



The COMMUNIST

Official Organ of the Communist Party of America

(Section of the Communist International)

FORMED AT THE JOINT UNITY CONVENTION of the UNITED COMMUNIST PARTY
and the COMMUNIST PARTY OF AMERICA.

VOLUME 1, No. 4

OCTOBER, 1921

PRICE 10 CENTS

CONTENTS

	Page		Page
Mingo.....	By Thorold Rogers 1	The Party and the Negro Struggle	
The Task of the Hour.....	By A. Raphael 3		By John Bruce and J. P. Collins 18
Communism and the Irish Workers		Winning the Masses.....	By J. P. Collins 20
	By R. Ganly and J. P. Collins 7	The American Chambers of Commerce.....	By Roger B. Nelson 23
Our Agrarian Problem.....	By H. R. Harrow 9	Legal and Illegal Activity.....	25
Have We Retreated?.....	By Roger B. Nelson 11	At the Congress of Red Labor.....	By Joseph Dixon 27
Soviets or Parliament.....	By David Damon 15	The Present Moment.....	29
		Review of the Month.....	31

MINGO

By THOROLD ROGERS

WHEN miners strike there is fight. And when miners fight there is war! A strike of the miners is not a folded-arm, benefit-collecting affair. It is a war—bitter class war!

Armies, thugs, gunmen, detectives, courts, trusts, and labor bureaucrats—all have bowed to the dauntless miners in action. Despite the Wilsons, Mitchells, Whites, and Lewises, the U. M. W. has participated in many an heroic struggle. Cabin Creek, Ludlow and Mingo are milestones in the annals of the class struggle in America.

The Contending Forces

For over twenty years West Virginia has been the scene of a fierce struggle between coal-barons and miners. The U. M. W., one of the largest labor unions in the world, has time and again tried to win a hold among the one hundred thousand miners of the State. In this effort the union was thwarted by the corporations and the State and Federal governments. Today, less than half the mine workers are unionized. Furthermore, the outlook for organization is not bright.

The most vicious labor-crushing combinations run the mines of West Virginia. Gary, the steel king, and Atterbury, a railroad lord, own most of the mining area. Morgan,

of course, also has his place here. Our United States Solicitor General, James M. Beck, and the Secretary of the Treasury, A. W. Mellon, are heavy stockholders. The situation affords striking proof of the unity of the capitalist class executive power with the stock exchange.

Field of Battle

West Virginia is the home of the rule of bludgeon and gun. The mayors, magistrates and public officials are open strike-breakers. The governmental machinery, the homes, the stores, schools, hospitals, churches and press are owned outright by the coal magnates. Even a New York Tribune correspondent had all his work censored by a representative of "Logan County's Army of Defense." So intense has been the struggle, that the notorious Baldwin-Felts gunmen have been called in by the operators. These armed thugs are today the guardians of "law and order." They collect rents, deport workers, beat up miners, and act as general hangmen for the coal-barons.

There is nothing at which the capitalists will stop in their attempts to crush the miners. All workers' organizations are honeycombed with spies. The "Yellow Dog Contract" is employed to stamp out the slightest manifestation of unionism. West Virginia is a veritable Gibraltar of open-scabbery.

Arson, pillage, murder, deportation, jails and injunctions are the order of the day. The workers are met at every turn by clubs, bayonets and machine guns.

The Issue

The fundamental issue in this bitter struggle is the right to organize. The fight is a fight against inhuman working conditions, against brutally degrading exploitation. The struggles are not revolutionary despite the fact that they now and then break out into open armed conflict. Many conditions, peculiar to the locality, have played an important part in intensifying the contest. The mines are relatively new and the laborers have in the main been drawn from the mountaineers. For decades the miners have handled arms. And they handle them well. They are nearly all natives of Welsh and Scotch ancestry; the ancestry running back for more than a century. In so far as actual class-consciousness is concerned, the workers are even less developed than the average mass of city laborers. These are the factors that add fury to the combat.

On The Firing Line

Strikes are not accidents but regularly recurring incidents in this region. The local conditions coupled with the character of the capitalist opposition only add fuel to the flames. In July, 1920 the U. M. W. declared a strike in Mingo. What followed is now well known. Sid Hatfield, chief of police, friend of the miners, was foully murdered by the gunmen. The strikers were beaten and clubbed. Arrests, indictments, wholesale evictions, murdering of workers, pillaging by the armed corporation thugs, and starvation for the wives and children of the miners came in the wake of the strike order.

For months the war went on. In spite of their leaders and the tremendous odds against them the workers revolted. The last march was only a repetition of the events of 1919. All the efforts of the miners for compromise had failed. Governor Morgan turned down their request for a conference with the operators. He turned a deaf ear to their pleas for a special session of the legislature. Of course, the reason for his conduct was obvious. The Governor would not dare antagonize the corporations. He appropriated the plans of the coal-barons lock, stock and barrel. Under no circumstances would the State's chief executive do anything which might be construed as a recognition of the union. President Harding was appealed to, but it was all in vain.

From the hills of West Virginia and across the boundary of Kentucky the miners came streaming to the rescue of their enslaved brothers of Mingo. Six thousand gathered for a struggle along the Spruce Fork Ridge in Logan county. They were met by the capitalists' hired murderers cloaked in State authority. The deputy sheriffs, chosen by and in the pay of the operators, were armed to the teeth in defense of

bourgeois law and order—oppression of the working class. Lives were lost and many were wounded.

Then came Harding's answer to the workers' appeal. Federal troops, airplanes, gas bombs and machine guns were rushed to crush the miners. Profits and the closed scab system were in danger. The workers had to be crushed.

Safe for Capitalist Democracy

It was the Federal troops that saved the hired thugs and White Guard rabble from the wrath of the miners. The workers were disarmed. They were driven home—a magnificent tribute to the prowess of gatling guns, airplanes and artillery.

Now, "Justice" must have her way! Hundreds of miners have already been indicted for murder and "insurrection," hundreds of workers are to be jailed. Anent the armed thugs—not a word! They must be free to maintain the capitalist dictatorship.

God's own country, West Virginia, a colony of the coal barons, has been made safe for capitalist democracy—working class slavery. More workers' blood must be spilled! Again evictions, deportations, pillage, arson and murder! More starvation for the women and children of the working class! Thus will it be until the American workers learn to speak the language their exploiters and oppressors understand best.

Lessons of the Struggle

There is "peace" at Mingo. A capitalist peace. An armed peace. No issue has been settled, though the workers have again met with defeat. New battles are in preparation.

The fight at Mingo was more than an ordinary strike. It was a struggle between the largest labor union in America and one of the most powerful labor oppressors, the steel trust. Besides, the working class is today everywhere on the defensive. Therefore, the slightest recognition of the miners' union would have been a victory for the whole working class. Hence the despatch with which the capitalist bloodhounds were unleashed at the miners. Thus the arrogant tone of the bourgeois press; the swift "justice" of their courts, the great military display, and the wave of capitalist solidarity in behalf of "law and order."

Mingo offers many valuable lessons to the workers of America. (1) The role of the capitalist state in the class struggle seldom appeared more brutally naked. The County, State and Federal governments were in the open service of the exploiters—an open attack on the workers. Our captains of industry and finance and the real State executives are of one and the same junta.

(2) The capitalist class will not hesitate to accept aid from labor leaders. But the moment these leaders have rendered their services, the bourgeoisie will discard them. Should the exploiters have any doubt as to the further possibility of receiving aid from the workers' spokesmen they

will make haste to send them to the gallows. The indictment of C. F. Keeney and Fred Mooney, district officials of the U. M. W., for murder, offers cruel proof of this. These leaders tried their best to hold the workers in check. Yet the capitalists demand their heads.

(3) Our masters are prepared to crush ruthlessly any attempt of the workers to secure the slightest improvement in their conditions—let alone any effort of a political nature. The entire capitalist class is bent upon driving the workers into virtual slavery. Class solidarity is at its height with the bourgeoisie.

(4) A defeat of any one section of the working class is a defeat for the whole working class, since the exploiters are thus encouraged to intensify their oppression. Working class solidarity is now more necessary than ever before.

(5) All the basic industries of the country are in the hands of one group of capitalists. An alliance of miners and railroad workers, with a view of organizing and uniting with the steel workers is an immediate necessity. Otherwise the workers will surely go to the wall.

The Party's Task

We must bring these lessons home to the workers. We must not allow Mingo to be blotted out of the workers' memory so readily. Propaganda alone, however, is insuffi-

cient. The Party must propose concrete, tangible plans which will draw as many workers as possible into action.

Our nuclei in the unions should initiate a movement to bring the pressure of all organized labor on the Federal government in order to rid West Virginia of the Baldwin-Felts gunmen. The union bureaucracy must be driven into the struggle.

We should strive to have the rail workers' unions refuse to move thugs and strike breakers into West Virginia.

Country-wide mass meetings will promote working class solidarity and tend to slacken the pace of capitalist suppression. The Mingo struggle must be correlated with the struggle against the whole open shop—open slavery—campaign. Financial assistance must be rendered to the miners by the rest of the workers. Otherwise the Mingo miners are doomed.

Mingo offers the Party an excellent opportunity for propaganda and activity. The situation is not revolutionary. Yet, the chances for drawing the masses into the struggle, for solidifying the workers are numerous.

Our slogans in this campaign must be: Disarm the Baldwin-Felts thugs! Away with the corporations' hired gunmen! The miners must have their union! Stand by the miners of Mingo!

The Task of the Hour

By A. RAPHAEL

THE question of Unity is no longer a fighting issue in our ranks. It is now our duty to take stock of our strength, to survey the class-struggle in the United States and outline for the Party a course of immediate action.

The situation in the United States is such that only those organizations having within its ranks large masses count in the class struggle. It cannot be denied that the Communist Party of America practically does not exist as a factor in the class-struggle. The truth of this statement can be inferred from the fact that the slogans, appeals and proclamations of the former two communist parties never caused even a ripple on the surface of the class struggle. We called upon the workers to boycott the last national elections. We called upon the workers to demand the recognition of Soviet Russia. We called upon the unemployed to organize. We agitated in favor of the Red Labor Union International. What has become of all this? What is there to show that our propaganda has not been in vain?

The Problem

Theoretically it may be admitted that our agitation has not been wasted altogether; that it has succeeded in creating among some workers a sympathetic attitude toward a few of our slogans. But sympathies alone are not sufficient. What we want is *action*. In order to get that, those workers that respond sympathetically to our calls and slogans must be organized. Should we, for example, succeed in making a worker feel that Soviet Russia ought to be recognized it is our task to have him do something in favor of such a policy. Should we make a worker believe in the Red as against the Amsterdam International, it is then our task to have him *act* upon this belief.

Let us consider the problem from the viewpoint of a worker who has been converted to one or another of our immediate slogans. What should such a worker do to make his sympathies count? Join the underground Communist Party? This only convinced Communists will do.

4
As the working class grows into political maturity, individuals and groups of convinced Communists will surely find their way into the ranks of the Party. But the working class is not divided into communists and anti-communists: Between the two there are many stages of development imperceptibly merging. The group of workers we are particularly interested in is the one that, in its daily struggles, reacts favorably toward our immediate slogans and tactics. This is the group that we usually designate as communist sympathizers, though in reality this group is seldom aware of the fact that it sympathizes with communist policies. It is this group of workers that offers the most fertile field for our activities. We must organize this group if our Party is to break the isolation in which it finds itself, and become a factor in the class-struggle. The problem, as it presents itself to us at this moment, is: *How can the Communist Party, an outlawed and underground organization, get in touch with the sympathetic and benevolently-neutral elements of the working class? How can the Communist Party make them function in an organized manner under its control and leadership?*

It is only recently that our Party has begun to be aware of the implications of this problem. All along we have been working contentedly on the theory that by spreading general communist propaganda and building up active nuclei in the labor movement, the desired end will be achieved. This is a very simple theory. What has been its result? Almost complete failure. It is high time for us to evaluate our experiences. After nearly two years of existence our Party numbers only ten thousand. It is obvious there is something wrong with the Party. The factional struggles and splits do not explain the weakness and the sterility of our Party life. On the contrary, we have had many splits and barren factional conflicts because we were weak and isolated. Had we been closer to the masses and actively engaged in *their* fights, we would have been spared the misfortune of many. The trouble is that we were *too much underground*, spiritually as well as organizationally. It is true we could not avoid our Party's going underground. We were driven to it in self-protection against the brutal onslaught of the capitalist government. But it was our duty to keep above ground spiritually and politically. This we failed to do. We reasoned in a metaphysical manner. Yes, yes and no. We created for ourselves an artificial alternative. We said, "Either we remain legal and betray communism, or save our communist souls and go underground." We did not see then that we could be above ground and under ground at the same time.

Coming to Life

After all our blunders and failures, and with the helpful guidance of the Communist International, we are beginning to see the light. *In order to end the unbearable*

isolation of our Party and bring it into direct touch with the masses, we must create a legal organization actively participating in every phase of the class-struggle—on the industrial field, parliamentary field; on a platform that will meet the requirements of the law, as actually enforced by the ruling class. We must have an organization co-existing with the Communist Party and led by it. Such an organization will provide room not only for communists in the strict Party sense of the word, but also for the wider circles of workers who will stand with us and follow our immediate platform and tactics. This will give the underground Communist Party an arm with which to reach the deep layers of backward workers and shake them out of their lethargy. It will also serve as a sensitive transmission apparatus between the revolutionary vanguard of the proletariat and its less conscious and as yet non-revolutionary masses.

A Pressing Need

In order to educate, organize and train the workers for the conquest of political power, the Party must actively participate in the economic struggles, election campaigns, and be present in all fields where a clash of class-interests may occur. Had our Party desired to or been in a position to participate in the last Congressional elections, the problem of creating a legal organization would have confronted us a year ago. Congress and the rest of the machinery of the capitalist state are still in existence. Unless we adopt the syndicalist attitude toward parliamentarism, we are bound to participate in the elections. How are we going to do it? In a country like ours, whose political life is highly organized, where party ties and party loyalty play so important a part in politics, the only way for us to make a successful start on the parliamentary field is through launching a legal political organization embracing all those that respond to our immediate platform and policies. This may not be apparent to our incorrigible "leftists" who would gladly do away with all parliamentary activities, were it not for the Communist International. The next best thing to suit the anti-parliamentary tastes of our "leftists" would be setting up for each election campaign a temporary committee to go out of existence on the morrow of the elections.

Those of our Party who take this matter seriously realize that a campaign committee not only spreads ideas but also creates for itself good will and sympathy. Only fools will throw away this valuable political asset by disbanding their campaign-machinery after the elections. The Communist Party must consolidate and capitalize these sympathies. The Party should strengthen its ties with the voters, by keeping up connections with them

all the year round, by gathering around itself the sympathizers created during election-intervals—in short, by *building a legal, fighting organization on the parliamentary field.*

On the Political Horizon

The problem of creating a legal political organization, in addition to the underground communist organization, must be considered also in the light of the impending new formations and alignments that are clearly visible on the political horizon of the American class-struggle. Objectively, we have all the necessary conditions for the formation of new political parties speaking in the name of the working class and practicing the policies of social-reformism, social-patriotism, socialist left-wingism, etc. As the American working masses come into political maturity the various movements already on foot for the creation of a Labor Party, a Farmer-Labor combination, and a "new" Socialist Party will get fresh impetus and strength. Whatever be the ultimate success of all these movements, it is reasonably certain that they will retard the immediate growth of the Communist Party of America, by providing an outlet for the growing dissatisfaction of the working masses of America. It is also reasonably certain that the Communist Party of America, as long as it is compelled to remain underground, will not be in a position to successfully challenge the aspirations of these new organizations for working-class-leadership. Only by meeting these organizations on their own ground can such an attempt be made and successfully carried out. This means creating a legal political organization.

The Industrial Field

A similar situation prevails on the industrial field. As long as we limit our industrial activities to building up communist nuclei in the labor unions, we don't feel very strongly the need of a legal organization. But the moment we begin to understand that the regeneration of the American labor movement is a long process, we learn that this task requires not only skillful propaganda and agitation based upon the daily needs and grievances of the working masses but also the organization of all the progressive and revolutionary elements within the unions under communist leadership. That we cannot utilize our underground organization for this purpose goes without saying. Consequently, some sort of a legal organization will have to be created by us, an organization wide enough to admit every member of a labor union who is sufficiently conscious to follow the leadership of our Party in its fight against the reactionary bureaucracy in the labor movement.

As a matter of fact, such organizations are springing up by themselves, as, for instance, the Shop-Delegates movement in the East, the Rank and File movement in

the West, and the Trade Union Educational League in the A. F. of L. These indicate an objective necessity. Unless we are satisfied to let these progressive and revolutionary elements in the unions fall under the control and leadership of anarchists, syndicalists, labor and social politicians, we will have to take the initiative in organizing and unifying these elements ourselves, thereby securing for our Party control and leadership. In other words, the moment we attempt to get, as a Party, into the actual fray of class-conflicts, we shall be driven by the logic of events to create legal organizations of various kinds.

A Strong Organization

At this point, some comrades may say: Well, suppose all this is true. Why can't we have *many* and all kinds of legal organizations? One on the industrial field, one on the parliamentary field, one for education, one for defense, and so on. Must we have *one* legal organization embracing *all* these activities?

The answer is that once you grant the necessity for the various legal organizations, not as makeshifts or overnight affairs but as solid, permanent organizations, you admit the necessity for *one* legal organization. Once these organizations are formed, they will, by the very nature of their common activities as well as affiliations, tend to amalgamate. This is only a matter of time, and no fears or theories can prevent it. All these separate organizations would consist of practically the same human material. They would be dealing with the same problems of the class-struggle, only with different aspects. From time to time they would pool their material and moral resources for common action. They will therefore be forming *one legal organization*. The question of many legal organizations as against one has no significance. It is much better for the Party to go into legal work with plan and foresight. We should not be drifting along without compass and rudder.

The "Whole Truth"

The opponents of a legal organization fear that it will not be able to tell the workers the "whole truth"; that by giving them half-truths, it will be deceiving them.

This view logically leads one to oppose not only a legal organization but also every kind of legal activity. How can the Party publish legal papers without betraying its program? How can Party speakers appear on legal platforms without turning traitors to the Social Revolution?

What do we mean by telling the workers the whole truth? At every stage of the class-struggle the workers must be told all that will, on the one hand, help the successful conclusion of their *immediate* struggles; and, on the other hand, contribute towards widening the class-struggle along the lines of the program of the Communist International.

The whole truth does not mean telling the workers, at every turn of the game, that the seizure of power will have to be accomplished by force of arms. The injection of the idea of armed force, whether as a means of defense or offense, at the *wrong* psychological moment can only harm the revolutionary movement. There are stages in the class-struggle that do not call for the introduction of the idea of armed force. *Telling the workers the whole truth about a given situation does not mean giving the workers the full Communist program.* A Communist program is not a Bible to be brought to the workers always in full, with all its implications. It is a guide to action for the advanced guard of the working class—The Communist Party. It is to be applied in practice according to the demands of every particular situation.

Should there arise a situation in which the legal organization would not be able to tell the "whole truth" without endangering its existence, it would be the task of the underground organization to do so. That's what the Communist International meant by imposing upon its affiliated bodies the duty to *combine* legal with illegal work. The centre of gravity of our activities is not fixed. It is constantly shifting; sometimes in the direction of the legal organization, sometimes in the direction of the underground organization. This centre of gravity is at all times determined by the ever-changing realities of the actual class-struggle.

No Liquidation

If our tactics should prove correct, our slogans appealing, and our propaganda effective, the legal organization will become a power. This does not imply the liquidation of the underground organization.

We should not, like the "Socialists" or Centrists misunderstand the relations between legal and illegal work. With Hillquit, for instance, it is one or the other. With him, it is all legal work. He fears that the illegal organization will make impossible the existence of the legal. Since he prefers the latter, he is opposed to the former. But why should there be an "either—or" for communists? It is both that we can and must have. After the working-class of the United States shall have seized the powers of State and established its dictatorship, there will no longer be a need for an underground organization. Even then it will not be liquidated. It will continue to exist no longer as an outlaw, but as the ruling Party in the Proletarian State.

Some believe that the Communist Party is, by its very nature, an underground organization. This is not true. Most of the Communist Parties of Europe are legal and function above ground. True, all these Parties keep in readiness an underground organization—apparatus for activities that are outlawed. The *bulk* of their work is *above* ground.

In practice there may arise difficulties and dangers in combining legal with illegal work. What of that? The road

to communism is full of difficulties and dangers. Are we going to give up the fight for communism because of that? It is our urgent task to overcome these dangers.

Our underground organization, as an organization, will remain intact. But its functions will undergo a change. It will no longer publish all its literature under ground. It will no longer distribute this literature through the outlawed organization. All these will be done by the legal organization. The Communist Party, as such will address the working class of America only when the legal organization will not be able to do so. The underground organization will remain without change, except that, instead of functioning in a vacuum, as it does now, the Communist Party of America will be working in a living, fighting mass-organization, in every unit of which there will be a communist nucleus working under the centralized control of the regular Party organization. There is, then, no danger that the Communist Party of America will be liquidated.

Party Control Assured

The Communist Party may be confronted with the danger of losing control over the legal organization. Theoretically, such a danger is always present. It does us no harm to keep in mind its possibility. But this theoretically possible danger should not serve as an excuse for opposing a legal organization. The question of control is a matter of political leadership. If the Communist Party will be theoretically sound and alive to the real needs of the working class, its policies, tactics and slogans will always appeal to the masses, particularly so to those within the legal organization.

The question of leadership and control is also a question of organization. Considering the matter from this angle, we must remember that the legal organization is to be created by the Party. This is a sufficient insurance against the danger of losing control at the outset. Furthermore, as many of our members as possible should actively participate in the life of the legal organization. This will insure party-control for a very long time to come.

As the legal organization develops, the ranks of the Party organization proper will grow. They will win over the most active, conscious and revolutionary elements of the legal organization. This being so, the Party will have no difficulty in retaining its position of leadership. Especially will this be so if we succeed in exposing the weakness and revolutionary impotence of Socialist Left-Wingism and Centrism.

The building of an open political organization is the task of the hour. This will end our isolation and political sterility. It will make us a Party of action, a real revolutionary Party.

Communism and the Irish Workers

By ROBERT GANLY and J. P. COLLINS

Clearing the Ground

ONE of the most difficult problems confronting our party is the question of getting a firmer foothold amongst the native and English speaking elements. The Irish workers are a considerable and aggressive portion of this section of the working class. They are active in politics and in the labor movement. They have been, and to a great extent still are, the very backbone of reaction, the support of the church, the chief instruments of the misleaders of labor and the shock troops of the government machine. We must win them over to our point of view. Those who cannot be brought into our ranks must be neutralized as far as possible and rendered useless to our enemies.

In planning our method of approach it is important that we understand the civilization and background of that section of the workers we have to deal with. We must understand the causes of the mental outlook of any particular section of the workers, for only then can we properly understand how to treat them. The Irish masses, especially in times gone by, have been an agricultural people. The very nature of the agrarian surroundings, removed them from modern industrial, literary and cultural centres and made them backward. Due to the savage persecutions of imperialist England which scented danger to its power unless the Gaels were eliminated, the latter emigrated to various countries and especially to the United States.

The loyalty of the Irish to the Catholic church is not only due to their peasant life but also the fact that shortly after the break between Rome and the English Church the Irish clergy remained loyal to Rome. At that time many of the clergy valiantly took the side of the people and fought with them against the English reign of terror. In fact, so great was the animosity of the English government to those clergymen who took the side of the people that at one time there was laid on the head of a priest a price equal to that given as a reward for the killing of a wolf-dog.

Upon arrival in this country, they found comparatively good conditions and secured land without much trouble. The way was as free to almost all avenues of life. The labor movement was weak. The radical movement was hardly of any significance. These were the conditions the Irish immigrants met with in the United States. Naturally their first contact was with the church, and being extremely conservative, yet ingenious and speaking the language of the land, they soon pushed their way to the

front in American life. Those who arrived fell into the hands of the corrupt clergy or the tricky politicians of their own race to be used for the support of capitalism.

New Roads

Only lately, as a result of the intensification of the class struggle, have there developed thousands of Irish radicals. Until the outbreak of the last war for liberation in Ireland the Irish masses were in a profound slumber—firmly in the grip of reaction. The struggle in Ireland stirred them up to their very depths. They had almost lost their national ideals among the English speaking elements. But at the clarion call from Ireland, they drew together again and gigantic Irish organizations like the A. A. R. I. R. sprang up. In a short time there were enrolled about three million members.

The A. A. R. I. R. grew out of a split in the ranks of the Friends of Irish Freedom—Judge Cohalan's faction—due to disagreements over policy. The Irish masses accepted the idea of rebellion and armed insurrection to free themselves. They hate imperialism as exemplified by England and sympathize largely with Soviet Russia especially because of the policy of the latter toward struggling small nations.

The Irish labor movement developed considerably during the past decade. Rebellion is the motto of Irish labor. These factors produced among Irish workers a frame of mind favorable to new ideas and interpretations. The time is now ripe for drawing the Irish workers closer to us; for imbuing them with our interpretation of the struggle. Now is the opportunity for the class-conscious Irish workers to fight for influence over and leadership of their kindred in this country. The latter must be brought closer and closer to communism. This cannot be done, however, by our old Utopian tactics, the application of the same yardstick to all problems. We must give proper consideration to the ideology of the masses; find out the points upon which we can draw them towards us and refrain from pressing issues which, at this time, would drive them away from us into the hands of the reactionaries.

The Irish Republic

There are activities in the struggle against England which we can perfectly endorse. One amongst these is the struggle against British Imperialism. All forces that struggle against imperialism are allies of the revolution,

for the struggle is one by sections of the oppressed against capitalist tyranny. We should heartily endorse and aid in every way possible the proposition of Irish independence and the Irish Republic. We may put forward our idea of the Republic—a Workers' Republic—of Industrial and community councils, a Republic where the evils of capitalism are eliminated and all the fruit of labor goes to the people who produce. This is the Republic that Irish labor wants. Therefore we should introduce the question as to whether a capitalist republic or a Workers' Republic would be the better for Ireland. In the labor unions we can forcefully point out that Irish Labor is genuinely anti-capitalist and organized on industrial lines. They have many real working class leaders.

As to Religion

We may make a serious mistake in the question of religion. This mistake can be especially fatal if committed in dealing with the Irish section of the working class in the United States. It is not our mission under capitalism to wage an aggressive campaign for eradicating religious superstitions. It may take us many years after we are in power to accomplish this. Our entire strength at the present time must be concentrated in drawing the workers into the class struggle. While we, in our own ranks, should not tolerate any one who is not clear on the matter of religion, it would be bad tactics to concentrate upon the solution of a problem which arises out of the general ignorance that capitalism imposes on the masses. This can only be solved when the social machinery is in our hands. What we are mainly concerned with, at present, is not the doctrine of religion itself but rather the prestige and influence of the church organization and clergy. We should, in dealing with the more ignorant, keep, as far as we possibly can, out of the mire of religion. We should expose the character of the personnel of the church organization, the political intrigues and wars conducted by the Vatican, its complete failure during the world war, its subservience to capital and the aristocracy. The tacit support given to England by the Pope must be brought home to the Irish workers. Such slogans as: "We will take our religion from Rome but not our politics" can be utilized to great advantage. These should be encouraged as they breed a spirit of independence of thought on political questions regardless of the point of view as to the clergy.

To expose the priests who take the part of Capital is another valuable tactic in undermining church influence. Criticism of individual clergymen goes a long way towards destroying the faith of the people in what they stand for. Another valuable tactic in fighting the influ-

ence of the clergy is to question their interpretation of the Bible, for the Bible could more easily be interpreted in favor of Communism than in favor of capitalism. In order to get in touch with the masses the Communists must seriously weigh the habits of the people surrounding them. No Communist worthy of his salt will, for the sake of his personal feelings, disassociate himself from contact with the mass of his fellow-men in the class struggle. In many sections of this country, particularly the rural in the South, the church offers the best point of contact. Churches are used for discussions and lectures. Communists should go where the masses are for the sake of Communism. It is our duty to do everything to extricate our class from the influence of our enemies, or at least to neutralize the mass and make it unreceptive to sermons in behalf of capitalism.

By drawing the workers more and more into the class struggle, the clergy's character and opposition to the interests of labor will be made evident. Not by attacking religion directly but by pointing out the wrong use to which it is put by those who speak in its name will we stir up thought among the masses and bring them nearer to us. In winning over the peasants in Russia the Bolsheviks went amongst them—where they could be found. They did not tell the peasants they were atheists. Neither did they tell them that they are against the monarchy. They told them they are against the landlords and for the land going to the peasants. It is such tactics that won the day. Even today the Soviet Government, very wisely so, has no crushing policy against religion. The Soviet Government subtly undermines and circumscribes it. Priests who display a counter-revolutionary character are eliminated. Ideas and ideals can't be wiped off the earth. They must be replaced by better ones through experience and education. *To be with the masses means to speak about things that interest them in the way they understand, giving our interpretation and gradually raising the workers' understanding to our view.* To do our work more effectively we need a special organization for this purpose—an organization composed of Irish workers. We must produce a live Communist Irish literature. Only such an organization can fight for leadership of and recognition amongst the Irish workers. Our members, as well as the Irish radicals, must be gotten together into such an organization. No matter what happens in Ireland, whether peace be concluded or no, the tactics proposed above are the practical method of approaching this element, of drawing it into the class struggle.

Our Agrarian Problem

By H. R. HARROW

THE development of Agriculture in the United States has created a situation which it is neither wise nor safe for the Communist Party to ignore. Since the earliest colony was established on the Atlantic coast and spread like a fan over the entire continent, American Agriculture has been conducted by individuals. Individualism has persisted in Agriculture against all the forces of a more and more concentrated industrial development. Resources of new land, modern machinery, science and credit have been exhausted one after another in the struggle for economic independence. There is no other resource in sight. The capitalist imperialists are awake to the approaching menace of farm bankruptcy. They sense its danger to their very existence and are formulating definite policies which will separate the rural masses from the city proletariat. The Communist Party must adapt itself to the immediate need of unmasking the hypocritical exploiters of the farmers. It must build a policy to fit the conditions which actually exist throughout the agricultural sections of America. Only by understanding the complex strata which make up the whole Agrarian mass can we hope to understand their reactions and lead each element to its position in the Proletarian Revolution.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

1. The Era of Colonization

The development of Agriculture in the United States is most easily followed by dividing it into five chronological periods. The first of these extends over the period of Colonization and through the Revolutionary war to 1783. During this period the early colonists got a foothold along the Atlantic coast. They imitated and improved the methods of the Indians. Land was cheap and labor dear. The indentured servants after paying off their passage money struck out and cleared freeholds for themselves. Land tenure varied somewhat in the different colonies. In New England a semi-communal system was originally tried. In New York and Pennsylvania the land system resembled somewhat the old feudal system. But these land systems were very loose in their control of the colonists, who became more and more dependent upon their own ability to clear and operate a farm. The landing of the first cargo of Negro slaves in Jamestown, Virginia, in 1609, solved the labor problem and changed the whole type of farming for the South. At the time of the Revolution there were already large

tobacco plantations of several hundred acres operated by slave labor.

2. Western Expansion

With the nationalizing of the western lands after the revolution the period of western expansion began. Land became a marketable commodity and was held in "fee simple." The original policy of the government to dispose of the national lands at a few dollars an acre resulted in the formation of land companies. A period of land speculation followed. This condition was brought to an end by the passage of the "Homestead Act" in 1862. It restricted the granting of public lands to actual settlers. Under the terms of this Act the settler was to gain 160 acres by living on and improving the land. The movement West continued as the settlers pushed on into the plain country in their prairie schooners. With the opening of the Erie canal in 1825 the stream flowed North and then West. During this period of expansion cotton played an important role in deciding the development of the South. With the invention of the Cotton Gin in 1793 by Eli Whitney the textile industry started in New England. An increasing demand for cotton was created. Since the Negroes were adapted to the growing of cotton, slavery and cotton became the outstanding features of the Southern states. In general the agricultural tools and machinery of this period were the same as those of the preceding period.

3. Development of Industry

The third period, 1830 to the Civil War, saw a complete transformation of both agriculture and industry. Railroads, telegraph lines and a mail service broke down the isolation of the scattered farms. Capitalism had advanced in Europe and the development of its industries created a demand for American grain and cotton. At this time the political situation in Europe tended to send increasing numbers of immigrants to America. For the first time our own industry employed as many wage workers as farmers. The great demand which these conditions created for farm products could not have been satisfied by the primitive farm unit. The invention of the reaper, mowing machine, improved plows, corn planters, cultivators, and finally a portable steam engine to run a threshing machine changed agriculture from the merely self-supporting unit to a commercial enterprise producing crops for sale.

It was from this point on that the independence of the farm owners began to disappear. Because of the greater adaptability of the machines in the level plain country, farming developed rapidly in the West. A movement abandoning Eastern farm lands followed, since the east could not compete with the cheaper grown machine crops of the West. This movement was checked by the gradual adjustment of crops better suited to Eastern conditions and local needs. This period was closed by the Civil War. The success of the Union forces was due largely to the inability of Southern agriculture to support its population and army. Cotton and slavery had made it rich but could not feed it.

4. The End of Free Land

The Civil War to 1887 marks the period completing the settlement of the free land in the United States. The abolition of chattel slavery forced a thorough-going reorganization of agriculture in the South. The old estates were bankrupt and changed hands. Many were broken up into small so-called tenant farms. Over-production followed and a slump in cotton started a movement for a more diversified crop system. The merchants who advanced credit to the small tenants fought this and demanded a cash crop. They succeeded in saddling upon the South the one crop system. Cotton remained the dominant factor in Southern agriculture.

The continued improvements in farm machinery made the American farmer the most efficient in the world. Beef cattle production followed the Western movement, and the demands of the early cattle barons for great ranges and safety for their cattle brought about the final act in the tragedy of the American Indian. He was officially cooped up on limited reservations. As the westward movement swept on to the coast, the plain country of the Middle West became the great grain producing area. A tremendous railroad development made rapid settling of the western lands possible and opened up and united the country as no other force could have done. The West continued its development as a cattle area. Later the coast States became the great fruit producing section.

5. Scientific Farming and Its Aftermath

From 1887 to 1920 American agriculture passed through an entirely new phase. All the land, except that later made available by reclamation projects, had been absorbed by individuals or corporations. Land values increased. It became more and more difficult to start farming. The farmers having reached the limits of production by expansion in new land and machinery, now turned to improved methods. Scientific research resulting in better methods improved seeds, fertility and conservation of soil, gave the farmer a new outlook. Experiment stations were established and more and more in-

tensive agriculture followed. As the limit of the resources of land, machinery and better methods was reached the farmer suffered a keener exploitation. To make up for their annual losses farmers were now forced to mortgage their land. In the main this credit has gradually been absorbed by the banks. Year by year the debt of farmers has mounted. The total in 1890 was \$1,085,945,960. In 1910 it had increased to \$1,726,172,851. Advance reports from many states for 1920 announce increases of over 200%. In some states the increases are over 500%. This indicates the rapid decline of individualism in agriculture. It spells the bankruptcy of the small farmer who represents the most important element in the rural mass.

In this period many farm organizations and societies sprang into existence. It was a natural reaction against oppression. These organizations vary from social rural gatherings to organizations for parliamentary action. Most of these, however, are organized to market a single commodity. The only organization which has caused the capitalists concern is the Non-Partisan League, which controls the State government of North Dakota and threatens to extend its movement into other States of the Northwest. This organization is not proletarian. It is an attempt to apply a program of State Socialism to the industries of North Dakota. This has brought the exploiters out in the open. The greatest contribution of the Non-Partisan League has been educational. Here we have an attempt to establish a mirage of state socialism in a desert of capitalist imperialism. All in all, this movement tends to prepare the rural masses for the next step; namely, the realization that they must join with the city proletariat in destroying their common enemy, the capitalist state, before they can be free.

THE SITUATION TO-DAY

We now have great concentration of city industry. Competition has been practically abolished in every great industry except agriculture. Meanwhile our great food surplus has been gradually absorbed by the increasing demands of our own population. Subtracting imported food stuff values from our exports we find that we are down to the self-supporting point. Thus 1920 brings us to the threshold of a new period.

American farming is taking a sharp turn. We are entering upon a period ripe for Communist action. For the first time we are offered an opportunity to break down the bulwark of conservative rural psychology which stands between Capitalism and a victorious proletariat. The capitalist imperialists represented by the Bankers, Machinery Trust, and Grain Gamblers, realize that they have all but ruined their most valuable ally, the small farmer. Their activities seem to point very definitely to a conscious and concerted policy. They are aiming to

make the farmer more productive, to satisfy his demands by partial concessions and to permit isolated commodity organizations. The capitalists will fight all farmers' organizations that may ally themselves with the working class in struggle. They are endeavoring to build a wall of misunderstanding between city and farm workers, to increase the antagonism between the migratory workers and working farmers and to enroll capitalist nuclei in all farm organizations. They are giving unlimited support to such conservative farm organizations as the *American Farm Bureau Federation*. This aid has enabled the latter to enroll a membership of one million five hundred thousand in a few months. The exploiters are controlling the agricultural press and are turning the hopes of the farmers for relief to the parliamentary Punch and Judy show of the Republican and Democratic parties.

OUR POLICY

In determining a basis for a Communist policy we must consider the economic status of the actual producers of food in the various sections of the United States and the methods of the Capitalist exploiters we are to fight. We must not confuse the conditions which actually exist with a misapplication of theoretical terms. As the vanguard of Communism, we shall be concerned only with organizing the exploited producers. The first logical step is to determine who are the real producers in a given section. This determines the tactics to be used.

In the United States there are four distinct agricultural sections. The economic status of the producers differs in each of these.

In the South we have the virtual slavery of the negroes and poor whites operating so-called tenant farms. Our tactics in this section must consider the whole race problem.

In the West capitalist farming is an established fact. Great ranches employ hundreds of workers. The fruit packers' unions, the I. W. W., and strikes remind one of situations similar to those in city industry. Here the

proletariat predominates as the actual producer. Here all industrial tactics which are successfully used in the cities may be applied.

In the Grain States there is a blending of proletarian and semi-proletarian strata. Throughout most of the year the working owners or tenants carry on the farm production; then for a few weeks the proletarian harvest "stiff" joins in the production of the grain crop. Here the tactics must balance between the two. Both must be considered, but the greatest emphasis must be given to the importance of the semi-proletarian farmers who are the dominant element.

In the Eastern section the proletarian element is negligible.

From Iowa to the Atlantic Coast north of the black Belt States lies the probable theatre of the American proletarian revolution. Population, industry and the number and productivity of farms are greater here than in any of the other sections. Because of the proximity to the great centres of population, the Eastern farmer stands out above all others in his importance to proletarian victory. Our tactics must be directed towards enlightening this backward class.

"Leftism" has been buried. A party of action must recognize that its ultimate duty is to win power by destroying the capitalist state. But this can not be done immediately in America. Only by leading all the workers in their preliminary skirmishes can the Party become the vanguard. This applies to the struggles of the backward semi-proletarian farmers as well as to the foremost sections of the city proletariat. We must also realize that the struggle for the destruction of the capitalist state will inevitably resolve itself into a struggle for food. The ruthless counter-revolutionary attacks must not be reinforced by *Famine*. We must begin now to fight the Capitalist section which is planning to cut off the skilled producers of food from their role in the ranks of the American proletariat.

Have We Retreated?

By ROGER B. NELSON

SOVIET Russia is in retreat! The Communist International is on the wane! The "rabid" revolutionists are tamed! They have become compromisers. They are advocating reforms. Thus whine the gentlemen of the right. Thus wail the paralyzed of the left.

The Communist Party of America is meeting with the same wails and whines. Its attempts at legal work and its slogans calculated to secure immediate response from the workers are being branded by the "left" sick as treason to communism. The "right" pretend to chuckle with glee at

our "stealing a leaf" from their volumes. But time and again the "Socialists" portray their actual state of mind and heart—panic and despair—by resorting to the most dastardly methods in order to prevent our winning the working masses. Thus have those who have for years done their best to make impossible the existence of a revolutionary party now become very solicitous of the Communists' policies. This reminds one of the bourgeoisie supporting Makno as a defender of the poor against the rich!

The question of immediate demands involves many issues

of vital import to the workers. Is it consistent with revolutionary policy to make immediate demands? If yes, what kind of immediate demands should a revolutionary party put forward? Can legislative demands enhance working class power? Does not the plea for remedial legislation as a means of meeting such problems as unemployment indicate a right-about-face, a complete retreat for the communists? Are we really not sticking to the bridle path of the social revolution?

What's So and What Isn't So

In the answer to these questions, lies the answer to a series of other questions. What is the task of the Communist Party? How can we carry out our task? What of parliamentarism? What is a revolutionary Party?

At the outset, a word or two about our program. The kernel of revolutionary policy lies in the essence of Marxism—"one movement is worth more than a hundred programs." At no time should the program of a Communist Party be anything else but a method of struggle, a method of meeting the general conditions of the development of the revolution. Our program, to be a program of action, a program of revolutionary struggle, must at no time fail to consider the conditions at hand. Otherwise we will be formula-stricken fetish worshippers sacrificing the working class to fossilized dogmas. There are no immutable iron laws in revolutionary struggle. Our theory, to be scientific, must not be a dogma. It must be a manual of action. Then only will our movement be sound—on the bedrock of Marxism.

We must also remember that the broad laboring masses never fight for general, abstract ultimate ideals. They struggle for immediate, concrete, tangible needs. The contents of the demands for which the masses fight may vary, but the needs are always pressing. To-day the call for Proletarian Dictatorship or even workers' control may be far off; tomorrow they may be the burning questions of the hour. The masses are not concerned with the problems of the future. They are driven to death in their efforts to eke out a bare living. Hence they are interested, not in the glory and happiness of the future Communist Commonwealth but in the degradation and misery burdening them in the everyday hell of Capitalism.

We might talk ourselves blue in the face about our holy cause, about the wonders of Communism, about the necessity for shouldering guns against capitalism and yet not enhance the revolution by an iota. But let us talk to the workers about their long hours, their disemployment, their hardships and the why and wherefore of these, and they will be ready listeners and doers.

Role of the Party

The Communist Party can never hope to develop without a fighting policy—a policy which organizes the masses and draws them into struggle against the capitalists. We have seen, however, that the masses will fight only for pressing

objectives. Hence the only slogans which can call forth response from the working class—and which can develop the Party are those which concern themselves with immediate tasks.

It is the task of the Party to unify and direct the workers' struggles so as to destroy capitalism and build a Communist order. But propaganda and agitation are insufficient for the realization of this task. We must formulate practical plans for direct action. In this manner only can the working class be taught the necessity for overthrowing capitalism, the need for proletarian dictatorship and for communism.

Practical plans for direct action by the workers are those plans which the workers are ready and able to accept. The prevailing economic and political conditions, the class-consciousness of the workers, and the character of the opposition must serve as the guide for the formulation of our plans, for the choice of our slogans. These factors determine the practicability of any plan. Thus, for the party to call the workers to arms in order to help the Mingo miners would be a practical plan of suicide, but not a practical plan of action. The American workers could not today rush to arms if they would. Neither would the way out lie in ranting about the horrors of capitalist bestiality. The Party, very properly so, called upon the workers to end the system of mine guards, to disarm the thugs, and to help the Mingo miners win their union. These are tangible, practical slogans. These are slogans which can evoke a response from the masses. In them we call upon the workers to do what they are able to and what they are prepared for.

Immediate Demands

The Party must urge the workers to fight for the immediate necessities of life. We must have immediate demands. *It is through the immediate demands that the Party can get contact with the masses and win them over to Communism.* The only way through which we can actually become the vanguard of the proletarian movement is through participating in the everyday struggles of the workingman. Talk alone will not win confidence for us. We must show the American workingman that we can do something. We should be in the front ranks of all his battles. We should lead the way in courage and purpose. Then we will be able really to win a hold on the masses.

A fighting Communist Party must make all the economic needs of the masses issues about which to unite the workers for struggle against Capitalism. It is these issues, as the Third Congress has aptly said, which we should unite "into the flood of the revolution." If the immediate demands we put forward are in accord with the needs of the masses, then these demands will be considered necessary by them and they will struggle for them. This fight is bound to develop into a fight for power because, today, the struggle for the smallest demand lines up the entire capitalist class. In West Virginia the miners are not battling for the proletarian dictatorship. They are fighting for the right to organize—for a union. Yet,

the full weight of the Federal Army, the courts, and the whole press were brought into play against the workers. Thus we see that the fight for the smallest need is now a sharp fight.

The struggle for immediate demands will, far more than propaganda and agitation pure and simple, convince the masses of the need for the overthrow of capitalism. An outstanding characteristic of present day capitalism is the fact that the realization of even the most modest demands is incompatible with its existence. Therefore, the more the masses struggle for their immediate needs the more do they become convinced of the impossibility of really satisfying them under capitalism. And experience is the best teacher, for the workers as well as anybody else.

Our immediate demands must be of such a character as will not only lead the masses into struggle but will also organize them. For example, in the Mingo issue, the demand to disarm the thugs was calculated not only to secure support for the miners, but also to organize the rest of the workers. Fighting for the demand to disarm the thugs, broadens and deepens the struggle, involves bringing to bear the full pressure of organized labor on the government, and tends to undermine the political power of the bourgeoisie. Mingo, the unemployment crisis, and the open shop drive can be turned into far better teachers of Communism—for the broad laboring masses—than any literature. It is up to the Communist Party so to utilize these struggles as to inspire the workers and lend Communist color to the contests.

What Is a Revolutionary Party?

What is a revolutionary party? *A mere declaration of revolutionary intention, a mere putting forward of a program filled with good wishes for and oaths in behalf of the Social Revolution does not make a Party revolutionary.* Besides, too often has a blanket revolutionary declaration covered a multitude of opportunist sins. Such utterances, by themselves, make neither the author nor the working class revolutionary.

We must remember that the Revolution is a long and painful process. To hasten this process and prepare the working class for decisive struggle, is the duty we confront. *A revolutionary workers' Party, then, is that Party which organizes and prepares the working class for persistent and energetic struggle against capitalism.* Every strike, every political skirmish, every test of strength is only a rehearsal a turn at training, a means of preparation for the struggle to win proletarian political supremacy. A revolutionary Party is a Party that guides and unifies the masses in these struggles.

A revolutionary Party is a Party that fights for the workers. It is a Party that has no interests other than those of the working class. It is a Party that ferrets out every chance to struggle against the exploiters. It is a Party that welcomes every opportunity for struggle. Herein do we differ from the Opportunists who cast aside every oppor-

tunity for struggle. *The Opportunists and Centrists neglect and reject every opportunity for struggle. They refuse to fight for even the minutest demands of the working class.* They totally reject struggle. When the workers do fight against the capitalist class the Opportunists and Centrists seek every opportunity to betray the laboring masses. They welcome every opportunity to break the proletarian ranks.

Only through the Party's active participation in the workers' struggles for their immediate needs can the labor lieutenants of Capital be shown up. We may hurl the epithets of traitor and renegade from now till doomsday and the workers will not be convinced of the truth of our charge. But, if by experience in their everyday struggles the workers become aware of the fact that the Communists are up and doing, and that the bureaucracy is really impeding the realization of their immediate needs, then they will kick out the labor lieutenants of Capital and kick them out for good.

When a revolutionary Party fights for the immediate needs of the workers, it never fails to point out that no lasting, effective improvement in the workingman's conditions is possible under capitalism. The Centrists and Opportunists however, deliberately mislead the masses and strive to make the workers believe in and hope for permanent betterment of their conditions under Capitalism. We join and lead the immediate struggles, though we are fully conscious of their limitations. We initiate and join them because, as a revolutionary Party, all chances for the slightest possible immediate relief of the workers must be welcomed by us. As a revolutionary Party we cannot be content with mere talk of ultimate aims.

Again, when the Centrists and Opportunists are compelled to put forward plans for meeting the workers' immediate needs, they put forward such plans as will avoid drawing the masses into struggle. When Communists put forward immediate demands they put forward only such immediate demands as will lead into struggle and organize the greatest possible mass of workers. The Centrists and Opportunists, however, avoid everything that may entail organizing the masses for a fight. Under such conditions, the Party must not only struggle itself, but must also force other organizations to fight for the immediate needs of the workers. This will convince the masses that our aims are their aims, and will win leadership for us. Any other policy is "a wait and see policy"—a Centrist policy.

Legislative Demands

Can legislative demands be put forward by a revolutionary Party? The answer to this question is to be found in the Communist attitude towards Parliamentarism. Briefly stated, it may be said that the Communists do not look upon Parliament as an organ fit for the exercise of proletarian dictatorship. We reject Parliament as a possible instrument of working class political power.

We do not believe it is possible for the proletariat to secure its victory by receiving a majority in the Parliamentary elections. Though it may be admitted that such a majority indicating that most of the people—hence the majority of the working class—are for Communism could, as a means of propaganda, aid our final victory.

We must utilize Congress and the election campaigns not merely for propaganda, but also for organizing the workers. This is particularly imperative for us in America where the working class is only beginning its struggle for power. When Opportunists reach Congress, they strive to secure improvements for the labor aristocracy by compromising with the capitalists. Communists, however, must expose the bourgeoisie; they must draw the attention of the working masses to the issues of the struggle and must help organize the workers.

Mere talk, regardless of its eloquence or volume, will not expose the capitalists to the working class. The Communists must put forward concrete proposals. *Tangible, immediate demands in line with the workers' interests must be made on the government.* These proposals must be in full accord with the issues agitating the workers' movement outside the legislative halls. They must furthermore, be correlated with the struggles of the workers on the outside. Our activity in Congress is subsidiary to and dependent upon the mass struggle on the outside. The bourgeoisie will do their best to kill all our propositions. They will refuse even to consider the workers' problems. This will materially aid us in exposing the capitalists. This will help us give a political character to the whole struggle.

In America, where the workers are still politically impotent and industrially divided, the Parliamentary campaigns and Congress are especially helpful toward unifying and broadening the struggle. If our labor movement were sufficiently advanced, this would not be so true. Then we could utilize other agencies. If the Party had better connections with the existing labor organizations, the importance of the Parliamentary campaigns would not be so great. As it is, however, with the labor movement weak and the Party still weaker, the Parliamentary campaigns and Congress are of great aid to us as a means of broadening the struggle. What other means has the Party to-day for speaking to the workers on a broad class basis, on a basis wider than their shop or industry?

When we make these definite demands on the government, when we put forward our legislative immediate demands, we do so not with the idea of solving the insoluble—the contradictions of capitalism—but in order to rally the masses around practical concrete plans of combat which will further draw them into struggle against the State and expose its class character. A proposal on our part to have the government set aside Two Billion Dollars, let us say, for the relief of the unemployed, would rally the masses around our banners against the government. Already, Hoover and Harding

are pledged not to give financial relief to the hungry jobless. Here is an opportunity for organizing and drawing the masses into struggle.

Of course, we do not put forward our call for emergency legislation to meet the unemployment wave with a view to doing away with the crisis. We are well aware of the unsurmountable limitations of the relief possibilities under capitalism. We do our all to make the workers equally aware of the same. We, as a revolutionary Party, do however know that we must exploit fully every chance for even temporary relief of the workers. We also know that the capitalists will fight tooth and nail against the workers' securing the slightest improvement in their conditions. Hence our legislative demands. Hence our call to the workers to demand from the government positive immediate relief.

Summary

Our analysis has brought us to the following conclusions:

1. Our Program is not a complex dogma. It is a manual of action.
2. The masses do not struggle for general abstract ideals affecting their future. They fight only for immediate concrete, tangible needs.
3. The development of the Party and the organization of the masses can be attained only through a fighting policy—an active struggle for the immediate demands of the workers. We must formulate a practical program of direct action by the workers.
4. A revolutionary program per se, or a blanket declaration of revolutionary intentions does not make a Party revolutionary. A Party is revolutionary only when it leads the workers in their everyday struggles for their immediate necessities, broadens and deepens these struggles and directs them into revolutionary channels.
5. When we put forward immediate demands we always emphasize the impossibility of the workers' condition being permanently bettered under Capitalism. We always make it clear that only the overthrow of Capitalism can solve the difficulties.
6. The Opportunists are those who neglect and reject every opportunity for struggle, whether the struggle be for a modest immediate need or a broad political demand. The Communists are those who welcome every opportunity for organizing the workers against Capitalism, whether the opportunity be one of a struggle for temporary relief or a general assault on the bourgeoisie.
7. Propaganda and agitation alone are insufficient for securing a working class victory. The workers must be prepared. Their everyday struggles under Communist guidance and inspiration are rehearsals, drills for the final conflict. Experience is the workers' best teacher.
8. Especially in countries where the workers have attained only a low degree of class consciousness is it incumbent for the Communist Party to utilize parliament and the election

campaigns for purposes of agitation and organization. America is such a country to-day.

9. We cannot hope to use effectively Congress and the election campaigns as means of agitation and organization unless we correlate our Parliamentary struggles with the struggles of the broad laboring masses on the outside. Of course this necessitates our putting forward immediate legislative demands which will aid us in organizing the masses and drawing them into the struggle against the Capitalist class.

10. Our putting forward of legislative demands does not at all mean that we call upon the worker to put faith in the Capitalist State. We fight for these immediate demands, like for the other immediate demands, in a manner different from that of the Opportunists and Centrists. We urge these demands to expose further the Capitalist State, as an organ of bourgeois oppression and call upon the workers to rally

against the State as such. The Centrists and Opportunists do everything possible to avoid class conflict. We do our all to organize and lead the masses against their oppressors.

We have not retreated. We are only coming to life. We are beginning to be aware of the difficulties ahead of us. We are first beginning to understand Communist theory and practice. There is no bridle path to Communism. The task before us is gigantic. Only foresight, Communist dialectics and revolutionary strategy can be of aid. The Party must steer clear between the rocks of Opportunism and the shoals of Leftism. We must reject the sterility and dogmatism of the Three-and-a-Half International as well as the treachery and cowardice of the Second and Two-and-a-Half Internationals. The interests of the working class are the interests of the Communist Party. And the interests of the Communist Party are the interests of working class.

On with the immediate struggle! On with the Communist task!

Soviets or Parliament

By DAVID DAMON

IN his pamphlet from "Marx to Lenin," Morris Hillquit poses the question, "Is the Soviet the 'historically developed form' of the Socialist state or is such a state likely to function with equal efficiency in a modified form of parliamentary regime?"

The conclusion to which he comes at the end of his discussion is that "In countries of Western civilization, in which the proletariat has grown to larger numerical strength and the whole population, including the rural, has attained a higher degree of political maturity, the form of the government of the Socialist state *will be determined by the circumstances under which the revolution will occur* (emphasis mine) the extent to which it will be influenced by the Russian example and the strength of the parliamentary traditions in the country." All of which is, of course, evading the question which he has himself proposed, for if one asks whether the Soviet "is the 'historically developed form' of the Socialist state" and answers "that it will be determined by the circumstances under which the revolution will occur," one merely raises the new question, what are the circumstances under which revolutions have occurred and what do we know about the conditions under which revolutions are likely to occur in the future?

The Core of the Problem

The latter question is really the crux of the matter. Hillquit evidently believes that some fine day his Socialist

Party will elect a President of the United States and a majority of the members of Congress, as well as a majority of the legislatures of three-fourths of the States, and thus achieve power in the United States. He may then well believe that the "Socialist" state would have its beginning in the existing parliamentary government. Under such circumstances the "Socialist" state would undoubtedly have such a beginning. But Hillquit himself points out, that in the one country where the Socialists did elect a majority of the members of parliament—Finland—they did not achieve a revolution through their majority in parliament, but only a coalition government with a Socialist Premier and "the other portfolios equally divided between Socialists and non-Socialists." Hillquit may consider that a revolution, but it was certainly not a revolution in any Marxian sense of the term. The revolution did come in Finland later, after the Kerensky government, in league with the Finnish bourgeoisie, had dissolved this "revolutionary government." After the new elections had installed a bourgeois government the Socialists declared a general strike, drove out that government by force and established a working class government. "The rising," Hillquit writes, "was accompanied by little physical violence." But evidently *it was an armed rising* through which the working class government was set up.

Lessons of the Struggle

What are the conditions under which proletarian revolutions occur? The answer to this question includes the answer to the question whether Soviets or parliament will form the basis for the proletarian state. Certainly no proletarian revolution, and for that matter, no revolution in history, has occurred as the Socialist Party, of which Hillquit is the theoretic leader, pictures it. When and where in history has a dominant class, holding in its power the state machinery, permitted that power to slip from its hands without an armed struggle? The Hungarian revolution is a seeming exception, but there the capitalists, beaten to their knees by their bourgeois opponent, temporarily surrendered their power in a hopeless situation, only to strike to regain it with all its might at the first favorable opportunity. This seeming exception stands out as one of the most ruthless examples of torture and murder of the workers by the bourgeoisie in their effort to maintain themselves as a ruling class. When and where in history has a ruling class permitted an exploited class, bent upon putting an end to its exploitation, to take over the state power by electing a majority of the members of a parliament? To believe such a fairy tale is to class one's self with the politically and historically ignorant infantile. The proposal to win the support of a majority of the voters (with millions of workers disfranchised and the capitalist class in possession of its tremendous machinery of propaganda) is the most utopian proposal ever put forward by a political party.

The experiences of the last five years indicate that the proletarian revolution takes place when the capitalist system breaks down—when it is unable to feed, clothe, and house millions, when the things necessary to supply the needs of the ordinary standard of living of the workers are unobtainable or cannot be bought by them. It is the suffering brought on by the breakdown of the capitalist economic system, such as followed in the wake of the imperialist war, which arouses the workers to action. It is unemployment such as now exists in the United States (there are close to six million out of work according to the latest report of the Department of Labor), which, if long enough continued might tend to produce a crisis of revolutionary potentialities. Let us imagine the number of unemployed in this country increasing by a few more million and continuing for another year. Does any one imagine that the ten million workers in desperate need of food, clothing and housing, would wait for the 1924 presidential election to vote for Hillquit's party in order to express their discontent and secure relief? The capitalist system itself generates the conditions producing crises similar to these. Thus are produced the conditions for the proletarian revolution. The revolution which will drive the capitalists from power in the United States will grow out of just such conditions; conditions in which the misery or discontent of the workers develops the will for

action against the capitalist class and precipitates the proletarian revolution.

History Speaks

Hillquit, in discussing the Soviets in his pamphlet, has considered only the question, what form will the proletarian state take after the revolution? Thus he is able to evade completely those "historical conditions" which lead to the establishment of the Soviets, first, as *revolutionary organizations fighting to overthrow the bourgeois state*. That is the form in which the Soviets first present themselves. They are fighting organizations. They arise spontaneously out of the factories, the army, the previously existing working class organizations. Their form—Soviets—Councils—is dictated by the "historical conditions" through which the workers have passed and in which they find themselves at the time the struggle is precipitated.

Studying the question from the historical facts, let us look at the conditions in Russia in 1905 at the time when the Soviets first made their appearance. There was a revolutionary crisis. Driven by the discontent produced by oppression and great suffering the masses had risen against the government. Groping for some plan of coordinating their power each group of the discontented sent delegates to a central body. In this central body the plans for action and revolutionary leadership were developed. Soviets or councils, known by that name, undoubtedly existed in Russia before the revolution in 1905. That which was new, that which has given the name its peculiar significance in the working class movement, is that in a time of crisis there arose spontaneously revolutionary councils—Soviets—representing the united opposition of the workers to the existing government.

The experience of the revolution of 1905 was followed in the Russian Revolution of 1917. Another great crisis, the suffering and hunger due to the war, roused the workers to a new struggle to throw off the burden of oppression. The experience of 1905 and the need for coordinating the power of the working class again led to the organization of Soviets—the fighting revolutionary organizations.

The history of the German revolutionary movement in the last months of 1918 and the early part of 1919 furnishes parallel facts. In the crisis, after the signing of the armistice, arose Workers' Councils—Soviets—in which the workers grouped themselves for struggle. Hungary passed through the same experience. Munich was governed by a Soviet when the workers triumphed.

In Action

These historical facts give a sound basis for the statement that in a revolutionary crisis, in which the workers find themselves openly arrayed against the existing capitalist government, there is a spontaneous movement on

the part of the discontented and revolutionary proletariat to form Soviets. These may come into existence as the meeting of delegates from groups of discontented workers in the factories, in the unions and in the army. Each crisis which develops finds the workers thus arrayed against the government because the bourgeoisie more and more openly use the state power to meet the difficulties it encounters in maintaining itself and to keep the workers in subjection. The Soviets are the result of the need felt by the workers to establish a competing organ of power when they realize that the existing government is the representative of their enemy—the capitalists.

The historical experience out of which these Workers Councils, or Soviets, develop, are not difficult to discern. It is surely unnecessary to argue that a mass of people having common grievances and interests naturally seek to combine when they are thrown into a struggle. What can be more logical than that the working masses, driven to a revolutionary struggle by oppression and suffering and having learned by experience that the existing government is an instrument in the hands of their exploiters, should develop organs to express their power. Of course these organs are based upon conditions in capitalist society which bring the workers together and make common action possible. It is in the factories and in the unions that the workers come together. They have learned to take common action there in their struggles for better wages and working conditions. Their previous experiences in struggles with the capitalists, as well as the physical fact that they meet together in the factories and in the unions, both are historical conditions which make these the units from which action develops. Given these historical conditions and a revolutionary crisis in which the government acts as the open agent of their enemy. What other result could one expect except that the workers would unite for common action on the basis of their previous experience and elect delegates from the shops, the unions and other existing workers' organizations, and from the army, if a revolutionary spirit had developed there, and thus form a Soviet? It is thus that the first Soviets are formed and it is but a logical step that thus united locally, the workers should unite on a larger scale by sending delegates from their local Soviets to central bodies.

The development here described is already apparent as a tendency in those struggles which the workers are compelled to wage against the capitalists in the fight to secure food, clothes and housing, which continually flares out in great strikes. In the mass strike of the 20,000 workers of Lawrence, Mass. in 1912, which involved a large part of the workers of that city, a general strike committee was formed in which one could easily recognize the beginning of a local Soviet. In the general strikes in Seattle and Winnipeg, strike councils were organized, representing a majority of the workers of the communities, which, given a sharper and more general

struggle of the workers would have easily developed into full-fledged Soviets, controlling and directing all the affairs of those municipalities.

A Powerful Weapon

From the foregoing it is clear that the circumstances under which the proletarian revolution is likely to occur as well as the historical conditions, the previous experience in the life of the workers, point to the Soviets as the form of organization in which the power of the workers will express itself in a time of revolutionary crisis. The experience of the Russian Revolution, in achieving the overthrow of the exploiters and oppressors of the workers through the Soviets, which has served as an inspiring example to the workers of all countries, makes only more certain the development of Soviets in other countries by adding the factor of a conscious effort of the workers to follow in the footsteps of the Russian workers when compelled to act in a revolutionary situation.

When the Soviets come into existence the contest between the workers and their exploiters becomes a struggle between the bourgeois state and the Soviets. In that struggle one or the other will be destroyed. If the workers succeed in wresting power from the hands of the bourgeois state and in transferring that power to their Soviets, is there any likelihood that the workers will reconstruct any of the institutions of the bourgeois government? Will they organize a parliament in place of their Central Soviet? Is it not more likely that the antagonism to and hatred of the bourgeois state will attach itself to all the institutions of that state? On the other hand, the very fact of their experience with the Soviets during the struggle and their victory, will endear these institutions to the workers and make certain their adaptation to the new task of state administration.

The question "Soviet or Parliament?" is not a question of distant theoretical importance. The advocacy of the Soviet form of organization as the organ of workers' struggle for power and of the proletarian state includes the acceptance of extra-parliamentary means of achieving power. It means the acceptance of the principle that the existing capitalist government will be overthrown through the mass power of the workers. And this includes the use of armed force. It is for this reason that the Hillquits, who cling to their proposal to vote the capitalists out of power, refuse to commit themselves to the advocacy of the Soviets. It is also for this reason that the Communist International makes acceptance and advocacy of the Soviets as one of the cardinal tests of acceptance of its principles.

The experiences of life itself are the tests of the principles of the Communist International. The Soviets are the powerful weapon which have come out of the life experience of the workers, to destroy their enemies and to serve as the instrument for rebuilding society according to the Communist ideal.

The Party and the Negro Struggle

By JOHN BRUCE and J. P. COLLINS

An American Problem

THE solution of the Negro Problem lies, as in the case of most of the social suffering, in the abolition of Capitalism. But to be satisfied with this conclusion, and present the same as a cure-all to the masses will not do. The masses do not understand our theories, and the bourgeois grip upon them can not be loosened merely by the statement of such truths. It is evident that though we clearly understand our ultimate aim, the realization of it by the masses depends upon our skill to correlate our objectives with their ideology and their immediate wants and sufferings. The test of a true Communist does not lie in the correct repetition of Communist truths, an act which at times is a mere parrot performance, but in the understanding of their proper application.

In the case of the Negro we are faced with a distinctly American problem which demands a careful application of Communist strategy. The importation of the Negro to the American hemisphere arose from a desire for cheap labor power. This type of labor developed vast sections of the continent. The Negro's exploitation proceeded under conditions of chattel slavery. Thus the Southern bourgeoisie continued to grow wealthy and powerful until the two systems, Chattel Slavery in the South and Wage Slavery in the North, came to an open clash. They could not peacefully exist side by side.

As Feudalism limited the development and free expansion of Capitalism so the system of the slave barons in the South set serious limitations upon the Northern bourgeoisie. The slave system of the South with its monopoly of labor power was too effective a barrier for industrial capitalist economic penetration of the South. Two distinct systems of exploitation were developing within the same governmental structure. After many vain attempts to manoeuvre and compromise at each other's expense, the struggle broke out. For the South it was a war for independence, for the North a war for liberation. Ostensibly it was a war to abolish slavery in America but beneath the idealistic motives that were held up to the masses, was that ruthless hypocrisy of which only the bourgeoisie is capable. The hypocrisy of the Northern bourgeoisie was strikingly demonstrated when, at the conclusion of peace between the warring factions, the Negro was delivered to the tender mercies of the former slave-owning class.

A Hollow Mockery

The moral effect upon the Negroes was, of course, detrimental to the bourgeois in general. The Negro

wanted freedom and through association with his rulers had learned many lessons. He determined to make his formal liberation real. This frame of mind is not conducive to easy exploitation. It had to be curbed. The Negro's spirit had to be broken. But the Southern bourgeoisie had a "gentlemen's agreement" with the North whereby they were prevented from openly and formally re-enslaving the Negro. Such conduct would have roused the "plain people" of the North and forced another crisis. It was then perpetrated under cover. This was carried out masterfully. The Northern troops garrisoning the South did not interfere. They quietly aided in the disarming of those in the South who were interested in the preservation of the new rights and the maintenance of the so-called state of emancipation. Through this mutual understanding between the Northern and Southern bourgeoisie the Negroes and their sympathizers were disarmed. Deprived of the means of self-defence, they entrusted themselves to the care of the Federal Government. Then followed one of the most despicable steps taken by any ruling class in order to crush the opposition of the exploited. The Southern bourgeoisie, hand in hand with the illiterate and misled "poor whites," organized a gigantic, secret murder society, tortured, lynched and murdered in the dark of night. The victims were never accounted for. They ran into tens of thousands. Amongst the victims were negroes and their white sympathizers. By these methods the Negro was reduced to peonage. To this day lynching-bees and sundry means of terrorism are quite the order of the day in the South. The so-called liberation of the Negro is revealed as a farce of the worst sort—a hollow mockery.

The bourgeois press of the North has hardly uttered a word of protest against this reign of terror. It is our urgent task to throw light upon this oppressive conduct of American capitalism.

The Negroes' Answer

As a result of the bestial treatment accorded them, the mass of Negroes has developed a profound hatred, not so much of the class that caused their sufferings, as of the race to which his oppressors belong. Wasn't he despised because he was a Negro? And spat upon because of his color? Didn't the white workers themselves, under the influence of bourgeois propaganda, bar him from the labor unions because of his dark skin? Surely he could not expect help from anyone but his own kind. Thus we see the Negro throughout the country orga-

nized along purely racial lines. Due to this condition, to the tactics of Gompers & Co., American organized Labor to-day has no hold upon the twelve million Negroes.

Despite numerous difficulties, millions of Negroes have migrated North in the last two decades. Yet, even in the North, with its comparative freedom, they remain in their race organizations and retain their racial ideology. Because of the comparative civil equality and educational facilities of the North, the organizations have gained great impetus. But they are, in the main, controlled by petty bourgeois, opportunist elements. There are three principal Negro organizations representing three distinct developments of the Negro mind. These are

1. The Universal Negro Improvement Association—the Garvey Movement—headed by Marcus Garvey;
2. The Association for the Advancement of Colored People, headed by Dr. Du Bois;
3. The African Blood Brotherhood, headed by Cyril Briggs.

These bodies total an actual membership of not more than 300,000. However, by reason of their publicity organs, and other forms of propaganda they exercise an influence over millions of Negroes in the United States and many thousands in the West Indies and Africa. There are a great number of nondescript organizations, both in the United States and in her colonies. These may bring the number of Negroes actually organized to over a million and a half. Fraternal societies have a great hold upon the Negro. His churches also wield a great influence over him; they are more like social and recreation centers and have a wider scope of activities than the white church. Then there are over four hundred Negro periodicals with an acknowledged and rapidly growing influence. Most of these, like his churches, are rather free from direct Capitalist control.

Who's Who Amongst the Negroes

The Negro's mental development has been neglected even to a greater extent than that of the average white worker. Due to his peculiar history, the treatment received at the hands of the white exploiters, and the opportunism of most of his present leaders he has been made the victim of an intensive racialism and anti-all-white feeling. The Negro petty bourgeois elements, together with other schemers, have taken advantage of his state of mind to achieve their own selfish ends; while the radical element, until recently, has been up against a stone wall of closed mentality because of organized Labor's official attitude toward the Negro.

The psychology of the Negro and the effect of petty bourgeois leadership are well illustrated by the character and performances of some of the above-mentioned orga-

nizations. The Garvey Movement which, more than any other, has caught the imagination of the Negro, expresses itself in terms of liberating Africa and this, otherwise ideal, objective, it attempts to achieve by electing Mr. Garvey as the "Provisional President of Africa," at \$50,000 per year. This gentleman, dubbing himself "the Moses of the Negro Race" has instituted a "government," with royal titles, Potentates, High Chancellors, etc. He speaks about diplomatic representation, commissioners, courts of reception, knighting knights, decorations and Bureaus of Passports and Identifications. Of course, all the high chieftains get big salaries. Apparently this method of liberating the Negroes suits the powers-that-be and the kings of finance hold Mr. Garvey in great esteem for the work he has done in keeping the Negro's mind off the real problems before him and busying him with such tomfoolery as knighthoods and court receptions. Moreover, Mr. Garvey was kind enough to pledge the Negro's loyalty to the United States and approve all future wars of the United States. To assure the good will of the other capitalist governments he extended them a similar pledge despite his talk of freeing Africa from their control. All of his bombastic displays are being financed, not by his toy government which does not have sovereignty over a single square mile of territory, but by constant collections ostensibly for commercial enterprises, the creation of which will, according to Garvey, solve the unemployment problem for the Negro. Needless to say, the major portion of these funds goes to pay the salaries and "traveling expenses" of the adventurers and jokers who are misusing an ideal cause in behalf their own selfish ends.

Dr. DuBois' organization has as its main objective full civil rights for the Negro and racial equality. His organization has considerable hold upon the petty bourgeois element. It is, in fact, completely dominated by that element in conjunction with a group of white "Liberals" who are represented on the Board of Directors. DuBois' methods are petitions and protests. Pacifist and without backbone!

The African Blood Brotherhood, headed by Briggs, is more militant than any of the others. Its slogan is "Immediate protection and ultimate liberation for Negroes everywhere." It preaches co-operation with white radical forces. It is an organization of defense against lynching and terrorism.

The Present Situation

The bourgeoisie is in control of most of the organizations that mold the mind of the Negro. It has succeeded in driving the Negro thoroughly into the racial camp by playing upon race antagonism and the bitter treatment of the Negro at the hands of the whites. By thus obscuring the real cause and source of his oppression

and exploitation the average Negro is prevented from understanding the identity of his interests with the rest of the working class.

The Negro has drawn close to his church which, unlike, the White, is still a "mass-church" where the great majority of the Negroes seek help and advice. Its role is to an extent comparable to that of the Jewish synagogue. In encouraging discussion and lectures it goes further than any section of the white church. The Negro Church ostensibly sponsors the Negro race interests, gets together with him on his problems and guides him in his daily troubles. The Negro church is more free from the control of big capital than is the white church. It understands how to keep in touch with and influence the masses. Being a "mass-church" of a mass dissatisfied with things as they are, it can, through proper tactics, very well be used by us to conduct an ideological struggle that will undermine its influence.

Bearing in mind all these factors it is easy to account for the racialism of the Negro and the almost complete lack of class consciousness or even such class organizations as labor unions. Indeed, the white bourgeoisie, aided by the reactionary labor leaders, has played its cards well and has succeeded in greatly estranging the negro from the white worker.

The Negro to-day considerably augments the strike-breaking armies of the capitalists. He is available for that purpose in great numbers and on short notice, North or South. His strike-breaking is, in a no small measure, a matter of revenge against the white workers who bar him from their labor unions and interfere with

his opportunities for more gainful occupations and better wages.

A Great Danger

The bourgeoisie is taking full advantage of the negro's readiness to be used as a strike-breaker. Through a few sops from the government, ably aided by his present leadership, the Negro can be made the staunchest and most valuable supporter of reaction in this country. His leaders have already told him that his friends are the capitalists. They cite the example of capitalist-supported schools like Tuskegee in the South and North as proof of that friendship. The Negro, then, is in danger of becoming the backbone of a vicious White Guard system. We need but reflect, for a moment, on the fact that the backbone of the reactionary French Government to-day is represented by the colored colonial troops garrisoning not only the occupied portions of Germany but many places in France itself. The situation confronting us in the United States is replete with no less awful possibilities.

We must arouse the class-consciousness of the Negro and bring him into our ranks. The Negroes of America have hardly been touched by our prapaganda. Of all the races and nationalities of this country they are the farthest removed from class concepts and class organization. But they are dissatisfied and potentially rebellious. How can we give a class character to their dissatisfaction and protest? How can we draw the Negro masses into the struggle against the oppressors of all workers? What shall the Party do to win the Negroes for Communism? These are pertinent questions. The writer will attempt to answer them in an article to follow.

Winning the Masses

By J. P. COLLINS

UNDER capitalism the great mass of the people live under the dictatorship of the few. Despite the smallness of their numbers, the latter keep the mass in economic bondage. It would, however, not be feasible for the numerically small ruling class to keep the great mass in servitude merely through physical force. Therefore, it is necessary for the powers that be to control the bulk of the masses ideologically and to hinder their cultural development. This ideological control gives the bourgeoisie the necessary adherents, to maintain themselves in power. By means of this control opposition is divided and neutralized. The destruction of the ideological influence of the master-class is therefore a prerequisite to any serious attempt to engage the masses in open struggle for the destruction of capitalism. But the masses cannot be freed from mental servitude

merely by the propagation of Communist theories; a skilful handling and development of their immediate grievances against the ruling-class and its lieutenants is essential.

Degrading the Workers

In America, more than in any other country, does the whole social apparatus of the bourgeoisie—the schools, the churches, the press, the theatres and "movies," the games, the charities—hold the worker in ignorance and mental torpor. A striking illustration of the state of the workers under these conditions has been furnished by a report of the U. S. Military Intelligence Bureau. Ninety per cent of the men examined in the army during the war possessed only the intelligence of normally developed boys of eleven to fourteen

years of age. Small wonder then that the average worker is incapable of conceiving his interests from a broad point of view. Therefore, unless such issues as the dictatorship of the proletariat and armed insurrection are presented to the average worker in relation to his bread and butter problem they are as incomprehensible to him as Einstein's theory. We must then meet the worker on his own basis and inject in him a fighting spirit—a desire to struggle for better conditions. Thus only can his interests be pitted against the interests of the ruling class. Thus only will the workingman's self-confidence be gradually increased until it grows into class consciousness. It is innumerable and costly struggles, shattered hopes and disillusionments, that will more and more weaken the bourgeois influence over the worker and slowly but surely tear him away from the ideology which now enslaves him.

The Task We Confront

It is true that the bourgeoisie have a gigantic apparatus of propaganda. It is true that ours is a mere toy in comparison with it. Nevertheless, the task of the bourgeoisie is correspondingly great. They must distract the masses or oppose their true interests by fooling and betraying them. We, however, frankly stand for the interests of the masses. Our influence depends largely upon what we say and what we do, our tactics and our policies of approaching the working class. For us the skill in keeping in touch with the masses, organically and ideologically, is paramount.

The problem of winning over the masses simmers down to taking up their every day grievances, to engaging in their bread and butter struggles. We must lead the counter-moves and maneuvers. We must expose the bourgeois machinations. We must direct the sentiments of the masses towards us and along our channels. It is for us to draw them more and more into action in their own behalf. *Mass sentiments*, taking root in immediate grievances, must be used as the basis of mass distrust of the ruling class and its servants, while the self-reliance of the workers is being developed. Against the strategy of the bourgeoisie striving to control the masses we must pit the strategy of the Communist Party. To the politicians of the bourgeoisie we must oppose the politicians of the proletariat. The class struggle is a struggle against exploitation. Politically the struggle manifests itself between the capitalist class and the proletarian vanguard organized in the Communist Party. Our objective is the winning of the masses. The capitalist objective is the perpetuation of bourgeois control.

Fulfilling Our Role

How can the Party obtain its objective, fulfill its role? This is a question involving policies and organizational machinery. In so far as policies are concerned, thanks to the Communist International, we are on the right track. But in so far as working forces are concerned to carry out these policies we find ourselves seriously hampered. We are

blocked by the inexperience of our membership, by our isolation from the masses, by our sectarianism.

We have built an underground party, and have come to believe firmly in its all-sufficiency. We have virtually disappeared from the public scene. We ourselves have discarded whatever legal medium has not been wiped out by the ruling class. We are inarticulate, self-centered; so much so that we count ourselves active when we, once in a while, issue a leaflet.

The Party today is a cumbersome, inflexible mechanism having no movement to function in, no connection with or influence upon the life of the masses, no outlet from its underground all-sufficiency. This imprisonment of our revolutionary energies demoralizes us. Several times have we been broken asunder by clique formations, individual intrigues and peanut politics.

From Talk to Action

At present we are in a stage of transition—from a sectarian propaganda group to a party of action. Those who oppose the change oppose the Communist International, oppose the needs of the class struggle, fight the inevitable. They will be left behind because the onrush of events knows no delay, no compromise of facts. The day of action being limited to occasional leaflet distributions and "chewing the rag" at group meetings is over for the C. P. of A.

The task of the Party is prescribed by the needs of the working class. The needs of the working class determine our Party policies. *The crying need is an open political rallying center.* There are hundreds of thousands of rebels of various shades demoralized and disconnected. The Party must offer a medium for their unification and utilization for the revolutionary struggle. This can only be done by initiating a political mass movement broad enough to take in the bulk of this rebel element. The Socialist Party is doomed; the other factions are dead or dying. For us not to utilize this opportunity for the initiation of such a movement is deliberately to deliver the field to our enemies. This would be an act of blind stupidity of which only sectarians of the worst type could be guilty. Through the extensive use of such a political center we may lead the revolutionary elements back to constructive work in the labor movement. We shall then be in a position to organize with greater ease and efficiency the militants in the labor unions for a revival of rank and file demands, for a change in leadership, and for the strengthening and the transformation of labor organizations.

The Days Ahead

Those who do not want the C. P. of A. to take up this work do not want a Communist Party at all. What will be the function of the C. P. of A. after it has projected itself across the political field? First of all, the membership of the underground party will be strictly confined to the most able and conscious revolutionists. The function of the underground Party will be almost entirely to guide and control

the broad, open organization and movement. Our Party committees and groups will not waste their time at underground meetings with the routine of selling tickets, books and pamphlets. Such matters can be attended to by any one, openly. Our members will meet to discuss tactics and policies, to initiate activities. The underground party will be a huge caucus of well organized, well disciplined revolutionists, functioning throughout as a unit. At the same time, all that can be done openly will be done so by means of the open apparatus.

Within the underground party our program and theory must be thoroughly clarified. The correctness of our policies must constantly be emphasized to those in the open organization. Towards the masses, however, we must move cautiously, step by step. We should draw them into the direct struggle on the basis of their immediate interests which they can readily appreciate. More and more the direct struggle will develop, sharpening the lines between the interests of the workers and the interests of the ruling class. The more the struggle for immediate needs develops, the more will our program be understood as offering the sole remedy. This will occur, however, only if we are so organized as to consciously participate in the struggle, and aim for leadership. At all times we should inject our ideas, interpretations, mottoes, slogans and plans to storm every trench in the struggle.

Pressing Need for Action

The immediate need of the Party is the creation and perfection of the open movement. In one form or another, all branches and groups must come into the open, gather around themselves the sympathizers and rebels of their own localities and organize them for all open activities. The Party committees should discuss the issues of the day, methods of giving expression to the needs of the workers, and the tactics of rallying more workers. Every move made by the bourgeoisie and their lieutenants will be discussed, with a view of answering. We must consider plans for putting the sympathizers to work for our policies. We must always have in mind the mass outside. It is imperative for us to correlate all our work with the needs of the mass of workers.

In Cross-Section

The Central Executive Committee will decide the general policies. Their application will be attended to by subordinate committees. As much discussion as possible should precede Party decisions. But *once a course of action has been decided upon the only thing debatable, until the coming convention, is its manner of application.* Thus only can policies be put into effect with the required speed throughout the country. All revolutionary parties must pursue this policy.

The prerequisite for our work with sympathizers is a preliminary general agreement amongst ourselves on the main

points of action. In carrying out our labor program we will find a far greater number of sympathizers than in our political work. But in neither case should we adopt arbitrary or crude methods. We can win leadership only through convincing the workers of the correctness of our position. This we must attempt to do even when we are assured of a majority to carry our proposition, for the problem is to get the workers to act for our program. This they will do only when they understand it and are enthusiastic for its realization.

Rallying the Masses

A caucus without a program which expresses the needs of the workers in their field of organization is useless. For example, a caucus in the Needle Trades could get the sympathy of the worker on the question of a bona fide Federation of all Needle Trade Unions into an industrial body. The unification issue in one form or another can, as a matter of fact, be used in most American unions. In every one of them in varying form, it corresponds to the needs of the Labor movement. Again, a struggle for shorter hours and higher wages may furnish a platform against the bureaucrats in some unions. The union shop may also be instituted and preserved by us.

In soldiers' organizations the bonus issue may be injected to alienate them from the government. The impoverishment of the farmers and tenant farmers offers an opportunity for building a powerful movement. We must destroy their bourgeois ideology. It is evident, then, that only around such urgent objectives of labor can we build Communist political thought.

Conclusion

Whatever the issue, whatever the program, it must mean action by the masses themselves—not by officials for the masses. It must mean intensification of the opposition to things as they are, to the government and to the labor-bureaucracy. It must bring in its wake greater unification of the workers, larger masses into the struggle. To all of this we must impart a Communist tendency, a Communist hue.

The Communist Party is face to face with all these activities and struggles. We must crystallize the discontent of the masses in all walks of life. We must gradually draw the masses into a more and more general struggle as a class. This is the task of a Party of action! This is our task! We must win the American working masses for Communism!

The American Chambers of Commerce

A Study in Capitalist Dictatorship

By ROGER B. NELSON

THE American workingman is becoming more and more aware of the fact that the state is an instrument of oppression in the hands of the capitalist class. He is learning this lesson not so much from Communist propaganda as from his everyday struggles.

Through every strike, every industrial dispute, every political contest and every social problem this thread of capitalist domination runs. America is notorious for political graft, for legislative lobbies and for outright corporation ownership of government officials.

The writer proposes to deal with the role of Chambers of Commerce in American life—political, industrial and social. A survey of the history of American Chambers of Commerce leads one to find very close relations between trade associations and governmental bodies. From a purely, or at least dominantly, commercial body the American Chamber of Commerce has developed into a powerful political institution. Recent years have seen the Chambers of Commerce win a mighty hold on education, social organization, the press, government, foreign policy and the industrial life of the country. In short, the Chambers of Commerce are today political organizations—organizations of the capitalist class against the workers.

Early History

America's oldest commercial organization is the New York Chamber of Commerce, founded in 1768. It was born out of the opposition to the Stamp Act and was instrumental in organizing street riots and demonstrations against British taxation. The first Boston Board of Trade particularly reflected the unrest of the revolution and England sent soldiers and ships to awe the merchants into submission.

Because of the slight progress made by American commerce up to the middle of the nineteenth century, the increase in the number of commercial bodies was, till then, very small. In 1858 there were only ten Chambers of Commerce and twenty Boards of Trade in the United States. The laying of the cable in 1866 and the development of the railway and telegraph systems revolutionized conditions of trade. Numerous commercial associations came into being.

New Tendencies

For over a century America's commercial organizations were largely given over to the consideration of business problems of local or, at most, of national interest. With the development of imperialism and the intensification of the

class struggle there arose the modern Chambers of Commerce. These are organizations of the craftiest and ablest business men interested not only in the upbuilding of commerce but in politics, education, and all social movements. Mr. Wheeler, formerly president of the United States Chamber of Commerce, has pronounced these organizations "the most beneficent force that community life in America has ever known." To Prof. Cherington of the Harvard Graduate School of Business Administration, the Chambers of Commerce are the "doing bodies" of our cities.

In 1912 the United States Chamber of Commerce was formed. The Secretaries of Labor and Commerce and the President christened it. Today it has over twelve hundred affiliations and a membership of 670,000. It is the largest business organization in the world. Its influence reaches every walk of life. More than three thousand cities and towns in the United States have Chambers of Commerce or organizations resembling them. All in all there are now in the United States over 4,500 commercial organizations. They are listed as Chambers of Commerce, Boards of Trade and Commercial Clubs, Leagues and Associations. In 1905 there was founded the International Congress of Chambers of Commerce representing the business men of the entire world. Recently this body held a convention at which were considered the problems confronting the capitalist class in its struggle to maintain power.

Influence on Government

The influence of commercial organizations on government is manifold. It is not for us to consider at this point the extensive network of legislative lobbies. The notorious "Million Dollar Legislature of California"; the lobbies of the huge trusts; the grants of stupendous natural resources; the corporation-subsidizing of campaign funds; and selling of public utility privileges by city legislators speak volumes in substantiation of the truth that our "democracy" is a government of, by and for the capitalist class.

From the by-laws of the United States Chamber of Commerce we learn that its purpose is to establish closer relations between the commercial interests and the Federal officials. It aims "to secure cooperative action in advancing the common purposes of its members, uniformity and equity in business usages and laws, and proper consideration and concentration of opinion upon questions affecting the financial, commercial, civic and industrial interests of the country at large." For the last decade the Department of Commerce has been working hand in glove with the United States Chamber.

Throughout the country the Chambers of Commerce have delegated to themselves the power to act as the guardians of the cities' "stability and prosperity." In cities and towns having the Commission form of government these bodies play an especially important role. They plan the social and financial legislation. They are the power behind the throne. The flood disasters of 1913 deprived Hamilton, Ohio of its municipal government. In this emergency *the Chamber of Commerce set up a provisional government. A commercial body took over the reigns of government.*

As the working class grows more mature politically, as the class struggle becomes more sharp, the Chambers of Commerce take on wider political functions. This tendency has been well estimated by the head of Williams College. He said: "The center of political gravity is gradually settling, and if it passes from legislative bodies to the electorate, there must be found a workable way of securing deliberation among the voters. *If it should come about that the only place for free and effective deliberation is among the voters prior to election day, then, plainly, bodies like the Cleveland Chamber of Commerce will become normal centers for the consideration of public questions and their influence will be increasingly important.*" (Emphasis ours). The Cleveland Chamber of Commerce has been particularly successful in gaining political power, in molding the opinions of the masses, and in guiding their demands into safe channels.

Powerful Factor in Social Life

In social life the Chambers of Commerce have steadily grown in influence. Through an effective control of advertising the newspapers are at their mercy. Should a small town or even city newspaper antagonize the local Chamber it is bound to feel the heavy hand of the almighty dollar. The leading business houses are members of the Chamber of Commerce and they discontinue advertising. This puts the quietus on the recalcitrant press and "public opinion" remains safe.

The churches and public and higher schools are to a great extent dominated by these commercial associations. The god of every church is at the mercy of Mammon. Unless policies acceptable to the supporters are adopted, the pastor himself is compelled to look to heaven for relief. Hence, the national "law and order" Sundays; the Americanization campaign waged by the churches. Thus do the Chambers of Commerce own even the souls of the workers!

Many of our leading colleges and universities work in close co-operation with the Chambers of Commerce. The control of America's highest educational centers by corporations needs no emphasis. The influence of Morgan in Columbia, Rockefeller in the University of Chicago, and the Anthracite Kings in Pennsylvania University is a *fait accompli*.

Many institutions have their curricula planned by the Chambers of Commerce. Some conduct special courses under the latter's auspices. The Harvard Graduate School

of Business Administration, the Wharton School of Finance in the University of Pennsylvania, Cornell, City College, New York University, Oberlin and Williams College work in very close co-operation with their respective Chambers of Commerce. These specialize in turning out trained spokesmen, "expert secretaries" for the commercial interests. Naylor in his "Trade Associations" (page 143) sums up the situation from a business point of view by saying: "In several of the universities of this country courses are given under the patronage of trade associations. The paper industry encourages the technical study of paper making at the University of Maine and elsewhere through its Vocational Education Committee. Other associations have arrangements with various technical schools for the training of scientific men for their particular industries."

In Cleveland the Chamber of Commerce controls all the philanthropic activities. No one is permitted to solicit funds without permission from the Central Federation of Charity which was created and is completely controlled by the local Chamber of Commerce. All plans for proposed public works are first submitted to the Committee on Municipal Art and Architecture, a subsidiary body of the local Chamber. The city Charter of 1912 was a product of the Chamber's Committee on Legislation. It must be remembered that the Cleveland organization is typical of the hundreds that wield as much, if not more, power. Boston, Denver, and Kansas City also boast of highly developed Chambers of Commerce.

Industrial Field

In strikes and labor disputes the Chambers are especially active. The vicious open shop drive is largely financed by the U. S. Chamber of Commerce, National Association of Manufacturers, Manufacturers' Association of Illinois, National Metal Trades, National Founders' and National Erectors' Associations.

San Francisco's Chamber of Commerce was behind the anti-labor campaign which terminated in the imprisonment of Tom Mooney and Billings. The Chamber of Commerce was the heart of the scab movement in the Boston police strike. In the Lawrence and Paterson strikes the Chambers of Commerce directed the capitalist forces. Ole Hanson was only the mouthpiece of the Chamber of Commerce in the Seattle General Strike.

Palmer's furious drive was, to a great extent, inspired by the U. S. Chamber of Commerce. The latter's agents worked side by side with the Department of Justice thugs. To-day the Chamber maintains an elaborate anti-Red bureau. In the Report (p. 35) of the Ninth Annual Meeting of the Directors of this body we find the following: "The organization of a staff to carry on the work of the Committee on American ideals was completed soon after the last annual meeting. The first efforts of the Committee were directed to securing the co-operation of the organization members of the Chamber, who were asked to appoint committees of their

own to work with the Central Committee. There has been a cordial response to this request. *The Committee maintains headquarters in New York City and has collected and disseminated information to the membership of the Chamber as to radical activities, methods of Americanization adopted and found helpful by commercial organizations and individual business firms.* (Emphasis ours.)

The role of the Chambers of Commerce in the class struggle is stated very plainly by one, Wilson, in his "Community Leadership" (p. 62). He says: "If the public gets muddled on the issue and mixes evolution with revolution together, there is no prophet so rash as to predict the outcome. To keep the matter straight, there must be an organized center of community leadership in hundreds of cities where the clearest headed and most patriotic citizens may exert their influence to the utmost." Wilson frankly says that the modern Chamber of Commerce is the mechanism through which the forward-looking capitalists can unify and direct the opposition to the forces struggling against the present order.

Pursuing this path the Chamber of Commerce is underwriting the expense of maintenance incurred by many counter-revolutionary organizations. The Indianapolis Chamber of Commerce, for instance, pays the rent for the American Legion's national headquarters. Numerous Legion posts are in the hands of the Chambers and their agents. Scab-herders always look to the local commercial bodies in time of distress, as was shown by the relief accorded to the Baldwin-Felts thugs in the last West Virginia episode.

Summary

1. The American Chambers of Commerce and the numerous trade associations are an integral part of the capitalist dictatorship in this country. They are a powerful link in the chain that binds the workers to wage slavery. The

stock-exchange and the state executive power are closely interlinked.

2. They are the "doing bodies" and the brains of the capitalist democracy. No economic or political legislation is anywhere passed without their being "consulted."

3. Through their hold on advertising they have great control over the press. Through their contributions and aggressive demands they dominate many colleges and universities and the major party campaign funds. The Chambers also control the purse strings of the church.

4. The Chambers serve as the recruiting ground for all reactionary movements. They direct the anti-labor forces, support the counter-revolutionary organizations and mould opinion against the working class.

5. In every strike, in every labor dispute, the Chambers of Commerce line up for war and drive all the governmental forces into action against the workers.

The Chambers of Commerce are rallying centers of counter-revolution. They constitute a strong, extra-governmental, state-power. They are the vital link between the stock exchange and the executive forces of the capitalist state.

What Can We Do?

The Party must wage an aggressive campaign against the Chambers of Commerce. We must unmask their pernicious anti-labor activities in the legislature, school, and press. In every strike we must point out to the workers the real character of these associations—a union of capitalists along class lines, regardless of trade or industry. From this we must have the workers draw the lesson of the necessity for broadening their organizations, losing their craft outlook, and meeting the solidarity of capitalist oppression with the solidarity of working class liberation.

Legal and Illegal Activity

*From "Principles of Organization of Communist Parties, the Methods and Character of Their Work."
(Adopted by the Third Congress of the Communist International)*

THE different phases of the development of the revolution call for corresponding variations in the practical activity of every Communist Party. There is, however, no essential difference in the organizational structure to be built up by the legal party on the one side and the illegal on the other.

The party must be so organized that it is always prepared to adapt itself to changes in the conditions of the struggle. The Communist Party must develop itself into a fighting organization capable on the one hand of avoiding a pitched battle against overwhelming forces of the

enemy concentrated upon a given point, while on the other hand the very concentration of the enemy must be utilized to launch an attack upon him at the time and place where he least expects it. It would be the greatest mistake in party organization to stake everything upon an uprising or street fighting or only upon conditions of severest oppression. Communists must perfect their preliminary revolutionary work in every situation and arrange it constantly on a basis of preparedness for the struggle, since it is often almost impossible to foresee the changes from periods of ferment to periods of tranquility.

And just in those cases that might be foreseen it is impossible to count on that foresight for the reorganization of the party, since the change usually takes place with great and often with surprising rapidity.

Legal and Illegal Parties

The legal communist parties of the capitalist countries usually fail to grasp the importance of the task of being properly prepared for revolutionary uprisings, for armed conflict, in fact for the illegal struggle as a whole. They commit the error of constructing the whole party organization on a too one-sided basis with a view to permanent legality and of developing it according to the requirements of the legal tasks.

In the illegal parties, on the other hand, there is often insufficient understanding of the methods of using the opportunities furnished by the legal activity to build a party organization which maintains the closest and most vital relations with the revolutionary masses. The party work here betrays the inclination to undertake fruitless Sisyphus tasks or powerless conspirative activity. Both of these tendencies are erroneous. Every legal communist party must understand how to assure for itself the greatest preparedness for action even under the conditions of underground activity, especially must it be ready for the outbreak of revolutionary uprisings. Every illegal communist party must exploit with energy all the opportunities afforded by the legal labor movement to become through intensive party work the organizer and leader of the great revolutionary masses.

The conduct of the legal and illegal work must always be concentrated in the hands of the same central party organization.

In the legal as well as the illegal party the conception occurs frequently of the illegal communist work of organization as the foundation and support of a closed, military system which is isolated from the rest of the party work and party organization. This idea is altogether incorrect. On the contrary the construction of a fighting organization must be achieved in the period before the revolution chiefly on the basis of communist party activity. The entire party must be developed into a fighting organization for the revolution. Isolated revolutionary military organizations, prematurely developed, soon reveal a tendency to disintegration and demoralization since they lack immediate and practical party activity.

It is of course imperative for an illegal party to protect its members and its party organization from being found out by the authorities, and to avoid every possibility of facilitating such discovery by careless keeping of records, collecting of contributions and injudicious distribution of revolutionary material. For these reasons it cannot use open forms of organization for conspirative ends. It can, nevertheless, through practice, acquire more and more proficiency in this matter.

All precautions must be taken to prevent the entrance

into the party of doubtful or undesirable elements. The means to be used for this end will depend entirely on whether the party is legal or illegal, persecuted or tolerated, in a state of rapid growth or of stagnation. One method which has proven useful under certain conditions is the system of candidature, whereby applicants for admission into the party are first placed upon probation on the recommendation of one or two party members and admitted finally only on condition of their carrying out work which has been entrusted to them.

It is unavoidable that the bourgeoisie should send spies and provocators into the illegal organization. The struggle against this condition must be carried on with great skill and perseverance. One method is the clever combination of legal and illegal activity. Through long legal revolutionary work the test can best be made who is adaptable, courageous, conscientious, energetic, clever and responsible enough to be entrusted with tasks suited to his capacity.

A legal party must always make its preparations for unexpected situations in advance, for example by keeping addresses in some secret place, to destroy letters as a rule, to place recording documents in safe-keeping, to provide conspirative training for its messengers, etc. Our general party work must be distributed in such a way so as to strengthen and develop the kernel of a fighting organization before the revolutionary upheaval according to the needs of this phase of the struggle. It is especially important that the leaders of the communist party should always keep these needs in mind in their work, and should endeavor so far as possible to form a clear conception of these beforehand. This can never be done with sufficient clearness and precision. But that need be no reason for neglecting altogether this most important requirement with regard to the conduct of communist organization work. For if with the open revolutionary uprising the greatest changes in the activity of the communist party come about, they may also put the best organized party face to face with tasks of great difficulty and complexity. There is a need perhaps of mobilizing our political party for military struggles within the space of a few days, and not only the party, but also its reserves, the organizations of its sympathizers, indeed its whole Landsturm, that is the unorganized revolutionary masses. For there can at this time be no talk of a regular red army. We must win the victory without an organized army through the masses under the leadership of the party. For this reason the most heroic struggle will perhaps not avail if our party is not prepared beforehand for the emergency from the standpoint of organization.

Preparedness Essential

The observation has often been made in revolutionary situations that the central organs of direction of the revolution were not equal to their tasks. The proletariat can accomplish remarkable achievements in the subordinate tasks of organization. For the most part, however, dis-

order, lack of judgment and chaos reign in its headquarters, and even the most elementary division of labor may be lacking. The news service in particular is often so poor that it brings more trouble than benefit. Where secret post, secret transport, secret headquarters, secret printing offices are needed these usually depend entirely upon lucky or unlucky chances. Every provocation of the organized enemy is done with the best intentions.

The situation will never be better if the party which leads the revolution has not previously organized special activities for these purposes in its own ranks. For example the surveillance and unmasking of the political police requires special practice. A system for secret communication can only function successfully through long and regular practice. All these special branches of revolutionary activity need some previous secret preparation, however small, by the legal communist party.

And for the most part a strictly legal activity is suf-

ficient for the development of the necessary arrangements in these fields, if attention is only given in the organization of this activity to the character of the arrangements needed. For example, a well arranged system of distribution for legal leaflets, letters and publications may serve as a system for secret communication, courier service, secret post, secret headquarters, conspirative transport system, etc.

The communist organizer sees every party member and every revolutionary worker in his coming historical role as a soldier in the battle of the revolution. And he places him accordingly beforehand in the group and in the work which most nearly corresponds to his future position and function. His present activity must, however, be of some useful work which is of service in the daily struggle, not a mere drilling the usefulness of which is not understood by him. And at the same time this activity is also to some extent a training for the important requirements of the final struggle of the future.

At the Congress of Red Labor

By JOSEPH DIXON
Delegate, United States.

THE Red International of Labor Unions is now an accomplished fact, and one of the most important facts in the present world situation. Under the banner of revolutionary trade-unionism some 17,000,000 workers have united and expressed their allegiance to Moscow. The Congress which completed the organization of this great force during July, consisted of representatives from twenty-eight different countries, from every continent and every shade of revolutionary tendency which accepts the fundamental principles of the class war. Their varieties of outlook and policy were, however, forged into one unified, authoritative program.

Impressions

The carrying out of the program was entrusted to the General Staff of the Red International and its Feld Marshal, A. Losovsky. He was the unanimous choice for General Secretary, that is responsible executive of the International of Labor Unions under the control of the Executive Committee. Losovsky is at the same time the head of the All-Russian Trade Union Federation. He is a man of medium stature, bearded, with bright blue eyes and high forehead.

His unusual intellectual equipment, combines the qualities of student, man of action, and administrator. A real dynamo in the recent sessions, he spread the contagion of his energy and enthusiasm in every direction,

and dominated the Red Congress. Through the force of his personality the domination was, however, intellectual in its source and results, for the Russian avoids above all, mere personal domination.

The trade unions of Russia number over 7,000,000 members, yet Russia stood on a basis of equality in voting power with the six other principal industrial countries. Even the United States with its insignificant scattering of organized adherents of the Red International, cast as many votes as Russia did. Nor were the delegates overawed by a display of Russia's intellectual and political talent. The Russian political leaders kept away from the Congress—even after all the delegations, including the syndicalist opposition, had signed a letter requesting that they address the convention. An amusing incident occurred when one of the few delegates who had charged "dictation" on the part of the Russians, was heard to declare that the refusal of the Soviet and Communist International leaders to address the Congress was a serious slight, almost an insult. Of course the delegates as a whole understood the delicate refusal of the Russians to be placed in any position which could give excuse for a charge of undue influence or pressure to effect the decisions of the Congress.

One of the incidents of the Congress may be of special interest to American readers. This was the reception accorded to George Andreytchine, who arrived during

the last days of the Congress. All of the French, Spanish, Italian, Bulgarian delegates and many of the Russians welcomed him as a long-lost brother. Some of them literally took him to their bosoms. He was invited to address the Congress—the only intrusion upon the regular course of business that occurred, and at the close of the sessions the American trade unionists unanimously voted to request him, as he was remaining in Russia, to represent them on the Central Council. Andreytchine's services in bringing about close cooperation between the Communist and Syndicalist elements both in the Council and the Congress were of the greatest value, and he was elected to the Executive Bureau upon nomination by the Russians.

Men of the Congress.

There were many other interesting figures in the Congress. Tom Mann of England was one of the most popular, as well as most influential. There was Fritz Heckert of Germany, who has been active in building up the magnificent left-wing movement in the German trade unions—with a membership of over two millions out of a total of nine millions—organized in the course of a year. There was Bela Szanto of Hungary, a veteran of the class-war and a proletarian student active in the Hungarian revolution and therefore now much sought after by the Hungarian White Terror. Szanto is the author of several books on trade unionism and revolutionary tactics, and of a history of the Hungarian Revolution. He speaks English almost without accent, having learned it from an Englishman in Budapest. One of the most interesting Russians was Artem-Sergiev, president of the Miners, who wielded great influence at the Congress. He spoke English fluently and participated in many of the English-speaking caucuses. All who knew him were much grieved at his death in a railway accident just after the Congress, together with six others, including Hewlett of England and Freeman of Australia.

Another brilliant Russian was Tziperovich, who presented the resolution on Workers' Control of Industry. This is a most profound document, perhaps the outstanding theoretical contribution of the Congress. The venerable Ozol of the Russian Tailors' Union was also an interesting figure.

The Opposition

The opposition elements in the Congress were small in number, but furnished a few picturesque figures. Bartels, of the Freie Arbeiter Union, Gelsenkircher, Germany, was the irreconcilable. He is a young and active man and a fluent talker, and being at odds with the Congress on almost every point under debate, he occupied much of the foreground. He left the Congress still un-

reconciled, but it is stated that his organization at home forced him to modify his position and he is now negotiating a working agreement between his union and the large left-wing in the trade unions, in which all the decisions of the World Congress are recognized. Two delegates who always voted "No" were Tom Barker, an I. W. W., with credentials from the Argentine Confederation, and another I. W. W. with credentials from a Timber Workers' Union in Western Canada.

The French and Spanish opposition was the most interesting. But they will require an article by themselves. After one has mentioned a few it seems unfair to omit many others who immediately come to mind, such as the young Negro from the Labor Union of Java, who spoke in German.

The Struggle of the Day

The problem of the revolution in Western Europe and America is fundamentally the problem of the trade unions. This lesson has been learned through death and suffering during the first two years of the Communist International. At the first Congress the question of the trade unions was hardly considered in any serious way. At the Second Congress the trade unions were definitely recognized as presenting a major problem to the revolutionary movement, and the fundamental principles of the Communist program were laid down, while the theoretical aspect was deeply discussed. By the time of the Third Congress (June, 1921) it was recognized that the struggle between the Communist International and the social-traitors of the Second and Two and a Half Internationals had in reality become a struggle for the leadership and control of the trade union movement of the world. While the social-traitors had been discredited and defeated on the political field, they had retained, and still retain, their hold upon the organized workers in the trade unions. And "it must be recognized that the revolution is impossible in the face of opposition, or without the support, of the workers organized in the trade unions." The main struggle against the "yellow" leaders has been transferred to the field of the trade unions. It is the struggle against the Amsterdam Federation of Trade Unions. The issue of the trade unions is now the fundamental task of the Communist Parties of the capitalist world.

The Second Congress had laid down the main lines of Communist tactics in this field. But practical questions of carrying out these tactics could only be worked out by a trade union congress. And the clear formulation of tactics as well as theory, the laying down of definite and specific programs, came only with the First Congress of Revolutionary Unions in July, 1921. The questions dealt with in this Congress are many and varied; the problems are sometimes very complicated. We will now only enumerate the most important.