

The COMMUNIST

VOL. VIII

SEPTEMBER, 1929

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U. S. *Max Bedacht*

The Party Trade Union Work During
Ten Years *Wm. Z. Foster*

Our Negro Work *Cyril Briggs*

The Struggle for the Comintern in America
L. Platt

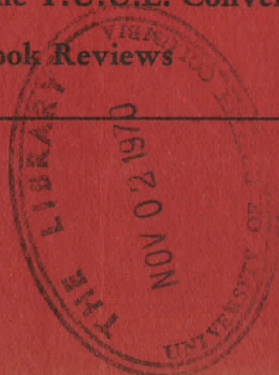
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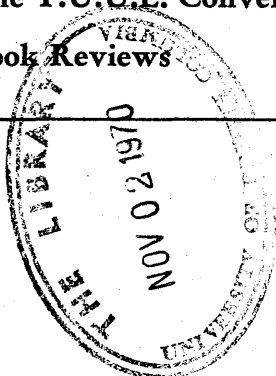
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THE COMMUNIST

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Marxism-Leninism*

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MAX BEDACHT, *Editor*

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No. 9

TEN YEARS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY IN THE U. S.	481
<i>By MAX BEDACHT</i>	
THE PARTY TRADE UNION WORK DURING TEN YEARS	488
<i>By WM. Z. FOSTER</i>	
OUR NEGRO WORK	494
<i>By CYRIL BRIGGS</i>	
THE STRUGGLE FOR THE COMINTERN IN AMERICA	502
<i>By L. PLATT</i>	
A NOTE ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF POST-WAR CAPITALISM IN THE U. S.	512
<i>By Ross</i>	
THE T.U.U.L. CONVENTION	529
<i>By WM. Z. FOSTER</i>	
BOOK REVIEWS	534

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To Communism Under the Banner of the Comintern

Ten Years of the Communist Party in the United States

ON September first our Communist Party of the United States was ten years old. It was born twins: the "Communist Party" organized in "Smolny," on Blue Island Avenue in Chicago, and the "Communist Labor Party" organized in the Machinists' Hall on South Ashland Boulevard, Chicago. The history of the ten years of existence of our Party is the history of the unification of these twins into one Party through a continuous process of bolshevization.

Even in the period of its revolutionary glory the American Socialist movement suffered from the peculiar position of the American working class and from the manifold illusions in the heads of the American workers resulting therefrom. Insofar as the Socialist movement in the United States maintained its revolutionary principles it suffered very decisively from lack of concreteness and gloried in revolutionary abstractions. Insofar as it attempted to concretize, it abandoned its revolutionary qualities and gloried in American exceptionalism.

American capitalism found extremely favorable conditions for its development. These conditions of course could not change the fundamental relationship between the American working class and the capitalist class. This relationship remained precisely the same as in the rest of the capitalist world and dominated by irreconcilable antagonisms. However, these conditions made possible the maintenance of a wage and living standard for the American workers which made the American working class the labor aristocracy of the world. The favorable conditions presented to American capitalism enabled and compelled the capitalist class in the United States to "favor" the American workers with bribes and privileges which the workers in the European capitalist countries did not enjoy. Because of this condition and its accompanying political reverberations, the American working class was inoculated with the bourgeois conception of exceptionalism: capitalism is a bad institution all over, but not in America; the working class is in a bad position all over and must fight against capitalism everywhere, but not in America. The theory of exceptionalism created in the eyes of the workers the mirage, that, irrespective of the character of capitalism in general, in America the relationship of capital and labor is not that of two irreconcilable warring classes, but of two cooperating forces which are guided by the Golden Rule of "live and let live."

Under these conditions it is natural that America did not become the cradle of class struggle theories. These theories were imported from Europe. It was the task of the leaders of the Socialist movement to acclimatize them. It was the duty of the leaders of the Socialist organizations to analyze American capitalism and the problems of the American working class with the aid of the analytical methods of Marxism, and thereby make the Marxian theory a means of the American workers for better understanding their problems and a guide toward their solution. This task the American Socialist movement never fulfilled. Every letter written by Marx or by Engels to their friends and followers, who were the leaders of the Socialist movement in the United States, in its earlier days, urged this Americanization as an indispensable prerequisite for the establishment of a revolutionary proletarian movement in the United States. But neither these leaders nor their successors in the Socialist Labor Party, and later the Socialist Party, complied with this request. The only "Americanization" that Socialism in the United States ever witnessed was its complete adaptation to the purely petty bourgeois reactions to capitalist concentration which manifested itself most outstandingly in the anti-trust movement of the muckrakers. For a time these petty bourgeois ideologists, the most prominent muckrakers, were also the most prominent leaders of the Socialist Party,—Charles Edward Russell and Allen L. Benson are outstanding examples.

The left wing movement which developed within the Socialist Party as a healthy revolutionary class reaction to the pure and simple petty bourgeois opportunism of the official leadership and spokesmen, was purely spontaneous and suffered from all the shortcomings of spontaneity. It lacked theoretical clarity and in most instances either led to sectarianism or to petty bourgeois anarchism and syndicalism.

When, finally, the left wing movement in the American Socialist Party took on organizational forms and programmatic unity, it was primarily on issues developed internationally in the Socialist movement and originating from the war and its immediate aftermath—the period of proletarian revolution in Russia and, later, in other parts of Europe. This, the birth of the Communist movement in the United States, did not solve immediately the basic shortcoming of lack of concreteness. On the contrary, it was because of this basic shortcoming that two parties saw the light of day on the First of September, 1919, instead of one Communist Party. And this original split was not even a division between concrete conceptions on the one side and abstract ones on the other, but abstractions were the guiding principles of both factions; wherever

concreteness dared to raise its head in the form of formulations of immediate issues of the American class struggle, they were greeted from all sides with the bitterest accusations of "centrism." But, the peculiarity of the conditions of development of the Communist movement in the United States was such that real "centrism," or as we would call it now "opportunism," colored itself in those days, as the "left" opportunists do in ours, with abstract though very revolutionary-sounding phrases. They did this in order to escape the real tasks of organizing and leading the American working class in the class struggle. The problem of the bolshevization of our Party was the problem of the concretization of its tasks, the actual organization of the militant American workers and for leadership in their struggles against capitalist exploitation and against capitalism.

The greatest contribution toward this development was the leadership of the Communist International and, especially, the work of the Second World Congress. This Congress took up all of the basic questions confronting the Communist movement in the different countries and formulated definitely the attitude of the Communist International toward them. This affected our Party on a number of very important issues.

First, the attitude of the Party toward the trade unions. The American Communist Party had taken over as an inheritance from the previous "left," the purely syndicalist conceptions of the Industrial Workers of the World. It did not understand that under the cover of the radical phrases of this theory there was hidden the flight from the difficulties of reality. But a revolutionist cannot run away from realities. On the contrary, his revolutionary quality is tested by his ability to face reality and to solve the problems growing out of this reality. The Thesis on Trade Union Work passed by the Second World Congress of the Communist International opened the first breach in the wall of the leftist conception of the trade union work of our Party in its early stages.

Second, the question of parliamentarism. The Communist Party (all wings and groups) had inherited from the left wing of the Socialist Party anti-parliamentarism as the spontaneous reaction to the pure and simple parliamentarism of the Socialist Party. Here, too, the young Communist movement did not realize that repetition of radical-sounding anti-parliamentary phrases could not solve the greatest problem of our Party in America—the necessity of the politicalization of the ideology of the American working class, and the killing of their democratic illusions.

Third, the question of workers' councils (soviets). The development in Russia of workers' councils (soviets) as instruments of organization of the whole working class for the revolutionary

struggle created the illusion that all that was needed to carry through the revolution in America was to organize at once workers' councils (soviets). This illusion led to a waste of organizational efforts and to a complete misunderstanding of the status of the revolutionary class struggle in the United States. The resolution of the Second World Congress on the role of the workers' councils (soviets) destroyed this illusion and brought our American Party back to the realities of the American class struggle and the needs of the American working class in this struggle.

The 21 conditions of membership in the Communist International, adopted at the Second World Congress, also settled definitely the character of a Communist and of a Communist Party.

From the Second World Congress on the development of our Party and its unification was distinctly on a basis of a progressive absorption of the decisions of the Second World Congress by the Party.

The second period of post-war capitalism made it clear to our Party that it can play its revolutionary role only in the degree in which it succeeds in making itself the leader of the American working masses in their every-day struggles, and in the degree it succeeds in conveying to these masses out of the experiences of this every-day struggles the conception of the necessity of the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism. The Communist International, as the international leader of our Party, was most instrumental in creating this definite understanding of its tasks in our Party. Especially Comrade Lenin was instrumental in bringing our Party out of the clouds of revolutionary phrases on to the firm ground of revolutionary action. His "Left Communism: An Infantile Disorder," and his discussions with representatives of the American Party, and especially his conferences with the delegation of our Party to the Third World Congress, were starting points of the concretization of the tasks of our Party. In his conferences with the American delegation to the Third Congress he proved to the delegation that he knew the general problems of the American Party better than the American Party or its representatives did.

The controversy within the Party about the establishment of a legal Party (1921), the controversy about the legalization of the Communist Party (1922), and the Labor Party controversy (1923-25), were the outward manifestations of the gradual Americanization and the Bolshevization of the Party. The reorganization of 1925-26 was merely an outward sign of the progress of this Bolshevization.

The progress of our Party in the direction of a Bolshevized Party of revolutionary action was considerably retarded by the

development of a serious internal struggle which, though originating from political differences, developed rapidly into an unprincipled factional fight. This fight gradually divided the whole Party into two antagonistic camps. Political principles were replaced by factional considerations. The Party's interests gave way to the interests of the factions. Party loyalty was drowned in faction loyalty and Party discipline was swallowed by factional discipline. As a result the revolutionary aims and purposes of the Party lost their influence as the guiding corrective of all policies, tactics and campaigns of the Party. Thus rendered rudderless, the ship of our Party gradually drifted toward the back-water of opportunism. The guiding hand of the Comintern, so invaluable during the entire existence of our Party, again straightened out its course.

The campaign necessitated by and developing out of the Comintern Address, which made an end to this poisonous cycle of factionalism, is in some respects and for the time being, a new stage in the Bolshevization of the Party. The unreserved application of the Address means in the last analysis complete concretization of the task of the American Party. It means Americanization, Bolshevization of the organizational forms and relationships, establishment of discipline and of ideological unity, the generation of continuous revolutionary activity on the basis of the every-day problems of the American working class.

The unification of our Party in its ten years of existence was primarily a process of theoretical clarification and of a consequent ideological unification. This process could not take place without the elimination of unassimilable ideologies and ideologists. The Party witnessed several very distinct processes of such eliminations. In these processes the Party either by forcible expulsion or by voluntary elimination rid itself of elements foreign to a revolutionary composition.

In all instances of this nature the Party was cleaned of opportunist elements who were the bearers of petty bourgeois ideology within the ranks of the Party. This ideology always manifested itself in resistance to the revolutionary activities of the Party. The form of this resistance varied, but its object remained the same.

The first of these processes concerned the so-called Michigan group which is now leading an existence under the name of the "Proletarian Party." The leaders of this group, the outstanding one of which was John Keracher, proposed to escape the necessity of immediate and intense activities in the class struggle by confining the activities of the Party to the class and lecture room. For them the revolutionary struggle of the working class against capitalism was not to be developed out of the daily struggles of the workers

against the capitalists for bearable conditions of employment, but was to be the result of educational activities only. Through the class and lecture room the working class was to be acquainted with the theories of Marxism. After a sufficient section of the working class was thus won, it was time for the revolution to start.

This group endeavored to escape the necessity of concrete revolutionary action by means of abstract revolutionary education alone.

The second cleansing process rid the Party of a group of opportunists *sans* phrase. This cleansing was the natural result of the decisions of the Second World Congress of the Communist International. The results of this Congress killed the opportunist illusions about the Communist Party held by a group composed of pacifists and similar petty bourgeois "ists" and led by Margaret Preevy and others. The twenty-one conditions of membership in the Communist Party led to a veritable exodus of a number of those who had imagined themselves Communists and then when confronted with clearly circumscribed duties of a Communist, suddenly found that they were not.

This more or less voluntary exodus was unfortunately not joined by all who belonged in that group. Some social-democratic elements, who were very conscious of their role as agents of the bourgeoisie within the ranks of the revolutionary workers' organizations, maintained their membership in the Party and endeavored to hinder the process of Bolshevization and to push the Party from the road of revolutionary development on to the road toward social-democracy. This fact necessitated a later ejection from the Party of a whole group of such agents of the bourgeoisie as Salutsky, Lore, Askeli, and others.

The third of these processes took place in 1922. The pure "lefts" had developed a conception that the purity of revolutionary principles is endangered by bringing them into contact with and applying them to the every-day events of the class struggle. For them revolution was the result of a natural evolutionary process of capitalism. When capitalism had completed the process of incubation of the revolution, then, and only then, was the role of the revolutionary Party to begin. Until then the revolutionary Party, the Communist Party, was to prepare itself in secret—secret not only from the capitalists and their agents, but also from the working class. And on the first day of the revolution the Communist Party was to appear on the scene and was to claim its historic due—the leadership of the revolution.

This group is still leading a precarious existence as "The United Toilers." In true opportunist fashion they still succeed in escaping the necessity of immediate revolutionary activity with the very

“radical” excuses that the time of their activities begins only with the building of the barricades.

Another group within the Party detected its anti-Communist heart after the final conclusion of the first post-war period of capitalism—the period of proletarian revolution. The tedious everyday tasks of the Party with no romantic embellishments brought out their inherently pro-capitalist tendencies and made them embrace the anti-Leninist theories of Trotskyism. This rid the Party of the inherently anti-Communist group of Cannon. This group, too, like its “left” predecessors, is cloaking its flight from revolutionary action with radical phrases.

The last of these cleansing processes takes place at the present moment as a result of the developments of the Third Period of post-war capitalism. Now the tasks of the Party take on a revolutionary concreteness which frighten the petty bourgeois souls that had still remained in the Party. The development of the war danger demands the most intensive mobilization for and activities in the class struggle. To escape the necessity of these activities, these latest apologists of the bourgeoisie within the Party developed the theory of differentiation between the intensity of external and internal contradictions of capitalism. Giving primacy to the external contradictions they hoped to escape the only method of meeting the war danger, namely, the exploitation of the internal contradictions for an intensification of the class struggle.

All of these cleansing processes have led to a considerable strengthening of the Party, to a clarification of its Bolshevist mission and aim and to an ideological unification. The present struggle against the latest right opportunist manifestations is a fit birthday activity for the Party and ushers in its second decade of existence with a perspective of Leninist clarity and Bolshevist unity.

The Party Trade Union Work During Ten Years

By WM. Z. FOSTER

PART I

IN the ten years that have passed since our Party was founded there have been many changes in our trade union policy. In accordance with the changing objective situation, and with our growing, better understanding of trade union work in general. The experiences that we have had in conducting our long struggle on the trade union field contain many valuable lessons which our Party as a whole should profit from.

In 1919, when our Party was organized, the workers were in the midst of an intensive offensive for higher wages, shorter hours, and better conditions. This offensive was active in many industries. The masses were very militant and backed up their economic demands with aggressive strikes. Among these were the steel strike of 1919-20, the "outlaw" railroad trainmen's strike, the "outlaw" Illinois coal strike, the "outlaw" railroad shopmen's strike, the national strike of the miners, etc. During these two years following the war the workers in many industries succeeded in winning more economic concessions from the employers than had been conceded them during the war itself. But American imperialism, emerging from the war situation was preparing for the great offensive it was soon to launch against the whole working class.

Our Party took but small part in these struggles of 1919 and 1920. It was in the stage of collecting the Communist forces, of building the Communist Party through a series of splits from the Socialist Party, splits of the new Communist Parties, and the gradual re-consolidation of the splits into a definite Communist Party. With the war psychology, with the war hysteria still prevalent, the Party lived underground in a general atmosphere of terrorism set up by the Government, the American Legion, the Ku Klux Klan, etc. Such trade union work as was carried on was of an ultra-leftist character. The Party's policy was one of dual unionism. It divided its support between the I.W.W. and other independent industrial unions. The Party actually participated little in the economic struggles of the workers. It rather scorned their immediate demands, concentrating upon revolutionary programs, such as the call for an armed insurrection during the strike of the Brooklyn

street car workers. This ultra-leftist policy, inherited largely from the left wing in the Socialist Party, was also very much due to the great up-swing of the Russian revolution whose experiences our comrades tried to mechanically repeat in this country. The revolutionary situation in general throughout Europe and the existing terrorism in the United States were also factors.

THE POST-WAR CAPITALIST OFFENSIVE

The Party first really got into trade union work during the great struggles of the workers in the years 1920-23. This was the period of the big capitalist offensive following the war, the open shop drive of trustified capital to "deflate" labor, to destroy its organizations, to reduce its wages, to lengthen its hours, and to liquidate such union control as the workers had established during the war. It was an era of wholesale wage cutting and union smashing in the midst of slackened industry and mass unemployment. This period in the United States corresponded with the great capitalist offensive against the workers in the capitalist countries generally.

The workers militantly resisted this capitalist assault upon their established standards. They replied to the attacks of the capitalists by a whole series of bitter strikes during these three years, in the coal, building, printing, needle, textile, lumber, meat packing, marine transportation, and other industries. These strikes climaxed in the great national strike in 1922 of 400,000 railroad shopmen.

The trade union bureaucracy, shocked out of its complacent belief that the question of trade union recognition by trustified capital had been settled by the many class collaboration schemes with the employers and Government during the war, headed these great strikes merely to betray them. The labor bureaucrats committed the most dastardly acts of treachery on every front. Consequently the workers had their unions smashed badly, and their standards reduced in all industries. This tremendous capitalist attack, assisted by the A. F. of L. leaders' betrayal, resulted in the greatest defeat the American working class had ever suffered. The A. F. of L. unions lost over a million members, especially from the best proletarian elements and in the most strategic industries.

Our Party took a very active part in these great struggles. In 1921 the Party came from underground in the shape of the Workers Party. This emerging into legal status meant more than simply bringing the Party into the open. It also threw it into active participation in the mass struggles of the workers then taking place.

The Party soon began to shed its ultra-leftism. It developed the policy of working inside the mass trade unions. This change in policy was facilitated by the writings of Comrade Lenin on work

in the old trade unions, by the decisions of the Comintern in shaping trade union policy generally, and by the influence and program of the R. I. L. U. The Party endorsed the Trade Union Educational League, which was formed in 1920.

The Party launched an active struggle for leadership of the masses of workers battling against the employers. The workers, who were in an extremely radical mood, responded strongly to our efforts. We played a decisive role in the tremendous struggles of these years. The Party, with practically no fraction system, carried on its trade union work through the T. U. E. L.

The T. U. E. L. concentrated its struggle around three principal slogans, amalgamation, the Labor Party, and recognition of Soviet Russia. The Party itself, of course, also militantly advanced and fought for these slogans. With these slogans were bound up the whole struggle against the wage smashing, open shop campaign of the employers, and the treacherous program of the trade union bureaucracy. These slogans corresponded to the needs of the workers and the workers rallied around them in great masses.

The amalgamation issue ran like wild-fire among the workers. The great strikes taking place demonstrated so clearly that even the most backward workers could see it that the craft unions with their policies of class collaboration could not stand in the face of a drive of trustified capital against the labor movement. It was easy to make great numbers of workers understand the necessity of industrial unionism through the consolidation of the existing craft unions. Our amalgamation resolution was first presented to the Chicago Federation of Labor, and there adopted almost unanimously in the face of a scattered opposition of the demoralized extreme right wing. Then followed whole groups of unions all over the country. The amalgamation resolution was, in the next few months, endorsed by nine international unions, seventeen state federations of labor, scores of central labor councils, and many thousands of local unions. More than one-half of the total number of organized workers in the United States and Canada openly endorsed the T. U. E. L. amalgamation resolution. The big rank and file railroad amalgamation conference in 1922, with over 400 delegates present, was an example of the mass character of the movement. The great miners' conference of the same period, with about 300 delegates, was an expression of the same general movement, although the amalgamation issue did not play such a role among the miners.

The slogan for a Labor Party was no less successful than the amalgamation slogan in rallying great masses of workers. The Party and the T. U. E. L. carried on a wide agitation among the unions for the Labor Party, with a splendid response. Among the measures

used to popularize the Labor Party slogan was a general rank and file referendum on the Labor Party sent out to 28,000 local unions of the A. F. of L. and railroad brotherhoods by the T. U. E. L. The masses were rapidly becoming conscious of the necessity to break with the old parties and to set up a political organization of their own. The ruthless repression of the growing strikes by the government did much to create this consciousness amongst the workers. These Labor Party activities reached their high point in the mass convention in Chicago in July, 1923. This convention, called under the joint auspices of our Party and the Farmer Labor Party (Fitzpatrick group) represented in the neighborhood of 500,000 organized workers. It gave birth to the Federated Farmer Labor Party.

The movement for the recognition of Soviet Russia, pushed aggressively by the Party, the T. U. E. L., the Friends of Soviet Russia, the Trade Union Committee for the Recognition of Soviet Russia, etc., also secured a powerful mass response from the organized workers, as well as among the working masses generally. Without question, a majority of the organized masses in the trade union movement were to support this slogan, despite the vicious opposition of the Gompers bureaucracy. At the A. F. of L. convention in Portland, in 1923, the actual majority of delegates came from organizations that had committed themselves in favor of recognizing Soviet Russia, although the convention itself, with characteristic A. F. of L. treachery, almost unanimously voted down the recognition resolution.

Our movement made these three slogans, amalgamation, the Labor Party, and the recognition of Soviet Russia, the central issues in the American labor movement. Besides our campaigns in support of the Party leaders arrested in the Bridgeman Convention also had a broad mass character. Our Party was really functioning as a leading factor in the sharply raging class struggle.

During this period the trade union bureaucracy were very much disorganized in the face of the great rank and file upheaval led by our Party and the T. U. E. L. Under extreme pressure from the radicalized masses, who militantly struggled with every weapon in their power against the bosses, they found it difficult to defeat our central slogans among the masses themselves. Typical of their demoralization was the action taken in the Ohio State Federation of Labor Convention when the T. U. E. L. presented its amalgamation resolution. Although no preliminary work had been done amongst the delegates and although the convention had long been thoroughly dominated by the labor fakers, nevertheless our amalgamation resolution was adopted overwhelmingly. Similar conditions existed in

other federations and international unions. It was only towards the end of 1923, after the Federated Farmer Labor Party split, and after the masses of workers had been defeated in the big strikes, that the bureaucrats were able to go over into an offensive successfully against the left wing in the unions.

An important feature of this period was the development of the so-called "Progressive" movement in the trade unions. This was a reflection of the sharp degree of radicalization among the masses. The right wing of the "Progressives," headed by Johnston of the Machinists Union and built primarily around the sixteen railroad unions, eventually crystallized into the "Conference for Progressive Political Action." It vaguely developed in the direction of independent political action and a Labor Party. This movement defeated Gompers in the A. F. of L. convention over the Plumb plan of railroad nationalization. The left wing of the "Progressives," headed by John Fitzpatrick, had its stronghold in the Chicago Federation of Labor and in various state federations and local unions throughout the country. It endorsed our slogans of amalgamation, the Labor Party, and the recognition of Soviet Russia. Fitzpatrick, Nockels and other leaders of these "Progressives" dealt heavily in radical phrases and made a show of active resistance against the Gompers machine. Their central slogan was for a Labor Party.

Our Party and the T. U. E. L. followed a policy of united front movements with the Fitzpatrick "Progressive" group. These united fronts were built around our three central slogans. The Communists furnished the actual leadership in these movements, Fitzpatrick literally being dragged and driven by us from one mass movement into another. We finally and definitely split with the Fitzpatrick group in July, 1923 over the question of the formation of the Federated Farmer Labor Party. We favored the formation of this party and Fitzpatrick opposed it. Practically the entire convention of several hundred delegates supported us against Fitzpatrick. Fitzpatrick fled almost immediately pell mell back to Gompers, and his "left progressives" soon followed him.

In this period of our Party's trade union work we made many serious mistakes. These were predominantly of a right wing character. Among them was our tendency to make our united fronts with the "Progressives" too much from the top and our general lack of criticism of these "Progressives" for their shortcomings. This led to a failure on our part to really crystallize our mass following and, when our break with the "Progressives" came, they were able to carry masses with them whom we should have retained under our banners. The Party and the T. U. E. L. also developed

wrong Labor Party policies and theories, embarking upon problems of building skeleton near-revolutionary labor parties which tended to substitute for and to liquidate the Workers Party. This wrong policy was exemplified by the Federated Farmer Labor Party, which was almost Communist in its make-up.

A further basic mistake made by us in our mass trade union work was to depend largely upon the false policy of forcing the trade union bureaucracy through mass pressure to lead the current strikes, to bring about amalgamation, to organize the Labor Party, etc., instead of developing more definite movements for the rank and file to actively take these matters organizationally into their own hands. This enabled the bureaucrats to largely stifle our movements, notably that for amalgamation, in their upper committees. We also quite generally made the serious error of not following up the big mass campaigns of those years by aggressive work to build the Party, to organize substantial Party fractions, and to organizationally establish the T. U. E. L. Also the trade union work was not political enough in character, tending to concentrate too much on slogans of immediate struggle. The Party displayed the seriously wrong tendency of dividing into trade unions and politicals, that is, those who devoted themselves almost wholly to trade union work and those who, doing no trade union work at all, occupied themselves with general political work of the Party. The latter tendency was largely a hang-over from the early ultra-leftism of the Party.

In spite of these serious drawbacks, however, the Party really made headway. It developed as a mass leading force. The T. U. E. L. grew rapidly in the United States. Its work was approved by the R. I. L. U., and its methods were recommended to the International Trade Union Left Wing. Recognition by the capitalists of the leading role of the Communists in the great struggles of these years contributed to the Bridgeman raid and trials in 1922. This whole period demonstrated the fact that the Communist Party, even in those days of its weakness and inexperience, could lead vast masses of workers in actual struggle. It demonstrated beyond question that the Communist Party is the vanguard of the workers and it gave proof of the great future that lies before our Party as the leader of the eventual vast revolutionary struggles of the American proletariat.

(To be continued)

Our Negro Work

By CYRIL BRIGGS

IN attempting to evaluate the work of our Party among the Negro workers and farmers during the past ten years, it is necessary to begin with the frank admission that the task of winning the Negro masses to our program was seriously and sincerely taken up only since the Sixth World Congress. Most of our Negro work prior to the Congress was of a sporadic nature intended in the main as gestures for the benefit of the Comintern.

In its resolution on the Negro Question in the United States, the Sixth Congress correctly pointed out that

“the Negro masses will not be won for the revolutionary struggles until such time as the most conscious section of the white workers show, by action, that they are fighting with the Negroes against all racial discrimination and persecution.”

and further, that it is the duty of the Party

“to mobilize and rally the broad masses of the white workers for active participation in this struggle.”

This is just what we did not seriously essay in the years preceding the Sixth Congress. And it is significant that the Negro membership of the Party experienced its first real growth with the application of the Comintern line and exactly in proportion as when and where it was applied. Prior to the Sixth Congress one could almost count the Negro membership on the fingers of one's hand—in fact, for a number of years this was literally possible. Today, the Negro membership is increasing, in one district (Buffalo) Negro comrades outnumber the white.

Prior to the Sixth Congress, white chauvinism in the American Party (in both factions!), unmasked at that Congress by Comrade Ford, and mercilessly condemned by that supreme revolutionary body, made progress in Negro work well-nigh impossible. The Sixth Congress recognized this and in its Resolution on the Negro question laid down the line for a relentless struggle against white chauvinism in the American Party, declaring, in part:

“An aggressive fight against all forms of white chauvinism must be accompanied by a widespread and thorough educational campaign in the spirit of internationalism within the Party, utilizing for this purpose to the fullest possible extent the Party schools, the Party press and the public platform, to stamp out all forms of antagonism, or even indifference among our white comrades toward the Negro work. This educational work should be conducted simul-

taneously with a campaign to draw the white workers and the poor farmers into the struggle for the support of the demands for the Negro workers."

Since the Sixth Congress the Central Committee and some of the District Committees have undertaken to carry out the line of the Comintern on the work of organizing the Negro workers and tenant farmers, share croppers, etc. A National Negro Department has been created to work with the Central Committee in the formulation of policies on Negro work and in the direction of that work nationally. The districts have been instructed to create District and Section Negro Committees, and most of the districts have complied. However, this is only a beginning. White chauvinism is still a powerful influence in the Party. Defeated at the center it is yet very strong at the periphery. Even in cities so close to the center as Baltimore, Washington, Philadelphia, etc., it continues to bedevil our Negro work. And it is particularly menacing at this time since it is precisely in this period of the growth of our influence among the Negro masses that white chauvinism can do most injury.

White chauvinism manifests itself in a general underestimation of the importance of the role of the Negro masses in the revolutionary struggles; in open or concealed opposition to doing work among the Negroes, in thinly veneered antagonism to Negro comrades and sympathizers; in failure to carry on anything but the most sporadic and feeble activities among these masses; in failure to come out openly and continually as the champion of the Negro masses in their racial and economic struggles; in failure to prosecute the fight in the reactionary trade unions for the removal of the color bar; in failure to mobilize and rally the broad masses of the white workers for active participation in the struggles of the Negro masses; in failure to draw capable Negro comrades into responsible and leading positions in the Party, in the left wing unions, in the Party auxiliaries, and in trying to excuse the failure to push the Negro comrades to the front with the rotten slander that existing Negro cadres are totally incapable and undeveloped.

White chauvinism has in the past not only prevented the Party from carrying on an aggressive and persistent campaign to win the Negro masses to the Communist program, but was responsible for many costly mistakes in our approach to these masses. The tendency in the past was to ignore the leading Negro comrades when formulating policies on Negro work. This manifestation of white chauvinism led not only to the leftist blunders which marked the birth of the A.N.L.C. and, on this and other occasions marred our approach to the Negro masses, but even to policies so utterly un-Communist as *opposition to the spontaneous mass migration from*

the South of hundreds of thousands of Negroes on the rotten social democratic and A. F. of L. argument that the coming North of these workers would hurt the economic position of the northern white workers and result in the sharpening of racial antagonisms, with resultant race riots. As punishment for their opposition to this gargantuan stupidity the older Negro comrades were refused further support (five or six dollars a week for postage) in getting out the weekly news service which was being sent out to some three hundred Negro newspapers, and were absolutely ignored in the formation of the new bridge organization. The bourgeois trick of utilizing the least militant of the oppressed race was reflected in the Party at this period. At about this same time the Party, at a convention in New York City, went out of its way to repudiate social equality for the Negro, an act which was given wide publicity in the capitalist press and, of course, quoted extensively by the Negro press, thus in one breath of astounding asininity, destroying much of the good work done by our news service, leaflets and speakers.

Another example of the wrong policies engendered by the influence of white chauvinism in the Party is found in the circumstances which led up to Comrade Huiswoud's defiance of the Party caucus at the Farmer-Labor convention in 1925 in taking the floor to answer an attack on the Negro masses by a Southern delegate. The Party instead of censuring the fraction for failure to answer this attack on the Negro masses and for further refusing Comrade Huiswoud permission to answer, accepted the fraction's opportunist view that a defense of the Negro workers would have antagonized the Southern delegates. The Sixth World Congress completely exonerated Comrade Huiswoud and censured the Party for its support of the fraction's attitude. A similar incident occurred at the Miners' Conference in Pittsburgh when one of the most active Negro comrades was disciplined for his insistence *in bringing before the conference the tabooed question of Negro work*. This comrade has been since subjected to a campaign of persecution and what, in the absence of formal charges and proof, appears to be nothing but the dirtiest slander. Many other instances of wrong policies arising out of white chauvinism could be cited.

In addition to being hampered and sabotaged by chauvinistic tendencies in the Party, the Negro work, like the trade union work, anti-imperialist work, etc., further suffered as a result of the unprincipled factional struggle which was eating at the very vitals of our Party and with which the Comintern very properly and effectively dealt in the Address. The impossibility of any real Bolshevik self-criticism during the bitter factional struggle permitted white chauvinism to stalk unchallenged in the highest committees of the

Party and gained factional protection for those comrades exposed as white chauvinists.

It is not my intention to give the impression that no work at all was done before the Sixth Congress. The Party led the Negro fig and date workers' strike in Chicago, the laundry strike in Carteret, N. J., the Colored Moving Picture Operators' strike in New York. In addition, we organized the Negro Miner's Relief Committee, captured the Tenants' League from the Socialists, held classes and forums in New York City, Chicago, Philadelphia, etc. But the work was sporadic and therefore bound to be ineffective.

Since the Sixth Congress much has been done to correct the shortcomings of our Negro work. The instructions of the Communist International to push the Negro comrades to the front in Party work have been carried out on a large scale. At both the Party and the League conventions Negro delegates were present in large numbers and took a leading part in the work of both conventions, serving on all leading committees, presiding over sessions, etc. Negro comrades were elected to the highest body in the Party, the Central Committee, and to the National Executive Committee of the League. Negro comrades were also elected to the Party's Polbureau, and to the National Bureau of the League. Negro comrades have been added to District Committees, Section Committees, etc. An ideological campaign against white chauvinism was carried on in the Party press and in all units of the Party during National Negro Week in May of this year. In addition to this all too brief ideological campaign sharp organizational measures have been taken against several comrades who were exposed as white chauvinists. In Seattle, Wash., several comrades who objected to the presence of Negro workers at Party dances were expelled. In addition, the Central Committee expelled a number of comrades who, when the vote was taken in the unit to which the offending comrades belonged, voted against expulsion. In Norfolk, Va., most of the white members of a Party unit were expelled for refusal to admit the Negro comrades to their meetings. And in making the Norfolk expulsions the Party showed its Negro face by sending Comrade Hall to Virginia as C.E.C. representative to act in the matter.

In the T.U.E.L. a basis for trade union work among the Negro proletariat has been laid, and some work in this direction begun. A Negro department has been organized with Comrade Hall at its head. In addition, Comrade Hall was sent on tour for the Trade Union Unity Convention with the aim of mobilizing the Negro workers for that convention. Special emphasis has been laid on the necessity of getting large Negro delegations for the convention. Up to a few days prior to the convention, however, indications were that

the districts had not done very much in this respect—another evidence of continued under-estimation of our Negro work.

While the Party and the T.U.E.L. have begun to orientate toward the Comintern and R. I. L. U. line on mobilizing the Negro workers for the class struggle, the left wing unions under our leadership have done very little to win the confidence of these workers—the Gastonia fraction being an honorable exception, with all its mistakes and wobblings, to this general indictment. Especially criminal is the apathy of the needle trades comrades and their general attitude toward the Negro workers—an attitude which has made it impossible for their union to retain the Negro workers which *it only organizes in times of strikes*. While this union has scores of functionaries, with departments for Greek, Italian, Jewish, etc., workers, it has not a single Negro functionary and no department concerned even remotely with the organization of Negro workers. This, in spite of the fact that there are several thousand Negro workers in the needle trades in New York City alone. In the miners' union the same underestimation is material. In spite of the existence of excellent, militant material plus the fact that the number of Negro miners is very large, in some fields outnumbering the white miners, this union has not yet appointed a single Negro field organizer.

The Party auxiliaries concerned with relief and defense have yet to orientate themselves on our Negro work. The defense body has been doing some good work in helping the tenants of Harlem to fight their battles against the landlords, but this is not enough. There are always numerous opportunities to champion the cause of Negro workers who are notoriously the worst victims of the employers and their courts. The relief organization has made a small start, but has not gone very far, due, in part, to lack of sufficient cooperation from the Negro comrades themselves.

That there is still urgent need for sharpening the struggle against white chauvinism, both ideologically and organizationally, is demonstrated by the present unhealthy situation in District 8 where as a result of much blundering and lack of political direction, a distinctly anti-Party attitude developed some months ago among the Negro comrades. Kruse, then D. O. decided that the district could not pay wages to a Negro functionary, and in spite of the repeated demands of the National Negro Department, the Secretariat and the Central Committee that the District Organizer share with the Negro functionary all funds available for wages this was never done. The Negro comrades in the district very naturally resent the failure to mobilize the Party behind this work and to give the necessary political and financial support. They had a perfect case to bring

charges of white chauvinism against the comrade or comrades responsible for this un-Communist attitude and had they gone about it rightly they could have brought about the expulsion of those responsible. Instead they adopted a wholly impermissible anti-Party attitude and issued a statement in which they threatened to sabotage the Negro work of the Party unless Comrade Isbell was paid his wages. In reacting in this manner these comrades showed that they were politically undeveloped. However, the fact that the Negro comrades sinned against the Party should not be permitted to cover up the greater crime of the white comrades involved.

In St. Louis, Missouri, which is in District 8, some white Party members are at present debating whether a hall, controlled by the Party and in the center of the Negro community, could be thrown open as a center for Negro work! This rotten petty-bourgeois attitude cannot be tolerated in a Communist Party and the District Committee should take immediate and energetic action to force these comrades into line on our Negro policy or to kick them out of the Party. The District Committee must take responsibility for this condition in St. Louis and for the developments in Chicago. Had the District Committee given proper care to the creation of a strong District Negro Committee, *and would have given political leadership and a correct line*, many of these mistakes would not have occurred. How politically bankrupt is such an approach to the question of Negro work may be judged from the attitude of Comrade Milgrom and the support of that attitude by some of the white members of the Committee. Comrade Milgrom finds a million faults in the work of Comrade Isbell, but fails to see anything wrong in the attitude of the District Committee towards the Negro work of the Party. When deservedly sharp criticisms of Comrade Milgrom's attitude was made by Comrade Gus Sklar, some white comrades had the petty-bourgeois reaction that Comrade Sklar was "unnecessarily antagonizing a comrade." This is their conception of a Bolshevik Party and Bolshevik self-criticism! Comrade Isbell may not have been the proper comrade for the work but how any comrade could fail to see that the district was also at fault is inconceivable unless that comrade was supporting the chauvinistic policies of Kruse. The Negro District Committee further showed its weakness by its total neglect of live local issues, by its failure to react promptly and militantly on the beach segregation fight, etc. Here both the Negro and the white comrades were at fault.

The danger to the Party's Negro work contained in such situations as exist in Chicago (the situation is being liquidated by a more correct attitude on the part of the District committee under the leadership of Comrade Hathaway), can be gauged by our experi-

ence in Philadelphia a few years ago, when a very active comrade withdrew from the Party in protest at the chauvinist attitude of the Philadelphia white comrades. At about the same time a group of Negro Pioneers withdrew on the same account. As a result, an entire branch of the bridge organization, of over 45 members, was lost to us.

Unfortunately, Chicago is not an isolated instance. At this very moment we have an unhealthy situation in Baltimore where our influence among the Negro workers is being undermined by the chauvinistic attitude of some of the white comrades there. According to charges made by the local Negro director, Comrade F. E. A. Welsh, and Comrade Nicolai Garcia, a Negro comrade from the center, and substantiated by Comrade Hall on the basis of his own experiences with the Baltimore comrades, this attitude expresses itself not only in apathy toward our Negro work, but in open antagonism as well. Illustrative of the strength of white chauvinism among the Baltimore comrades is the fact that Comrade Garcia was in Baltimore six days before he was able to get a bed. The white comrades with whom he came into contact just didn't know what to do with him! Yes, two days later when a white comrade arrived from New York and talked about going to a hotel there were instant protestations and offers about white comrades to put him up. Even in District Two, at least one unit (in Queens) "did not know what to do" with several Negro workers they had brought into the Party. Apparently it had not entered their heads that they should be taken into that unit.

For the failure to energetically fight and unmask these tendencies of white chauvinism in the Party the Negro comrades are themselves largely to blame. Often, however, it happens that the Negro comrades involved are new members of the Party and are not aware of the decisive stand taken by the Communist International and its American section against white chauvinism and merely come to the conclusion that the Communist Party, instead of being a Party of internationalism and working-class solidarity, is "just like the republican, democratic and socialist parties" in the reaction of its members to the race question. White chauvinism must be rooted out of our Party. The petty bourgeois elements who are the ones most responsible for this manifestation within our ranks of the influence of the imperialist ideology must be dealt with sharply wherever it can be shown that they are sabotaging the Party's Negro work or exhibiting other indications of white chauvinism. The Negro comrades should play a leading role in the task of exposing the white chauvinists and cleansing our Party of these undesirable elements.

It is the duty of our Party, of all its leading committees, of all the leading comrades, to unceasingly combat all manifestations of white chauvinism within our Party and within the ranks of the working-class. The Party must take up in all earnestness the task laid down by the Sixth Congress waging "an aggressive fight against all forms of white chauvinism," accompanied "by a widespread and thorough educational campaign in the spirit of internationalism within the Party." And this campaign should be treated *as a major campaign*, involving the entire machinery of the Party, including all leading national, district and section committees, the agitprop committees, the Party press—every instrument at our command.



The Struggle for the Comintern in America

By LEON PLATT

THE internal struggle now taking place in the Communist Party of America as well as within the Communist Parties of other countries, is the most outstanding and important since the days when the international communist movement declared Trotskyism a counter revolutionary ideology and opened war against it. The actions of Lovestone and his group, and the struggle of our Party against them bring to the surface a series of questions, which are of decisive importance to the membership of our Party and to the revolutionary workers who carry on their daily struggle under the leadership of the Communist Party. The present day position of Lovestone on the role of the Comintern, the role of leadership in a Communist Party, and his role in the struggle against war and for the defense of the Soviet Union must be exposed before the working class, and show his degeneration to Social Democracy.

1. *Why do the Communists fight among themselves?*

Many of our Party members and revolutionary workers who are being influenced by our Party ask this question. The bourgeoisie, the social democrats and all other enemies of the revolutionary movement are again rejoicing over the internal struggle in our Party and the actions the Party had to take in eliminating some of its former leaders who ceased to lead and became misleaders. The Communist Party wants to make it clear that internal controversies in a Communist Party are not based on personal struggle between individual leaders. Internal fights in a Communist Party are based on political differences and not on unprincipled scramble for power as the bourgeoisie interprets and as even some of our backward members believe it to be.

The development of the revolutionary movement is not following a straight line. The tactics and policies of our Party are being shaped according to the economic and political situation existing in the United States at given periods and are subordinated to our chief aims of the full realization of our Communist program. If at a certain period the economic and political conditions change, then the party basing itself on Leninist analysis of these changed conditions must also change its course and adopt new tactics to be able to cope with the newly created situation. This the Party

must do if it does not want to isolate itself from the toiling masses and remain the leader of the working class in its struggle against capitalism.

From the experience of the revolutionary movement we know that, in a period when the Party has to take a sharp turn, we have certain sections of our members as well as sections of our leadership, who do not see the changed economic and political conditions and consequently refuse to follow the new political line of the Party and not only persist in maintaining their old course but begin actively to oppose the new orientation and decisions of the Party. This creates the basis for differences in a Communist Party. It is true that our American Party went through many years of unprincipled struggle without any political basis; this fact was already long ago established by the Comintern and does not concern the present struggle of the Party against Lovestone and his group.

The Communists as convinced Leninists carry on an uncompromising struggle against those who deviate from the Leninist line of the Party. This struggle cannot remain a secret or be avoided. The Party as the leader of the working class, brings out into the open all the political differences that exist in the Party and on the basis of consistent Leninist political discussion it clarifies its membership and the revolutionary workers and thereby adopts a correct Communist policy that will lead the working class to victory. However, those leaders of the Party, who refuse to subordinate themselves to the accepted opinions and decisions of the Party majority and insist on following a different line, the Party vigorously combats and does not hesitate to use any disciplinary measures against them.

2. The Question of Leaders in a Communist Organization

The present period of capitalist development, known as the third period, is being characterized by the sharpening of the internal and external contradictions of capitalism which have their inevitable effect upon the working class, leading to developing sharp class struggles. Lovestone refuses to see the contradictions arising in the present third period of capitalist development and began to organize an active opposition to the new course of the Party and the Communist International. The American Party as well as the Communist International has already had experience with situations, where former Party leaders instead of being the champions of the new course and tactics of the Party become an hindrance and prevent the Party from carrying out its new tasks. Of particular importance to us are the experiences derived from our struggle against counter-revolutionary Trotskyism.

When Lovestone today pretends not to understand the reasons for the decisive and energetic action of the Party against him and

his group it will be of interest to recall some of the views expressed by one of the present leaders of the right wing group and see how today they lost every vestige of Communist consciousness and responsibility. In a speech made by Wolfe on Trotskyism in 1928, it is said:

"We live in a changing world and those who are not capable of adjusting themselves may lead today in the right direction, tomorrow in the wrong direction. Then they become misleaders and must be fought. The history of our movement is full of such persons."
(From a corrected stenogram of a speech by B. D. Wolfe.)

"Thus the same leader continuing to lead in the same direction when a new direction is necessary, becomes a misleader and it becomes necessary for the working class to cease to follow him, oftentimes to fight him." (From an article by B. D. Wolfe, *Leaders and Faction fights.*)

This was the approach of our Party membership in the struggle against counter-revolutionary Trotskyism. However, it is not only limited to Trotskyism, but applied to leadership in a communist organization generally. In the present moment in the case of Lovestone, Wolfe and Gitlow.

The Trotskyites, to justify their struggle against the Communist International brought up the past services of Trotsky, his personal abilities and individual greatness. Likewise Lovestone and his groups bring continually up their past work as a justification for their present slander and struggle against the Comintern. The membership must answer Lovestone as it did to Trotsky, that their past work as leaders who today became renegades is not the question before the Party. The party and the revolutionary working class do not judge their leaders only on their past. What is important for the party is where do they lead at present? We shall let Wolfe speak again to show how Lovestone and Wolfe degenerated to social democracy. In the same speech Wolfe continues:

"So I say we cannot ask how eloquently does this man speak? How much has he served us in the past, how much has he seemed to be a leader. At every stage, again and again, we must subject our leadership to the most searching analysis and ask *where are they leading in the present movement?* What are the objective results of their proposals for the working class? In our movement there is no room for hero worship. When our leaders become misleaders, we break them just as we have made them, otherwise we cannot go ahead to victory."

The membership of our Party has no sentimental approach to its leadership and the personal factor is not important. The membership therefore must understand and not to permit itself to be confused with the demagogic arguments of Lovestone expressed in every one of his anti-Party documents, about his past services, long

membership in Party, devotion, etc. . . . All this does not justify his struggle against the Communist International, but on the contrary condemns him. This petty bourgeois ideology basing leadership in a Communist Party on sentiment must be condemned, because it weakens the consistency of a bolshevik leadership which can only lead to the political degeneration of the party. Only those who are permeated with a bourgeois ideology and completely degenerated into the camp of social democracy can judge leadership on the basis of personal characteristics. The membership of a Communist Party has only a political attitude to its leadership. They judge concrete deeds and policies and nothing else, and in spite of everything Lovestone, Wolfe and Gitlow have done in the past the moment however, they began to struggle against the Communist International they were condemned by the membership and expelled from the Party. To make Wolfe understand why this was done we will let Wolfe speak further:

Let him not dare to say: 'Look what I did for the movement yesterday.' For the working class must always answer: 'What are you doing for the movement today?' It is useless for him to urge: 'On such and such an occasion I was right' when it is clear to all conscious workers that on the present occasion he is wrong."

"The revolution has no respect for persons. In fact the more prominent a leader has been in the past, and the greater his reputation, the more dangerous his influence for the bad becomes when he attempts to lead in the wrong direction." (Leaders and Faction Fights by B. D. Wolfe.)

The history of all those who deviated from the line of the Communist International and resisted its decisions shows that they inevitably have to land in the camp of social democracy. From passive resistance and disagreements on little questions they finally build up a political platform which becomes incompatible with membership in the Communist International.

3. THE ROLE OF THE COMINTERN

The 6th World Congress correctly pointed out and confirmed by the 10th Plenum of the C.I. that the main danger facing the Communist Parties is the right danger. The right danger consists in the failure to see the contradictions of capitalism in the present period, the shakiness of capitalist stabilization, the great disproportion between the developing forces of production and the contraction of markets, the effects of capitalist rationalization on the working class, sharpening of the contradictions between the state building socialism and the capitalist world and the effect of all these contradictions on the working class and the further development of capitalism. The working class in the present period of capitalist

contradictions is becoming more radicalized and is entering into a counter-offensive against its exploiters, the economic struggles of the workers are today being raised to a higher level and the daily struggles for better economic conditions are today assuming a political character and directed against the capitalist system as a whole. The increasing pressure of the imperialist world on the colonial countries inevitably leads to a growing resistance on the part of the colonial people against imperialism and the growing class differentiation in the colonies, where the working class is also assuming the role of the leader of the National Liberation movement. On the other hand the basic internal and external contradictions of capitalism, are sharpening the war danger between the U.S.S.R. and the imperialist world and between the imperialist powers themselves. Deviations from the above analysis given by the Comintern, inevitably leads to an overestimation of the strength of capitalism and thereby creating the impression that the working class will never be able to overthrow capitalism, underestimation of the readiness of the working class to struggle for better economic conditions, softening of our struggle against the "progressive" and "left" wing of the Socialist party. Not seeing the present contradictions of capitalism and their effect upon the working class will lead the party to isolation from the masses and instead of being at the head of these struggles of the workers the party will find itself at the tail end of these struggles. For this reason the C.I. and every Party in the Comintern are carrying on a bitter struggle against the right winger and conciliators who fight the political line of the Communist International. This struggle was yet begun at the 9th Plenum of the C.I. and at the 6th congress, however, the moment the decisions of the congress began to be put into effect, the right wing became more crystallized and increased its resistance to the line of the C. I. This necessitated for the C.I. to take more energetic measures in combatting the right wing. To Lovestone, however, the right wing in the Comintern is the Comintern itself. In one of his documents of August 19, Lovestone writes:

"Replacing any attempt (by the 10th Plenum L.P.) to estimate the situation of the parties of the Comintern as a whole, there are whole columns of measureless abuse against the "rights and conciliators" (that is generally primarily at those who resist the revision of the line of the 6th congress.)"

The characteristic feature of all those who in the past have fought the line of the Comintern and refused to carry out its decisions is, that they carry on their struggle under the pretext of fighting the revisionist and saving Leninism. In America too, Lovestone is justifying his struggle and slander against the Communist International under the pretext that the E.C.C.I. and the 10th plenum

are revising the decisions of the 6th congress and Leninism. In the same document of August 19, Lovestone states:

“The tenth Plenum and its thesis has put a stamp of official approval on the dangerous line of revision of the 6th congress decisions and of Leninism recently carried through by the E.C.C.I. and the “new leaderships” in the U.S. and other countries.”

The party and the Communist International are not blind to this hypocrisy. From the experience of the revolutionary movement we know, that many crimes were committed in the names of Leninism and Marxism. In 1912 Bernstein revised Marxism under the excuse that he was trying to save Marxism. Trotsky and Cannon in America are today fighting the Communist International also under the excuse that they are fighting the revision of Leninism. Brandler and Thalheimer in Germany, who deny the existence of the war danger advocating collaboration with the social democrats for workers control of production, denying the fascist role of the social democrats, are also fighting the Comintern under the excuse that the Comintern is revising the 6th congress and Leninism.

The events that took place since the 6th congress proves distinctly that not only was the analysis of the 6th congress correct, but that this line was effectively carried out by the Comintern in the course of the daily struggles of the International proletariat. The sharpened struggle against social democracy and the exposure of its fascist role before the working class, the raising of the economic struggle of the workers to a higher level by transforming them into political struggles against capitalism generally, the August 1, anti-war demonstrations, all this represents an effective application of the policy adopted at the 6th World Congress of “class against class.” The expulsion of the right wingers from the Communist International and cleansing the ranks of all communist parties from opportunists and social democrats is a continuation of the policy laid down at the 6th congress of struggle against the right danger and ideological consolidation of the Communist Parties. The anti-war demonstration of August 1 taking place over the entire world is a direct outgrowth of the line of the 6th congress in the struggle against war and for the defense of the Soviet Union.

On the other hand issuing strike-breaking bulletins on August 1, urging the workers not to strike when the party in certain sections of the country did issue the slogan: “Down tools on August 1,” failure to see the contradictions of capitalism in the third period, failure to see the growing radicalization of the American workers, violation of the most fundamental principles of communist organization etc., represents not only a revision of the 6th world congress

decisions but of communist principles generally and succumbing to social democracy.

Lovestone with his "theory" of the "degeneration" of the Communist International is going a step further. He is not limiting himself with the charge that the C.I. is revising the 6th congress and Leninism, but that the C.I. is destroying the Communist Parties of the International. In the document of August 19, Lovestone writes:

"The 'new leaderships' are conducting a campaign of ideological and organizational terror (similar to our own 'enlightenment campaign') which have succeeded in paralyzing the energies of the Parties and giving them great political and organizational setbacks . . . in practically all countries (U.S.S.R., Germany, France, U. S., Czecho-Slovakia, England, Poland, Italy, Switzerland, Canada, etc.)"

What is the political meaning of Lovestone's charges of the "degeneracy" of the Comintern, what political conclusions can he draw from this if he is to take Lovestone seriously? If the Comintern is revising Leninism, so what is it accepting in its place? Every class conscious worker knows, that today there are only two ways for the working class to follow, either along the Leninist revolutionary lines or along capitalist lines. The revolutionary front and the capitalist front are today more leveled than ever before, there is no middle ground between them. According to Lovestone, when the Communist International revised Leninism it naturally must accept social democracy, then the logical conclusion one can come to is, that the Comintern is no longer a communist organization, that it outlived its purpose and has no justification for its existence as a revolutionary force. These are the conclusions Lovestone draws in one of his documents of September 4. In this document Lovestone charges the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Communist International that they revised Leninism and accepted Trotskyism in its place. Lovestone says:

"With the support of the E.C.C.I. the 'new leaderships' are carrying through a revision of the line of the 6th congress and Leninism. Such revision has brought them closer to the line and views of Trotskyism in its various forms."

The revolutionary working class however, knows that Trotskyism is a counter-revolutionary ideology incompatible with Communism and those who "are brought closer to the line and views of Trotskyism in its various forms" are counter-revolutionaries.

The renegade Lovestone further says that the E.C.C.I. endorsed such leaderships in the various parties of the C.I. that "have succeeded in paralyzing the energies of the Parties and giving them great political and organizational set-backs . . . in practically all countries (U.S.S.R., Germany, France, U. S., Czecho-Slovakia,

England, Poland, Italy, Switzerland, Canada, etc.” What political conclusions can one draw from this statement if he is to take Lovestone seriously in the case. If the Comintern today is destroying the energies of the parties—the leader of the working class and giving them great organizational and political set-backs, then the Comintern is not only destroying the Communist movement which it itself helped to build, but with this very act it is defeating the working class and thereby assuming a counter-revolutionary role and must be combatted as such. If the Comintern is no longer the general staff of the world revolution, the leader of the struggles of the exploited and oppressed workers and colonial people then why should the workers follow the Comintern and carry on struggles under its banner? If the Comintern replaced Leninism with Trotskyism then why should a true communist belong to the Comintern? This is where Lovestone leads to. This is how Lovestone thinks and this is political basis for struggles against the Party and the Comintern leading directly to counter-revolution.

However, the developments since the world congress prove that it is Lovestone who degenerated to Trotskyism and revised Leninism, and that the C.I. applied the decisions and program adopted at the 6th congress in a true Leninist fashion. The struggles carried on by our German Party under the leadership of the C.I. in the Ruhr district, the strike in Lodz, the strikes in Bombay, Calcutta, the strike of the textile and agricultural workers of Czecho-Slovakia, the miners' and textile strikes in France, the strikes in Colombia, the Gastonia strike, the heroic struggles of the Berlin proletariat on the barricades on May 1, the political demonstrations of the International proletariat on August 1 against imperialist war and for the defense of the Soviet Union. All these heroic battles of the International working class, led under the direct guidance of the Communist International shattered the capitalist world and drove social democracy to fascism, all this shows distinctly that the Comintern is the only revolutionary organization fighting capitalism.

Only a renegade and social democrat blinded by his zeal to discredit the leader of the working class can say that the Comintern today is revising Leninism and accepting Trotskyism in its place and breaking up the various parties of the Communist International. Such views have no place in Communist Parties and individuals holding such views cannot remain members of the Communist International, and when the Party expelled Lovestone and his right wing group, it did what Wolfe himself expected the Party to do:

“The vanguard of the working class is not made up of blind followers and the wisdom of no individual is greater than the collective wisdom of the Party that judges him and that places him

in a position of trust and removes him from this position according to how he serves at any given moment." (Leaders and Faction Fights, B. D. Wolfe.)

THE STRUGGLE AGAINST WAR AND FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE SOVIET UNION

The main task facing the Communist movement is the struggle against imperialist war and for the defense of the Soviet Union. The Party must popularize the achievements of the Russian workers in their building up of socialism and mobilize the support of the American workers for the defense of the U.S.S.R. What is the role of Lovestone in our struggle against war? It is necessary to establish the fact, that any one having a wrong view on inner Party questions cannot fight the war danger. The struggle and the slanders of Lovestone against the Comintern is undermining the prestige of the Comintern and thereby weakening our struggle against imperialist war. The direct acts of Lovestone coming out against the strikes the Party called in various sections of the country for August 1 and minimizing its political significance is of the same counter revolutionary character as the action of the Trotskyites who have also appealed to the workers not to demonstrate on August 1. Then if the Comintern revised Leninism and is no longer a revolutionary organization, why then shall the workers respond to the call of the Comintern in the struggle against war? Why should the workers defend this comintern?

If the Communist Party of the Soviet Union is accepting Trotskyism and is not building socialism then it is going to capitalism, and then why should the workers defend it? If the Russian Communist Party is nothing else but a bureaucratic machine revising Leninism then why should the workers of other countries follow the example of the Russian party and establish a dictatorship of the proletariat in their country? It must be recognized that Lovestone with his slanders against the Comintern and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union is undermining the prestige of the U.S. S.R., the successful building up of socialism and is weakening the efforts of the party and the C.I. in mobilizing the support of the American workers for the defense of the Soviet Union. In this present period the attacks of Lovestone on our party is of the same counter-revolutionary nature as those of the Trotsky opposition. It would be here of interest to bring the opinion of one of the present leaders of this right wing group, of those who slander the Comintern and the Communist Party of the U.S.S.R. and its effect on our struggle against war. In 1928 Wolfe wrote:

"If they were successful if the working class were to believe their slanders, then they would be strengthening the imperialist armies, lessening the possibility of turning the imperialist war into a civil war, strengthening the forces preparing to attack the Soviet Union, and weakening the forces preparing to defend it. Their propaganda is the more dangerous because it is disguised in the name of Communism." (B. D. Wolfe, the Trotsky Opposition, page 55.)

As part of the struggle of our party against war, the party must carry on a struggle against counter-revolutionary Lovestonism and with his defeatist attitude, spreading pessimism, is undermining the efforts of the Party and the Comintern in mobilizing the workers for the defense of the Soviet Union.

The struggle against Lovestone and his right wing group can best be carried on by building the Party. Unless we widely popularize the decisions of the 6th world congress and the 10th plenum and make every member understand the contradictions of the present period of capitalist development and its effects on the working class, the party will not be in a position to lead the growing struggles of the American workers. In this period particularly it will be necessary for the party to continue its uncompromising struggle against Lovestone and all other manifestations of the right danger. The best answer the Party membership can give to disruptive activities of Lovestone is to strengthen the party organization, raise the political level of the membership and activate our party units. The American Party has great opportunities of becoming a mass party if it will follow and apply the political line of the Communist International. The position of the American working class is continually becoming worse, the deadly effects of rationalization and the tremendous war preparations of American imperialism will bring the American workers to the realization that only through sharp class struggle against their exploiters, under the leadership of the Communist Party and the T.U.U.L. established in Cleveland on August 31, will they be able to defeat their capitalist enemies. While the membership will build the party and T.U.U.L. and other mass organizations, Lovestone and his group will further degenerate into social democracy and completely go over into the camp of capitalism.

A Note on the Development of Post War Capitalism in the U. S.

By N. R.

I

THE triumph of the North in the American Civil War gave the American bourgeoisie complete control of the government, and they quickly set out to rid the country of the already decaying feudalism in the South, and to exploit with a reckless abandon the prolific resources in America's vast virgin territory. Aided by an abundant and ever-increasing labor supply, by a freedom from legal restrictions on bourgeois development (whatever restrictions existed were easily circumvented by bourgeois lawyers), by an ability and a desire to utilize the newest forms of production and to ruthlessly sweep aside whatever old forms were in the way, by a large and growing internal market unfettered by tariff walls, the American bourgeoisie could make use of the embroilment of Europe in the war of 1914-18, to become the creditor of the world, to expand their extensive imperialist designs, and to consummate a technique and a rationalization which surpassed that of any other country. Having attained the hegemony of world imperialism during the war and having steadily advanced since then, America is now actively striving for a monopolist position in world economy and politics which is driving it to a more brutal rationalization on the one hand, and on the other to colossal military preparations, which are more and more involving the U. S. with an almost incredible rapidity in the general crisis of world imperialism, and is more and more profoundly accentuating the basic contradiction of the third period of post war capitalism—the contradiction between the development of the productive forces and the contraction of the markets. Some statistics will help to clarify these generalizations.

The output per man-hour in American industry in 1925, taking 1914 as a base was as follows:

Steel works and rolling mills	153
Auto manufacturing	310
Shoe manufacturing	116.5
Paper and pulp-making	125.7
Cement making	157.8
Leather working	128.2

Flour milling	139
Cane sugar refining	127.3
Petroleum refining	177.3
Slaughter and meat packing	110.7
Rubber tire making	311

First it must be remarked that the increase in output made greatest strides in the last five years of this period and that there has been since 1925 a continued advance in output per man-hour. One thing which must immediately be grasped from these figures is the fact that the greatest advance takes place in those industries which are intimately connected with war preparations. This must not be overlooked. It means that the Party must start real work in these industries first because of their military connections, second, because in these very industries rationalization is carried to the furthest possible extreme with a dizzy speed. The enormous advance in rationalization and technique in the war industries becomes clearer if we take some more figures. The growth in quantity of physical production in the key industries has been as follows (it should be kept in mind that 1921 was a year of depression):

	<i>Iron and steel</i>	<i>Chemicals and oils</i>	<i>Rubber products</i>
1921	47	63	55
1922	80	75	112
1927	101	125	116

In the power industry we also see a startling advance in technical development and rationalization. For example, 74% more current can now be generated (1927) with a given quantity of fuel than in 1919. Here we see plainly and clearly the indivisible connection between rationalization and war preparations.

If we take figures for total physical volume of manufactured goods we find a great increase in the past few years but a substantially smaller increase than in the output in the war industries. The index for all manufactured goods in March (which is a fairly representative month although it shows a slightly greater increase than the other months) in the following years, is:

1921	71
1923	105
1925	108
1926	111
1927	112

The report of the Committee on Recent Economic Changes in the U. S. shows that the volume of production in manufacturing went up 46.5% in the period 1919-1927. The Commerce Year

Book for 1928 cites figures which indicate that between 1919 and 1925 the quantity output in manufacturing increased 28.5%, in mining 33%, in agriculture 8%, and in all industry 20%.

If we take figures from another slant at this question we find that the value of manufactures has been:

	<i>in millions</i>
1919	61,737
1921	43,618
1923	60,529
1925	62,668
1927	62,713

In interpreting these figures the following should be kept in mind: that 1919 was a boom year with extremely high prices, that 1921 and 1927 were years of depression, and 1925 was a good business year; that finally when all corrections are made the value of products for 1927 is less than for 1925 though the quantity production is greater. We shall shortly analyze the implications of all these figures.

II

The classic form of progress in capitalist production, Comrade Varga correctly states, is an increase in the productivity of labor through technical innovations. Although we are not competent to make a comprehensive analysis of the tremendous advance in technology in America in the past decade we must nevertheless briefly note this basic factor and discern its economic significance. It is clear that the quest for profits has been the dominant motive in the advance in technology but it would be failing to see the forest for the trees to neglect to see the close connections existing between development of technology and present day war preparations. It is not for nothing that hundreds of research laboratories have sprung up in the U. S. in recent years with the single purpose of advancing technology. Every advance in the metallurgical, electrical, chemical, transport, and radio industries is a direct advance in military preparations.

Although there has been no fundamental change in the machine itself in the past decade in the U. S., nevertheless there has been an introduction of machinery which further increases the specialization of labor (specialization which requires no skill), and advances the automatization of the machine process. This growth in the automatization of the machine process is making human labor more and more superfluous in the highly rationalized industries.

One of the most startling advances in technique has taken place in the power industry. The capacity of the generator in central electric stations has increased thirteenfold in the past twenty-five years, the greatest development coming in the past few years. The electrification of industry has proceeded apace in the past decade. The gigantic central power stations (note in this connection the Insull combine, the question of Boulder Dam and Muscle Shoals, the projected merger of the power interests in New York state through J. P. Morgan and Co. and the Mellon power interests in the South Atlantic states) are fast becoming decisive economic rulers. The cessation of electric power supply by a general strike or a mass revolutionary movement, as Comrade Varga points out, would be a virtual deathblow to the industrial life of a country. This is more strikingly true in the U. S. Further advance in the use of power in the U. S. is seen in the better utilization of coal, steam turbines in place of the old steam engines, steam engines no longer employed as machines for labor but for the generation of electric power. The use of energy, i. e. mechanical power and heat, has jumped from 271 in 1920 to 310 in 1926 (taking 1899 as the base year). The use of electrolysis in metallurgy has also been a great technological advance especially connected with the use of light metals for armaments.

In the chemical industry we see notable advances in the new methods of producing synthetic fuels and raw materials (benzine, rayon, rubber), the regeneration of used rubber, the production of nitrogen from the air and the general advance in the dye industry. An important sidelight showing the intimate and direct relationship between the chemical industry and war preparations is the definition of chemical industry given in a recent Department of Commerce publication. The industry embraces:

1. Naval stores (rosin and turpentine); all gums, pigments and varnishes.
2. Industrial chemicals including sulphur and chemical specialties.
3. Medicinal and toilet preparations.
4. Crude drugs and botanicals; paint oils, etc.
5. Fertilizers and fertilizer materials.
6. Explosives, pyroxylin plastics, etc.
7. Coal tar products.

It is obviously not for nothing that this industry which was relatively insignificant before the war, produced over 2,278 millions last year and had a foreign trade of 400 millions.

But if it has been the technical advance in the means of production that has increased the productivity of labor it is the insti-

tution of the traveling belt with its serial production that has had the most dire effect upon the health and very life of the working class. And it is here in the U. S. that we have seen its most advanced application. Professor Tugwell, a leading apologist for American imperialism, remarks on this matter: "It is of utmost importance that serialization be complete and that human feeding or removing should be reduced to an absolute minimum, because so long as a human being remains, the pace of the process has to be a pace which he can keep. When he is eliminated there is no logical limit to the speed of operations. The rhythm can be speeded up indefinitely. It is true too that the greatest gains are made in the late stages of the completion of serialization. For it is not until perfection is approached that speeding up can begin. *It is the last stage which we have been entering in the few years just passed.*" (Our italics.)

All this is crystal clear. When serialization is perfected the workers are not needed any more! And while serialization is being perfected we have a process in which the worker must keep up a superhuman pace which grows even faster, which goes beyond the limits of human endurance, which keeps the worker steadily fatigued, which requires only the most routine and monotonous movements, which stamps on the worker the same standardization which has been stamped on the machine, which drives out the skilled and draws in unskilled workers, women and children, which throws onto the scrap heap workers over forty, and which finally makes superfluous for industry masses of workers. And most important of all this murderous capitalist rationalization is developing with a dizzy rapidity. Such is the logic of technological process under decaying capitalism!

It is necessary to go into this question in a little more detail. The real center of the factory today is not in the machine but in the traveling belt which establishes an *automatic* control over labor productivity and helps to dispense with the Taylor system of scientific management, leading to a speed-up of the machine process to the maximum of human intensity and endurance. In the U. S. the conveyor system has spread to almost every basic industry, is present in the post office and is being installed into offices. To fail to recognize the importance of the conveyor process and its growing employment as the highest form of capitalist rationalization means a failure to grasp the dynamics behind the rapid radicalization of the American working class and the deepening of the contradictions of the whole capitalist system.

With the introduction and improvement of the traveling belt the skilled worker becomes generally superfluous. The vast majority

of the workers in the typical factory in the U. S. today are unskilled, and their proportion rises with practically every technological advance. As this advance proceeds the distinction between these unskilled and the small minority of skilled workers and technical intelligentsia is becoming ever clearer. For example, in the chemical industry where the main means of production are not machines but apparatus, appropriately constructed container and pipe systems in which the objects of labor are handled, and machine processes play only an accessory role, the chemical engineers make up less than 20% of the total personnel; the rest are unskilled workers who do the work of assistants and understand nothing of the processes of production. Another instructive example in this respect is the division of labor in the auto factory:

	%
Machine tender	40
Assemblers on the belt	15
Helper for skilled workers	15
Laborers—clean-up men	15
Skilled workers	10
Inspectors	5

The remark of Henry Ford that he can train over half of his factory force in less than a day is apparently no exaggeration.

The Thesis of the Sixth Congress of the C. I. on the International Situation says: "In the great majority of capitalist countries the politics of the bourgeoisie are determined by two main tasks; 1, further to increase competitive power, i. e. to further develop capitalist rationalization; and 2, to prepare for war. From the social-class standpoint, bourgeois politics leads on the one hand to *increased pressure on the working class and to an increase in the rate of exploitation.* (Italics ours.) On the other hand it leads to the employment of "compensating" methods of economic and political corruption of which social democracy is more and more becoming the conscious vehicle." This process is being dramatized in the U. S. The conveyor system as we pointed out above draws a sharp distinction between the minority of skilled and the broad masses of unskilled workers. The skilled workers and the technical intelligentsia are regularly bribed by American imperialism and are the social base for social reformism in the U. S. Nevertheless, in addition to the vicious speed-up, there is in many industries a tendency to a slight decrease in wages for the unskilled workers. This is most notorious in the textile mills, especially in the South, in the mines and in other basic industries. In wading through wage statistics published by bourgeois institutions it does not require a flair of genius to discern that the bourgeois statisticians exclude the poor-

est paid industries from their figures. Nevertheless, if we take the *index* of the Federal Reserve Board comprising over three million factory workers we find the following (1919 is base year):

	1925	1926	1927	1928	Jan. 1929	Feb. 1929
Wage amount	107	109	105	104	103	110.5

The tendency here shows a slight decrease in wage amount. It cannot be said however, that there is a general tendency to wage reduction. As a matter of fact there has been a small increase in wages in a couple of industries. It must be borne in mind constantly that in many cases the speed-up is so brutal that it is necessary, in order to keep the worker sufficiently nourished to carry on under this rationalization, to sometimes refrain from reducing the wages. Nevertheless, in these industries, as well as throughout industry in general, what is actually taking place is that the skilled workers are finding their skill rendered obsolete, or rather superfluous, and are being driven into the ranks of the unskilled where they have to accept lower wages. And finally in considering the movement of the standard of living of the working class in the U. S., it must be kept in mind that the steady growth in number of unemployed has a telling effect on *lowering* the general standard of living.

Although bourgeois economists have long been accustomed to speak of cyclical and seasonal unemployment it is only in the past few years that they have become alarmed at the growing unemployment which occurs not as a result of depression but because of the *development* of capitalist production, because of the very nature of present-day capitalist rationalization, namely, organic, or better still, structural unemployment.

The Commerce Year Book for 1928 gives the following index for factory employment:

1923	1924	1925	1925	1925
100	90.3	91.2	91.9	88.5

In other words in four years we have a decrease of 11.5% in number of factory workers. It is in line with the chronic perversion of statistics by capitalist organs that a note to these figures says that (for some adventitious reason) the figure is just a little too high! Stuart Chase points out that in the period 1919-25 there were 900,000 fewer workers in the factories, 600,000 fewer in agriculture, and 175,000 fewer workers on the railroads. He further adds that the decline in 1929 compared with 1919 registers over two million workers, and that all recent counts of factory workers show not only a relative but an absolute decrease. The current Review of the Bureau of Labor Statistics corroborates the general

trend to an absolute decrease in factory workers. Coupled with this we have an increasing population which naturally worsens the entire situation.

It is true that many factory and farm workers who are being dis-employed as a result of technical progress and rationalization find employment in the fields of trading and the services. For example Stuart Chase points out that many of these unemployed workers have become apartment house and hotel employees, moving picture personnel, insurance agents, salesmen, etc., soda jerkers, bootleggers (estimated at about 500,000). He adds further on, "there is a limit to those who can be pushed into the line between factory door and ultimate consumer. There is certainly one distributor for every producer and in some trades it is as high as two to one." With the growing mechanization of many of the distributive services and office work the absorptive power of these fields becomes smaller to a very large extent. It should be noticed at this point that one of the striking elements of parasitism in American imperialism is just this decrease in workers employed in productive processes directly creating surplus value, and the increase of workers in the non-productive fields.

The decrease in agricultural workers has also progressed due to mechanization of agriculture and the depressed condition of the farmer in the past eight years. Not only has there been a decrease of 600,000 agricultural workers from 1919 to 1925 but there has also been a decline of farm population of 2,600,000 in the 1920-25 period. That this is a constant tendency is seen from the figures for 1926-27 which show a release from the farms of 1,600,000. In this connection we must note that many of those who are leaving the farms to seek work in the cities are Negro farmers and farm hands. Surely agriculture is helping to deepen the problem of structural unemployment!

So serious is the problem of structural unemployment and so feverish is its growth that Mr. Ethelbert Stewart, U. S. Commissioner of Labor Statistics, sees the highest level of unemployment in spring of 1928 as "only the beginning of a more or less permanent unemployment because a growing number of industries are equipped to provide more than consumers have money to buy, together with supplanting of workers by machine. . . . There is not an industry in the U. S. today that couldn't produce all it can sell with the present equipment working thirty hours a day."(!!?)

A recent survey of 754 workers in typical factories in three industrial centers, who were discharged because there was no further need for them and not for inefficiency or insubordination, brings into the light the extreme plight of most of these workers. Only

410 out of the 754 got permanent jobs and of these over 50% were idle more than three months and only less than 12% got work within a month after discharge. Of those 46% without permanent jobs 8.4% were out of work for over a year and over 42% of these were idle for more than six months. The survey adds: "the large proportion of workers found considerable difficulty in getting relocated and those who did find work had been idle for some time." Almost 70% of these workers got jobs in absolutely new employments (which is another indication that the mass of workers require no skill), and 48% of the workers who found jobs received lower wages than formerly while 18% got higher wages. Another interesting figure as to unemployment is the stability of employment in auto factories. In 1928 (which incidentally was a boom year for the auto industry) the average stability was 80%, the lowest was 38%, while over 38% of the auto factories in the U. S. had a stability of under 80%.

If we take the figures of the Federal Reserve Board for typical industrial concerns employing over three million workers we get the following indices:

	1924	1925	1926	1927	1928
Production	95	104	108	106	111
Workers	95	95	96	92	89

Thus we note that the further rationalization develops, the greater the mass of unemployed workers. The decrease in production in 1927 was owing to the fact that 1927 was a year of depression. However, whereas the decrease in production during the year was two points the decrease of workers in these industrial concerns was four points. A further substantiation of this tendency are the statistics in the Commerce Year Book, which show that in the period 1919-25 the increase in output in agriculture, manufacturing, mining and transport was 20%, while the increase in output per worker was 30% and in addition 7% fewer workers were needed.

If now we sum up the results of all these figures we have cited we see a general increase in the past decade in total physical output, with a far greater increase in man-hour output, brought about by technical advance and brutal rationalization, which has meant an enormous decrease in employment and which indicates that the further rationalization progresses the greater will be the number of unemployed, the greater the exploitation of labor! Comrade Varga is correct in saying that "the contradiction between technical-organizational progress, between the immense increase in social wealth and the growing army of permanently unemployed is the most powerful element of instability within capitalism." This

is completely true for American imperialism and there is going on before our very eyes a constant development of productive forces, and a restriction of markets (owing to growing unemployment, depression in agriculture, high tariff walls, fiercer competition on the market of world imperialism, and other factors) which is ever deepening this basic contradiction, and more quickly than those who do not study carefully this process imagine, the crisis of American as well as world imperialism is approaching.

III

In order to fill in the picture of rationalization in the United States it is necessary to sketch the development of finance capital since the war. Although in the U. S. we have the growth of trusts immediately after the Civil War it was not until the very end of the nineteenth century that the monopolies arising from the concentration of industry, fused with banking capital to usher in the era of finance capital. In the past ten years the further concentration and centralization of capital owing to universalization of the conveyor system with its fabulous mass production, has been going on apace and today, we are witnessing a tremendously growing concentration of finance capital in the hands of a few, primarily in the Morgan and Rockefeller cliques. (The connection between the concentration of capital and war preparations must be kept in mind.) A statistical analysis of mergers in the United States will help to dramatize a part of this development.

	1919	1920	1921	1922	1923	1924	1925	1926	1927	1928	Total
Mfg. & Mining	89	173	89	67	67	95	121	139	207	221	1268
Oil	15	35	16	11	9	9	8	7	7	7	124
Coal	4	7	6	5	8	11	5	5	3	4	58
Iron & Steel	24	42	9	15	13	27	25	23	57	35	270
Non-ferrous	6	6	12	5	5	6	15	25	22	19	121
Textiles	4	8	8	6	6	9	7	11	9	36	104
Motor vehicles	8	12	7	5	6	4	9	6	5	6	67
Chemicals	1	5	4	3	3	6	2	8	8	19	59
Foodstuffs	8	16	9	5	8	7	13	14	25	23	128
Lumber & Paper	3	10	8	4	1	2	6	12	25	20	91
Other	16	32	10	8	9	14	31	28	46	52	246

The gigantic mergers of banks in the past decade and especially in the past two years, and the mergers in public utilities, which are the most colossal of all mergers in the United States, are not included in these figures, but they must be borne in mind if one is to understand the role of the financial oligarchy in American econ-

omy and politics. The American State apparatus is now the organ of a small financial oligarchy, and the union of State with Finance Capital in the United States is no longer a covert process. It is as clear as day. The anachronism between the complete socialization of production and the tremendous accumulation in the hands of a few monopolists, becomes ever more patent.

The elements of parasitism and decay in this classic land of finance capital become sharper as the concentration of monopoly develops. The existence of a large rentier class is one of the stark examples of this parasitism and has the effect of making more miserable the lives of the vast masses of exploited. In order to assure themselves control of the internal market, the financial oligarchy more and more increases the tariff rates. This arbitrary way of keeping up the prices in the home market not only injures the workers but also has a harmful effect on the small capitalists and farmers who are crushed under the yoke of finance capitalism, and in addition makes the drive for foreign markets ever fiercer. Although the unit prime cost in the United States has decreased over 20% in the past few years, prices in the period 1922-27 have decreased only .1% yearly. The difference mainly flows into the swollen coffers of the financial oligarchy. Here in the United States in the past decade, we see not only an increase in the rate of surplus value, but the establishment of two rates of profit, a fabulously high rate of profit for the monopolists and an ordinary rate of profit for the independent producers if they happen not to be entirely crushed by finance capital.

The growing elements of fascism in the U. S., which are beginning to replace parliamentary democracy, indicates that the American bourgeoisie is clearly cognizant that its rule is soon to be seriously questioned by the working class. The development of the power of the president, the cabinet and the supreme court at the expense of congress, the use of force and terror against Nicaragua, the growth of the fascist military, religious, and fraternal organizations, the terrorism against strikers in the past few years, the progress of gangsterism in the reformist unions, the attacks on revolutionary workers by the police and the courts, the smashing up and the proscription of workers' meetings, the attacks on workers on Red Day, the entire situation in Gastonia—all these are powerful elements indicating that the American capitalist state has entered the era of decline.

Lenin has said very humorously, and of course correctly, that "the statement that combines do away with crises is a tale for the marines. On the contrary, when monopoly appears in *certain branches* of industry, it increases and intensifies the chaos proper to capitalist

production as a *whole*. The disparity between the development of agriculture and that of industry, which is already a characteristic of capitalism; becomes increased.”

On all sides, we see monopoly capital crushing the smaller capitalists. The mad speculation on Wall Street in the past year or two has meant enormous profits for finance capital and bankruptcy for the petty bourgeoisie. The independent stores are being driven out by the chain store monopolies; the small manufacturers are being wiped out by the industrial monopolists. All along the line we see the gradual disappearance of the small producers. A study of bankruptcies of commercial (manufacturing and trading) concerns and banks in the U. S. reveals a fairly steady increase, which naturally hits the small capitalists hardest.

1919	.....	6451	1924	.....	20615
1920	.....	8881	1925	.....	21214
1921	.....	19652	1926	.....	21773
1922	.....	23676	1927	.....	23146
1923	.....	18718			

One of the palpable contradictions inherent in monopoly capitalism is the disparity between the development of industry and the development of agriculture. This is due on the one hand to the existence of the monopoly in land and absolute rent and on the other because the individual farmers are impotent before the juggernaut of finance capital. The following little table, which shows the purchasing power of the farmer's products compared with what he buys, indicates the rise in price of the industrial and other non-agricultural goods (at the expense of farm products) resulting from monopoly prices, higher tariff, etc. In other words as finance capital becomes more consolidated the farmer's position becomes more despondent.

1919	1920	1921	1922	1923	1924	1925	1926	1927
102	99	75	81	88	87	92	87	85

In addition we must note that the increase of mortgage debts on farms owned by the operator has been over one-half billion dollars in the period 1920-25, and the growth in tenantry over this period. Furthermore since 1925 there has been a considerable increase in mortgage debt and tenantry. The mechanization of agriculture (for example, there are three times as many tractors as in 1920, despite the decrease in total acreage under cultivation during this period) has meant almost steady overproduction, low prices, decrease in number of farmers and farm hands, and a decrease of 6% in real wages of farm workers in the period 1919-27. It is needless to

add that the Farm Board recently organized by Hoover will further strangle the independent farmer for the benefit of the financial oligarchy which is already stretching out its tentacles across the American farms and giving the death blow to the small farmer.

IV

Unequal growth in the economic development of the various countries is an invariable law of capitalism. This law finds its clearest expression in the transfer of the economic center of capitalism from Europe to America. Having captured the hegemony of world imperialism during the last war, the United States has been carrying out a foreign policy which grows ever more ruthless and which has deepened the antagonisms in world imperialism to an extreme degree. The keynote of American foreign policy since the war was laid down by Hoover in 1921: "The chief of these necessities arises from our transformation from a debtor to a creditor nation and to the expansion of our production into a larger surplus for export. Unless we contemplate a great shrinkage in industry and a readjustment of our entire productive machinery we cannot for a generation or more absorb enough imports to balance our exports. It is economically feasible to continue a large favorable balance of trade provided we are prepared to reinvest our balance in long time credits in the creation of productive enterprises abroad." It was this policy which helped to drown the revolutionary movement of Europe in blood in the immediate post-war period and which soon after helped to revive war stained capitalist Europe. That is why American imperialism has become the creditor of the world to the colossal sum of 25 billions. That is why American merchandise exports have been growing fairly steadily. But at present the struggle in the world markets is becoming more and more intense. Trustified Europe is putting up a life and death fight.

An analysis of merchandise exports and imports in the past decade will help to clarify this matter:

(In millions)

	<i>Exports</i>	<i>Imports</i>
1919	8,059	4,125
1920	8,439	5,669
1924	4,762	3,832
1925	5,083	4,456
1926	4,991	4,669
1927	5,056	4,421
1928	5,374	

The high export figures for 1919 and 1920 are due to the high

price level and to the incapacity of Europe to provide sufficient for itself and *a fortiori* for export. The merchandise export balance for 1928-29 was over one billion, the highest balance since 1921. This was mainly a result of the phenomenal growth in export of autos and auto accessories. The establishment and buying up of auto factories in Europe during the past year by Ford and General Motors mean that there will be a tremendous decrease in auto production in the U. S., and yet a fiercer struggle for world auto markets. Foreign trade statistics show that there has been a very rapid growth in the export of finished goods in the past few years, and that despite the growth of American trade in general the proportion of trade with Europe is on the decline owing to the development of rationalization in Europe, and it is in the field of manufactured goods that the struggle for markets is growing particularly acute. Already in 1926 Hoover grasped this and remarked: "Our most competitive group is that of manufactured goods, and expansion of exports of our manufactured goods is of utmost importance to us. If we are to maintain the total volume of our exports it must be by steadily pushing our manufactured goods." It must further be kept in mind that altho exports have been on the increase the advance in total production has been so great that the exports of American merchandise are still under 10% of total production. Consider the fact that America's main imperialist rival, Great Britain, exports about 70% of its total production, that Great Britain has the colonial monopoly, and that the U. S. is without large colonial territories, and the dynamics of imperialism are begun to be seen crystal clear. Because of the fact that exports are so small relative to total production, expanding American imperialism, directed by Herbert Hoover, the most capable jackal of monopoly, capitalism is making deliberate and studied steps to capture the world markets for its growing mass production. That is why European cartels and trusts are growing. That is why Europe is arming to the teeth in an economic as well as a military way.

The struggle is going on not only for markets for goods but also for sources of raw materials. It is clear that under capitalism as the productive factors expand the need for raw materials becomes more imperative. Add to this the fact that raw materials are an indispensable part of war preparations and we see why the struggle for oil, rubber, copper, raw cotton, etc., is proceeding with a rapidity unparalleled in history. The struggle between the American and British oil interests, the friction over the spoils in China, the penetration of American imperialism into Africa and India, into Canada and Australia, the expansion of American imperialism in Latin America—in all these struggles America has gotten the upper hand

over British imperialism, which though definitely on the decline is still very powerful. Although the election of MacDonalld means no fundamental change in the policy of British imperialism, it does signify that British imperialism is absolutely determined to make its last and fiercest struggle against American imperialism.

The advance of the productive forces of European imperialism has resulted in placing Europe in the last year in a slightly better position relative to America in the scale of world economy despite the growth of American production and foreign trade. This fact is brought out in Comrade Varga's recent report in *Imprcorr* No. 25. In order to complete the picture of international antagonisms it is necessary to examine the capital export and the movement of gold in the last few years. During the world war America became the center of world imperialism and since that time American investments and loans have penetrated into every imperialist and colonial country in order to make super profits for the financial oligarchy. If we examined the foreign capital emissions for the past few years we have the following in millions: 1925, 1,108; 1926, 1,145; 1927, 1,604; 1928, 1,319. If we take the actual net capital exports for the past year we find this considerably less than the figure given, since there has been a balancing off among other factors by an increase by European imperialism in short time capital investments in the U. S. owing to the speculative orgy on Wall St. and the higher bank rates on account of this orgy. It must also be borne in mind that this speculative orgy, with its fabulous profits for the finance capitalists, has moved the flow of some investments into Wall St. (although a great deal of the loan capital received from Europe is invested by American imperialism as financial or industrial capital in Latin America, Canada, etc.) A study of the movement of gold in the last few years is necessary to really understand this fundamental question. From 1919 to 1927 there has been a fairly steady flow of gold into the U. S. amounting to net imports of over 1,430 millions. This plethora of gold in the U. S. helped to keep the money rates exceptionally low and in 1927 led to the enormous export of gold to the amount of 500 millions to Europe, and particularly to England, mainly on account of American long-time loans abroad. However, the fabulous expansion of speculation in the U. S. in 1928 has created a fundamental change in this relationship. From the cheapest of money markets Wall St. today is the dearest. It has been bidding 6 to 15% for demand loans and as high as 9% for time loans on stock exchange collateral. Lenders at London could not get more than 5½% and the London Bank rate was not raised above that figure because a higher one would *impede the recovery in British trade*. The inevitable result was not

only recall of some American funds previously loaned to Europe and a *temporary* decrease in American purchase of foreign securities, but movement of European money into Wall Street. That is why the net gold imports into the U. S. last year were 155 millions. That is why the Bank of England is face to face with a failure to keep up its minimum gold reserve.

These in sum are some of the dynamic economic realities which are determining in no mean way the logic of contemporary political events. Snowden's struggle against the Young Plan with its international (read American dominated) Bank is a fierce attack on the designs of America to gain a monopolist position in world imperialism. The whole so-called movement for a United Europe is dictated by the necessity to make a more bitter struggle against the growing American domination in the international combines in oil, steel, copper, chemicals, electricity, rayon, autos, etc. And the growing effectiveness of France and Germany against America in the imperialist arena is also helping to throw into high relief the increasing precariousness of capitalist stabilization. The precise course of events cannot be foreseen. What is clear, however, is that the colossal speculative orgy on Wall St. which is one of the most powerful elements of instability in the present correlation of forces in world imperialism, is heading for a speedy smash-up. It is one of the factors that are involving America in the imminent collapse of world imperialism.

A brief résumé will complete our argument. The most basic contradiction of capitalism, the contradiction between the growth of productive forces and the lagging behind of the markets, has in the present period reached fantastic dimensions. In order to extend its possibilities of disposal throughout the world, American imperialism (and the same is true for the other imperialist countries) is intensifying its rationalization. But the first result of this process is an extension of productive forces! The vicious circle cannot be solved under capitalism. Thus as a result of this rationalization we have on the one hand a superhuman speed-up of the workers, which is having a deadening effect on their health, a shortening of the worker's stay in the factory, a drawing in of women and children for unskilled labor, and a fabulously growing army of disemployed, all these elements indicating the deepening internal contradictions in the U. S., and on the other hand, a fiercer and more organized drive for foreign markets and sources of raw materials which is being fought against by Europe. Imperialist and gigantic preparations for war which daily draws nearer. These are some of the factors that are with extreme rapidity radicalizing broad layers of the American masses and ripening them for revolutionary activity.

The T. U. U. L. Convention

By WM. Z. FOSTER

A MATTER of outstanding importance in connection with the Trade Union Unity League Convention is the fact that the Convention constituted in itself a dramatic demonstration of the growing radicalization of the American working class under the fierce pressure of capitalist rationalization. It showed the correctness of the Comintern and Profintern line on trade union work in the United States. It is fundamentally necessary that we fully realize the significance of the Comintern in this respect because, unquestionably, there was in the preparation for the Convention, a serious underestimation of its potentialities, based upon an underestimation of the radicalization of the workers. This realization is further necessary, because there is a real danger that this underestimation may carry over into the follow-up work after the Convention, thereby crippling the new trade union center.

The Convention, in many ways gave proof of the great and growing body of radicalization which lay behind it among the workers. First, there was the large and representative delegation, assembled in spite of very imperfect preparatory organizational work. It must be said that in many districts the Party and the T. U. E. L. apparatus did not respond to the Convention call with sufficient energy. On the whole, the work was greatly neglected. The program of holding shop meetings and local conferences, especially in the outlying districts, to build the delegation and to begin preliminary union building was carried through in only a very few instances. The tendency was merely to skim the surface, so to speak. Only in the last three or four weeks preceding the Convention was even this superficial work done. In some cases there was even an organized pessimism in T. U. E. L. circles regarding the Convention, a clear case of the militants dragging behind the masses.

Nevertheless, when the Convention assembled it presented a splendid body of 690 delegates, most of them from the basic, most highly rationalized industries. The rousing response of the workers overcame much of the inadequate organization work and literally crowded out the pre-Convention pessimism, some of which even got so far as the first day of the Convention. But it was hard for these pessimists to maintain their destructive point of view in the face of this big and representative delegation with 181 miners, 150 youth, 66 steel and metal workers, 52 auto workers, 72 women,

64 Negroes, etc. The splendid Negro delegation was especially significant as exemplifying the radicalization among this section of the working class. Pessimism vanished in the flame of enthusiasm generated by these militant workers.

It would be a mistake, however, to believe that no injury was done by lack of preparations and by the negative attitude assumed by many comrades towards the Convention. On the contrary, had the Convention been thoroughly understood, properly evaluated, and the necessary work done, undoubtedly the Convention could have been twice as large as it was, it would have had a better mass base, and its general effects would have been much greater.

The growing radicalization of the workers was expressed not only in the size and composition of the Convention delegation, but especially in its splendid spirit. The workers simply burned with enthusiasm. They were militant and revolutionary. They wholeheartedly endorsed the entire program of the Profintern and the T. U. E. L. They left no place for trimmers and opportunists. They wanted to fight and to build a movement to fight with. The blazing rank and file spirit of resentment against capitalist rationalization was the outstanding characteristic of the T. U. U. L. Convention. It swept all before it like a storm towards the realization of the Profintern policy for the establishment of the new center and its revolutionary program. This rank and file enthusiasm compared very favorably with the mood of many leading comrades.

This spirit manifested itself among many other respects by the most enthusiastic response to slogans against imperialist war, for the defense of the Soviet Union, and to speeches regarding the building of socialism in that country. The Convention also rallied to the Gastonia defense in a manner that leaves no doubt that great masses of workers are increasingly learning the political significance of the great labor trials now proceeding. The Convention enthused and enthused again over the program of the new revolutionary industrial unions and the new union center. It burned with resentment against the A. F. of L., S. P. and Musteite misleaders of labor. It was animated from beginning to end with a strong spirit of solidarity between Negro and white workers. It endorsed with enthusiasm the whole class struggle program of the T. U. U. L.

The Lovestone group in the Convention was crushed by this militant spirit of the workers. It suffered a complete debacle. Lovestone and his lieutenants went to Cleveland and held a national caucus against the Party. They especially figured on making an effective mobilization in the T. U. U. L. Convention to put across their right wing line. They had a few delegates, who

diminished in number as the Convention proceeded. These were organized carefully with prepared speeches in the approved Lovestone manner. Gitlow was the chief of this Convention group. He came into the Convention on the second day, greeted with ominous silence and an occasional cat-call. It was the policy of the Lovestoneites to intervene in the general debate then proceeding and to attempt to wreck the work of the Convention by interjecting their own program.

But neither Gitlow nor his followers ventured to take the floor. They did not dare to face that revolutionary Convention with their opportunist proposals. Not a single Lovestone delegate spoke in any session of the Convention. It was the most striking example of political cowardice ever exhibited in a left wing convention in the United States. Gitlow sat limply in his seat, unable to confront the splendid fighting spirit of the hundreds of proletarian delegates.

Finally, on the last day of the Convention, Lovestone, through Gitlow and Vrataric, introduced a resolution on the Labor Party and another on Gastonia. If the Lovestoneites had a general program for the Convention, they did not dare to present it. The two resolutions which they did introduce were both of a distinctly right wing character, the Labor Party resolution being simply an opportunist proposal for a united front with the labor bureaucrats, and the Gastonia resolution being a proposal to drop the defense slogan and to unite with the liberals upon the frame-up slogan.

These resolutions were defeated unanimously by the Convention. The Lovestone delegates did not venture to speak for their own resolutions, nor did they even vote for them. It was a case of complete political bankruptcy. As for the Cannon-Trotskyites, they made no showing at all, not one of their delegates being in evidence.

The final debacle of the Lovestone group in the Convention in the face of the militant delegates came in the election of the National Committee. Gitlow was nominated by a Lovestoneite as a representative from the needle trades section. When his nomination was put to the Convention he received only two votes. He presented a sorry spectacle as a member of the Executive Committee of the Profintern in a Convention of the American section of the Profintern.

The Lovestone group systematically minimizes the radicalization of the workers, but at Cleveland, in the militant T. U. U. L. Convention, the radical spirit of the delegates swept this group to complete defeat.

Besides in its size, composition, and revolutionary spirit of the

delegates, the Convention further exemplified the growing radicalization of the workers by the determination with which it went at its work. This intensity indicated how seriously the delegates took the Convention and their earnestness in putting its program into effect. They saw in the movement being initiated something vital and real in their lives as workers.

The Convention was very business-like, accomplishing a huge amount of work in the three days' sessions. But the delegates' determination to really take hold of the work was even more keenly shown in the respective industrial and special conferences held in competition with the Convention. These conferences were veritable vortexes of the most lively activity and enthusiasm.

In previous T. U. E. L. national convention, such sectional conferences were largely formal in character, with leading comrades presenting the programs almost entirely; but not so this time. The rank and file delegates took hold of the conferences with unprecedented energy. Each conference was the center of intense interest of the delegates in its section. Moreover, the delegates attacked wholeheartedly the work of developing programs in the respective industries and groups.

The Negro conference was the outstanding of the many conferences. It was an inspiration to the whole Convention. The youth, women, and Labor Unity conferences were also of unprecedented size and vigor. The same may also be said of the metal, railroad, needle and various other industrial conferences. They all plunged deeply into the practical work confronting them in their respective spheres. It is not in the province of this article to deal with the work of these conferences, but merely to indicate the general characteristic of their intensity.

The extraordinary interest in the work of the individual conferences can only be explained on the basis of the extreme vitality of the Convention, or in other words, by the real radicalization which animated the delegates and the masses who stand behind them.

The great lesson of the Convention, the demonstration of the growing radicalization of the working class, must not be lost upon us. If it is, the new trade union center, as well as our Party, will suffer keenly. The pessimism existing prior to the Convention among active comrades, amounting to a certain degree of chvostism, or dragging behind the masses, and a failure to understand the real meaning of the Third Period, must be drastically liquidated as a menace to our Party work in all its phases.

It now becomes necessary to follow up the work of the T. U. U. L. Convention with energetic campaigns of agitation and or-

ganization. A great danger now is a period of relaxation or inactivity based upon a real failure to understand that the workers are becoming ready for struggle.

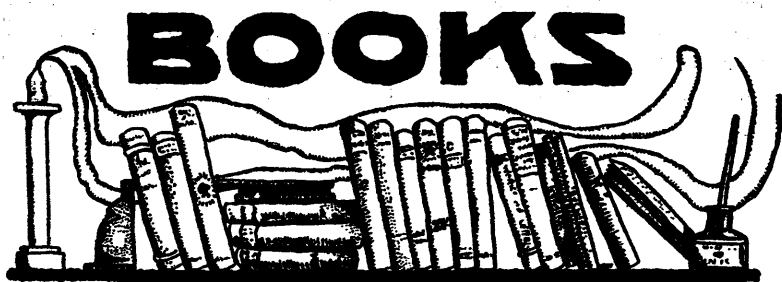
The program outlined by the Convention for the organization of the unorganized, the building of the new unions, the strengthening of the left wing in the old unions, must be carried through most vigorously. The first step in this work will be the holding of conferences on a wide scale to hear the reports of delegates from the Convention. There must be conferences of the shop groups, the local unions, left wings in the old unions, shop gate meetings, and general conferences in all industrial centers. The most energetic efforts must be made to draw Negro workers into such gatherings. These conferences must be utilized to build the machinery of the T. U. U. L., to carry forward on all fronts its program of organization and struggle. The T. U. U. L. must be built up as a dues paying organization, and as the real leader of the left wing union movement. The conferences must give special attention to the extending of the circulation of Labor Unity. The vitality of our movement in every district will be measured by the extent to which these preliminary conferences are held. The splendid impetus given by the Convention must be intensified by the most active organization work on all sides.

This whole program of activity can only be carried through if there is the proper realization in our ranks of the growing radicalization of the working class and the readiness of the workers to build the T. U. U. L. The Convention gave a striking demonstration of this. Remnants of the pre-Convention pessimism must be ruthlessly liquidated as a most serious right deviation. Only in this way can we proceed effectively with our work. If the follow-up work of the Convention is no better than the preparatory work in the districts, then much of the beneficial effects of the Convention will be lost.

Not only must we realize that the workers are ready to build the T. U. U. L., but also that there exists a splendid opportunity to build our Party. We must put on a big Party drive for membership, especially for the establishment of shop nuclei, and the building of shop papers in the basic industries. The situation is such that we must aim at having a strong shop nucleus and a vigorous shop paper in every important industrial plant. This work must be undertaken with greater vigor and more system than ever before in Party history. Such Party nuclei and shop papers will be the best guarantee for the success of the general organizational program of building the T. U. U. L. The strengthening of the Party by drawing in these fresh proletarian elements and their engage-

ment in such vital work as the building of the T. U. U. L., will liquidate the remnants of Lovestoneism in our Party and will deal a death-blow to the attempts of these elements to establish an anti-Comintern party. It will unite our Party as never before.





G. V. PLEKHANOV: *Fundamental Problems of Marxism*. Edited by D. Riazanov, Marxist Library, Volume I, International Publishers, New York, 1929. xiv+145 pp. \$2.00.

In its theoretical aspects, Marxism is not only the expression of the position of the proletariat in the class struggle, as Engels has pointed out, but it is also the theoretical summary of the conditions of working class emancipation. It is precisely because the working class as a whole can acquire only a general insight into these conditions, can learn mainly through its own material mistakes, that the development of a revolutionary Marxist vanguard is a basic condition of proletarian emancipation. A Marxist party that does not represent the interests of the working class and the historical movement on every front, that is not in the truest sense of the word the theoretician of the proletariat, that does not attempt to batter down the restrictions and false ideologies of class society, constantly fighting to extend the perspective of the working class and generally acting as its "intellect" and general staff,—such a party does not deserve the name of a Marxist vanguard.

With our traditional scorn for "theory," the struggle for the crystallization of a Marxist party in America is, at the same time, also a struggle against the vulgarization of Marxism and a struggle for its extension and development on an ever-increasing scale. Neither the party nor the working class as a whole has anything to gain from the false but current conception that Marxism consists of only one principle, the principle of the class struggle,—a conception that is incidentally reduced to the undialectic and philistine notion that the class struggle consists of only its more obvious and fundamental forms; while its more subtle ideological manifestations are scarcely perceived. That Marxism must lead the working class not only in shattering an old world but also in building up a new world, in positively developing a complete outlook on life and a general view of the universe, seems to be forgotten by many a "practical Marxist." As a result, the practical requirements and conditions of our movement, which limit the scope of our activities and prevent us from carrying on the more remote phases of class activity, are transformed into a denial of the very necessity of these activities. The vices and limitations of the class struggle in America are thereby exaggerated into a virtue and raised to the level of a "theory." Objectively, Marxism is placed in the position of championing the very class subjectivism against which it has always fought. As we proceed further along the road of bolshevization, however, we shall have to deepen our conception of Marxism and raise it more and more to the level of Marxism particularly in Russia.

In this task, the translation of the classics of European Marxism will play an important role. Plekhanov was not only one of the pioneers of Marxism in Russia, but also the teacher of Lenin in precisely those fundamental problems of Marxism which give the title to this book. It is not altogether inappropriate, therefore, to initiate a Marxist Library in English with a work of this nature.

The embryonic state of Marxism in this country did not really involve America in the discussion of the basic problems raised by the European revisionists. Our study of Marxism was limited more or less to its historical and economic aspects, while our application of Marxism to American problems has scarcely begun. An evaluation of such specifically American movements as Behaviorism in the sphere of psychology and pragmatism in the sphere of philosophy, for example, has so far not even been attempted. It is not surprising, therefore, to meet with the most elementary misconceptions of the scope and character of Marxism.

In this book, which was originally published in 1908, Plekhanov quite correctly develops the idea that the historical and economic aspects of Marxism cannot be separated from its philosophical basis. The attempt to do so can only mean the acceptance of some particular bourgeois philosophy. Marxism is a complete *Weltanschauung*, and does not need to be supplemented by one philosophy or another, under the pretext that Marx and Engels never expounded their philosophical views. On the contrary, the philosophical ideas of Marx and Engels have an orderly and abundant content, more so, Plekhanov insists, than Dietzgen, for example, to whom Marx referred as the philosopher of our movement. It is not a question of completing Marx' and Engels' philosophical ideas, but, at most, of popularizing them.

The conception of Marxism as a philosophy involves nothing more than the proposition that Marxism represents a dialectic materialist conception of society and nature; a conception that views the universe as a dialectic aggregate of material units constituting a movement continuum. If dialectic materialism formulates the general laws of movement of the universe as a whole, historical materialism formulates these laws as they are expressed in human society. The unity of society and nature in their physical, material aspects does not imply the identity of their specific forms of existence; basic physical unity neither presupposes nor implies the identity of natural and social laws.

It is possible to misinterpret Plekhanov's assertion that there is no need to complete Marx' and Engels' *philosophical* ideas. Plekhanov himself never confused the character of these ideas as a general theory,—capable of serving as a basis for understanding the real processes of society and nature,—with these processes themselves. Marxism to him did not represent a system that included all knowledge within itself once and for all. He knew very well that Marxism is primarily a method for studying the real world—which does not disappear with any particular individual—and, as such, is an objective guide to action. Marxism, Plekhanov insisted as early as 1896, is not limited and one-sided, but opens up an enormous field of investigation. The work begun by incomparable masters, however, *must be continued if Marx's brilliant idea is not to be transformed into a verbal abstraction*. If all that we could do in the face of a given society was to repeat the generalization that the anatomy of this society is to be found in its economy, our assertion would remain only an empty, if potential formula. In itself, it is indisputable; but it is not enough: We must be able to make a scientific use of a scientific idea. We must be able to account for all the life functions of this organism whose anatomic structure is conditioned by its economy;

we must understand how it moves, how it is nourished, how the *emotions* and *concepts* which arise in it, *thanks to this anatomic structure*, become what they are; how they change with the changes in this structure, etc.*

Just as the natural sciences study the laws and structure of the material universe and thereby constitute one of man's most important forces of production by constantly increasing his control over nature—so Marxism, as a theory and study of real, objective processes in society, becomes an instrument of control in the hands of the proletariat. Marxism has this in common with the natural sciences, that both are a study of *reality* for the purpose of control, except that the reality of the former is the physical universe, while the reality of the latter is the objective relations of social life. Marxism differs from the natural sciences in this, that while both apply an objective, materialist method to the study of their respective spheres (with the natural sciences becoming more and more dialectic in method and conception in the Marxian sense), the class basis of Marxism is proletarian, while the natural sciences, as a productive force, belong to the owners of the productive forces in modern society—to the workers in the Soviet Union, and the capitalists in the rest of the world. And while the productive forces are used primarily in the interest of the respective classes, the interest of the workers, unlike that of the capitalists, coincides with the interests of society as a whole, that is, with the unhampered development of the productive forces and the general historical movement.

D. Riazanov, the director of the Marx-Engels Institute in Moscow, who edited Plekhanov's little book, included two other essays by Plekhanov which are in themselves of special interest. These essays are "Sudden Changes in Nature and History" and "Dialectic and Logic." Particularly the latter represents a phase of Marxism which, in America, is the least understood, and yet, as Engels has correctly pointed out, is as basic and important as the fundamental proposition of the materialist conception of history. One of the most striking features of Lenin's work, for example, is the extent to which he succeeded in making the dialectic method his second nature. His entire activity is a concrete and "instinctive" application of dialectics to the problems of the movement and the class struggle as they confronted him during the course of his career. The invariable criticism by Marx and Engels in reference to the work of Wilhelm Liebknecht and others was: *Es fehlt ihnen Dialektik*, what they need is dialectics. The dialectic nature of reality necessitates the application of a dialectic analysis to its problems if we are to understand and master them at all.

Plekhanov shares with many of the European Marxists the brilliant gift of popularizing a scientific idea without vulgarizing it. As an examination of historical materialism from the angle of its foundations, Plekhanov's little book not only played its role in the popularization and development of Marxist thought in Europe, but it should contribute to the dissemination of a deeper and more correct conception of the character and implications of Marxism in America.

The gradual emergence of a Marxist literature in this country is one of the most encouraging and enduring manifestations of the American movement. The publication of a Marxist Library in America, although somewhat tardy in appearance, promises much for the spread of Marxism. It will fulfill its function if, in addition to translations of European classics, it lays particular stress upon specific American problems and helps to develop a special literature of American Marxism. —A. LANDY.

*G. Plekhanov: *Beitrage zur Geschichte des Materialismus*. Stuttgart, 1896, p. 252.

LENIN, By Valeriu Marcu, MacMillan Company, New York, \$5.

Reviewed by GERTRUDE HAESSLER

When one takes up a book on any working-class subject published by such a hide-bound capitalist company as MacMillan, one does so with resignation and with a certain preconceived notion of the cynicism, distortions, lack of understanding and deliberate falsifications peculiar to the bourgeoisie, especially when presenting any subject likely to present the working class in a favorable light.

Thus it is a pleasant surprise to read "Lenin," by Valeriu Marcu, for although Valeriu Marcu's "Lenin" is on the whole unmistakably bourgeois in approach and interpretation, the author very obviously attempts to understand his subject, and at times even displays flashes of insight into the forces at work beneath the surface in the class war, and sympathy in handling the whole subject of labor's struggle with its enemies on the economic and political field.

The author tries very hard to make this biography a history of the Russian working class in the new epoch of its clear-cut struggle with the bourgeoisie—starting from the end of the epoch of the terrorist struggle against the monarchy, Lenin's realization when still a young boy, that his martyred brother's methods no longer suffice for the struggle, that Alexander's death closes the epoch of terrorist struggle, and that a new epoch of struggle has begun.

Thus far the author shows some comprehension of the situation, but this is exactly as far as any sympathetic and conscientious bourgeois would understand it. From now on an interpretation of the history of Russia involves a profound grasp of the role of the working class, the role of the Party of the working class, the role of the individual within the Party and within the working class in general, and the international character of the working class struggle. It is precisely on these points that the author woefully falls short of the promise held out in the very beginning of the book, although the flashes of insight he does have now and again into these forces saves the book from the commonplace, dreary, non-analytical recitals of events and dates which all histories and biographies written from the bourgeois standpoint consist of.

The author pictures the growing class consciousness of the workers and the causes therefor,—the concentration into the large factories, the labor with the tremendous forces of the machine, disillusionment with religion, the stimulus to reading and study. He also depicts with some understanding Lenin's personal methods of work: At workmen's clubs "He did not merely give learned or enthusiastic addresses, and, at the end of a short half-hour, go away again: in the latter part of the evening he asked his listeners to tell him about themselves, about their factory life, about the general attitude of their comrades."

The development of mass psychology and the power of the mass is well described: "So in the shops at Toruton's the weavers stood through the day elbow to elbow; the individual was lost. They were a compact mass which slowly acquired the momentum of its numbers." And on the intervention of the foreign powers after the Revolution, "Every European Power became a Knight-errant and set out to save the Russian dame which had fallen into deep water. Or was it her purse that seemed to be floating alluringly on the surface?" But active intervention failed, and: "The British world teachers had to abandon their pedagogic methods of blockade. They tried next to train the Russians to be democratic gentlemen, using an Upper and Lower Chamber as gentlemen should, by means of a system of oil deals."

There are numerous other spots that sound promising, but these scattered examples of occasional comprehension on the part of the author must not fool the reader into looking upon him as an understanding interpreter of Lenin's life and all that Lenin stood for. The author is still wallowing in the slough of bourgeoisdom, and try as he may, he cannot escape it. In spite of all his sympathy and all his very obvious attempts to be honest and "fair" he reveals an utter misconception in his treatment of Lenin and of the class struggle as a whole. Where is his understanding of the role of the individual, for instance, or of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat through the Party of the working class, in representing Lenin as a personal dictator—albeit a "good" dictator. Here is Lenin, according to our bourgeois: "For two decades he had been in pursuit of power, keeping his eyes fixed on its radiant form, listening to its call." Again: He felt Kornilov's attempt as a personal insult, was outraged at the thought that another should have dreamed of robbing him of his own darling child, power."

For Lenin's writing, which have become the text books of the revolutionaries all over the world, the author shows the following non-international, undialectic appreciation: "This usually tedious writer, whose collected works were as necessary for their own day as its daily bread but are today (for they were written purely for the needs of the hour) like the remains of a meal . . ."

The author thinks he is poking some sly jabs at Lenin's so-called deviations from the "dogma" of Marxist theory, when he tries to show how Lenin would quickly change his tactics in the face of realities. The author does not present Lenin as a general, skilfully maneuvering in the face of seemingly insurmountable difficulties, yet holding on to his fundamental principles and aims, but presents Lenin as a bundle of inconsistencies, abandoning his daring tenets when faced with hard cold facts. He does not realize that quick change of tactics is one of the cardinal attributes of Lenin as a practical revolutionist. Lenin's own analysis of this very thing is famous: "It is not enough to be a revolutionist and an adherent to Socialism, or, in general, a Communist. One must be able to find at any moment the particular ring in the chain which must be grasped with all strength in order to hold the whole chain and to assure the passage to the next rings, and the order of the rings, their form, their connections, their distinction from one another in the historical chain of events, is not so simple and obvious as in an ordinary chain which is made by a blacksmith."

Whereas there are some saving characteristics in the author's treatment of the workings of the Russian labor movement, he certainly runs absolutely true to bourgeois type when it comes to understanding the international aspect of the movement. He describes Lenin's hopes of assistance for Soviet Russia from the international proletariat at the time of the Polish aggression and points out that the workers did not lift a finger in response to his call for assistance! And how about the British "Hands Off Russia" movement that tied up the British bourgeoisie, frightening them from mobilizing the army, and preventing further aggressions? And how about the mass movements in all other countries? But nothing short of successful revolution in Europe would convince our bourgeois author that anything efficacious was being done—stormy mass meetings, vivid literature, threats of general strikes, etc., are in his eyes not even worth mentioning as "assistance." The critical engagement had been fought to a decision," he says, "and the industrial workers of Europe had not moved in his support."

Here is his view on the Communist International—either a lapse into bourgeois distortion, a deliberate attempt to belittle, or otherwise an amazing lack of comprehension of the Comintern's significance and power which cer-

tainly his masters, the imperialists, do not share. He speaks of the C. I. entirely in the past tense. He says: "To take thought for national needs, to think independently at all, was mortal sin,—more reason why the Communist International was unable to create anything permanent out of this current of deep enthusiasm. Its error was not its revolutionism but its scholasticism. All the virtues of the realism which Lenin showed in Russia became weakness in his foreign-socialist policy."

The illustrations in the book are interesting and there are plenty of them. The style is peculiar—a strange mixture of matter-of-fact presentations of facts and romantically inclined introductions to these facts, which are supposed, probably, to supply the "human touch." He frequently obscures the meaning in order to be picturesque. That's what a bourgeois audience, of course, enjoys. When he reads Lenin's mind, and puts thoughts and words into his mouth, he goes to the ridiculous and never reaches the sublime. Take this absurd romanticising, for example, in describing Lenin's so-called asceticism: "Perhaps he was afraid that the spirit of joy would tell him that the red lips of a dairy maid, laughter by the riverside, all that tempts by its peace, is more important than the distant visions of a better world."

Yet how well we all know how Lenin would play—really play. Piatnitsky, Yaroslavsky, Zinoviev and many others have all described him at moments of exuberance and joy and relaxation.

The book is certainly interesting reading, with all its glaring faults. If read with due discrimination, it is also instructive. But the reader must beware of the author's seeming grasp of his subject. It is not understanding of the subject at all, which the author displays, but merely an insight now and then into matters that are ABC to any active revolutionist, but can never be comprehended by any bourgeois no matter how intelligent or how sympathetic or how earnest.

Yet, while the book is worth reading, it is not worth buying, especially if it means choosing between it and some other book. All the material in it can be gotten from the literature of our own comrades. Read the book,—but borrow it to do so.

**TO THE READERS OF THE COMMUNIST:
UNTER DEM BANNER DES MARXISMUS**

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Correction

To the Editor of THE COMMUNIST:

The article of Comrade Briggs in the July COMMUNIST fails to mention important facts with regard to my position on the Negro question. The facts are these:

Together with the rest of the fraction, due partly to weak connections with the center, and misunderstanding as to what our policy should be, and partly to a retreat before the southern environment, we did not in the early part of the strike propagandize enough, or attempt to force the organizational steps, for bringing the Negroes into the union on an equal basis.

However, after the coming of the C. E. C. representative and the explanation of the party policy, I fought with him in the fraction, and in the Gastonia and Bessemer City meetings, for our position, and for the organizational steps. This was reported to the secretariat. It is known by all of those who were in Gastonia that I was among the first to admit my mistake on the Negro question and fought for the correct policy against those who still wavered.

My articles and speeches for complete social, political and racial equality were widely printed in the Southern press while I was there and later as late as August 12th, the FP carries a Gastonia dispatch declaring that the Manville-Jenckes Citizens Committee is widely distributing a circular attacking my articles and speeches on the Negro question.

Fraternally yours,

KARL REEVE.

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION, ETC.,
REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912,
OF THE COMMUNIST, published monthly at New York, N. Y., for October 1,
1929.

State of New York
County of New York

LLLLLLLL

Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Max Bedacht, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the Business Manager of The Communist, and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management (and if a daily paper, the circulation, etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, embodied in section 411, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse of this form, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business managers are:

Publisher, Communist Party of U. S. A., 43 East 125th Street, New York City.

Editor, Max Bedacht, 43 East 125th Street, New York City.

Managing Editor, None.

Business Manager, Max Bedacht, 43 East 125th Street, New York City.

2. That the owner is: (If owned by a corporation, its name and address must be stated and also immediately thereunder the names and addresses of stockholders owning or holding one per cent or more of total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, the names and addresses of the individual owners must be given. If owned by a firm, company, or other unincorporated concerns, its name and address, as well as those of each individual member, must be given.)

Communist Party of U. S. A., 43 East 125th Street, New York City. Max Bedacht, Acting Secretary, 43 East 125th Street, New York City. A non-profit organization—political.

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are: (If there are none, so state.)

None.

4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners, stockholders, and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear upon the books of the company but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting, is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association, or corporation has any interest direct or indirect in the said stocks, bonds, or other securities than as so stated by him.

5. That the average number of copies of each issue of this publication sold or distributed, through the mails or otherwise, to paid subscribers during the six months preceding the date shown above is. (This information is required from daily publications only.)

MAX BEDACHT,
Business Manager.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 19th day of September, 1929.
Max Kitzes, Notary Public (My commission expires March 30, 1930.)



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