

Bolshevizing the Party

By TOM JOHNSON.

THE degree of Bolshevization of a Communist Party may be determined to a large extent by its ability to react immediately and correctly to changes in the arena in which it operates and to instantly throw its full forces into action in the changed situation.

Our American Party is today facing such a revolutionary test. After much hesitation, after a severe internal struggle which involved scrapping much of the old leadership, the Party has at last made the turn and come to some realization of the present situation in America, and the tremendous tasks and responsibilities developing on our Party from the changed conditions of the class struggle. This process has been helped considerably by recent development's. Lovestone's phantasy of a "Victorian Age" for American imperialism has been shattered by the realities of life. The "industrial recession" of which Lovestone only yesterday spoke so hesitatingly, has turned out to be a severe economic crisis which is shaking the structures of American imperialism to its depths.

The analysis of the 10th Plenum of the Comintern and of the October Plenum of our Party has been fully substantiated by the whole course of events. The struggles in Gastonia, New Orleans, Illinois. The great movement of the unemployed developing throughout the country under the leadership of the Party. The tremendous mass demonstration of 50,000 New York workers, ready to battle with the police for possession of the streets, at Steve Katovis' funeral. And finally the success already registered by the Recruiting Campaign, and the increasing momentum of this campaign as it draws to a close. These living facts must open the eyes of the most backward Party member to the new situation. These facts give the lie once and for all to Lovestone's ravings of an "exceptional" American imperialism, of a wrong Party line, and of a disintegrating Party.

Still Lagging Behind.

Under the pressure of these developments the Party is going forward, is developing the forms and methods of work necessitated by the changed conditions. But this very fact proves that our Party is not yet a Bolshevized Party, quick to grasp the essentials of the new situation and to mobilize its full forces for action. The fact of the matter is that in many of the lower Party organizations this change is made only under pressure of the masses of workers outside of the Party. The Party in some cases is not the leader, the initiator of the change, it lags behind the masses and only makes the change under the instant demand of these workers for leadership in the struggle.

This was brought home vividly to the writer at a recent mass meeting at Toledo. This meeting, a protest meeting against the Ohio Criminal Syndicalist Law, was not a large one, only 125 workers being present. However, most of those present were new faces to the comrades—they were workers who had never attended our meetings, with whom we had had in the past no contact. At the conclusion of the meeting 13 workers joined the Party, 5 of them workers in the huge Willys Overland auto shops. Furthermore, after the meeting the local organizer informed me that the day before, a delegation of 3 Willys-Overland workers had come down to the Workers Center to find out how they could organize in the Auto Workers Union. This delegation stated that they represented some 80 men in their department, whom they had lined up to join the union.

Why did these workers join the Party? Why did this delegation of auto workers come to the Party asking to be organized? They came because the Party in Toledo had been forced under the pressure of events, to engage in mass activity, to appear before the workers as a leader and organizer of the working class in its struggles. The mass unemployment situation in Toledo had drawn the Party into action. A splendid Council of the Unemployed had been formed, 700 workers had participated in the mass demonstrations of the unemployed demanding work or wages of the city government. The Party had come forward as a leader of the Toledo workers, reaching hitherto untouched strata of the Toledo working class with out program and propaganda. Largely as a result of this new activity the Party made contact with Willys-Overland workers, and 2 weeks succeeded in issuing a shop paper in this plant. For 4 years the District Committee has been trying to get the Toledo comrades to issue a shop paper in Willys-Overland. This the Toledo comrades have in the past failed to do, due to the fact that they had absolutely no contact with the workers, in this, the largest and most important shop in the city. As a re-

sult of the mass activity forced on our Party in Toledo by the workers, our Party there has increased its influence with the workers tremendously and for the first time is playing the role of actual organizer and leader of the masses of workers in the struggle against capitalism.

Activize Every Member.

Unfortunately not all of our Party members are actively participating in this activity in Toledo. At a time when the Party needs all its forces, to the last man, mobilized for immediate action, some of the members fail to respond to the call of the Party. This shows that the Party has not yet fully made the change—that some Party members are yet living in the old period and are either not ready or not willing to meet the increased demands the Party must make on each member in this period of mass struggles. We must strive by every means to draw such members into the Party work, but failing in this we must ruthlessly weed the mout of our ranks. The Communist Party of the United States has no place in its ranks for inactive "card-carrying Communists" today.

Never has the situation in America been so favorable for our work. Never have we faced such gigantic class struggles as we face today. To take advantage of the opportunities for work, to carry out the great tasks facing us, we must have every member at his post. Every lower Party unit, every individual Party member must understand this new situation and all it means to the American working class and to our Party. No longer must our Party lag behind the masses of the workers. Our Party must be the vanguard of the working class, and never, even in isolated circumstances, a tail of the action of the workers. The new line we have endorsed so enthusiastically in innumerable resolutions, must become a living fact, must be carried out and put into effort in every action of the Party. Then, and only then, will our Party be well along the road to Bolshevization.

For the Release of the Anti-Fascist Prisoners!

From an Appeal of the Trade Union Federation of Italy.

THE Confederazione Generale del Lavoro (General Trade Union Federation) of Italy which was abandoned by the reformists and illegally continued by the revolutionary workers, has issued to the proletarian organizations of the whole world an appeal, from which we publish the following extract:

"For many years thousands of proletarians have been imprisoned in the Italian fascist jails, given the utmost penalty the law can inflict, condemned to isolation and so slow but certain death by starvation. They were in the front ranks of the struggle against the regime of exploitation and reprisals established by fascism. The tortures, privations, the sufferings, provocations and threats have not bent them. They remain, in spite of everything, the strong and courageous fighters for the proletarian cause. For this reason they were excluded from the amnesty which the fascist government recently granted on the occasion of the wedding between the "democratic" Belgian monarchy and the monarchy of the black shirts. This class amnesty which pardons and releases the thieves, forgers, bankrupts who are the friends of the fascist dignitaries, coincides with new mass arrests of proletarians in all parts of Italy. . . .

After seven years of fascist dictatorship and after three years of exceptional law neither the permanent arrests and the sentences of the Special Tribunal, nor the shootings have been able to suppress in the Italian workers the will to fight and to resistance. This is proved by the movements, the mutinies, which are flaring up everywhere in Italy. . . .

The trade union federation of Italy appeals to the workers to reply to the contemptibleness of the fascist "amnesty" by strengthening the struggle for the release of the political prisoners, for the abolition of the Special Tribunal and the exceptional laws, for the overthrow of the regime.

The Trade Union Federation of Italy, which continues its revolutionary class action in spite of the terrorist laws of fascism, appeals to the proletarian organizations of all countries to support their active solidarity by the emancipatory struggle of the Italian toilers.

Long live the international struggle for the release of all victims of reaction! Long live revolutionary international solidarity!

Fight to the death against all varieties of fascism and against Italian fascism!