make out of our Party a Party worthy of membership in the Communist International.

3. As to Compromise.

A word or two about compromising principles. Our program is not a Holy Bible handed down to us by the Gods. It is not a sacred papal bull that we must hurl at the American working class. Our program is a guide to our action, a source of light for our policies and tactics. Consequently, our program will cease being a conglomeration of attitudes, pious wishes, and formulas only when we turn it into life, when we test it, when we apply it. But to test and apply our principles means to fight side by side with the workers in all their struggles. It means to lead the workers in the onslaught against their oppressors. And to fight alongside of and lead the workers in battle necessitates machinery adapted to such an end. The hidden, underground machinery cannot serve this purpose. Hence, the imperative need for an open, centralized organization under complete Party control.

This is no compromise. To refuse to take such steps is to be guilty of worse than compromise. To run away from the struggles and trials of the workers is the surest way of

turning our program into fossilized dogmas, into lifeless formulas—in short of entirely destroying our principles.

At present we can openly apply and work out all of our principles except that of armed insurrection and the seizure of power. The Party must lose no opportunity for winning over the masses to our position on this problem. For this task, the underground organization is especially fitted. In other work, the Communist Party should fully and most openly utilize all legal opportunities. The underground Party should limit itself to that work which can and must be done underground only. This should be the guiding policy for our press, education, defence, agitation and labor union work. Such a policy is not one of compromise. It is the policy urged and demanded by the Third International. Were it otherwise, all our defense, legal publications, mass meetings, nuclei and election campaign activities would be compromising acts. We know better than that. On the contrary, such work is only the most positive proof of our strength, of our life, of our carrying out the program of the Communist Party and the Communist International. This and this only is what is meant by Communists combining legal with illegal work. Of course, all these activities are always under the complete control of the Party.

4. A Working Body.

Finally, as to those who protest their desire for open legal work but say that they are only opposed to the existence of one unified, centralized organization functioning on a national scale. Such opposition is groundless. The case of the opponents of centralized open work won't hold water. If the Party really means and plans to do effective work, to realize our task of becoming the unifying and guiding center of the class struggle, it must adopt the most efficient machinery for this end. We must organize ourselves not on a foundation of sand, not on a shifting slippery basis, but on a solid, permanent and concrete foundation. The class struggle does not lend itself to mechanical, artificial divisions in distinct air-tight compartments. All the phases, all the manifestations of the class struggle are closely interlinked, are closely interwoven. The workers face the same fundamental problems in every phase of the struggle against their exploiters and oppressors. *We, therefore, cannot set up special, isolated, disjointed organizations for every need and purpose that may arise from the class struggle.* Again, the membership which is to function in any one of these countless "organizations" is the same that is to function in all of them. Why, then, refuse to set up an organization which will unite all of our members into one working body? Why deliberately scatter our forces and dissipate our energies? The very struggles and hardships of the class war necessitate a unified, centralized organization. Furthermore, it is much easier for the Party to control its open legal work if this work is unified and centralized on a national scale. The Party can exercise much more effective control of its legal expression when this expression is centralized and in the hands of responsible comrades than when our forces are

scattered, disunited, and not co-ordinated. Hence, the necessity to have one unified, centralized organization, more easily under the complete control of the Party, in order to effectively participate in the struggles of the working class.

CONCLUSION.

The class struggle and the very life of the Communist Party demand a unification and centralization of all our open work on a national scale. The Communist International is most insistent on our accepting such a policy.

It is high time that our program cease being a dead letter. It is high time that we put into motion the wheels of life, of action, of revolutionary struggle. Let every member

pledge himself to the building of a virile, mass Communist Party! Away with sectarianism! We must give our undivided energy to the Party work in all its divisions. The need for Communist activity and leadership is greater than ever before. The working class of America must be won over to Communism! This can be done only through tireless, whole-hearted efforts to realize the Party's plans. This must be done! There is no time for delay! All discord, dissension, and disruption must be banished!

Comrades! All as one! To work! To your task! Put your shoulders to the wheel! On with the Communist struggle!

Unemployment and the Party

By WILLIAM SHAW.

The workers of America are being harshly disillusioned. The short hey-day of wartime prosperity has ended and the spectre of unemployment haunts the working class. If it is indeed true that the Communist Party of America is fighting the battles of the masses, we must attack this most vital problem of the workers, with all the energy at our command—analyzing it clearly and correctly, establishing a sound plan of action in the light of the specific conditions confronting us and then tirelessly, courageously and efficiently carry that plan to complete success.

The reduction in the number of employees varies with industries, territory, seasons and other essential factors. In the iron and steel industry, the basic industry of large-scale capitalist production, activity is but 20 per cent of the normal. In New York State the reduction in the number of employees has been estimated at approximately thirty per cent. From April 30, 1921, to June 30, 1921, employment in 1,428 firms throughout the United States fell 2½ per cent. A moderate estimate would show from 20 to 25 per cent decrease in employment in the United States since the height of industrial activity. *But what interests us most is the fact that to-day from five to six million persons are walking the streets, jobless, hungry, homeless, foot-sore and miserable, and that this vast army of misery is steadily growing in size and wretchedness.* The most optimistic of financial authorities can point to no satisfactory indication of real improvement.

The Federal Reserve Bulletin for July, 1921, says: "Seasonal dullness in practically all lines of trade has prevented general business conditions from showing a material alteration during the month of July. Both in volume of business, extent of unemployment and depression of production, the month still reflects a condition of business reaction in basic lines of industry."

Preparing a Policy.

A correct analysis of the present mental attitude of the American workers is a prerequisite to the establishment of any policy. "The dominating class, which controls the spiritual food of society along with the material, inculcates the ideas of its rights into the members of society artificially. So that the whole of society is usually permeated with the ideas of the dominating class." Small wonder then if our workers submit so meekly when confronted by the closed door of the factory. We are not surprised that they accept most readily the explanations offered by the employers, "Lack of orders," "Going out of business," "Falling prices," etc., without the slightest protest. The principle of production for profit has become so securely imbedded in the ideology of the worker that "slack" and unemployment are accepted as natural phenomena as unavoidable as rain and snow, heat or cold.

"The established opinion, whether born of class interest or received by tradition, exerts a powerful influence on society as a whole, until the new economic forces become strong enough to formulate their own set of opinions, their own ideology and inculcate them into the minds of men."

But in the face of the enormous power of the ruling class and the mental inertia of the masses, the economic forces alone can not develop this new ideology sufficiently to bring about a conscious mass will that will overthrow the class in power and thus alter economic conditions. A driving, clearly-defined force is necessary. It becomes the function of the Communist Party, the concrete expression of the development of the new economic forces seeking control, to consciously and energetically endeavor to completely destroy the ideology of the master class and to substitute a deep-rooted revolutionary working-class ideology in its stead.

The popular capitalist-born attempts to justify the existence of unemployment must therefore be exploded—their

fallacies mercilessly exposed. With unerring accuracy, the confusion, the anarchy of capitalist production must be pointed out, as soon as it manifests itself in the particular phase of industrial life with which the worker is vitally concerned. The responsibility for the sufferings, the humiliation, the misery, coincident with unemployment must be deeply branded upon those responsible for the management of the industry and the capitalist system of production in general.

But the mere intellectual pastime of pointing out certain peculiar phenomena of the capitalist system of production, or the indulgence in tirades and vituperation against it, will not suffice. This empty and fruitless occupation we leave to the Socialist Party and the liberal intellectuals engaged in the innocuous sport of dissecting society. It is the task of the Communist Party, however, to inspire the discontented masses with a determination, to submit to economic slavery no longer, to cast aside with contempt all "panaceas" and deluding cure-alls and to bend all their energy toward the complete and final emancipation of the working class through their own conscious, unified and unconquerable achievement. The call of the Communist Party is a call to action!

Capitalism at Work.

Government reports and labor statistics are replete with illustrations of the breakdown, the contradictions, and inefficiency of the capitalist methods of production and the resulting unemployment.

The Industrial Employment Survey Bulletin for July, 1921, makes these interesting comments:

Burlington, Vt.—"Unemployment exists principally in the lumber industry, which is only 50 per cent of normal. There is a shortage of houses for rent.

In spite of the universal housing shortage and the demand for steel and iron from Russia, we find:

Montpelier and Barre, Vt.—"Rough and finished granite show little or no improvement. Unemployment affects about half the number of wage earners; those working are on part time; and several plants are closed entirely on account of lack of orders."

Pittsburg, Pa.—"Unemployment is increasing with iron and steel continuing to curtail."

The American Engineering Council's committee on elimination of waste in industry states: "Responsibility for more than 50 per cent of the waste in industrial processes . . . can be placed at the door of the management. . . . From four to five million workers were idle during January and February of this year. In 1921 half a million dollars will be lost in wages in the building trades."

Walter N. Polakov, Industrial Engineer, says: "Production of coal per miner per year and per hour indicates not only that the American miner produces far more than any miner elsewhere in the world, but that the productivity is increasing. This is due to two main factors—first, gradual reduction of working hours and second to the extensive use of mining machinery. We observe three very distinct

by-effects of this increased hourly productivity—1) Intermittent employment, 2) high turnover of labor, 3) high mortality of miners."

"To sum up, the production of coal under the competitive system of individualistic scramble for private profits at the expense of the welfare of the people of the country has developed several definite, harmful characteristics, the outstanding of which are:

"Too many miners subjected to suffering of unregulated unemployment. Within this industry an army of unemployed is artificially maintained in order to meet the contingencies of speculation.

"Absence of coal storage at the mines which could have protected public from coal famine and assured the miners steady work."

"Irregular shipments of mine output to markets in order to inflate prices."

According to this study, 32.3 per cent of the time lost in the coal mines during January, 1921, was due to "No Market." This is an excellent example of the result of depression in one industry upon trade in another.

Maynard Keynes in "The Economic Consequence of the Peace," says: "There are therefore three separate obstacles to revival of trade—a maladjustment between internal prices and international prices, a lack of individual credit abroad wherewith to buy the raw materials needed to secure the working capital and to re-start the circle of exchange, and a disordered currency system which renders credit operations hazardous or impossible quite apart from the ordinary risks of commerce."

In general unemployment may be said to arise from one or more of the following conditions of capitalism: Underproduction to maintain high prices, overproduction, inefficient management, strikes, lockouts, attempts to destroy labor unions by starving workers into submission, seasonal market, dislocation of currency and exchange, employment of women and children; return of war plants to peace basis, longer hours, etc. And what are these but clear manifestations of the utter incompetence of capitalism to produce what we need with the aid of a contented society.

A Basis for Action.

Communists within labor unions should urge the conduct of detailed investigations of their particular industry during periods of unemployment. Three distinct advantages are to be gained thereby: 1) The facts disclosed will increase the discontent of the rank and file. 2) They will show the necessity for industrial unionism and stimulate its growth and development. 3) They will promote an interest in production tending to lead gradually to a desire for control thereof and ultimately to the seizure of the factories themselves. That such investigations can be both valuable and comprehensive is well demonstrated by the studies of Jett Lauck for the Railroad Brotherhoods and the Mineworkers and those of the Labor Bureau of New York City for local labor organizations. Party leaflets issued during periods of unemployment should show an intimate knowledge of the actual

conditions within each industry, as obtained from such investigations or from the comrades on the job. *Such leaflets should attempt to make Communist propaganda out of facts familiar to the worker in the industry.*

The varying degree and the many different phases of the unemployment problem necessitates a strongly centralized yet flexible type of organization. Western cities report that a great many of the idle workers have emigrated to the agricultural sections of the states. Harvests will soon be completed. Thousands of these workers will flock back to the cities. The Party executive committees of the various cities that will receive these men should have their campaign of literature, mass meetings, etc., prepared. Certain industries are seasonal in their nature, such as shoes, clothing, etc. Local Communist authorities should have their "dope" prepared in advance for this special contingency. No lack of initiative or readiness should be tolerated by the Central Executive Committee. On the other hand, the C. E. C. should be ready to lend the local authorities both financial support and practical advice for their local struggle.

Certain general considerations are to be kept in mind during the Party's campaign on unemployment. We must inspire the unemployed masses with a militant and fighting spirit, rouse them to activity, making of them the most dangerous, the most resolute and the most aggressive section of the working class. Not long ago the unemployed of Berlin forced their way into the hall of the trade unions and demanded action leading to their employment. The idle workers of England, including many ex-service men, held numerous out-door demonstrations, forcefully demanding work or a government dole. They seized public buildings for shelter and the government did not dare resist. The workers of Halifax invaded the halls of Parliament for relief. The demands of such groups upon the government usually take the form of a demand for work or financial assistance. The insistent efforts of these men have resulted in the inauguration of numerous "public" enterprises, bridges, parks, railways, etc., and the granting of unemployment benefits in England, France, Italy, Germany and other countries.

.... Through demonstrations, parades, strikes and union demands, the government has often been successfully persuaded to relieve unemployment by the socialization of industry (Mexico, Italy, England) trade with Russia, and give material food, shelter and relief.

The government is peculiarly averse to interfering in such demonstrations when ex-service men are concerned, and therefore it is wise to exploit this opportunity to the full by propaganda among these men. Such demands are exceedingly valuable for Communist propaganda because they bring the worker face to face with the government.

All campaigns should be planned only after thorough acquaintance with such local conditions as the psychology of the workers, the strength of their organization, strength of the employers, environment, conditions in the industry, etc. A great many American workers have accumulated

a surplus during the period of high wages. They are still reluctant to take extreme or revolutionary measures. Reactionary and liberal leaders often have a deep influence over the members of their organization. Such workers must be led step by step toward our goal. On the other hand, where workers like those of Seattle are well organized, and have a general strike to their credit, half-way measures will not suffice. And to urge public demonstrations, etc., in a locality where the industrial barons are in absolute control and the workers are weak, as for instance in some steel towns in Pennsylvania, is to court unnecessary bloodshed and repudiation of Communist leadership.

Every opportunity for broadening the struggle, bringing in new sections of the proletariat, emphasizing their common aims, and urging unified action, should be utilized to the fullest extent. Unemployed workers may therefore at times expect financial aid from affiliated employed workers. Pursuing such a policy, the miners of England attempted to obtain the assistance of the other members of the Triple Alliance during their recent strike. The unions of Australia have organized a joint council for the consideration of problems like unemployment, the open shop, etc. In the United States a similar movement is being launched in San Francisco.

The fact that the existence of unemployment is a distinct menace to the employed should be pointed out. The competition of a large mass of idle workers tends to lower the wages of the employed. Even the skilled workers are endangered because of the constant introduction of new machinery and the substitution of machine-feeders for skilled craftsmen. If the employers can use the lock-out weapon against a group of workers without encountering the effective resistance of the working class as a whole, they will be tempted to make further use of it when the proper occasion arises, to starve the workers into submission, reduce their wages, lengthen their working hours and destroy their organizations. The prospect of being submerged within the ranks of the unemployed at the sudden whim of the capitalist scheme of production keeps the worker in a submissive mood, undermines his power of resistance and lays him open to the ruthless exploitation of the capitalist class. Unemployment is therefore a problem of vital importance to the entire working class and as such it should be brought to the foreground by Communists within labor unions and their organizations should be forced to take effective action.

Demands should be made for: benefits for the unemployed, exemption of dues, part-time work for all (this will tend to place the problem squarely before a large number of workers and thus promote a struggle of broad character), organization of the unorganized, legal action against the employer for cessation of production, demand for government interference and action (this will help us expose the capitalist character of the government), sympathetic strike, easy union transfer card system so that members can find work elsewhere without scabbing, etc. Impetus can be given to the growth of the shop committee by demanding that the

employer show the employed members of the union that curtailment of production or shut-down is justifiable. The Italian workers resorted to the latter and found it highly effective.

The Industrial Workers of the World has established centers, where the unemployed congregate and where literature is distributed among them. Wherever possible such centers

should be established in order to facilitate our getting into contact with the unemployed.

Our task then lies before us. The problem of unemployment affecting the workers so vitally affords a real test of the ability of the Communist Party to enter into the struggles of the masses and lead them on to the Revolution through sound tactics, courageous leadership and unconquerable energy and devotion.

Review of the Month

I.

IRELAND AGAIN.

A truce has broken out in Ireland—the Achilles heel of England. For the moment, the Black and Tan mercenaries are relieved from arson and murder. Round-table battles are the order of the day. To many, this respite in Irish warfare appeared permanent. But the threatening clouds of peace are about to break. Ireland may shortly resume its “naturally” British color.

The pilot of British imperialism, Lloyd George, is burdened with many a problem. The economic crisis, staggering taxation, unemployment, labor unrest, Anglo-French detente, the Far East and Near East are among the urgent. Under such circumstances one would expect the British Government to be anxious for an Irish “solution.” Yet what are the Irish offered?

With the aid of Smuts, Lloyd George has worked out a most tricky evasion of the problem. Despite his pretentious noise about “Dominion Status” for Ireland, he does not really offer even that, for Dominion freedom implies or is supposed to imply the right to get out of the Empire. And this is precisely what Ireland is not permitted to do. Besides, the partition of Ireland into Ulster and elsewhere completely unmasks the Smuts-George proposals. In addition, an indefinite portion of the British national debt is to be foisted on the Irish as a price for the empty autonomy within the Empire.

De Valera and the Irish governing-body-to-be or would-be, Dail Eireann, demand complete independence. They want a Republic and an opportunity to settle all differences with Ulster themselves. Whether the Dail Eireann will cling to those terms only time will tell. Herein lies the hitch in the negotiations. De Valera says his terms are final, and Lloyd George and Curzon are no less emphatic in announcing that they have gone the limit.

Whether compromise will carry the day remains to be seen. In the meanwhile all British soldiers have been ordered to return to Ireland at once. Rumors of re-arresting the released members of the Dail Eireann are afloat. But come what may, the recent negotiations have already established the fact that the Irish revolutionists are much stronger

than most observers would have them be. They have forced Lloyd George to offer arrangements that, in 1918, were branded as impossible by him. The strict adherence to the terms of the truce speaks volumes for the discipline and organization of the Republican army. And the Dail Eireann has a much firmer hold on the people of Ireland than Lloyd George would be ready to openly admit.

But the Irish problem is much more complex than surface manifestations indicate. Both De Valera and Lloyd George must rigidly pursue a policy of extreme caution. The expense of maintaining an army of plunder in Ireland is tremendous. Furthermore, Britain is anxious to nullify the anti-English sentiment in America. This sentiment cannot, for instance, be of the slightest help to the British Government in its attempts to have the Harding Administration refund it a quarter of a billion dollars of debt. Again, De Valera has to contend with the Church, which is a powerful influence against a Republic. To his left is Irish labor, which, to date, has submerged its class interests to national interests. Now the working class is becoming restive. The dockers and railroad men are preparing for struggle. Fear of the Irish proletariat will very likely cause De Valera to tread lightly in his campaign for a Republic. Warfare may again break out in Ireland very soon. The struggle for Irish freedom may yet take on a struggle for real Irish freedom—the freedom of the working class of Ireland.

II.

THE SILESIAN CRISIS.

Every step taken by the capitalist imperialists towards peace is two steps backward—to war. The Versailles Peace was perpetrated in order to close the ghastly four-year tragedy. Turkey, Silesia, Russia, Tyrol and the Balkans are only a few of the seeds of war sown by the last infamous peace.

Anglo-French relations are becoming more and more strained. The entente cordiale is a thing of the past except for the regularly recurring newspaper fanfares. In the Near East the heavy French investments in the bonds of the old Turkish Government make for a lenient attitude toward Turkey as compared to British manipulation. In Rus-

sia the policies of the two leading European imperialist powers are divergent. Reparations are also a bone of contention. The point of immediate dispute lies, however, in the heart of the Silesian coal regions. Germany's winning a seven to four majority in the plebiscite only aggravated the situation. This proved unsatisfactory to the Polish lackeys of French imperialism, and the adventurer Korfanty was given a lease of life.

France is behind the Polish manoeuvres in order to build a power to replace Russia as an enemy in Germany's rear. Hence the anxiety to hand over the Silesian coal fields to Poland, plebiscite or no plebiscite, majority or no majority. England, fearing a too-powerful France, is planning to thwart a French monopoly of the continental steel and iron output. Politically there is not a grain of difference between Polish and French control. Besides, England cannot permit the Silesian coal fields to fall into French hands, since English capitalists own a good portion of these interests.

For a time the conflict threatened to take on the most serious turn. Open fighting broke out amongst Poles, Germans, Italians and English. Confusion was plied upon "solution" in the interim. Then came the French request to have Germany facilitate the passage of more troops to Silesia. But the peace treaty required Germany to obey only a joint request. The German reply led to further Allied negotiations. Fearing a union of Anglo-Italian influence, France at first hedged about turning over the matter to the Supreme Council.

The "solution" of the Supreme Council was, of course, a stalemate. The Premiers couldn't agree, so they passed the buck to the League of Nations. This is simply playing for time. Britain would give the heart of the industrial triangle to Germany, but the Silesian triangle, as an economic unit, can be as much divided as the Pittsburg district. And since England and Italy couldn't smother French opposition in the Supreme Council, they surely cannot expect much from the shadow of the League of Nations, where there can be no decisions without unanimity.

This session of the Supreme Council marked America's positive re-entry into the chambers of European political life. Ambassador Harvey was present as an "informal" mediator. Silesia is a sore spot in the Anglo-French relations, and it may be necessary for American influence to save the situation. The Silesian triangle may yet prove to be the grave-yard of Polish, if not of French, imperialist aspirations, for Britain is determined not to yield.

Of course, the imperialists are aware of the danger of a real solution materializing. Hence the miners and industrial workers of Silesia are being crushed by the armed hands of all the Powers. The Communists are now being mercilessly persecuted. Especially imperative does it become for the Allied Powers, regardless of disensions amongst themselves, to destroy the Silesian Communist Party in view of the threatening strike movement in Germany. The capitalists

are determined to prevent the nationalist conflagration from becoming a class war—a war through which the Silesian problem would be settled.

III.

OUR DWINDLING PROSPERITY.

The American working class is rapidly sliding back to "normalcy." There are now at least 5,735,000 unemployed. Prices are not coming down. In fact, the past month has seen a rise in prices in many industrial centers. Wages are, however, being slashed at a furious pace. The Steel Trust has just made another cut. The Oil Trust is not far behind. This campaign is so sweeping that even Gompers, in order to hide his offensive lethargy, is calling an executive conference to consider the problem of wage reductions. Throughout the country labor's smallest gains are assaulted with ferocious success. Only on the Pacific Coast are the workers showing signs of resistance. And this in spite of organized opposition by the union bureaucracy!

The business reaction in the basic lines of industry is complete. Steel, copper, zinc, petroleum, the New England metal working industry, and machinery are suffering from intense depression. Pig iron production in July was the lowest of any month since December, 1903.

America's advantage, enjoyed during and after the war, of being the only country able to supply the world needs, is quickly passing into oblivion. Trading in dollars is still prohibitively high. In South America German and Belgian firms are seriously challenging American business through underselling by from 20 to 75 per cent. Imports for the fiscal year 1920-21 amount to \$3,667,000,000, and exports to \$6,519,000,000. This marks a decrease from the previous fiscal year of 30 per cent in imports and 20 per cent in exports. But a far greater falling off is in sight for the coming months. July exports are less than 50 per cent and imports about one-third of those of the corresponding month of 1920. The shrinkage in price may account for this falling off only in a small measure.

There is also, at the same time, a serious falling off in the proportion of American commerce transported in American bottoms and a corresponding increase in the proportion carried in foreign vessels. To cap all this, the Fordney Tariff will soon be law—an added stimulus to the dwindling of American foreign trade.

Considering this depression, the workers are on the whole most apathetic. The cause for this is apparent. Their economic difficulties have to date been mitigated by the savings and remnants of war-time prosperity. But with this barrier giving way, the floodgates of class conflict will be opened. A series of struggles are bound to ensue.

IV.

CLASS WAR IN JAPAN.

The world trade depression is not overlooking Japan. There the capitalists are also slashing wages. But their cam-

The Necessity for Legal Work

By J. MORRIS

Problem Before Us.

The most important problem confronting the party at present, is how to approach the masses who are tacitly in sympathy with us, how to get into close touch with those who are within the trade and industrial unions, and those who have lost confidence in the S. P. or similar organizations, and win them over to us.

It is a self-evident truism to Communists that proletarian mass action needs leadership. This leadership must come in the form of a strongly centralized revolutionary proletarian political party—the Communist Party.

When the C. P. and C. L. P. were first organized, many comrades believed that an underground organization should be formed. At that time, we were opposed to it, and we were undoubtedly fully justified in our position. The open conventions of the two Communist Parties have rendered a great service to the revolutionary cause in this country. They have succeeded in attracting the attention of the broad toiling masses and have helped considerably to spread our ideas among them.

It may be urged that the effect was like that of sparks which soon died out. It is not so. It is true that they were indeed sparks, but sparks from which bright and glorious flames will spring. The open conventions have played the part of agitators and propagandists whose work could not be fully appreciated at first. The results of the open conventions are only being felt now, after a long period of hard struggle.

It is true that due to the open conventions many of us have become victims of the capitalist class. It is, however, equally true that no revolutionary movement has ever been launched without sacrifices. No ruling class has ever given up and no ruling class ever will give up its privileged position without a bitter fight. To conduct all our propaganda and agitation openly when our forces were still too weak for an effective attack upon the ruling class, would have been a serious mistake. We were compelled to go underground to protect the movement, strengthen our organization, to create a strongly cen-

tralized party, and to develop a clearly defined revolutionary program. Only in an underground organization is it possible to set forth our final aims, and the tactics by means of which these aims are to be achieved. Only through an underground organization could we make clear to the proletariat of this country the ultimate necessity of armed insurrection for the overthrow of the bourgeois state and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The Underground Party

Experience has taught us that in order to avoid persecutions as much as possible, the proletarian political party must be organized underground. Even in comparatively liberal England, where the various propagandists have heretofore enjoyed full freedom of speech, a campaign of persecution has recently been started against the Communists. The panic-stricken rulers have realized that the Communist Party of England is really undermining the foundation of the capitalist system. This will undoubtedly compel our English comrades to go underground. At the present stage of development of the labor movement, the proletariat is compelled to organize its political party underground. All plans are to be decided upon by the underground organization to avoid governmental interference. All legal Communist organizations must be under the complete control of the illegal organization.

During its formative period, the Communist Party is of necessity separated from the labor movement in general. Most of its energies are devoted to the perfection of its organization and to a clarification of its program. All the Socialist and Communist Parties have passed through such a period. The inevitability of such a period was pointed out by Comrade Lenin in December, 1900, in his article, "Urgent Problems of Our Labor Movement," which appeared in the first issue of the *Iskra*. We cite the following excerpt:

"In every country there existed a period when the labor movement and socialism were apart from one another, each following its own road. And in each country this

campaign has become so oppressive that the workers are in open fight. A series of labor disputes is convulsing the Empire. Tokio is the center of the strike area. The Government has brazenly aligned itself with the employers and banned all demonstrations of the workers. This was no bar, however, to seven thousand shipyard strikers parading, and singing labor songs. Thousands of textile workers are joining. Sanguinary encounters with the police and soldiery follow these elementary stages of mass action.

The Japanese proletariat is rapidly learning the art of class war. Conditions are making for an intense increase of class-consciousness. Suzuki, the Gompers of Japan, is losing his hold on the workers. The outlook for class peace in Japan is rather slim, and the trade union movement, which is in its practically initial stages, is being given a revolutionary basis. The development of a strong Japanese labor movement is of great import, particularly to the working class of America and Russia.

state of affairs led to the weakening of both socialism and the labor movement. On the contrary, only close contact of socialism with the labor movement has created everywhere a firm foundation for either of them. But this contact of socialism with the labor movement has in each country developed gradually and along different lines according to the local conditions of each given period."

Theoretically Russia has long ago proclaimed the necessity of uniting socialism with the labor movement, but actually this unity is only being developed at the present time. It is not surprising that due to the difficulty, it is being accompanied by hesitation and indecision.

The Communist movement of America is at present going through a period similar to that described by Lenin. The program of the party points out clearly the necessity of close contact between communism and the labor movement. The accomplishment of this portion of the program proceeds slowly. Our failure in this direction is due to lack of representation within trade unions and mass organizations and to our lack of experience. Our nuclei furnish the most effective means for the realization of this program. This is substantiated by the success of the Communists in the European labor unions resulting in the creation of the Red International of Trade and Industrial Unions.

In order to establish close contact with the masses the C. P. A. has taken another step—the inauguration of a legal English press. Heretofore our legal publications as well as our underground organs, reached our members exclusively. Thus the legal press of both parties failed in its purpose of reaching the masses.

There are many reasons for our failure to reach the masses through these various channels. Our membership has been reluctant to engage actively in the work of the party. During the period of isolation our work fell into the hands of a few, willing comrades, thus creating sectarianism. But this period is a temporary one. We dare not make it a permanent condition if the movement is to flourish. The tactics of a political party of the proletariat must be changed according to changed circumstances. This is an old Marxian truth. Comrade Lenin in the above-mentioned article said:

"Finally as to the question concerning tactics, I shall say only this, the social democracy does not bind itself, does not limit its activity to one plan worked out beforehand. Neither does it limit itself to but one method of political struggle. It recognizes all means of struggle so long as they correspond to the actual forces of the party and so long as they lead to the best results attainable under the existing conditions."

It therefore follows from this that at certain periods of the struggle, our tactics must conform to the prevalent condition thereof. But we must expect that such changes will inevitably lead to an internal struggle

within the party, because all members do not immediately comprehend the necessity for the change in policy. The C. P. A. is passing through such a struggle. The amalgamation of the two parties, the establishment of a policy of strict centralization, and the evolution of a clear-cut program were the prerequisites for our present task—the practical application of the methods of struggle for the realization of our ultimate aims.

The Present Moment.

The C. P. A. has now reached a point where a change of tactics is an absolute necessity. This change is vital not only to the party but to the progress of the entire American labor movement.

The mountain did not go to Mohammed, so Mohammed must go to the mountain. The masses do not and will not come to our underground organization, so we must organize above and carry our agitation on a legal basis.

The question of legal work was raised at the unity convention, but on account of lack of time, nothing definite was decided and it was given over to the C. E. C. The C. E. C. realizing the importance and consciousness of the necessity for combining legal work with the illegal, decided to conduct legal work on a large scale. For this reason they have established a special department for the purpose of pushing this work by all possible means. The decision of the C. E. C., as is usual with any new departure, was met with some skepticism. But this step was necessary as our party was becoming more and more sectarian. Our isolation was affecting the entire party. In order to rid itself of this harmful influence, to establish real contact with the toiling masses, the C. E. C. decided to conduct work not only within labor unions but also through all other workers' organizations, upon a unified and systematic plan.

The hesitation and skepticism shown towards the question of the necessity for legal activities is exactly the same as that manifested towards the question of participation in reactionary unions. At that time many members of the former C. P., as well as of the former U. C. P., were opposed to entering reactionary unions. They feared that participation in such unions, would lead to the winning over of our weaker elements by reactionaries and to the ultimate demoralization of the Party. Experience, however, has shown that exactly the reverse is true, that the work in trade unions has not only strengthened our party by giving our members an opportunity to actually participate and gain experience in the every-day struggles of the workers but that through such activity we have increased our membership and have won over the more enlightened elements of such organizations.

Open Work.

Many of our comrades have become accustomed to limiting their work to the narrow circle of the most class-

conscious and revolutionary section of the proletariat. Any attempt to reach the broad masses was hailed as "opportunism," "liquidation," "impairing the purity of the Communist movement." These comrades were especially opposed to entering reactionary trade unions or other organizations controlled by reactionary and centrist leaders. In reality these are but manifestations of what Lenin has so cleverly called the "infantile sickness of leftism." Such a policy can only lead to Blanquism, fanaticism, inactivity, and the gradual deterioration of the entire movement. Such ideas should be fought to the limit, if the Communist Party is to become and remain a virile force in the American labor movement.

The purpose of legal work is, through propaganda and agitation, to awaken in the proletarian masses an interest in the political struggle. In order to conduct such propaganda, it is necessary to get in touch with them within the various organizations, however backward. Many of our comrades consider this dangerous. They foolishly believe that it will involve the corruption and pollution of our Communist principles, thus to mingle with the less class-conscious masses. These comrades do not appreciate the vast differences that separate the reactionary leaders from the broad masses of these organizations. Many of the comrades, turning all their attention to the leaders, unfortunately lose sight of the rank and file. They are under the impression that the reactionary leaders reflect the opinion of the membership. But the history of the world labor movement does not justify this conclusion. The proletarian masses are instinctively revolutionary as the Russian Revolution has demonstrated.

To lose confidence in the masses, to suppose that they are reactionary, and to discard for a moment the opportunities for Communist activities within reactionary trade unions, implies a most narrow and impractical outlook upon the revolutionary movement, as a whole. The expansion stage of capitalism has given birth to an opportunistic ideology within the labor movement, and the growth of a reactionary leadership. But this period has passed. The proletariat is being subjected to the attacks of merciless imperialism. Revolution appears as the only salvation. Therefore Communists must enter every reactionary proletarian organization in order to fight and expose the reactionary leaders and to win over the masses for Communism. No true Communist can conscientiously shirk this important duty.

Another argument put forward against legal Communist propaganda is, that at the present time, we will be compelled to refrain from propagating openly, some of our principles, such as the necessity of armed insurrection. This policy it is claimed, may lead to centrism. This argument would hold true if our work were limited to legal propaganda only. But whatever cannot be circulated through legal means can be and must be given publicity through our underground political party. The

illegal party remains the controlling factor. It directs all the agitation and propaganda of the illegal as well as of the legal organization.

Legal activity will play an important part in the Communist movement of this country. It will bring the Communist Party in close touch with the proletarian masses of the trade unions and other working class organizations. Under the direction of the illegal party there will be conducted Communist propaganda as far as the existing conditions permit. The legal organization will also serve as a recruiting ground for the Party. The constant influx of new and healthy elements will lend vitality and renewed energy to the movement.

The time chosen for the creation of a legal organization was indeed most opportune. Had not the C. E. C. taken the initiative in this direction, some centrist party would have gained control over all those who in reality belong with us.

The Difficulties.

The argument that our Party is not strong enough to be in a position to conduct legal work on a large scale and that our members are not sufficiently developed for this task, is unfounded. The working class as a whole, does not develop, nor does it receive its revolutionary training merely from books and propaganda. Such training is mainly the result of varied and difficult experience. Our members will never learn to conduct legal work, unless they really engage in it. Experience is the best teacher.

In adopting a definite decision on this question, the C. E. C. was guided by the actual conditions existing in the United States to-day. Curiously enough the Communist International has fully accepted this view independently of our Party, thus fully supporting the stand of our own C. E. C. Let us consider for a moment what the representatives of the Communist International have to say on this issue. In their Theses on Tactics, issued by the Bureau of the Russian delegation to the Third Congress of the Comintern and signed by Comrades Zinoviev, Lenin, Trotzky, Bucharin, Radek and Kamenev—we find the following statement:

"Not everywhere has the Communist International made sufficient progress along the road of creating Communist mass parties. Nay, in two of the most important countries of victorious capitalism, there is yet everything to be done in this direction."

"In the United States of North America where on account of historical circumstances, there was lacking a broad revolutionary movement even before the war, the Communists are still before the first and simplest task of creating a Communist nucleus and connecting it with the working masses. The present economic crisis, which has thrown five million people out of work, affords very favorable soil for this kind of work. Conscious of the imminent danger of a radicalized labor movement,

American capital tries to crush and destroy the young Communist movement by means of barbarous persecution. The Communist Party was forced into an illegalized existence, under which it would, according to capitalist expectations, dwindle into a mere propagandist sect and lose its vitality in the absence of any contact with the masses. The Communist International draws the attention of the Communist Party of America (unified) to the fact, that the illegal organization must not only serve as the ground for collecting and crystallizing of active Communist forces, but that it is the Party's duty to try all ways and means to get out of the illegalized condition into the open, among the wide masses. It is the duty of the Party to unite the masses politically for the struggle against American capitalism."

These extracts fully justify the position of the C. E. C. of our national party on the question of legal work. They also contain another important idea, namely, the idea of the necessity of a Communist mass party. We will try to develop this idea, as it is of utmost importance to the Communist movement of this country.

It would have been foolish and ridiculous to talk of a Communist mass party at the time when the Communist Party was in the process of formation. It was necessary at that time to create a Communist nucleus consisting of the most advanced, most class-conscious workers, around which to build the future strong mass party. During the present period of depression and the breakdown of capitalism, the masses are open to conviction. Large numbers of workers are ready to join the movement.

The Russian Analogy.

Many of us think that a Communist mass party is superfluous for the Communist movement. Such an opinion is probably a relic of the early stage of our movement, when the party was compelled for a time to isolate itself from the masses, during the process of formation. Thus many comrades point to the victory of the Russian proletariat, which was accomplished under the leadership of the Russian Communist Party with a membership of approximately ten thousand out of a population of 130,000,000.

The comparison does not, however, warrant the conclusion drawn. Previous to the October Revolution, Russia was economically a backward country. It is true that a few industries were operated on a large scale, but we must remember that Russia was then and is now, mainly an agricultural country. The large industries had been concentrated in a few centers only. Moreover these industries had developed with such rapidity that the Russian capitalists had had no opportunity to organize efficiently. Previous to the Bolshevik Revolution, capitalism had not, therefore, flourished sufficiently to exert any decided influence over the political and economic life of the country. After the overthrow

of the Czarist regime, there remained in the political field but one other well organized body, strong enough to take control—the Communist Party of Russia, the Bolsheviki.

The Bolsheviki were confronted with the most favorable conditions for the assumption of power. There was no need for such a violent struggle against national capitalism as the Revolution in Western Europe and America will undoubtedly involve. On the other hand, the working class of Russia had not yet fallen under the vicious influence of the treacherous trade union leadership such as we find in Western Europe and America. For these reasons, the Russian Communist Party, in spite of its limited membership, found it comparatively easy to establish direct contact with the working masses.

Our Task

The Communist Parties of Western Europe and America must overcome many obstacles which our Russian comrades did not have to face. They must do battle against a well organized, class-conscious and powerful capitalist class. At the same time, they must wage a bitter fight against the traitors within the ranks of the proletariat—the able lieutenants of capitalism—the reactionary labor leaders who hold in their relentless grasp the vast mass of workers organized within the labor unions.

To comrades opposed to the formation of a mass party it is well to point to the experience of the Communist Party of Germany which confirms our stand. Although this party included in its ranks, even before unity was accomplished, about 100,000 members, it was not strong enough to win the fight against the treacherous bureaucrats of these unions and accomplish a successful proletarian revolution. This leads us to the inevitable conclusion that only a Communist mass party, penetrating and permeating the labor unions and other organizations of the workers, only such a party can become the leader of the proletarian revolution in capitalist countries like Germany, England and the United States.

In reply to the opponents of a Communist mass party, Lenin in one of his speeches delivered at the Third Congress of the Communist International, said, "Those who do not understand that in Western Europe, where almost the entire proletariat is organized, it is necessary to win over the majority of the working class, those are lost for the Communist movement."

Comrade Zinoviev in his report to the Third Congress of the Comintern, made in the name of the Executive Committee of the Comintern, the following comment regarding England and America.

"Comrades, we have not only caused splits during this year, but we have equally helped especially in England and America, to unite the various existing currents. Before the 2nd Congress, there were in England eight minor currents, struggling with each other. And we have now—due to a great extent to the pressure of the Executive

Committee of the Comintern—only one party. The same is true in regard to America. Regarding America, we decided not to accept to the International any of the factions until unity was achieved. We must advise our American friends to learn to work not only within the limits of the illegal party, but to organize notwithstanding the White Terror, a legal and semi-legal movement, functioning parallel to the party, in order to win over larger circles of the working class. It is a question of life or death, for the English and American Parties, not to remain as a sect. The ground in England and America is so well cultivated that our party must be able to plant

the seeds. We are of the opinion that our main slogan for these two parties must be: *Closer contact with the masses, more legality.*"

These extracts prove conclusively that the C. E. C. of the Communist Party of America has taken the proper position on the question of legal work before the highest tribunal of the Communist International took a similar stand. We therefore appeal to all the members of the Party to co-operate with the C. E. C. toward building up a legal organization that will insure the future growth of the party and the ultimate success of the movement. Comrades, to work!

What Shall We Do in the Unions?

By J. P. COLLINS

The Present Moment

The period of crystallizing a Communist nucleus in each country; the period of struggle to win over the best amongst the class conscious workers and organize them into a Communist Party; the inevitably ensuing struggle with the centrists, yellow Socialists and Syndicalists is nearing its end in most of the countries. The dominant problem of the new era is to wrest from the influence of the enemies of the proletarian revolution the broad masses of the working people.

The International Communist Party and especially its American section is going through a new metamorphosis; a new concentration of the militant proletarian vanguard is taking place. New concepts of struggle, new methods, new organizations are coming to life to serve the new needs; the broadening of the struggle.

In the United States the Communist Party is faced with a more difficult and diverse task than in any of the other countries. The workers in this country speak virtually all the languages of the world. Twenty-five nationalities are here in great numbers. The problem of reaching them in the various national groups and yet have one centralized party is, as far as the Communist Party is concerned, near its solution. But while the different nationalities are settled in their particular localities where they have developed their press and national organizations, and where we have established our spheres of influence, the labor unions are a mixture of all nationalities regardless of their understanding each other or not. This is a serious disadvantage to the revolutionary movement. Under this system the foreign-language-speaking workers who are likely to be the back bone of the revolutionary movement are prevented from gaining expression and their influence in the labor movement is thus reduced to a minimum. In some of the unions the

foreign-born workers, due to their predominating numbers, have been able to gain expression, as for instance in the unions of the needle trades, textile workers, tobacco workers, miners, and metal-workers. Amongst them we will find a distinct trend towards class-action. In other American unions where the nationalities are more evenly intermixed and where no particular nationality has predominance the grafting bureaucracy has maintained itself more successfully.

Our Labor Movement

The reactionary aspect of the American labor movement is not, however, entirely due to the many nationalities, the economic history of the country or the different languages. The intricacies of the machinery of the A. F. of L., the policy of deliberate exclusion adopted toward the most exploited sections of the workers in this country (negroes, unskilled, etc.), the antiquated craft union form of organization and craft union method of waging struggles, the intricate system of electing officials and delegates to central bodies and conventions, the deceptive and tricky constitutions of the unions, the high initiation fees; all serve the purpose of fortifying the grafters in power and perpetuating their regime in the American labor movement.

In the European countries the labor movement has at least a political aspect to the extent that it generally recognizes the class struggles. But in this country we have the most important unions controlled by the reactionaries. These unions being veritable job-trusts, the leaders consider it their prime function to keep the workers under their thumb. The labor movement in this country could properly be classified as follows:

(1) Unions organized by the bosses. There are many of them all over the country. These usually come into existence after a lost strike or when the workers crave

for organization. This condition seriously hampers the reorganization of bona-fide unions or the organization of new ones.

(2) Unions looked upon with no disfavor by exploiters like the Railroad Brotherhoods. The representatives of the workers in these unions are usually of the sort approved by the bosses. The fact that the railroad workers are among the lowest paid despite being almost solidly organized, shows how profitable this condition is to the exploiters.

(3) Radical and trade unions of various shades, as for example, the U. M. W., I. L. G. W., A. C. W., A. M. W., A. F. of I. and I. W. W.

The Road Ahead.

Upon the Communist Party of America as the best organized radical faction in the field falls the task of invigorating the labor movement and raising its militancy. To achieve this we must strive (1) to raise by all means the general level of class consciousness among the American workers. (2) To break down the barriers against the unskilled, the negroes, etc. (3) To gain the maximum expression for the more revolutionary element amongst labor, particularly the foreign workers. (4) To bring about the constructive participation of all revolutionary elements in labor union affairs. (5) To bring about the reorganization of the labor movement on industrial lines, on the basis of shops and factories (6) to democratize the labor unions through rank and file committees and the delegate form of union management, and (7) last, but not least, to bring about the reduction of initiation fees in order to bring into the unions more rapidly a bigger mass of the most exploited workers.

To achieve this program, which is absolutely necessary for broader forms of struggle, we must bring into action more than Party members. It is our task as Communists to take the initiative and general leadership and rally around ourselves all those who agree and sympathize with our program. Who can deny that aside from 300,000 sympathizers who read our press there are twice that many who would wholeheartedly subscribe to our trade union program? The party must be a party of action. But it can only become so if the membership gains actual experience in activities amongst the workers. The days when mere attendance at group meetings and occasional leaflet distribution was considered sufficient are over. Every member who is eligible must join a labor union. Those that cannot join a labor union must join the workers' organizations in their territory. *Every member must serve as a link between the Party and the masses.*

The strength of the party is to be found in its participation in the every-day life of the masses and in its fighting for their interests at every step. Those that shirk this duty only render lip service to Communism. They are a dead weight on the Party.

Our Immediate Tasks.

Only those amongst us who have been in the forefront in attempts to establish contact with the masses can fully realize how impotent and unfit our present machinery and old methods (even our higher committees) are to accomplish this task. Indeed we are facing a new era. Before we are through reorganizing and readjusting our forces we will have a live, virile party and a party mechanism so constructed as really to enable us to effectively participate and give actual, practical direction to the struggles of the workers in this country. Our foreign-language-speaking comrades have unconsciously been maintaining an attitude of aloofness from the practical problems of the class-struggle in this country. Theirs was a philosophy of controlling the so-called "backward" English-speaking element, on the assumption that the "foreigner" cannot play any important role in the class-struggle in this country. When it came to work among the masses they maintained an attitude of "its up to the Americans." They have confined themselves primarily to problems of control peculiar to the affairs of their particular nationalities instead of to their press, their organizations, the carrying out of the Party's immediate tasks among the workers and the studying of their problems from the point of view of establishing contact with the broadest masses of their own nationality.

As far as the problems of the proletariat are concerned in this country there are no foreigners; there are only workers. The Party's immediate as well as ultimate program must become a factor among all of them no matter what tongue they speak so that each nationality in its own way may contribute to the realization of our program in our varied fields of activity. The aloofness of our foreign-language-speaking comrades towards our labor union and industrial work has been almost complete. No one will deny that today the bulk of the American organized labor movement is composed of workers of foreign birth. Until the great majority of our membership—which is foreign—gets behind our labor union program in dead earnest, little will be accomplished. We have over 800 members working in the coal mining industry, about that many in the steel industry, still more in the needle and textile industries, together with thousands of sympathizers in each trade. They are mostly of Russian or foreign extraction as well as Hungarians, Germans and Poles. None of the language bureaus with the exception of the Jewish, have made any attempt to organize them or even to educate them to a better understanding of our task and duty toward the labor movement. One of our first tasks therefore must be to bring our foreign-language-speaking comrades into line for this work. We must organize the influence of the foreign-language-speaking workers in the labor movement and give it maximum expression.

This can be done by organizing language-speaking nuclei along practically the same lines as all nuclei are

organized, either according to industries or trade or, if there are sufficient numbers, according to local unions. Russian miners should be placed in Russian miners' nuclei, Polish workers into Polish nuclei, etc. They shall be connected with all the other language or English nuclei in their trade union or industries. Each of the language nuclei should organize the sympathizers in its language. We must get together the workers of these nationalities in their industries whenever it is necessary to put across our propositions in the labor unions. We should make the foreign worker an organized factor in the labor movement. He will then be the very backbone of a strong left wing in the labor movement which will go with us through thick and thin.

Sympathizers.

The importance and the possibility of using communist sympathizers to aid us in our struggle is generally underestimated by most of our comrades. The wonderful success of our French comrades in the French Confederation of Labor and the resulting tremendous influence on the labor movement in France is largely due to a skilful use of sympathizers. In a comparatively short time our French comrades got the majority in the French Railroad Federation (the yellows stealing the treasury). At the recent congress of the French Federation of Labor the reactionaries only obtained a small majority, despite the expulsion of many radical locals. Especially in this country where the labor movement is so backward and the radical forces as yet impotent, is the question of clearly understanding how to approach and use sympathizers extremely important.

There are principally four sorts of sympathizers—(1) the communist sympathizer, those workers who agree with the main points of our program; (2) the revolutionary syndicalists; (3) the left Socialist element; (4) the anarchists. In this country, due to the backwardness of many sections of the labor movement, even less conscious elements than the above mentioned could be used to great advantage on many occasions. These are the progressives, the One Big Unionists and socialistic workers in general. These various shades of sympathizers with the cause of social revolution are especially important in view of the fact that the great percentage of our membership is totally inexperienced and at the present time unable to do much effective work amongst the masses. Moreover, our present trade union program, due to the backwardness of the American labor movement must be of such a simple and elementary nature as to offer a logical basis for uniting all the elements above enumerated. They are to carry the burden of the struggle for a change in the labor movement. But we are to lend initiative and persistency.

Syndicalists.

By far the most important factor in influencing a great number of radical workers whom we must win over to our point of view will be the syndicalists, represented in this country by the I. W. W. They are still far apart from us in tactics. The tactical differences can by no means be overlooked and an intense struggle against the present leadership must be carried on. The I. W. W. claims that there are many millions more who can be organized among the unskilled. On this claim they base the theory that a strong job-controlling I. W. W. can be built. Many years of costly experience and patent failure prove that the mass of workers rally around the existing big labor bodies like the A. F. of L., which offers them tangible prospects of bettering their immediate conditions. Thus we have in the U. M. W. and others more unskilled workers than twenty times the membership of the I. W. W. It is Utopian to imagine that a small body of thirty thousand without any job control, hounded, persecuted and ostracized by the enemy press could attract the big mass in preference to the well established, well financed and recognized trade unions.

The only way for the I. W. W.'s functioning effectively is to work as a minority within the organized labor movement, not by worshipping three letters but by doing everything to put across their program. With those elements of the I. W. W. that are mainly concerned about their program we are already co-operating effectively, and they have shown themselves to be splendid fighters. Those, however, who, through their dual-unionism agitation demoralize and take the radical and militant element out of the trade unions, must be fought most bitterly. Theirs are tactics that strengthen the enemy; tactics that separate the militant minority from the bulk of the masses and deliver the latter to the influence and domination of the labor fakers. At this moment it is the latter type that is on top in the I. W. W. Had those who went to jail been in the field, the I. W. W. to-day would work hand in hand with all other revolutionary forces; the same as in England, where all wobblies are in the Rank and File movement within the British unions and shops; the same as in France, where the rebel wobblies fight side by side with the communists and anarchists in order to rid the French syndicalists of the dominant reactionaries; the same as in Australia, Spain and in other countries.

Thus we see that in almost all countries where rebel unionists are organized they do not separate themselves into small dual-unions which are condemned to remain forever small isolated, propaganda groups, but plant their flag and organize themselves within the camp of the enemy, fight the encroachments of the reactionaries, and offer a new leadership to the masses. More than one organization that was right in principle went on the rocks

because of wrong tactics. The official I. W. W. leaders who during this period of ferment in the labor movement, when every rebel within a union is of immeasurable value to the revolutionary cause, appeal to the radicals to withdraw, to leave the masses individually or in groups for the sake of gaining a few dues paying members, are guilty of the worst crime against the American labor movement—against the whole working class.

The Anarchists.

The anarchists' little groups which operate in many places without being recognized as such are another section which we have to take into consideration. We have already, especially among the Italians, won over many of their fighters. They generally agree on the question of rank and file control, the struggle against the bureaucracy, and the destruction of capitalism. Their lawlessness and individualism, however, coupled with the vague idealism with which they surround themselves, are very dangerous in effect upon proletarian discipline and solidarity in action. The futility of individual, decentralized action and the impossibility of educating the overwhelming bulk of the workers under capitalism can be clearly seen by all except the parlor anarchist. Unfortunately the parlor anarchist plays an important role in the dissemination of these doctrines which, if carried into effect, would paralyze into helplessness the working class movement and shatter it into thousands of disjointed, isolated groups unable to act concertedly. The bourgeoisie foster anarchistic individualism amongst the working class. The lack of solidarity and discipline, the autonomous and disjointed craft unions instead of big mass organizations are in part due to the influence of this propaganda. The proletarian anarchists, once convinced of the necessity of discipline and centralization, are among the best and most consistent fighters against capitalism. At any rate, if we cannot bring them to agree fully with us, we should work hand in hand with them as much as can be done—especially in the labor movement.

As to the revolutionary or near revolutionary workers who more or less already agree with us or whose minds are not imbued with any particular doctrine of the class struggle, a patient, friendly attitude will go a long way in criticizing their shortcomings.

Mass Issues

A virile Communist Party worthy of its name must not only strive to absorb and direct the forces that consciously move against capitalism but must also use these

forces to bring into action the broad masses of workers. In the United States the C. P. is the only solid, live organized force in the field which, with the proper analysis of the situation and the proper application of the tactics adopted by the Third Congress of the C. I., can give leadership and direct the great discontented masses into definite revolutionary channels. The situation in the A. I. of L. is very tense. A great industrial crisis is gripping the country. Are we capable of fulfilling the task of a Communist Party? Are we ready to participate in the class struggle in the way that American conditions demand? The Third International bids us to reach the masses and not to bury ourselves, not run away from them, but to depart from our old erroneous methods. The Russian comrades yearn for support from this country in the form of working class action. Are we going to plunge into another period of internal strife or are we going to seize this opportunity to make a powerful communist mass movement?

The economic world-crisis has reached America and it is this crisis that will test the C. P. of A. American capital, in order to dominate the world, is out to lower the standard of living of the workers to a level approaching as nearly as possible that existing in other industrially developed countries. In order to do this they must first destroy all the defenses of the working class, especially the trade unions. The open shop drive is a part of the long-drawn, persistent struggle against the workers. In this country the factories are closing down steadily and the number of unemployed having reached six millions, is still rising, but in Germany industries are "booming." They are booming because the workers' standard of living in Germany has been reduced to the starvation level. Therefore, some American and English capitalists are placing their contracts in Germany, which is manufacturing goods and building ships for them at a cheap labor cost. They will continue to do so until the workers of America have been made to submit completely to the new slavery. In view of these facts, the fight to maintain the union shop, the fight to maintain the standard of wages and hours now becomes a revolutionary fight. We must make it our fight and under its banner we shall develop a powerful movement. Only by properly using the issues that stir the masses will we be able to accomplish this and organize the sympathizers behind us, thus developing a new leadership, a new organ ready to lead the working class towards mass and class action.

Class Struggle or “Commodity” Struggle

By Daniel Shays

The Commodity Struggle Theory

The key to the sterility of the Socialist Party of Canada and its bookish conversion of the class struggle into a mere class-room struggle is found in its ancient and highly orthodox doctrine of “The Commodity Struggle.” As a practical consequence of this strange doctrine, any member of the Canadian party who seeks to take a really active part in the class struggles of the Canadian workers must do so in defiance of party theory. Although this doctrine is slowly drifting toward the refuse heap of discarded false theories, yet the orthodox still cling to it, and seek to force its fetters upon the virile “young Turk” movement that is seeking to galvanize the party into life despite its dead formulae.

The Proletarian Party of the United States, legitimate offspring of the S. P. of C., having its being just south of the Canadian border, nowhere specifically adopts this doctrine; yet the Proletarian Party seems to have been blasted by the hereditary taint. It betrays its ancestry by evidencing something of the same sterility in the living class struggle, by a pedantic overemphasis on the class room, by a tendency to indifference as to the form of unionism, by a belittling of the significance of unionism and strikes, and by a complacent eclecticism which declares:

“We are unable to distinguish the relative importance of different forms of the class struggle. We use them all. Whereas the Communists make the industrial struggles of the workers and the extra-parliamentary activities of the masses their major campaign, we refuse to place emphasis anywhere, or if we must emphasize any form of the class struggle it is parliamentary activity that we choose to make our major campaign.”

The theory of the Commodity Struggle is stated in pristine purity in the Fifth Edition (issued 1920) of the “Manifesto of the Socialist Party of Canada,” where it has survived ten or eleven years of existence and five revisions of the manifesto, including one revision undertaken, at least so we are informed, by one of the men, Pritchard, who has revolted against the theory in its practical implications, and who is now active in attempting to line up the S. P. of C. for the Communist International. It is from this Fifth Edition of the Manifesto that we quote (pages 39 and 40):

“On the industrial field the workers appear as sellers of the one commodity, labor power; they are rivals rather than allies. As with the sellers of any commodity, competition forces combination to a certain extent, so with the workers. As sellers of labor power they combine in trade unions, making an effort to support one another in enhancing the price of their commodity. Were they all welded into one organization there would yet remain the unemployed, to

which hunger would dictate the necessity of competing with, rather than aiding, the employed workers in their struggle. To form the workers, employed and unemployed, all into one union would be but to transfer the competition from without to within the organization.”

The reasoning of the above quotation may be summarized as follows:

1. Labor power is a commodity (which it undoubtedly is).
2. The laborer as a vendor of a commodity resembles any other vendor of any other commodity (such as the merchant).
3. Therefore on the field of labor power sale (daily work—exploitation) the laborers are rivals rather than allies.
4. Trade unions are “combinations in restraint of trade” in the commodity labor power, just as trusts and dealers’ associations “combine in restraint of free trade” in their respective commodities, and attempt to artificially limit the supply of a commodity at a given price (price fixing).
5. This is the only significance of trade unions.
6. Such being the case, their form is immaterial. (Indeed the craft union is the proper expression, though they do not say it, of this price fixing, job trust conception of unionism).
7. Industrial unionism offers no advantages. (There would yet remain the unemployed, etc.)
8. Class unionism (taking in all workers) would (by implication) weaken the effectiveness of the unions, since it would “transfer the competition from without to within the organization.”

Point one, that labor power is a commodity, is undoubtedly correct. Also that the laborer is a commodity vendor. *But labor power is essentially different from all other commodities.* The laborer, in his material conditions and needs, and in the ideology these beget, is different from all other vendors of commodities. His unions differ basically and in essence from all other combinations for protecting vendors and regulating prices. And the traffic in labor power is as different from traffic in other commodities as is the North Pole from the South. *The differences are the differences between ordinary “commodity struggle” (by which I suppose they mean competition in the sale of commodities) and the Class Struggle, and these differences the S. P. of C. ignores.*

The Commodity That Sells Itself

Let us examine some of these differences.

When the capitalist commodity vendor sells potatoes or dynamos he is selling external objects. They are no part of him. When he has sold the potato he is through with it. Its consumption by the purchaser occasions him neither pain nor effort. He will neither see nor need that potato again.

When the proletarian commodity vendor sells labor power

he sells a portion of himself. His labor power is an inseparable part of him, and he sells himself by the task or the hour to the purchaser. While the purchaser is consuming the commodity labor power in the form of its use value, labor, the unlucky vendor is toiling and sweating and giving up part of his nerve and muscle tissue, some of his fat (!) and flesh and blood to the purchaser.

Labor power is an extremely "perishable" commodity. If for a certain length of time it remains unsold it ceases to exist. Most other commodities do not "perish" so swiftly. In fact, many commodities are enhanced in price by being withheld from the market and placed on ice. If they are perishables the perishing of a few commodities often increases the price of the remaining supply in the hands of the commodity owner. But if the owner of the commodity labor power loses a portion of this the very opposite occurs. And if his commodity perish (for he has but one) he perishes with it.

3. There is an historico-social element entering into the composition of the value of the commodity labor power that does not enter into the value of any other commodity. The element I have reference to is "the standard of living." As in the case of any other commodity, the value of the commodity labor power is measured by the amount of average labor time socially necessary to reproduce it. But unlike other commodities, the amount of labor time that is "socially necessary" varies not only with the mechanical technique of production but also with the socially-historically determined "standard of living."

4. The attempt to maintain or enhance this "standard of living" on the part of the workers, and to break down or lower it on the part of the purchasers of labor power (capitalists) is one of the elements which converts the ordinary bargain and sale (Commodity Struggle, as the S. P. of C. terms it) which accompanies the traffic in other commodities into a *class struggle* in the case of the commodity, labor power. The struggle to maintain the standard of living is more than a "struggle" to maintain a price. *It is a struggle for the continued existence of a class.* The lowering of the price of any other commodity does not "degrade" the commodity nor its vendor. (It may increase his sales.) The lowering of the standard of living degrades both the vendor of the commodity labor power and the commodity that is inseparable from him. The degrading of the standard of living tends to degrade the worker to the level of a beast. At times (as with the introduction of machine weaving into India) it wipes out whole sections of the working class.

5. The use value of the commodity labor power (its consumption as labor) is the begetter of the exchange value of all other commodities. It is also the source of all surplus value (which in turn is the source of all rents, interest and profits). It is a peculiarity of the commodity, labor power, that its use in general yields new exchange values in excess of its own exchange value and price. All other commodities, if used for further production, give to the new product only the exchange value they already contain. Furthermore,

they have exchange value only because at some stage in their careers labor power was used upon them in the form of labor. Without traffic in labor power at some stage of the productive process no other commodity would yield either exchange value or profit.

Where the Class Struggle Comes In.

In the traffic of all other commodities a competitive bargaining and haggling (called by the S. P. of C. "Commodity Struggle") is carried on. In the traffic in the commodity, labor power, there is also involved a class struggle.

We have already seen that a class struggle in the sense of a struggle for the continued human existence of a class is waged about one of the component elements of the value of labor power, namely, the standard of living. We have also seen that labor power yields a greater or less surplus value in its consumption, and viewed from this angle the question of the standard of living becomes a question as to the relative proportions of necessary and surplus value that shall be derived by working class and capitalist class.

And that brings us to the curx of the matter. The traffic in labor power is not merely nor in its distinguishable essence a traffic between individuals as buyers and sellers endowed with freedom to withhold, freedom of contract, freedom of combination and withdrawal from combinations, freedom to fix prices subject to government regulation and other such trade freedoms. Indeed, these freedoms are conspicuous by their absence.

The trade in labor power is the trade between the workers as members of the working class and the exploiters as members of the capitalist class. It is because he is a proletarian, divorced from the machinery of production and propertyless, it is because he is a member of an historically and socially defined subject class that the worker must sell his labor power in place of trafficking in commodities external to himself and living without toil.

It is because he is a capitalist, owner of property in the machinery of production or of other property entering into the producing or circulating process, it is because he is a member of the class that has a monopoly of such property, it is because of his class privileges as a member of an historically and socially defined master class that the buyer of the commodity labor power can traffic in that valuable and surplus-value-yielding commodity labor power, and own the products of labor without laboring to produce them.

Hence it is that bargain and sale ("Commodity Struggle") in the case of other commodities develops into the class struggle in the case of traffic in labor power. Hence it is that this traffic has political significance and that the organizations of both master and working class have political significance.

Viewed in this light, the Socialist Party of Canada's distinction between workers' activities "on the industrial field," where "they are rivals rather than allies," and on the political field, is artificial and silly.

Where the State Comes In

The capitalist class is enabled to hold on to the privileges of extracting surplus value by traffic in labor power, because it uses its class instrument, the State, to protect these privileges. The primary functions of the capitalist State are the protection of private property (class privileges) and the maintaining of law and order (suppression of the class struggle).

The hand of the law (white-gloved and wielding a club or gloveless and grasping bayonet or trigger) is visible in every strike. Which of us has not seen, which of us has not felt it? Unions are emasculated, devitalized, enjoined, deprived of leaders, or outlawed and forbidden by the State. The State attempts (as in the case of the O. B. U. and I. W. W.) to prescribe the forms and limit the objects of unionism. It forbids many, nay, almost all, methods of struggle. (Such as boycott, picketing, use of force, deepening and broadening of the scope or object of strikes, general strikes, strikes with manifestly political objectives, etc. Oftentimes it forbids strikes altogether, as in the case of compulsory arbitration.

When the strike affects a basic industry, or indeed, shows any signs of being successful and threatening even the smallest of the privileges of the capitalist class, the police, the militia, the troops, are called out. In Gary, during the recent steel strike (in a basic industry) Major Leonard Wood, in command of a fully equipped division of the United States Army, entered the town, placed it under martial law and forbade not merely union meetings and organizing activities, but even forbade the meeting of three men together on the streets. In Colorado wholesale massacres of striking workers occurred. In Seattle and Winnipeg the State attempted to dictate the methods, scope, objectives and weapons of the general strikes, and in Winnipeg even the forms of unionism. Calumet, Ludlow, Lawrence, McKeesport Rock, West Virginia—one has but to mention those names fraught with memories of struggle and slaughter, and it becomes obvious to all but pedants that the struggles of the workers in unions and strikes are bound to have political significance.

Not primarily in the pedantic atmosphere of the class room, not primarily in the sheltered halls of parliaments, *but primarily in the midst of this living class struggle of the workers* lies our opportunity to point out the class nature of the State and the necessity of broadening and deepening the struggle until it comprises whole masses of the proletariat and the exploited, the whole class if possible, and until the objects of the struggle become consciously political aimed, wherever and whenever waged, at the organization of the workers as a class for the seizure of political power and the use of it by the workers for the destruction of master class privileges and the organization of the classless communist economy.

The Political Strikes

We have seen that strikes tend to have political significance because they threaten the privileges of the master class,

because the State, an instrument for the protection of class privilege, then steps in, and because the workers, being met with a political weapon, gradually learn the necessity of an attack upon the State as a preliminary to any real class movement.

But there is yet another sense in which strikes may have political significance. They may be, and have been and increasingly will be used for *political objectives*. Strikes for the release of political prisoners, strikes in protest against the "raiding" activities of the State, strikes to lift the blockade against proletarian Russia or to stop the support of counter-revolutionary expeditions there on the part of various governments, are strikes with political objectives. Sometimes strikes even aim to and tend to undermine the State, i. e., the capitalist State, as witness the general strike in Russia in 1915. Sometimes they tend to dictate the form of the master class State and its activities, as witness the successful strike against the recent monarchial coup of Kapp-Luettwitz in Germany. In times of revolutionary crisis the mass strike is an important weapon for undermining and aiding in the overthrow of the capitalist State.

Unionism and the Class Struggle

But the Socialist Party of Canada quotes with approval on page 37 of the Manifesto the words of some "Western labor official" to the effect that "the only remaining usefulness of the labor unions is in resisting the petty tyrannies of the masters." Even if that were their only function it would be important whether they were organized industrially or by crafts.

But when not quoting, the manifesto assigns even pettier significance to the unions than that of centers of resistance. In the passage first quoted above, from page 39 of the Manifesto, the unions are "combinations" . . . "forced to a certain extent by competition" . . . "as with the sellers of any commodity." Their object is to "make an effort to support one another in enhancing the price of their commodity."

In attempting to accomplish anything for the benefit of their class through the medium of unions and strikes, we learn on page 37 of the Manifesto, "the workers to-day are fighting not only against the man-made laws of capitalism, but also against all the laws of economics." This is strange encouragement to come from a revolutionary organization! At least as early as 1867 Marx anticipated this tendency and also the movement toward class unionism, and he brands the apostles of this very doctrine as "sycophant political economists." Thus on pages 702 and 703 of Capital, Volume I, this—not the least prominent of the Marxists and one whose authority the S. P. of C. professes to respect—declares:

"As soon, therefore, as the laborers learn the secret, how it comes to pass that in the same measure as . . . the productive power of their labor increases, so in the same measure even their function as a means of the self-expansion of capital becomes more and more precarious; as soon as they discover that the degree of intensity of the competition among themselves depends wholly on the pressure of the

relative surplus population; as soon as, by trades unions, etc., they try to organize a regular co-operation between employed and unemployed in order to destroy or to weaken the ruinous effects of this natural law of capitalistic production upon their class, so soon capital and its sycophant, political economy, cry out at the infringement of the "eternal" and so to say "sacred" law of supply and demand. Every combination of employed and unemployed disturbs the "harmonious action of this law."

And while we are quoting Marx to these Marxists, even more interesting is the resolution that he prepared on the functions of unionism, which resolution was adopted by the First International at its Geneva Congress of 1868. It reads in part as follows:

"The immediate goal of the trades unions is confined to the necessary daily struggles between capital and labor as a means of repulsing the increasing usurpations of capital, i. e., it is confined to the questions of wages and hours. This activity is not only permissible, but also indispensable as long as the present system exists. Moreover, this activity must be generalized through the establishment and consolidation of economic organizations in all countries.

"On the other side, the economic organizations have become, without being conscious of it, the focus of organization for the working class; performing the same function as the medieval municipalities and communes for the bourgeoisie: If the economic organizations are indispensable to the daily guerilla warfare between capital and labor, they are far more important as an organized means to advance the abolition of the system of wage slavery itself."

Again, if the S. P. of C. is indifferent to the forms of unionism we may well ask where this "Marxist" organization imagines the workers are to get the ideology of class unity, of struggle as a class, if not from their daily life. Do they daily sell their labor power "as rivals rather than allies," yet get the concept of being allies rather than rivals? Where? From heaven? From the class rooms of the S. P. of C. or the Proletarian Party? Have they an ideology that is not derived from their daily life? Or is there indeed something in this daily traffic in labor power that distinguishes it from traffic in other commodities, that give it a class significance, a political significance, an educative significance, and in the end—a revolutionary significance?

The Socialist Party of Canada and its American offspring, the Proletarian Party, by failing to participate in this significant phase of the class struggle, by remaining indifferent to unions and to the forms of unionism, have doomed themselves to the stifling atmosphere of the class room and remain a narrow, sectarian, doctrinaire group. In so far as the masses have been reached in Canada as during the Winnipeg general strike, the members of the S. P. of C. who used that rich situation to the full (such as Pritchard) did so in violation of the official theory of the party and earned the condemnation of the "orthodox-Marxists" of Canada. In the face of the first big experience of the Canadian movement the theory of the commodity struggle was dropped for the theory of the living class struggle. It can never again be confined to the class room. The mechanical Marxists of the class room will yield to the Marxists worthy of the name—the Communists.

American "Democracy" — a Capitalist Dictatorship

By THOROLD ROGERS

THE CAPITALIST STATE

In every capitalist country the bourgeoisie have the organized power of suppression and exploitation in their hands. They also control the workers' minds. The organ of this class suppression is the capitalist state which is nothing else but the unified and centralized power of the whole ruling class. Thru their state the capitalists are able to maintain the present system of exploitation.

The bourgeois state, whether it be democratic or monarchical, is a most complicated machine of oppression. It grips every walk of life. No worker can avoid its heavy hand. Congress, State and municipal legislatures, the executives, the courts, army, navy, police, spies, detective bureaus, scab-herding agencies, private gunmen, the American Legion, Ku Klux Klan, Chambers of Commerce, Employers' Associations, press, church, schools,

theatres, and the dominant political parties are only the state's vicious tentacles stretching out in all directions.

IN AMERICA

American capitalism is maintained by what is perhaps the most powerful organ of oppression in the world today. Vigor and dash mark its brutality, which is painfully prompt and sure in overcoming its enemy—the working class. The long and severe prison sentences handed out to the workers' leaders, government by injunction, military crushing of strikes, disfranchisement of workers on account of color or birthplace, the murder of government officials suspected of proletarian sympathies, tarring and feathering, kidnapping, lynching, poisonous propaganda, fraudulent learning, a prostituted church, the killing and wounding of hundreds of thousands in war, ruthless exploitation, denials of the workers' right to as-

semble, speak, or write—these make up the bountiful crop of “the greatest democracy in the world”. The readiness and fervor with which our “democracy” crushes the working class is comparable only to the readiness and fervor with which it serves the master class. The U. S. Government is, indeed, the model pure and abstract bourgeois democracy.

Our exploiters and oppressors have raised a halo about the American government. Thru their ownership of the press, schools, churches and countless other organs of information and misinformation they have poisoned the workers’ minds. The average American workingman honestly believes all the fantastic stories about the greatness, glory, holiness, and kindness of our “democracy”. He is ready to die for it. His ideology is largely a product of newspaper, church, motion picture, and school room sermons by capitalist servants. Not until the Communists succeed in disillusioning the American worker, not until they rid him of this pernicious ideology, will they be able to secure a hold on the working masses of this country.

The labor-bureaucracy and reform-socialists have rendered remarkable service to our capitalists by strengthening the workers’ faith in the bourgeois government and the whole state machinery. It is for the Communist Party to undermine this most damaging work and imbue the proletariat with a clear understanding of the oppressive, class character of the state, of the role it plays in the class struggle, and of the necessity for a proletarian state—a proletarian dictatorship—in the transition period between capitalist slavery and communist freedom.

A LITTLE HISTORY

In this article the writer proposes to limit himself to an analysis of the plan and structure of the American Government. The other, auxiliary agencies of the state will not be considered here. Nor will we go into a narration and exposition of its actual functioning in the class war. Our study shows conclusively that the American Constitution is only an excellent plan of crushing the masses and baffling their will—that is a capitalist dictatorship.

Historians like Beard and Smith, or even Bryce, Fiske, McMaster and Wilson offer abundant evidence to show that the American Constitution and the government founded upon it were clearly designed to eliminate as far as possible the direct influence of the broad masses on all legislation and public policy.

At the outset the American Revolution was merely an organized, armed protest against the arbitrary and then unconstitutional taxing power of the British ruling class. Of course, as the struggle developed, the war took on a much broader and more popular basis. For a time the poorer classes were actually a powerful factor in the political life of the country. But with the return

of peace, the propertied classes regained prestige and a strong wave of reaction set in. It was under such conditions that the Constitution was formed and the present American government organized.

THE HOLY CONSTITUTION

To the average American worker, the Constitution is the very incarnation, the very embodiment of popular rule, of democracy. In reality, it is nothing but an attempt to apply the precepts of the 18th century philosophy—the aims and ideals of the bourgeoisie rapidly coming into the position of a ruling class. Adam Smith, the economic and political lodestar of the rising capitalist class, tersely formulates the essence of this philosophy as applied to government. He says: “Civil government, so far as it is instituted for the security of property, is in reality instituted for the defense of the rich against the poor, or those who have some property against those who have none at all.”

This was the guiding principle of our “Fathers” who framed the Constitution. The Constitutional Convention set up as its goal the organization of a government that would as far as possible keep out the mass of people and not be directly responsible to them. They sought to devise a government “which was just popular enough not to excite general opposition and which at the same time gave to the people as little as possible of the substance of political power”.

Bribery and a strong appeal to the fear of European aggression helped to secure the adoption of the Constitution by the States. Bryce admits that if the Constitution had been put to a popular vote instead it would have been rejected. At the time of its adoption, the American masses looked upon the now holy Constitution as anything but a democratic document.

AN UNDERGROUND CONVENTION

The Federal Convention was a real underground convention—hidden from the masses of the people. Utmost secrecy characterized the sessions which were held behind closed doors. The delegates were not allowed to communicate with anyone outside. No one could make any copy from the record without special permission from the body. These steps were taken in order to facilitate realization of the aims of the Convention—a strongly centralized government possessing great freedom from change.

A reading of the proceedings, which were not made public until fifty years after the Convention, will disillusion anyone as to the faith of that body in the masses. Such honest spokesmen for popular rule as Jefferson and Paine were not to be found in that gathering. To delegate Elbridge Gerry, later Vice-President, democracy was the worst of all political evils. He realized, however, that discretion was the better part of valor and that it was unwise to make public such sentiments. This

"Father" of our country believed "that the people should at least appoint one branch of the government in order to inspire them with the necessary confidence."

OUR VENERABLE "FATHERS"

Our schools set up the American "Fathers" as heroes to be worshipped and modelled. But McMaster has this to say about them: "A very little study of long-forgotten politics will suffice to show that the filibustering and gerrymandering, in stealing governorships and legislatures, in using force at the polls, in colonizing and distributing patronage to whom patronage is due, in all the frauds and tricks that go to make up the worst form of practical politics, the men who founded our state and national governments were always our equals, and often our masters".

Hamilton wanted to give the rich and well-born "a distinct, permanent share in the government." He certainly had a prophetic vision of the class struggle that was to develop in the United States. To him "all communities divide themselves into the few and the many. The first are the rich and well-born; the other, the mass of the people, are turbulent and changing. They seldom judge or determine right." Gouverneur Morris even proposed to appoint men of aristocratic blood for life to the upper House, the Senate, in order to check the lower House. And Madison, often called the Father of the Constitution, believed that the Government ought "to protect the minority of the opulent against the majority." This is the essence of bourgeois democracy, of capitalist dictatorship.

AGAINST THE MASSES

1. A Most Rigid Constitution

The American Constitution is replete with the most cleverly devised and deadly effective means of baffling the will of the masses and making it almost impossible for them to alter the form of government, let alone overturn it. The Constitution makes it impossible for the mass of people to directly propose or even ratify changes in the fundamental law.

An extraordinary majority is necessary to even amend the Constitution. A two-thirds majority of both Houses on application from the legislatures in two-thirds of the States is required to merely set in motion the machinery for Constitutional amendment. Then the ratification of the amendment proposed can come only after it has been assented to by conventions in three-fourths of the states. To-day, only one-fiftieth of the population, so distributed as to constitute a majority in the twelve smallest states, can defeat, any proposed amendment. We see, then, how utterly foolhardy it is to plan to use the Constitution as a means of effective fundamental change. If, because of countless obstacles, the workers can not win a bare majority for a mere reform, how can

it be expected of them to get a two-thirds majority for a fundamental change?

Of over 2,000 propositions for amendment only eighteen have been adopted so far. The first twelve were really inconsequential. The next three were adopted through force of arms—that is, while the Northern army still held the conquered Southern States or as a price for readmission to Congress. All in all, not a single one of the amendments adopted to date were fundamental in nature. In no other country in the world have the bourgeoisie such an effective barrier against possible encroachments of the masses. In no other bourgeois country is there any distinction between legislation and constitutional amendment.

2. The Aristocracy of the Robe

Another feature of American "democracy" is the court system. This system is an insurmountable stone wall which the workers inevitably come up against in the class war. The whole plan of American government hinges on the unlimited authority of the courts. This device is not only the most important constitutional check on the masses but is also an excellent means of preserving and enforcing all the other checks.

The Constitution provides for life tenure of the Supreme Court judges, who are not elected by the people but appointed by the President. Our Supreme Court, a small irremovable oligarchy of nine judges, not only has power but has an absolute veto power and exclusive right of interpreting all law. No other bourgeois republic and not even the old Hohenzollern Germany had so efficient a constitutional means of preserving and perpetuating the capitalist system. This sanctum sanctorum of bourgeois democracy may not only legislate without the consent of the other bodies but even against them. In short, the Supreme Court is an independent legislative and judiciary body combined. It is furthest removed from the masses, prevents even the slightest legal changes, and only avoids an aristocratic appearance for the American government. In reality, the Supreme Court is based on the doctrine of divine rights. In the days of old the king could do no wrong. In the U. S. the nine little kings, the Supreme Court judges, can do no wrong—to the capitalist class.

Anent the role played by the Supreme Court in our class war, J. Allen Smith says: "These decisions have been almost uniformly advantageous to the capital-owning class in preserving property rights and corporate privileges. It is not, however, in the laws which have been annulled or modified by interpretation that we find the chief protection afforded to capital, but rather in the laws which have not been enacted. The mere existence of this power and the certainty that it would be used in defense of the existing social order has well-nigh prevented all attacks on vested rights by making their failure a foregone conclusion." The Legal Tender Decisions, the Income Tax Decision of 1905, the Danbury Hatters, and the Child Labor Law decisions are only a few examples of such class conduct.

Besides, through government by injunction, the Supreme Court enacts special, emergency, criminal legislation against the workers. The injunction in the last mine strike is typical of such capitalist justice to the workingman. This power enables the Court to deprive the workers of a jury trial—a supposedly inviolable right of Americans. There is thus assured conviction in cases where a jury trial, if had, might bring chances for acquittal. In such contempt cases against a workingman the nine aristocrats of the robe become a veritable Holy Trinity. They serve here as judge, jury and prosecutor combined.

Again, when the Supreme Court annuls law, the decision takes effect not from the time the judgment is rendered but from the time the act in question was originally passed. This retroactive character, known in law as *ex post facto* legislation, is supposed to be against the Constitution. But what of that when class interests are at stake? What is the Constitution between bourgeois profits on one hand and exploited workers on the other?

The "Fathers" consciously and deliberately put this most powerful weapon in the hands of the ruling, propertied class in order to stifle the masses. Though the Constitution gives the Supreme Court the right to reverse and affirm laws and treaties, it has exercised this right only in the case of laws. The reason for this is obvious. The treaties, being made by the President and Senate, stand practically no chance of being influenced by the masses. Hence there is really no need of checking the treaties. Since all treaties require a two-thirds vote in the Senate and the Senate needs a two-thirds vote to impeach the Court, there is no conflict. Friends in need are here, as elsewhere, friends indeed.

3. Checks and Balances

The system of checks and balances further buttresses the capitalist barriers against any change of the government by the working class. Originally the system was fostered by the bourgeoisie in their struggle for supremacy, in their struggle to limit the power of the monarchical and aristocratic class. Its existence is an open recognition of a class conflict. But in the U. S., there being no landed aristocracy, the bourgeoisie adopted it for use against the working class.

Our House of Representatives has less power than the Senate or President. The latter have the power of appointment and treaty-making. They may cede or annex territories without the House. Our "Fathers" figured that the President and Senate, being of the same ultra-conservative type, would thus have a double check on the lower body in which there might sometimes be found working class representatives. To-day the House is at most only a shadow but not a substance of representation. Its much vaunted control of the purse is crippled, for once an appropriation law is enacted it can not be repealed or even modified without the consent of the President and Senate. The army and navy appropriations are excepted from this rule.

A defeated Party may gobble hundreds of millions of dollars, robbed from the working class, since the second ses-

sion of the old Congress does not meet until after the members of the new House have been elected. This system makes it very difficult to fix responsibility and is thus of incalculable aid to the bourgeoisie in hiding the class character of the government. The division of authority between two Houses makes it possible for either one to pretend the favor of popular demands and yet sabotage them.

4. The Committee System

The very system of procedure in the House of Representatives is calculated to banish every chance of its assuming power. At the opening of a new Congress the House divides itself into about fifty standing committees. No Congressman is allowed to propose a bill unless it is first favorably passed upon by the proper committee. Here the bills of a minority Party are usually killed, for the majority Party controls the committees. Minority Parties are placed on committees only to blur the responsibility of the ruling Party in the eyes of the masses. Working class representatives can thus be completely deprived of their "inalienable" right to introduce bills and voice the interests of the proletariat.

Every Congress elects a Speaker who is a member of the majority Party. He appoints the committees which are irresponsible and irrecalable. All committee deliberations are secret and graft often plays havoc with them. The average committee lives through the two sessions of a Congress and gets about two hours to report, read, and have a vote on its proposal by a roll call which can be asked for by one-fifth present and which takes at least forty-five minutes. Besides, the member who reports the bill dictates how long the debate shall last, who shall speak, and whether any or no amendments are to be made.

Since the time is so limited the committees rush each other to report. Even discussion is thus killed. The Speaker determines the order in which the committees report. This gives rise to log-rolling or trading between committees. In America the lower legislative House is not even a debating body. At best the House of Representatives is only an instrument for hasty voting on proposals prepared by committees behind closed doors.

THE AMERICAN PARTY SYSTEM

Besides the American Government's organic barriers to a working class expression of will through a parliamentary structure, there are thwarting bodies that are now part and parcel of the governmental machinery. One of these is the system of political parties. The latter is only an added effective check on the masses.

In England, unlike in the U. S., the Party has the right not only to elect but also to remove the representatives. But in America the only control the masses can have over a candidate is a blind faith in dishonest election promises. Our Parties have no responsibility for the government. The American political party system only serves as a special means for advancing capitalist interests. And the dominant

Party machines are subsidized by corporations. They are entirely out of the reach not only of their voting masses but even of their membership.

It is the task of the dominant political parties in the U. S. to perpetuate the rule of the capitalist class. Every one of these parties is afflicted with secret methods and cunning arrangements for corporation rule. This is shown in the manner of the choice of candidates and platforms. A popular majority of a Party does not indicate such an approval of its platform. The American parties always have a multitude of issues in order to attract all sorts of votes. And in America more than anywhere else do the parties state their issues unclearly and inject strong personal elements in the campaign.

No party, let alone a revolutionary proletarian party, can make any constitutional amendments, since it can scarcely ever get a two-third majority in both Houses. Furthermore, the branch of government which is potentially nearest being under party control through frequent elections, the House of Representatives, is the weakest.

CONCLUSION

We have seen that the American Government—the world's greatest "democracy"—was originated and organized by the

"Fathers" in the interests of the propertied class. Leaving out of consideration, for the moment, the organic unfitness of the parliamentary state as a means of securing working class liberation, and not even taking into account the capitalist control of the army, navy, police, press, church, schools, and a horde of auxiliary organizations of oppression, we see that the American Government has especially perfected means of crushing the workers' will. These are:

1. A rigid, practically unamendable constitution.
2. A judicial oligarchy endowed with unlimited powers.
3. A complex and most confusing system of checks and balances resulting in a diffusion of power and absence of even formal direct and definite responsibility to the voting masses.
4. A vicious Congressional committee system calculated to make impossible effective protest by a minority party.
5. A party system especially fit for blurring the class struggle and particularly adaptable to serving corporations.

The Communist Party must acquaint the working masses with the above conditions. We are now afforded abundant occasion to draw such lessons from the daily life and struggles of the workers. It is up to us to make the most of these opportunities.

Immediate Struggles and Immediate Demands

From Theses on Tactics, Adopted by the Third Congress.

The development of the communist parties can only be achieved through a fighting policy. *Even the smallest communist units must not rest content with mere propaganda. In all proletarian mass organizations they must constitute the vanguard, which must teach the backward, vacillating masses how to fight, by formulating practical plans for direct action, and by urging the workers to make a stand for the necessities of life.* Only in this manner will Communists be able to reveal to the masses the treacherous character of all non-communist parties. Only in case they prove able to lead the practical struggle of the proletariat, only in case they can promote these conflicts, will the Communists succeed in winning over great masses of the proletariat to the struggle for the dictatorship.

The entire propaganda and agitation as well as the other work of the Communist parties, must be based on the conception that no lasting betterment of the position of the proletariat is possible under capitalism, and that the overthrow of the bourgeoisie is a prerequisite for the achievement of such betterment and the rebuilding of the social structure destroyed by capitalism. This conception, however, must not find expression in the abandonment of all participation in the proletarian struggle for actual and immediate necessities of life, until such a time as the proletariat will be able to attain them through its own dictatorship. Social-democracy

is consciously deceiving the masses. when, in the period of capitalist disintegration, when capitalism is unable to assure to the workers even the subsistence of well fed slaves, it has nothing better to offer than the old social-democratic program of peaceful reforms to be achieved by peaceful means within the bankrupt capitalist system. Not only is capitalism, in the period of its disintegration, unable to assure to the workers decent conditions of life, but the social-democrats and reformists of all lands are also continually demonstrating that they are unwilling to put up any fight, even for the most modest demands contained in their own programs. The demand for socialization or nationalization of the most important industries is nothing but another such deception of the working masses. *Not only did the centrists mislead the masses by trying to persuade them that nationalization alone, without the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, would deprive capitalism of the chief industries, but they also endeavored to divert the workers from the real and live struggle for their immediate needs, by raising their hopes of a gradual seizure of industry, to be followed by "systematic" economic reconstruction.* Thus they have reverted to the minimum social-democratic program of the reform of capitalism, which once an illusion, has now become an open counter-revolutionary deception. The theory prevailing among a portion of the centrists, that the program of the nationaliza-

tion of the coal or any other industry is based on the Laskian theory of the concentration of all the energies of the proletariat on a single demand, in order to use it as a lever for revolutionary action, which in its development would lead to a struggle for power, is nothing but empty words. The suffering of the working class in every country is so intense, that it is impossible to direct the struggle against these blows, which are coming thick and fast, into narrow doctrinaire channels. *On the contrary, it is essential to make use of all the economic needs of the masses, as issues in the revolutionary struggles, which, when united, form the flood of the social revolution.* For this struggle, the Communist Parties have no minimum program for the strengthening of this reeling world structure within the system of capitalism. The destruction of this system is the chief aim and immediate task of the parties. But in order to achieve this task, the Communist Parties must put forward demands, and they must fight with the masses for their fulfilment, regardless of whether they are in keeping with the profit system of the capitalist class or not.

What the Communist Parties have to consider is not whether capitalist industry is able to continue to exist and compete, but rather whether the proletariat has reached the limit of its endurance. If these communist demands are in accord with the immediate needs of the wide proletarian masses, if these masses are convinced that they cannot exist without the realization of these demands, the struggle for these demands will become an issue in the struggle for power. *The alternative offered by the Communist International in place of the minimum program of the reformists and centrists is: the struggle for the concrete need of the proletariat and demands, which, in their application, undermine the power of the bourgeoisie, organize the proletariat, form the transition to proletarian dictatorship, even if the latter have not yet grasped the meaning of such proletarian dictatorship.*

Broadening the Fight

As the struggle for these demands embraces ever-growing masses, as the needs of the masses clash with the needs of capitalist society, the workers will realize that capitalism must die if they are to live. The realization of this fact is the basis of the will to fight for the dictatorship. It is the task of the Communist Parties to widen, to deepen and to co-ordinate these struggles which have been brought into being by the formulation of concrete demands. As the partial struggles of isolated groups of workers gradually merge into a general struggle of labor versus capital, so the Communist Party must also alter its watchword, which would be—"uncompromising overthrow of the enemy." In formulating their partial demands the Communist Parties must take heed that these demands, based on the deeply rooted needs of the masses, are such as will organize the masses and not merely lead them into the struggle. All concrete watchwords, originating in the economic needs of the workers, must be assimilated to the struggle for the control of produc-

tion, which must not assume the form of a bureaucratic organization of social economy under capitalism, but of an organization fighting against capitalism through workers' committees as well as through the revolutionary trade-unions.

It is only through the establishment of such workers' committees and their co-ordination according to branches and centres of industry, that Communists can prevent the splitting up of the masses by the social-democrats and the trade-union leaders. The workers' committees will be able to fulfil this role only if they are born in an economic struggle in the interests of wide masses of workers, and provided they succeed in uniting all the revolutionary sections of the proletariat—the communist party, the revolutionary workers and those trade-unions which are going through a process of revolutionary development.

Every objection to the establishment of such partial demands, every accusation of reformism in connection with these partial struggles, is an outcome of the same incapacity to grasp the live issues of revolutionary action which manifested itself in the opposition of some communist groups to participation in trade union activities and parliamentary action. Communists should not rest content with teaching the proletariat its ultimate aims, but should lend impetus to every practical move leading the proletariat into the struggle for these ultimate aims. How inadequate the objections to partial demands are and how divorced they are from the needs of revolutionary life, is best exemplified by the fact that even the small organizations formed by the so-called "left" communists for the propagation of pure doctrines have seen the necessity of formulating partial demands, in order to attract larger sections of workers than they have hitherto been able to. They have also been obliged to take part in the struggle of wider masses of workers in order to influence them. The chief revolutionary characteristic of the present period lies in the fact that the most modest demands of the working masses are incompatible with the existence of capitalist society. Therefore the struggle, even for these very modest demands, is bound to develop into a struggle for Communism. . . .

Preparing for the Struggle.

The character of the transition period makes it imperative for all Communist Parties to be thoroughly prepared for the struggle. Each separate struggle may lead to the struggle for power. Preparedness can only be achieved by giving to the entire Party agitation the character of a vehement attack against capitalist society. The Party must also come into contact with wide masses of workers, and must make it plain to them that they are being led by a vanguard, whose real aim is—the conquest of power. The Communist press must not consist of organs which publish theoretical proofs that communism is right. They must be clarion calls of the proletarian revolution. . . .