
October 1941

Fourth International

The 29 Go On Trial

By THE EDITORS

For Defense of the Soviet Union

Manifesto of the Fourth International

American Imperialist Aims *By William F. Warde*

Public Health and the War *By Grace Carlson*

France: The Coming Storm *By Marc Loris*

Trotsky and the Red Army *By John G. Wright*

***How The German Political
Prisoners Live***

By One Who Just Got Out Of Germany

Twenty Cents

Manager's Column

The editorial staff of **FOURTH INTERNATIONAL** had its plans for the September issue upset by the class struggle itself. At the very moment when the September issue was ready to go to press, the paper workers and truckmen connected with the paper industry of New York struck for better conditions and made impossible the procurement of the kind of paper we use in time for the regular September issue.

Because of this circumstance, **FOURTH INTERNATIONAL** has been obliged to omit the issue which would normally have been dated September, 1941. The bulk of the material for that issue is printed, instead, in this, the October, 1941, issue.

We regretted the interference with our publication date, but wished the striking paper workers every success in their struggle. It would have been too bad if they allowed all of the financial benefit coming from skyrocketing paper prices to go into the pockets of the bosses.

* * *

The business office has a special reason for being glad to see the approach of fall. It means the end of the well-known "summer slump." It means that activity no longer has to be carried on in the face of debilitating heat.

We have no doubt that it was the summer heat which knocked some of our branches back into the mire of debt. For the moment we are willing to believe the best about such places as Akron, Cleveland, Flint, Los Angeles, Milwaukee, New Haven, San Diego, San Francisco, and our cities in Texas. But we are highly skeptical about Los Angeles, San Diego and San Francisco, especially since they come from a part of the country which makes a principle of not admitting that weather can have an adverse effect on anybody.

Boston, Chicago, Minneapolis and St. Paul stand apart as ideals for other parts of the country to emulate. They have so regularized and stabilized their payments that the business office can almost tell when they put their checks in the mail at home.

Philadelphia and Pittsburgh

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have devoted themselves conscientiously to the liquidation of old debts and have gone far toward clearing up their accounts. There are a few other places which would do well to adopt the attitude of steady devotion which the comrades in these cities show.

* * *

The persistence with which our publications continue to find

their way into every remote part of the world is proven constantly by written and verbal communications coming to our offices.

From one of the important cities of South Africa this month came a letter of inquiry from a worker who complained that he had not been getting his copies of the magazine with regularity. He was sure the

war was not in itself enough to interfere with F. I. circulation!

* * *

The generous cooperation of Pioneer Publishers with the **MILITANT** and the **FOURTH INTERNATIONAL** allows us to make an excellent offer to those of our readers who realize the importance of becoming regular subscribers to the newspaper and magazine.

The subscription offer advertised on this page gives the reader interested in the best literature of the Trotskyist movement an opportunity to add to his library. Included in the list of premiums are works which have become standard in revolutionary literature.

Some of the works offered with the higher-priced subscriptions are available now in limited quantities and we sincerely urge those who recognize their value to take advantage of this chance at once. The offer will be valid only until November 7, which in the Trotskyist movement is doubly celebrated: as the anniversary of the great Russian Revolution of October and as the birthday of one of its great figures, Leon Trotsky.

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FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

VOLUME 2

OCTOBER, 1941

NUMBER 8

The 29 Go On Trial

By THE EDITORS

On the 20th of this month there begins, in the Federal court room in Minneapolis, the trial of the 29 defendants in the government's "seditious conspiracy" case against the Socialist Workers Party and Local 544-CIO.

This date was set by Federal Judge Matthew M. Joyce on September 11, when he upheld the indictment against the defendants' demurrer. Five weeks was all that the judge would permit the defendants to prepare trial. The Federal prosecutor, acting under orders from Washington, was successful in persuading the judge not to grant the defendants further time in which to prepare their case. Attorney General Francis Biddle is anxious to push through this case and secure a conviction as soon as possible.

Those who remember the facility with which A. Mitchell Palmer, Mr. Biddle's notorious predecessor and model, railroaded radical defendants to prison under wartime conditions, cannot permit themselves any illusions about the probable outcome of this case.

"But the charges are so fantastic! They can't make them stick!" say many friends of the defendants. Many other people who care nothing for the defendants, but have some concern for constitutionalism and decent legal formalities, express the same illusion. When the indictment drawn up by the Department of Justice was first published (the full text appeared in the August, 1941 issue of the *Fourth International*), the liberal organs — *The Nation*, *The New Republic*, the *New York Post*, the *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, etc. — found the charges so far-fetched and unreasonable that they could hardly believe that the government would go through with the case. But the government has already succeeded in putting the case at the head of the calendar, setting the trial for the 20th of October.

Reactionary governments do many "fantastic" things. That does not lessen the effect of those actions. To convict the defendants on such flimsy charges is indeed fantastic, but so is war and militarism, capitalist dictatorship and exploitation. These things shouldn't be; but they are.

What the Government Has Already Done

What could happen in this trial which would be more outrageous and undemocratic than that which the government has already done up to now in its all-out attempt to crush Local 544-CIO? This union, under the same leadership which had built the union in 1934 and which has remained uninterruptedly at the helm until now, decided by democratic decision to disaffiliate from the AFL Teamsters and to accept a charter from the CIO. That decision was taken on June 9, whereupon began a series of open govern-

ment acts to drive the membership of the union to abandon the union and to rejoin the AFL as individual members. One can hardly conceive of anything more "fantastic" than AFL Teamster chief Daniel J. Tobin's telegram of June 13 to President Roosevelt and Roosevelt's immediate reply. Tobin told Roosevelt: "The withdrawal from the International Union by the truck drivers' union, Local 544 and one other small union in Minneapolis, and their affiliation with the CIO is indeed a regrettable and dangerous condition. The officers of this local union. . . were requested to disassociate themselves from the radical Trotsky organization. . . We feel that while our country is in a dangerous position, those disturbers *must be in some way prevented from pursuing this dangerous course.*" Stephen Early, Roosevelt's secretary, immediately issued a statement from the White House which said in part: "When I advised the President of Tobin's representations this morning, he asked me to *immediately have the Government departments and agencies interested in this matter notified.*" (*New York Times*, June 14, 1941.)

And two weeks after this threat from the White House came the June 27 FBI raids on the Minneapolis and St. Paul headquarters of the Socialist Workers Party. And then on July 15 came the indictment of the 29 who are now to go on trial. Everyone in the Twin Cities understood the meaning of these moves. In reporting the FBI raids the *St. Paul Dispatch* of June 28 came out with an eight-column front page streamer: "U. S. to prosecute Local 544-CIO." And the press on that day carried Attorney General Biddle's formal announcement on the raids: "The principal Socialist Workers Party leaders, against whom prosecution is being brought, are also leaders of Local 544-CIO in Minneapolis . . . (who) have gained control of a legitimate labor union to use it for illegitimate purposes."

Then came a stream of additional government actions against the union. One was the arrest of one of its organizers, Carl Skoglund, on deportation charges — a man who has lived forty years in this country! Another was a Federal indictment in Sioux City, Iowa, against the Local 544 secretary-treasurer, Kelly Postal, on a charge that it was now suddenly discovered that Postal allegedly had something to do with an old strike — a case which had been worked up several years before by the FBI against several Iowa and North Dakota teamsters' union leaders and the trials of which had been over for two years. Thus encouraged by the Federal authorities, indictments also showered down from the state courts on "embezzlement" charges against the union

leaders for failure to turn over the Local 544 treasury to Tobin.

The Latest Outrage

Permit us to skip over much of the rest of the story and come down to the latest "fantastic" government act against the union.

Tobin admitted in his June 13 telegram to Roosevelt that what he was confronted with was "the withdrawal from the International Union by the truck drivers' union, Local 544." That did not stop either Tobin or the government departments from directly denying to the membership of the union the right to withdraw from Tobin's International. Tobin set up a rival "544-AFL" which proceeded in collaboration with the bosses and the labor-hating governor Stassen to sign contracts ostensibly covering all the workers in the industry. Local 544-CIO thereupon proposed to settle the issue by elections, by secret ballot under government supervision, to determine which union actually represented the men. Local 544-CIO filed a series of petitions with State Labor Conciliator Blair and the National Labor Relations Board, asking for such elections. The proverbial man from Mars might think that such elections would be the only way to settle the question. But the State and National Labor Relations Board — i. e., the authorities in Washington — decided otherwise. State Labor Conciliator Blair ruled on only one of the election petitions of Local 544-CIO, that covering the furniture industries; he solemnly ruled that because Local 544-CIO had called a strike in this industry on the basis of strike notices which had been filed prior to the union's disaffiliation from the AFL, the union was not entitled to the protection of the State Labor Law and was therefore not entitled to an election. Then Blair, instead of going through the painful process of concocting similar pretexts for ruling against the rest of the Local 544-CIO election petitions, proceeded to hold hearings on a Tobin petition to certify the AFL as the bargaining agent for the entire industry *without elections*. At the hearings hundreds of truck drivers testified that they remained loyal to 544-CIO and wanted elections. The sole witnesses at the hearings for the AFL were its paid officers. Yet, on September 19, State Labor Conciliator Blair certified without elections the Tobin "union" as the official bargaining agent for the entire motor transport industry of Minneapolis! And on that same day, obviously by prearrangement, the National Labor Relations Board rejected all the CIO petitions for elections.

There was one other way for Local 544-CIO to prove conclusively that it is the union which represents the workers in the motor transport industry. That was to strike. If the government and the employers would permit of no other way to count the union's members, they could count them on the picket-lines.

But that method was also closed by the state government to Local 544-CIO. Minnesota's "labor" law requires unions to submit strike notices to the state administration and to observe a "cooling off" period. Local 544-CIO submitted such strike notices. The administration rejected them under various pretexts as "illegal." Then the employers went into the courts and secured injunctions forbidding Local 544-CIO to strike.

Thus a situation was created in which, if the union called any section of the workers out on strike, the judges would have been able to put those workers and their leaders into jail, without trial, for contempt of court for violating the injunction! Under these conditions it was impossible for the

union to prove its strength by its ability to enforce strikes.

One need hardly record more than these cold facts to dramatize the well-nigh unbelievable outrageousness of this government onslaught against a union which, as everybody in the Twin Cities knows, is the real union of the transport workers of Minneapolis. "Fantastic" — but this is the record of what the government has done.

In the light of this record, one can begin to understand what kangaroo proceedings are being prepared against the defendants when the trial opens on October 20. If Roosevelt on June 13 did not hesitate to publicly align himself with Tobin against the CIO, against a union which had, admittedly by democratic decision, joined the CIO; if Attorney General Biddle did not hesitate to conduct the June 27 demonstrative raids against the Socialist Workers Party as a means of frightening the membership of Local 544-CIO; if the National Labor Relations Board, just reorganized to Roosevelt's satisfaction, did not hesitate to refuse the truck drivers of Minneapolis their elementary right to an election — then Biddle's flunkys will hesitate at nothing in rail-roading the defendants to jail.

Necessitated by Roosevelt's War Policy

There are well-meaning people who find it hard to believe that the government will trample the Bill of Rights underfoot to aid Roosevelt's chief labor lieutenant and punish forthright opponents of his war program. We refer these people to the findings of the American Civil Liberties Union. Undoubtedly the governing board of the American Civil Liberties Union, largely composed of friends of the administration, did not like to believe that Tobin was being aided by the government. Nevertheless after a careful investigation, in a letter of August 20 to Attorney General Biddle, the American Civil Liberties Union regretfully comes to the conclusion "that the government injected itself into an inter-union controversy in order to promote the interests of the one side (Tobin) which supported the administration's foreign and domestic policies."

The "foreign and domestic policies" of Roosevelt are, of course, his war program. We have seen in recent months the lengths to which Roosevelt has gone in putting over his design to plunge the country into war. He has systematically violated the Constitution of the United States which grants to Congress the sole power to involve this country in war. He has not dared to pursue a constitutional course, for even a Congress as conservative as the present one is subject in some degree to the pressure of the masses of the American people. And the masses of the American people are opposed to this country's involvement in the war. Against the will of the American people, Roosevelt pursues his war course and in that course he must go to any lengths to crush all possible rallying points of mass opposition to the war.

Local 544-CIO came into conflict with Tobin primarily over the question of Roosevelt's war policy. Tobin found it possible to keep hands off the militant leadership of Local 544 from 1936 to 1941. Tobin hated the union's famous weekly, *The Northwest Organizer*, which has consistently pursued an anti-war, anti-Roosevelt policy; but until the heightening of the war crisis, Tobin held back from a head-on clash. His greed for per-capita dues collections — Local 544 was responsible for organizing 200,000 over-the-road drivers into the International in the North Central Area — overcame Tobin's aversion to the radicalism of the Local 544-CIO leadership. Until the deepening of the war crisis, and until Roosevelt cracked the whip for his labor lieutenants

to line up the workers for war. Then Tobin moved against 544, and the union local went over to the CIO. Whereupon Tobin turned for aid to Roosevelt and it was readily granted to him, and that aid includes railroading the 29 defendants in the "seditious conspiracy" trial.

The Meaning of This Trial

This trial has a transcendent political and historical importance. That is why we Trotskyists can face it confidently, regardless of the immediate consequences for those who are personally involved. The very desperation of these acts of the government against the Socialist Workers Party and a single local union is a revealing indication of the utter

insecurity of the ruling class and its government. They enter this war with the blackest fears for the future of the capitalist class. We, on the contrary, enter this trial with the firm assurance that this skirmish in the class struggle will be followed by gigantic class battles, in which the workers will be victorious. Those battles will free the defendants from Roosevelt's jail if, in spite of law and justice, he succeeds in putting them there.

The task of the defendants and their supporters is to make every worker in this country understand the meaning of this skirmish. If we can do that, the workers will be all the better prepared to win the great battles which are coming — and are coming sooner than many dream.

For Defense of the Soviet Union

Manifesto of the Fourth International

The following manifesto, issued by the Executive Committee of the Fourth International, is reprinted from the International Bulletin Press Service.

The Soviet Union is at war! The Soviet Union is in mortal danger! In his desperate struggle to open the world to German imperialism, Hitler has turned to the east, hoping by a quick victory to strengthen his military and economic positions. At this hour of supreme danger the Fourth International proclaims what it has constantly said to the workers: Defend the U. S. S. R.! The defense of the Soviet Union is the elementary duty of all the workers true to their class.

We know very well—better than anyone—that the present government of the U.S.S.R. is very different than the Soviet power of the first years of the revolution, but we have something to defend and we defend it against the class enemy independently of all the misdeeds of its present leaders. The Soviet workers accomplished a tremendous revolution which changed the face of a vast country. They stood alone, they lacked the forces to realize all their hopes, and they had to tolerate on their necks vile usurpers. But now Hitler comes to annihilate everything. That, neither the peoples of the U. S. S. R. nor the world working class can permit.

How to defend the U. S. S. R.? To answer this question we must first know why the first workers' state, the first experiment in proletarian power, stands at the edge of the abyss. If a catastrophe is possible at this date, after almost a quarter century of survival, the cause lies above all in the internal degeneration of the workers' state, now ruled over by a parasitic bureaucracy.

Stalinism Responsible for the Catastrophe

A little more than twenty years ago, the Soviet Union came through the civil war, having victoriously repulsed the attacks of the imperialist brigands of the whole world. If today the Soviet Union has been plunged into the most terrible of wars, if today its very existence is threatened, the responsibility for its plight falls first and foremost upon Stalin. The second imperialist war and the attack against the Soviet Union could occur only after the revolutionary forces of the world proletariat, and above all its European section, had been disorganized by the Stalinized Comintern.

The Soviet Union suffered a defeat each time that the workers' ranks were smashed as a result of the treacherous

policies of Stalinism. The Soviet Union suffered a defeat when the Chinese revolution was strangled by Chiang Kai-shek, protege of Stalin, in 1927; when the Soviet bureaucracy crushed the Left Opposition, exiling and exterminating the flower of the Bolshevik party; when Hitler came to power in Germany, thanks to the fatal policy of the German communist party inspired directly by Stalin. The Soviet Union suffered a defeat when Stalin sold the French working class to the bourgeoisie as payment for a military pact; when the heroic Spanish Revolution was led to its defeat by Stalin's agents, who fought for the maintenance of private ownership of the land and factories; when the horrible Moscow trials, staged by Stalin, alienated the sympathies of workers from the Soviet Union.

The present attack against the Soviet Union by Hitler is the last link in a large chain of defeats suffered by the forces of the working class throughout the whole world, and the responsible author of these defeats was the Comintern, acting under orders of the Soviet bureaucracy. Hitler is himself a product of the decline of the proletarian revolution, carried through by the great saboteur whose name is Stalin.

We have often stated: without a Stalin there could be no Hitler! Over the present decadence reigning in Europe, with its untold misery for the working masses and their great hopes lost, moves the black shadow of Stalin, the great organizer of working class defeats!

The Bureaucracy's Foreign Policies

The Soviet Union remained isolated as a result of the betrayal by the Comintern of the revolutionary interests of the working class. The ruling bureaucrats endeavored to avoid the consequences of their crimes towards the workers by effecting diplomatic combinations with imperialist powers. But in the background of destroyed working class forces, they could go only from failure to failure. The disarray of the Kremlin, face to face with the results of its own policies, was never more apparent than on the dawn of June 22, when Hitler opened his campaign against the Soviet Union.

The foreign policies of Stalin during the last few years were in no way superior to those of Chamberlain. And for the same reason: they were both the policies of weakness. After the Munich pact Chamberlain promised the world a "new era of peace." This "era" lasted less than a year. After

the German-Soviet pact Molotov boasted that the agreement between the "two peoples," Russian and German, would guarantee unlimited peace to the Soviet Union. With the military smashing of France and the German advances into the Balkans, Stalin found it necessary to give Hitler a series of "warnings," which did not exceed the limits of small diplomatic manoeuvres.

However, a warning which is unaccompanied by real force changes into its opposite, that is to say, instead of restraining the enemy, it incites him to proceed further. By all these acts Soviet diplomacy demonstrated only one thing: that the Kremlin was mortally afraid of war. That could only encourage Hitler to undertake decisive action. To what extent the Soviet leaders were victims of their own policies is shown by the speeches of Molotov and Stalin. All that the "genius-like leadership" could think of saying in the face of the Hitler attack consisted of pitiful jeremiads about the dishonesty of the aggressor.

Stalin Stifles the Revolutionary Struggle

The war can only intensify the profoundly conservative policies of the bureaucracy. Internally Stalin has already strengthened the mechanism of police dictatorship at the expense of military interests. The bureaucracy lets it be known in this way that it may be willing to defend the Soviet Union but it is first and foremost concerned with defending its privileged position in the country. Externally the principal concern of the bureaucracy is to appear like a genuine member of the Anglo-American imperialist camp. It is in the name of this program that the Kremlin maintains an unbroken silence on everything which might call to mind the proletarian revolution.

The country where "socialism has finally triumphed" is at war, but the very word socialism has disappeared from the vocabulary of spokesmen of the bureaucracy. The Kremlin, with its mercenary writers, revives all the patriotic memories of Czarist Russia. It does not even dare recall to the Soviet masses the great events of the civil war. There are two reasons for this: first, not to disturb Churchill with burning memories and new fears, and second, because it is itself in mortal fear of the revolutionary traditions of the masses. The Communist International plays dead. In the countries of the "democratic" camp, the Stalinist parties made an instantaneous about-face. Their already long experience in this sort of drill step made it possible to carry it out without the slightest incident.

The immediate ally of the Soviet Union is the German working class which has the same enemy directly in front of it: German imperialism. But even now, when pressed by the armies of Hitler, the bureaucracy dares not appeal to it. The bureaucracy has appealed to the German people, including "honest National-Socialists," in a manifesto which contains not the slightest proletarian note but is filled instead with pitiful and ridiculous lamentations.

For the destruction of German imperialism, proletarian internationalism is a far more powerful force than any aid which Moscow may be able to get from London or Washington. Lenin often repeated that it was that force which prevented the imperialists from strangling the Russian revolution during its heroic days. But in that period the Soviet leaders knew how to speak to the workers in a revolutionary tongue.

The present Kremlin leaders can only whine to German soldiers in the language of Russian nationalism; they are completely incapable of opening a revolutionary perspective

to them. It identifies its war aims with those of Churchill and Roosevelt, and thereby serves only to strengthen German nationalism and in the end to help Hitler. It calls upon the English and American workers to support their imperialists and thereby cannot fail to tie the German workers to their leaders as well. The stifling of the revolutionary struggle in one camp makes its development more difficult in the other.

The bureaucracy conducts the war with its own characteristic methods. They are the methods of a profoundly conservative caste of parvenus, which grew up from and was nourished by the decline of the revolution. The leaders in the Kremlin have many times justified the long series of their betrayals of workers' struggles on the grounds of the defense needs of the Soviet Union. In reality, thanks to the Stalinized Comintern, the working class was defeated and the Soviet Union found itself more isolated than ever. Today the results are obvious. Yesterday the Kremlin fawned upon the Germany of Hitler just as today it grasps desperately at Churchill and Roosevelt. What has been achieved by this? Where has it led?

The Spirit of the Soviet Masses

The balance sheet of Stalinist policy shows an enormous deficit. The present catastrophe is only the bankruptcy of this whole policy. But if at the decisive hour the leaders in the Kremlin could only reveal their confusion, the Soviet masses, on the other hand, were able to demonstrate their courage and daring. The first weeks of war have shown the devotion and spirit of sacrifice of the Soviet troops. That is the fundamental fact of the campaign up to this time.

The Russian soldiers have been able to oppose the terrifying methods of German militarism with boldness and initiative. They do not fight "for Stalin," for the hated bureaucrats who oppress them but they understand fully the difference between Stalin and Hitler. They are aware that Hitler did not enter upon this formidable campaign in order to liberate the country from the parasitic bureaucracy; that he comes on the contrary to complete the latter's task, to put a definitive end to a revolution already deeply wounded. The Soviet people, by its ferocious struggle, has shown the world that there still remains something to defend and that it expects to defend it to the end.

Despite all the crimes of the bureaucracy, the October revolution, which brought a new life to all the peoples of Russia, is not yet dead. The worker and collectivized peasant are fully aware of what a Hitler victory would mean: seizure of the economy by the German trusts and cartels, transformation of the country into a colony, the end of the first experiment in planned economy outside the profit system, the end of all hopes. They do not want to allow that.

Tasks of the Working Class

The Fourth International has unceasingly proclaimed what the Soviet worker has grasped by his class instinct: *unconditional defense of the Soviet Union!* We defend the Soviet Union regardless of the betrayals by the bureaucracy and despite these betrayals. We do not demand this or that concession by the Stalinist bureaucracy as a condition for our support.

But we defend the Soviet Union with our own methods. We represent the revolutionary interests of the working class and our weapon is the revolutionary class struggle. The imperialist allies of the Kremlin are not our allies. *We go on with the revolutionary struggle, even in the "democratic" camp.* To support the imperialist masters of England or the United States would mean to aid Hitler in maintaining his

hold over the German workers. Our stakes are wagered on the revolution, and the best method of assisting the revolutionary future of the German workers is to conduct and intensify working class struggles in the opposing camp.

In Germany and in the European countries occupied by German troops, defense of the Soviet Union means directly the *sabotage of the German military machine*. German workers and peasants in soldiers' uniforms, the Fourth International calls upon you to pass over with your arms and equipment into the ranks of the Red Army! German workers and peasants now in the factories, on the railroads, and on the farms, and enslaved peoples of Europe, paralyze in every possible way the march of German militarism! You will not only by this means defend the Soviet Union, but you will also be preparing your own liberation, not the "liberation" which Churchill or Roosevelt holds in store for you, but your own, whereby you will be able as free men to build a new world.

In the Soviet Union, the Fourth International calls upon the Soviet workers to *be the best soldiers* at their combat stations. Our organization lives upon the teachings of the leader of the Red Army in the difficult first years of the revolution, Leon Trotsky, assassinated by the Kremlin's hangman, but whose memory must now be recurring evermore frequently, in this hour of supreme danger, to the minds of all the former participants in the civil war. His example and the traditions of that great period must now be inspiring the soldiers, sailors and aviators!

But the miracles of heroism of those days were rendered possible only because the workers and peasants clearly understood what they were defending. In order to repeat these miracles of daring, which are so necessary if Hitler is to be defeated, the best weapon is the restoration of the democracy of the Soviets. War does not put an end to our struggles against the bureaucrats but makes it more imperious than ever.

For the defense of the Soviet Union, form soviets of workers, peasants, and soldiers! That is our rallying cry.

But our struggle against the bureaucracy remains subordinated to the war against imperialism. That is true on the political plane, where we consider our criticism of the parasitic oligarchy as the method of best arming the country against imperialism, and it is also true on the military plane where practical actions against the bureaucracy are subordinated to the needs for defense of the country. Under wartime

conditions all the problems of the regime are posed more sharply than ever in the minds of the Soviet workers. The first task of the present hour is the formation of cadres and the *organization of the Soviet section of the Fourth International*.

Stalinism Is Doomed!

In a more or less brief period, the bureaucratic regime, now living on a compromise between the proletariat and imperialism, cannot survive the war. Even in case of victory, the days of the Stalinist clique are numbered. A victory, even in the form of prolonged resistance, would awaken all the hopes of the Soviet masses, and would destroy the accumulated apathy engendered by the years of defeats. The workers and collective farmers would increasingly oppose the arbitrary actions of bureaucrats. Besides, the failure of the German armies would inevitably produce what Stalin dreads the most—workers' insurrections throughout all Europe. On the burning terrain of the revolution, Stalin would lose his footing and follow Hitler straight into the abyss.

The turmoil of war now resounds through the whole world. All the imperialists are working feverishly for the annihilation of humanity. A tremendous wave of reaction is sweeping before it all the liberties and all the conquests of yesterday. Hitler, Churchill and Roosevelt are eager rivals in this terrible contest. Stalin seeks only to conform to the "democratic" robbers and his greatest fear is that he may let slip some revolutionary word.

As for us, we can well continue to be optimists. Within the depths of the masses a revolt is ripening which nothing will be able to restrain. The first imperialist war of 1914-1918 now appears as a simple rehearsal for the present war, and the revolutionary whirlwind which will come out of the present war will dwarf the revolutionary crises of 1917-1920. The resistance of the Soviet masses to the German advance cannot but hasten the explosion. That is why all the peoples of the world must support that resistance, each according to the particular methods which we have indicated.

Defend the Soviet Union and you thereby defend yourselves, you will hasten the hour of your liberation!

For defense of the Soviet Union!

Long live the World Socialist Revolution!

Executive Committee of the
Fourth International

August, 1941.

The Press on the Prosecution of the 29

By THE EDITORS

The government prosecution of the Socialist Workers Party and Local 544-CIO has called forth considerable editorial comment in publications ranging from the left-wing labor press to the ultra-conservative big capitalist organs. The volume of this comment testifies to the importance of the event; the reaction of the various writers to the prosecution indicates the social forces they represent in the present stage of the class struggle in this country.

Conservative capitalist public opinion of course heartily endorsed the action of Roosevelt's Department of Justice. Now at last their government was getting busy to clean

up the Reds and purge the trade unions of trouble-making militants. Now the liberal Roosevelt had clearly placed himself in the reactionaries' camp and was through coddling the CIO.

The only injustice the big bourgeois press complained of was that Roosevelt's attack did not go far enough. Why stop at the Trotskyists? Why stop at the leaders of Local 544-CIO? Why not go after other radical groups and those responsible for strikes? Above all, why not also go after the Communist Party? the reactionaries asked.

Typical of this attitude was the editorial in the July 20

Memphis Commercial Appeal: "We are all for putting the Socialist Workers Party — Fourth International Group — in those well-guarded places where it can do no further harm, but not until the Government institutes similar proceedings against the rest of the flock, are we going to get very enthusiastic about it. The Third International and the Fourth International look alike to us in that neither one means this country any good."

The *Chicago Tribune*, leading Mid-West isolationist opponent of Roosevelt, also chided the administration for sparing the Stalinists. Just as the Stalinists swing over to support of Roosevelt, said the *Tribune* on July 18th, "it's odd that the weight of the Attorney-General's hand should descend upon the deviations of the Trotskyites, whom Stalin has pursued all over the earth, and upon the teamsters who have just broken away from Mr. Roosevelt's AFL friend, Dan Tobin." The *Tribune* broadly hinted that Roosevelt is shielding the Stalinists.

The war-mongering *New Leader*, Social-Democratic shadow of the administration, made a similar complaint on July 19. "Why the Trotskyists? Mr. President?" it asked plaintively. Why not the Stalinists in their stead or after them? The *New Leader* flounders about but cannot find satisfactory answers to either of these two questions. The political talent of the Social-Democrats consists, not in giving clear and correct answers to grave political issues affecting the working class but in dodging and darkening them.

The *St. Paul Dispatch* answered the *New Leader's* question why the Stalinists were spared in an editorial on June 28, 1941: "It is easy to see why the Department of Justice has chosen to proceed first against the Trotskyites, rather than the Stalinists. The Communist Party of America is Stalinist. Up to last Sunday, when Germany attacked Russia, the Stalinists were at war against the defense program and the policy of aid to Britain, because Stalin was still supposed to be allied with Hitler. While the present situation continues, as a result of Hitler's double cross, the Communists are on America's side. The Trotskyites, who have a feud with Stalin, can be expected to carry on the campaign of disloyalty."

The Stalinists Advise the FBI

In view of the barrage directed at the Stalinists in connection with the Minnesota indictments, a naive person might expect that a simple sense of self-preservation would lead the Stalinist leaders to defend the Socialist Workers Party and CIO unionists in this case. But the Stalinist bureaucrats' first duty is to their lord and paymaster in the Kremlin. Even if the ultimate consequences of such policies be their own annihilation, as in Germany, France or Spain, they willy-nilly follow the course laid down by the dictates of the reactionary Kremlin clique. In an article which appeared on August 16th, fully a month after the indictments, the *Daily Worker* finally took notice of "The Prosecution of the Minneapolis Trotskyites." The Stalinist organ heartily approved the government action against the Trotskyists:

"The American people, whose independence as a nation, together with that of the people of Great Britain and the Soviet Union is endangered and at stake in the fight for the defeat of Nazi Germany, can find no objection to the destruction of the Fifth Column in this country. On the contrary, they must insist upon it. The leaders of the Trotskyist organization which operates under the false name of 'Socialist Workers Party,' deserve no more support from labor and friends of national security than do the Nazis who camou-

flage their party under the false name of 'National Socialist Working Party.'"

The Stalinists also stated that they do not like the laws under which the Socialist Workers Party was indicted; they do not like the FBI's interference in the internal affairs of the labor movement; above all, they do not like the fact that the federal government had indicted the Trotskyists as a revolutionary workers' organization. According to the *Daily Worker*, Roosevelt and Biddle should be framing up the Trotskyists just as Stalin and Vyshinsky framed up the Trotskyists in the Moscow Trials. We "insist that the Trotskyites be characterized for what they are — the agents of Fascism in this country," says the *Daily Worker*.

The Stalinists are actuated by a double fear. Firstly, the trial of the Trotskyists as revolutionists, officially stamped as followers of Lenin and Trotsky, not only exposes the slanders of the Stalinists but raises the prestige of the Trotskyists among class-conscious workers. "The Government, instead of isolating the Trotskyites, exposing them for what they are," blurts out the *Daily Worker*, "actually may, by its actions help to create sympathy for them by allowing them to pose falsely as the champion of the rights of the trade unions."

Secondly, the Stalinists are second-class guests in the pent-house of the bourgeoisie. They fear, despite Stalin's wooing of Roosevelt, that convictions of the Trotskyists will be used as a "medium for attacking genuine labor organizations including the Communist Party." "It is a known fact," states the *Daily Worker*, "that such groups as the Dies Committee, the Rapp-Coudert Committee and similar groups in other states have tried to distort the programs and principles of the Communist Party and charged them with intentions almost similar to those drawn in the indictment of the Trotskyite branch of Hitlerism."

True, these witch-hunting agencies have distorted the program of the Communist Party as the Communist Party distorts the principles of the Socialist Workers Party. These distortions, however, proceed in opposite directions. The Dies Committee falsifies the Stalinist program by depicting it as a revolutionary organization, while the Stalinists falsify our program by portraying us as Fascists.

The Stalinists, in short, prefer that we be imprisoned by a frameup made in Moscow; the American bourgeoisie, naturally, prefers a good American frameup made in Washington. That is the sole difference between the two types of frameup artists.

Attitude of the Labor Movement

Most of the official top AFL spokesmen applauded the government's action against us as heartily as did Republican Governor Stassen of Minnesota or the boss press. A double blow delivered at the CIO and the "Reds" — what could be sweeter to these ultra-reactionary bureaucrats? What did it matter if democratic rights or trade union independence were violated, so long as their rival, the CIO, was crippled?

On the other hand, the CIO and especially its more progressive sections, have condemned the government prosecution and rallied to the defense of the Minneapolis teamster leaders. We cite two actions of the CIO. In a statement issued on July 28th, the political arm of the CIO, Labor's Non-Partisan League, of which John L. Lewis is chairman, declared: "Witch hunting tactics of the Justice Department under A. Mitchell Palmer, in World War I are being revived here as history repeats itself in World War II. . . Today, Justice Department activities again are a menace to fundamental lib-

erties and to labor's basic rights. . . If Minneapolis teamsters can be jailed for their opinions, so can anybody."

The delegates to the United Auto Workers Convention in Buffalo, representing over 500,000 workers, passed a resolution in support of Local 544-CIO and against the FBI's anti-labor activities. This betokens the CIO's firmer class solidarity, its profoundly proletarian composition and its more vigilant resistance to the government's reactionary moves. In the aroused and united army of organized labor is the sole force that can prevent the government from going through with this and any further assaults upon labor's rights.

Reaction of the Liberal Press

The liberal press was embarrassed by Roosevelt's rape of civil liberties and labor's rights in this case. The *Nation*, *New Republic*, *New Leader*, *New York Post*, etc., demand an open declaration of war and paint the President as the greatest crusader of democracy since Woodrow Wilson. Now, before Roosevelt grants them their war, he is violating the very democratic rights he is supposed to be defending. This inconsistency, this minor offense, this slip of the penitentiary disturbs what little remains of their liberal consciences.

All the liberal papers chant the same refrain. Why the Trotskyists? Why this "hysterical fear of a little handful of theoretical communists," asks the *New Republic* on July 28th.

The liberals are caught in the prongs of a dilemma. If the Trotskyists are so slight a political magnitude, the government's offense is all the greater. If, however, the Trotskyists represent a weighty force, that means that our revolutionary ideas are making headway among the advanced workers. The petty-bourgeois piddlers in politics twist and turn to avoid embracing either equally hateful alternative.

The liberals call upon the government to dismiss the prosecution on the ground that the Trotskyists represent no serious danger at the moment to the capitalist regime. There is a positive implication to this negative judgment. The assumption is that, if Trotskyism became powerful enough to challenge the status quo, the Department of Justice would be justified in framing up and imprisoning its adherents. (This is, in fact, the conclusion to which all liberal and "socialist" defenders of the capitalist regime have come in practice whenever that regime has been placed in jeopardy by the proletarian revolution. That is why Kerensky outlawed the Bolshevik party; Noske and Scheidemann shot down and jailed the German Spartacists; and the Loyalist-Stalinist-Socialist-Anarchist government in Spain murdered and imprisoned proletarian revolutionists.)

While deploring the prosecution, the liberals go to any length to absolve the Roosevelt administration of wrongdoing. They vehemently deny, for example, the obvious junction of this case in aiding AFL Teamsters chief Tobin against the CIO. "It is impossible to believe," says the *New Leader*, "that the President of the United States would repay a personal debt by having anyone's enemies indicted. That would be too much like the kind of frameup we have been taught to expect from Stalin and his gang. That explanation will not do." But it will stand until the *New Leader* provides a better one.

The devices resorted to by the liberals to absolve the Roosevelt administration of full responsibility for this prosecution would be amusing, were it not for the fact that they thereby make it more difficult to arouse the labor movement to the danger of a conviction. Here are a few examples:

The *New York Post*, in an editorial entitled "Better

Left Alone," on July 22, complains that "the Federal grand jury . . . appears to have gotten unduly excited . . . The grand jury may have been taken in by the Trotskyite literature . . . These (revolutionary principles) are, of course, basic elements in the form prospectus of every radical lunatic fringe group." In a word, the prosecution is the mistake of a hick jury, according to the *Post*. That Attorney General Biddle himself ordered the FBI raids on the Socialist Workers Party and the subsequent grand jury investigation; that the Department of Justice itself drew up the indictment which it persuaded the grand jury to approve — all this the *Post*, a Roosevelt supporter, conceals.

The *New Leader* week after week — until the trial was set for October 20 — printed "inside" stories that the Roosevelt Administration was planning to quash the indictment; and that Biddle, because of unfavorable publicity accorded the prosecution, would not be appointed Attorney-General.

The *New Republic*, after describing the outrageousness of the prosecution and declaring that its continuance "would be unforgivable, it would be worth ten divisions to Hitler," is so overcome by the import of its criticism of the government's action that it abruptly concludes its July 28 editorial: "For that reason (the importance of the case) we ask our readers to suspend judgment until the facts are a little clearer. We promise to report fully and promptly on those facts." Any reader who followed the *New Republic* in suspending judgment would still be doing so; for the *New Republic* has not had an additional word to say since that "suspend judgment" on July 28.

The liberal adherents of the Roosevelt administration are obliged by the logic of their political line to hide from themselves as well as from others the true significance of the prosecution. At best they treat the prosecution as an aberration on the part of the administration, an accidental occurrence, an error which a little fixing will rectify. These cliques of petty-bourgeois intellectuals gone war-mad suffer in one degree or another from the blindness arising out of their class position and their allegiance to the imperialist regime.

The objective social and political function of these petty-bourgeois patriots is to strengthen the imperialist state by persuading liberal and labor circles to support the war. Their success in this task is directly proportionate to their ability to depict that war and its promoters as "democratic, progressive, liberating." Having hypnotized themselves into the belief that such is the case, they now have to convince others.

Roosevelt's attack upon militant unionism and civil liberties exposes these progressive pretensions and lays bare the reactionary nature of his course—and that of the liberals. Hence their alarm, confusion, dismay. Hence their refusal to recognize and to admit the bitter truth: that Roosevelt's move, far from being an episodic deviation, is a direct and inevitable consequence of his War Deal.

Dos Passos Tries to Explain

John Dos Passos tries to face this problem in "A Letter to a Liberal in Wartime," published in the September 6th issue of *The Nation*. Dos Passos explicitly identifies himself with the left wing of Roosevelt's supporters and with their Holy War. However, Dos Passos, who has an honorable record of standing up for labor's democratic rights, is disturbed by the reactionary trend of Roosevelt's Department of Justice. He takes the side of the Minnesota truck drivers and followers of Trotsky against their government prosecutors. He answers the *New Leader* by characterizing the case as a

frameup, in which "even the language of the indictment has the peculiar twist of Stalin's frame-ups in Moscow."

Dos Passos is seriously afraid that by this case "a precedent will have been set that bodes ill for this country's liberties." "You must remember the Palmer raids, the deportations delirium, the crushing of the I.W.W., the Sacco-Vanzetti case, all the terrible perversions of justice after the last war that made American democracy a mockery to a whole generation of young men," he reminds his liberal friend. "Is it all going to happen again?" he asks. "Is the same lack of whole-hearted principle that wrecked Woodrow Wilson's crusade to set the world straight, going to destroy the present administration too?"

Standing upon the same formal political ground as they do, Dos Passos appeals to the better nature, to the principled conscience of his fellow-liberals within the administration, to change their course and drop the prosecution. He warns the administration that it is injuring its own best interests, "is risking more than can possibly be gained by the prosecution." How can the government unify the country for war, he asks, when it "undermines at home those four freedoms for which it is asking the nation to make every sacrifice abroad?"

This appeal speaks better for Dos Passos' kindness of heart than for his political understanding. He is not facing the fact that the best interests of the Roosevelt regime are bound up with the interests of imperialism, which compel it to prosecute working class militants and opponents of the war. By itself the government will not and cannot swerve from this course; only an aroused and powerful labor movement can check its reactionary repressive trend.

Dos Passos received his answer from "A Liberal in Office" early in September when Attorney General Francis Biddle justified the FBI's wire-tapping in the Harry Bridges case before the Senate Judiciary Committee: "It is a dirty business, of course," Biddle stated, "but . . . we have abandoned civil rights before in times of war." (New York Times, Sept. 4.) The imperialist war economy invades the sphere of democratic rights as well as it invades all other departments of national life. Government officials have decided to ration civil liberties along with gasoline, refrigerators and silk stockings. Democracy will be placed on the dole only for the duration of the war, they promise; but the people cannot place any more confidence in this than in any other of Roosevelt's promises.

The Class Nature of the Prosecution

The liberals do not grasp the class character of the prosecution; they do not understand that it is not an aberration but a socially determined action arising out of the prevailing conditions of the class struggle in the United States. Three main social forces are involved in that struggle: the big bourgeoisie, the working class and the middle classes. Roosevelt and Biddle, Stassen and Blair, the big capitalist press and politicians, represent the attitude of the big bosses. The Socialist Workers Party and its defendants within the labor movement stand for the interests of the working class. Tobin, the AFL fakers, the Hillmanites and the Stalinists are agents serving the imperialist bourgeoisie. The small group of liberals who condemn the prosecution represent progressive middle-class sentiment. This is the real alignment of class forces in this case.

The roots of the prosecution reach down into the war policy of the Roosevelt government. That government is bent on whipping labor into line and beating down all opposition

to its course. Labor leaders like Tobin and Hillman act as government agents in bending the workers to their will and disciplining the rank and file. Tobin and Roosevelt work hand in hand to conscript the trade unions for service in this bosses' war and to police its ranks. Tobin moved to purge his International of the militants of Local 544 in conformity to Roosevelt's command. When they escaped from under his thumb, he called upon his political boss for help. The government thereupon seized the opportunity to snare two birds in the same net: the militant unionists of Local 544-CIO and the most consistent opponents of its war policy—the Socialist Workers Party.

That is the answer to the question of the liberals and social-democrats—Why the Trotskyists? Roosevelt purges the Trotskyists for the same general reason that Stalin purged the Trotskyists; as a preventive measure against the revolutionary opponents of his regime. The Trotskyists may be no tremendous mass influence today, but Roosevelt senses from the influence they already wield within the left wing of the labor movement, that they can become the rallying-point of opposition to his war policies tomorrow. Therefore he is trying to remove this revolutionary political force from the arena to stop the spread of its ideas. Having no new methods at his disposal, he can only imitate the illegal procedures and frameups that Wilson and A. Mitchell Palmer used against Debs, the I.W.W. and the revolutionists in the last war.

The liberals sneer at the Trotskyists as insignificant and cannot explain why they are hounded. But their estimate is not shared by the reactionary rulers of today. These take the Trotskyists very seriously. Roosevelt even impairs the reputation of his administration among the liberal democrats by prosecuting us, thus joining the unsavory company of Hitler, Petain, Chiang Kai-shek, Stalin and others.

There must be profound social motives that would account for this uninterrupted series of persecutions in so many countries against the Trotskyists. There are. By themselves, the Trotskyists are today only a vanguard movement, but they possess a program and a future. Behind the Trotskyists stand the potentially revolutionary masses, who represent the greatest of all threats to the powers that be. That is why all these rulers constitute an international united front of reaction against the Trotskyists. Around the Trotskyists the international united front of revolutionary struggle against imperialism is mobilized.

What do the liberals and social-democrats who belittle the importance of the Trotskyists amount to in their own right? Certainly their lord and master, Roosevelt, doesn't hearken to their advice or take their complaints seriously. They are nothing but impotent, sniveling, despicable chambermaids of the bourgeoisie. These people, who have no power and have nothing to lose, take pleasure in abusing the Trotskyists in words. But those mighty ones who have real power and a great deal — indeed, everything — to lose, act vigorously against us.

This is in accord with the nature and the present disposition of forces in the class struggle. The imperialist persecutors and their allies represent the interests of the masters of capital. The liberal democrats speak for the petty-bourgeoisie, the impotent hostages of capital. We stand for the cause of the revolutionary working class. That is the fundamental reason for our prosecution. Here is also the source of that political strength which will enable us to survive that prosecution and grow stronger.

France: First Signs of the Storm

By MARC LORIS

The political life of France has obviously entered a new phase. The Petain Government has abandoned the hope of rallying the country around itself by its benevolent paternalism; it now tries, with trembling hand, to crack the whip. The Bonapartist character of the Government has been markedly accentuated in the past period. In his speech on August 12, Petain acknowledged that the whole country is against him and that, in addition to the German bayonets, the sole support of his regime is the police. His regime rests upon so narrow a base that it is shaken by incessant alterations.

When he took power, Petain boasted that he would put an end to the traditional instability of the French parliamentary regime. In actual fact the Government apparatus has never been more subject than today to constant jolts. The whole administration, including the police, is periodically purged. "Whoever is not with me is against me," Petain has proclaimed. Simple abstention becomes an offense, the least doubt an attack. To consolidate the crumbling structure of his regime, Petain demands an oath of loyalty from his collaborators. He is now trying to create some mass base with the French Legion. He had already tried some months ago to solve the same task with the National Assembly. The organizing of this enterprise has now been stopped. The new effort will doubtless meet with the same success.

The more Petain is isolated from the country by distrust and hate, the more he is obliged to yoke himself by new bonds to the chariot of the conqueror. He promises Hitler "loyal collaboration" and the main part of his collaboration is the crushing of his own people by even heavier repressions.

The Role of Individual Terror

It is in this atmosphere that the revolver shot against Laval rang out. The attempt is obviously not an accidental occurrence and the motives of the assassin have rarely been clearer. It is the whole French petty-bourgeoisie, overwhelmed by misery, stifled by repression, its patriotism offended, which pulled the trigger to assuage its anger. The attempt against Laval enables us to measure the growing tension of antagonisms which are accumulating in France (and in all Europe).

In the duel between the oppressors and the terrorists we are, of course, on the side of those who do not hesitate to sacrifice their lives for liberty, but that does not mean that we approve their methods. Far from that. Individual terror is the specific weapon of the petty-bourgeoisie when pushed to the wall. It is no novelty. It has already had a long experience in numerous countries. Marxists have often had the occasion to criticize the tactics of individual terror—not of course in the name of morality, but from the standpoint of revolutionary effectiveness. It is not a question of "revenge" oneself; but of finding the best methods of struggle. For one Laval assassinated ten other zealous "collaborators" will present themselves. For a single French officer killed there will come a hundred others, more haughty and more brutal.

As for the effect of the individual attempts upon the masses, if it has any effect it can only be to drive them into passivity. If salvation can come from a few heroes who will avenge our miseries and liberate us from the oppressor by means of a revolver shot, what's the use of organizing and

preparing the struggle? If one can rely on a "savior," why lose time forming a revolutionary party?

If they are sterile in themselves, the individual attempts are nevertheless manifest signs of the profound crisis which is maturing in France and in all Europe. Hitler's "New Order" can bring the peoples only misery and oppression. In their slang, the German soldiers use the word "organized" with the meaning of plunder. If they have stolen a chicken or a roll of butter, they say that they have "organized" them. They have grasped very well what all the grandiose phrases on the "organization" of Europe by Hitler means: the concentration of all resources in the hands of German imperialism for the prosecution of its work of conquest. The oppressed and despoiled people grumble with revolt.

The Effect of the Soviet Struggle

To this general cause of the crisis is now added the war against the USSR. It is there that one must see the source of the wave of sabotage which has suddenly swept over France. In what measure are the acts of sabotage the product of concerted organizational action? That is difficult to say. It appears that the Stalinists have preserved a fairly considerable organizational ability; but at the same time the amplitude of the sabotage movement and the variety of its forms shows that it has manifestly surpassed the organized nuclei of an illegal party. In this wave of sabotage which seeks to paralyze the German military machine, we fully support the initiative of the masses which serve the interests of the defense of the USSR as well as their own liberation.

Are the Stalinists participating in the individual assassination attempts with their responsible cadres? That is difficult to say, but it seems that they are not alien to that. The American press has announced that in a leaflet the Stalinists threaten to exterminate 10 Germans for each one of themselves condemned and executed. The attempt upon Marcel Gitton, an old Stalinist leader, who turned Fascist at the outbreak of the war between France and Germany, reinforces the hypothesis of the Stalinists' participation in the terrorist struggle. It is evidently not excluded that Gitton was assassinated as a result of internal quarrels in the Fascist camp, but in the present conditions the other possibility, that of an action by the Stalinists, is much more probable. There is, moreover, nothing to astonish us in this. The Stalinists are not restrained by any Marxist principle; for a long time such things have not mattered one bit to them. On the other hand, bureaucratism and individual terrorism go hand in hand. Both have their origin in distrust of the supposedly "incapable" masses, which the individual has to extricate from their difficulties. We repeat: nothing can be accomplished by means of individual attempts. These uselessly sacrifice the precious devotion of the masses and fetter their action.

The Storm Is Approaching

German imperialism has still, of course, great reserves of strength, and it would be illusory to hope for its early fall. But its situation has manifestly worsened in these last weeks. Hitler, it seems, cannot terminate his adventure in the East

before winter. This means enormous expenditures of forces in the coming months, the loss of prestige in Germany itself. The German generals are going to sack the conquered countries with still more fury. But if the first real protests—attempts at assassination and sabotage—are repressed in blood and crushed for a certain time, they will soon revive with redoubled force and in more effective forms. The resistance of the adversary will have been lessened. After many assaults the outburst is inevitable.

A mighty storm is gathering over Europe. What we now feel are the first gusts in the air. All the nations are shaking

to their very foundations. The ruling classes are discredited. To be sure, purely nationalist eddies are not lacking amongst the petty-bourgeois masses who have lost their equilibrium, but the power will go to those who know clearly what they want. And we know what that is: the end of the whole capitalist system, power to the workers, the socialist revolution. *Our* weapon is a bold revolutionary party. All our efforts, all our constant care should be devoted to preparing this weapon. All our will ought to be ceaselessly concentrated upon this role: to prepare the organization which tomorrow will be able to lead the struggle to the end.

The Aims of American Imperialism

By WILLIAM F. WARDE

The Roosevelt-Churchill conference has brought sharply to the fore the question of the war aims of the United States. The so-called "peace-terms" published by the conference were received everywhere with a reserve bordering on cynicism. The terrible aftermath of Wilson's 14 points is too fresh in people's memories for Roosevelt's revised edition to arouse enthusiasm. What assurance do the records of British and American imperialism hold that their new paper promises will find fulfillment? The amount of political credit the masses extend to Roosevelt and Churchill's program is short.

The one point in the conference declaration which could be accepted at face value was the belligerent assertion that the Two Powers aimed at crushing the Nazi war machine and its associates. But the annihilation of Hitlerism raises more questions than it answers. How can this be done? How would the post-war world be reconstructed? Who will govern that world? Why will the crushing of Hitler bring a better future than did the crushing of Kaiserism?

The starkly reactionary aims of the Anglo-American imperialists prevent them from giving an honest or progressive answer to these questions. The real objectives of U. S. imperialism are not mentioned in the declaration. Roosevelt, like Wilson, portrays himself as a guardian of peace, an apostle of civilization, the defender of democracy, the patron of humanity. But this shining knight serves more earthly masters. Roosevelt is the political agent of the American plutocracy, the promoter of its welfare. His foreign and domestic policies flow from the needs of that class in its struggle for power and profit against its foreign rivals and its own people.

The imperialist war aims of Roosevelt's regime are determined, not by casual circumstances or by humanitarian considerations, but by the material urges of American monopoly capital. The predatory appetites of our super-capitalists have suffered years of famine: Roosevelt must appease them. Their international interests are gravely threatened by Germany and Japan: Roosevelt leaps forward to protect them. These are the real motives behind the government's course. All the rest is bait to hook the masses.

The Permanent Crisis of American Capitalism

American capitalism has been in a state of chronic crisis since 1929. This crisis, arising out of the general crisis of world capitalism, has already passed through three distinct stages. The first, from 1929 to 1934, was a period of

precipitous economic decline; the second, from 1934 to 1937, witnessed an upturn and partial recovery under Roosevelt's New Deal; the third, from 1937 to 1940, coincided with a new economic decline which, in conjunction with the sharpening of imperialist antagonisms, led to extensive preparations for foreign war.

The fourth chapter in the unfolding of this permanent crisis has just begun. This crisis is the most serious for American capitalism, not only because it comes on top of the previous crises, but because it far surpasses them in magnitude.

The Roosevelt administration attempted to cope with the earlier phases of crisis mainly by domestic measures. Now the capitalist state through Roosevelt's war program seeks to overcome this new and more acute stage of crisis by passing beyond the national boundaries and taking the whole world for its province. Roosevelt's previous foreign policies (the Good-Neighbor pose, Hull's Trade Pacts, monetary measures) were subordinated to his domestic program. Today all domestic life, economy, politics are conscripted to subserve the imperialist designs of the big monied bosses.

The American monopolists are hunting the biggest of big game. They have set forth to achieve the political mastery and economic monopoly of the globe. This aim necessarily involves a strategy of planetary dimensions.

Just as the Second World War is the most convulsive expression of the blind alley in which world capitalism finds itself, so the intervention of the United States in the war is the supreme manifestation and inescapable consequence of the uninterrupted internal crisis of American monopoly capitalism. The reform measures of Roosevelt's New Deal proved incapable of solving a single fundamental problem posed by the decomposition of capitalist economy. The murderous means contemplated in his imperialist War Deal will be no less incapable of removing the deepening difficulties of American capitalism. On the contrary, the total participation of the United States in the inter-imperialist conflict will inevitably bring far greater problems to the weakening American economy, heap more intolerable burdens upon the people, and sharpen to a razor edge every class antagonism. Entrance into the war can be only the prelude to domestic crises and social convulsions of revolutionary intensity.

Objectives—Past, Present and Future

The object of American imperialism is to conquer the world. For a long time the privileged American bourgeoisie

believed that they might avoid the perils of direct participation in the wars of Europe and Asia by permitting or paying subordinate agents to fight for them and by intervening toward the conclusion of the conflict to regulate the affairs of victor and vanquished alike. This was the strategic course pursued by the British bourgeoisie during its rise to world hegemony in the 19th century. This was partially the policy pursued by American imperialism in the First World War, when it intervened toward the close of the conflict to decide its outcome and dictate the terms of peace.

During the post-war decade Washington-Wall Street played the role of "benevolent dictator" toward defeated Europe. Emerging from the war as chief capitalist victor, the American plutocracy rushed to the rescue of European capitalism; helped quench the revolutionary fire that threatened to consume it; stabilized its devastated economic foundations and repaired vital parts of its structure. The American bankers exacted a stiff price for their services by forcing the European bourgeoisie to acknowledge Wall Street's financial supremacy and to pay heavy tribute. They usurped England's lordship over the world market and stock exchanges. Until 1929 they harvested golden fruits from this policy.

The crash of 1929 shattered this extremely profitable form of "collaboration," i.e. superexploitation, between the American and European capitalists. American assets in bankrupt Europe turned into liabilities. The golden chain of reparations, war-debts, loans by which American capitalism had manipulated Europe, dissolved. Upset by the domestic consequences of the world crisis, immersed in efforts to deal with them, the U. S. capitalists found themselves obliged for a time to turn their back upon Europe and concentrate upon internal problems.

This turned out to be but a passing phase. The reactionary political effects of the crisis combined with the defeats of the proletarian revolution to produce the swift rise of European Fascism. Hitler started the Nazi war machine moving to give German money-masters their place in the sun. The military march of German, Italian and Japanese imperialism upset the political equilibrium in Europe and the rest of the world.

These menacing developments in the world arena coincided with the New Deal's failure to achieve any fundamental alleviation of the economic crisis within the United States. The conjunction of these world-political and internal-economic crises, both springing out of the death agony of capitalism, has driven the Roosevelt administration to take the same militaristic road as the other powers.

Entranced by the past and fearing to gaze too closely upon the grim face of the future, the representatives of U. S. monopoly capital doubtless count upon duplicating the policy of world financial enslavement which brought them so bountiful a harvest following the last war. This policy, however, must now be applied under very different conditions and will inevitably have far different and less satisfactory results. Other, more terrible methods of harnessing Europe and the world must be evolved and enforced by the American imperialists.

Tasks of U. S. Imperialism

Capitalist society has now entered upon the epoch of its continuous decline. The policies which brought prosperity and power to the ruling bourgeoisie during the economic upswing of the last century no longer succeed. The utter bankruptcy of Chamberlain's appeasement policy was a striking demonstration of this fact. Germany was not content to

play the role of junior partner to British imperialism. Hitler demanded and fought for a monopolistic position in relation to all his capitalist competitors.

The partition of the planet amongst the imperialist powers, the dwindling production of capitalist economy, the existence of the USSR, the eruption of imperialist antagonisms, the tangled network of nationalist interests, the severity of class and colonial conflicts — all these factors bar any peaceful road to world power, even to so rich a Colossus as the United States. To ward off its rivals and to keep its central place in the sun, the American imperialists must fight on a world scale. And it must contend with all kinds of challenges to its rule: imperialist, nationalist, proletarian, colonial and semi-colonial. No matter how the American bourgeoisie endeavored to avoid direct involvement in the war, its ever-widening circumference would not permit them to escape. This is the essential significance for the United States of developments in the first period of the world war.

The United States is now committed to participation in the inter-imperialist war. Roosevelt has undertaken to lead the coalition of Anglo-American imperialists in the struggle for world domination against Germany and Japan. For American imperialists there can be no turning back along this road to world conquest by military means. From now on, the imperialist war policies dominate everything in American life, just as they determine the fate of all mankind.

The decision of the greatest and most favored imperialist government to embark upon the war demonstrates with irrefutable force that the ruling bourgeoisie in all highly developed countries without exception have no other recipe for the solution of the social crisis than the methods of world conquest, just as they have no other solution for their domestic crises than the annihilation of bourgeois democracy by fascist dictatorship. Permanent militarism and permanent reaction — these are the characteristic political products of capitalist decay in our time.

The aims of American imperialism require unprecedented means and measures for their realization. They involve the militarization of the entire nation. They require active and acquiescent allies and the arming and financing of these allies. They require billions upon billions of dollars, millions upon millions of lives, and armaments of Cyclopean magnitude. They require the military defeat of the chief imperialist antagonists, Germany and Japan, either serially or simultaneously. They require the submission or subjugation of all South American countries. They require taking the possessions of the British Empire, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and possibly India, under U. S. patronage and protection. They require suzerainty over China, mastery of the Pacific, and eventually the destruction of the Soviet Union.

Such are the gigantic tasks confronting the American imperialists in their struggle for world supremacy. They must solve these tasks, not like British imperialism, in the course of several centuries, but in the course of several years or decades. Although the commander-in-chief of American monopoly capitalism may not fully comprehend the magnitude of their tasks, the development of events is rapidly disclosing it to them. The chief spokesmen for American imperialism, from the White House to Thomas Lamont of the House of Morgan, now feel themselves called upon to police the world, to dictate the terms of life and labor to the rest of humanity, and to carry through their program of imperialist conquest at any cost to the American people.

The Prospects for Success

The question arises: Can American imperialism suc-

ceed in fulfilling these tasks and reaching its goal of world domination? To this question we give a categorical answer — No!

In the first place, economic factors forbid. The colossal economic efforts and expenditures demanded by the imperialist war plans have already begun to strain the economic resources of the United States, undermined by a decade of crises. Rich as the American plutocracy is, enormous as are the resources of American capitalism, they still do not possess inexhaustible reservoirs of wealth. This has already begun to show itself in the rationing of consumers' goods and in the strict allocation of essential raw materials. As the war progresses, ever greater demands will be imposed upon limited resources. The vital energies of the producers and the material means of production will become depleted. It is not difficult to foresee a stage at which the breaking point is reached and an explosion must occur, with the most catastrophic consequences for American and world capitalism.

American capitalists console themselves with the illusion that after the war is won, expenses will be reduced and the world will return to "business as usual." But who will guarantee an end to this war? Authoritative spokesmen already speak of five to ten years of conflict. And who will guarantee that any blessed "normalcy" will return to capitalism in the intervening armistice? The fairly favorable conditions following the last war will not be duplicated after this one. Too much has happened in the interim; capitalism is considerably weaker now than it was then.

Nor is there any assurance that the war will end before the economic explosion occurs. The fate of the New Deal is an ominous anticipation for the future of American capitalism. The billions Roosevelt expended for bolstering up a sagging economy from 1933 to 1939 was followed in 1940-41 not by the diminution of these expenditures but by their multiplication for war purposes.

Even if American imperialism should emerge victorious from the war without experiencing revolutionary convulsions, it cannot then depend upon any durable stabilization either for itself or for international capital. The 20 years between the First and Second World Wars conclusively demonstrated that capitalism can no longer regain its balance, but is condemned to stagger from one crisis to another; like a battered boxer before his knockout. How utopian would it be therefore to expect that, after a far more prolonged and catastrophic conflict, American or world capitalism can acquire even that measure of stability which it regained between 1920 and 1939! Capitalism can only continue to slide deeper into the abyss, dragging civilization closer and closer to chaos and destruction.

American capitalism would be faced, after the war, with a world in ruins. It possesses neither the means, the forces nor the will to reconstruct that world on new, progressive and lasting foundations. It can only duplicate — on a larger scale and in a fiercer manner — the policies which the victors in the last pursued, but with far less prospect of success. French imperialism tried vainly to reorganize the map of Europe in order to buttress its hegemony. Its hopes foundered in the debacle of 1940. British imperialism, which likewise tried to maintain world supremacy, is now compelled to cede it to American imperialism on the one hand and German imperialism on the other. Neither jointly nor individually do the imperialist powers have any program for reconstructing society on a progressive basis.

Obstacles to Imperialist Sway

The devastation caused by World War II will far ex-

ceed that wrought by World War I. The last war was fought in a relatively restricted area upon the European continent. Asia, Africa, South America, North America felt its effects only in a minor degree. The destruction of productive forces was partially counterbalanced by their enhancement in centers like the United States.

That one-continent conflict is provincial compared to the widening world arena of the present war. Instead of country against country, continents are now being hurled against continents. Four-fifths of the planet's population is already at war; the final fifth will soon follow. The greater magnitude of the forces engaged leads to a correspondingly greater destruction of existing achievements and productive forces.

Side by side with the devastation of actual warfare goes the despoilation of the resources of conquered countries by their conquerors. The Nazis sack French, Polish, Czecho-Slovakian, Balkan industry, finance, and agriculture. Japan does the same with China. The dislocation of economic ties and the expanding needs of the war machines everywhere reduce the long inadequate rations of the working masses. This situation strikes at the Soviet Union as acutely as at any other great nation, enfeebling its economic foundations and resisting powers. And all this comes on top of ten years of crisis preceding the outbreak of war!

The physical devitalization brought on by hunger, epidemics, wars, engenders a no less deadly psychical demoralization. The masses entered this war in grim desperation, without the illusions in capitalism, without the hopes and enthusiasms of the last war. Just as capitalism has no means of restoring their physical energies, so it has no program of regenerating their depleted psychological and political energies. Capitalism continues its sway, less through any positive social force, than through the negative factors of the passivity of vast masses and the impotence of their official leaders.

But, as the ferment in France indicates, this mood of inertia does not and cannot persist indefinitely. The masses are propelled by the very hopelessness of their situation to rush toward the least ray of light in their darkness—in their quest for a way out of their intolerable plight. By whatever route they are led to resume their forward march, they must come to the broad highroad: the road of proletarian revolution against the capitalist oppressors.

The colonial peoples, drawn one by one irresistibly into the whirlpool of war, are today a hundred times more revolutionary in temper, more experienced in dealing with the imperialists, more prepared to fight for independence than during the last war. The colonial and semi-colonial peoples are like mines planted under the structures and highways of the imperialist powers, awaiting the spark of explosion.

This is the kind of world that American capitalism will have to stabilize. This is the kind of community its armed forces will have to police. These are the social and political obstacles which bar the road to the American monopolists' goal of a strong and secure world empire.

American imperialism can win the war only by pitilessly crushing its foes, by subjecting the peoples of the world to political bondage, and by suppressing all oppositional movements. The American imperialists will appear to the subject peoples like a fearsome combination of German and English imperialism and will be loved no better than these predecessors.

The American bourgeoisie will be confronted with the same insoluble problems in enslaving the world that Hitler is confronted with in enslaving Europe. It will need over-

seers, Gestapos and Gauleiters to administer its dominions. There is no question that American imperialism can buy Quislings and Petains but these hired men will be unable to command loyalty from their people who will disdain them as vile tools of the foreign oppressor.

American imperialism must even forfeit the support of sections of the world bourgeoisie, not all of whom can become its servants or will link their destinies with it. Inspired by dreams of restoration to power or hopes of increasing their share, oppositional tendencies will exhibit themselves amongst them. American capitalism cannot pay for so large a retinue of courtly servitors as British imperialism did in the past century. Together with the peoples of the world it must place the foreign bourgeoisie on reduced rations.

Today American imperialism experiences the greatest difficulty in exacting collaboration from the South American bourgeoisie. What will happen when it places the bourgeoisie of the rest of the capitalist world upon the dole? From the first day of the new American empire, its international, social and economic supports will be enfeebled by its inability to rely upon the fealty of its capitalist vassals.

The real menace to the American imperialists, however, comes not from the side of the bourgeoisie but from the working masses. The foreign bourgeoisie, in case of stark necessity, can always reconcile themselves to the domination of American finance capital and collaborate with it. The working masses cannot.

In order to establish and maintain their sway, the U. S. overlords will be obliged to use unlimited force and the most brutal and barbarous methods of oppression against the masses beyond its borders. This, combined with the most intense economic exploitation, must necessarily provoke national and proletarian uprisings throughout the dominions and on the margins of the American Empire. The proletarian and petty-bourgeois masses will insistently strive to throw off their yoke and achieve national liberation and social emancipation.

American imperialism can put down these tendencies and perpetuate its power only through methods akin to Hitler's. Senator Clark of Idaho has already recommended that the U. S. seize the South American countries in Hitler's fashion. Iceland has already been so occupied. This is a foretaste of the future. The iron heels of American imperialism will be pressed down upon many other victims.

American imperialism will not succeed in consolidating an empire where the British and French imperialisms have already failed. German imperialism is today encountering the obstacles that American imperialism must soon cope with. But neither contender for world supremacy will be able to solve these problems. The super-empires of tomorrow,

projected by the insatiable appetites of imperialism, will have a far briefer life-span than today's empires. They are all built upon shifting sands and great fissures appear in the very process of their construction.

Economic and political considerations alike reinforce the conclusion that American imperialism will be unable to enjoy its anticipated feast. The fruits of victory will turn into Dead Sea fruit in its hands.

The same conclusion follows even more forcibly in case of a defeat for American imperialism. In that event the social supports and political power of America's 60 families will be immediately imperiled. The workers and farmers have little enough confidence in the Roosevelts and Knoxes, the Morgans and Rockefellers now. They will have even less as the war develops its terrible consequences. The last shred of respect for the plutocrats and their representatives will be destroyed if the war should end in a defeat *a la Francaise*. That defeat would immediately engender a revolutionary crisis within the nation.

In victory or defeat, American imperialism finds itself confronted with this insoluble contradiction. It is obliged to reorganize the world solely in the interests of its own clique of monopoly capitalists, but the reactionary nature of those interests prevents it from successfully reorganizing the world. This imperative historical task can be fulfilled only along different lines, by an entirely different program and by other social forces.

Only the revolutionary vanguard of the working class, the sole creative historical force in our society, has a program to counterpose to the imperialist aims. Against imperialist world domination and national enslavement, the revolutionary workers set up their aim of international freedom through the self-determination of nationalities. Against endless wars of imperialist conquest, a *Pax Americana* or *Pax Germanica*, the revolutionary workers strive to eliminate war through a Socialist peace. Against nationalist hatreds and hostilities, the revolutionary working class proclaims and practices proletarian solidarity, the unity of the workers of all lands against their capitalist exploiters.

Against continued capitalist chaos, the revolutionary proletariat fights for a new social order based upon the overthrow of the exploiters. Against imperialist governments of the Fascist or democratic types, the revolutionary proletariat struggles for a Workers and Farmers Government, genuinely representative of mass interests. Against another League of Nations, backed up by American dollars, bayonets and battleships, the revolutionary workers call for a Free Federation of Peoples in a Socialist United States of the World.

This is the program of war-aims the Socialist Workers Party opposes to the war-aims of Roosevelt and Rockefeller.

A Speech To The Youth on Trotsky

By JOSEPH HANSEN

(Excerpts from a speech delivered at the Trotsky Memorial Meeting on August 22, 1941, in New York City.)

* * *

In her article in the August, 1941 issue of the FOURTH INTERNATIONAL, Natalia Sedov Trotsky tries to give us a more intimate picture of Leon Trotsky, to let us see something of the *man* whose name stands for Marxism today. Natalia's contributions not only have a priceless historical

value for those unborn generations who will comb the records of the past in order to get a better picture of the founders of the classless society, but they have a political value as well. Natalia has solid political judgment in her own right. She is a woman in every respect worthy of Trotsky.

Her writings give us a deeper insight into Trotsky's character and enable those who aspire to become leaders in the revolutionary struggle of the working class to better

shape their talents in conformity with the great aim they have chosen.

One of the quickest ways of learning an art is to take a master-craftsman in that art and imitate him closely. Every apprentice anxious to learn selects someone whom he knows or a great name in his field and strives to reach the perfection of the model he has chosen. Writers when they first begin usually imitate a great writer or a series of great writers of the past. Painters and sculptors do likewise. Military men select Alexander, Hannibal, Caesar, Napoleon.

It is only natural that a youth joining the revolutionary movement should take Trotsky as his model and hope that some day he can be as adept in the science and art of proletarian revolution, granting his more modest talents, as was Trotsky. Such a goal is wholly normal and praiseworthy. It is reported that John Keats, who became one of the great romantic poets of England, would content himself with no one less than Shakespeare as a model when he set out to become a poet, and in that he was correct.

The danger in choosing Trotsky as one's model lies in the possible discouragement which can come when one has reached that stage of development where he can begin to appreciate Trotsky's true stature as a revolutionist.

Trotsky's titanic intellect and his vast political experience during some of the most turbulent decades of human history are compressed into a relatively few volumes. Trotsky's works are so polished, their logic so unshakeable, their insight into characters, events, movements of parties and classes so profound, that the revolutionary apprentice is inclined to throw up his hands and say, "No one can ever hope to equal that — it is better to choose a pattern of more modest scope." When he recalls that Trotsky was renowned as best of the best, as an orator, as an organizer, as an administrator — when he understands Trotsky's role in leading the armed insurrection of October — when he appreciates Trotsky's colossal work in building the Red Army, in directing the armed defense of the Soviet Union against the interventionist armies of the imperialist world, and adds on top of this his work in founding with Lenin the Third International, and then the Fourth International, the young comrade is ready to say, "Such a man occurs only once."

And he will be saying the truth. There can be only one Trotsky.

But that is not the whole truth. Trotsky did not walk off a farm near Odessa and immediately sit down to write his *History of the Russian Revolution*. Besides those of his own personal characteristics which he could shape to one degree or another, there was the past which he could use as a foundation and there were world events to do the final molding.

We Stand on Their Shoulders

The higher development of the class struggle made it possible for Lenin and Trotsky to begin where the founders of scientific socialism were forced by death to leave off. Trotsky developed his theory of the permanent revolution, through which he was able to predict the course of the 1917 revolution, more than twelve years before the event. Lenin developed his concept of a professional revolutionary party which made the success of that revolution possible.

That is why Trotsky could predict that the future development of socialism, and especially in the United States, will bring forth dialectical materialists — those who profess the revolutionary philosophy of Marx — superior to those of the past, great as they have been.

When one stops to think why this must obviously be so, with the increase of knowledge and experience available to the new generations, then it begins to seem strange that anyone among the youth should feel discouraged about trying to develop his talents in the pattern furnished by Trotsky. The rich heritage of our party in the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky will provide the material for theoretical grounding. If we stop to recall the revolutionary movement at the beginning of the past war and especially in the United States in 1918, we can say that the revolutionaries at the beginning of the Second World War are far richer in theory and experience.

And the crisis of capitalism in its death agony provides one revolutionary situation after another. Even though the immediate period may isolate us still further, that period will be followed by tremendous expansion of all the forces of the Fourth International.

The youth of today enjoy the privilege of standing higher on the rungs of history than their predecessors. We have not only the revolution of 1848 and the Paris Commune, we have 1905 and October. We have not only Marx and Engels, we have Lenin and Trotsky.

How Trotsky Joined the Movement

Trotsky entered the revolutionary movement in much the same way that many of us have entered. He rebelled against the oppression which existed on every side. He was filled with protest that had no outlet and which he himself undoubtedly did not understand at the time. He felt it as an urge to "perfect himself." When he encountered socialists, he ridiculed them, considered them utopians, counted himself as conservative, argued vehemently with them. In fact, the more he was convinced by their arguments, and the more he felt the ground crumbling under his feet, the harder he argued to maintain himself — just like the rest of us began.

When he finally became convinced that the only hope for humanity lay in the working class, he joined wholeheartedly in spreading these new ideas. He wrote leaflets, ran them off on a home-made duplicator, got his fingers as thoroughly inked as if it were the most modern mimeograph.

Trotsky next found himself up against the ideology of Marxism, and he was not easily convinced of its correctness. Just as he had struggled against accepting socialism in general, so he struggled against Marxism. It seemed too rigid to him, too finished a philosophy, too closed a system. But in arguing with Marxism, he discovered that he was *ignorant*. Not a few of us, no doubt, have experienced that same embarrassment at one time or another, especially the first time we encountered a well-equipped Marxist.

Trotsky set about to remedy his ignorance. He read desperately, at first with little system, skipping haphazardly from one author to another. During his first imprisonment, he had the opportunity to read at his leisure, and in the development of the events of the past, he discovered for himself the truth of the laws formulated by Marx and Engels.

Trotsky's third great hurdle was Lenin's "organizational methods." His struggle over accepting Lenin's concepts took the longest time. This is understandable, since Lenin's theories on organization were a basic innovation in the international socialist movement and had not been proved in practise. In addition Lenin met the opposition of the great figures of the European socialist movement, who spoke with

tremendous authority as disciples of Marx and Engels and leaders of the huge Social Democracy.

For some years, Trotsky did not hesitate to deal stiff polemical blows against Lenin and his organizational methods. What is important, however, is that during the war and in the crucible of the Russian revolution, Trotsky recognized the correctness of Lenin's views and joined Lenin's party.

The knowledge that it was necessary for Trotsky to go through the same internal struggles that everyone experiences in his development as a Marxist should prove a source of encouragement to all of us. Trotsky even had to break with his family at the beginning, although the rupture was later healed. He had to disappoint his father who wanted him to take up a career as an engineer. He had to disappoint his mother who wanted him to be a good boy and who came to see him behind the bars at Kherson after his first arrest and cried over his conduct.

For some years Trotsky was held up as the bad example in the family circle. His cousin who made a fortune in Siberia during the Russo-Japanese war was held up as the good example. But Trotsky was not out to make himself a rich bourgeois — he was out to expropriate the entire class. After the revolution, his cousin called Trotsky up by telephone. He had lost everything and wanted Trotsky to do something for him.

What Made Trotsky Great?

What qualities gave Trotsky his pre-eminence? What did he have which ordinary men do not possess or do not possess to such a striking degree as Trotsky? Let me enumerate a few of the more prominent characteristics of Trotsky.

He was gifted with a prodigious memory, and especially a memory for theories. His practise of reading over his previous articles coupled with his perception of the logic of events sharpened this memory still further. In 1938 for example, we translated a speech which he had made in 1924 in a scientific congress. We took the finished draft to Trotsky for his approval. He returned it shortly with a question mark on one of the pages. "What is wrong with the translation?" we asked him. "I think there is a sentence missing here," he responded. Trotsky was correct. We had missed a sentence in a speech he had made fourteen years before.

He was gifted with remarkable quickness of perception. He was completely honest — by that I mean honest to the working class. He was a fighter.

But there were others of his generation who had similar gifts — men who became famous as theoreticians, journalists, politicians — such men as Plekhanov, Parvus, who had a brilliant career before him, and Martov. None of them reached the heights of Trotsky, however, despite the fact they lived through the same great events and were even revolutionaries. All of them lacked one quality that was *the* characteristic of Trotsky — *will power*.

Trotsky's will was absolutely indomitable. It radiated from his very presence, his bearing, his vigorous manner of speech, his impatience of opposition if he was certain that he was correct. More than once I had occasion to feel this iron trait of Trotsky when I had not succeeded in convincing him that he had taken an incorrect position on some small issue.

His writings are permeated with this unbreakable will. It is especially apparent in the scathing sarcasm he heaps upon the enemies of the working class. His whole life's

course speaks of this will — nothing could break him, prisons, exile, expulsions, persecution, slander, death itself.

Trotsky was undoubtedly endowed with an unusual amount of energy. He learned to use this energy in a highly disciplined manner, concentrating and directing its firing power where it would be most effective. Ordinary people dissipate what energy they begin with and stifle any possibility of increasing its flow by splitting their interests into contradictory channels. They no sooner begin an enterprise than they are halted in their tracks by the paralyzing thought that maybe they should be doing something else.

Trotsky, once having made up his mind, threw himself with complete abandon into the project. This was true of the smallest things. His secretaries tell how in France Trotsky insisted on helping with the housework. The comrades did not wish him to leave his study, but the best deal they could make with him was that he should do no more than wipe the dishes. However, he proved to be a bottleneck in the production line of the kitchen as he would insist upon bringing the dishes to such a high polish that they glistened like jewels and the rest of the work had to await his completion of this task. It was the same in his recreation. In Turkey his secretaries tell me stories of being dragged from bed at 3:30 and 4 o'clock in the morning, their eyes still glued with sleep, to go out fishing with Trotsky who was all dynamic energy after a previous hard day's work. In Mexico many of the American comrades had the privilege of climbing up and down the hot Mexican hills, acting as burros to carry the cactus which Trotsky dug from the countryside.

How Trotsky Worked

But this tremendous energy was especially apparent at his work desk. He chained himself here, working from early in the morning until late at night with just brief periods of rest and time out for meals. He worked like this no matter what the task at hand might happen to be, whether it was the disagreeable work of combatting the GPU, writing Stalin's biography, or something which he enjoyed such as writing for the press of the Fourth International.

During the last Moscow trial he organized the work of his secretariat down to the least detail. I remember him walking up and down with a *New York Times* in his hand which had been airmailed from New York with the complete indictment. He had covered it with notations in red and blue pencil, studied it from end to end, and he organized his secretariat as if it were a small army. We stood at attention while he outlined what we should do, asked for proposals and discussion. We divided up the work, this comrade and that comrade to work on translations, this one to take care of press relations, this one to do research work, etc., etc.

This done, we all went on the firing line and Trotsky himself worked harder than any of us. In one day I recall he made five press releases, one of them a long article for a London paper. Some of his secretaries worked 22 hours at a stretch. It was through such work, in collaboration with others who provided material from New York and other cities, that Trotsky was able to completely expose the falsity of this frameup as he had the previous Moscow trials.

When I see our comrades on the street gathering signatures on the petitions to place James P. Cannon on the ballot for mayor of New York, I think how Trotsky would have

plunged into such a campaign, how he would have enjoyed organizing an all-out battle to put James P. Cannon on the ballot in New York. He would have blocked out all the districts on the map, held meetings, consulted comrades, and then seen to it that everyone carried out his assignment. He himself would have been everywhere, checking this neighborhood and that neighborhood. I can see him even standing on a street corner with petition blanks in his hand, arguing in a kindly but vehement tone with the crowd about him, but at the same time not losing a single opportunity for signatures.

Trotsky's whole life was like that. He chose his main objective — one single objective — *to fight for the socialist revolution*. From the time he made that decision, everything he did had no other purpose but to further this one aim. This singleness of purpose made it possible for Trotsky to focus his energy and to so thoroughly synthesize it with his other gifts that they in turn received a richer development and he became the very incarnation of the proletarian revolution.

But even such a man is subject to the ebb and flow of the tides of the class struggle. In the final analysis no one

can do more than give expression to one or another force of the contending camps. Creatures embodying all the vilest dregs of the past can rise to power when a revolution subsides. After the upheaval, a period of reaction sets in, and it is in such periods that the sternest tests are placed upon a revolutionary. He is deserted, isolated, hounded, slandered, imprisoned, tortured, sometimes faces death. The labor movement seems like a vast tomb during gloomy years until a new upturn begins.

Some of Trotsky's greatest work was done in such a period — the period climaxed by the Second World War — the period in which Trotsky became the target upon which every reactionary force in the world vented its furious hatred. During this period he laid down the theoretical structure for a new International of the working class. He exposed the crimes of the monstrous Stalinist bureaucracy before the eyes of the whole world. And he taught and hardened the cadres who will continue the Marxist movement.

The founding of the Fourth International may well go down in history as Trotsky's crowning achievement. Trotsky's unflinching struggle in the teeth of the most terrible persecution is one of the most valuable lessons he has given us.

Trotsky and the Red Army

By JOHN G. WRIGHT

On the old western battlefields of the Civil War of 1918-1920 the Red Army and the Soviet masses are now waging the second revolutionary war in modern times. The initial phases of this titanic struggle are taking place under the leadership of Stalin and his clique of usurpers who are doing everything in their power to lace the revolutionary war into the Kremlin's bureaucratic straitjacket. But this does not and cannot alter the class nature of the Nazi-Soviet conflict. The Russian revolution is now inscribing into the pages of history the second great chapter of its military struggle against world imperialism and world counter-revolution.

Only those who cannot read the language of history will fail to understand the meaning of the heroism and unconquerable spirit of the Soviet fighters who are kindling a new hope in the hearts of the oppressed all over the world. The greatest conquests of October still live! And one of the crucial achievements of the revolution was the construction of the Red Army.

The Red Army always was and will always remain associated with the names of the great leaders of Bolshevism, Lenin and Trotsky. Not only the leadership in organizing and building the army, but the initiative for its formation came from Leon Trotsky. He was the untiring inspirer of every decisive step taken in this direction. The decree instituting universal compulsory military training was adopted on April 22, 1918 by the All-Russian Central Executive Committee of the Soviets on the basis of Trotsky's report to this body. Within two weeks after the formation of the Supreme Military Council in March, 1918, Trotsky was appointed its Chairman. When this body was superseded in September by the Revolutionary Military Council, he remained Chairman.

Precisely because Trotsky's name is inseparably bound up with the formation and life of the Red Army, its history

has been suppressed or falsified. The great lessons of its construction have been trampled underfoot; its role in the life of the Soviet power completely obscured. Those who understand nothing of Marxism are free to reduce the problem of the Red Army to purely military terms. For us, the military achievements of the USSR are inextricably bound up with class forces and class politics. The Red Army represents one of the great *political* conquests of Bolshevism.

The Social Role of the Red Army

Like every army, the Red Army is not something separate and apart from the state but, on the contrary, constitutes the very quintessence of the Soviet state which, in its turn, represents a new and an unprecedented form of political power. Without the essential organ of the Red Army the workers' state could not have endured for more than a few months. It could never have survived the years of Stalinist rule. Again, this should not be understood in a purely military sense. In the life of the workers' state the army plays a role that is *qualitatively* different from the role played by military forces in a class society ruled by an exploiting minority. Bourgeois armies serve as naked instruments of coercion and oppression. The ideal soldier of the bourgeoisie is an unthinking, unquestioning, obedient automaton. It is otherwise with the Red Army and the Red soldier. Suffice it to point out that in Lenin's lifetime and long after his death, the Red Army served as a political and cultural institution second only to the Bolshevik party. The flower of the youth and of the land received in its ranks not only military training but their political and cultural education. Furthermore, the Red Army has been practically from the beginning integrated with the productive plants of the country. Red soldiers received part of their training in industrial enterprises most closely connect-

ed with defense and, consequently, those most advanced technologically.

The colossal cultural shift thus produced through the instrumentality of the army tore vast strata of peasants from the barbarism of rural life. As a matter of fact, this prepared in large measure the ground for the future successes of industrialization. And these in turn acted to reinforce the military might of the army.

The Kremlin is of course trying to usurp credit for the heroic resistance of the Red Army, but Stalin will not succeed in this.

We Trotskyists link up the present heroic resistance of the Red soldiers directly with the Russian October and the Civil War. Whoever is astonished by the power of Soviet resistance is unaware that only the revolution unleashes forces capable of overcoming insuperable obstacles. This is being demonstrated on the battlefields today. This was most graphically illustrated in 1918 in the organization of the first victorious army of the proletarian revolution.

How Trotsky Built the Red Army

What did the task of building the Red Army actually involve? It involved the translation into military terms of the major political tasks of the Soviet power. As Trotsky has pointed out:

"Most of the questions of principle and the difficulties in connection with the constructive work of the Soviets during the years that followed were encountered first of all in the military sphere, and in most concentrated form at that."

It was precisely for this reason that Lenin constantly referred to the experiences in the army at every crucial stage in the development of the Soviet Union in his lifetime. Lenin's own estimate was that "in the organization of the Red Army the consistency and firmness of proletarian leadership in an alliance between the workers and the toiling peasantry against all exploiters were brilliantly realized." (Lenin's *Collected Works*, volume XVII, pp. 412-414.)

The Army, like the Soviets, drew its strength from the complete confidence and support of the masses. In a letter to Lenin written in 1918 during his first trip to the front, Trotsky said, "I am building an organization calculated for a long war. It is necessary to make this war popular. The workers must be made to feel that this is their war."

Recalling the experience of those days, Trotsky wrote in his autobiography: "The front ranks of the masses had to realize the mortal danger of the situation. The first requisite for success was to hide nothing, our weakness least of all; not to trifle with the masses but to call everything by its right name."

The Red command never hesitated to bare the grim truth before the army and the country. Typical of this attitude was the order issued on October 18, 1919 during the defense of Petrograd against Yudenich, when Trotsky issued instructions: "not to send in false reports of hard fights when the actual truth was bitter panic. Lies will be punished as treason. Military work admits errors, but not lies, deception and self-deception." In contrast to this, the Stalinist regime, which has no confidence in the masses and stands in great fear of them, always resorts to lies which the revolution invariably sought to punish as treason.

The revolution abominated the lie because the primary task was to educate and prepare the masses for socialism. "For us," wrote Trotsky, "the tasks of education in socialism were closely integrated with those of fighting. Ideals that enter the mind under fire remain there securely and forever."

In the crucible of the Civil War, millions upon millions became indoctrinated with internationalism and devotion to the workers' state. This tradition was so strong that it was of necessity continued in the training of other millions in subsequent years, even after the Stalinist degeneration of the Soviet Union set in. For instance, when M. M. Landa, the then editor of *Red Star*, official organ of the Red Army, wrote a pamphlet (which was translated into many languages) in 1934 on the Red Army, he cited Stalin himself as the authority for the fact that:

"The strength of the Red Army lies in this, that from the first days of its birth it has been brought up in the spirit of internationalism."

At the first session of the First World Congress of the Comintern on March 2, 1919, Trotsky delivered a report on the Red Army in which he said to the assembled delegates:

"I can assure you that the worker-communists who comprise the core of this army feel that they are not only the guard of the Russian Socialist Republic but also the Red Army of the Third International."

Fifteen years later Stalin, who had meanwhile betrayed internationalism, still found himself compelled to render it lip service because this tradition was so deeply ingrained, above all in the army.

Nor was the influence of the army limited to its own ranks. One of the chief functions of the Komsomols — the Russian Young Communist League — was work in connection with building up the army and the fleet. This close connection between the youth and the armed forces was undoubtedly one of the reasons for the political expropriation of the youth by the Kremlin in 1936, when the Komsomols was transformed into a non-political organization.

Furthermore, the regular army was supplemented by territorial militias and by such civilian bodies as *Osoaviakhim* (Society for Assistance in Defense and in Aviation-Chemical Construction) which spread similar education among additional millions.

This cement of the class struggle which originally constituted the cement of the Red Army is what holds its ranks together today, despite the havoc wrought by Stalinism.

The Problem of the Red Army Command

The army was the first complex social mechanism that was completely reconstituted by the revolution. The problem which arose immediately and acutely was that of an administrative staff, i. e., the command, without which this complex mechanism could not be attained. The masses themselves could not possibly supply this staff inasmuch as they lacked training, experience, and the very habits of exercising authority. Qualified commanders could come in the beginning primarily from the ranks of the former ruling classes, first and foremost, from the old Czarist officerdom. This problem of putting the bourgeoisie and its technical and administrative staff to work for the revolution was especially acute in a country so backward as Russia. But even in the most advanced countries, after the downfall of the bourgeoisie, it will be solved much in the same way that the Bolsheviks did, namely, by first smashing ruthlessly all attempts at sabotage and then offering employment to the members of the deposed classes.

In his recollections of Lenin, written shortly after his death in 1924, Trotsky relates how the question of military specialists arose almost immediately after the seizure of power. The General Staff occupied at the time one of the rooms in the Smolny.

"It was the most chaotic of all institutions," wrote Trot-

sky. "One could never find out just who issued orders, just who was in command and just what was commanded. Here for the first time the question arose, in its general form, of military specialists. We had already had certain experience on this score in the struggle against Krasnov, when we appointed (the former Czarist) colonel Muraviev as commander-in-chief. To Muraviev were attached four sailors and one soldier with instruction to keep both eyes open and their revolvers cocked. This was the embryo of the commissar system. And this experience to a certain degree served as the basis in creating the Supreme Military Council.

"Without serious and experienced military men we shall never get out of this chaos,' I would say to Vladimir Ilyich after each visit to the Staff.

"From the look of things, that's so. But suppose they betray . . .'

"We shall attach a commissar to each one of them.'

"And better still, let us make it two,' exclaimed Lenin.

"And strong-armed ones at that. There cannot possibly be a dearth of strong-armed communists.'

"This was the origin of the formation of the Supreme Military Council."

In a speech delivered on March 19, 1918 before the Moscow Soviet of Workers', Peasants' and Soldiers' Deputies, Trotsky explained:

"Yes, we are utilizing military specialists. For, after all, the tasks of Soviet democracy do not at all consist of rejecting all technical forces which can be profitably used for the success of our historic work, once they have been politically subordinated to the existing regime. After all, in relation to the army, too, the whole power will remain entirely in the hands of the Soviets, who shall appoint in all military organs and military sections reliable political commissars to exercise general control. The importance of these commissars must be raised to enormous heights; their powers will be unlimited. Military specialists will direct the technical side of the work, purely military questions, operative activities, military actions, whereas the political side of forming, training and educating the sections must be wholly subordinated to the plenipotentiary representatives of the Soviet regime in the person of its commissars. There is not and there cannot be any other way out at the present time. We must remember that the struggle requires technical knowledge in addition to the enthusiasm latent in the people."

Stalin's Opposition to Trotsky's Solution

The central issue of the "Military Opposition" was their opposition to the utilization of these military specialists. The records of this struggle have been suppressed because they hopelessly compromise Stalin and completely reveal his role as the behind-the-scenes director of the struggle of the "Military Opposition."

Was this opposition due to mere stupidity and ignorance? On the part of individuals, inexperience and stupidity can account for a great deal. But whenever political questions are involved it is always necessary to probe down to the class roots from which most psychological reactions draw their sustenance. The opponents feared betrayal. This fear of the "specialists" in reality expressed an exaggerated estimate of the powers of the bourgeoisie and distrust in the power of the masses and of the new regime. What did this fear express, if not a typical petty-bourgeois reaction?

Commenting upon this question in a letter, Natalia Sedov

Trotsky makes the following analysis:

"I remember the feverish discussion which lasted for weeks. I recall the passionate struggle conducted by L. D. jointly with V. I. (Lenin) in order to draw in specialists into the construction of the regular army. L. D.'s very first experience in this sphere convinced him that without this basic condition we could not conquer. The question of building the Red Army to replace guerrillaism was for him the life-and-death question of the revolution. The arguments of the opponents were groundless. They were based on *fear* of betrayal. They dragged us back to the pre-revolutionary period when at the basis of all arguments likewise lay fear — inability to take into account our own forces and possibilities. And this impelled the dissident Bolsheviks to retreat in the face of the existing and extremely favorable political situation for the seizure of power by the proletariat."

Life itself refuted the opponents. The problem of providing the Red Army with the commanding staff was brilliantly solved through the combination of "specialists" with political commissars. Summing up the experience Lenin said in the midst of the Civil War:

"When Comrade Trotsky recently informed me that in our military department the officers are numbered in tens of thousands, I gained a concrete conception of what constitutes the secret of making proper use of our enemy . . . of how to build communism out of the bricks that the capitalists had gathered to use against us."

With the termination of the Civil War, the problem of the commanding staff assumed a different form. The revolution was now in a position to train and educate its own "specialists." The institution of political commissars altered its character completely, becoming transformed into the Political Department of the Red Army, responsible for the political education of the troops. Trotsky remained personally in charge of this work as Commissar of War until he was removed in 1925.

Stalin and the Red Army Today

The bureaucratization of the Soviet Government and of the Bolshevik Party, which dates back in its beginnings to the middle of 1922, did not have its direct effect upon the army until much later. In a certain sense it is correct to say that the Red Army for years remained in a special and privileged position in relation to the rest of the apparatus. This is reflected even in the sphere of Stalinist falsifications. Only in 1929 did Stalin dare to begin "rewriting" the history of the Red Army, and even then very cautiously. So far as the commanding staff is concerned, Stalin gained its subservience but it was not peopled by his own unscrupulous and incapable flunkies until after the blood purges of 1937-1938.

Terrible as were the blows dealt by Stalin to the Red Army, it remains the one institution least affected by his degenerated regime. This extraordinary development, which no one could have foreseen, may well play a vital role in determining the future not only of the Soviet Union but of mankind.

Events have now brought their verification to the fact that it was beyond the power of Stalinism—which proved itself capable of perverting and destroying so many of the political conquests of October—to undermine completely the creative work of the Red Army. Lenin and Trotsky had forged it as the sword of the world revolution. They forged so firmly and so well that while the edge of this sword has been

dulled and chipped by Stalinism, its blade still remains unbroken.

We have indicated the extent to which the Red Army has survived the Stalinist degeneration of the Soviet Union. This degeneration, however, has not failed to make frightful inroads into the army. It could not have been otherwise. Every stage in the degeneration of the workers' state found its corresponding deflection in the ranks of the army. Thus the expulsion of the proletarian vanguard from the party was preceded by the hounding of Trotskyists and other oppositional elements in the armed forces. From 1925 to 1927, outstanding Civil War fighters and commanders like I. N. Smirnov (he was known as the "Lenin of Siberia"), N. I. Muralov, S. V. Mrachkovsky and countless others suffered the same fate as Trotsky and his secretariat, they were removed from their army posts and then sent either into exile or concentration camps and jail. They were later murdered by Stalin.

After 1929 when Stalin broke his bloc with Bukharin-Rykov a similar fate befell the supporters of the Right Wing. Very few of those who capitulated, former Left Oppositionists and former Right Wingers alike, were permitted to resume high military posts.

In September, 1935, sweeping changes were introduced in the Red Army. The militias were greatly restricted. This weakened the direct ties between the army and the populace. The arsenals formerly in each factory were taken over by the GPU. Another terrible blow was dealt to the principles of October by the restoration of a privileged officers' caste. All these measures were political steps taken by Stalin to tie the army more firmly to his regime.

But while he thus weakened the defensive power of the USSR, Stalin did not attain his goal. His hold on the army could not be guaranteed by "reforms." He therefore resorted to the blood purge which struck deeply and savagely at the entire Red Command.

In the space of a single year—May 1937 to May 1938—the Red Army was stripped almost to a man of all those commanders who had been recruited in the period of the Civil War. Purged too were those Civil War fighters who had risen from the ranks in the course of the next 15 years. The flower of the Red Army command was either shot or imprisoned as "enemies of the people" in the period of the infamous Moscow Frameups.

No other army in history ever suffered such a blow, and on the very eve of the involvement of the USSR in a major war.

The work of the Red Army in all spheres from 1925 to

1937 had been under the direction of those generals who were members of Trotsky's original commanding staff. Tukhachevsky, Gamarnik, Yakir, Uborevich, Bluecher, Primakov (the outstanding Red Cavalry commander), Eidemann (head of the Ossoaviakhim) and others had continued, even under Stalin, to build the Red Army on the foundations laid down by Lenin and Trotsky. These men had modernized and mechanized the Red Army. They planned and constructed the fortifications in the West (the so-called Stalin line) and similar fortifications in Siberia. They drafted the mobilization plans. They prepared the strategic plans for meeting future attacks.

The Revolutionary Task of the Red Army

In place of these men Stalin has appointed people without revolutionary experience, without military knowledge, without prestige among the troops, and without any moral capital. These creatures owe everything to Stalin. They have no choice or desire other than to follow him. Stalin crowned his purges by abolishing the "Socialist Oath" of the Red Army, instituting new disciplinary statutes in the spirit of bourgeois armies, and elevating still another officers' caste from corporals to Marshals, with himself as Commander-in-Chief.

The war brings to its greatest intensity the contradiction between Stalin's regime and the needs of the army which is being suffocated by his stranglehold. Every hour of struggle reveals more and more clearly the criminal inadequacy and inefficiency of Stalin and his henchmen. Thousands of Red soldiers and officers, together with other thousands of workers and peasants—especially those who have arms again—are growing ever more aware of the terrible price in terms of territory, industrial and natural resources, military equipment and manpower which the Soviet Union is now paying for the continuation of the Stalinist "leadership."

The traditions of the Civil War are reviving. The struggle against the enemy, the entire war-time experience, imbues the Red Army with the assurance that with a qualified and revolutionary leadership, corresponding to the class nature of the war, the struggle against the Nazis could be transformed literally overnight from the defensive to an offensive. The very logic of the struggle now poses in the sharpest form to the Red Army the need of ridding the country of the bureaucratic incubus. Stalinism can lead the Red Army in the end only into the same blind alley in which it has itself arrived. The Red Army must solve this life-and-death question in order to wage a victorious revolutionary war.

Public Health and "National Defense"

By GRACE CARLSON

Mechanized warfare, with its demands upon the civilian workers in the home factories as well as upon the soldiers at the front, has made the question of public morale an extremely important one to the modern war-makers.

"Wars are won or lost according to the health, courage and calmness of whole populations and their ability to exert themselves to the utmost, and this is particularly true in modern total warfare," says a report issued May 28th of this year by the National Nutrition Conference for Defense. Called by President Roosevelt, this conference, attended by

doctors, nutritionists, agricultural scientists, social service workers, food manufacturers and distributors discussed plans for raising the level of public health by utilizing the findings of the new science of nutrition.

The immediate motivation for the calling of the National Nutrition Conference for Defense was the shocking discovery made by army officials that out of 1,000,000 men examined under the Selective Service Act, 400,000 had been found unfit for general military service. Brigadier General Lewis B. Hershey, deputy director of Selective Service, in

speaking of these rejections to the Conference, said: "Probably one-third of these are suffering from disabilities directly or indirectly connected with nutrition."

When such conditions prevail in the age group covered by the Selective Service Act—18-35—it is very clear to the student of public health that the effects of long-continued malnutrition and undernourishment would reveal a far more serious situation in the older-age groups not covered by conscription. As a matter of fact, a break-down of the figures given by the army on the rejections will demonstrate this trend.

Age	Accepted	Rejected
18-25	58.64%	41.36%
26-30	47.94%	52.06%
31-36	35.91%	64.09%

Thus in the youthful age range of 30 to 36, about two-thirds of the young men of the country were found to be physically unfit. If precise statistics were obtainable for other age groups, including the middle-aged men, a far more devastating picture would be drawn of the effect of the American policy of permitting "one-third of the nation" to continue in an "ill-fed, ill-clothed and ill-housed" condition.

General Hershey confessed to the Nutrition Conference that "we are physically in a condition of which nationally we should be thoroughly ashamed" and that this is a condition "which we should recognize as dangerous and which we should take immediate positive and vigorous measures to correct."

What the Government Already Knew

It may have come as a startling revelation to General Hershey and to other army officials to learn of the appalling condition of the health of the American people, but other departments of the Federal government have had information in their files for many years about the high rate of sickness in the United States.

The United States Public Health Service, for example, conducted a survey of the state of the national health in 1935-36 and reported its findings in a series of bulletins issued in 1938. These reports were based on a house-to-house canvass of some 800,000 families, including 2,800,000 persons from 83 cities and 23 rural areas in 19 states. There was an attempt to obtain a representative sampling of the American people, but it is interesting to note that the *final* reports include only the findings about the *white* population of the country. When one learns from other surveys which have been made of the tragically high morbidity and mortality rates among American Negroes, the evidence presented by the National Health Survey appears even more startling.

It is estimated that on an average day of the year about five million persons are disabled to such an extent that they cannot go about their usual work or other routine. Of these five million, about half get well sooner or later and resume their ordinary life; about half remain permanently disabled. Among those permanently disabled, nearly two million are less than 65 years of age. Thus, in a year's time, sickness and disability costs the American people *two billion* days' absence from work, school, or household duties.

The explanation for these shockingly high morbidity rates were found in the close relationship which was found between the economic status of the families surveyed and the amount of disabling disease. These facts are brought out clearly in Table I:

Table I

Days of Disability per Person per Year from Diseases, Accidents and Impairments According to Economic Status:

Income Status of Family	Days of Disability per Person per Year
Relief	17.4
Under \$1000 (non-relief)	10.9
\$1000-\$1500	7.9
\$1500-\$2000	7.0
\$2000-\$3000	6.9
\$3000-\$5000	6.5
\$5000 and over	6.5

In the United States, where 70 per cent of the families live on less than \$1500 per year, and where one-third of the families must eke out a living on less than \$750 per year, a high rate of sickness is to be expected. Low-income families which cannot obtain enough nourishing food, warm clothing or decent homes for their members cannot withstand the onslaught of disease as can families in the upper-income brackets.

Moreover, such low-income families cannot afford the medical care necessary to handle the greater load of sickness which they bear. Despite the easily-accepted aphorism that "only the very poor and the very rich have proper medical care," the evidence from the survey shows that close to one-third of the population on relief or in the low-income brackets receives *no* medical service or inadequate service. Despite the large number of tax-supported medical institutions in the country, families with small incomes still spend larger percentages of their incomes for medical care than do those who are in moderate or comfortable circumstances.

Thus, the Interdepartmental Committee to Coordinate Health and Welfare Activities summed up the findings of the National Health Survey as well as results of surveys made by the Department of Labor and other Federal Bureaus in the following words of a report issued in January, 1939:

"Sickness comes oftener and lasts longer and death comes earlier to the homes of the poor than of the well-to-do. It is a plain fact—and a shocking fact—that the chance for health and even for survival is far less among low-income groups than among those who are in moderate or comfortable circumstances . . . Among the poor in our large cities, death rates are as high today as were those of the nation 50 years ago before the beginning of the spectacular advance of public health and medical science."

The Reactionary Role of Private Medicine

This committee, more popularly known as the President's Committee on Health Security, made a number of recommendations for a public health program which would help to alleviate the tragic conditions which it had reported. These recommendations were embodied in the Wagner Health Bill which was before Congress in 1939, but was defeated (smothered in a Senate Committee) through the pressure of the reactionary bureaucrats of the American Medical Association. Although the proposals of the Bill for an extension of the public health services of the country could not have dealt adequately with the tremendous problem of disabling illness and premature death among the low-income groups of the country, they were opposed by the vested interests of private medicine as being "socialistic" and "radical."

The American Medical Association bureaucrats succeeded thereby in sidetracking further efforts to put over a public

health program which would meet the basic essentials of the nation's health. None of the prominent public health officials, social workers, child welfare experts, educators or other technicians who had taken part in preparing the recommendations of the Committee on Health Security would risk a head-on collision with the American Medical Association over even so mild an instance of "socialized medicine" as the Wagner Health Bill.

Nor did the American Medical Association offer a counter-proposal which could solve the health problems of the American people. All that the official organ of the American Medical Association offered in this controversy was a series of denunciations of governmental control of medicine and warnings against breaking down the so-called "sacred relationship" between the private doctor and his patient. This, despite the fact that the eminent medical historian, Dr. Henry Sigerist, long ago pointed out that the one thing which destroys the relationship between doctor and patient is the doctor's *bill*.

American medicine which is today moving at a blitzkrieg pace in the laboratory in its assault on death and disease moves as slowly and as clumsily as an oxcart in its social relations. The modern doctor has mastered all of the latest surgical techniques; has devoted himself to the study of the new chemotherapy; can press into service the "miracle" drugs, sulfanilamide, sulfapyridine, sulfathiazole and the others to defeat diseases which had never yielded to medical treatment before, such as streptococcal meningitis. But he still faces diseases of insufficiency which should have been abolished years ago.

Pellagra, rickets, scurvy, tuberculosis and a score of other diseases, caused directly or indirectly by malnutrition and under-nourishment, are social anachronisms. That pellagra, the dread "red death" of the South still exists, years after medical research has demonstrated that it can be prevented if the potential victims are given diets including adequate amounts of vitamin B, found chiefly in meats, is damaging evidence against organized American medicine. It offers conclusive proof that medical men do not know how to build a system of "preventive medicine," but are forced to take therapeutic measures against diseases which should have been prevented.

Dr. Sigerist has epitomized this paradox in the following words, "It is a great thing that medical science has discovered that nicotinic acid (part of the Vitamin B complex) will cure pellagra, but it is equally as important to remember that a beefsteak will prevent it."

Tuberculosis, Scourge of the Poor

The terrible death toll from tuberculosis offers even more damaging evidence that private medicine in a dying capitalist system cannot solve the health problems of the people. Tuberculosis is above all a disease of poverty. It could be wiped out if every individual could have enough good, nourishing food, adequate clothing, decent living conditions, proper rest and freedom from worry, and if every person now ill with tuberculosis could be given proper medical care in a sanatorium. And yet in 1939, in the United States, 61,609 people died from tuberculosis. Considerably more than half these individuals were in the age range, 15 to 45, that is, were in the most productive years of life.

A vast amount of evidence has been accumulated by the National Tuberculosis Association to demonstrate that poverty breeds tuberculosis. One of the most graphic pieces of evidence is offered in a study made in Cleveland on Housing and Tuberculosis. The findings are given in Table II.

Table II

Number of Deaths from Tuberculosis per 100,000 White Population and Monthly Rentals in the Cleveland District.

<i>Monthly Rentals</i>	<i>Number of Deaths per 100,000 White Population</i>
\$10 - \$20	125
\$30 - \$45	50
\$55 and up	25

Five times as many deaths from tuberculosis for those from the undernourished low-income families, who are crowded into unsanitary tenements, where tuberculosis germs are easily spread from person to person and family to family! American doctors, who can devise remarkable therapeutic measures to cure tuberculosis, find themselves helpless in the face of the problem of *preventing* tuberculosis. For this would be an attack on the capitalist system of poverty, which breeds tuberculosis and a host of other ills.

Thus, all of the highly-trained, hard-working, well-meaning American doctors, who are devoting themselves to ending the scourge of tuberculosis are barred from this goal by their lack of social vision. They have the techniques of twentieth-century medical sciences, but the social philosophy of the nineteenth century, when capitalism and private enterprise were young and vigorous.

Capitalism "in its death agony," as Leon Trotsky described it in 1938 in the great thesis adopted at the founding convention of the Fourth International, cannot solve the problems of today—neither war, nor fascism, nor poverty, nor unemployment. Dying capitalism cannot guarantee health security to the people. If this objective were a possible one, the United States, the most highly developed and advanced capitalist nation in the world, would have attained it. Two-thirds of the world's gold is in American vaults; American warehouses bulge with surplus food; American cotton-growers plow under row after row of luxurious cotton plants, but the "ill-fed, ill-clothed, ill-housed third of the nation" struggle and suffer and are driven into early graves.

Reformist Gestures Are Futile

In the present "national emergency," frantic but futile efforts are being made by the war-makers, such as the calling of the National Nutrition Conference for Defense, to solve the health problems of the American people and thus to prepare them better for an "all-out" war effort.

In commenting on the work of this Conference, Walter White, the Executive Secretary of the American Association of Social Workers, pointed out that the emphasis of the Conference on securing a better understanding of the vitamin content of certain diets was purely academic. "It appears that more thought should be given to the stark fact that there are millions of our low-income families, many of whom have been on and off relief during the last ten years who do not have the funds to buy the necessary food items required in a balanced diet," he went on to say.

Even more academic, ridiculous and futile is the work of the Food Habits Committee of the National Research Council, which has been assigned to find out by means of a public opinion poll whether the faulty diets of Americans are due to ignorance, prejudice or poverty. What every schoolboy in a relief family knows, namely, that relief standards are not adequate and do not permit the purchase of enough, good, wholesome food, the learned gentlemen of the Food Habits

Committee must try to discover by means of a public opinion poll.

It certainly cannot be news to these scientists that the United States Government though the A.A.A. has deliberately sought to create a scarcity of certain essential food products, wheat, pork, etc., so as to keep farm prices up. News of the destruction of so-called surplus citrus fruit crops in California have filled the newspapers, but many American children have never seen or tasted oranges and grapefruit, those important sources of Vitamin C. Red Cross workers report that when they furnished food to flood refugees in an isolated region of the South, they found hungry children playing ball with oranges—not knowing what else to do with them. The lack of Vitamin C in the infant diets of 20 years ago is the reason why nearly three times as many men are being rejected for America's 1940-41 draft army on account of bad teeth as were rejected in 1917, Dr. C. G. King of the University of Pittsburgh charged recently.

The attempt to solve the problem of "want in the midst of plenty" through the distribution of surplus food by means of the food stamp plan has failed dismally. The food stamp plan, at present, after two years of pushing ahead as fast as possible, is available to only about one-half of the families on relief. It will take at least another year, federal authorities estimate, to extend it to all of the relief families, and no such help will be given to the thousands of low-income families, not on relief, who must subsist on relief standards.

No social scientist, who makes an honest analysis of the present and future cost of the defense program can hope that public aid to the needy will be expanded in the coming period.

American capitalism cannot afford to buy health for its people, and at the same time to pay for the greatest and most powerful war machine in the entire world. On the contrary, unemployed workers are being told that in the interests of national defense, WPA and other social security programs must be cut; employed workers are being asked to work longer hours for less pay for the same so-called program of national defense. These workers, already in a notably poor physical condition, are asked to jeopardize their health further by voluntarily accepting still lower standards of living than those which have already undermined their health.

But the organized workers have been resisting these demands and have pointed out that the big industrialists, who have been making fabulous profits in this national "emergency," should back up their patriotic utterances with full financial support of the defense program. Not only must the workers continue this fight to preserve the living standards which they have won through past struggles, but they must attempt to extend these gains by the establishment of workers' control of production and a Workers' and Farmers' Government in the United States.

Only in a Socialist United States will longer and richer and more abundant lives for all be stressed, because only in the socialist society can plenty for all be achieved; and only a system of socialized medicine can distribute the fruits of twentieth century medical genius "to each according to his needs." Then, the age-old yearning of the people for the strength, for the happiness and the joy which only abounding health can bring, will be fulfilled. To this cause the Socialist Workers Party has dedicated itself.

The Life of German Political Prisoners

This extraordinary document, reprinted from the International Bulletin Press Service, is the English translation of a report written by an ex-political prisoner who was recently able to leave Germany. Besides presenting a graphic picture of the treatment of political prisoners and their life inside Hitler's jails and concentration camps, it testifies to the heroism of the German Trotskyists who remain devoted to their revolutionary ideas and continue their political work even within the Gestapo's prisons.

THE EDITORS

Because of chronic over-crowding, it is impossible for the jails to provide separate cells for prisoners, except in especially important instances, e. g., for important functionaries. Solitary cells are usually reserved for the purpose of rendering "noiseless" the "work-outs" given the prisoners; these range from nightly third degrees, through subtle torment (e. g., offering salted food and forbidding water), to all manner of bodily and spiritual torture. These tortures have by no means lately been abandoned. The difference between the practice of the regime in earlier days and in recent months is that the use of torture is no longer haphazard but is methodically organized. Diligent Kommissars exchange suggestions for tactics to be used on various types of prisoners and arrive at unbelievably interesting results.

In many instances, notably among the best "politicals," the jailers have found that punishment and force simply harden the prisoner and make the eliciting of further infor-

mation impossible (as long as the prisoner is rational). And because the object of the torture is not simply sadistic exercise but the eliciting of a maximum, comprehensive statement, physical torture is frequently abandoned, especially when a point has already been reached from which further confession can be pursued and developed. Often purely psychological instrumentalities for exerting pressure bring better results (e.g., arrest of innocent relatives, denial of the right to receive letters or visitors, denial of the privilege of reading, deprivation of relaxation time).

Until the end of the most important investigation, the prisoner is usually kept as completely isolated as possible, especially from his accomplices. In the larger jails, however, "politicals" are kept together; they quickly exchange tales of their experiences and warn each other against spies. (The spies associate intimately with the other prisoners, brag about their "revolutionary work," and attempt to pump "admissions" from their associates. They return from their "interrogations" with smuggled cigarettes, chocolate and other things with which to buy themselves into the good graces of other prisoners.) He who maintains a wary attitude in respect to unfamiliar neighbors, speaking little of his own "deeds" and spending his time in political discussion, will be rewarded in (mostly bad!) experience.

Conversations deal mostly with experiences before and during the "interrogations"; interest in general, especially theoretical, questions tend to diminish.

Aside from the early period of the harassing "interrogations," the tension of waiting for newcomers, confronta-

tions, etc., life in a jail is relatively bearable. For, in spite of especially bad meals (because originally it was arranged for a short period), the guard is mostly composed of officials from the "old system," who, as soon as the immediate pressure of the Gestapo lets up, are willing to ease the conditions of the politicals especially. The most important element is, of course, the relationship with other comrades which is avidly cultivated by word of mouth or through writing, despite the tale-bearing of petty criminals or even of officials.

The Trial Period

During the period of detention for examination, the political prisoner is handled precisely in the same manner, as the criminal. Now an "ordered life" begins with stipulated work. These months of waiting for sentence are the most difficult for many, especially when, as frequently occurs, one is kept in solitary confinement. One has to worry too much about the inevitable mistakes of the trial, and about the preparation for the trial; and above all, his personal insecurity and the fate of his comrades weighs heavily upon the prisoner in isolation. In these cases, there is rarely communication among politicals. Comparison of notes by means of petty attempts at bribery through the medium of certain criminals who clean the floors, serve the food, etc., is usually risky and, if discovered, can do more harm than the chance is worth.

The hearing itself is in most instances hardly more than the gathering together of all Gestapo records. The judges hardly know the accused. Denial of statements once certified by the prisoner (even if made under duress) is almost always useless. Some of the arresting officers of the Gestapo are always present as witnesses at the trial. The transactions usually take place so as to avoid publicity. Official attorneys act toward their imposed clients more like prosecutors; pass unbelievably quickly over the arguments for defense and try to obtain confessions. Their pleas usually begin: "My client is guilty; but there are perhaps in this or that factor extenuating circumstances to account for his behavior." Freely chosen defenders are absolutely denied. The sentence cannot be appealed to a higher court and is immediately effective.

After the trial, even in cases where the punishment is severe, an easing of the jail atmosphere is noticeable. The psychological pressure of uncertainty lets up; solitary confinement and isolation usually stop. Only long-term prisoners, hardened to jail routine, would be able to stand as much as three years in solitary without interruption. Very often the jail doctor orders an interruption in solitary confinement when signs of psychic disorder appear.

In general, the release from solitary and consequent association with other prisoners, constitutes in itself a betterment of conditions, at least offering a diversion from brooding. In the long run, it is only an exceptionally strong-willed, powerful individual, with highly diversified interests, who can work in isolation ten hours a day at a monotonous occupation without becoming spiritually dulled. One is thrown upon his own resources entirely for stimulation. Only in exceptional cases are textbooks allowed. In such instances our comrades often prefer to be alone rather than subject themselves to the influences of bad company. Then every moment of free time is utilized for study and even the work period is used for the mental solution of problems outlined in the textbooks.

Contacts with Outside World

The smallest scrap of news from outside, culled, for example, from newspapers of the officials or from reports by fellow prisoners engaged in outside work and coming into contact with "free" workers, spreads like wildfire. Politicals naturally accept outside work with alacrity and since the shortage of rural laborers has become so noticeable, they are no longer kept for work inside the jail. It has been demonstrated that the politicals, through solidarity, maintain order and discipline in their own ranks.

Every work-group of from ten to twelve men has an officer as overseer. In addition there is a foreman sent by the firm for which the work is being done. Especially in the case of politicals there is a careful guard against the establishment of illegal relations with the world outside.

Despite careful supervision, the "outside workers" always bring fresh life into the jail and are proud of being able to supply news to their comrades "inside," along with a few pennies saved out of the increased wage paid them for the more arduous outside work.

A prisoner is allowed to write one letter every two months from the penitentiary and to have one ten-minute visit every three months. These "privileges," as well as letters from the outside, are great events, shared in by all comrades; every bit of news is immediately relayed about the jail. There are fairly accurate reports on regulations in the different institutions, which can be very diverse, depending upon the management. For instance, in certain places the "politicals" are absolutely separated from the criminals in order that the latter may not be "infected"; the treatment of politicals is usually worse under these circumstances, their food more meager, their work more distasteful, their quarters more noxious, etc. The modern conception is that it is better for the general life of the institution to abolish separation of prisoners into categories, in order to weaken the unity of the politicals by incessant spying on the part of the criminal prisoners. Aside from the spying the close association of politicals is extremely difficult, for political conversations are strictly forbidden and every reported word leads with certainty to punishment or the concentration camp. One is forced, therefore, to select one's companions from among those with the most reliable characters. From this category must be excluded the higher functionaries of the Stalinists, since even on the outside these people denounce oppositionists as "traitors" to the state institutions. These "notables" use the prison regulation against political conversation as a pretext to forbid association on the part of their followers with oppositionists whose ideas might harm their loyal sheep.

Among the best elements this warning against association often works in reverse; it brings sharpened interest and eagerness for discussion. One usually begins with concrete, personal experiences, like a criticism of stupid, illegal methods of work which has entailed a great loss of members; reinstatement of the Russian "Paragraph 218," etc., in order through these gradually to approach fundamental questions. For, among many, purely theoretical interest tends in time to diminish and they become unpolitical, either because of outer pressure or of inner laziness. Only a few pursue political problems out of their own intellectual urge.

Political Work in Prison

Although numerically the C. P. is most strongly represented among the politicals, our comrades are everywhere

among the most politically active and clear-thinking; and where they work astutely have a relatively great influence, despite substantial opposition — under pressure of the jail system, every Stalinite name known to the masses has a double influence. Our comrades engage in a form of pedagogic exercise to be carried on inside over an extended period. To effect the gradual victory of our ideas in the minds of a few, particularly under such especially difficult circumstances, is a task which can bring a rich reward. If one has the rare pleasure of working with other comrades at the task of winning worth-while sympathizers to our views, elaborating methods, charting progress and apportioning the work, then each small accomplishment can be justifiably looked upon with pride.

One on the outside has no conception of the problems discussed inside by the really interested comrades. Not only the latest Stalinist change of line and its consequences, but also theoretical and actual problems of our movement. Frequently those inside sense with sharpened intuition the difficulties and matters for argument confronting their comrades outside, discuss those matters, make prognoses, and formulate political attitudes. When a prognosis thus made is later substantiated by a letter from the outside, one is proudly assured that the "officers" of our cadres are equipped to arrive at decisions independent of "orders" from above.

In this spirit our imprisoned comrades, deeply moved by the death of the Old Man, express their gratefulness for his priceless teachings, left to us and future generations as tools with which to build. They caution against the convenient argument that the Old Man was prevented by sentimentality from admitting that the achievements of October, won with his help, have been lost. Throughout the time of the Finnish war the comrades stood staunchly behind the slogan of the defense of the Soviet Union, as they had after the Stalin-Hitler pact and the invasion of Poland. They believe that those inside do not have their vision blurred by the propaganda machine of the bourgeoisie and therefore are able to perceive fundamentals with greater clarity than some of those outside in contact with the class enemy.

Although the isolation of those inside produces the danger of their arriving at conclusions disconnected from events in an alien world, still the intense discussion inside and the correspondence from the outside act as correctives. Perhaps some time we shall enjoy the fruit of this correspondence, penetrating the double censorship of jail and state, to sustain and inspire those working inside who in turn reinforce and enrich their meaning. It is a small contribution to the preparation of the German and international revolutions.

Prior to the expiration of the penal term of a political, the administration of the institution must submit a written report to the Gestapo concerning the tendencies and political attitude of the prisoner. The basis of these reports consists of summaries of "conversations" conducted by the jailers at regular intervals throughout the detention period. These are amplified by the statements of certain spies and the reports of the jail officials. Basing itself on these reports, as well as upon the general behavior of the comrade after his arrest (during the interrogation and before the court) and upon his earlier revolutionary activity, the Gestapo decides whether to free him at the end of his term or to detain him longer. Usually at least a declaration is demanded, in which the prisoner promises to abstain from future revolutionary activity. Whoever refuses to sign such a declaration (e. g. Jehovah's Witnesses) must reckon with the concentration camp.

Usually, after the conclusion of his sentence, the released prisoner has to face new hearings at which pointers for further trials are gathered, with new arrests and the rolling up of old, forgotten items. So it may happen that, years after acts were committed, new arrests can be suggested by the review of the record of a released prisoner, involving comrades who had long considered themselves safe. Fortunately the bad consequences of such declarations made by released comrades can be avoided because of the general acquaintance with the methods of the Gestapo; the comrades are shrewd and prepared.

Life in Concentration Camps

Our knowledge of life within the concentration camps is most meager. For their inmates do not come out so easily and those who have been only temporarily "entertained" there are acquainted with conditions only as exceptions. The state cannot maintain a steadily increasing number of persons for any great length of time; it must engage them in productive activity in order to produce a value more than covering the cost of their detention. The prisoners are therefore used in inside and outside work, especially in types of labor necessary to the conduct of the war: construction of buildings, improvement of the land, etc.

The inmates can write nothing to those outside concerning their work, since the censorship and rules in concentration camps are much more rigid than in ordinary jails. Letters are regulated even as to the number of lines and are harshly withheld if they do not comply exactly with the rules. That is why we have a livelier and more intensive correspondence with our comrades in the jails than in the concentration camps. At least the concentration camp inmates have the opportunity to see daily newspapers, and the weekly paper *The Lighthouse*, published for all German penal institutions, can be bought out of the prisoners' wages. This sheet contains brief reviews in catch-word style, of the most important events of the week (according to the lights of the editor!) as well as details of the long speeches of statesmen.

The main difference between concentration camps and jails is the composition of the body of inmates (in the concentration camps mostly qualified "politicals") and of the guard. In the jails most of the old staffs of officers are maintained, with occasional removals and replacements but with new management and changed rules and under the control of reliable superior officers. In concentration camps there are also SS-guards, frequently sifted and sorted, since they become occasionally infected and discomposed. Neither the politically unstable nor the persistently sadistic elements can be constantly used over a long period, because the hard work required of the inmates could not be realized in some cases due to mistreatment, deaths, etc. Without exception, the concentration camps swarm with spies, as well as provocateurs who, for instance, on the occasion of the mass reception of radio addresses or appeals, will utter revolutionary expressions, observing and reporting the reactions of the comrades.

The head of the concentration camp is required to submit, at least quarterly, regular political reports on the inmates. In connection with these, they circulate all sorts of veiled promises of release, or of amnesty, and throw out a variety of demoralizing rumors.

Despite certain "advantages" to be found in the concentration camps (subscriptions to newspapers, the purchase

of supplementary food items) there is greater pressure upon the nervous system of the inmate, because of the complete isolation from the outside world (prohibition of visitors and censorship of letters) and the uncertain perspective of a problematic release in the distant future.

The knowledge that the desired goal of every inmate,

freedom, can be attained only through the revolution, should lessen the danger of becoming unpolitical in the concentration camp. But political education in the concentration camp goes contrary to the official goal — not toward the development of good citizens; the concentration camp is in reality the graduate school of the revolution for our best forces.

From the Arsenal of Marxism

These three historical documents date back to the year 1926, a crucial year in the struggle of the Left Opposition against the bureaucratic degeneration of the party. They have not been published before in any language.

The first of these documents comprises extracts from Trotsky's diary, in which, in November 1926, he jotted down for future reference — in thesis form — a series of basic propositions concerning the development of the USSR. They provide additional irrefutable evidence that Trotsky never cherished any illusions about the meaning and gravity of the struggle against the bureaucratic tendencies which had then gained the ascendancy in the state apparatus, in the party, and in the country. These November, 1926, theses were later expand-

ed by Trotsky in a large number of speeches, articles, and books.

Here, in the most generalized form, is Trotsky's analysis of the most complex historical problem, namely, the mechanics of class society as expressed in the oscillations between revolutionary epochs and events and those of reaction and counter-revolution. To young Bolsheviks these theses supply an object lesson in the method of Marxism. Trotsky here applies the dialectic to explain how the struggle for the emancipation of the working class is conditioned and determined by vast social processes, their political ebbs and flows, their effects on the psychology of the masses and other phenomena in the superstructure. From this kind of analysis and synthesis is derived our program which alone makes possible a conscious intervention in

events. Above all, these theses teach the lesson that in our epoch the decisive struggle is the struggle for the correct inter-relationship between the party and the class.

The other two documents which likewise pertain to this same year (1926) cast a graphic light on the conditions under which Trotsky conducted this great struggle. The ideological leader of the rising bureaucracy was none other than Bukharin to whom these two personal letters are addressed.

In a certain sense, they constitute an appeal to Bukharin; at the same time they sound a warning about the disastrous consequences of the course on which Bukharin had embarked, and for which he paid with his own life, twelve years later, in the third of the Moscow Frameup Trials.

THE EDITORS

The Inter-Relationship Between Revolution and Counter-Revolution

November 26, 1926.

1. Revolutions have always been followed by counter-revolutions in history. Counter-revolutions have always thrown society back, but never back as far as the starting point of the revolution. The succession of revolutions and counter-revolutions is the product of certain fundamental features in the mechanics of class society, the only society in which revolutions and counter-revolutions are possible.

2. Revolution is impossible without the participation of the masses. This participation is in its turn possible only in the event that the oppressed masses connect their hopes for a better future with the slogan of revolution. In this sense the hopes engendered by the revolution are always exaggerated. This is due to the mechanics of class society, the terrible plight of the overwhelming majority of the popular masses, the objective need of concentrating the greatest hopes and efforts in order to insure even the most modest progress, and so on.

3. But from these same conditions comes one of the most important—and moreover, one of the most common—elements of the counter-revolution. The conquests gained in the struggle do not correspond with and in the nature of things cannot directly correspond with the expectations of the broad backward masses, who are awakened for the first time in the course of the revolution itself. The disillusionment of these masses, their return to routine and to futility is as much an integral part of the post-revolutionary period as the passage into the camp of "law and order" of those "satisfied"

classes or layers of classes who had participated in the revolution.

4. Closely bound up with these processes, parallel processes of a different and, to a large measure, of an opposite character take place in the camp of the ruling classes. The awakening of broad backward masses upsets the ruling classes from their accustomed equilibrium, deprives them of direct support as well as confidence, and thus enables the revolution to seize a great deal more than it is later able to hold.

5. The disillusionment of a considerable section of the oppressed masses in the immediate conquests of the revolution and—directly connected with this—the decline of the political energy and activity of the revolutionary class engender an influx of confidence among counter-revolutionary classes—both among those overthrown by the revolution but not shattered completely, as well as among those which aided the revolution at a certain phase, but were thrown back into the camp of reaction by the further development of the revolution.

The Conditions for the Rise of Stalinism

20. It would be wrong to ignore the fact that the proletariat today (1926) is considerably less receptive to revolutionary perspectives and to broad generalizations than was the case during the October overturn and in the ensuing few years. The revolutionary party cannot passively align itself in accordance with every shift in the moods of the masses. But it cannot ignore any alteration which is produced by causes of profound historical order.

21. The October revolution, to a greater extent than any

other in history, aroused the greatest hopes and passions in the popular masses, first of all, the proletarian masses. After the maximum sufferings of 1917-1921, the proletarian masses improved their status considerably. They cherish this improvement, hopeful of its further development. But at the same time their own experience has shown them the extreme gradualness of this process of improvement which has only today reached the pre-war standard of living. This living experience is of incalculable significance to the masses, especially the older generation. They have grown more cautious, more skeptical, less directly responsive to revolutionary slogans, less receptive to major generalizations. These moods which unfolded after the ordeals of the civil war and after the successes of economic restoration, and which still remain undisrupted by new shifts of class forces—these moods constitute the basic political background of party life. These are the moods which bureaucratism—as an element of “law and order” and “tranquillity”—banks on. The attempt of the opposition to pose new questions before the party ran up against precisely these moods.

22. The older generation of the working class, who made two revolutions, or the last one, beginning with 1917, is now nervous, exhausted, and, in large measure, fearful of all convulsions bound up with the perspectives of war, havoc, famine, epidemics and so on.

A bogie is being made out of the theory of the permanent revolution precisely for the purpose of exploiting the psychology of a considerable section of the workers, who are not at all careerists, but who have put on weight, acquired families. The theory of the permanent revolution which is being utilized in this sense, is of course in no way related to old disputes, long relegated to the archives, but simply raises the phantom of new convulsions—heroic “invasions,” violations of “law and order”; a threat to the conquests of the reconstruction period: a new zone of great efforts and sacrifices. Making a bogie out of the permanent revolution is, in essence, speculation upon the moods of that section of the working class, including party members who have grown smug, fat and semi-conservative.

The Interrelation Between the Party, the Youth and the Class

24. The young generation, only now growing up, lacks experience of the class struggle and the necessary revolutionary temper. It does not explore for itself, as did the older generation, but falls immediately into an environment of the most powerful party and governmental institutions, party tradition, authority, discipline, etcetera. For the time being this renders an independent role more difficult for the young generation. The question of the correct orientation of the young generation of the party and of the working class acquires a colossal importance.

25. Parallel with the above-indicated processes, there has been an extreme growth in the role played in the party and the state apparatus by a special category of old Bolsheviks, who were members or worked actively in the party during the 1905 period; who then left the party in the period of reaction, adapted themselves to the bourgeois regime and occupied a more or less prominent position within it; who were defensists together with the entire bourgeois intelligentsia and together with the latter were propelled forward in the February revolution (of which they did not dream at the beginning of the war); who were staunch opponents of the

Leninist program and of the October overturn; but who returned to the party after victory was secured or after the stabilization of the new regime about the same time that the bourgeois intelligentsia stopped its sabotage. These elements, who more or less accommodated themselves to the June 3rd regime, can be, naturally, only elements of the conservative type. They are in general in favor of stabilization, and generally against every opposition. The education of the party youth is largely in their hands.

Such is the combination of circumstances which in the recent period of party development has determined the change in the party leadership and the shift of party policy to the right.

The Soviet Thermidor

26. The official adoption of the theory of “socialism in one country” signifies the theoretical sanction of those shifts which have already taken place; and of the first open break with Marxist tradition.

27. The elements of bourgeois restoration lie in: a) the situation of the peasantry, who do not want the return of the landlords but are still not interested materially in socialism (hence flows the importance of political ties with the peasant poor); b) in the moods of considerable layers of the working class, in the lowering of revolutionary energy, in the fatigue of the older generation, in the increased specific weight of the conservative elements.

Two Letters to Bukharin

January 8, 1926.

Nikolai Ivanovich:

You will perhaps recall that two years ago during a session of the Politbureau at my home I said that the mass of the Leningrad party* was muzzled more than was the case elsewhere. This expression (I confess, a very strong one) was used by me in an intimate circle, just as you used in your personal note the words: “unconscionable demagogy.”

To be sure, this did not prevent my remark concerning the muzzling of the party mass by the Leningrad party apparatus from being broadcast through meetings and through the press. But this is a special item and—I hope—not a precedent . . . But doesn't this mean that I *did see* the actual state of things? However in contrast to certain comrades, I saw it a year and a half, and two and three years ago. At that time, during the same session I remarked that everything in Leningrad goes splendidly (100%) five minutes before things get very bad. This is possible only under a super-apparatus regime. Why then do you say that I did not see the actual state of things? True, I did not consider that Leningrad was separated from the rest of the country by an impenetrable barrier. The theory of a “sick Leningrad” and a “healthy country” which was held in high respect under Kerensky was never my theory. I said and I repeat now that the traits of apparatus bureaucratism, peculiar to the *whole* party, have been brought to their extreme expression in the regime of the Leningrad party. I must however add that in these 2½ years (i.e., since the autumn of 1923) the apparatus-bureaucratic tendencies have grown in the extreme not only in Leningrad but throughout the entire party.

* Controlled by Zinoviev-Kamenev allied in 1924 with Stalin.

Consider for a moment this fact: Moscow* and Leningrad,** two main proletarian centers, adopt *simultaneously* and furthermore *unanimously* (think of it: *unanimously!*) at their district party conferences two resolutions aimed against each other. And consider also this, that our official party mind, represented by the press, does not even dwell on this truly shocking fact.

What are those special (?) social (!) conditions in Leningrad and Moscow which permit such a drastic and "unanimous" polar opposition? No one seeks for them, no one asks himself about them. What then is the explanation? Simply this, that everybody silently says to himself: *The 100 percent opposition of Leningrad to Moscow is the work of the apparatus.* This, N. I., is the gist of the "genuine state of things."

But Leningrad does not stand alone as regards "day-to-day routine." In the past year we had on the one hand, the Chita business, and on the other, that in Kherson. Naturally you and I understand that the Chita and Kherson abominations* are exceptions precisely because of their excesses. But these exceptions are *symptomatic*. Could the things that happened in Chita have occurred had there not been among the Chita summits a special, binding, mutual amnesty, with independence from the rank and file as its basis? Did you read the report of Schlichter's investigating committee on Khersonovism? The document is instructive to the highest degree — not only because it characterizes some of the Khersonovist personnel, but also because it characterizes certain aspects of the party regime as a whole. To the question why all the local communists, who had known of the crimes of the responsible workers, kept quiet, apparently for a period of two-three years, Schlichter received the answer: "Just try to speak up — you will lose your job, you'll get kicked into a village, etc., etc." I quote, of course, from memory, but that is the gist of it. And Schlichter exclaims apropos of this: "What! Up to now only oppositionists have told us that for this or that opinion they have been *allegedly* (!) removed from posts, kicked into a village, etc., etc. But now we hear from party members that they do not protest against *criminal actions* of leading comrades for fear of being removed, thrown into a village, expelled from the party, etc." I cite again from memory.

I know that certain comrades, possibly you among them, have been carrying out until recent times a plan somewhat as follows: give the workers in the nuclei the possibility of criticizing factory, guild and regional matters, and at the same time, crack down resolutely on every "opposition" emanating from the upper ranks of the party. In this way, the apparatus-regime as a whole was to be preserved by provid-

* Controlled at the time (1926) by the Right wing of Bukharin-Rykov-Ugланov in a bloc with Stalin.

** Controlled at the time (1926) by Zinoviev and Kamenev who had broken with Stalin and entered into a bloc with the Left Opposition.

* In 1925-26 numerous cases were laid bare of criminal abuse of power by ranking provincial bureaucrats. The Chita and Kherson affairs were the most notorious instances at the time of corruption, grafting, terrorization of the party membership and of the populace, and other crimes.

ing it with a broader base. But *this experiment was not at all successful*. The methods and habits of the apparatus-regime inevitably seep down from the top. If every criticism of the Central Committee and even criticism inside the Central Committee is equated, under all conditions, to a factional struggle for power, with all the ensuing consequences; then the Leningrad Committee will carry out the self-same policy in relation to those who criticize it in the sphere of its plenipotentiary powers, and under the Leningrad Committee there are districts and sub-districts.

When in 1923 the opposition arose in Moscow (without the aid of the local apparatus, and against its resistance) the central and local apparatus brought the bludgeon down on Moscow's skull under the slogan: "Shut up! You do not recognize the peasantry." In the same apparatus-way you are now bludgeoning the Leningrad organization, and crying, "Shut up! You don't recognize the middle peasant." You are thus terrorizing in the two main centers of proletarian dictatorship the best proletarian elements, reeducating them from expressing aloud not only their views, correct or erroneous alike, but also their alarm concerning the general questions of the revolution and socialism. And meanwhile, the democratic rights granted to the rural areas are unquestionably being strengthened and entrenched.

Can't you see all the dangers that flow from this?

* * *

March 4, 1926
Personal

N(ikolai) Ivanovich,

I write this letter in longhand (although I have grown unaccustomed to it) inasmuch as it is embarrassing to dictate to a stenographer what I have to say.

You are of course aware that in accordance with the Ugланov* line there is being conducted against me in Moscow a half-concealed struggle with all sorts of sallies and insinuations which I refrain from characterizing here as they deserve.

By all sorts of machinations — in part and wholly unworthy of and degrading to our organization — I am not permitted to speak at workers' meetings. At the same time rumors are being spread systematically through the workers' nuclei that I give lectures "for the bourgeoisie" and refuse to speak to workers. Now just listen to what luxuriates on this soil, and this, once again, not at all accidentally. I cite verbatim from a letter of a worker party member.

"In our nucleus the question has been posed why you arrange to give paid reports. The prices of admission to these reports are very high and the workers cannot afford them. Consequently only the bourgeoisie attends. The secretary of our nucleus explains to us in his talks that for these reports you charge fees, percentages for your own benefit. He tells us that for every one of your articles and for your by-line you also take a fee, that you have a big family and, says he, you run shy of funds. Does a member of the Politbureau really have to sell his by-line? etc., etc. You will ask: isn't this silly nonsense? No, to our sorrow, it is not nonsense. I have verified it. At first it was decided to write a letter to the Central Control Commission (or Central Committee), signed by several members of the nucleus, but then

* Ugланov was one of the Right-wing leaders of the inquisitions and purges against the Left Opposition during the period of the Right-Center Bloc (1925-1929).

they decided not to, saying: 'They will drive us out of the factory, and we have families.' . . .

In this way a fear has seized the worker-party member that if he tries to verify the most infamous slander against a member of the Politbureau, he, a party member, can be driven from the factory, for following party procedure. And you know, were he to ask me, I could not in all sincerity say that this would not happen. The same secretary of the same nucleus says — and again *not at all accidentally*: "In the Politburo the sheenies are running wild." And again no one dared to say anything about it to anyone — for the self-same openly formulated reason: they will drive us out of the factory.

Another item. The author of the letter which I cited above, is a Jewish worker. He, too, did not dare to write about the "sheenies who agitate against Leninism." The motive is as follows: "If the others, the non-Jews, keep quiet, it would be awkward for me . . ." And this worker — who wrote me to ask whether it is true that I sell my speeches and my by-line to the bourgeoisie—is now also expecting that he will be driven any hour from the factory. This is a fact. Another fact is that I am not at all sure that this won't happen — if not immediately, then a month from now; there are plenty of pretexts. And everybody in the nucleus knows "that's how it was, that's how it will be" — and they hang their heads.

In other words: *members of the communist party are*

afraid to report to the party organs about Black-Hundred agitation, thinking that it is they who will be driven out and not the Black-Hundred gangster.

You will say: Exaggeration! I, too, would like to think so. Therefore I have a proposal to make: *Let us both take a trip to the nucleus and check up on it.* I think that you and I — two members of the Politbureau — have after all a few things in common, enough to calmly and conscientiously verify: whether it is true, whether it is possible that *in our party, in Moscow, in a workers' nucleus, propaganda is being conducted with impunity which is vile and slanderous, on the one hand, and antisemitic, on the other; and that honest workers are afraid to question or to verify or try to refute any stupidity, lest they be driven into the street with their families. Of course you can refer me to the "proper bodies."* But this would signify only *closing the vicious circle.*

I want to hope that you will not do this; and it is precisely this hope which prompts this letter.

Yours,

L. TROTSKY.

The Stalinist Version of Napoleon's Invasion

Since Stalin's "scorched earth" speech of July 3, and its appeal to the feudal Russian tradition of the defeat of the Napoleonic invasion, the Stalinist press has published innumerable articles and references to the Russian feat of repelling Napoleon in 1812. According to the Stalinist version, feudal Russia was fighting a "national war" in the struggle against Napoleon. The Soviet movie, "General Suvorov," goes even further, glorifying the feats of the Czarist armies in driving the armies of the French Republic out of Italy in 1799 — that is, before Napoleon came to power! That Napoleon abolished serfdom in Poland in 1807 and that Czarist Russia reinstated serfdom there after Napoleon was defeated — this fact could scarcely fit into the Stalinist version. Fortunately for the Stalinist historians, Napoleon, although he long was tempted to do so, finally abandoned the idea of freeing the Russian serfs and organizing a peasant war against the Czar.

Was the Russian war of 1812 a national war against Napoleon? The authoritative Soviet historian, Eugene Tarle, considers this question in his famous book, "Bonaparte," and concludes that it was not. Tarle writes:

"It would not be amiss here to say something of the so-called Russian 'national war' of 1812.

"Never did Napoleon, or his marshals, or their companions in arms, speak of the war of 1812 as a 'national' war, in the same sense that they spoke of the Spanish guerilla war as a 'national' war. Nor could they compare the two phenomena. The war in Russia lasted six months. Of these six months, the first three saw Napoleon constantly victorious as he advanced along a direct line from Kovno to Vilna to

Smolensk to Moscow, interrupted by battles and petty skirmishes with the regular Russian army. There was, however, not a single national mass revolt against the French — neither then nor after Napoleon's entry into Moscow. Indeed, there were occurrences of quite a contrary nature, as when the peasants of Smolensk complained to the French authorities that their master, the landowner Engelhardt, had been guilty of betraying the French.

"Following the Battle of Malo-Yaroslavetz, when the frosts intensified the profound disorganization of the retreating French army, there came into being that phenomenon which contemporaries accurately described as 'the actions of the militia detachments,' but which later came to be known as 'a national war.' The heads of the militia were officers of the regular Russian army who had been authorized to organize detachments of volunteers from among the soldiers of the regular army and willing newcomers. . . In these militia corps were to be found soldiers, Cossacks and reserves. The peasants as a group took no part in these activities. . .

"It is clear that if the Spanish guerilla warfare might justifiably be called a national war, it would be impossible to apply this term to any Russian movement in the war of 1812.

"People began to regard even the burning of Smolensk and Moscow and the firing of villages as manifestations of 'national war,' overlooking the fact that these were systematic acts of the Russian army in its retreat to Moscow."

Eugene Tarle was lost sight of in the purges of 1936. But at the beginning of the Nazi-Soviet war his name reappeared in the Soviet press. Perhaps he will now have to re-write his writings on the Napoleonic epoch!

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Dear Friend:

The most sweeping attack upon civil liberties and labor's rights in many years is the Federal indictment in Minnesota of 29 people — members of the Socialist Workers Party and the leaders of Motor Transport and Allied Workers Industrial Union, Local 544-CIO. Their trial will begin at St. Paul on October 20.

This prosecution is doubly unprecedented. Never before in peacetime has the Government invoked statutes punishing the mere expression of opinion as it is doing with the Socialist Workers Party. Nor have Federal authorities ever so flagrantly intervened in a trade union dispute by instituting criminal proceedings against the members of one labor organization, the CIO, on behalf of another, the AFL.

The prosecution has been vigorously condemned by the CIO, Labor's Non-Partisan League, the United Auto Workers, the American Civil Liberties Union, the Nation, the New Republic and other leading labor and liberal spokesmen.

The Civil Rights Defense Committee is being organized to take charge of the general defense work in this case. Together with the National CIO, it has already provided bail and counsel for the defendants. It must now raise the necessary funds to defray the heavy costs of fighting the prosecution and rallying public support to the defendants. The American Civil Liberties Union is cooperating with this Committee and will contest the violations of constitutional rights involved.

We ask you, as a friend and fighter for democratic rights, to join us in becoming a member of this Committee. Acceptance of membership entails no agreement with the political views of the defendants, but only a willingness to defend the democratic rights of the trade unionists and the members of the Socialist Workers Party menaced by this prosecution.

Please signify acceptance by sending a card to us and the Committee will keep you informed of all important developments.

Sincerely yours,

CHARLES R. WALKER
MARGARET DE SILVER
JOHN DOS PASSOS
JAMES T. FARRELL
CARLO TRESCA